

# Sustained Competitive Advantage: Strategic HRM Initiatives and Consequences in Indian Context

S. Velmurugan and K. B. Akhilesh

**Abstract**—In the past few decades, researchers have witnessed a paradigm shift in Human Resource Management—from individual performance to organizational outcomes with the role of Human resource (HR) managers becoming increasingly significant to the organization. In such a context, it is important to examine HR practices from a strategic perspective on the sustained competitive advantage (SCA) of the organizations. The present study explores how Indian organizations look at their human resources strategically when faced with competitive environment. Also, it explores strategic initiatives being taken to manage human resources within the organizations and how these initiatives promote SCA in terms of enhancing the overall customer-centric delivery of goods and services.

**Keywords**—Strategic HRM, Strategic HRM Initiatives, Consequences, and Sustained Competitive Advantage.

## I. INTRODUCTION

OVER the past two decades the field of Human Resource Management (HRM) has undergone immense paradigmatic growth and widening from both academics and practitioners as well [1]. Moreover, due to the impact of privatization, liberalization and globalization, sustaining and competing to survive in the present competitive market has become a gigantic task for organizations today. We knew that the business essence has been gradually shifting from traditional management style to modern management style that is total development of Human Resource in the organization. Identifying potential, shared vision, building work culture, and employee engagement of human resources can only meet and make competitive advantage in the present market. Human resource is very important in management of business [2] that the 6 Ms of management, viz. Men and women, material, money, market and method. But among all these, men and women is the only living beings could do the effective coordination and utilization of all resources. 'All the activities of any enterprise are initiated and determined by the persons who make up the institution, plants, offices, computers, automated equipment, and all else that make up a modern firm are unproductive except for human effort and direction of all the tasks of management, managing the human component is the central and most important task, because all else depends on how well it is done' [3].

Velmurugan, S. is Doctoral Student with Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Science [IISc], Bangalore, India (phone: +91-9972232535; e-mail: velumg@mgmt.iisc.ernet.in).

Akhilesh, K. B. is Professor with Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Science [IISc], Bangalore, India (e-mail: kba@mgmt.iisc.ernet.in).

If Human Resource professionals are able to participate in company's business strategy and is looked upon as valuable contributor to the organization. Hence, the HR team should understand business environment very well and make tactical and strategic planning for survival of an organization in the competitive market. Strategic HRM is the process of linking human resources to clearly defined strategic goals and objectives for future oriented organizational competitiveness. Strategic human resources are basically a plan of action which is developed by human resource professionals to measure individuals who are accountable and empowered to achieve the stated result in a specific desired timeframe. They are patterns of action, decisions, and policies that guide a group toward a vision or goals. However, the present study focuses on how human resources practices are deployed strategically to promote work culture which influences employee engagement in order to achieving sustained competitive advantage in Indian context.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This part explain existing research work which is relevant to human resource management perspective in the context of present scenario of HRM, strategic HRM, strategic HRM initiatives, strategic HRM consequences and sustained competitive advantage of the organization.

### A. Present Scenario of HRM

HRM has been defined as the process of attracting, developing, and maintaining a talented and energetic workforce to support organizational mission, objectives, and strategies [4]. Between mid-century and the late 1970s, HRM research primarily focused on the development of valid and fair HRM practices in large organizations. These studies examine the relationship between various HRM practices and individual performance. More recent research examines the impact of HRM practices on organization-level performance measures [5]. This line of research has led some researchers to propose a normative model of HRM practices, referred to as the "best practices" or "high commitment" theory of HRM. This model suggests that universally, certain HRM practices, either separately or in combination are associated with improved organizational performance [6]. There were several ways that organizations can maintain high commitment and high performance among employees and ultimately organizational effectiveness: by promoting the organization's credibility with employees; encouraging the use of participative management and employee involvement programs; focusing on high achievement, mutual trust and

