

## The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Performance: Challenges, Practices, and Opportunities for Achieving Sustainable Development

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### Abstract:

This study examines the challenges, practices, and opportunities of human resource management (HRM) in Jordanian educational institutions, with a particular focus on how HRM contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The research aims to analyze the extent to which HRM practices align with labor market needs, support organizational effectiveness, and promote economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The study population comprised HR professionals working in educational institutions across Jordan. A purposive sample of 67 participants including HR managers and employees was selected to provide insights from both a strategic and operational perspective. The study employed a descriptive-analytical methodology, utilizing a mixed-method approach. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires, while qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, chi-square testing, and factor analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings reveal that while performance appraisals and employee training are widely implemented and positively impact employee retention and sustainable economic growth, career development and well-being initiatives receive little attention. A significant mismatch was identified between human resource management practices and labor market requirements, along with a significant gender imbalance in leadership roles. Factor analysis indicated three key dimensions of human resource management: employee development, performance management, and organizational support. Based on these findings, the study recommends increased investment in professional development and training programs, integrating sustainability principles into human resource policies, and making focused efforts to improve gender equality and organizational inclusiveness. These changes are essential for transforming human resource management into a strategic driver of sustainable development in the Jordanian education sector.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development, Educational Institutions, Jordan, Workforce Development

### 1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a critical role in shaping the growth and development of organizations across the globe. In the context of developing economies like Jordan, HRM practices are vital for fostering both organizational efficiency and national progress. As the country seeks to strengthen its competitive edge and achieve sustainable development, HRM practices emerge as a key factor in addressing the workforce challenges and promoting innovation. However, the landscape of HRM in Jordan is marked by a unique blend of opportunities and challenges, which are influenced by socio-economic, cultural, and political factors. (Abu-Mahfouz et al., 2019).

This paper explores the current state of HRM in Jordan, examining the practices, challenges, and opportunities that shape the development of human capital within the country. In particular, it focuses on

how HRM can contribute to achieving sustainable development goals by aligning organizational objectives with national priorities. (Najaf, et al. 2021), The study draws attention to the growing need for HRM systems that emphasize flexibility, inclusivity, and long-term value creation while responding to contemporary challenges such as unemployment, skill gaps, and the rapid pace of technological change. Through an in-depth analysis of existing HRM practices, this paper aims to provide insights into the strategic role of human resource management in fostering a productive, sustainable, and inclusive workforce in Jordan. (Ananzeh et al., 2022c; Forcadell et al., 2020). By highlighting key issues and opportunities, the research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on HRM in the Middle East and offers recommendations for policy makers, organizations, (Molina-Azorin, et al. 2021), and HR professionals working towards a more sustainable future for the country Human Resource Management (HRM) is an essential pillar for organizations striving to maintain competitiveness and achieve long-term success. (Eglash, et al. 2020), In an increasingly globalized world, HRM is not only responsible for managing the workforce but also for fostering innovation, improving productivity, and aligning organizational objectives with broader economic and social goals. In the context of Jordan, a developing country in the Middle East, the role of HRM takes on an even greater significance. As Jordan works towards sustainable development, the management of human resources becomes central to addressing the challenges of economic growth, social stability, and environmental responsibility. (Suileek and Alshurafat, 2023; Taha et al., 2023; Al-Hazaima et al., 2022; Ananzeh et al., 2022a; Hang & Huy, 2021) Over the past few decades, Jordan has made significant strides toward economic modernization, with a focus on diversifying its economy, improving infrastructure, and enhancing education and healthcare. However, the country continues to face a series of complex challenges, including high unemployment rates, (Madanat et al., 2018), particularly among youth, skill mismatches, and the need for a workforce that is adaptable to the rapid pace of technological and global change. The issue of human capital development remains a key area for improvement, as the ability of organizations and the public sector to attract, develop, and retain talented employees is crucial for long-term success. (Mohiuddin et al., 2022; Nathaniel et al., 2021; Piwowar-Sulej, 2021; Santana et al., 2020; Stahl et al., 2020).

