



Assessing the Impact of HRM Practices on Employee Absenteeism with Reference to Remote Employees

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to explore the effect of three key HRM practices—Consistency, Distinctiveness, and Consensus—on reducing absenteeism in the workplace. It seeks to understand how these practices influence employees' attendance and whether they can significantly lower absenteeism rates. The responses were collected from 604 participants using a structured questionnaire. The sample primarily consisted of individuals aged 25-44 from the IT, Marketing, and Finance departments, with most respondents occupying mid-level positions. Data were analyzed using SPSS for descriptive statistics and structural equation modelling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships between the factors and test the hypotheses. The study indicates a substantial impact of HRM practices on reducing absenteeism rates. structural equation modeling (SEM) confirms significant positive relationships between Consistency, Distinctiveness and Consensus with reduced absenteeism. Reliability and validity assessments demonstrate high reliability and strong validity for all constructs. The findings suggest that consistent, distinctive, and consensual HRM practices significantly reduce absenteeism among employees.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Absenteeism, Remote Work, Consistency, Distinctiveness, Consensus, Structural Equation Modeling

JEL Classifications: M12, J22, O33, J24, D23, C38

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, the standard workplace has gone through a lot of changes. Remote work is now seen as a revolutionary force that will change the future of work. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses have had to make big changes. They have had to rethink how they use technology and how they run their businesses in order to keep running while following new rules and guidelines (Dwivedi et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge effect on the world economy as a whole. Now, HR directors have the difficult job of finding a balance between what their companies need and what their employees want. Technology use is growing at a faster and bigger rate, which has also sped it up. So, HR practices have moved into uncharted territory that needs a full re-evaluation of long-standing norms and the adoption of creative solutions to meet the needs of the modern world.

The 2019–20 crown infection outbreak is still going on because of the corona infection disease (COVID-19), which was caused by a corona infection (SARS CoV-2) (Kaushik, 2020). Studies say that companies and industries started having problems when the lockdown was announced, especially when it came to employees losing interest in their jobs and not being able to do them at all. About 80% of people who were homeless overnight had to go back to their original homes. Labourers and low-level workers in the organised sector were the ones who were hurt the most (Kaushik, 2020).

Working from home is becoming an issue in the area of human resources management. HR practices have changed a lot because of remote work, which was made possible by better technology and changed employee standards. As a researcher and HR professional, I can attest that in order to maximise the advantages and get over

the drawbacks of remote work arrangements, this change requires considerable consideration and modification. Working from home has many perks, such as higher productivity, a better work-life balance, and the ability to hire people from a wider pool. There are also some challenges that come with it, like keeping workers interested, keeping an eye on performance from afar, and making sure that team members can talk to each other well. HR workers need to get around these problems by using digital tools and creative methods, so that remote assessment and collaboration can go smoothly.

Both opportunities and challenges have arisen for HR professionals as a result of remote employment. Nevertheless, the “new normal lifestyle” and changing workplace practices—which involve isolation, quarantine, and stringent health guidelines—are placing a great deal of strain on and altering the nature of work policies, such as those pertaining to employee well-being, pay, leave, and other policies. Employers maintain a stable workforce during this difficult period because to HR practices that have changed or are focused on pandemic countermeasures, such as online training and e-recruiting. In addition to giving people more freedom, a better work-life balance, and easier access to talent from around the world, the virtual workspace has brought to light a number of specific problems (Shahriar et al., 2022). These days, HR departments have to deal with problems with digital communication, teamwork, performance management, and employee engagement. Due to the distance between employees, it is also harder to keep the company culture consistent and build a feeling of community among remote workers.

The HR department plays an even bigger role in changing old ways of doing things and making the future of work possible as more Companies let people work from home for a long time or even permanently. Along with learning new skills and adapting to new technologies, this change means that HR workers need to come up with ways to make sure that remote teams are healthy and productive.

There are a lot of changes that happen when people work from home, and this study looks at the difficulties HR faces when they try to keep the team together and make the company successful in a virtual setting. As a new trend, remote work is opening up new ways to find and train employees, help them grow, evaluate their performance, and get them involved in their job. This study reads secondary data to help HR professionals and leaders figure out how to get around problems and make the most of the benefits of working from home. This will help companies get and keep the best employees and build a culture that can react and bounce back from changes in the workplace.

In a world that is changing the way people work, HR workers need to be at the forefront of these changes. Through this study of how remote work affects HR practices, organisations and their most valuable assets—their employees—are able to navigate uncharted territory and take advantage of new possibilities, which will ensure a bright and stable future.

Nowadays, many people wish they could work from home. It's not necessary to take a bath, get up early, get ready for work, and

sit through long traffic jams that take a lot of time, especially for millennials today. Sufficient to put on temporary garments, then access the laptop at home and proceed with work. Concerning job happiness and work-life balance, working from home has an advantage over working from the office since it eliminates travel, provides suitable working hours, and fosters an approachable work environment. All things considered, the adoption of these flexible work arrangements seems to have been a deliberate choice that calls for the company to plan, organise, and implement measures to improve work-life balance and employee productivity (Allen et al., 2005).

Work from Home offers a lot of benefits and drawbacks, just like any other organisational reform (Konradt et al., 2003). In addition to offering flexible work schedules, WFH ensures that its employees are comfortable and productive workers. Offering employees, a work-life balance is both desirable and practical, and it also helps the business finish its tasks and achieve its goals. These days, the majority of companies give their staff members this chance. It is sometimes referred to as virtual or remote work, and it denotes that the worker is doing their work from a comfortable and accessible place—typically their home. Men who want to pursue home care careers and employees with elder care duties may find Work From Home to be especially appealing.