commitment; and developing a combined group/entrepreneurial approach to management [7], thereby creating an organizational culture in which individual employees are encouraged to be adaptive, competitive and successful. Recent research on best HR practices has shown that the HR function is indeed an important success factor in an organization's effective performance [8]. In the closing years of the twentieth century, management has come to accept that people, products, markets, cash, buildings, or equipment, are the critical differentiators of a business enterprise. All the assets of an organization, other than people, are inactive. They are passive resources that require human application to generate value which results for sustaining a profitable company or a healthy economy by the productivity of the workforce [9]. The current literature indicates that it is not fruitful to examine just a single type of HR practice and its influence on a firm's performance. Instead, bundles of HR practices and their contingent effects have to be analyzed [10]. Thus, in the present study, we intended to consider few important human resource domains staffing, employee separations, learning and development, performance appraisal, and compensation which are practicing by almost all the organizations in Indian Context.

#### *B. Strategic HRM*

Strategic human resource management is a complex process which is persistently evolving and being studied and discussed by academics and practitioners. Strategic HRM can be regarded as a general approach to the strategic management of human resources in accordance with the intentions of the organization on the future direction it wants to take. In the past two decades, there has been growing attention in the field of strategic management of the organizations in the United States. Hence, it contributed various models of strategic management [11]. This field of study produced several conceptual and practitioner-oriented insights to propose the human resource (HR) practices which associated with countless business strategies [12]. Moreover, recent research eventually focused to examine the determinants of HR practices from a strategic perspective [13]. Strategic HR departments are future-oriented and operate in a manner consistent with respect to the overall business plan in their organizations [14]. So, such departments tend to employ progressive human resource practices in which the emphasis is on assessing the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for the future and to institute staffing, appraisal and evaluation, incentive and compensation, and training and development programs to meet those needs. We stressed two important things on human resource that is before focusing on core theme of present paper, we attempted to give meaning and differences between human resource management and strategic human resource management in the view of present study. Till now there were few studies which contributed theoretical models to understand both the role of human resource management in the organization and the determinants of various human resource practices [15]. Similarly, it is very difficult to distinguish between Human Resource Management

and Strategic Human Resource Management without a strong theoretical foundation for Strategic Human Resource Management. Researchers have contended that the concept of strategic human resource management has evolved into a bridge between business strategy and the management of human resources [16]. Hence, distinguishing between strategic HR and HR strategy, it is stated that strategic HR is the process of linking HR practices to business strategy. Thus, strategic HR deals with identifying the capabilities required of a business strategy and using HR practices to develop those capabilities. On the other hand, HR strategy as building an agenda for the HR function and defining the mission, vision and priorities of the HR function [17]. During the last decade, the personnel/HRM field has shifted from a micro focus on individual HRM practices to a debate on how HRM as a more holistic management approach may contribute to the competitive advantage of the organization [18]. These strategic HR practices called collectively as 'high performance work practices'. Ideally, these functions should fit together to meet the greater goal of strategic human resources to support, manage and maintain high-commitment and high-performance employees [19]. On the other hand, strategic human resource management considered as the overarching concept that links the management and deployment of individuals within the organization to the business as a whole and its environment [20].

#### *C. Strategic HRM Initiatives*

Strategic human resource management becomes more important in any type of the organization; it has to ensure its resources as the sources of strategies. If the organization uses potentiality of its human resources, it could succeed in business for long lasting competitive market. According to the high-commitment model, for instance, well-paid, well-motivated workers, in an atmosphere of mutuality and trust, generate higher productivity gains and lower unit costs [21]. However, any organization depends upon its employees to retain competitive advantage. An organization to create and sustain a desired culture is creating a shared vision. Creating a shared vision with all of the employees is a critical first step in the organization [22]. A shared vision helps reduce resistance to change and enables all employees to contribute to success. Rather than working at cross purposes with each other, each can contribute to the total success. Review of the contexts of HRM from various theoretical perspectives. They argued that organizational culture and HRM are not separable in an organization [23]. However, the present study focused on linking strategic HRM practices with sustained competitive advantage influencing by human resource initiatives (i.e. building work culture) which has three sub elements like shared vision, flexible work environment and reinforcement.