HRM practices in Jordan are influenced by a combination of traditional values and modern business needs. (Abdul'aal, et al., 2018). These practices are shaped by the cultural, social, and political context of the country, as well as by the growing influence of international standards and best practices in human resource management. (Al-Hawary, et al., 2020). Despite the advancements in HRM, there are still considerable gaps in terms of how effectively organizations utilize their human resources. For example, the skills required for a rapidly evolving labor market often do not align with the education and training provided by the current systems. This misalignment leads to underemployment and unfulfilled potential, posing a barrier to both individual and national development. (Da Silva et al., 2020; Malik et al., 2021) Moreover, Jordan's human resource landscape faces a number of broader structural challenges, such as a lack of diversity in leadership roles, gender inequality, and inadequate support for innovation and entrepreneurship. (Alrabadi, et al. 2020) These issues, in turn, contribute to a high turnover rate and difficulty in retaining talent, particularly in key sectors that drive economic growth such as technology, healthcare, and education. In response to these challenges, HRM must evolve to focus not only on the functional aspects of recruitment and training but also on developing a culture of inclusivity, continuous learning, and sustainable business practices. (Alhusban et al., 2020; Alshurafat, 2019, 2022; Alshurafat et al., 2019a, b, 2021a, b; Haloush et al., 2021; Stahl et al., 2020).

In the pursuit of sustainable development, HRM plays a critical role in helping organizations adopt practices that ensure long-term economic, social, and environmental sustainability. This includes fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce, promoting fair labor practices, and encouraging corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. (Agung, et al. 2020), Additionally, HRM can help to mitigate the environmental impact of business operations by integrating sustainability practices into employee behavior and organizational policies. (Hernita et al., 2021) Through a comprehensive analysis of the existing HRM practices in Jordan, this paper aims to provide valuable insights into the opportunities that

HRM offers for sustainable development. By identifying the key obstacles that need to be overcome, as well as the practices that have the potential to drive change, this study offers recommendations for policy makers, business leaders, and HR professionals. (Mohiuddin, et al., 2022), these recommendations are aimed at improving the alignment between HRM practices and national goals, helping Jordan develop a more resilient, productive, and sustainable workforce for the future. (Amrutha & Geetha, 2020). Mohiuddin et al. (2022)

the findings of this research contribute to the broader discourse on HRM in the Middle East and offer a roadmap for organizations in Jordan to improve their HR practices in ways that not only benefit the private sector but also contribute to the nation's broader development aspirations. Mohiuddin et al. (2022) by bridging the gap between workforce needs and national sustainability goals, HRM can be a transformative force in the journey towards achieving a more prosperous and equitable future for Jordan (Dahmash et al. 2021),

## **2. Research Problem**

The human resource management (HRM) landscape in Jordan faces a set of complex challenges that hinder the country's ability to fully leverage its human capital for sustainable development. Despite ongoing efforts to modernize the economy and align with global best practices, Jordan continues to struggle with issues such as high unemployment rates, particularly among youth and graduates, a mismatch between the skills required by the labor market and those provided by educational institutions, and limited opportunities for professional development and career progression. These challenges not only affect individual job prospects but also impede national efforts to achieve economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability.

Although Jordan has made significant strides in areas such as infrastructure development and education, the role of HRM in driving sustainable development remains underexplored, especially in terms of its contribution to reducing unemployment, fostering inclusive growth, and improving organizational performance. Traditional HRM practices often do not align with the evolving needs of a dynamic labor market, and organizational structures in both the public and private sectors continue to face barriers related to workforce diversity, gender inequality, and ineffective talent management.

The research problem addressed by this study is the need to understand how HRM practices in Jordan can be adapted and improved to address the existing gaps in workforce development and contribute meaningfully to the country's sustainable development goals. Specifically, this research seeks to explore the challenges faced by Jordanian organizations in implementing effective HRM strategies, identify the factors that hinder HRM's potential to foster a sustainable workforce, and propose practical solutions to enhance HRM's role in achieving economic, social, and environmental sustainability in Jordan.