When employees move from the office to their own homes to work, they tend to have more freedom. According to (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004), an employee who works from home is less likely to be closely watched and controlled, so they have more freedom in choosing their own work hours and schedule. There are clear benefits for both the employee and the company in working from home, but there are also a lot of problems that come up when Work From Home policies are put into place. For example, (Hall and Liddicoat, 2005) say that managing human resources can become more difficult.

Research on work from home reveals both positive and negative consequences. Thus, a lot of research has been done on its effects. It is crucial to look into how the “new manner of working,” or WFH, has affected employees who have never worked remotely before in terms of productivity, output, and performance. Also, it's important to figure out the exact work situations that make it hard to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Studies have shown that the inability to balance personal and professional obligations can lead to a conflict between work and family, where employees are increasingly challenged to fulfil their work responsibilities as they engage in family activities. Conflict between work and family is frequently seen as a gender-specific issue. The explanation for this is that women are typically in charge of providing care and handling household chores in almost all cultures (Atkinson and Hall, 2009), and they are also more burdened than males in emergency situations (Galanti and Cortini, 2019). However, COVID-19 has resulted in the confinement of millions of individuals at home, which has exacerbated the difficulty of distinguishing between one's personal and professional lives, irrespective of gender or age. For this reason, it is argued that conflict between work and family can be

a problem for both men and women who work from home. But studies have shown that teleworking might make the benefits of working from home less useful (Hilbrecht et al., 2008) By making work-family problems worse and better at the same time (Toscano and Zappala, 2020).

One significant aspect of working from home during pandemics is feeling alone at work. The negative effects of remote work have profoundly affected people, even though experts have suggested that loneliness and isolation at work are the main drawbacks (Cooper and Kurland, 2002). People are feeling more alone than ever thanks to this pandemic (Ellis et al., 2020), which has increased stress and negatively impacted job satisfaction and productivity. According to (Golden et al., 2008), occupational isolation and job productivity are negatively correlated, while the quantity of face-to-face engagement and the time spent working from home are positively correlated.

Studies on work from home are becoming more and more prevalent. According to (Perry-Smith and Blum, 2000), there is a growing tendency in the direction of achieving a healthy work-life balance. Furthermore, an increasing body of research indicates that allowing employees to work from home improves organisational performance and lowers absenteeism (Stavrou, 2005).

Given that it addresses the “process” aspect of HRM, the HRM system strength perspective is an intriguing one. By examining the process methods, (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004) were among the first to establish a connection between the study of HRM and the discipline of occupational and organisational psychology. Three things contribute to the HRM system’s strength: consistency, consensus, and distinctiveness. A system that exhibits high rates of distinctiveness, consensus, and consistency is considered strong in human resource management. Features that enable a scenario to stand out in the surroundings and draw interest and attention are what make it distinctive. The creation of an impact across modalities and time, independent of the type of interaction, is known as consistency. People who are in agreement with the cause-and-effect relationship are said to be in consensus. The argument is made that an effective HRM system is one in which workers see clear, reasonable HRM messages that are consistently perceived and understood by other workers within the organisation and that are consistently communicated throughout (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004).

This investigation endeavours to ascertain whether there is a correlation between the number of days that employees are absent from work and the overall strengths of an HRM system, as viewed through the prism of the “social exchange theory.” When a boss and an employee do business with each other, they are engaging in social exchange. A good attitude towards the company is shown by workers who are treated well. (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2006) say that this means there is a good link between attitudes and behaviour. Reciprocity means that workers change their duties to meet the needs of their employers based on how they are treated. Employers have responsibilities that are affected by how well these responsibilities are met (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2002). Such an HRM system can send a good message to employees by

making them feel like the company cares about them, according to this idea. Utilising the social exchange theory, the investigation will examine the three components of system strength and their correlation with absenteeism in order to comprehend the relationship between HRM system strength and absenteeism. In order to achieve a high degree of uniqueness, your company should communicate well with its workers. This is because distinctiveness cares about clear and unambiguous messages. Making sure that HR messages are clear and easy to understand can be seen as an investment in workers by administrators. It’s important that the same HR policies are shared throughout the company when there is a high level of consistency. As an example, testing and rewarding workers’ training should happen all the time. The way people work will probably be seen as an investment in them. The fact that there is a high rate of consensus shows that all workers agree on how the HR policy should be applied. Employees will be able to predict what will happen based on their actions and reactions with the help of a mostly voluntary HR system. As an employee, you might see creating a consensual workplace as something the company does for you. Geurts say that the norm of reciprocity says that being present is a way for workers to “restore” the balance between them and their boss. When there is a high degree of stability, accord, and uniqueness, employees are more inclined to attend work when they believe that their organisation is invested in their well-being.

The potential correlation between absenteeism and the effectiveness of the HRM system is being examined in the context of the concept of reciprocity among employers, managers, supervisors, and employees. The concept of the “content approach of HRM” has served as the foundation for a great deal of study on absenteeism, which is a significant issue for businesses. HRM’s content strategy centres on the collection of HR practices. An instance of this could be a correlation between employee absenteeism and training opportunities. Consequently, rather than focusing on content, this study will only address the “process approach of HRM” system strength, offering an alternative perspective.

1.1. Employee Absenteeism

A pattern of irregular behaviour at work is called absenteeism. Someone who takes leave frequently is considered an absentee. Employee indifference and lack of commitment are the main causes of absenteeism. Within certain industries, employee absenteeism is a major issue. According to Webster’s Dictionary, “being absentee is a habit; someone who habitually stays away is called absenteeism.”