#### *D. Strategic HRM Consequences*

Employee engagement has emerged as an important element for business success in today's competitive marketplace. Further, it can be a deciding factor in organizational success. Not only does engagement have the

potential to significantly affect employee retention, productivity and loyalty, it is also a key link to 'customer satisfaction', company reputation and overall stakeholders' value. However, to gain a competitive advantage, organizations have responsibility to pay attention towards Human Resource department to set the strategic planning for employee engagement and commitment [24]. Employee engagement is "the degree to which employees commit to the workplace environment whether they may be with human capital or others their organization, and how long they stay as a result of that commitment. Employee engagement has been defined as "an individual employee's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcome" [25]. Employees who are engaged exhibit attentiveness and mental absorption in their work and display a deep, emotional connection toward their workplace [26]. The choice to express one's authentic self was understood as the emotional, social and physical act of engagement [27]. Humans become drawn into their work, physically and emotionally, in ways that display how they experience at work. At Johnson and Johnson, engagement has become a part of the work culture as teams are provided real time feedback about how their work enables their individual business units to meet their quarterly goals. Engaged employees have consistently been shown to be more productive on most available organizational measures [28], it is conservatively estimated that less than 30 per cent of the global workforce is engaged [29]. Moreover, less than 20 per cent of employee's report any level of confidence in their current manager's ability to engage them [30]. Not surprising, employee engagement is reported to be on a continued decline worldwide [31]. Many organizations believe that employee engagement is a foremost source of competitive advantage which has been drawn drastic changes to solve challenging organizational problems such as increasing workplace performance and productivity even during the widespread economic decline [32]. Thus, in the present study, we had chosen employee engagement getting insight through the depth literature survey. It has three sub elements (i.e. cognitive, emotional and physical) and it was measured by linking with other variables which used in the present study.

#### *E. Sustained Competitive Advantage*

The idea that human resources can serve as a competitive advantage is not new. [33] The potential for capitalizing on superior human resource management as a means of gaining and maintaining a competitive advantage. HR practices are a source of competitive advantage and as [34] suggest, the success of companies in the present competitive environment largely depends upon the caliber of their human resources and innovative employee management programs and practices. Researchers drawing largely on a behaviorist psychology perspective have addressed the link between human resource management practices and competitive advantage [35]. From this perspective, researchers have argued that human resource management practices can contribute to competitive advantage as far as they elicit and reinforce the set of role behaviors that

result in lowering costs, enhancing product differentiation or both [36]. It was partially relied on the resource-based theoretical perspective in describing human resources as a competitive advantage [37]. The model of competitive advantage was to include organizational culture, distinctive competence, and strategic unity as "mediators" in the strategy-competitive advantage link. It then discussed how human resource practices can be used by firms to develop strategies that will lead to a sustained competitive advantage, stating that there must be a focus on the relationship between human resources, strategies and competitive advantage [38]. The resource-based view suggests that human resource systems can contribute to sustained competitive advantage through facilitating the development of competencies that are firm specific [39]. The sustained superior performance of many companies has been attributed to unique capabilities for managing human resources to gain competitive advantage. Conversely, to the extent that HR systems inhibit the mobilization of new competencies and/or destroy existing competencies, they may contribute to organizational vulnerability and competitive disadvantage.

Sustained competitive advantage is distinct from the concept of competitive advantage. Within the resource based view, a sustained competitive advantage exists only when other firms are incapable of duplicating the benefits of a competitive advantage [40]. Thus, a competitive advantage is not considered sustained until all efforts by competitors to duplicate the advantage have ceased. Therefore, four criteria must be attributable to the resource in order for it to provide a sustained competitive advantage: 1) the resource must add value to the firm, 2) the resource must be unique or rare among current and potential competitors, 3) the resource must be imperfectly imitable, and 4) the resource cannot be substituted with another resource by competing firms [41].