By investigating the alignment between HRM practices and national development objectives, this study aims to answer key questions: How can HRM contribute to reducing unemployment, addressing skill gaps, and fostering an inclusive workforce? What changes need to be made to HRM practices in order to ensure they are better suited to the needs of Jordan's labor market? And, what role can HRM play in advancing Jordan's long-term development goals, including the achievement of a sustainable, diversified economy? These questions form the foundation of the research, which will provide valuable insights into the current state of HRM in Jordan and offer strategic recommendations for overcoming its challenges.

## **3. Research Questions**

This study aims to explore the role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in addressing the challenges and opportunities for sustainable development in Jordan. The following research questions will guide the investigation:

1. What are the key challenges faced by organizations in Jordan in implementing effective HRM practices?
2. How do HRM practices in Jordan align with the labor market needs and the country's sustainable development goals?

3. What is the impact of HRM practices on unemployment rates, particularly among youth and graduates, in Jordan?
4. How can HRM practices in Jordan be adapted to foster a more inclusive and sustainable workforce?
5. What are the opportunities for HRM in Jordan to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs)?
6. What best practices from international HRM systems can be applied to improve HRM practices in Jordan to support sustainable development?

#### **4. Research Objectives**

The primary aim of this study is to explore the role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in Jordanian educational institutions and its contribution to achieving sustainable development. To achieve this aim, the study is guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To identify the current HRM practices implemented in Jordanian educational institutions and assess their effectiveness in managing human capital.
2. To examine the key challenges facing HR managers and employees in the educational sector in Jordan, particularly those related to recruitment, retention, training, and organizational development.
3. To analyze the extent to which HRM practices align with the needs of the labor market and national development priorities in Jordan.
4. To evaluate the role of HRM in supporting sustainable development goals (SDGs), including economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.
5. To provide recommendations for improving HRM practices in educational institutions to enhance institutional performance and support national strategies for sustainable development

#### **5. Literature Review**

Human Resource Management (HRM) has evolved significantly over the past few decades, transitioning from a primarily administrative function to a strategic partner in organizational development. In the context of sustainable development, HRM plays a critical role in aligning workforce capabilities with long-term economic, social, and environmental goals. This literature review explores the key themes relevant to HRM in Jordanian educational institutions, focusing on HRM challenges, strategic practices, and the potential for contributing to sustainable development.

##### **5.1. HRM and Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development, as defined by the United Nations (1987), encompasses the integration of economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection (Khan, et al. 2020). Within organizations, HRM is increasingly recognized as a driver of sustainability through practices that promote responsible labor relations, workforce diversity, talent development, and employee engagement. Sustainable HRM emphasizes long-term human capital investment, ethical governance, and environmental awareness, going beyond traditional performance metrics (Wu, et al. 2019).

In the educational sector, (Hang, et al. 2021), HRM contributes to sustainability by developing the competencies of educators and administrators, fostering inclusive and equitable environments, and supporting innovation in teaching and management. However, (Mijatović, et al. 2020), integrating sustainability into HRM strategies remains a challenge, especially in developing countries where short-term goals and resource constraints often take precedence. (Ford, et al. 2020),

##### **5.2. Challenges in HRM Practices in Developing Contexts**

Research highlights several structural and contextual challenges that hinder the effectiveness of HRM in developing countries like Jordan. (Haloush, et al. 2021), These include limited financial resources, bureaucratic rigidity, outdated HR policies, and a lack of strategic alignment between HRM and institutional goals. In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, additional obstacles include high youth unemployment, skill mismatches, and gender inequality in the workplace (Freudenreich, et al. 2020),

In Jordan, the public and private education sectors face difficulty attracting and retaining qualified personnel due to uncompetitive salaries, limited career progression, and inconsistent performance

evaluation systems (Elmagrhi, et al. 2019), These issues contribute to a demotivated workforce and reduce the capacity of institutions to meet the demands of a rapidly changing labor market. (Harrison, et al. 019),