Workplace harassment, family matters, poor working conditions, lack of sufficient welfare services, inadequate leave provisions and regulations, drunkenness, sickness, and job searching are a few of the main causes of absenteeism. Staff absences cause a work stoppage or delay because they create a work pile and bottleneck. Absenteeism is a problem that occurs at work and needs to be addressed.

A high absence rate has a detrimental effect on an organization’s cash flow and overall well-being, which leads to subpar performance and even disarray. Employee absenteeism is an issue

that not only lowers productivity but also causes the organisation to mismanage its finances because of the benefits that are provided to employees even in cases when they are not present, as stated by (Cole and Kleiner, 1992). Employee turnover rates are directly impacted by absenteeism, thus it is important to take it as a consequential issue and keep a close eye on it in order to control it. Concurrently, the primary factor influencing industrial growth—which directly affects economic growth—is workforce turnover.

Note that no single successful strategy may be used to reduce absenteeism. But a clever mix of diverse metrics and behavioural models would undoubtedly produce the intended outcomes and fight absenteeism (Muchinsky, 1977). Employee absenteeism can be controlled and subsequently reduced by making a significant effort to implement policies and procedures that ensure clean, healthy working conditions, enough pay and benefits, job security, a clear recruitment process, generous leave policies, enhanced communication and timely grievance resolution, cordial relationships between supervisors and employees, and education opportunities for workers.

Regarding the productivity of work from home, its implementation, and the length of time that businesses will allow it to be used, there is a great deal of disagreement. Despite initial disappointments, a lot of businesses have since started investigating the practicality and sustainability of the long-term work-from-home alternative.

1.2. The Main Reasons for Absenteeism in Remote Work Settings

There are several new variables that come with working remotely that may increase employee absenteeism. First off, there may be a rise in medical cases due to the physical strain of working remotely. Musculoskeletal problems and general deterioration of health may arise from a decrease in physical activity and from poorly designed ergonomic home offices. Furthermore, this may get worse when the lines between personal and professional life become increasingly hazy. It can be difficult for workers to shut off from work, which increases the risk of health issues brought on by stress and the requirement for sick days (Baker-McCleam et al., 2010).

Second, there is a serious problem with work-life imbalance. While working remotely gives employees the freedom to work from anywhere at any time, it can also put pressure on them to be available at all times. This mismatch can eventually contribute to burnout by causing longer work hours, making it difficult to take breaks, and making you feel like you're always "on." Employees that experience burnout eventually get exhausted and productively less productive, which forces them to take time off to rest (Cascio, 2000).

Thirdly, distant work situations frequently experience mental health difficulties. Office environments can contribute to feelings of loneliness and isolation because they lack in-person interaction and social relationships. This seclusion can worsen mental health issues like anxiety and depression, especially when combined with performance-based incentives and a blurred work-life boundary. It is possible for workers to need time off in order to receive

treatment, go to therapy, or just take a day off for mental health (Fiorini, 2024).

Furthermore, absenteeism may be influenced by job unhappiness and disengagement. The likelihood of remote workers disengaging from their jobs and the company as a whole increases if they feel underappreciated, unsupported, or overworked. A increased chance of unscheduled absences as well as lower motivation and productivity can result from this disengagement (Cascio, 2000).

In addition, there are issues with surveillance and legal implications. The labour rules pertaining to maximum working hours, breaks, and other regulations must be complied with by remote work arrangements. It can be difficult to ensure compliance across jurisdictions, which could result in absenteeism because of legal conflicts or problems with non-compliance. Furthermore, it can be challenging to keep track of the output and attendance of remote workers, which can lead to a breakdown in accountability and communication and raise absence rates (Fiorini, 2024).

Finally, there is a chance that the costs associated with working remotely will increase absenteeism. Compared to their colleagues who work in offices, remote workers could pay more for healthcare or not have access to full benefits. This financial hardship may cause workers to put off getting medical attention or taking care of health problems over their jobs, which will increase their absenteeism (Sundin, 2010).

Proactive management techniques are needed to meet these problems. Employers can improve physical and mental health by implementing policies that support mental health initiatives, encourage regular breaks, and supply ergonomic assessments and equipment. Having open lines of communication, checking in frequently, and creating a positive work environment can all help reduce feelings of alienation and disengagement. Furthermore, assuring adherence to labour regulations and offering extensive benefits can reduce financial strains and encourage worker retention and output in distant work settings.

1.3. The Impact of HRM Practices on Employee Absenteeism with Reference to Remote Employees (Kocakulah et al., 2016)

1.3.1. Work-life balance

Workers who find it difficult to maintain a work-life balance may become burned out, which raises absenteeism. Employees may find themselves working longer hours, finding it difficult to step away from professional obligations, and neglecting personal and family time when work and personal life become blurred. This imbalance may lead to long-term tension, exhaustion, and ultimately burnout, necessitating time off for workers to recuperate. By providing flexible work arrangements including movable work schedules and remote work choices, as well as by encouraging staff members to take frequent breaks and vacations, employers can help employees maintain a healthy work-life balance. Offering tools such as wellness initiatives, time management courses, and unambiguous work schedule guidelines can also assist staff in better managing their workload, which lowers the risk of burnout and absenteeism.

1.3.2. Job satisfaction and engagement

Employee absenteeism is more common among disengaged workers. The demotivation, lack of appreciation, and lack of growth possibilities experienced by employees cause them to become less committed to their work, which raises absenteeism rates. Companies can solve this by putting in place plans to reward and acknowledge accomplishments, offer chances for professional advancement, and cultivate an environment that is inclusive and upbeat. Enhancing a sense of purpose and belonging, receiving regular feedback, and providing opportunities for professional growth can all help employees feel more engaged and satisfied at work. Increased employee engagement and higher attendance rates can be attained by fostering teamwork, praising both individual and group accomplishments, and giving staff members a forum to express their thoughts.