### III. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The present study focused to explore Strategic HRM practices and how it helps to build work culture and employee engagement in terms of achieving sustainable competitive advantage in Indian context. The aim of the study split in to the following four objectives; (i) To study the HRM professionals and organizations' profile in different sectors and types of organizations in the view of Human Resource Management perspective; (ii) To explore strategic HRM initiatives taken by Human Resource professionals; (iii) To find the relationship between strategic HRM practices, initiatives, and sustained competitive advantage.

#### *A. Research Design*

Descriptive research design adopted for the study, because this approach is mostly directed towards identifying the various characteristics of the research problem. Universe - The universe of the study includes organizations which have a minimum of 100 employees and above. Population - The Human resource personnel who are working in different levels (i.e. Board/Director-HR/General Manager-HR/Chief/Head-HR/Manager-HR/Assistant Manager-HR) in the organizations.

### B. Sampling Technique

Non-probability sampling was adopted in which *Purposive sampling* technique selected for the study. Sample Size - The total sample size is 60 (n= 60) considered for the study. Inclusion Criteria- Male and Female HR Personnel; Respondents aged between 25- 65 years; Managers who speak and understand both English, and Tamil languages; The managers who are working more than three years in the same company; The organization which has minimum 100 full time employees; The managers who have HRM relevant work experience in overseas. Exclusion Criteria - The organizations/NGOs focusing on non-profit are excluded; the organizations which have less than 100 full time employees. Tools/Questionnaires - (1) Socio Demographic Data Sheet (SDDS: Developed for the study); (2) Organisation Profile Questionnaire (OPQ); (3) Strategic HRM Practices Questionnaire (SHRM-PQ); (4) Strategic HRM-ICQ; (5) Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA-Q).

### C. Data Collection Procedure

The data was collected for the study through two ways such as (i) Web based method (e-mail) and (ii) Interview schedule (i.e. face to face) method. In web based method, the respondents were requested to fill the questionnaires followed by consent letter which gives brief details about research work along with ethical considerations. In interview schedule method, the respondents were requested to read carefully consent letter and agreeing to participate in the study by signing on it before filling up the questionnaires.

## IV. RESULTS

This part of the paper explains the results of present study. We had employed descriptive statistics (i.e. frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation, minimum, and maximum) for Socio-demographic details of HR professionals and organizational profile questionnaire which were semi-structured interview schedule (Table II). We had also employed other statistical method of parametric tests like correlation, one-way ANOVA and independent 't'-test. The correlation analysis used to find relationship between two variables; whereas the independent 't'-test was employed to check significant difference between two different independent samples (i.e. groups). Multiple regression analysis method was employed to measure linear relationship between two variables. As we stated in methods and materials, since it was pilot study, we had used only 60 samples (N=60).

Before, we employed other inferential statistical method; we checked reliability of using Cronbach's alpha method for each measurement questionnaires which were developed for present study (Table I). The Cronbach's alpha value for SHRM practices questionnaire-40 items was 0.79; Strategic HRM initiatives (i.e. building work culture)-15 items was 0.84; consequences (i.e. employee engagement) - 15 items was 0.68; and sustained competitive advantage questionnaire - 20 items, its alpha value was 0.86. The Cronbach's alpha value 0.6 is sufficient [42], thus, we were planned to move on

other statistical methods which could be employed for present study.

Though, we did Cronbach's alpha, we are still curious about using split-half reliability alpha value for each questionnaire which were developed for present study, hence, we constructed multi-dimensions/elements that of developed measurement tools. The split-half reliability alpha value for SHRM practices questionnaire -40 items' subsets values were 0.50 and 0.77; Strategic HRM initiatives (i.e. building work culture)-15 items were 0.72 and 0.67; consequences (i.e. employee engagement)-15 items were 0.59 and 0.53; and sustained competitive advantage questionnaire - 20 items were 0.71 and 0.82 (Table I).

