

Strategic Human Resource Management and Employee Well-Being in Ghana: A Mixed-Methods Study across Public and Private Sectors



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ABSTRACT

This study explored the impact of selected strategic human resource management (HRM) practices on employee well-being (EWB) in public and private sector organisations in Ghana. Drawing on Human Capital Theory and Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, the research employed a convergent mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative data from 372 employees with qualitative insights from 10 managerial staff across diverse sectors. The quantitative analysis, conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), revealed that strategic HRM practices significantly enhance employees' social, subjective, workplace, and psychological well-being. The qualitative findings, analysed thematically, confirm these results and reveal an expanded, culturally rooted understanding of well-being among employees, including physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual dimensions. This study contributes to HRM literature by empirically demonstrating the multi-dimensional influence of strategic HRM on employee well-being in a developing country and by providing practical guidance for HR policy formulation in similar contexts.

Keywords: Strategic HRM Practices, Employee Well-Being, Ghana, Mixed-Methods Research, Public and Private Sectors, PLS-SEM, JD-R Theory

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INTRODUCTION

Employee well-being (EWB) has gained considerable prominence in contemporary human resource management (HRM) discourse, attracting attention from academics, policymakers, and organizational leaders globally. Increasingly, organizations recognise that employee well-being has a significant impact on critical outcomes, including productivity, organizational commitment, and retention.¹ Recent global disruptions, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic, have further intensified the focus on employee well-being, highlighting its role in organizational resilience and sustainability.² This increased global emphasis is reinforced by international initiatives such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically Goal 3, advocating "Good Health and Well-being," emphasizing the critical role organizations must play in promoting employee health and well-being.³

¹ James K Harter, Frank L Schmidt, and Theodore L Hayes, "Business-Unit-Level Relationship between Employee Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, and Business Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis.," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87, no. 2 (2002): 268.

² Joel B. Carnevale and Isabella Hatak, "Employee Adjustment and Well-Being in the Era of COVID-19: Implications for Human Resource Management," *Journal of Business Research* 116 (August 2020): 183–87, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.05.037>.

³ United Nations, "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.," Pub. L. No. A/RES/70/1. UN General Assembly., Resolution adopted by the General Assembly (2015).

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of employee well-being, scholarly literature examining the impact of strategic HRM practices on well-being presents mixed and sometimes contradictory findings. Although several studies indicate positive outcomes, such as increased job satisfaction, improved psychological health, and improved organizational loyalty resulting from strategic HRM interventions,⁴ others caution that certain HR practices can unintentionally exacerbate job demands, resulting in increased stress, burnout, or reduced employee satisfaction.⁵ This divergence in research outcomes underscores the complexity inherent in the relationship between strategic HRM practices and employee well-being, suggesting that contextual factors—such as economic environments, organizational cultures, and regional practices—play significant roles in determining these effects.

Importantly, most of the existing HRM literature predominantly reflects insights derived from developed economies, with relatively limited empirical evidence available from developing countries, particularly African contexts.⁶ African nations, including Ghana, face distinct socio-economic and cultural dynamics, with specific implications for HRM practices and their effectiveness. Existing research within these contexts remains fragmented, often focusing narrowly on isolated HRM dimensions or individual organizational sectors, and largely overlooks comprehensive cross-sectoral analyses.⁷ Consequently, significant gaps persist regarding how bundled strategic HRM practices influence various dimensions of employee well-being within African organizational environments.

Addressing this critical research gap, this study explores how selected strategic HRM practices—specifically recruitment and selection, training and career development, performance appraisal, and compensation and benefits—impact employee well-being in both public and private sector organizations in Ghana. Ghana is a unique and relevant research setting due to its diverse and dynamic economic environment, characterized by robust private sector growth and structured public-sector frameworks, each encountering unique HRM challenges and opportunities. The juxtaposition of these sectors offers a valuable context for understanding strategic HRM and its implications for employee well-being across distinct organizational cultures and practices.

Drawing on Human Capital Theory (HCT) and Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, this study employs a convergent mixed-methods design to comprehensively investigate the relationship between strategic HRM practices and employee well-being. By integrating quantitative data from employees across public and private organizations with qualitative insights from managerial stakeholders, this study provides a rich empirical examination of how strategic HR interventions influence multiple dimensions of employee well-being—social, subjective, workplace, and psychological—in the Ghanaian context.

Ultimately, this research aims to provide theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it seeks to extend the current understanding of HRM's role in employee well-being within developing-country contexts, explicitly testing the applicability of HCT and JD-R Theory to explain these dynamics. Practically, the findings offer valuable insights for HR practitioners, policymakers, and organizational leaders in Ghana and similar developing economies, guiding the design and implementation of culturally sensitive and strategically aligned HRM practices that effectively support holistic employee well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Perspectives

Two main theoretical frameworks guide the exploration of strategic HRM and EWB: HCT and JD-R theory.