1.3.3. Work stress and burnout

Workplace stress and burnout are linked to long hours, an overwhelming task, and a poor work-life balance. These factors might result in absenteeism. When workers are overworked without proper breaks or assistance, their physical and mental well-being might suffer, requiring time off for recovery. By implementing strategies like flexible scheduling, reasonable workload expectations, and mental health assistance, employers can avert burnout. Employees can better manage stress by having access to tools such as mental health practitioners, stress management classes, and employee assistance programmes (EAPs). Reducing the chance of burnout and absenteeism can also be accomplished by promoting a culture in which taking breaks and time off is accepted and encouraged.

1.3.4. Leadership and management

An unfavourable work environment can be produced by incompetent management and leadership, which will increase absenteeism. It is possible for leaders who are not good communicators, don't offer enough encouragement, or treat staff unfairly to demotivate them and make them more likely to miss work. Conversely, strong leadership can greatly raise attendance rates. Resolving employee complaints, giving frequent feedback, and maintaining open lines of communication should be the leaders' main priorities. Workplace cultures can be positively impacted by supportive management techniques such as setting reasonable goals, providing mentorship and advice, and fostering an inclusive and courteous work atmosphere. Managers may enhance employee morale and lower absenteeism by investing in leadership development and training programmes that provide them the tools they need to lead successfully.

1.4. Impact of HRM Practices on Absenteeism

1.4.1. Autonomy and flexibility

Studies indicate that granting workers greater independence and adaptability in their work schedules may result in reduced absence rates. Employee control over work tasks, timetables, and surroundings is made possible by autonomy, which can lower stress levels and increase job satisfaction. With more flexibility to combine work and personal obligations, employees are less likely to burn out or require unscheduled absences. Examples of this flexibility include the ability to work from home (WFH) and

the opportunity to change working hours. When workers in work-from-home environments have the flexibility to adjust their work hours to accommodate their personal life, this enhanced autonomy can lead to better overall health and a greater sense of dedication to their profession, ultimately decreasing absenteeism. (Root, 2006)

1.4.2. HRM system strength

Absenteeism is impacted by a number of meta-features of a Human Resource Management system, including distinctiveness and consistency. Clear, distinct, and understandable HR regulations and procedures that are noticeable to employees are the hallmarks of a distinctive HRM system. Employees are more inclined to see HR systems favourably and align their behaviour with organisational goals when they are seen as unique, which lowers absenteeism rates. An atmosphere that is stable and predictable is also influenced by consistent HR practices, which ensure that rules are applied equally and consistently throughout the company. By eliminating doubts and stress that could otherwise lead to increased absence, this consistency fosters trust between staff members and management. A supportive and cohesive workplace culture can be developed by making sure that HR procedures are regularly conveyed and applied (Aksoy, 2015).

1.4.3. Employee engagement

Because they feel deeply a part of their work and company, engaged employees are more likely to be present and productive. Numerous tactics, including rewarding and praising staff members for their accomplishments, offering chances for career advancement, and fostering an inclusive and happy work atmosphere, can be used to increase employee engagement. Employee morale can be raised and regular attendance can be encouraged by recognition programmes that recognise both individual and team accomplishments. Employees can feel appreciated and invested in the company's future by taking advantage of career development opportunities like training and mentoring. Employee engagement can also be increased by cultivating an inclusive and encouraging work environment where staff members feel valued and heard. Absenteeism rates are lower when employees are engaged because they are more dedicated to their jobs and are less inclined to take time off without cause. Organisations may develop a committed and driven workforce that enhances overall success and productivity by placing a high priority on employee engagement (Thekedam, 2010).

The relationship between HRM practices and absenteeism underscores the significance of allowing for flexibility and autonomy, maintaining a robust and uniform HRM framework, and cultivating employee engagement. Organisations may effectively lower absenteeism and foster a more happy and productive work environment by concentrating on these areas.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Suyono et al. (2024): The objective of this investigation is to investigate the relationship between employee performance and organisational financial efficiency are affected when work-from-home and work-from-office practices are integrated. The study synthesises pertinent theoretical frameworks and empirical data

using a comprehensive literature review methodology. The results show that financial efficiency and personnel performance can both significantly increase with the thoughtful application of WFHWFO integration. Strong IT infrastructure, supportive management, and a positive organisational culture are important factors in effective deployment. The advancements in organisational, behavioural, and management theories are highlighted by theoretical implications, while the significance of strategic planning, technology infrastructure investment, organisational culture cultivation, employee well-being promotion, training and development programmes, and performance assessment and evaluation are emphasised by managerial implications. All things considered, this study offers practical recommendations to businesses looking to maximise both employee productivity and cost efficiency by strategically integrating WFH-WFO work practices.

Straus et al. (2023): The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated that a significant number of individuals in Europe labour from home. They will now be referred to as “remote workers” as a result of the increased complexity of their responsibilities. In Austria, times for working from home have changed since the pandemic began because of curfews, school closings, and limits on free time. We aim to identify the most effective strategies for maintaining the health, engagement, and productivity of remote workers during the COVID-19 pandemic by integrating transactional stress theory and event system theory. To investigate the impact of personal (self-goal setting, self-efficacy, home-office experience), external (equipment at home), and organisational (work-related and social) resources on changes in well-being, perceived productivity, and engagement, we collected daily data from two groups of workers. The first group consisted of 2222 employees from March to May 2020, while the second group consisted of 1268 employees from November 2020 to January 2021. It was less likely for people who worked from home and had a lot of social support at the start of the crisis to feel down and less interested in their work. For example, when resources got better between the first and second measurements, well-being, productivity, and interest all went down less. The effects on HRM are talked about, and ideas for future study are given.

