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STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ITS DETERMINANT FACTORS IN THE THAI NON-PROFIT SECTOR

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the extent to which strategic human resource management (SHRM) has been implemented in Thai nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and therefore investigate the determinants influencing the application of SHRM in the sector. The study draws hypotheses by employing the factors from institutional and organizational levels to investigate the pivotal personnel management approach, namely strategic human resource management in the Thai nonprofit sector. The study targets organization as a unit of analysis and investigation. The research methodology is a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches in which a survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain adequate information to answer key research questions. Research results suggested that five out of eight determinants exhibited for hypothesis testing have a statistically significant relationship and impact on SHRM applications. These determinants are the dependence on external funds, the leader's competence, the organization's culture, size, and the use of technology. Unlike the public or private sector, nonprofit organizations have applied the SHRM concept to actual implementation differently based on the type of organizations: foundations, associations, and unregistered civil society organizations (CSOs). Descriptive data also suggested that nonprofit organizations in Thailand have a unique pattern pertaining to SHRM practice in which employee participation is central to their operations and has been adopted more intensely compared to other SHRM attributes. Finally, quantitative, and qualitative analysis confirmed that among five determinant factors that impact SHRM practices, funds are regarded as a vital factor that supports or hinders the success of nonprofit organizations in Thailand.

Keywords: Strategic Human Resource Management, Nonprofit Organization, Thailand

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Introduction

Strategic Human Resource Management

Wright & McMahan (1992) defined Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) as the pattern of planned human resource developments and activities intended to enable an organization to achieve its goals. The notion of "Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM)" stemmed from the resource-based theory proposed by Barney in 1991 (Lado & Wilson, 1994; Wright et al., 1994). Rational and Contingency perspectives view human resource management concerning technological superiority. As it works as the fundamental factor determining the level of organizational competitiveness, the organization's performance can be diminished or eroded over time (Barney, 1991; Pfeffer, 1994; 1998). However, the resource-based perspective argued against this proposal and claimed that human resource management tends to gain and maintain the competitive advantage status of the organization. According to resource-based theory, the management mechanism within the organization is explained with a significant shift in perspective. Instead of emphasizing the orientation of the external environment, it focuses on the firm position in the competitive market. The resource is a source of competitive advantage. Therefore, organizations can gain a comparative business advantage from rare, valuable, and inimitable resources. Barney & Wright (1998) noted that human resource management practices promote the development of sophisticated and invaluable human capital. It builds a firm foundation for the organization, enhancing its capacity to compete in the market.

In addition to value-adding, Delery (1998) referred to Wright et al. (1994) and explained that firms must design HRM practices to support the organization's objective and strategy. Similarly, Devanna et al. (1981) emphasized the importance of SHRM as part of the value-adding strategy of organizations. Training or human development practices can improve performance and increase organizational opportunities in a competitive environment. Regarding Delery & Doty (1996), human resource management strategies often involve three typologies: 1) universalistic, 2) contingency, and 3) configurational dimensions. The universalistic perspective is claimed to be the best practice of HRM adopted by organizations, whereas contingency and configuration perspectives pay more attention to the contextual environment where there is no one-fit-all solution. Therefore, they proposed a so-called "best-fit practice" to consider human resource management in specific organizations (Kaufman, 2010).

The notion of strategic human resource management is particularly new compared to technical human resource management (Wei, 2006). Even though there is no consensus on the definition of this concept, most scholars have agreed on its primary function. SHRM involves internal policies and practices to ensure that human resources within an organization can effectively contribute to fulfilling business strategy and goals (Schuler & MacMillan, 1984; Baird & Meshoulam, 1988; Jackson & Schuler, 1995). Wright & McMahan (1992) noted that fundamental characteristics of SHRM involve a significant degree of fit. Fit in this context is referred to as "the pattern of planned resource deployments and activities intended to enable the firm to achieve its goal."

Past scholars discussed two types of fit: horizontal and vertical fit. Vertical fit means the suitability and alignment of human resource management practices with the organizational strategic management process (Schuler & Jackson, 1987). Horizontal fit, on the other hand, means congruence among various human resource management practices (Baird & Meshoulam, 1988). The issue of fit was discussed meaningfully by Wei (2006). In general, Wei (2006) explained that horizontal fit emphasizes the coordination between a wide variety of human resource management practices, while vertical fit significantly focuses on the capability of the HR package and the goal that an organization aims to achieve. Both dimensions are equally important as they reinforce the competitiveness and effectiveness of a

firm. Many scholars found that it is essential that a firm systematically arrange human resource management practices to impact organizational performance positively.

A resource-based view (RBV) differentiates technical human resource management (HRM) from strategic human resource management (SHRM) (Huselid et al., 1997). Technical HRM covers a series of practices ranging from recruiting high-quality employees, training and building their capacity to meet the organization's expectations, and motivating them to devote themselves to the mission and goal. This perspective pays attention to the linkage between these practices and makes sure that all of them are in line for increasing organizational effectiveness.