HCT, initially proposed by Becker, emphasizes that human resources constitute vital assets, and strategic investments in employee capabilities—through recruitment, training, appraisal, and reward

⁴ Mark A. Huselid, "The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance," *Academy of Management Journal* 38, no. 3 (1995): 635–672; David E. Guest and Neil Conway, "Communicating the Psychological Contract: An Employer Perspective," *Human Resource Management Journal* 12, no. 2 (2002): 22–38.

⁵ Sugumar Mariappanadar and Robin Kramar, "Sustainable HRM: The Synthesis Effect of High Performance Work Systems on Organisational Performance and Employee Harm," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration* 6, no. 3 (2014): 206–24.

⁶ Olatunji David Adekoya, "Significance of Employee Engagement and Individual Well-Being on Organisational Performance in Nigeria," *International Journal of Science and Management Studies (IJSMS)* 2 (2019): 15.

⁷ Francis Annor and Kwesi Amponsah-Tawiah, "Relationship between Workplace Bullying and Employees' Subjective Well-Being: Does Resilience Make a Difference?," *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal* 32, no. 3 (2020): 123–35.

systems—significantly enhance individual and organizational performance.⁸ HCT contends that employees who experience organizational investments in their professional and personal growth demonstrate increased satisfaction, higher morale, and stronger organizational commitment.⁹ Empirical studies have consistently validated that strategic HRM initiatives, aligned with HCT principles, positively influence employee outcomes, including motivation, retention, and well-being.¹⁰

The JD-R theory, articulated by Bakker and Demerouti, classifies work characteristics into job demands, which require sustained effort and can lead to stress and burnout, and job resources, which aid employees in coping effectively with demands and promote engagement, satisfaction, and psychological health.¹¹ The JD-R theory specifically posits that organizational support mechanisms, such as effective HRM practices, function as crucial resources that buffer employees against workplace stressors, thereby significantly enhancing their overall well-being.¹² Studies employing JD-R theory consistently demonstrate that effective resource allocation—through HRM interventions, such as training, clear performance expectations, and supportive leadership reduces burnout, promotes psychological health, and enhances organizational effectiveness.¹³

Together, these two theoretical lenses provide robust frameworks to understand how strategic HRM practices could influence employee well-being by investing in employees' HCT and providing supportive organizational resources to mitigate JD-R.

Empirical Review

Empirical investigations of the relationship between strategic HRM practices and employee well-being have yielded mixed yet largely positive findings. Huselid's foundational work established a direct link between strategic HRM practices and enhanced organizational outcomes, asserting that systematic investments in human capital development significantly reduce turnover and improve productivity and employee attitudes.¹⁴ Similarly, Guest and Conway observed that HRM systems characterized by fairness, developmental opportunities, and consistent rewards positively influenced employee perceptions of organizational support and psychological contract fulfillment, directly enhancing subjective well-being and engagement.¹⁵

However, some literature offers cautionary insights, indicating potential unintended negative outcomes of HRM practices. For instance, Mariappanadar and Kramar have argued that strategic HRM interventions can occasionally generate increased job demands, inadvertently leading to employee burnout or psychological distress.¹⁶ This suggests the need to carefully balance HRM strategies to avoid overloading employees, thus maintaining their psychological and physical health.

Recent empirical studies provide further nuanced insights into these dynamics. Wang et al. found that High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS)—HR practices strategically designed to maximize performance—can significantly decrease employee burnout while enhancing self-esteem and engagement, particularly when accompanied by clear communication and supportive leadership practices.¹⁷

⁸ Gary S. Becker, *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964).

⁹ Patrick M Wright and Gary C McMahan, "Exploring Human Capital: Putting 'Human' Back into Strategic Human Resource Management," *Human Resource Management Journal* 21, no. 2 (2011): 93–104.

¹⁰ Mark A Huselid, "The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance," *Academy of Management Journal* 38, no. 3 (1995): 635–72.

¹¹ Arnold B Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti, "Job Demands–Resources Theory: Taking Stock and Looking Forward.," *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* 22, no. 3 (2017): 273.

¹² Arnold B Bakker et al., "Job Resources Boost Work Engagement, Particularly When Job Demands Are High.," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 99, no. 2 (2007): 274.

¹³ Rentao Miao and Yi Cao, "High-Performance Work System, Work Well-Being, and Employee Creativity: Cross-Level Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16, no. 9 (2019): 1640.

¹⁴ Miao and Cao, "High-Performance Work System, Work Well-Being, and Employee Creativity: Cross-Level Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership."