Milikic et al. (2023): A study of 2,171 workers in Serbia during COVID-19 looks at how working from home affected their job satisfaction, commitment to the company, work-life balance, and health. According to a study done from March to May 2021, most workers had never worked from home before, had to deal with longer hours, and were not happy with the arrangement. A lot of employees still wanted a hybrid work plan that combined office and remote work, even with these problems. Not all of the people who answered said they were physically and emotionally healthy. Most said they were happy and energetic, for example. One important thing that didn't change was the mix between work and life. Offering unique data from Serbia, this paper gives useful insights into how people feel about their jobs and their health when they work from home. If HR policies and practices want to improve employee health and output in the years after COVID, these results show what they need to think about.

Davidescu et al. (2020): The necessity to rethink Human Resource Management (HRM) in light of upcoming work issues is examined

in this study, with a particular emphasis on employee development and workspace and time flexibility. In particular, the research looks at the impact these traits have on Romanian employees' job happiness and performance when it comes to teleworking—a practice that became more popular during the COVID-19 virus. This study created a “employee flexibility composite indicator” and used binary logistic regression models to measure its impact. It did this by using a national survey and multiple correspondence analysis. According to the results, novel workspaces—like partially home offices—significantly improve performance, job happiness, and overall work arrangements. This aligns HRM motivation and improves job satisfaction and organisational performance. According to the survey, it's critical to combine flexible and sustainable methods with staff growth.

Otoo (2019): This study looks at how employee competences affect the link between HRM practices and organisational performance as a mediating factor. Data gathered from 600 employees of certain hotels via a questionnaire was used to test an integrated research model that combined important components from the body of current literature. CFA and SEM were used to test the hypotheses and make sure the model was true and reliable. Results show that some HRM practices improve employee competences, in which HRM practices and organisational performance are linked through a middle-ground factor, and this has an effect on the performance of the company. The research, which was carried out in the hotel business and was based on cross-sectional data, may not be applicable to other industries or foreign contexts, but the findings are nonetheless rather insightful for hotel management and policymakers. They stress how crucial it is to implement clearly stated HRM procedures in order to develop human capital and encourage actions that provide businesses a competitive edge. To the existing body of knowledge, this study adds to it by showing real-life data from Ghana's hotel industry that shows how employee skills play a role in the HRM-performance link.

Vermeeren et al. (2014): Through an examination of the relationship between three major outcome dimensions—financial, organisational, and employee outcomes—and HRM practices, this research aims to add to what has already been written. It focuses especially on the mediating function of work satisfaction. Based on a special dataset from the “ActiZ Benchmark in Healthcare,” the study examines responses from 162 organisations (about 35% of all Dutch care organisations) that provide data from home care, nursing care, and care facilities in the Netherlands between fall 2010 and autumn 2011. Client happiness was measured with the Client Quality Index for long-term care, and yearly reports gave financial information., and 61,061 people (response rate: 42%) answered a questionnaire that collected employee data. In order to evaluate the theories, structural equation modelling (SEM) investigations were done. Based on client satisfaction, net margin, and HR outcomes (such as sick leave), the results show that HR practices have a direct or indirect relationship with better financial, organisational, and HR outcomes. Research revealed that HR practices had a significantly greater effect on organisational and HR results than on financial ones. Moreover, the research shows that job satisfaction completely balances the link between HRM and success. Emphasising the significance of employee attitudes in

HRM and organisational outcomes. Based on these findings, which emphasise the vital role HRM plays in the healthcare industry, especially when it comes to improving organisational and HR outcomes, academics and HR managers alike stand to gain from more research in this field.

2.1. Research Gap

Findings from previous research studies help us understand how HRM practices affect things like employee success, job satisfaction, and the efficiency of an organisation, especially when it comes to flexible and remote work. A big study hole, though, exists in our knowledge of how the combination of work-from-home (WFH) and work-from-office (WFO) schedules affects absences in particular. While studies like those by Suyono et al. (2024) and Davidescu et al. (2020) address the overall effectiveness of hybrid work models and employee flexibility, they do not explicitly link these practices to absenteeism. Additionally, while research by Milikic (2023) and Straus et al. (2023) examines the health and efficiency of workers, they do not fully explore how these factors impact absenteeism in the context of WFH and WFO practices. Thus, there is a need for research that directly examines the relationship between HRM practices, particularly Consistency, Consensus, and Distinctiveness, and absenteeism, filling this gap to provide targeted insights for improving absenteeism through effective HRM strategies.

2.2. Research Objectives

1. To examine the impact of consistency in HRM practices on Reduced Absenteeism
2. To evaluate the effect of consensus within the organization on Reduced Absenteeism
3. To assess the influence of distinctiveness in HRM practices on Reduced Absenteeism.

2.3. Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between Consistency in HRM practices and Reduced Absenteeism?
2. How does Consensus within the organization affect Reduced Absenteeism?
3. What effect does Distinctiveness in HRM practices have on Reduced Absenteeism?
4. Which HRM practice—Consistency, Consensus, or Distinctiveness—has the greatest impact on Reduced Absenteeism?

2.4. Hypothesis Development

The hypotheses for this study are designed to test the relationships between HRM practices and absenteeism. Hypothesis used in the study are as follows:

- Hypothesis 1: Consistency in HRM practices does not have a significant relation with Reduced Absenteeism.
- Hypothesis 2: Consensus within the organization does not have a significant relation with Reduced Absenteeism.
- Hypothesis 3: Distinctiveness in HRM practices does not have a significant relation with Reduced Absenteeism.

