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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Qualitative Assessment of Human Resource Strategies and Workforce Performance Attributes in Manufacturing Firms

DINESH CHAND GUPTA^{1*}, TANUSHRI PUROHIT²

^{1,2}SGT University, Haryana, India

Corresponding Author*dinesh_gupta1@rediffmail.com

ABSTRACT

Organizational outcomes are heavily impacted by the efficacy of the workforce directly, which are driven by the employee performance, commitment, motivation and hence the Human Resource (HR) strategies must be implemented in every manufacturing organization. The present research evaluates the qualitative experiences of employees in relation to critical HR practices, such as ability management, career development initiatives and workplace engagement programs. By adopting a thematic analysis of survey responses collected from 440 employees, this research identifies fundamental patterns that underscore the strengths and limitations of current HR strategies. The results point to new patterns in how employees view HR policies in relation to career advancement and professional growth, as well as job satisfaction and motivational factors. Additionally, HR professionals and legislators who are actively trying to create a resilient and motivated workforce might benefit from insights into employee attitudes toward corporate leadership, organizational culture, and training frameworks. By prioritizing employee-centric HR interventions, this study contributes to the discourse on sustainable workforce management by integrating HR innovations with broader corporate sustainability objectives. In industrial environments, the research is especially relevant to HR professionals, industry leaders, and scholars who specialize in strategic people management. The findings provide practical strategies for enhancing HR effectiveness in manufacturing environments. The interview data was analysed using thematic analysis, by using Nvivo software.

Key Words: *Qualitative Analysis, HR Strategies, Employee Performance, Job Satisfaction, Manufacturing Firms*

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource (HR) strategies play a pivotal role in shaping employee performance, commitment, and motivation, particularly in manufacturing enterprises where workforce efficiency directly influences productivity and competitiveness. Effective HR interventions, such as talent management, career development, and employee engagement programs, are essential for fostering a resilient and motivated workforce. However, despite significant advancements in HR practices, many manufacturing firms continue to face challenges related to job satisfaction, retention, and professional growth opportunities.

HR policies significantly shape organizational outcomes by improving workforce productivity and commitment. Guest (2017) argues that strategic HRM practices enhance both employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. Collings and Mellahi (2019) further emphasize that talent management and career growth programs contribute to long-term workforce stability and reduce turnover rates. Employee engagement plays a crucial role in fostering motivation and productivity. According to Kahn (1990), personal engagement at work is determined by psychological conditions such as meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Saks (2006) supports this view, highlighting that a

positive workplace culture fosters job satisfaction and enhances employee retention. Moreover, organizational culture, as explored by Denison (1996), shapes employee attitudes toward work and career progression. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative method for understanding employee experiences. Braun and Clarke (2006) outline how this approach helps uncover recurring patterns in HR effectiveness. Patton (2015) also emphasizes the importance of narrative data in identifying emerging trends in workforce management (Dobre, 2013).

Abiodun, (2010), enumerated the Annual reports and concerted effort explanations underscore a singular message that humans are regarded as the most vital resource. The essential factor for the success and sustainability of an organization is the availability of the appropriate workforce at the right location and at the right time (Angelo, 2021). Therefore, it is plausible to concentrate on human resource management (HRM) methods that govern human capital. Similarly, organizations with stronger staff performance are more likely to provide consistently focused output. The execution of work by employees has been the subject of investigation for an extended period. Numerous internal and external variables influence affiliation (Furrer et al., 2008).

White, (2022) elaborated the effective management of the HR department as essential for any organization seeking success. The quality of human resources, encompassing employee affiliations, commitment, job satisfaction, and experiences, significantly impacts the organization's profitability, brand perception, and sustainability (Houldsworth & Jirasinghe, 2006). Moreover, the progression of applied technologies has generated new employment opportunities with increasing demand in the market, making it persistently challenging to locate individuals with the requisite dedication and expertise for these roles. The proliferation of variables has led to the development of more intricate employee commitment models. The construction industry is regarded as one of the most productive industries. Construction enterprises were picked because to their significance as a vital economic sector, with their variety delineating several subareas (Meyer et al., 1989).