¹⁵ David E Guest and Neil Conway, "Communicating the Psychological Contract: An Employer Perspective," *Human Resource Management Journal* 12, no. 2 (2002): 22–38.

¹⁶ Mariappanadar and Kramar, "Sustainable HRM: The Synthesis Effect of High Performance Work Systems on Organisational Performance and Employee Harm."

¹⁷ Honglei Wang, Yejun Zhang, and Min Wan, "Linking High-performance Work Systems and Employee Well-being: A Multilevel Examination of the Roles of Organisation-based Self-esteem and Departmental Formalisation," *Human Resource Management Journal* 32, no. 1 (2022): 92–116.

Additionally, Khoreva and Wechtler demonstrated that specific types of HRM practices distinctly impact various well-being dimensions. For instance, skill-enhancing practices were found to particularly boost social and psychological well-being, whereas motivational practices enhanced workplace satisfaction and reduced stress-related outcomes.¹⁸ Such findings underscore the complexity of HRM strategies, advocating for integrated approaches rather than isolated HR interventions.

In developing countries, particularly African contexts, empirical evidence remains limited and fragmented. Ahmed et al.'s investigation into the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives on employee well-being in African contexts found that environmental and socially responsible policies enhanced employee morale and engagement, implying the relevance of strategic resource allocation for well-being in African organizations.¹⁹ Research by Annor and Amponsah-Tawiah on Ghanaian employees further highlighted that resilience is a key moderating factor between workplace stressors and subjective well-being, reflecting the unique cultural dynamics that influence employee perceptions of HR practices and well-being in Ghana.²⁰

Collectively, these empirical insights reveal a complex but generally positive relationship between strategic HRM practices and employee well-being. They highlight the significance of contextual factors, emphasizing the need for empirical investigations tailored specifically to developing-country contexts like Ghana. By exploring these relationships within the distinct socio-cultural and economic environment of Ghana, this study directly addresses existing research gaps, offering comprehensive empirical evidence from both public and private sector perspectives.

In summary, existing theoretical and empirical literature underscores the importance of strategic HRM in promoting employee well-being, but also cautions against unintended negative consequences. By synthesizing these theoretical and empirical insights, the current study positions itself to significantly extend the HRM literature, particularly within the unique and understudied context of Ghana.

Drawing on the empirical reviews, HCT and JD-R Theory, the following hypotheses are proposed:
H1: Strategic HRM practices significantly and positively influence employee social well-being.
H2: Strategic HRM practices significantly and positively enhance employee subjective well-being.
H3: Strategic HRM practices significantly and positively affect employee workplace well-being.
H4: Strategic HRM practices significantly and positively improve employee psychological well-being.
The proposed conceptual model integrating these hypotheses is illustrated below.

¹⁸ Violetta Khoreva and Heidi Wechtler, "HR Practices and Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Well-Being," *Employee Relations* 40, no. 2 (2018): 227–43.

¹⁹ Mansoor Ahmed et al., "Impact of CSR and Environmental Triggers on Employee Green Behavior: The Mediating Effect of Employee Well-being," *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* 27, no. 5 (2020): 2225–39.

²⁰ Annor and Amponsah-Tawiah, "Relationship between Workplace Bullying and Employees' Subjective Well-Being: Does Resilience Make a Difference?"

