

## **The relationship between strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance by mediating role of employee behavior in Jordanian telecommunication companies**

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**Abstract.** The Jordanian telecommunication sector is still under pressure from a drop in net profits due to several factors that have been accumulating for years. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance by mediating role of employee behavior in Jordanian telecommunication companies. This study used a survey questionnaire as the main technique for data collection. A total of 327 questionnaires were distributed to the employees in Jordanian telecommunication companies (Zain, Umniah, and Orange), while 308 questionnaires usable were collected. The results of this study indicated that strategic human resource management practices have a positive relationship with organizational performance. Moreover, the results indicated that strategic human resource management practices have a positive relationship with employee behavior. The results show also that employee behavior mediated the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance. This study recommends the decision-makers and managers in the Jordanian telecommunication companies to provide sufficient training and development programs, a high compensation, fair performance appraisal, recruitment & selection programs, participation in making decisions, which will certainly contribute to improve organizational performance.

**Keywords:** Strategic Human Resource Management Practices, Organizational Performance, Employee Behavior

### **1. Introduction**

The financial statements of the three main telecommunication companies' operators in Jordan (Orange, Zain, and Umniah) confirm a decline in net profit during the first half of 2018 compared to the same period of 2017, continuing the series of decline in profits, which has been evident since 2012 (Al-Mbaideen, 2018). The penetration rate in Jordan exceeded 120% according to the statistics of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRC), meaning that revenue growth is declining year by year in cost to achieve efficiency. Therefore, the telecom operator in Jordan needs to maintain sustainability, financial stability, and profitability (Hardan, & Shatnawi, 2013). The telecommunications sector in Jordan is undergoing rapid innovation. All this affects the profitability margins of products and services, which will urge management to devote more efforts to improve

cost and expenditure through the design of appropriate cost tools and systems (Hardan, & Shatnawi, 2013; Motaz, Mutia, & Ghaith, 2021).

The relationship between human resources management practices and organizational performance has received considerable research attention, generally focusing on large companies from developed countries, to the omission of studies focusing on companies in developing countries (Abdallah, Mastura, & Ghaith, 2021; Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016). Moreover, little is known about human resources management practices in either Jordan or other Arab countries (Altarawneh, 2009; Ghaith, Enas, Mutia, & Abdul Malek, 2018). Aladwan, Bhanugopan, and Fish (2014) indicated that human resources management in Jordan has not yet received due attention. Jordan's HRM policies and practices are strongly influenced by national cultural values in Jordan (Aladwan, Bhanugopan & Fish, 2014; Ghaith, Mutia, Mayssoon, & Abdul Malek, 2018). In addition, there is no clear evidence regarding the involvement of HR managers in strategic decision-making or the design and establishment of HR practices in the public and private sectors in Jordan (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2006).

In Jordanian organizations, recruitment and selection of employees is largely inadequate and needs effective attention if it is aimed at promoting and supporting the competitive advantage of the business it represents (Al Fayyad, 2005; Ghaith, 2020). This is reflected in the fact that job analysis and job descriptions are often implemented but are never referred to in the recruitment and selection process (Aladwan, Bhanugopan & Fish, 2014). Also, in Jordanian institutions, literature shows that recruitment and selection are fraught with problems. This can be interpreted as rarely dependent on merit and ability; and is hardly systematic or objective (Aladwan, Bhanugopan & Fish, 2014). Moreover, in Jordanian organizations, training and development remain not an important function contributing to organizational success. Instead, this function is considered a holiday or leisure activity is usually given to friends or relatives of managers. Furthermore, the performance appraisal system has not received adequate attention in Jordanian institutions and is not fully appreciated, and Jordanian employees continue to express their negative feelings towards this practice (Aladwan, Bhanugopan & Fish, 2014).