2.5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study is presented in Figure 1.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research method is used in this study to look into how HRM practices affect employees who work from home calling in sick. The main idea behind this study is that good HRM practices can greatly lower absences at home jobs. Specifically, the framework considers three key HRM practices: Consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus, as independent variables. These practices are hypothesized to influence the dependent variable, which is reduced absenteeism.

3.1. Population

The population consists of employees from various companies across India. The focus is on employees who are engaged in remote work arrangements.

3.2. Sample Size

A total of 700 questionnaires were distributed to employees across different companies. Out of these, 604 responses were received and considered valid for analysis.

3.3. Data Collection

Data was collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed electronically to the employees, ensuring a wide reach and convenient participation.

3.4. Tools and Techniques

The tool used in the study is a structured questionnaire that was divided into three sections:

1. Demographic information: This section contained 5 questions aimed at capturing the demographic details of the respondents.
2. HRM practices: This section included 16 questions related to three independent variables of HRM practices, namely consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus.
3. Reduced absenteeism: This section comprised 5 questions aimed at measuring the level of absenteeism among the employees.

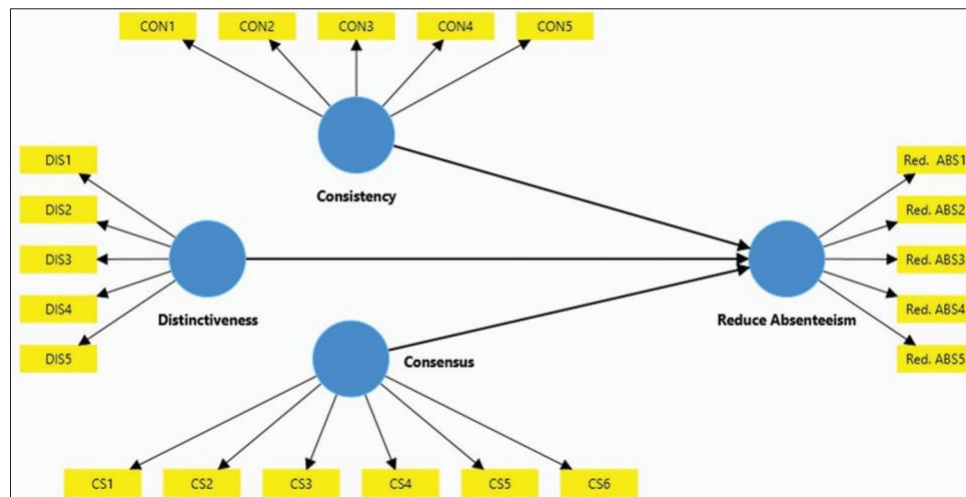
3.5. Software Used

The collected data was analyzed using two software tools:

1. SPSS: SPSS is used for initial data analysis, including descriptive statistics and regression analysis.
2. SmartPLS 4: The measurement model was checked with SmartPLS 4's advanced analysis, such as CFA and SEM, to see if the hypothesised links between variables were true.

4. RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The demographic analysis of the 604 answers showed that most of the respondents (35% of the sample) are between the ages of 25 and 34. The next largest group is those between the ages of 35 and 44, with 28%. Gender breakdown shows that men make up 55% of the population, while women make up 44% and people who say they are "other" make up 1%. Department-wise, the IT sector had the highest participation at 22%, with Marketing and Finance both at 18%. Most respondents occupy mid-level positions (40%), with entry-level positions at 30%. In terms of years of service, 30% of respondents have been with

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

their companies for 4-6 years, followed by 25% with 1-3 years of service. This demographic insight helps in understanding the sample's diversity and its potential influence on HRM practices and absenteeism.

The Table 1, presents descriptive statistics for various variables and providing insights into their distributions and characteristics. CON 2 has the highest mean (4.038), suggesting that it is perceived more positively compared to others. Conversely, CS 1 has the lowest mean (3.669), indicating slightly less favorable responses in that area. The median values are consistently 4 across most variables. Standard deviations vary from 0.511 to 0.779, showing the extent of variation in responses. Variables like Red. ABS 2 and Red. ABS 3 have higher standard deviations (0.779 and 0.725, respectively), indicating greater variability in responses compared to variables such as CON 1, with a lower standard deviation of 0.511. The data reveals that while most variables receive positive ratings, there is notable variation and skewness in how respondents perceive different aspects.

Table 2 shows the reliability and validity of the study constructs: CON (Consistency), CS (Consensus), DIS (Distinctiveness), and Red. ABS (Reduced Absenteeism). All constructs exhibit high reliability with Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7, with Red. ABS being the most reliable at 0.879. Composite reliability (rho_a and rho_c) is also high, especially for Red. ABS, which has the highest values, indicating strong consistency. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are above 0.5 for all constructs, showing that they explain a significant portion of variance, with Red. ABS achieving the highest AVE of 0.674, reflecting excellent validity.

