

Cultural Dimensions of Human Resource Practices in Saudi Arabia: Navigating Identity, Diversity, and Social Change in STC

Abdelmoti Aburub¹ , Fayiq Khanfar^{2*} 

¹ Department of Business Administration, College of Business, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Email: asaburub@imamu.edu.sa

² College of Business, Limkokwing University, Cyberjaya, Malaysia; Email: Fayiqabdel15@gmail.com

*Corresponding Author: Fayiqabdel15@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of Human Resource (HR) practices on organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement in the Saudi Telecommunications Company (STC), which is based in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The study examined five HR dimensions: cultural diversity management, digital HR transformation, HR practices related to innovation, HR practices related to values, and employee empowerment. A quantitative survey method was informative, including the distribution of data through 300 questionnaires to STC employees, with 250 valid for statistical analysis using SPSS 28. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression statistical methods were employed. The study results revealed that all five dimensions related to HR enhanced organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement with significance. These study results emphasize consideration for strategies that include aspects of cultural awareness, technology in HR, and innovative and values-based strategies to promote employee engagement, commitment, and resilience within the organization. This study contributes to the strategic HRM literature of emerging economies and presents to strategic HR leaders' important implications for practices that complement the goals of Saudi Vision 2030.

Keywords: Human Resource Practices, Cultural Diversity, Employee Engagement, Organizational Adaptation, Innovation-Oriented HR, Values-Driven HR, STC in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia witnessed transformative changes in its economy, culture, and technology because of Vision 2030, the national transformation program focused on diversifying the economy and developing socio-cultural modernization. As societal changes and shifts in HRM practices redefine sectors and ways to negotiate employee HRM practices in both the private and public sectors (Abubakar et al., 2024). To illustrate, there are convergences of a national culture, modernization, and technology, as demonstrated through the Saudi Telecom Company (STC), a digitally innovative organization. The STC exists in an interstitial space of traditional identity, innovation, and competitiveness in the global marketplace, and as a social practice, HR is enabling strategic engagement in leading transformational change. Given particularly the Saudi cultural context of collectivism, there are implications for employee expectations of organizational behavior (AlShehri, 2024). There are also convergences with the context (cultural, workforce, etc.) to the HR future expected norms, because the transformational HR landscape exists at the intersection of globalization and digital transformation of HR paradigms operationalizing in future agility, employees as organizational partners, inclusion, and employee empowerment. The tension between traditional work and contemporary forms of work brings a sense of urgency for organizations to create a more dynamic HR system that can adequately accommodate cultural diversity, new

technologies, and the cultural values of the organization. In the case of STC, there are culturally settled notions that will have to co-exist with, and ultimately welcome today's emergent forms of managerial practices that are arguably reconfiguring international forms of being (Frontiers in Psychology, 2025). The other transformative element is the push towards digital transformation in HR. New technologies, including AI, data-analytics, cloud-based HR systems, etc., are signaling new ways organizations can engage in recruitment, performance management, and even employee engagement (AL Shalhoob, 2025). Therefore, the shift to HR transformation should not be merely thought of in terms of technology changes, but rather a metamorphic change in the culturally bound social norms used in organizational decisions and in the employee/organization relationship (Rahman et al, 2023). For example, customary Saudi institutional environments for human resource (HR) decision-making are typically framed through a lens of authority, relationship and traditions embedded in the local context. Digital HR will transform HR decision-making for certain, while it may still consider contexts of authority, relationships, practices and traditions, it will still influence some more digital HR practices of transparency, a decentralized process and more employee involvement. Therefore, it too must be framed by contextual factors in which cultural identity and HR digitalization can co-exist, in a context of organization. The factor of shift to managerial framing around cultural diversity has impacted base employee factors, whereby there is now more intentionality-driven employee base that involves women, expats, and youth (that is: a heterogeneous workforce) that is being used for innovation which is of course a challenge through management of the cultural factor and dealing with organizational culture (Abubakar et al, 2024). Attending to a diversity factor in managerial framing and engagement work (if diversity management is effective, it is constructive) has the ability for intention inclusion in practice to translate to 'global', and best practice that reasonably consider, even with organizational goal of STC's vision, the diversity factor unique to Saudi customs. With respect to technology in relation to a diversity presence in the outlook for HR, and how diversity practices shape values and innovation with HR practices that is, and/or deeply rooted, through statements about values (or attributes), trust, dignity, collaboration and service excellence are seen as strategic 'enablers' of the STC's resources engagement to the potential for a strong cohesive and agile organizational culture (Al Shehri, 2023). These sets of HR values and practice may also, and importantly, provide for employee agency by being included in the decision making process, based in the value of employee agency for organizational engagement in the innovation process for the intention of promoting engagement and to further enhance valuing culture, and valuing the role of employees in the workplace (Raman, et at, 2023). These HR engagement influence factors translate and are also distinct.