Another important variable in this study is employee behavior or organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior is a business behavior that has positive effects on the organization's performance (Romle, Talib & Shahuri, 2016; Ghaith & Mutia, 2019). Organizational citizenship behavior or employee behavior can easily be understood as different forms of collaboration and assistance to others who support the social and organizational psychological context (Abdullah et al., 2019). Employee behavior is known as a science that examines human behavior in the organization and how these behaviors affect their organization (Romle, Talib & Shahuri, 2016). The researchers suggested that organizational citizenship behavior enhances organizational effectiveness, and organizational success requires staff to perform more than their usual duties and perform better than expected (Ariani, 2012; Ghaith & Mutia, 2019).

Prior studies found that employee behavior has a positive relationship with employee performance and organizational performance (e.g., Romle, Talib & Shahuri, 2016; Sadeghi, Ahmadi & Yazdi, 2016). AL-Khasawneh and AL-Shehri (2017) indicated that employee behavior has a positive relationship with the performance of Jordanian telecommunication companies. As well, prior studies found a positive relationship between HR practices and employee behavior (e.g., Tang & Tang, 2012; Tinti et al., 2017). Thus, it is indicated that the relationship between HRM practices and organizational performance is not direct, may include some mediator or moderator variable. Hence, Ogunyomi and Burning (2016) recommended considering a mediator or moderator variables such as culture which reflect behavior in the mentioned relationship. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance by mediating role of employee behavior in Jordanian telecommunication companies.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Strategic Human Resource Management Practices**

Despite the significant role that strategic human resource management practices play in theories of, and tries to describe, understand, criticize and alter organizations and concepts of strong structures and functioning, it is nearly difficult to define strategic human resource management practices, or perhaps immediately because of that. There is no such thing as strategic human resource management practices because it is a set of events rather than a unitary phenomenon. It is made up of very different events including prescriptions, models, theories, and reviews

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(Saha et al., 2019). Comparing it to human resource management is the best way to comprehend strategic human resource management. Human resources management focuses on recruiting and employing the finest staff and supplying them with the necessary compensation, advantages, training, and advancement within an organization (Wright, Nyberg & Ployhart, 2018). However, strategic human resource management practices take these duties one step further by aligning them with other department's objectives and general company objectives. Human resources management units that exercise strategic management also guarantee that all of their goals are aligned with the vision, mission, values, and objectives of the organization (Wright, Nyberg & Ployhart, 2018).

Strategic human resource management practices are the practice of attracting, developing, rewarding, and maintaining staff for the advantage of both individual staff and the organization as a whole. Human resource management departments that exercise strategic human resource management do not function separately within a silo; they communicate with other departments within an organization to comprehend their goals and then develop policies that align with those goals as well as the organization's goals (Donnelly, 2019). Strategic human resource management practices as opposed to a need for legal compliance or compensation are seen as a partner in firm achievement. Strategic human resource management practices make use of the human resources department's talent and chance to make other departments stronger and more efficient (Donnelly, 2019).

Overall, strategic human resource management practices are concerned with problems and procedures affecting individuals or being influenced by the organization's strategic plan. The key problems facing an organization in today's setting are primarily human problems, such as ensuring people's accessibility, maintaining, motivating, and developing these resources (Al Dalaien, Ibrahim & Aburumman, 2020; Saha et al., 2019). Today, on products or markets, an organization is competing for less and more on individuals. In the 21st century, there is increasing recognition among management thinkers and practitioners of the potential of human capital resources in providing a competitive advantage (Saha et al., 2019).

### **2.2 Employee Behavior**

It is recognized that to maintain the competitive advantage for an organization, the organization needs to raise not only the behaviors of employees in-role behavior but their extra-role behaviors that go beyond their specific task (Ghaith, 2020; Zhai, 2010). Individual behavior and individual performance-related concepts. Sonnentag and Frese (2001) state individual performance has two dimensions as behavior and results. Based on the perspective of the behavior of the organizational role, roles define expected behaviors and establish job descriptions, expectations, and stereotypes (Vandyne, Cummings & Parks, 1995).