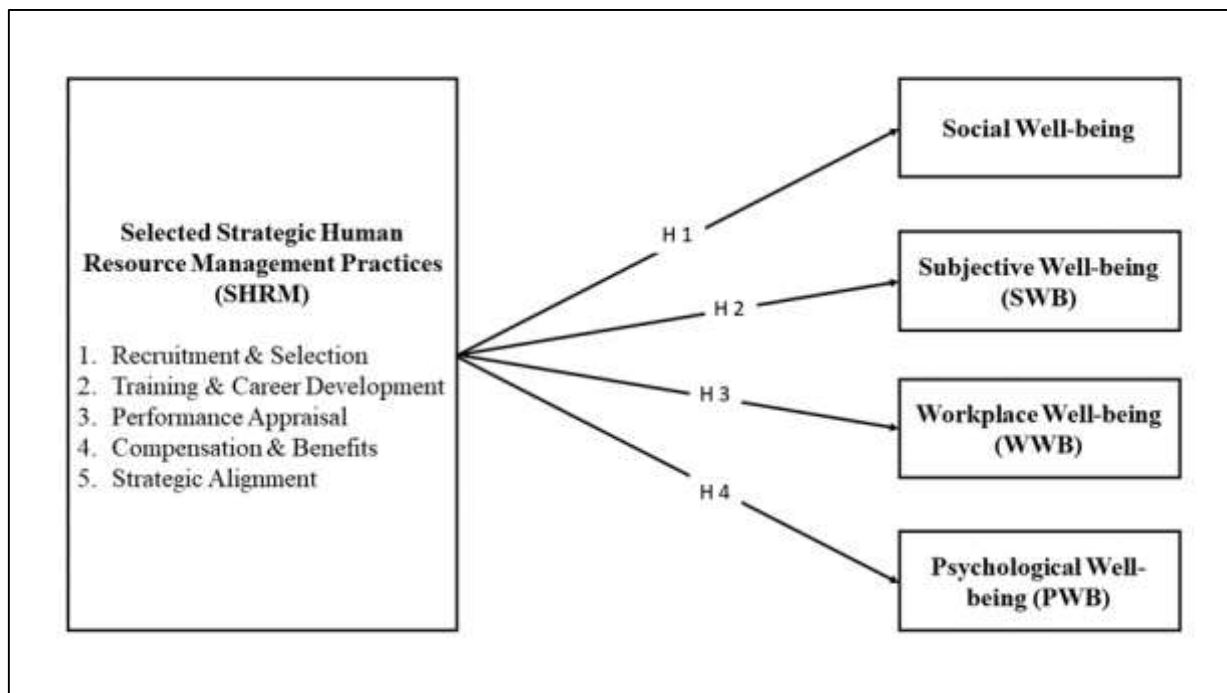


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Paradigm and Design

This study used a pragmatic research paradigm, which allows the researcher to draw on both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand a complex phenomenon, such as employee well-being. Pragmatism emphasizes practical inquiry, flexibility, and the integration of different research strategies to address multifaceted social issues.²¹ Within this paradigm, the study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, which allowed for the simultaneous collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.²² The purpose of this design was to enable triangulation and integration of findings from different sources, thereby enhancing the validity and comprehensiveness of the research conclusions.

Study Context and Sampling

The study was carried out in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana, chosen due to its concentration of public and private sector organizations across various industries, including banking, healthcare, manufacturing, and logistics. The region serves as Ghana's economic hub, hosting numerous multinational and indigenous institutions.²³ The study targeted employees from both sectors to capture diverse experiences of HRM practices and well-being. A stratified purposive sampling strategy was used. Stratification was based on organizational type (public vs. private), ensuring fair representation.²⁴ Subsequently, purposive criteria were applied to select organizations that had been operational for a minimum of ten years and were registered with Ghana's Registrar General's Department. Individual participants were selected based on their involvement in or exposure to organizational HRM practices.

Sample Size and Participants

The quantitative component involved a total of 372 respondents who completed structured questionnaires. The sample size was determined with Miller and Brewer's formula for social research, ensuring statistical adequacy and generalizability. Respondents included both managerial and non-managerial staff, providing

²¹ Brighton Kumatongo and Kenneth Kapalu Muzata, "Research Paradigms and Designs with Their Application in Education," *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology* (Online ISSN 2664-0899. Print ISSN 2517-9306). 5, no. 1 (2021): 16–32.

²² Ghana Statistical Service, *Ghana 2021 Population and Housing Census: General Report Highlights* (Accra: Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

²³ Ghana Statistical Service, *Ghana 2021 Population and Housing Census: General Report Highlights*.

²⁴ John W Creswell and J David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Sage publications, 2017).

a broad perspective on organizational practices and well-being outcomes. For the qualitative component, 10 managerial-level employees (five each from the public and private sectors) were selected. Sampling was guided by the principle of data saturation, where data collection ceases when no new themes emerge.²⁵ These interviews added contextual depth and offered managerial insight on employee well-being and the application of HRM practices.

Instrumentation and Measures

Strategic HRM Practices were measured using an 18-item scale adapted from Aladwan, covering four key practices: recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation and benefits.²⁶ Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Employee well-being was assessed using a scale developed by Pradhan and Hati, which measures four dimensions: social, subjective, workplace, and psychological well-being.²⁷ Items such as “I am satisfied with my job” and “I quickly adjust to day-to-day changes in my life” were included. The internal consistency of both scales was tested and confirmed in the Ghanaian context. For the qualitative aspect, a semi-structured interview guide was developed. This guide included open-ended questions designed to explore managerial perceptions of employee well-being, HRM implementation challenges, and culturally rooted understandings of wellness.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted over two months. For the quantitative phase, structured questionnaires were distributed both physically and by email, yielding a 96% response rate (372 usable responses out of 387 distributed). For the qualitative phase, face-to-face interviews were conducted in private settings at the workplaces of the participants. Interviews lasted approximately 30–45 minutes, were audio-recorded with permission, and later transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS (Version 23) for preliminary analyses and SmartPLS 4 for advanced modeling. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach’s alpha and Composite Reliability while validity was evaluated with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. The main statistical technique employed was Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), chosen for its suitability in examining complex models with latent variables and smaller to medium sample sizes.²⁸ Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, aided by MAXQDA software. Analysis followed Braun and Clarke’s six-step process: familiarization, coding, theme generation, reviewing themes, defining themes, and producing the report.²⁹ Both deductive and inductive approaches were used to identify patterns that confirmed or extended the quantitative findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. The participants were informed of the study’s objectives and assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation. Informed consent was obtained before data collection, and all data were securely stored and accessed only by the research team.