When looking into the literature that is published around HR transformation or digitalization and HR process change, there is not much literature around how multiple dimensions of HR exist or coexist in Saudi context at a single organization or at a national level multidimensional occurrence - specifically the case of national level adjustment (Abubakar et al, 2024). Past study seems to focus on framing a study on HR transformation, framing a case study on HR digitalization, or HR and/or empowerment studies, and does not look at processes around HR practices, as well as cultural, social and value dimensions of HR practices which shape organizational behavior (Al Shalhoob, 2024). The absence of many of these concepts weakens the case for framing for a holistic approach of demonstrating the connections with multi-dimensions of HR and improving cultural diversity management, HR digital transformation thinking, innovative HR practices, HR values, employee agency and engagement to respond multilayered and appropriately for improvement in organizational responses of cultural adaptation design even to encourage employee engagement. Therefore, there is a need to consider the multi HR dimensions around how these operate distinctively but relationally to support the organizational culture of adaptation, and engagement on the level of organization for example the STC organization - as a Saudi organization, as it was still an important organization to study - specifically by examining STC as a key organization for initiative and transformation to examine perception and therefore rich view to examine HR in the theoretical consequential sense of organization, by examining overall indicative value of human resources engagement.

Research Problem

Despite organizations in Saudi Arabia rapidly undergoing digital transformation, there is no evidence as to what this means for the practice of human resources human capital and employee engagement, not complexities for organizations thinking of change with the cultural dimensions of change. While it appears that Saudi Vision 2030 necessitates innovation, greater employee diversity, employee empowerment will continue for organizations to improve repair, and continuity under the ongoing challenges of competing local traditions and current HR practice Alyamani (2025). HR transformation involving digitalization and diversity, workplace culture could create a positive structure for human resource and engagement within the workplace but the connection in reference to digital transformation, diversity culture and organizational culture in Saudi Arabia has not been explore. Gutterman, Alan S. (2023). In addition, as noted in this study the vast majority of studies cited in the literature base their literature on historical adjacent Gulf states and challenge their limitations, identity claim(s)

with a limited explaining power of an organization(s), for example, STC, also how organizations straddle tensions or affordances of the local/identity related to how the accompany change of the global shift of HR for social change within the organization .Amamou, M. (2025). The literature does depict clearly there is an urgent reconsideration, or exploration of possibilities for the divide that presently exist in each, innovation, values, and empowered human capital, through cultural ability and engagement in the context of culture in Saudi Arabia.

Research Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to analyze the impact of cultural dimensions on human resource (HR) practices and their effect on organizational cultural adaption and employee engagement at the Saudi Telecom Company (STC). The study specifically intends to:

- Investigate the impact of cultural diversity management on organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement in STC.
- Explore the role of digital HR transformation in facilitating employee engagement and cultural integration.
- Analyze how innovation-oriented HR practices enhance employees' adaptability and participation in organizational change.
- Examine the influence of value-driven HR practices on maintaining organizational identity while promoting diversity.
- Assess how employee empowerment practices contribute to employee engagement and the development of an adaptive organizational culture.
- Propose a conceptual model explaining how these HR practices collectively influence organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement in the Saudi context.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

- How does cultural diversity management affect organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement within STC?
- What is the impact of digital HR transformation on employee engagement and cultural adaptation in a Saudi organizational setting?
- To what extent do innovation-oriented HR practices contribute to employees' adaptability and engagement in STC?
- How do values-driven HR practices help balance Saudi cultural identity with the demands of modernization and diversity?
- What role do employee empowerment practices play in fostering organizational cultural adaptation and engagement?
- How can an integrated HR framework support STC's transformation toward a more inclusive, innovative, and adaptive culture?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Cultural Diversity Management and Organizational Adaptation

Cultural diversity management involves intentional and organizational auditions to recognize, value, and capitalize on employees from a variety of different cultural backgrounds (Shore et al.,2011). Beneficial diversity management can contribute to inclusion, innovation, and safety, which may all be factors used in the preadaptation of a work culture (Inegbedion et al., 2020). Presently the issue of workplace diversity is being incentivized in Saudi Arabia through Vision 2030 reforms and international talent entering the Saudi marketplace, as well as demographic characteristics of increasing numbers of women in the workforce (Alyamani, 2025).

Nevertheless, challenges remain in diversity management approaches, with special regard to a society whose view may have a collectivist inclination, culturally normative behavioral patterns may fully encumber full depth of implementation, and challenge a transactional human resources approach regarding human resources practice because of globalization of practices. Gutterman, Alan S. (2023). STC as a nationally owned telecommunications organization has a dual-call to maintain a Saudi identity while moderating intercultural interactions working together, while being socially legitimized in the international marketplace, while ethically portrayed with regard to the localization of socially conducive workplace environments. All in all, there is still a degree of organizational flexibility to the constructed culture in the intercultural engagement of employees.

According to Tajfel and Turner (2004), Social Identity Theory, employee beliefs that they are included and their difference is validated in cultural various workplace cultures that are respectful of these differences, increases the likelihood that the employee would identify with the organization; therefore, increasing engagement.