More recent literature tends to explain SHRM systematically rather than the individually specific focus, as seen in previous human resource literature. All relevant practices are considered as a singular unit. This implies a synergistic effect these practices have toward one another (Ichniowski et al., 1997; Becker & Huselid, 1998; Lepak et al., 2006). Boxall & Macky (2007) identified common characteristics among human resource management practices, including employee empowerment, skill development, and employee motivation. Also, SHRM covers a broad spectrum of human capital management, such as selection and recruitment, training and development, performance management, internal rotation and mobility, security, compensation, benefit, and engagement and participation.

As Bratton & Jeff (2017) noted, strategic human resource management refers to the linkage process of human resource functions made with the strategic objective of improving organizational performance. The concept is rooted in human resources planning and effective management of people as a pivotal contributor to competitive advantage. Generally speaking, SHRM is derived from the emphasis on the strategic role of human resource function. As seen in the practical approach, scholars are encouraged to develop a strategic framework for HRM, which contributes to the attachment of the prefix 'strategic' to this term. Further, the notion of strategic human resource management can be identified as 'discursive formation,' broadly understood as a set of interconnecting propositions. Storey (2001) concluded that SHRM is a distinctive human management approach aiming to gain a competitive advantage by using a wide variety of cultural, structural, and personal practices to strategically deploy committed competent human resources.

In recent years, SHRM has been introduced to the nonprofit sector as an integral part of the organization's development and management. SHRM is an integration of strategic organizational mission and human resource management. It applies policies developed for human resource management with current and potential changes encompassing organization goals. Furthermore, it was considered to replace traditional practices in human resource management to cope with changes and challenges in more effective ways. Organizations with effective SHRM will respond to changes quickly by relying on capabilities, talents, and practical information from their human power (Pynes, 2004).

Human resource management in nonprofit organizations receives greater attention from a wider audience, including donors, researchers, governments, and citizens. However, empirical study related to this topic is limited. This study is, therefore, designed to investigate determinants affecting the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations. The objectives of this study are to examine the extent to which SHRM practices are being used in nonprofit organizations in Thailand and examine the factors affecting the application in strategic human resource practices. The implication of this study will help deepen our understanding of actual practices in managing human power in the nonprofit sector. Moreover, understanding the correlation between the determinants and the application of SHRM practices will contribute to better strategic management in response to contextual and environmental factors striving to achieve the organization's desired goal and social impact.

Previous Studies on the Measurement of SHRM Application

The evaluation of human resource management has evolved from HR functions. Previously, human resource management focused on personnel with extreme centralization, a hierarchical system, and a lack of flexibility. Later, several scholars introduced the notion of human resource management in the early 1970s. Traditional human resource management covered cross-functional-team management based on decentralization and more flexibility in the organizational system. Until the early 1980s, academics and practitioners developed a shifting perspective and tried to link business strategy with human resource management practice. Therefore, the emergence of SHRM is significantly associated with organizational performance and effectiveness based on planned human resource deployment, activities, and procedures developed for achieving the expected goal or objective (Agarwal, 2007).

Among other scholars, Krishnan and Singh have provided helpful insight for analyzing the core characteristics of SHRM practice. For example, their study "Strategic Human Resource Management: A Three-Stage Process Model and Its Influencing Factors" conducted in 2011 indicated that the adoption of SHRM can be observed through the three-step process of SHRM. These are (1) Business and human resource strategy formulation, (2) The implementation of HRM systems, including interventions relating to an employee, and (3) The evaluation of HRM systems for increasing the efficiency of an organization. Translating fundamental principles into practices is crucial for an empirical study. For example, Akhtar et al. (2008) proposed seven dimensions of strategic HRM practices. These include 1) training, 2) development, 3) participation in decisions, 4) job security, 5) job identification, 6) performance evaluation, and 7) career management.

A more detailed index was developed by Berger & Berger, 2004; Morton, 2004. The index was created explicitly regarding the nonprofit organization's context. In the study, the SHRM index was presented in 13 criteria: 1) organizational mission and value used for employee attraction, 2) flexibility in working schedule and arrangement, 3) constant internal communications with all employees consisting of valuable information, 4) recruiting practices targeting college graduates and professionals, 5) employee engagement with competitive wages and bonuses, 6) opportunity for staff's professional development, 7) specific leadership development practice for talented staff, 8) multiple performance evaluation strategies, 9) organizational objective links to the employee performance, 10) feedback loops for employee, 11) designed plan which in line with workforce needs, 12) corporate culture communications, and 13) workforce diversity practices (Guo et al., 2011).