²⁵ Judith Schoonenboom and R Burke Johnson, “How to Construct a Mixed Methods Research Design,” *KZfSS Kölner Zeitschrift Für Soziologie Und Sozialpsychologie* 69, no. Suppl 2 (2017): 107–31.

²⁶ K.M. Aladwan, “The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Employees’ Attitudes in Jordanian Organisations” (Edith Cowan University, Australia, 2012).

²⁷ Rabindra Kumar Pradhan and Lopamudra Hati, “The Measurement of Employee Well-Being: Development and Validation of a Scale,” *Global Business Review* 23, no. 2 (April 6, 2022): 385–407, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150919859101>.

²⁸ Joseph F Hair et al., “When to Use and How to Report the Results of PLS-SEM,” *European Business Review* 31, no. 1 (2019): 2–24.

²⁹ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology,” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study sampled 372 respondents across public and private organizations in the Greater Accra Region. Table 1 presents a detailed summary of the demographic characteristics of participants, including gender, age, education level, years of experience, marital status, management level, and sector affiliation.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	220	59.1
	Female	152	40.9
Age Group	18–30	143	38.4
	31–40	126	33.9
	41–50	56	15.1
	51–60	47	12.6
Education Level	SSCE/WASSCE	21	5.6
	Diploma/HND	31	8.3
	First Degree	216	58.1
	Postgraduate	104	28.0
Years of Experience	< 1 year	8	2.2
	1–3 years	122	32.8
	4–6 years	72	19.4
	7–10 years	72	19.4
	11–15 years	45	12.1
	> 15 years	53	14.2
Marital Status	Single	169	45.4
	Married	152	40.9
	Divorced/Separated	35	9.4
	Widowed	16	4.3
Management Level	Top Management	79	21.2
	Middle Management	132	35.5
	Lower-Level Management	161	43.3
Sector	Public	194	52.2
	Private	178	47.8

Source: Field data collected in 2023

Measurement Model Validation

To assess the quality of the measurement model, reliability and validity tests were conducted. Table 2 shows the results for Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct. All constructs exceeded the recommended thresholds: α and CR values were above 0.70, and AVE values exceeded the 0.50 benchmark, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and convergent validity.

Table 2: Measurement Model Assessment

Construct	Cronbach's α	Composite Reliability	AVE
Strategic HRM Practices	0.955	0.959	0.584
Employee Social Well-being	0.921	0.935	0.644
Employee Subjective Well-being	0.715	0.860	0.756
Employee Workplace Well-being	0.933	0.944	0.652
Employee Psychological Well-being	0.961	0.968	0.815

Source: Field data collected in 2023

Discriminant validity was confirmed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, with all values below 0.85, further affirming the distinctiveness of the constructs.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesized structural model was assessed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The path coefficients (β), standard errors, t-values, p-values, and explained variance (R^2) for each dependent construct are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Structural Model Results

Hypothesis	Path	β	Std. Error	T-Statistic	p-value	R^2
H1	Strategic HRM \rightarrow Social Well-being	0.707	0.030	23.319	0.000	0.499
H2	Strategic HRM \rightarrow Subjective WB	0.482	0.044	10.922	0.000	0.232
H3	Strategic HRM \rightarrow Workplace WB	0.805	0.017	47.143	0.000	0.648
H4	Strategic HRM \rightarrow Psychological WB	0.569	0.033	17.009	0.000	0.323

Source: Field data collected in 2023

All four hypotheses were statistically supported ($p < 0.01$), indicating that strategic HRM practices significantly and positively influenced employee well-being in all measured dimensions. The model explained substantial variance in the workplace (64.8%), social (49.9%), psychological (32.3%), and subjective well-being (23.2%).

Qualitative Findings: Employee Understanding of Well-being

Thematic analysis of the qualitative interviews revealed a broader conceptualization of well-being among Ghanaian managers. Eight interrelated dimensions emerged: psychological, physical, workplace, subjective, social, spiritual, emotional, and financial well-being. These culturally embedded perspectives complemented the quantitative dimensions and revealed the multidimensionality of well-being within the Ghanaian work context.