TABLE I  
RELIABILITY CHECK FOR DEVELOPED INSTRUMENTS FOR THE STUDY

Dimensions	No. of items	Split-half Value	Cronbach's Alpha value
SHRM Practices	40	0.508 0.778	0.795
Strategic HRM Initiatives:	15	0.728 0.673	0.845
BWC			
Consequences:		0.590	0.681
EE	15	0.535	
SCA	20	0.712 0.823	0.865

BWC = Building work culture, EE = Employee engagement, SCA = Sustained competitive advantage

The split-half approach involves splitting the total items into two subsets and if reliability scores of .70 and above are considered reliable and those between .60 and .70 are considered moderately reliable, and those below .60 are considered unreliable [43]. In the present study, the alpha value for first subset of SHRM practice questionnaire is 0.50 it indicates poor reliability. Similarly, alpha value for consequences' subsets also showed 0.59 and 0.53, it indicates poor reliability. But, reliability value for SHRM initiatives, and sustained competitive advantage are high, it is acceptable. In the present study, we could not perform factor analysis, because, recommended N (i.e. minimum sample size) should be at least 100. A rough rating scale for adequate sample sizes in factor analysis: 100=poor, 200=fair, 300=good, 500=very good, 1000 or more=excellent [44]. Also, determining sample size [45] stated that ratio should be in the range of 3 to 6. In the present study, outcome variable is sustained competitive advantage and it has 20 items. As we aware that we required larger sample size (i.e. 200 samples) to employ factor analysis, we were quit unhappy to perform factor analysis and it would not make any sense at least this level of study.

We observed outcome of analysis of HR professionals' details and organizational profile details which explicated in Table II. The analysis on the age of the HR professionals revealed that the majority of the respondents (40.0%) were falling into the age category of 31 - 35 years, 21.7% of the respondents were falling into the category of 26 - 30 years, 20.0% of them were belonging to 36 - 40 years, 8.3% AND 6.7% of the respondents were belonging to 41 - 45 years and 46 - 50 years respectively, and only 3.3% of the respondents

were belonging to 51–55 years. The mean age of the HR professionals was 35.38 years ( $SD=6.56$ ). The results on the gender of the HR professionals revealed that the majority of the respondents were male (73.3%) and 26.7% were female respondents. On the educational qualifications of the HR professionals revealed that the majority (40.0%) of the respondents were educated up to post-graduate specialized in Master of Social Work–Human Resource Management/ Personnel Management & Industrial Relations, 33.3% were from M.B.A. specialized in Human Resource Management, 18.3% were from Post-graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management, 6.7% were opined their higher educational status is M.Phil/PhD specialized in human resource management. On the view of work experiences of the human

resource professionals in the present organization, we observed that work experiences ranged from 2 to 30 years with the mean of 4.36 years ( $SD= 3.71$ ), whereas, it was observed that work experiences ranged from 0 to 27 years with the mean of 6.6 years ( $SD=6.4$ ) in the previous organization. Moving on to organizational profile questionnaire, we collected only one data from each company, around 60 different organizations were participated and age of those organizations ranged from 3 to 100 years with the mean of 19.71 years ( $SD=17.24$ ). We also observed that 46.7% organizations were entitled for private, 30% and 23.3% of the organizations were entitled public and multinational company respectively.

TABLE II  
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF HRM PROFESSIONALS AND ORGANIZATION PROFILE DETAILS

Variable(s)	Categories	N=60	%	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Gender	Male	44	73.3	--	--	--	--
	Female	16	26.7	--	--	--	--
Age	26 – 30 years	13	21.7	35.38	6.56	--	--
	31 – 35 years	24	40.0			--	--
	36 – 40 years	12	20.0			--	--
	41 – 45years	5	8.3			--	--
	46 – 50years	4	6.7			--	--
	51 – 55years	2	3.3			--	--
Qualification	P.G. Diploma in HRM	11	18.3	--	--	--	--
	M.S.W. in HRM/PM&IR	24	40.0	--	--	--	--
	M.B.A. in HRM/PM&IR	20	33.3	--	--	--	--
	M.Phil/PhD in HRM/PM&IR	4	6.7	--	--	--	--
Work Experiences	Present Organization	--	--	4.36	3.71	2 years	30 years
	Previous Organization	--	--	6.6	6.4	0 years	27 years
Age of the organization	Age	60	100	19.71	17.24	3 years	100 years
Ownership	Private	28	46.7	--	--	--	--
	Public	18	30.0	--	--	--	--
	Multinational company	14	23.3	--	--	--	--