Williams and Anderson (1991) define in-role behavior as "the behavior recognized informal reward systems and forms part of the requirements as described in the job description". Extra-role behavior is defined as "behavior that exceeds the requirements of a specific role and is directed towards the individual, group or organization as a unit, to enhance organizational objectives" (Ghaith, 2020; Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2000). Factors that affect the classification of specific behavior as in-role or extra-role include particularistic characteristics (observer and actor); relational characteristics (specific relationship between observer and actor); and dynamic characteristics (changes in the actor's perceived capability during time), (Van Dyne, Cummings & Parks, 1995).

The practical importance of employee behavior is to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness by contributing to resource transfers, creativity, and adaptability. According to Organ, (1988), one of the widely used concepts of employee behavior in literature review comprises five dimensions are conscientiousness, civic virtue, altruism, courtesy, and sportsmanship. Another major conceptualization of employee behavior, suggested by Williams and Anderson (1991), is reduced to two dimensions: (1) employee behaviors that benefit the organization in general (e.g., giving prior notice when they cannot attend work); and (2) employee behavior which immediately benefits individuals and indirectly through these means in the organization (e.g., helping others who have been absent).

Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, and Blume (2009) proposing and finding the relationship between employee behavior and individual results through meta-analysis, including the positive effects of employee behavior on managers' ratings of employee performance and allocation bonus decisions, negative effects on employee turnover intention and employee absenteeism. Even if the employee behavior positively affects individual and

organizational performance, employee behavior bonuses are indirect, uncertain, and contractually unsecured by the formal reward system (Organ, 1988; Ghaith & Mutia, 2019; Mutia, Ghaith, & Ahmad, 2017).

According to Organ's (1988) conceptual definition, employee behavior can enhance organizational effectiveness when aggregated over time and people. Conceptually, Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, and Blume (2000) summarize the potential causes for employee behavior to contribute to organizational success are: (1) enhancing joint productivity and administrative productivity; (2) freeing resources so that they can be used for more productive purposes; (3) reducing the need to allocate scarce resources for purely maintenance functions; (4) assist in coordinating activities within and between working groups; and (5) strengthen the organization's ability to attract and retain the best employees.

### **2.3 Organizational Performance**

Performance is converting inputs to outputs to achieve certain results; in terms of content, the performance relates to the relationship between the minimum and the cost-effective (economy), between the effective cost and the output (efficiency), and between output and achieved outcome (effectiveness) (Chien, 2004; Yousef, Hazril, & Ghaith, 2021). Performance and effectiveness are interchangeably seen as similar concepts by researchers for decades (Henry, 2004). Henry (2004) points out that organizational effectiveness is the outcome of organization activities while performance measurement consists of an evaluation tool to measure effectiveness. According to Henry (2004), organizational effectiveness reflects a structural perspective where the focus is on defining the concept in terms of assessment and perception.

Henry (2004) summarizes five models that reflect the richness of organizational effectiveness: (i) the target model, measures effectiveness from achieving goals and objectives; (ii) system model, focus organization system measurement from inputs, convert process to outputs; (iii) the strategic departments model is the satisfaction of external and internal stakeholders to ensure effectiveness; (iv) the model of competing values extends to the organization of past models and methods as a set of competing values; and (v) Ineffectiveness model assumes that it is more reliable to identify problems and errors in institutions, so effectiveness is to reduce factors that prevent organizational performance.

Organizational performance structures include variables such as competitive advantage, profits, costs, customer satisfaction, sales revenue, and market share (Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016). Large organizations use both financial and non-financial measures to assess organizational performance (Malina & Selto, 2004). In profit-oriented organizations, organizational performance is the ability of a company to reach objectives like high profit, quality product, good financial results, and survival at a pre-determined time using a relevant strategy for action (Koontz & Donnell, 1993). Organizational performance can be used to view how an organization is doing in terms of the level of profit, market share, and product quality of other organizations in the same industry. Consequently, it is a reflection of the productivity of members of an organization measured in terms of revenue, profit, growth, development, and expansion of the organization (Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa & Nwankwere 2011).