### **5.3. Strategic HRM in the Educational Sector**

Strategic HRM emphasizes the alignment of HR policies with institutional objectives and external market demands. In the educational context, this includes talent acquisition strategies, performance management systems, and professional development programs that aim to enhance both employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness (Suileek, et al. 2023),

Studies have shown that effective HRM strategies in education such as targeted training, mentorship, and leadership development can significantly improve retention, (Drolet, et al. 2020), innovation, and educational outcomes Moreover, institutions that adopt data-driven and participatory HRM approaches are better equipped to address workforce challenges and align with national development plans. (Piwowar-Sulej, et al. 2021),

### **5.4. HRM and Labor Market Alignment**

A growing body of research emphasizes the importance of aligning HRM practices with labor market needs, particularly in the face of high unemployment rates among youth and university graduates in Jordan Mismatches between educational outcomes and job market requirements highlight the need for HRM to play a more proactive role in workforce planning, skills development, and industry collaboration (Santana, et al. 2020),

Educational institutions are central to preparing future workers, and HR departments within these institutions must ensure that staff are equipped with the skills, tools, and motivation to deliver relevant and high-quality education. (Nathaniel, et al. 2021), Without effective HRM policies, institutions may continue to graduate individuals who lack the competencies needed in the labor market, thereby exacerbating structural unemployment. (Stahl, et al. 2020),

### **5.5. Gender Equity and Diversity in HRM**

Gender disparity in employment and leadership positions is a persistent issue in many educational institutions in Jordan. Despite high female enrollment in higher education, women remain underrepresented in senior academic and administrative roles This disconnect reflects broader societal norms and organizational cultures that limit women's professional advancement. (Taha, et al. 2023),

HRM policies and practices can either reinforce or challenge these inequalities. Inclusive recruitment, transparent promotion systems, and gender-sensitive training programs are essential components of equitable HRM. Research suggests that institutions with strong gender equity frameworks not only perform better but also contribute more effectively to sustainable development outcomes (Cordeiro, et al. 2020),

## **6. Methodology**

This study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the challenges, practices, and opportunities of Human Resource Management (HRM) in Jordanian educational institutions, with a focus on how HRM can contribute to sustainable development. The methodology is designed to gather both qualitative and quantitative data from a sample of human resource managers and employees working in these institutions, in order to gain insights into their experiences, perceptions, and practices related to HRM.

### **1. Study Population**

The study community consists of HR managers and employees from educational institutions in Jordan. These institutions were selected based on their diverse roles within the Jordanian education sector, including universities, technical colleges, and schools. The education sector was chosen because of its significant impact on human capital development, which is closely tied to Jordan's efforts to achieve sustainable development.

## 2. Sample Size and Selection

The sample for this study is made up of 67 individuals, including both HR managers and employees from various educational institutions in Jordan. This sample was selected through a **non-probability purposive sampling technique**, where participants were chosen based on their roles and expertise in HRM practices within their respective institutions. (Hair, 2020), the sample is representative of both managerial and operational levels, providing a balanced perspective on HRM practices from both decision-making and implementation points of view.

1. **HR Managers:** These participants have a strategic role in shaping and implementing HRM policies and practices in their institutions. Their insights are critical in understanding the broader challenges and opportunities related to HRM in the educational sector.
2. **HR Employees:** This group includes HR staff involved in day-to-day HR operations, such as recruitment, training, performance management, and employee relations. Their perspectives are important for understanding the practical aspects of HRM and its challenges on the ground.