Moving on to inferential statistical methods were employed for present study, as we stated initial part of result, we applied independent sample 't'-test and multiple regression analysis. But, we did not show outcome of the result in this paper since we did not get any significant value for any of the variables. We also employed one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to check the significance between groups with linking of various variables which showed in Table IV.

Table III presents that result of correlation between SHRM practices, initiatives and consequences. There was positive relation between staffing and employee engagement-cognitive. The correlation co-efficient was 0.264 and it was statistically significant at  $p<0.05$  level. In addition to that, there was positive relationship between staffing and employee engagement – emotional. The correlation co-efficient was 0.312 and it was statistically significant at  $p<0.05$  level. Correlation outcome was observed that when strategy plans for staffing in the organizations, employees were shown engagement in their organizations with respect to the elements of cognitive and emotional.

TABLE III  
CORRELATION BETWEEN SHRM PRACTICES, INITIATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES

	Staff.	Emp.Sep.	L&D	Per. App.	Comp.	BWC-SV	BWC-FWE	BWC-RI	EE-C	EE-E	EE-P
Staff.	1										
Emp.Sep.	0.474	1									
L&D	0.695	0.449	1								
Per. App.	0.494	0.416	0.722	1							
Comp.	0.655	0.341	0.537	0.403	1						
BWC-SV	0.528	0.044	0.373	0.226	0.501**	1					
BWC-FWE	0.549	-0.003	0.454	0.280*	0.614**	0.655**	1				
BWC-RI	0.486	0.015	0.458**	0.373**	0.544**	0.618**	0.748**	1			
EE-C	0.264*	-0.041	0.327*	0.236	0.445	0.544**	0.491**	0.604**	1		
EE-E	0.312*	0.114	0.319*	0.169	0.392**	0.483**	0.642**	0.361**	0.536**	1	
EE-P	0.167	0.197	0.304*	0.129	0.356	0.278*	0.542**	0.409**	0.473**	0.454**	1

\*\*p<0.01 level (2-tailed); \*p<0.05 level (2-tailed).

CEO = Chief Executive Officer; Own = Ownership, Nature = Nature/type of organization, Stra. Meet. = Strategy Meeting, Staff.=Staffing, Emp. Sep.= Employee Separation, L&D = Learning and development, Per. App. = Performance Appraisal, Comp. = Compensation, SHRMP Total= Strategic HRM Practice Total, BWC-SV = Building Work Culture – Shared Vision, BWC – FWE = Building Work Culture – Flexible Work Environment, BWC – RI = Building Work Culture – Reinforcement, EE-C = Employee Engagement – Cognitive, EE – E= Employee Engagement – Emotional, EE-P= Employee Engagement – Physical.

With respect to strategic HRM domains of learning and development, there was positive relation between learning and development and building work culture – reinforcement ( $r=0.458$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), employee engagement – cognitive ( $r=0.327$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), employee engagement – emotional ( $r=0.319$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), employee engagement – physical ( $r=0.304$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). In connecting with SHRM domains of performance appraisal, there was positive relationship with building work

culture – flexible work environment ( $r=0.280$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), building work culture – reinforcement ( $r=0.373$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). It was also observed positive correlation between the domains of compensation of SHRM practices and building work culture – shared vision ( $r= 0.501$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – flexible work environment ( $r=0.614$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – reinforcement ( $r= 0.544$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), and employee engagement – emotional ( $r=0.392$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