Digital HR Transformation and Employee Engagement

The term digital HR transformation highlights the introduction of technology into HR functions and employee experience. Huynh ThiThu, (2025). Examples of digital HR transformation include AI recruitments, an electronic performance system, and an electronic learning system which include personalized opportunities for development. In Saudi Arabia, companies such as STC (Saudi Telecommunication Company) launched some digital HR systems (Alsaman, 2025).

The digital transformation leads to real-time feedback, data-driven decision-making, and eliminate formal work at will employee engagement (Kalburgi, 2025) its meaning and assessment parts of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989). Where employees perceive there is value in the use of technology, and it is easy to use, employees became motivated and engaged. However, cultural resistance and lack of digital competencies, will diminish that opportunity. Therefore, it is crucial to maintain a balance of innovation with cultural readiness for successful digital HR initiatives at STC, in relation to both adaptability and employee engagement.

Innovation-Oriented HR Practices and Cultural Adaptation

Human Resource practices aimed at fostering innovation must emphasize creativity, a propensity for learning, and a willingness to take risks Jatobá, M., Fernandes, C. I., Gunkel, M., & Kraus, S. (2021). Possible approaches encompass flexible work arrangements, participation in creative problem-solving groups, and behavioral performance systems that intentionally promote experimentation. The imperative for STC to innovate aligns with one of the three objectives outlined in Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 strategic framework aimed at transitioning to a knowledge-based economy.

The HR strategy designed to foster innovation would cultivate a psychological atmosphere conducive to flexibility, a crucial aspect of engagement in cultural transformation (Jameel, 2025). Employee-centered HR methods that provide platforms for continuous learning and information exchange foster resilience and adaptability in employees to embrace change (Al-Shammari, 2024).

Rooted in the Resource-Based View (Alvarez & Barney, 2022), innovative HRM systems can be regarded as capabilities or strategic resources that sustain competitive advantage through employee engagement and adaptability. For STC, an innovation-oriented human resource management will be crucial for facilitating swift adaptation to technical and cultural transformations.

Values-Driven HR Practices and Organizational Identity

Human resource policies that operate in support of innovation need to emphasize creativity, curiosity to learn, and risk-taking (Riana et al., 2020). Possible examples include flexible work arrangements, involvement in creative problem-solving groups, and behavioral performance systems that intentionally support risks and experimentation. STC's focus on innovation will be aligned with one of the three pillars of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 to transition to a knowledge economy.

The HR policy intended to support innovation would create a psychological climate that promotes flexibility, which is instrumental in culture change (Vu, Nguyen, & Le, 202). Employee-centered HR approaches that create additional levels of continuous learning and knowledge-sharing platforms build resilience and adaptability in employees and encourage them to adapt to change (Al-Shammari, 2024).

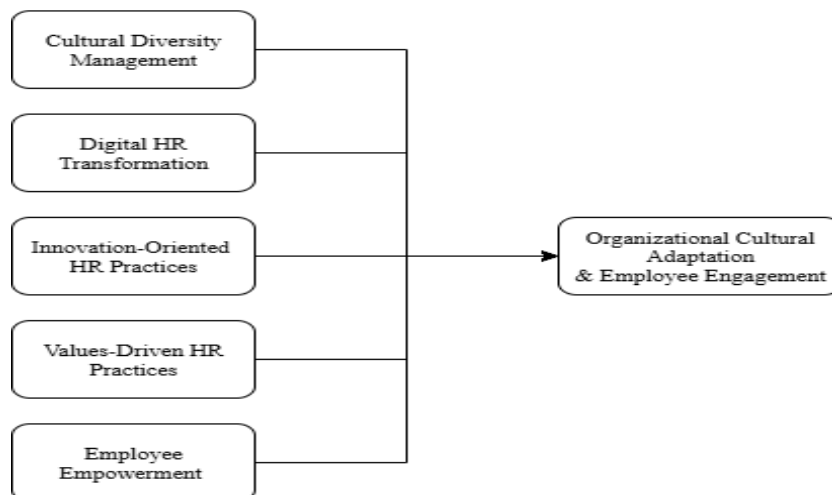
Innovative human resource management systems are understood through the Resource Based View (Alvarez & Barney, 2022) as capabilities or strategic resources that foster and maintain competitive advantage through employee involvement and adaptability. Therefore, for STC, human resource management oriented towards innovation will be very important in relation to the rapid adaptations required by changing technology and the culture) in the future.

Employee Empowerment Practices and Engagement

Employee empowerment refers to employees having autonomy, voice, and decision-making authority within their work roles (Vu, Nguyen, & Le, 202). Empowerment enhances intrinsic motivation, and a sense of ownership is one of the key components of engagement ((Ishfaq & Ali, 2023). In countries such as Saudi Arabia with an established hierarchy in society, empowerment raises the stakes of traditional power relationships among stakeholders by building peer leadership models (and not simply positional leadership) grounded in collaborative problem solving or leadership-by-participation (Al-Shammari, 2024).

Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) states that empowering employees meets their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness that enables them to engage and adapt to their environment in more effective ways. Employees will feel more trusted and empowered to provide creative input and accept change if they feel empowered. Thus, within STC, empowered employees are critical for building a culture of proactivity, innovation, and ongoing development.

Conceptual Model



Cultural Dimensions of Human Resource Practices

Conceptual Model Explanation

This study's conceptual framework implies that developed and values-based human resource (HR) practices may enhance organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement at the Saudi Telecom Company (STC). The (5) key HR practices identified are cultural diversity management, digital HR transformation, innovation-oriented HR practices, values-based HR practices, and employee empowerment practices. Cultural diversity management is relevant to be inclusive and appreciative of diverse cultural identities (Inegbedion et al., 2020). Managing digital HR transformation augments respected communication and flexibility under hybrid working situations (Kalburgi, 2025). Innovation-oriented HR practices apply and adapt individual's creative skills of problem-solving (Jameel, 2025). Values-based HR practices attribute and/or align ethical practices to cultural/religious values associated with Saudi culture and religion to evoke trust, loyalty, and organizational identity (Lu, Zhu, & Zafar, 2023).

And employee empowerment practices relate possible and suggested motivated behaviors through the enactment of strengthening behavior enhancing psychological ownership to elicit employee engagement behavior (Afsar & Umrani, 2020). These HR practices are interrelated resources, an HR practice bundle, to build an organizational resilient culture, which integrates traditionalism and modernism moving forward to sustain STC's success towards both digital and social transformational change (Alyamani, 2025)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative methodology to investigate the impact of diverse HR practices on organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement at the Saudi Telecom Company (STC). The quantitative approach facilitates precise analysis of the interactions among factors and their hypothesized effects through statistical methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Research Design

To investigate the associations among the independent variables (cultural diversity management, digital HR transformation, innovation-oriented HR practices, values-driven HR practices and employee empowerment) and dependent variable (organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement), a descriptive-correlational research design was employed. It is useful when the intent is to understand trends and the influence of multiple dimensions of HR on outcomes from the organizational perspective (Saunders et al, 2019).

Population and Sample

The target population includes HR professionals and STC workers involved in HR initiatives and organizational change work. Participants were recruited through purposive sampling based on engagement in HR activities and knowledge about corporate culture. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, resulting in 250 usable responses for analysis that produced an effective response rate of 83%.

Data Collection Instrument

Data was gathered via a structured questionnaire modified from validated instruments in other studies. The questionnaire comprised six sections, encompassing a total of 35 items, allocated as follows:

- Cultural Diversity Management (6 items): Adapted from (Omoyele & Olabisi, 2020), measuring inclusivity, fairness, and respect for multiple cultural identities.
- Digital HR Transformation (5 items): Based on Ishfaq, F., & Ali, M. (2023), assessing the adoption of digital tools, e-HRM systems, and technology-driven HR processes.
- Innovation-Oriented HR Practices (6 items): Adapted from Jain et al. (2022), capturing employee creativity, idea generation, and support for innovative behaviors.
- Values-Driven HR Practices (5 items): Based on Reis et al. (2023), measuring alignment of HR practices with organizational and cultural values.
- Employee Empowerment Practices (5 items): Adapted from Afsar & Umrani (2020), assessing participation in decision-making, autonomy, and responsibility.
- Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement (8 items): Adapted from Saks (2006, measuring adaptability, engagement, motivation, and commitment.

All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The questionnaire was pre-tested with a pilot group of 20 participants to ensure clarity, reliability, and validity before full distribution.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 28. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage) were utilized to summarize the demographic characteristics of the individuals. Cronbach’s alpha was utilized to assess the reliability of the scales as a measure of internal consistency. Correlation analyses were conducted to assess the relationship between independent variables (cultural diversity management, digital HR transformation, innovation-oriented HR practices, values-driven HR practices, and employee empowerment practices) and dependent variables (organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement). Ultimately, multiple regression analysis was employed to evaluate the predictive influence of HR policies on organizational outcomes. All analyses were conducted with a significant level of $p < 0.05$.

Ethical Considerations

Participants were apprised of the study's objective, guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity, and advised that participation was voluntary. The data were utilized exclusively for academic reasons, in compliance with ethical research norms (Resnik, 2024).

Pilot Study: Questionnaire Reliability Assessment

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Cultural Diversity Management	6	0.84
Digital HR Transformation	5	0.82
Innovation-Oriented HR Practices	6	0.86
Values-Driven HR Practices	5	0.80
Employee Empowerment Practices	5	0.83
Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	8	0.88

Explanation: A pilot study was executed using 30 employees from STC through purposive sampling. The objective was to evaluate the clarity, readability, and reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.80 for all constructs signify substantial internal consistency, validating the reliability of the items for the primary investigation. Minor linguistic modifications were implemented in response to participant input to enhance clarity and comprehension.