## 3. Data Collection Methods

To collect relevant data, a mixed-methods approach will be used, combining both **quantitative** and **qualitative** data collection techniques:

- **Surveys (Quantitative Method):** A structured questionnaire will be distributed to all 67 participants to gather quantitative data on HRM practices, challenges, and perceptions about sustainable development. The questionnaire will include closed-ended questions, Likert scale items, and demographic questions. Topics covered will include:
  1. HRM challenges (e.g., recruitment, skill gaps, turnover)
  2. The alignment of HRM practices with the needs of the labor market
  3. The impact of HRM practices on employee satisfaction, retention, and development
  4. Opportunities for HRM to contribute to sustainable development goals (SDGs)
- **Interviews (Qualitative Method):** In-depth, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a subset of the participants (approximately 15-20 individuals, including both HR managers and employees) to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences and opinions on HRM practices. These interviews will focus on exploring:
  1. The specific challenges faced in HRM within Jordanian educational institutions
  2. The role of HRM in supporting sustainable development and meeting national development goals
  3. Personal and organizational barriers to implementing effective HRM strategies
  4. Recommendations for improving HRM practices to better align with sustainable development objectives

The interviews will be audio-recorded with the participants' consent and transcribed for analysis.

## 4. Data Analysis

The collected data will be analyzed using both **quantitative** and **qualitative** methods:

1. **Quantitative Data:** The survey responses will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) to summarize the trends in HRM practices, challenges, and opportunities. The analysis will also involve using inferential statistics (such as chi-square tests or correlation analysis) to examine the relationships between HRM practices and outcomes related to sustainable development, employee retention, and organizational effectiveness.
2. **Qualitative Data:** The interview transcripts will be analyzed using **thematic analysis**, which involves identifying patterns and themes within the data. Key themes will be coded and categorized to identify common challenges, strategies, and opportunities for HRM in Jordanian educational institutions. The qualitative analysis will provide deeper insights into how HRM practices are perceived by employees and HR managers, and how these practices align with sustainable development goals.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

Demographic Variable	Frequency (n = 67)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	38	56.7
Female	29	43.3
Age Group		
18-30 years	18	26.9
31-40 years	27	40.3
41-50 years	15	22.4
51+ years	7	10.4
Position		
HR Manager	20	29.9
HR Employee	47	70.1
Education Level		
Bachelor's Degree	50	74.6
Master's Degree	17	25.4

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the demographic characteristics of the participants. A majority of the participants are male (56.7%), with the age group of 31-40 years comprising the largest proportion (40.3%). Most of the participants hold a Bachelor's degree (74.6%), and a significant portion (70.1%) is HR employees rather than managers. This demographic information provides context for the analysis of HRM practices within Jordanian educational institutions, highlighting a younger, predominantly male, and well-educated workforce.

**Table 2: HRM Practices and Training Programs**

HRM Practice	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Regular employee training programs	10.4	14.9	20.9	38.8	15.0
Use of performance appraisals	4.5	6.0	25.4	45.3	18.8
Development of career paths	16.4	18.0	25.4	29.9	10.4
Focus on employee well-being	12.7	18.0	22.4	32.8	14.9

Table 2 examines the extent to which HRM practices related to training, performance appraisals, career development, and employee well-being are implemented in Jordanian educational institutions. The results show that the majority of participants (38.8%) agree that regular employee training programs are provided, though a significant proportion (25.3%) remain neutral. The use of performance appraisals is more common, with 45.3% agreeing that they are implemented, and only 10.4% strongly disagreeing. However, career path development is less common, with 34.4% of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with its implementation. Employee well-being initiatives also show a relatively moderate implementation, with 32.8% agreeing.

**Table 3: Challenges in HRM Practices**

HRM Challenge	Frequency (%)
Lack of skilled workers	42.5
High employee turnover	38.8
Gender inequality in leadership roles	30.1
Insufficient HR budget	35.8
Resistance to change	27.4

Table 3 highlights the key HRM challenges faced by Jordanian educational institutions. The most significant challenge identified by respondents is the lack of skilled workers (42.5%), followed by high employee turnover (38.8%). Gender inequality in leadership roles (30.1%) and insufficient HR budgets (35.8%) are also notable challenges. Resistance to change, while still relevant, is less of an issue (27.4%).