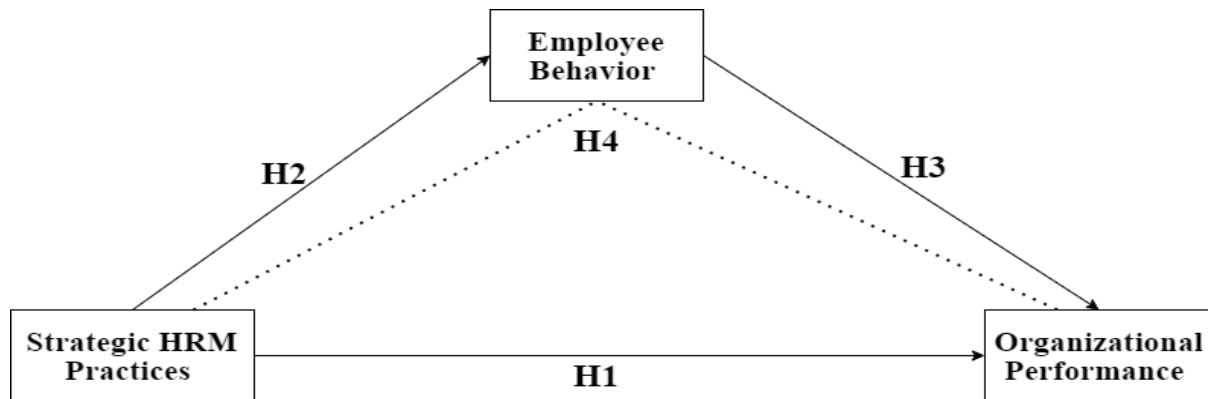
Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis (2007) indicated that the determination of organizational performance, for many organizations, is by the organization's ability to use its resources to predict its future. Today, more organizations are seeing their employees as their most valuable resources. Bolman and Deal (2003) explained that the measurement of organizational success today is based on the organization's ability to set up a structure that is close to a family arrangement. The structure of the organization has proven to be an essential factor when examining success in maintaining employees and customers (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner & Gremler, 2008). The practice of reviewing structures has become a good example for upcoming organizations dictating that employees are important to the performance of organizations and should be valued when making everyday decisions (Aburumman, Salleh & Omar, 2020). Approximately, there are many different criteria to evaluate organizational performance, ranges from organizational stability to employee turnover rate, from productivity to profit and revenue, and from organization's growth to stock values (Cohen & Bradford, 2005).

### **3. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development**

This study used social exchange theory to developed the theoretical framework of this study. The researchers indicated that social exchange theory is based on the principle of reciprocity (Karim, Majid, Omar & Aburumman, 2021; Ghaith, 2020; Salleh et al., 2020; Zamanan et al., 2020). The principle of reciprocity refers to the equal

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exchange of either positive or negative commitments between any party (Aburumman, Salleh, Omar & Abadi, 2020). Thus, if Jordanian telecommunication companies provide to employees' a positive behavior such as training & development programs, high compensation system, fair performance appraisal, recruitment & selection programs, effective participation for employees, employees will behave similarly and will commit to positive behaviors by improving and increasing organizational performance such as competitive advantage, profits, costs, customer satisfaction, sales revenue, and market share. Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework of this study.



**Figure 1:** Theoretical framework of this study

Based on the previous discussion, the next hypotheses have been developed, as follow:

**Hypothesis 1:** Strategic human resource management practices have a positive relationship with organizational performance in Jordanian telecommunication companies.

**Hypothesis 2:** Strategic human resource management practices have a positive relationship with employees' behavior in Jordanian telecommunication companies.

**Hypothesis 3:** Employees' behavior has a positive relationship with organizational performance in Jordanian telecommunication companies.

**Hypothesis 4:** Employees' behaviors mediate the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance in Jordanian telecommunication companies.

#### 4. Research Methodology

This study used a survey questionnaire as main technique to data collection. The target population of this study includes Jordanian telecommunication companies (Zain, Umniah, and Orange). All these companies are located in Amman, which is the capital city of Jordan and the total number of employees in these companies is 2125 (Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, 2020). As the number of employees working in these companies is 2125, the appropriate sample size should be 327, as suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and Sekaran (2003). Hence, a total of 327 questionnaires were distributed to the employees in Jordanian telecommunication companies (Zain, Umniah, and Orange), while 308 questionnaires usable were collected. Thus, the response rate was 94.1%.