Manufacturing industries play a crucial role in the nation's economic operations. This industry is regarded as one of the most vulnerable to economic fluctuations in the current growth phase. Conversely, these industries experiences significant disadvantages; the fragile economy adversely impacts the labor market, leading to emigration as numerous educated and skilled individuals depart the country (Barber & Taylor, 1990). This has resulted in the suspension and

closure of many enterprises due to a shortage of skilled personnel (Suroj, 2013). The primary factors influencing diminished work performance and productivity in construction projects include labor shortages, insufficient workforce, low productivity levels, staffing issues, scarcity of technical personnel, and the absence of incentive programs. To achieve the expected revenue from any construction project, it is essential to maintain effective control over the output components contributing to overall performance enhancement, such as labor. Conversely, businesses must maintain a consistently prepared workforce, which proves difficult during periods of diminished demand in certain subsectors, such as industrial construction, when projects are dispersed over several terrains (Uhl-Bien et al., 2023).

Best practices and organizational requirements, at a minimum; cultivate devoted individuals as a fundamental capability of a proficient workforce to optimize job performance and production. The effective use of abilities, rather than just increasing their supply, is crucial for improving job performance (Cândido & Santos, 2019). This paper aims to investigate the effects of HRM practices on employee performance and commitment within manufacturing firms, as well as to examine the mediating role of employee commitment in the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance in these ventures. Consequently, the impact of HRM strategies on employee performance should be evident. The influence of HRM strategies on employee performance and the mediating function of employee commitment in manufacturing firms have not yet been examined. This study intends to contribute theoretically by addressing the research gap, since no prior study has explored HRM methods in connection to employee performance while mediating the impact of employee commitment. This paper presents a qualitative assessment of HR strategies in manufacturing industries, focusing on how employees perceive their work environment and organizational policies. Through thematic analysis of employee narratives, this study aims to identify key patterns in HR effectiveness, emerging trends in job satisfaction, and the role of leadership and workplace culture in influencing motivation. The findings contribute valuable insights for HR professionals, policymakers, and industry leaders striving to optimize workforce management strategies. The effectiveness of HR strategies in industrial settings has been widely discussed in the literature, with emphasis on their impact on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement.

This study establishes a framework to tackle the following research questions:

RQ1: Do HRM methods substantially enhance employee commitment?

RQ2: Is there a substantial effect of employee commitment on employee performance?

RQ3: Do human resource management techniques substantially enhance employee performance?

RQ4: Does employee commitment serve as a mediator in the interaction between HRM practices and employee performance?

Employee Performance

Employee performance is defined as the use of knowledge, skills, experiences, and abilities to accomplish given tasks effectively and efficiently. Employee performance evaluates resource utilization, assesses the amount and quality of work, enables organizations to thrive and excel, measures and attains established performance objectives, and ultimately enhances employee efficiency for informed decision-making. Employee performance assessment is predicated on several variables, including employee traits, behaviors, and achievements. Numerous researches assert that organizational performance is favorably influenced by human resource management techniques. Nevertheless, (Faizan, 2015) proposed that there was no concrete evidence to support this presumption. Good organizational performance relies on employee's involvement as suggested by different researchers. Besides that, employee's attitude is the determining factor when translating HRM policies and practices into specific performance. An employee with good performance is motivated by intrinsic motivation and encouragement. These high performers boost up organizational performance. That is the reason why most of the research on human resource practice is conducted in employee's perspective (Halbesleben & Bellairs, 2016).

The strategy and contextual conditions of an organization are reflected in the execution of its HR management system, since the pattern of human resource capital management is contingent upon the business's decisions. This pattern illustrates the exchange of information between the corporation and its personnel. The disparity in perspectives between managers and non-managers generates a divide over the impact of human resource practices on employee performance. Consequently, it is essential to conduct research aimed at achieving perceptive consensus between these two parties regarding human resource practices. Organizational performance is significantly contingent upon employee performance, and successful organizations acknowledge that human resources contribute to this performance. Human Resource

Management methods are used for the assessment of employee performance, and in this highly competitive environment, enhanced HRM procedures might significantly elevate employee performance (Robbins & Timothy, 2022).

Employee commitment

Employee commitment is significant since an exceptional degree of devotion may lead to many outstanding organizational results. It indicates the extent to which workers engage with the firm and remain dedicated to its objectives. The influence of a financial squeeze on employee commitment may be contingent upon a complex amalgamation of environmental elements, including financial circumstances and human resource management techniques. Three types of employee commitment have been developed. Affective commitment is characterized as the extent to which a person is emotionally connected to a relationship, as assessed by factors such as loyalty, affection, warmth, belongingness, and attraction. Continuance commitment is characterized as a desire to stay a member of the organization. Finally, normative commitment is characterized as an employee's dedication to persist with the organization, indicating a propensity to maintain employment (Halbesleben & Bellairs, 2016).