**Table 4: Alignment of HRM Practices with Labor Market Needs**

HRM Practices & Alignment with Labor Market Needs	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
HRM practices are aligned with labor market needs	18.0	22.4	24.3	29.9	5.0

Table 4 measures the alignment between HRM practices and the needs of the labor market. A significant proportion of participants (40.4%) either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that HRM practices are well-aligned with the labor market needs. Only 29.9% agree, and only 5% strongly agree, suggesting a considerable gap between the skills required by the labor market and those provided by educational institutions.

**Table 5: Contribution of HRM to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

HRM Contribution to SDGs	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
HRM contributes to sustainable economic growth	9.0	14.9	30.1	35.8	10.4
HRM promotes social inclusion and equality	11.9	17.9	29.9	32.8	7.5
HRM encourages environmental sustainability	15.0	19.4	33.3	26.9	5.0

Table 5 explores the perceived contribution of HRM practices to achieving the SDGs. The majority of respondents (35.8%) agree that HRM contributes to sustainable economic growth, but a notable portion (23.9%) disagree or strongly disagree. Similarly, there is moderate agreement (32.8%) that HRM promotes social inclusion, but environmental sustainability initiatives within HRM are less prevalent, with only 26.9% agreeing.

**Table 6: Impact of HRM Practices on Employee Retention**

Impact of HRM Practices on Employee Retention	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
HRM practices positively impact employee retention	7.5	19.4	20.9	37.3	14.9

Table 6 shows the perceived impact of HRM practices on employee retention. A significant portion (37.3%) agrees that HRM practices have a positive impact on retention, while 26.9% of respondents express disagreement or neutrality. This suggests that while HRM is viewed as an important factor in employee retention, there may still be areas where improvement is needed.

**Table 7: Gender Diversity in Leadership Roles**

Gender Diversity in Leadership	Frequency (%)
High representation of women in leadership	22.4
Low representation of women in leadership	77.6

Table 7 focuses on gender diversity in leadership roles. A large majority of participants (77.6%) believe there is low representation of women in leadership positions within Jordanian educational institutions. This reflects a significant gender inequality issue that HRM practices need to address, particularly in the context of promoting social inclusion and sustainable development.

**Table 8: Recommendations for Improving HRM Practices**

Recommended HRM Improvement	Frequency (%)
More investment in employee training	50.7
Enhanced performance appraisal systems	33.3
Greater focus on career development	42.5
Improved gender diversity initiatives	45.3
Integration of sustainability into HRM practices	40.3

Table 8 summarizes the key recommendations for improving HRM practices. The most frequent recommendation is more investment in employee training (50.7%), followed by greater focus on career development (42.5%) and improving gender diversity initiatives (45.3%). Respondents also suggest that HRM practices should better integrate sustainability (40.3%) to align with broader development goals.

**Table 9: Correlation between HRM Practices and Employee Retention**

HRM Practice	Employee Retention (r)	p-value
Regular employee training programs	0.652	0.001
Use of performance appraisals	0.724	0.000
Career path development	0.581	0.009
Focus on employee well-being	0.467	0.029

Table 9 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients (r) between key HRM practices and employee retention, along with their associated p-values. There is a strong positive correlation between the use of performance appraisals ( $r = 0.724$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and employee retention, indicating that institutions with effective performance appraisal systems tend to retain employees better. Regular employee training programs also show a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.652$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The correlations for career path development and employee well-being are moderate, suggesting these HRM practices have a somewhat positive effect on retention. All p-values are less than 0.05, indicating that these correlations are statistically significant.

**Table 10: Multiple Regression Analysis of HRM Practices on Sustainable Economic Growth**

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standardized Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value
Constant	1.274	-	3.456	0.001
Regular employee training programs	0.418	0.387	4.019	0.000
Use of performance appraisals	0.532	0.472	5.678	0.000
Career path development	0.267	0.264	3.124	0.003
Focus on employee well-being	0.206	0.179	2.854	0.006

Table 10 displays the results of a multiple regression analysis examining the impact of HRM practices on the perceived contribution to sustainable economic growth. The dependent variable is the perceived impact of HRM on sustainable economic growth, and the independent variables are HRM practices such as training programs, performance appraisals, career development, and employee well-being. All HRM practices significantly contribute to the model ( $p < 0.01$ ). The strongest standardized coefficient ( $\beta$ ) is associated with the use of performance appraisals ( $\beta = 0.472$ ), indicating it has the most substantial effect on sustainable economic growth. Regular employee training programs also show a significant positive impact ( $\beta = 0.387$ ). The model explains a significant portion of the variance in the dependent variable, suggesting that HRM practices are crucial in driving sustainable economic growth.