4.1. Regression Analysis

Figure 2, represents the regression analysis results for the study, it reveal several key insights. The Model Summary indicates that the regression model explains 59.2% of the variance in absenteeism (Adjusted R square = 0.590), with an overall significant model (F-statistic = 289.821, P < 0.001). This suggests that the predictors—consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus in HRM practices—collectively have a substantial impact on reduced absenteeism rates among employees.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Variable used in the study	Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Excess kurtosis	Skewness	VIF
CON 1	3.829	4	0.511	4.566	-1.216	1.925
CON 2	4.038	4	0.761	0.423	-0.493	1.825
CON 3	3.917	4	0.625	2.891	-0.796	1.788
CON 4	3.944	4	0.654	2.357	-0.727	1.839
CON 5	3.947	4	0.644	2.325	-0.66	1.85
CS 1	3.669	4	0.658	0.594	-0.186	1.889
CS 2	3.674	4	0.657	0.624	-0.204	1.971
CS 3	3.705	4	0.673	1.061	-0.287	1.797
CS 4	3.725	4	0.57	2.717	-0.999	1.693
CS 5	3.704	4	0.712	0.372	-0.079	1.599
CS 6	3.674	4	0.644	0.64	-0.166	1.702
DIS 1	3.904	4	0.691	2.1	-0.776	1.894
DIS 2	3.897	4	0.68	1.758	-0.66	1.837
DIS 3	3.889	4	0.648	2.703	-0.804	2.055
DIS 4	3.575	4	0.551	0.804	-0.594	1.483
DIS 5	3.677	4	0.625	0.999	-0.408	1.535
Red. ABS 1	3.791	4	0.527	3.091	-1.129	1.933
Red. ABS 2	3.896	4	0.779	0.547	-0.469	1.849
Red. ABS 3	3.868	4	0.725	1.402	-0.656	2.058
Red. ABS 4	3.825	4	0.709	2.44	-0.909	2.063
Red. ABS 5	3.828	4	0.681	2.889	-1.031	2.389

Table 2: Reliability and validity of constructs

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	CR (rho _a)	CR (rho _c)	AVE
CON	0.857	0.858	0.897	0.635
CS	0.853	0.856	0.891	0.576
DIS	0.824	0.836	0.876	0.588
Red. ABS	0.879	0.879	0.912	0.674

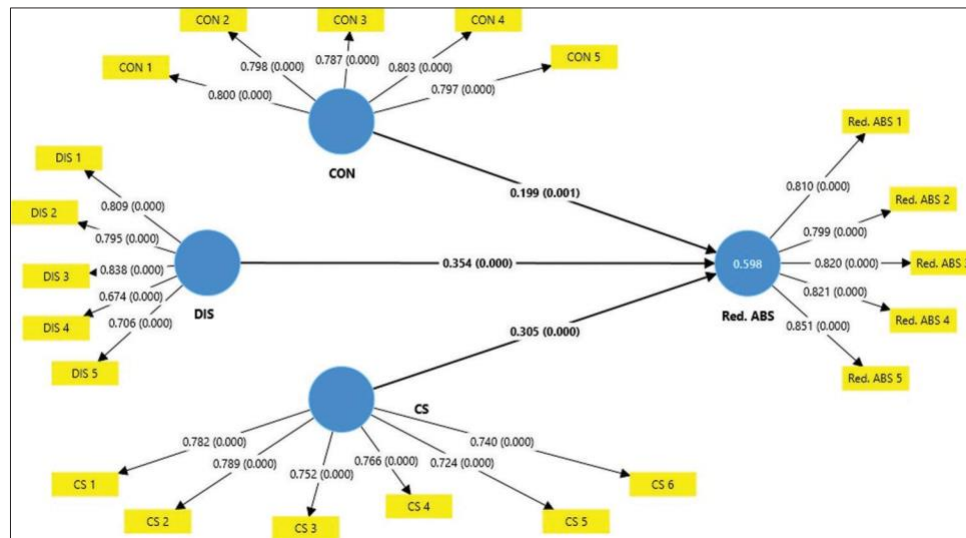
4.2. Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling

PLS-SEM is a strong method for analysing multiple variables that is used in many fields. PLS-SEM tries to get the most variance explained in the dependent variables. It works especially well for exploratory study and theory development.

The Figure 3, below presents the relationships between the constructs CON (consistency), CS (consensus), DIS

Figure 2: Regression analysis

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.769 ^a	.592	.590	.36023		
a. Predictors: (Constant), MEAN_CS, Mean_CON, MEAN_DIS						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	112.826	3	37.609	289.821	<.001 ^b
	Residual	77.859	600	.130		
	Total	190.685	603			
a. Dependent Variable: MEAN_Absenteeism						
b. Predictors: (Constant), MEAN_CS, Mean_CON, MEAN_DIS						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.169	.128		1.321	.187
	Mean_CON	.243	.049	.221	5.004	<.001
	MEAN_DIS	.392	.062	.343	6.330	<.001
	MEAN_CS	.333	.044	.293	7.626	<.001
a. Dependent Variable: MEAN_Absenteeism						

Figure 3: Structural equation modelling

(distinctiveness), and Red.ABS (Reduced Absenteeism). The path coefficients, factor loadings, and significance values are indicated, highlighting the strength and significance of these relationships.

4.3. Factor Loading

Table 3 displays the cross-loadings for each variable, showing the correlation of each item with its respective construct (CON, CS, DIS, Red. ABS) as well as with other constructs. Each item has its highest loading on its own construct, indicating good discriminant

validity. For instance, items CON 1 to CON 5 show strong loadings on CON (ranging from 0.787 to 0.803), while their loadings on other constructs are notably lower, ensuring that the CON items are more closely related to the CON construct than to CS, DIS, or Red. ABS. Similarly, items such as CS 1 to CS 6 exhibit high loadings on CS (from 0.724 to 0.789), with lower cross-loadings on other constructs. DIS items load heavily on DIS (0.706 to 0.838) and show less correlation with other constructs, especially CON and Red. ABS. Red. ABS items have the highest loadings on their respective construct (ranging from 0.81 to 0.851), confirming their

strong association with Red. ABS and distinct separation from other constructs.

4.4. Model Fitness

The Table 4, presents the fitness indices for both the saturated and estimated models. The SRMR value is 0.064 for both models. Values below 0.08 usually mean that there is a good fit with SRMR, which is an exact measure of fit. The SRMR of 0.064 in this case means that the differences between the actual and expected correlations are not very big. This means that the model fits the data well.