Numerous studies have examined the correlation between HRM practices and employee commitment. Investigated the determinants of employee commitment among Japanese workers. The findings indicate that HRM practices promoting English language acquisition, such as language training and establishing language proficiency as criteria for promotion and recruitment, significantly impact the affective and normative commitment of employees to their organizations' globalization efforts. Additionally, (Latham & Locke, 2018) investigated the concept of Islamic human resource management and assessed its impact on employee commitment. The results indicate that income and compensation, training and development, recruiting, and selection favorably influence employee commitment. Furthermore, Shields et al., (2020) established that HRM methods significantly impacted employee loyalty to their job and company. Furthermore, (Halbesleben & Bellairs, 2016) discovered that HRM may augment employee dedication, thus enhancing performance. Suresh, (2023) examine the roles of developing HRM in enhancing employee commitment, revealing that the five-dimensional development of HRM roles is favorably correlated with employee commitment. Furthermore, Solinger et al., (2008) discovered that HRM methods significantly influence employee commitment. Moreover, Miller, (2001)

demonstrated a significant correlation between HRM practices and employee commitment, and identified authoritative attributes and areas for improvement. Krausert, (2009) identified green HRM practices, targeted training, and awards as major instruments for directly enhancing employee commitment to the environment. Islami et al., (2020) discovered that HRM practices, particularly the working environment and training and development, positively affect employee commitment, whereas recognition and remuneration do not influence employee commitment in their study at the Department of Road Transport in Malaysia. Hence, based on the aforementioned clarification, it is posited that: H1: HRM practices have substantial and beneficial impacts on employee commitment.

The HRM Practices

Liao et al. (2010) characterized HRM as organizational actions aimed at managing the talent pool, ensuring that resources are employed in alignment with corporate objectives. They assert that Human Resource Management encompasses several techniques and related activities for managing personnel inside businesses. Additionally, the definition provided by Nelson & Quick (2012) asserts that people Resource Management (HRM) facilitates the attainment of corporate goals via the implementation of internally coherent policies and procedures tailored for the organization's people resource. Human Resource Management methods included the recruiting, assessment, and selection of prospective personnel, hence influencing human resource policies and ultimately guiding the development of overarching human resource philosophy inside a business. Human Resource Management methods serve as the foundation of organizational structure, primarily tasked with modernizing operational systems to meet current requirements and demands, irrespective of fast technology advancements (Najjar & Fares, 2017). On top of

that, HR practitioner better focuses on system approach rather than implement specific practices. Furthermore, HRM practices complement each other and it is better to be looked from an integrated perspective for a more comprehensive and holistic view. Micheline (2012) asserts that employee commitment is favorably affected by HRM strategies. The requirements of Human Resource Management may be discerned in relation to organizational goals via HRM planning, allowing for the implementation of various micro-staffing strategies to address these needs, provided they are defined and comprehended beforehand. Halsey Pmp (2017) said that Human Resource Management serves as the foundation of any enterprise for improved competitive advantage, as these practices are formulated to promote productivity and facilitate the knowledge growth process regarding information transfer.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, using thematic analysis to assess employee perceptions of HR strategies in manufacturing enterprises.

Data Collection

A total of 250 employees from various manufacturing firms participated in semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The participants represented diverse roles, including production staff, supervisors, and HR personnel. Open-ended questions were designed to explore their experiences with talent management, career growth opportunities, workplace engagement programs, and corporate leadership.

Data Analysis

Employee responses were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) as shown in Fig.1



Fig.1. Thematic Analysis Process (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Key themes such as job satisfaction, motivational drivers, and organizational culture were identified and categorized. The data were further examined to determine patterns in employee perceptions regarding HR policies and professional development opportunities. The questionnaire findings were supplemented by surveys with 250

respondents in this study, which implemented a qualitative research design. The interview data was analyzed using thematic analysis with the assistance of Nvivo. The interview procedure involved the recording of data, which was subsequently transcribed based on the responses of each participant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Key Themes and Impact

Analysis revealed that employees highly value HR interventions related to career growth and skill development. Many participants expressed that

structured training programs and mentorship initiatives positively impact their job satisfaction and professional growth. However, some employees reported dissatisfaction with limited career advancement opportunities and inadequate recognition for their contributions.