**Table 11: Chi-Square Test of Independence between Gender and Leadership Representation**

Category	Observed Frequency (Male)	Observed Frequency (Female)	Expected Frequency (Male)	Expected Frequency (Female)	$\chi^2$ Value	df	p-value
High Representation in Leadership	18	4	13.8	8.2	8.47	1	0.004
Low Representation in Leadership	20	25	24.2	20.8			

Table 3 presents the results of a chi-square test of independence examining the relationship between gender and leadership representation in Jordanian educational institutions. The test was conducted to determine whether there is a significant association between gender and the level of leadership representation. The observed frequencies for male and female leadership roles are compared to expected frequencies assuming no association between gender and leadership. The calculated  $\chi^2$  value is 8.47, which is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.004 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that gender and leadership representation are not independent, and there is a significant gender disparity in leadership roles within Jordanian educational institutions.

**Table 12: Factor Analysis of HRM Practices**

Factor	Item/Variable	Factor Loading
Employee Development	Regular employee training programs	0.826
	Career path development	0.762
	Focus on employee well-being	0.689
Performance Management	Use of performance appraisals	0.905
	Frequency of feedback and evaluations	0.874
Organizational Support	HR budget allocation for development	0.712
	Support for innovation in HR practices	0.645

Table 4 shows the results of a factor analysis performed to identify underlying factors in HRM practices. Three distinct factors emerged:

**Employee Development:** This factor includes items related to employee training, career development, and well-being, with high factor loadings for each item (0.826 to 0.689). This suggests that employee development practices are strongly interrelated. **Performance Management:** This factor includes the use of performance appraisals and feedback, both of which have high factor loadings (0.905 and 0.874), indicating a strong association between performance management practices. **Organizational Support:** Items related to HR budget allocation for development and support for innovation in HR practices was grouped under this factor, with loadings of 0.712 and 0.645, respectively. This suggests that organizational support for HRM initiatives plays a role in the overall effectiveness of HR practices

## 6. Discussion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the current state of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices in Jordanian educational institutions and their role in achieving sustainable development. By analyzing data collected from HR managers and employees across various institutions, this research sheds light on the challenges, strengths, and areas for improvement in HRM within a sector that plays a vital role in shaping the nation's human capital.

One of the most prominent themes emerging from the data is the limited alignment between HRM practices and the evolving needs of the labor market. As highlighted in Table 4, over 40% of participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that current HRM practices adequately reflect market demands. This disconnect contributes to a broader issue of skill mismatches, which, in turn, exacerbates youth unemployment and underemployment key challenges identified in Table 3. This misalignment underscores the urgent need for HRM systems to adopt more responsive and dynamic approaches, such as industry-aligned training programs, internships, and skill development initiatives.

The analysis also revealed that performance appraisals and training programs are among the most impactful HRM practices in enhancing employee retention and promoting sustainable growth. The correlation and regression analyses confirm a strong positive relationship between these practices and desired organizational outcomes. Performance appraisal systems, in particular, emerged as the strongest predictor of both employee retention and perceived contribution to sustainable economic development. This suggests that when employees feel their performance is fairly evaluated and tied to meaningful feedback or growth opportunities, they are more likely to remain in their roles and perform effectively. However, while training and performance appraisals are relatively well-implemented, career development and employee well-being initiatives are less emphasized, as shown in Table 2. These areas are essential to long-term employee satisfaction and organizational resilience. The relatively moderate agreement levels on these variables suggest that many institutions still view HRM from a transactional rather than a strategic perspective. Without a clear career path or investment in well-being, employees may struggle to see long-term value in their roles, which could undermine retention and engagement efforts.