Descriptive Statistics

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	140	56%
	Female	110	44%
Age	20-30	60	24%
	31-40	100	40%
	41-50	70	28%
	51+	20	8%
Years of Experience	0-5	50	20%
	6-10	90	36%
	11-15	70	28%
	16+	40	16%

Explanation: The demographic distribution table encapsulates participants' attributes through frequency and proportion for each category. It offers a concise summary of the sample profile prior to analyzing answers to the study constructs.

Means and Standard Deviations for Constructs

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Cultural Diversity Management	4.12	0.56
Digital HR Transformation	3.95	0.62
Innovation-Oriented HR Practices	4.05	0.59
Values-Driven HR Practices	4.08	0.54
Employee Empowerment Practices	4.10	0.57
Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	4.15	0.60

Explanation: This table displays the means and standard deviations for all principal constructions. Means reflect the average degree of consensus among participants for each construct, whereas standard deviations illustrate the range in responses. These statistics elucidate central patterns and variability, facilitating the data's preparation for subsequent analysis, including reliability and correlation assessments.

Reliability Analysis

A reliability analysis was performed to evaluate the internal consistency of the scales employed in the study. Cronbach's alpha (α) was computed for each construct utilizing SPSS 28. An α value of > 0.70 is deemed satisfactory, signifying that the items consistently assess the same underlying construct (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Reliability Level
Cultural Diversity Management	6	0.84	High
Digital HR Transformation	5	0.82	High
Innovation-Oriented HR Practices	6	0.86	High
Values-Driven HR Practices	5	0.80	High

Employee Empowerment Practices	5	0.83	High
Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	8	0.88	High

Explanation: All constructs exhibited strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values over 0.80. This signifies that the elements inside each construct are strongly connected and accurately assess the desired topic. No items require removal, affirming the questionnaire's appropriateness for the primary study.

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was performed to assess the strength and direction of the correlations between the independent variables (IVs) and the dependent variable (DV). The analysis utilized SPSS 28, with significance evaluated at $p < 0.05$.

IV / DV	1	2	3	4	5	DV
1. Cultural Diversity Management	1					0.62**
2. Digital HR Transformation	0.48**	1				0.57**
3. Innovation-Oriented HR Practices	0.52**	0.46**	1			0.61**
4. Values-Driven HR Practices	0.49**	0.42**	0.53**	1		0.58**
5. Employee Empowerment Practices	0.51**	0.44**	0.55**	0.50**	1	0.63**
DV: Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	0.62**	0.57**	0.61**	0.58**	0.63**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Explanation: All independent factors exhibit a positive and substantial correlation with the dependent variable, with coefficients between 0.57 and 0.63. This signifies a robust correlation between HR strategies and company culture adaptation and employee engagement.

Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was performed to assess the predictive influence of the independent factors on the dependent variable. The assumptions of linearity, normalcy, and multicollinearity were verified before analysis.

Predictor Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value	VIF
Cultural Diversity Management	0.21	3.85	0.000	1.45
Digital HR Transformation	0.18	3.20	0.002	1.36
Innovation-Oriented HR Practices	0.19	3.45	0.001	1.42
Values-Driven HR Practices	0.16	2.90	0.004	1.40
Employee Empowerment Practices	0.22	4.00	0.000	1.39

Model Summary:

$$R^2 = 0.68$$

$$\text{Adjusted } R^2 = 0.67$$

$$F = 92.45, p < 0.001$$

Explanation: The regression analysis demonstrates that all HR strategies significantly predict company culture adaptability and employee engagement. The model accounts for 68% of the variance in the dependent variable, indicating a significant impact of HR strategies on improving employee engagement and modifying company culture. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values less than 2 signify the absence of multicollinearity concerns.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: Cultural Diversity Management positively influences Organizational Cultural Adaptation and Employee Engagement.

Explanation: The results suggest that managing cultural diversity is positively associated with the organization's cultural adaptability, as well as employee engagement ($r = 0.62, p < 0.01; \beta = 0.21, t = 3.85, p < 0.001$). In other words, organizations that manage cultural diversity appropriately will develop an organizational culture that promotes cultural adaptability and engagement by employees. In addition, these findings provide

more evidence for a pathway that was indicated in previous work regarding cultural diversity management, particularly through employee engagement, leads to adaptive, and that diversity and inclusion policies lead to cooperation and commitment to the workplace Jackson et al. (2021) also show that simply having a diverse workforce is not sufficient for employee engagement, unless effective mechanisms are in place to manage and integrate cultural diversity into the workplace. These findings, taken together, provide some evidence for Hypothesis 1, and indicate that managing cultural diversity will (a) contribute to adaptive organizational culture and (b) greater employee engagement in SC and STC.

H2: Digital HR Transformation positively influences Organizational Cultural Adaptation and Employee Engagement.