Table 1. Key themes and impact

RQ	Key Theme	Impact
RQ1	Fairness, Growth, Opportunities, Recognition	Higher Commitment
RQ2	Emotional Investment, Loyalty	Enhanced Performance
RQ3	Training Programs, Feedback Systems	Skill and Productivity Growth
RQ4	Trust, Belongingness	Commitment mediates HRM and Performance

Thematic Analysis

Findings indicate that HR strategies focused on engagement and career development significantly influence employee commitment. Employees in firms that actively promote leadership development and internal mobility reported higher levels of job satisfaction compared to those in firms with rigid hierarchical structures. A strong organizational culture that prioritizes employee well-being fosters higher levels of motivation. Many employees noted that a supportive work environment and transparent communication from leadership contribute to their overall engagement and performance. Conversely, firms with weak HR frameworks experienced challenges in maintaining employee morale and retention.

The first research question, RQ1 explored how HRM practices influence employee commitment within selected manufacturing firms. Employee commitment refers to the emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement in the organization. This is evident from the responses coded from participants in interviews and focus groups. Figure 1 outlines the themes extracted during the analysis. For instance, Respondent 14

stated that “Regular feedback sessions and transparent communication from HR have made me feel more valued and loyal to the company.” Similarly, Respondent 22 emphasized, “Access to career development programs and recognition initiatives greatly increases my commitment to stay and perform.”

Further comments highlighted how performance management systems, personalized career growth paths, and recognition practices significantly drive commitment levels. Respondent 9 remarked, “When HR ensures transparent promotions and offers skill development workshops, employees feel respected and committed.” From the thematic analysis and Figure 2, it is evident that effective HRM practices such as transparent communication, recognition, fair performance appraisal, and growth opportunities have a positive and substantial effect on enhancing employee commitment. This aligns with previous findings where human-centered HR strategies were seen as critical for fostering long-term commitment among employees.

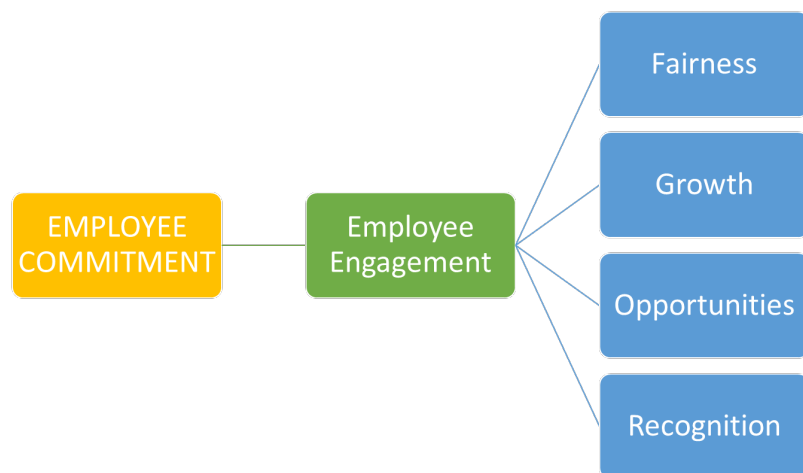
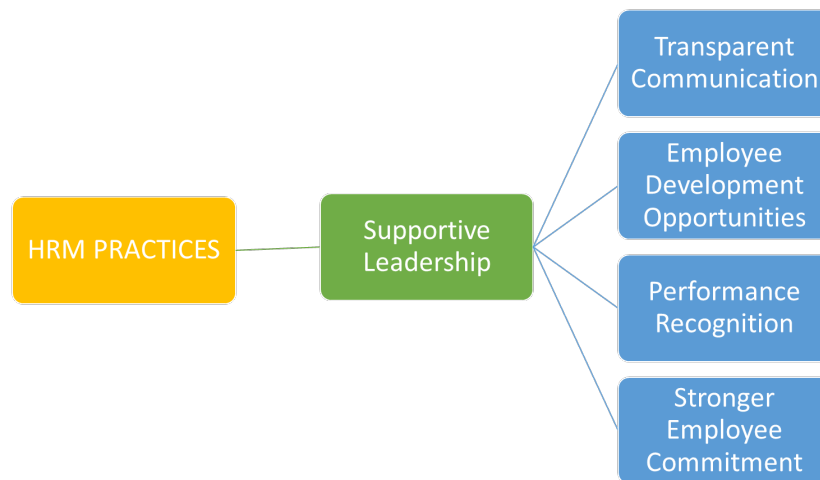