Regarding the measurements of the survey questionnaire, strategic human resource management practices (recruitment and selection, training and development, participation, performance appraisal, and compensation) were measured using a scale of Chen and Huang (2009) which consists of sixteen items. Employee behavior was measure using a scale of Organ and Konovsky (1989) which consists of four items. Organizational performance was measure using a scale of Mafini and Poee (2013) which consists of thirty-three items. All these items were measured by a 5-point Likert scale.

#### 5. Data Analysis and Results

Data analysis of this study included two main aspects are assessment of measurement model and structural model using SmartPLS (3.3.3). Assessment of measurement model included convergent validity and discriminant validity. Table 1 shows the results of convergent validity, where all the items have loadings ranged from 0.597 to 0.911 except items of TD1, OP20, and OP22, which have achieved loadings less than 0.4, thus was deleted based on recommendations of Hair et al., (2016). Regarding Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, all variables

achieved values more than 0.7. Meanwhile, all variables achieved values more than 0.5 regarding the average variance extracted. Thus, all variables achieved values greater than the proposed threshold value by Hair et al. (2016).

**Table 1:** Convergent validity analysis

Variable	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	
<b>SHRM Practices</b>	<b>Training and Development</b>	TD2	0.763	<b>0.705</b>	<b>0.833</b>	<b>0.626</b>
		TD3	0.739			
		TD4	0.865			
	<b>Compensation</b>	COM1	0.903	<b>0.869</b>	<b>0.920</b>	<b>0.793</b>
		COM2	0.862			
		COM3	0.906			
	<b>Performance Appraisal</b>	PA1	0.883	<b>0.840</b>	<b>0.904</b>	<b>0.759</b>
		PA2	0.819			
		PA3	0.910			
	<b>Recruitment and Selection</b>	RS1	0.861	<b>0.747</b>	<b>0.856</b>	<b>0.666</b>
		RS2	0.699			
		RS3	0.877			
	<b>Participation</b>	PAR1	0.871	<b>0.852</b>	<b>0.910</b>	<b>0.771</b>
		PAR2	0.904			
		PAR3	0.858			
	<b>Employee Behavior</b>	EP1	0.907	<b>0.880</b>	<b>0.918</b>	<b>0.738</b>
		EP2	0.911			
		EP3	0.696			
		EP4	0.904			
	<b>Organizational Performance</b>	OP1	0.783	<b>0.973</b>	<b>0.975</b>	<b>0.559</b>
		OP2	0.636			
		OP3	0.822			
		OP4	0.786			
		OP5	0.627			
		OP6	0.805			
		OP7	0.665			
		OP8	0.688			
		OP9	0.832			
OP10		0.797				
OP11		0.651				
OP12		0.785				
OP13		0.807				
OP14		0.646				
OP15		0.855				
OP16		0.710				
OP17		0.718				
OP18		0.688				
OP19		0.599				
OP21		0.597				
OP23		0.761				
OP24		0.811				
OP25		0.832				
OP26		0.657				
OP27		0.761				
OP28		0.793				

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OP29	0.840
OP30	0.824
OP31	0.742
OP32	0.771
OP33	0.757