Explanation: The findings show a strong, positive correlation between Digital HR Transformation, Organizational Cultural Adaptation, and Employee Engagement ($r = 0.57$, $p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.18$, $t = 3.20$, $p = 0.002$). This shows that in the practical use of digital HR tools and technologies, communications were improved, and performance was tracked and facilitated learning which led to engagement in one organization and adaptation in the other. Marler and Boudreau (2021) also saw evidence of digital HR systems supporting organizational efficiency and employee engagement, and Strohmeier, S., & Parry, E. (2020) demonstrated how e-HRM could enhance employee engagement and thus, facilitate organizational change. Conversely, other researchers have cautioned that employees may be engaged in the digital transformation process only when they have developed sufficient competence with their digital skills, or when poorly executed digital transformations led to creating substantially less value for employee engagement and employee organizational engagement (Li & Yu, 2022). Overall, and relevance to the current research, findings in the current study for H2 provide evidence of a positive relationship between Digital HR Transformation and Organizational Cultural Adaptation and Employee Engagement in STC.

H3: Innovation-Oriented HR Practices positively influence Organizational Cultural Adaptation and Employee Engagement.

Explanation: The results of the study showed a strong positive correlation between Innovation-Based HRM practices and Organizational Cultural Adaptation centered on the study's employee engagement contributions ($r=0.61$, $p<0.01$; $\beta=0.19$, $t=3.45$, $p=0.001$). This indicates a positive relationship between HRM Practices that support creativity, innovation, idea generation, and learning, but also employee engagement and organizational cultural adaptation which supports the finding of Avolio & Bass, (2020) that HRM Practices supporting employee engagement and practices promoting employee innovation have an influencing impact on commitment and adaptive behaviors. Also shown from the work of Choi and Lee (2022), when collaboration occurs, then working with creative employees positively influences organizational flexibility and employee engagement. Other scholars have also found that HRM practices that are innovation-based can affect the level of external involvement and cultural adaptation, where a prescriptive organizational culture displays less autonomy (Bass & Riggio, (2020).

Scholars certainly recognize this to be true; The study's findings support hypothesis H5 based on a positive correlation between Innovation-Based HRM Practices providing employee engagement and organizational cultural adaptation, in juxtaposition with STC.

H4: Values-Driven HR Practices positively influence Organizational Cultural Adaptation and Employee Engagement.

Explanation: The findings show that Values-Driven HR Practices have a statistically significant positive relationship with Organizational Cultural Adaptation and Employee Engagement ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.16$, $t = 2.90$, $p = 0.004$). This finding implies that Values-Driven HR Practices that are aligned with the core values, ethics, and social responsibility of business may contribute to more employee engagement or an organizational culture that is oriented towards adaptation. This adds to existing research; for example, Albrecht et al., 2020, found that values-driven HR practices were positively related to employee engagement, and improvement in agreement with the organization's context. Kim and Park (2021) - noted values and ethics driven HR practices lowered employees' trust and engagement within organizations. Conversely, some existing research argues values driven HR practices minimally encourage or keep the employee engagement the "same" when there are behaviors counter to "values" (Hassan et al., 2021). The study provides support for H4 in relation to the finding of positive association between Values-Driven HR Practices and Organizational Cultural Adaptation and Employee Engagement at STC.

H5: Employee Empowerment Practices positively influence Organizational Cultural Adaptation and Employee Engagement.

Explanation: The results reveal a substantial positive correlation of Employee Empowerment Practices to Organizational Culture Adaptation and Employee Engagement ($r = 0.63$, $p < .01$; $\beta = .22$, $t = 4.00$, $p < .001$). A positive correlation suggests that when an organization allows employees to be empowered by decision making, the employee wishes to act autonomously, which may be provided opportunities to act autonomously, which increases engagement to the employer, and a clear sign of adapting to an organizational culture. The observations correlate with Spreitzer (1995) that engaged and therefore empowered employees improve Employee Engagement, including constructs of engagement is not developed in isolation, rather as a commitment, initiative, and the ability to act and/or engage, in addition to the empowerment element, Zhang and Bartol (2019) also note that Employee Empowerment Practices can enhance overall organizational and employee flexibility and responsiveness to change and/or adaption. Other studies do suggest that Employee Empowerment Practices are often and therefore individual benefits of the Employee Empowerment Practices are limited or reduced for the Employee without the attention of the employee through supervision or management to help the employee to learn, be trained, or to manage their job functions (Seibert et al., 2021). Overall, I would suggest that H5 is supported by this study regarding Employee Empowerment Practices having a potential relationship with or involvement in an organizational Employee Engagement office engagement and adaptability to culture within STC.