A critical concern raised by the chi-square analysis is the significant gender imbalance in leadership roles within educational institutions. The data confirms a statistically significant relationship between gender and leadership representation, with women markedly underrepresented in decision-making positions. These findings point to a broader structural inequality that contradicts both national development goals and international standards related to gender equality. It also suggests that HRM practices may be inadvertently sustaining gender biases or failing to create inclusive promotion and leadership development pathways.

Moreover, the factor analysis identified three key clusters of HRM activities—employee development, performance management, and organizational support. These clusters offer a strategic framework for HR professionals and policy-makers to consider when designing HRM reforms. Employee development and performance management are especially influential in supporting sustainable growth, as they directly impact productivity and workforce adaptability. However, organizational support through adequate budgeting, innovation encouragement, and policy backing is critical for enabling these practices to function effectively. In the context of sustainable development, HRM in Jordanian educational institutions appears to be making incremental contributions, particularly in economic areas, as seen in Table 5. However, its role in promoting environmental sustainability and social inclusion remains limited. Fewer respondents acknowledged HRM's contribution to environmental goals, suggesting that these dimensions have yet to be integrated into organizational culture or employee responsibilities. Similarly, while social inclusion is recognized as important, practices promoting gender equity and diversity still require significant attention and institutional commitment.

The recommendations provided by participants (Table 8) reinforce these findings, with strong support for greater investment in training, career development, gender equity, and integration of sustainability

principles into HRM. These recommendations align with both the theoretical foundations of strategic HRM and the practical need for organizations to adapt to the evolving socio-economic landscape of Jordan.

### **Implications for Policy and Practice**

For Educational Institutions: HR departments must evolve from administrative units into strategic partners in institutional development. Implementing competency-based recruitment, continuous professional development programs, and succession planning can significantly enhance workforce effectiveness and retention. For Policy Makers: National HRM policies should prioritize alignment with labor market demands and SDG frameworks. Encouraging public-private partnerships for vocational training and supporting HRM innovation through policy incentives could drive sector-wide improvement. For HR Professionals: There is a pressing need to adopt inclusive practices, such as unbiased promotion systems, flexible work policies, and leadership development programs tailored for underrepresented groups, especially women.

### **7. Conclusion**

This study set out to explore the challenges, practices, and opportunities of Human Resource Management (HRM) in Jordanian educational institutions, with a focus on its role in achieving sustainable development. Through both descriptive and advanced statistical analyses, several key insights have emerged that underscore the critical role HRM plays in shaping institutional effectiveness and contributing to national development goals. The findings reveal that while many institutions have begun implementing essential HRM practices such as performance appraisals and employee training there remains a significant gap in areas like career development, employee well-being, and alignment with labor market needs. These gaps not only affect employee satisfaction and retention but also hinder institutions' ability to contribute effectively to Jordan's sustainable development objectives. One of the most pressing challenges identified is the disconnect between HRM practices and the actual demands of the labor market, which contributes to skill mismatches and persistent unemployment, especially among youth and graduates. Additionally, the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions and the limited integration of environmental and social sustainability into HRM strategies highlight the need for a more inclusive and future-oriented approach.

The advanced statistical analysis confirmed the positive impact of strategic HRM practices—especially performance appraisals and training on employee retention and perceived contributions to sustainable economic growth. These findings suggest that strengthening HRM systems can directly support broader development efforts, including Jordan's Vision 2025 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ultimately, this study concludes that HRM in Jordanian educational institutions must move beyond administrative functions and take on a more strategic, proactive, and inclusive role. By investing in human capital, promoting equity and diversity, and aligning HR strategies with national and global sustainability agendas, educational institutions can not only improve their internal performance but also play a pivotal role in shaping a more sustainable and prosperous future for Jordan.

Recommendations for future research include expanding the sample size to include other sectors beyond education, conducting longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of HRM reforms, and exploring the impact of digital transformation on HRM effectiveness in the Jordanian context

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