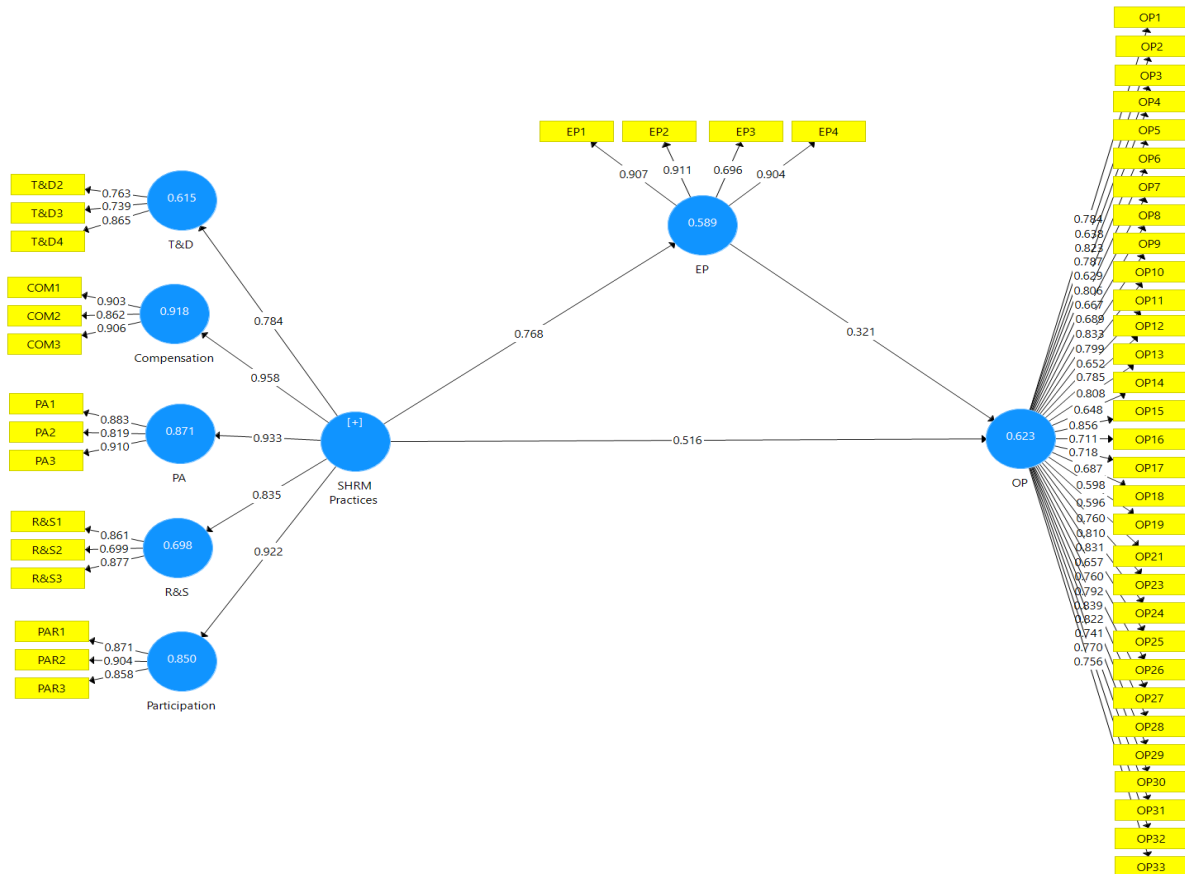
Note: Item TD1 deleted since it has loading of 0.250; Item OP20 deleted since it has loading of 0.341; Item OP22 deleted since it has loading of 0.357

Discriminant validity was investigated based on Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Table 2 shows HTMT values were all smaller than 0.85 for each construct and were within the range of 0.749 to 0.822 (Hair et al., 2016).

**Table 2:** HTMT ratio of correlations

Variable	SHRM Practices	Employee Behavior	Organizational Performance
SHRM Practices			
Employee Behavior	0.822		
Organizational Performance	0.779	0.749	

In order to the hypotheses testing, the path coefficients were created using the PLS algorithm embedded with SmartPLS (3.3.3) as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2:** Path Coefficients

After created the path coefficients, the next step was testing the P-Values and T-Values for each path coefficient in order to conclude whether the hypotheses are statistically significant or insignificant using bootstrapping techniques embedded with SmartPLS (3.3.3). Table 3 shown the hypotheses test.