Summary of Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Pearson r	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value	Supported?
H1	Cultural Diversity Management → Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	0.62**	0.21	3.85	0.000	Yes
H2	Digital HR Transformation → Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	0.57**	0.18	3.20	0.002	Yes
H3	Innovation-Oriented HR Practices → Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	0.61**	0.19	3.45	0.001	Yes
H4	Values-Driven HR Practices → Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	0.58**	0.16	2.90	0.004	Yes
H5	Employee Empowerment Practices → Organizational Cultural Adaptation & Employee Engagement	0.63**	0.22	4.00	0.000	Yes

Note: $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Explanation: The statistical analysis confirmed all five assumptions. The Pearson correlation coefficients show strong positive correlations between each HR Practice and the dependent variable; all independent variables were also statistically significant predictors of corporate cultural adaptation and employee engagement, as is evidenced by the regression coefficients (β). This complete view of the analysis allows the reader to quickly assess the main outcomes of the study.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of the study show all the five interrelated domains of culture and human resource management: management of cultural diversity, digital HR transformation, HR practices for innovation, HR practices based on values and employee power were positively related to organizational cultural adaptation and employee engagement in the case of STC. The study findings informed an organizational account of integrating both cultural and technological components of human resource management in each of the competencies of human resource management towards an organizational sustainable performance in the Saudi Arabia context. The effect of culturally diverse management on employees' engagement is meaningful, and significant and aligned with previous studies in which inclusive human resource practices represented respectful engagement in the structure of family, trust, belonging and collaboration Al-Harbi & Al-Khalifa, 2022). The STC is also an organization functioning in a shared multicultural context to achieve the vision and mission of Saudi vision 2030. So, managing different cultures is critical to having employees engaged and socializing with multiple backgrounds and cultures. Likewise, the influences of digital HR transformation were also aligned with the findings from Bondar Ouk & Brewster (2021) where digitization of the human resource management process has generated agility, transparency, and decisions based on data towards employee engagement. This finding supports Al-Mutairi et al. (2022) who argued that in Gulf organizations, spending on digital HR systems enhances employee

experience, responding to social change, and organizational culture change. The relationship between HR, innovation-oriented practices, engagement, and adaptability provides support to prior research proposing innovation-oriented environments can serve as a positive provocation to both employee creative engagement and organizational resilience (Jain & Jain, 2020). In the case of STC and the rapid technological disruption, innovative HR practices are a means to actively engage employees to realign themselves to shift and evolve the organizational culture. Findings for values-oriented HR practices provide more support for employees and organizational congruence in value and ethics which provide trust, and commitment, over time (Kim & Park, 2021; Hassan et al., 2021). Particularly in Saudi Arabia, cultural and religious values are informing organizational identity and employee behaviors. Lastly, employee empowerment practices emerge to be the strongest predictors of engagement and adaptability, in line with studies that indicate employee decision making induces ownership, and psychological safety (Spreitzer, 2020; Seibert et al., 2021) both of which are valued and necessary goods for successful response to disruption on either organizational or cultural level. In view of these findings, STC's HR strategies that are leveraging the digital space to provide innovative practices, culture of inclusivity, and value orientations, are yielding adapted and engaged workforce. The findings add to the growing research base of strategic human resource management in emerging economies, and support utilizing culturally relevant and innovation focused HR systems are important to facilitate navigating social, and digital transformation for organizational in Saudi Arabia.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to the knowledge on both the theoretical and practical domains of strategic HRM and organizational behavior. First, our approach brings together elements from previous models of HR practices for consideration in a cultural and digital context in Saudi Arabia's dynamic business context. Past studies have looked at HR practices and employee engagement separately (e.g., Albrecht et al. 2020; Kim & Park, 2021), whereas we present an integrated model demonstrating how prior HR practices provide organizational cultural adaptation, through values-based HR practices and innovation-based HR practices.

Second, it reinforces the role of employee-empowerment and cultural diversity as the core mediating mechanisms in the HR system driving employee engagement in a collectivist and high power-distance culture (Al-Harbi & Al-Khalifa, 2022) contributing the base knowledge and theory in HRM across cultures, which indicate that the values of national culture needed to fit with HR practice in order to be effective.

Finally, it contributes to theoretical knowledge related to the digital transformation of HR practices noting that in addition to being a technological tool, digital practice may also assist in enabling organizational culture to establish communication, inclusivity, and strategic agility as organizations modernize, as in the case of STC.

Practical Implications

The study suggests several recommendations for HR practitioners and policymakers from a managerial perspective in Saudi Arabia and other developing economies. First, the substantial positive impacts of a digital transformation of HR suggest that organizations should spend money on integrated HR technology systems that promote transparency, continuous learning and development, and employee engagement.

Second, values-based HR practices could become part of the HR practices in recruitment, performance management, and leader development programs, enabling a coherence between the organization's values and the values actioned by employees as it relates to the antecedents of employee engagement and trust (Hassan et al., 2021).

Third, HR must contribute to empowering employees by conveying decision-making responsibilities, facilitating employee possibilities of career development, and providing opportunities for inclusive dialogue. Employees who feel empowered in the workplace are more adaptable to change as it pertains to organizational change within a culturally diverse organization. This will be an important component of organizational change in a rapidly evolving and culturally diverse workplace, for example STC.