1. Psychological and Physical Well-being

The participants emphasized the importance of mental and physical health as a key to an employee's state of well-being. Psychological well-being was often linked to a sense of stability and peace of mind, while physical well-being was related to strength and the absence of illness. As one participant put it, *"Employee well-being means being psychologically and physically strong."* (Interviewee 2)

2. Workplace Well-being

The quality of the working environment emerged as a critical factor. The respondents highlighted how organizational efforts to make the workplace comfortable, safe, and respectful contributed to the overall well-being of employees. One participant stated, *"We ensure the working environment is conducive."* (Interviewee 5)

3. Financial and Social Well-being

Well-being was also framed in terms of financial stability and the ability to sustain social relationships. Participants associated financial security with peace of mind and saw social connections as essential for emotional balance. For example, *"Employee well-being includes financial stability, social relationships."* (Interviewee 6)

4. Subjective Well-being

Some managers considered well-being an internal evaluation of life satisfaction and work-life balance. This was often described as a personal feeling of fulfilment or happiness in both private and professional life. One shared, *"Satisfaction with life and work balance defines well-being."* (Interviewee 7)

5. Spiritual and Emotional Well-being

Spirituality was frequently mentioned, with many participants linking spiritual peace with emotional health. For these respondents, a connection to faith or a higher purpose was integral to navigating workplace challenges and maintaining well-being. One comment captured this perspective:

“Well-being involves spiritual peace and emotional health.” (Interviewee 10)

Table 4: Themes from Interview Data on Employee Well-being

Dimension	Representative Quote
Psychological & Physical	“Employee well-being means being psychologically and physically strong.” (Interviewee 2)
Workplace	“We ensure the working environment is conducive.” (Interviewee 5)
Financial & Social	“Employee well-being includes financial stability, social relationships.” (Interviewee 6)
Subjective	“Satisfaction with life and work balance defines well-being.” (Interviewee 7)
Spiritual & Emotional	“Well-being involves spiritual peace and emotional health.” (Interviewee 10)