TABLE IV  
DESIGNATIONS AND STRATEGIC HRM PRACTICES

Variable(s)	Board/ Director	General Manager	Chief/ Head	Manager	Officer	Assist. Manager	Senior Manager	F	df	Sig.
Staffing	28.00	28.80	30.66	30.80	29.66	27.83	32.25	2.095	(6, 53)	0.069
Employee Separation	25.00	26.20	26.33	26.84	25.33	25.16	27.00	0.424	(6, 53)	0.859
Learning & Development	27.00	28.50	27.00	31.46	30.66	28.66	32.75	1.960	(6, 53)	0.088
Performance Appraisal	25.00	26.70	21.33	28.80	27.33	26.66	31.50	4.474	(6, 53)	0.000*
Compensation	25.00	25.40	30.00	27.57	29.00	25.16	29.50	1.933	(6, 53)	0.092
SHRMP Total Score	130.00	135.60	135.33	145.50	142.00	133.50	153.00	2.290	(6, 53)	0.048*

\*P< 0.05 level

Moreover, it was also observed that there were positive relationship between SHRM initiatives (i.e. building work culture) domains and consequences domains (i.e. employee engagement). There were correlation between building work culture – shared vision and employee engagement-cognitive ( $r=0.544$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – shared vision and employee engagement-emotional ( $r=0.483$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – shared vision and employee engagement-physical ( $r=0.278$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), building work culture – flexible work environment and employee engagement-cognitive ( $r=0.491$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – flexible work environment and employee engagement-emotional ( $r=0.642$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – flexible work environment and employee engagement-physical ( $r=0.542$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – reinforcement and employee engagement-cognitive ( $r=0.604$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – reinforcement and employee engagement-emotional ( $r=0.361$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), building work culture – reinforcement and employee engagement-physical ( $r=0.409$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) (Table III).

The Pearson's correlation coefficient was also done between strategic HRM initiatives, consequences and sustained competitive advantage (Table V). It was observed that unique value which is SCA' domain positively correlated with building work culture' domain flexible work environment ( $r=0.325$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Similarly, the same domain of SCA positively correlated with employee engagement' domain cognitive ( $r=.271$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), emotional ( $r=.538$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and physical ( $r=.256$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); difficult to replicate which is SCA' domain positively correlated with employee engagement' domain emotional ( $r=.302$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), physical ( $r=.297$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); sustainability which is SCA' domain positively correlated with employee engagement' domain emotional ( $r=.441$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), physical ( $r=.261$ ,  $p<0.05$ ); superior to the competition which is SCA' domain negatively correlated with building work culture' domain shared vision ( $r=-.276$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and reinforcement ( $r=-.268$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) (Table V).

TABLE V  
CORRELATION BETWEEN SHRM INITIATIVES, CONSEQUENCES AND SUSTAINED COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

	BWC-SV	BWC-FWE	BWC-RI	EE-C	EE-E	EE-P	Uni. Value	Diff. Rep.	Sustain.	Sup.comp.	AMS
BWC-SV	1										
BWC-FWE	0.655**	1									
BWC-RI	.618**	.748**	1								
EE-C	.544**	.491**	.604**	1							
EE-E	.483**	.642**	.361**	.536**	1						
EE-P	.278*	.542**	.409**	.473**	.454**	1					
Uni.value	.041	.325*	.069	.271*	.538**	.256*	1				
Diff. Rep.	-.076	.068	-.051	.154	.302*	.297*	.677**	1			
Sustain.	.001	.194	-.063	.036	.441**	.261*	.596**	.624**	1		
Sup.comp.	-.276*	-.174	-.268*	-.090	-.038	-.090	.458**	.557**	.426**	1	
AMS	-.243	-.017	-.173	.099	.186	.196	.579**	.767**	.676**	.715**	1