The table also includes the d_{ULS} and the Geodesic Discrepancy d_G values, both of which are 0.933 and 0.292, respectively, for the saturated and estimated models. The d_{ULS} value, which measures discrepancies in the unweighted least squares estimation, indicates an acceptable fit, though it might not be as strong as other indices. These indices, along with the Chi-square value of 990.612, provide a comprehensive view of the model's performance. Although the chi-square statistic might seem high, it is essential to consider it alongside other fit indices and the sample size, as Chi-square is sensitive to large sample sizes.

Finally, the normed fit index (NFI) for both models is 0.863, which compares the fit of the proposed model to a null model. Values closer to 1 indicate a better fit, and an NFI of 0.863 suggests that the model fits the data reasonably well, although there might still be room for improvement.

4.5. Hypothesis Testing

The Table 5 below, displays the total effects of the independent variables (CON, CS, DIS) on the dependent variable (Red. ABS), along with their corresponding statistics, which are crucial for hypothesis testing.

The data shows that Consistency has a path coefficient of 0.199, a T-statistic of 3.406, and a $P = 0.001$. These results indicate a statistically significant positive effect, which contradicts the hypothesis that Consistency does not significantly relate to reduced absenteeism. The findings suggest that greater consistency in HRM practices is indeed associated with lower absenteeism, contrary to the hypothesis.

Similarly, Distinctiveness shows a path coefficient of 0.354, a T-statistic of 6.181, and a $P = 0.000$. This indicates a very strong and significant positive effect, again contradicting the hypothesis that Distinctiveness does not significantly affect reduced absenteeism. The evidence suggests that unique and distinctive HRM practices play a significant role in reducing absenteeism.

Consensus also presents a path coefficient of 0.305, a T-statistic of 5.528, and a $P = 0.000$. These results demonstrate a highly significant positive effect, opposing the hypothesis that Consensus does not significantly relate to reduced absenteeism. The data suggests that having a shared agreement or understanding within the organization significantly contributes to reducing absenteeism. Overall, the empirical evidence from the study indicates that

Table 3: Factor loading

Construct	CON	CS	DIS	Red. ABS
CON 1	0.8	0.423	0.631	0.468
CON 2	0.798	0.377	0.639	0.545
CON 3	0.787	0.461	0.654	0.516
CON 4	0.803	0.5	0.674	0.551
CON 5	0.797	0.429	0.624	0.518
CS 1	0.463	0.782	0.61	0.53
CS 2	0.473	0.789	0.619	0.527
CS 3	0.41	0.752	0.553	0.465
CS 4	0.425	0.766	0.559	0.574
CS 5	0.397	0.724	0.519	0.494
CS 6	0.325	0.74	0.45	0.461
DIS 1	0.729	0.522	0.809	0.605
DIS 2	0.709	0.503	0.795	0.603
DIS 3	0.697	0.584	0.838	0.641
DIS 4	0.464	0.626	0.674	0.465
DIS 5	0.452	0.602	0.706	0.495
Red. ABS 1	0.537	0.583	0.616	0.81
Red. ABS 2	0.591	0.533	0.614	0.799
Red. ABS 3	0.535	0.541	0.599	0.82
Red. ABS 4	0.505	0.542	0.596	0.821
Red. ABS 5	0.514	0.563	0.603	0.851

Table 4: Model fitness

Fitness indices	Saturated	Estimated
SRMR	0.064	0.064
d_{ULS}	0.933	0.933
d_G	0.292	0.292
Chi-square	990.612	990.612
NFI	0.863	0.863

Table 5: Total effects

Variables	O	M	STDEV	(O/STDEV)	P-values
CON -> Red. ABS	0.199	0.201	0.059	3.406	0.001
CS -> Red. ABS	0.305	0.307	0.055	5.528	0.000
DIS -> Red. ABS	0.354	0.354	0.057	6.181	0.000

all three independent variables—Consistency, Distinctiveness, and Consensus—have significant positive effects on reduced absenteeism, which contrasts with the initial hypotheses.

4.6. Key Findings of the Study

The findings reveals that Consistency, Consensus, and Distinctiveness in HRM practices significantly impact reduced absenteeism. Consistency (CON) has a mean value of 4.038 for CON 2, highlighting its positive perception. The regression model explains 59.2% of the variance in absenteeism, with Consistency showing a path coefficient of 0.199 ($P = 0.001$), Consensus having a path coefficient of 0.305 ($P < 0.000$), and Distinctiveness presenting a path coefficient of 0.354 ($P < 0.000$). These results indicate that greater Consistency, Consensus, and Distinctiveness are associated with lower absenteeism, contradicting the initial hypotheses that these factors would not significantly affect absenteeism. The findings are supported by high reliability and validity in the constructs, with Reduced Absenteeism demonstrating the highest reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.879$) and validity (AVE = 0.674), reinforcing the positive impact of these HRM practices on reducing absenteeism.

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that HRM practices characterized by Consistency, Consensus, and Distinctiveness play a crucial role in reducing absenteeism among employees. The analysis reveals that all three factors significantly and positively influence absenteeism rates, contrary to the initial hypotheses suggesting no significant effect. Consistency in HRM practices enhances employee reliability and attendance, while Consensus fosters a shared understanding and commitment within the organization, and Distinctiveness highlights the importance of unique and identifiable HRM practices in reducing absenteeism.

The study's findings are validated by high reliability and validity of the constructs, with Reduced Absenteeism showing the strongest metrics. These results emphasize the importance of implementing consistent, consensus-driven, and distinctive HRM practices to effectively minimize absenteeism and improve overall organizational performance.

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