Finally, HR's priority should include making a positive culture that promotes cultural diversity. The organization can improve the performance of an organization by implementing culturally responsive cultural diversity training, incorporating inclusive communications measures through the performance management/training cycle, and the commitment from both administration and leadership to treating employees equitably to facilitate cultural integration. Together, this study provides clear guidelines for HR leaders faced with balancing innovation over cultural identity and leads to an HR function which supports the advancement of societal change, aligned with Saudi vision 2030.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Limitations

Even though this study provides informative insights of the cultural perspectives of HR practices within the STC, there are some limitations to note.

First, both the data was surveyed using structured questionnaires and the data source relied on self-reporting data which may lead to common method bias or social desirability bias. Therefore, future studies can utilize multiple sources of data (for example, supervisory evaluations, HR records, etc.) to assess data validity.

Second, this study examined one company (STC) in one country, which limits the generalizability to other organizations and sectors. A comparative study in other sectors (i.e. banking, health care, education, etc.) may not only improve the understanding of how culture is related to digital HR advice/HR practices aligned with organizational outcomes but do so in a comparative manner.

Third, this study was cross-sectional, identifying measures of both variables at one point in time, so the data analysis does not afford power to ascertain causal relationships from HR practices to employee engagement. Longitudinal studies may be able to determine how HR or culture is enacted over time.

Lastly, this study only examined 5 of potentially many other pertinent HR dimensions, so while this may not matter to the current results, numerous other factors (leadership style, organizational learning, or employee well-being) may have, or more accurately will have an impact on HR systems. Future study may consider examining other relevant HR dimensions in to enhance relevant to the relationship among HR systems and the influence of middle managers in the digitally transformed environment.

Future Research Directions

In the future, researchers may investigate the potential mediation and moderation mechanisms between HR practices and levels of employee engagement. For example, empowerment and values may also facilitate leadership engagement with employees to foster them as an employer that engages employees. Qualitative methods, through interviewing and focus groups, will draw attention to a richer, more in-depth examination of communication and employees' perspectives on cultural diversity and the digital HR transformation. Comparative studies across the GCC countries will emphasize country-oriented cultural differences and implications for HRM practice and organizational adaptation in those cultures, as well. Also, better multi-variable statistical techniques using structured equation modeling (SEM) will help assess the model and produce a better explanation of employee engagement in cultural contexts as well as the complexity of leadership employee engagement practices. More generally, a future research agenda should build the practice of bridging culture, technology and human behavior for a more proactive approach to HRM in a dynamic fast-changing digital and social context.

CONCLUSION

The study looked at how five areas of human resource work in Saudi Arabia relate to culture - it tracked the links between (1) the handling of cultural diversity, (2) the shift to digital HR tools, (3) practices that reward new ideas, (4) policies built on stated values and (5) the formal delegation of authority to staff, on one side, and, on the other side, STC's success in adjusting its culture and the level of employee engagement. Data showed that each of the five HR areas raised both organizational adaptation scores and engagement scores. The results point to a need for HR systems that combine cultural, technical and human elements. Findings certainly show that organizations in Saudi Arabia have to critically consider digital transformation as a cultural intervention capable of changing the employee experience and engagement rather than just as a technical enhancement. The research indicates that the type of HR strategy that is value driven and empowerment oriented can further reinforce an employee's psychological tie to the organization and thus accelerate change in such rapidly transforming socio-economic environments. The theoretically enriching aspect of this study to the strategic human resource management literature hinges on establishing holistic linkages and synergistic effectiveness between culture, innovation, and digitalization toward heightening engagement and adaptability in emerging contexts. This practical contribution sets a foundation for HR leaders to develop an inclusive, innovative, and value-based HR system as per modernization and workforce empowerment into the goals of Saudi Vision 2030. This is how AI transforms industries, automating tasks and extracting intelligence from data. But the text generated sounds robot-like. This is basically what this tool can do - it can turn AI-written text into humanized text, closer to being natural and engaging. In totality, this study lays a constructive foundation toward understanding how HR practices that are culturally sensitive and technologically adaptive can ensure organizational success amid ongoing transformation. Future research should continue to explore dynamically the kinds of interactions that existence

or absence of cultural identity, digital innovation, and employee engagement create in different sectors and regions, thereby further strengthening the global debate on strategic HRM within the new digital age.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhance Diversity Management:

Promote inclusive HR practices and cross-cultural awareness to strengthen teamwork and communication.

Advance Digital HR Transformation:

Use digital tools to improve HR efficiency and engagement, ensuring alignment with Saudi cultural values.

Foster Innovation in HR:

Encourage creativity and continuous improvement through flexible systems and innovation-based incentives.

Promote Values-Driven HR Practices:

Integrate core Saudi and organizational values into HR policies to build unity and trust.

Empower Employees:

Increase participation in decision-making and leadership programs to enhance ownership and engagement.

Align with Vision 2030:

Ensure HR strategies support Saudi Vision 2030's focus on innovation and human capital development.

Monitor Cultural Adaptation:

Regularly assess cultural fit and employee engagement to adapt to ongoing social and technological changes.

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