\*\*p<0.01 level (2-tailed); \*p<0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table IV presents one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) between Designations and Strategic HRM Practices. It was observed that there was significant difference between designations and the domain (i.e. performance appraisal) of strategic HRM practices. It revealed that senior manager-HR view of performance appraisal ( $f=4.474$ ,  $p<0.050$ ) strategy planning was too good in Indian organizations followed by manager-HR, officer-HR, General Manager-HR, assistant manager-HR and Director-HR. But, the Head-HR view on strategy planning for performance appraisal was reasonably good. Similarly, there was significant difference between designations and strategic HRM total score. It observed that senior manager-HR ( $f=2.290$ ,  $p<0.050$ ) view on strategy planning for deploying human resources within the organization was excellent followed by manager-HR, Officer-HR, Head-HR, General Manager-HR and Assistant Manager-HR. But, the director-HR view on strategy planning for deploying human resource within the organizations was moderately good.

## V. DISCUSSION

The present study findings compared and discussed with existing literature review. It definitely gives us similarity and differences of strategic HRM practices, initiatives and consequences of present study while compared with previous studies. Human factor is an essential and taken into the account by any businesses for sustaining their growth takes place attracting plenty of customers through providing best of quality of products and services in the competitive market. It also emphasized that HRM is an essential segment of the business to be managed with great care while adopting the expansion strategy in the operations. Competitiveness has to be improved and employees were required to be empowered by making centralization of the HR practices [46]. Some issues were related to the staffing policies and training of

employees for stimulating creativity and innovation in the business sustainability. In this context, the present study outcome contributed that strategic HRM practice that of staffing, learning & development, performance appraisal and compensation strategies inculcated positive engagement amongst the employees in terms of cognitive and emotional which could be important factor for organization growth and sustainability. Researcher mentioned that employer practices influences on employee engagement and commitment which were key factors to shape up business results and sustainability [47].

On the other hand, the present study also contributed that strategic HRM practices' dimensions like staffing, learning & development, performance appraisal, compensation were plot form for building work culture by shared vision, flexible work environment and reinforcement. In addition to that, flexible work environment which is a variable of building work culture construct positively correlated with SCA dimension of unique value. Employee engagement variables also positively correlated with SCA dimensions. It showed that there was direct relationship between building work culture, employee engagement and sustained competitive advantage. It also observed that there was an impact on sustained competitive advantage by the HRM initiatives and consequences. In connecting with the work of [48] the approach of SHRM was an inherent segment of the organizations success in attaining the defined mission and business strategy. This practice was aimed at establishing a link between the key workforce and strategic goals, which are important for sustaining improvements in the business performance and establishment of culture that promotes the drive for innovation and flexibility.

## VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

We had crisis to cover larger population for data collection, as we knew that social science researchers have big laboratory called social laboratory, but, by using survey method to collect especially in India is very difficult.

Many of the HRM professionals had not participated in web based survey method because the present study focused on strategic aspect of Human Resource Management which is highly preserved information must not share with others. Hence, we could not collect more data, if we could have collected more data from larger population, the study could definitely yield more accurate results.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The Human Resources Management is no longer considered an isolation function by the employer (i.e. the top management) in the organizations. Its achievement has been visible everywhere irrespective of private, public, MNCs. Recognizing the importance of the human elements in the future success of business means that while framing strategy for the organization success and for sustainability, the human resource department have to be played vital role in order to developing strategies with respect to HR best practices like staffing, learning & development, performance appraisal, compensation and so on. Hence, these HR best practices could be linked with other important factors could be an establishment of a positive culture which provides an arena for shared vision, building flexible work environment. Moreover, strategy HR practices are also a wonderful tool to bring work culture into the organization in terms of reinforcing human elements in order to provide best of the best products and services for the organization in the competitive market. Even though, the strategic HR practices promoted a very good work culture into the organization, it might not be sufficient to coordinate human elements to produce best products and services which are needed for organizational success especially in Indian competitive market. Undoubtedly, the human resource management professionals have to work for employee engagement towards their task, assignment and work place. However, if the employers are very keen on framing strategies for human elements in order to delivering a quality products and services to attract their customers in competitive market, they have to get attention from human resource professionals from the building work culture and employee engagement context.

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