Source: Field data collected in 2023

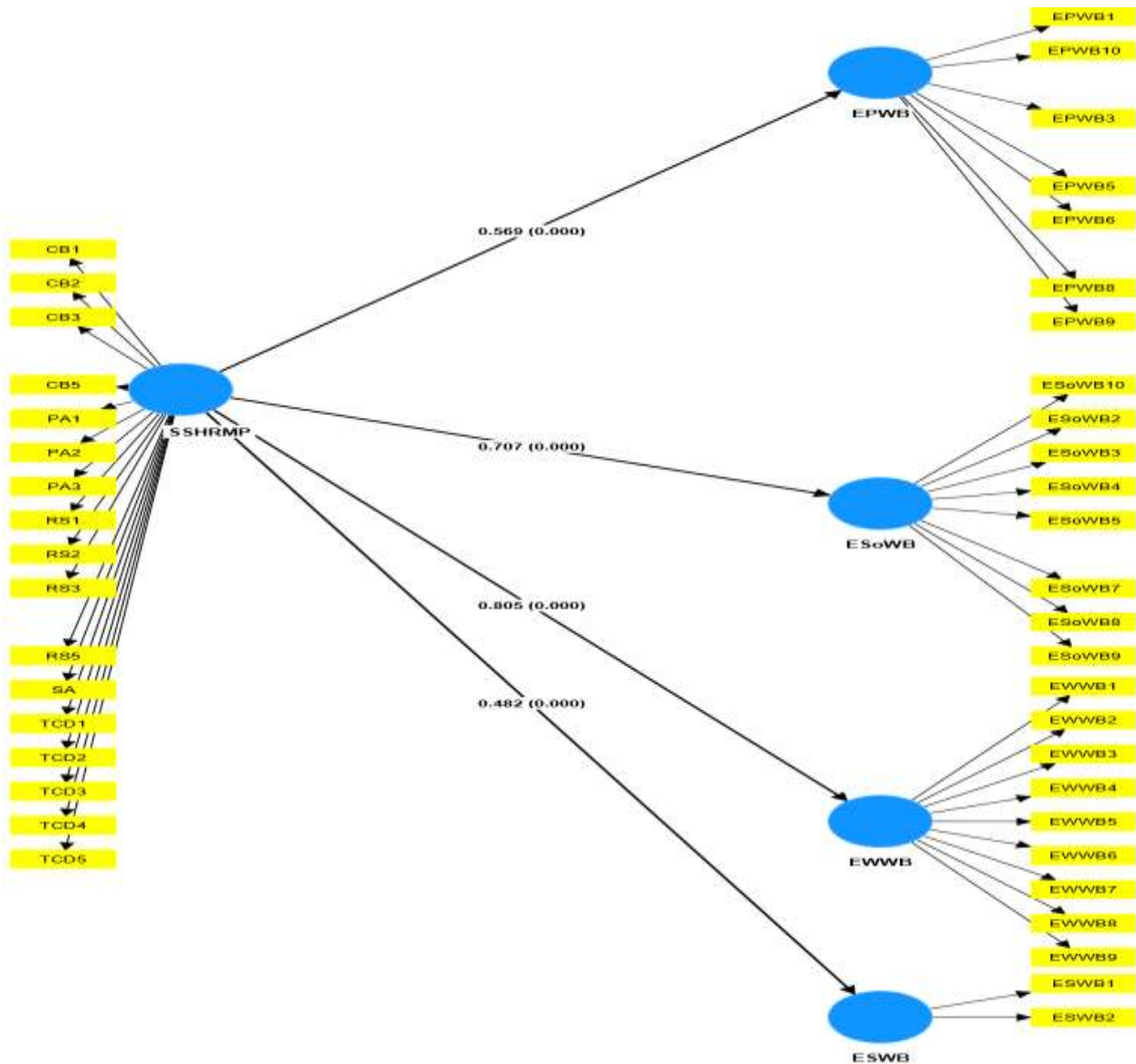


Figure 2. Structural Model

These findings confirm that strategic HRM initiatives should consider not only professional and psychological aspects but also the broader cultural, emotional, and spiritual factors that shape employee experiences and expectations in Ghana.

DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to examine the influence of strategic HRM practices on EWB in public and private sector organizations in Ghana. Guided by HCT and JD-R theory, the study integrated both quantitative and qualitative methods, uncovering significant relationships between strategic HRM practices and multiple dimensions of employee well-being, including social, subjective, workplace, and psychological dimensions.

Firstly, the quantitative findings strongly support the hypotheses that strategic HRM practices significantly enhance employee well-being. Specifically, fairness of recruitment and selection, systematic training and career development, effective performance appraisals, and equitable compensation were positively associated with higher levels of social, subjective, workplace, and psychological well-being among Ghanaian employees. These results align closely with previous research conducted globally, which highlights that strategic investments in human capital via targeted HRM interventions tend to yield improved employee morale, engagement, and satisfaction.³⁰ This underscores that strategic HRM should be viewed not merely as an operational tool but rather as an essential organizational resource instrumental in promoting holistic employee wellness.

Further reinforcing this observation, Wang et al. demonstrate that high-performance work systems significantly mitigate burnout and improve employee self-esteem.³¹ Similarly, Khoreva and Wechtler assert that skill-enhancing and opportunity-enhancing HR practices are integral to boosting employees' psychological and social well-being.³² In light of these prior findings, this research expands current understanding by empirically validating these relationships within the specific context of a developing nation—Ghana—an environment characterized by unique socio-economic and cultural dynamics.

The qualitative insights from managerial interviews provided valuable contextual depth to the quantitative results, enriching the interpretation and applicability of the findings. Specifically, managerial perspectives revealed a more comprehensive understanding of well-being that encompasses additional culturally relevant dimensions, including physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual aspects. For instance, the identification of spiritual and emotional well-being as critical components reflects the strong influence of Ghana's socio-cultural fabric, particularly the integration of religious and communal values in the workplace. This cultural nuance highlights the importance of adopting culturally sensitive HRM approaches that resonate deeply with employees' broader personal and community-oriented identities, moving beyond traditional western-centric frameworks that often dominate HRM literature.³³

The findings also affirm the theoretical frameworks that underlie this study. Human Capital Theory posits that strategic investment in employees' development enhances organizational performance and employee satisfaction.³⁴ The observed results validate this, as employees clearly perceived investments in recruitment fairness, developmental opportunities, and appropriate compensation as critical determinants of their personal well-being. Concurrently, JD-R Theory suggests that adequate organizational resources, such as supportive HRM practices, can buffer job demands and enhance employee engagement and psychological health.³⁵ The empirical results strongly affirm JD-R Theory, indicating that effective strategic HRM practices indeed function as vital resources mitigating workplace stressors, thus fostering healthier and more resilient workforces.

Moreover, these findings offer significant practical implications for policymakers and HR practitioners. The demonstrated positive effects of strategic HRM practices on employee well-being suggest that organizations—particularly within developing countries—should systematically integrate

³⁰ Huselid, "The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance."

³¹ Wang, Zhang, and Wan, "Linking High-performance Work Systems and Employee Well-being: A Multilevel Examination of the Roles of Organisation-based Self-esteem and Departmental Formalisation."

³² Khoreva and Wechtler, "HR Practices and Employee Performance: The Mediating Role of Well-Being."

³³ Annor and Amponsah-Tawiah, "Relationship between Workplace Bullying and Employees' Subjective Well-Being: Does Resilience Make a Difference?"

³⁴ Becker, *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*.