Fig.2. Themes related to RQ1

This RQ2 investigated whether higher employee commitment leads to improved performance outcomes. Employee performance here refers to the quality, efficiency, and productivity of work delivered. Figure 2 illustrates the thematic connections drawn from the participants' responses. For instance, Respondent 31 noted, *"When I feel committed to my company, I naturally give my best effort and try to exceed targets."* Similarly, Respondent 47 stated, *"Commitment makes me care about the company's success, which reflects in my work quality and team collaboration."* The findings

emphasized that emotionally invested employees showed better punctuality, work quality, innovation, and teamwork. Respondent 15 shared, *"When HR recognizes our efforts and promotes a culture of belonging, our performance improves because we feel responsible for the company's reputation."* The thematic analysis and Figure 3 confirm that employee commitment substantially impacts and improves employee performance. This supports existing literature that sees commitment as a critical predictor of organizational productivity and efficiency.

**Fig.3. Themes related to RQ2**

The RQ3 explored the direct impact of HRM strategies on the performance levels of employees across manufacturing firms. HRM techniques examined included talent management, skills training, engagement initiatives, and leadership support. Figure 4 outlines the coding structure derived from employee narratives. Respondent 5 stated, *"Training workshops organized by HR have boosted my technical skills and overall work performance."* Respondent 18 remarked, *"Performance reviews and regular feedback from HR keep me aligned with company goals and improve my productivity."* Several

participants emphasized that timely HR interventions, including real-time feedback, recognition programs, and skills upgrading, significantly lifted their day-to-day work efficiency. As Respondent 23 put it, *"The leadership training I received through HR helped me manage my team better and hit our targets faster."* The analysis demonstrates that structured HRM practices have a direct, positive and significant effect on employee performance, echoing similar findings from previous HRM research.

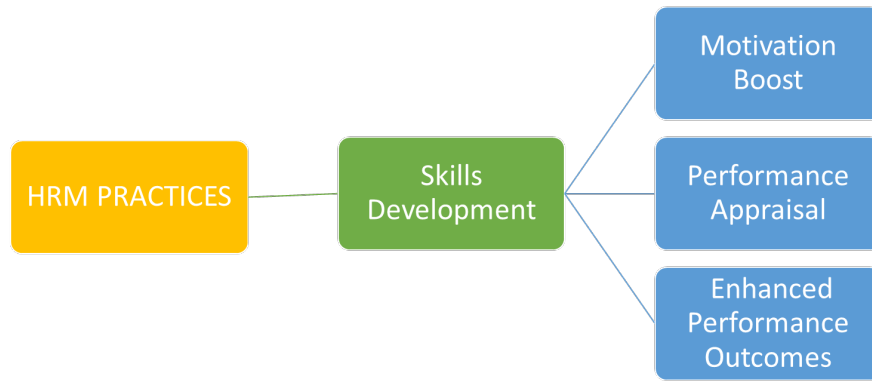


Fig.4. Themes related to RQ3

RQ4 examined if employee commitment acts as a linking mechanism between HRM practices and employee performance outcomes. Figure 4 displays the thematic mediation path identified during analysis. Respondent 40 explained, *“When HR policies make us feel valued and supported, our loyalty increases, which then makes us work harder and smarter.”* Similarly, Respondent 61 mentioned, *“It’s not just the HR programs themselves — it’s how they make us feel attached to the company that drives our performance.”*

Participants consistently indicated that HRM practices alone were not enough unless they fostered genuine commitment, which in turn motivated enhanced performance. Respondent 37 noted, *“Access to career growth opportunities deepened my commitment, and that commitment pushed me to consistently meet performance expectations.”* From the thematic analysis and Figure 4, it is clear that employee commitment plays a mediating role between HRM strategies and employee performance, reinforcing theories.