**Table 3:** Results of hypothesis testing

No.	Hypotheses	Path Coefficient	SE	T-Value	P-Value	LL	UL	Decision
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<b>H1</b>	SHRMP→OP	0.516	0.054	9.493	0.000*	0.405	0.619	Supported
<b>H2</b>	SHRMP→EB	0.768	0.026	29.364	0.000*	0.711	0.813	Supported
<b>H3</b>	EB→OP	0.321	0.054	5.969	0.000*	0.217	0.427	Supported

Note: \*: p<0.001

As shown in Table 3, strategic human resource management practices have a positive relationship with organizational performance in Jordanian telecommunication companies (Path Coefficient = 0.516; T-Value = 9.493; P-Value = 0.000; 95% LL= 0.405; 95% UL= 0.619), therefore H1 was supported. Moreover, strategic human resource management practices have a positive relationship with employees' behavior in Jordanian telecommunication companies (Path Coefficient = 0.768; T-Value = 29.364; P-Value = 0.000; 95% LL= 0.711; 95% UL= 0.813), therefore H2 was supported. In contrast, employees' behavior has a positive relationship with organizational performance in Jordanian telecommunication companies (Path Coefficient = 0.321; T-Value = 5.969; P-Value = 0.000; 95% LL= 0.217; 95% UL= 0.427), therefore H3 was supported. Regarding the mediating effect of employees' behavior, as shown in Table 4, employees' behavior mediated the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance in Jordanian telecommunication companies (Indirect Effect = 0.246; T-Value 5.831; P-Value = 0.000; 95% LL= 0.167; 95% UL= 0.331), therefore H4 was supported.

**Table 4:** Results of mediating test

No.	Hypotheses	Path Coefficient	SE	T-Value	P-Value	LL	UL	Decision
<b>H4</b>	SHRMP→EB →OP	0.246	0.042	5.831	0.000*	0.167	0.331	Supported

Note: \*: p<0.001

## 6. Conclusion

This study aims to examine the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance by mediating role of employee behavior in Jordanian telecommunication companies. The results of this study indicated that strategic human resource management practices (training & development, compensation, performance appraisal, recruitment & selection, participation) have a positive relationship with organizational performance. According to this result, that strategic human resource management practices (training & development, compensation, performance appraisal, recruitment & selection, participation) caused positive emotions that affected the organizational performance of employees in Jordanian telecommunication companies. Moreover, the results of this study indicated that strategic human resource management practices (training & development, compensation, performance appraisal, recruitment & selection, participation) have a positive relationship with employee behavior. According to this result, that strategic human resource management practices (training & development, compensation, performance appraisal, recruitment & selection, participation) caused positive emotions that affected the employee behavior in Jordanian telecommunication companies.

The results of this study also indicated that employee behavior had a positive relationship with organizational performance. According to this result, that employee behavior caused positive emotions that affected the organizational performance for employees in Jordanian telecommunication companies. Moreover, the results of this study show that employee behavior mediated the relationship between strategic human resource management practices (training & development, compensation, performance appraisal, recruitment & selection, participation) and organizational performance, from the perspective of employees in the Jordanian telecommunication companies.

This study provides a group of recommendations to Jordanian telecommunication companies. First, employee behavior was found to mediate the relationship between strategic human resource management practices (training & development, compensation, performance appraisal, recruitment & selection, participation) and organizational performance. Thus, this study recommends the decision-makers and managers in the Jordanian telecommunication companies to provide sufficient training and development programs, a high compensation, fair performance appraisal, recruitment & selection programs, participation in making decisions. Moreover, through the provision of these practices, the Jordanian telecommunication companies will ensure that employees enjoy a high level of



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effectiveness, which will certainly contribute to improve organizational performance. The decision-makers and managers in the Jordanian telecommunication companies should provide the fullest possible support (financial, physical, and moral) to the HRM department in designing and implementing the HRM practices. This can be achieved through creating an environment for continuous training and development, where the existence of a more comprehensive training and career development program can help in motivating and improving employee behavior, and also uplift their loyalty level. In addition, the compensation (salary, rewards, and benefits) boost employees' morale and loyalty, therefore decision-makers and managers in the Jordanian telecommunication companies should introduce measures to provide adequate motivation in the form of prompt payment of salary, allowances, and other rewards to deserving employees.

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