³⁵ Bakker and Demerouti, "Job Demands-Resources Theory: Taking Stock and Looking Forward."

comprehensive HRM frameworks aimed explicitly at enhancing employee wellness. Practical actions might include implementing structured and transparent performance appraisal systems, designing training programs that align organizational and employee growth objectives, and establishing compensation packages sensitive to employees' financial stability and overall job satisfaction.³⁶ Additionally, organizations in Ghana should capitalize on culturally aligned programs such as spiritual and emotional wellness initiatives, employee counseling services, and community-building events to further reinforce positive employee attitudes and retention.

Nonetheless, the cross-sectional nature of this study presents certain limitations, such as its inability to definitively establish causality between strategic HRM practices and employee well-being. Future studies could adopt longitudinal designs to investigate these causal relationships over extended periods, allowing a deeper understanding of how HRM practices evolve and continually influence employee wellness over time. Furthermore, the generalizability of these findings is primarily limited to formal sector organizations within the Greater Accra Region. Thus, future research can explore other geographic and organizational contexts, including rural areas, informal sectors, and different African countries, to further validate and enrich these insights.

In conclusion, this study has significantly advanced the current understanding of how strategic HRM practices influence employee well-being within Ghanaian organizations. By providing robust quantitative evidence complemented by rich qualitative insights, it underscores the pivotal role of HRM as both a strategic organizational resource and a culturally sensitive mechanism for enhancing holistic employee wellness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this mixed-methods study, several theoretical and practical recommendations are proposed to improve employee well-being through strategic HRM practices in Ghanaian public and private sector organizations.

First, HR practitioners and organizational leaders should prioritize the integration of employee well-being objectives into their strategic HRM frameworks. This includes embedding well-being considerations into recruitment policies, training programs, performance appraisal systems, and compensation schemes. Specifically, HRM practices should not only be performance-driven but also employee-centered, ensuring that the physical, psychological, social, and emotional needs of workers are acknowledged and addressed.

Second, organizations are encouraged to adopt a culturally responsive approach to HRM by recognizing the broader understanding of well-being among Ghanaian employees, which includes spiritual, emotional, and financial dimensions. HR managers can operationalize this by offering financial literacy workshops, creating employee support units, and allowing space for spiritual expression or values-based conversations within the workplace. These interventions are particularly important in the Ghanaian context, where cultural and religious identities significantly influence employees' perceptions of satisfaction and fulfilment.

Third, HR policy frameworks in both public and private sectors must move beyond compliance to strategic alignment. Government ministries and regulatory bodies such as the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) and the Ghana Employers' Association (GEA) should work collaboratively with institutions to standardise employee well-being indicators and establish benchmarks to measure HRM effectiveness beyond productivity. This will foster a national culture of human-centered management and help organizations build sustainable employee relations.

Fourth, capacity-building programs for HR professionals should emphasize the use of data-driven tools such as employee satisfaction surveys, organizational health audits, and well-being indices. These tools will allow HR departments to regularly assess the impact of HRM interventions on staff morale and take proactive steps to prevent burnout, disengagement, or turnover.

Lastly, further collaboration between academia and industry is recommended to refine and contextualize well-being models suited to African organizational realities. Universities should be

³⁶ Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes, "Business-Unit-Level Relationship between Employee Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, and Business Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis."

encouraged to develop HRM and psychology curricula that reflect emerging trends in employee care and organizational development, thereby preparing future professionals for the complexities of managing well-being in diverse workplaces.

Collectively, these recommendations draws a roadmap for reimagining HRM not only as an administrative function but also as a strategic partner in promoting sustainable employee well-being and organizational resilience in Ghana.

CONCLUSION

This mixed-methods study explored the impact of selected strategic HRM practices on EWB across public and private sector organizations in Ghana. Guided by HCT and JD-R theory, the research findings affirm that strategic HRM practices—encompassing fair recruitment and selection, comprehensive training and career development, effective performance appraisal systems, and equitable compensation—significantly enhance multiple dimensions of employee well-being, including social, subjective, workplace, and psychological aspects.

Qualitative findings enriched these quantitative insights, revealing that Ghanaian employees possess a broader, culturally nuanced understanding of well-being, integrating additional dimensions, such as physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual well-being. These insights underscore the need for organizations to implement culturally responsive HRM strategies that align closely with employee values, perceptions, and expectations, thereby fostering higher employee engagement and improved organizational performance.

Practically, this research suggests that organizations in Ghana and similar developing countries should strategically incorporate HRM practices with clear well-being objectives, emphasizing personalized and culturally sensitive programs. Future research, utilizing longitudinal approaches and incorporating additional strategic HRM dimensions, can further illuminate this relationship, offering deeper insights to effectively manage employee well-being and organizational performance.

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