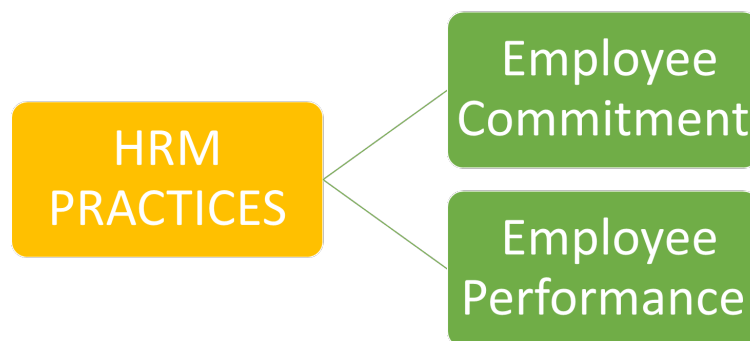


Fig.5. Themes related to RQ4



Fig.6. Word Cloud from Thematic Analysis

As seen in figure 6, the word cloud graphically reflects the most often spoken about issues and priorities among workers acquired by means of qualitative data collecting. Terms like "Growth," "Recognition," "Fairness," and "Training" stand out as they were most commonly mentioned by respondents. Larger-sized terms indicate more frequent references, hence stressing the need of

professional advancement, recognition, fair treatment, and ongoing learning possibilities. This graphic offers a fast, simple summary of employee attitudes, hence enabling HR practitioners to pinpoint the areas needing urgent attention to improve motivation and commitment.

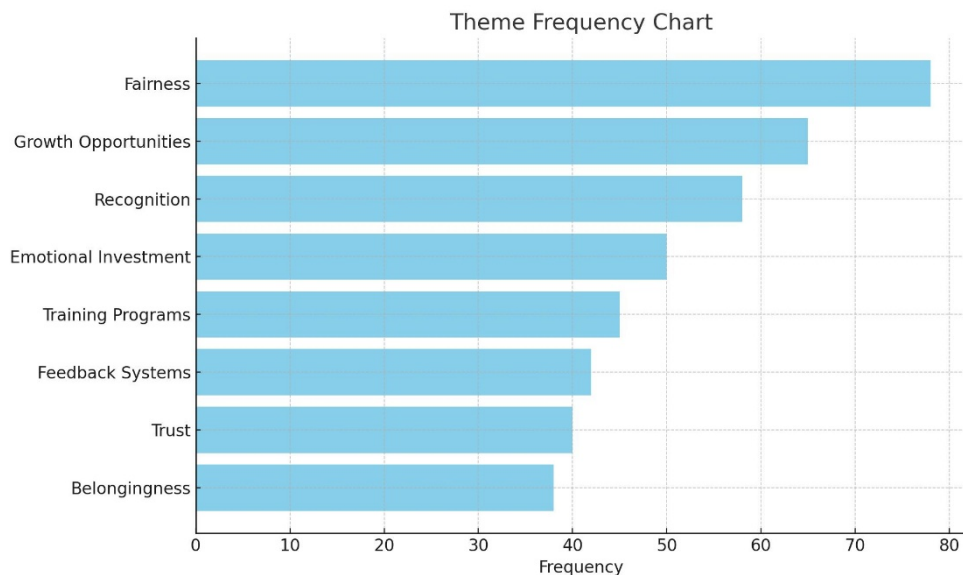


Fig.7. Bar Chart from Thematic Analysis

Key HR strategy elements and their effect on employee results—such as commitment and performance—are shown in the bar chart in figure 7. Every bar shows the intensity of employee feeling linked to certain HR policies. For example, although "Training Programs" and "Feedback Systems" were mostly connected with better employee productivity and skill development, topics like "Fairness," "Opportunities," and

"Recognition" were closely connected to greater degrees of employee commitment. This graph shows the important areas where HR policies are successful and where further improvements might provide better results for the workforce.

CONCLUSION

Using thematic analysis of qualitative data from 250 participants, this research investigated how HRM policies affect employee engagement and performance in manufacturing companies. The results show that employee dedication is much improved by fairness, chances for development, and recognition (RQ1). Furthermore, emotional involvement and loyalty were shown to improve employee performance (RQ2). HRM strategies including strong feedback systems and organized training courses were shown to directly enhance employee abilities and output (RQ3). Significantly, employee commitment became a major mediating element connecting HRM practices to performance results (RQ4).

The theme study showed that a human-centered approach—emphasizing trust, belongingness, and ongoing career development—can significantly maximize worker results. These results underline the need for companies to use inclusive, supporting, and tailored HR policies, hence adding important knowledge to HRM studies in industrial environments. Future studies may include longitudinal designs to evaluate the mediating function of employee commitment and investigate sectoral variations across various sectors, therefore extending this work.

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