This study will examine the determinants that influence the application of SHRM in nonprofit organizations. According to reviewed literature, the application of SHRM in nonprofit organizations is influenced by several factors. First, the level of application of SHRM, which works as the dependent variable (DV), is composed of five necessary elements of SHRM developed by previous studies, particularly by Akhtar et al., 2008; Berger & Berger, 2004; Morton, 2004. The dependent variable includes 1) strategic planning of HR and business strategy, 2) strategic selection and recruitment, 3) strategic training and development, 4) strategic performance appraisal, and 5) employee participation and management. All respective elements will be composed into the SHRM index to examine the extent to which nonprofit organizations apply SHRM. Meanwhile, eight independent variables (IVs) are proposed for the conceptual framework. These are (1) dependence on external funds, (2) dependence on relationship with external stakeholders, (3) leader's competence, (4) organization culture, (5) organization age, (6) organization size, (7) use of technology, (8) diversity of employee. The relationship between variables included in the proposed model is described in appendixes 1 and 2.

They all come alongside specific, quantifiable indicators to measure the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

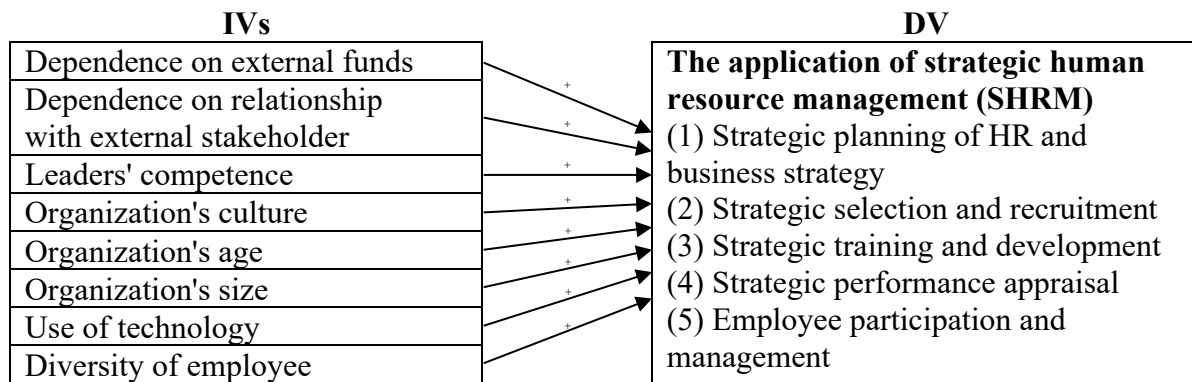


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Questions

This study attempts to deepen our understanding of strategic human resource management in Thailand and the determinants affecting its internal management regarding strategic human resource management practices. Two key research questions guide the development of this study: (1) To what extent are strategic human resource management practices used in nonprofit organizations? (2) What factors influence strategic human resource management practices?

Understanding actual practices concerning strategic human resource management and the factors affecting changes in strategic human resource practices applied in nonprofit organizations in Thailand will contribute to better strategic management in response to contextual and environmental factors. Nonprofit organizations will clearly understand whether SHRM, regarded as a holistic approach, is embodied in life or organization management. Once they have a better understanding of the level of application of this fundamental aspect and its influencing factors, they can apply research implications in designing and improving personnel management to respond to external changes, pressures, and instability more effectively.

Research Objectives

The study aims to: (a) build a clear understanding of actual practices concerning strategic human resource management by using the SHRM index as a groundwork to explore whether there are SHRM practices applied in nonprofit organizations in Thailand, and (b) investigate the factors affecting changes in strategic human resource practices to deepen understanding on the correlation between the organizational and external determinants and changes in the internal management striving to achieve the organization's desire or goal. More specifically, this study aims to: (1) Investigate the level of application of strategic human resource management practices implemented in the Thai nonprofit sector, (2) Examine the factors affecting the application of strategic human resource practices implemented in the Thai nonprofit sector.

Research Methodology

This study will use a mixed-method approach by incorporating quantitative and qualitative techniques. First, a survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews will be conducted to obtain adequate information to answer key research questions. After the variables were constructed and a survey questionnaire was developed, a researcher conducted a pre-testing to ensure reliability and improve the quality of research instruments. The pre-test was performed for 30 samples for nonprofit organizations in Bangkok, Songkhla, Khon Kaen, and Chiang Mai. This is to assess the validity of the content, including flow and comprehensiveness and accuracy of questions and answers.

More specifically, this study will collect data from (1) Self-administered questionnaires, (2) Interviewed questionnaires/Face-to-face surveys, and (3) Semi-structured interviews. The target population of this study includes all nonprofit organizations in Thailand that are legally

registered by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. Nonprofit organizations in this study are expected to operate independently from government entities and strive toward specific purposes, particularly foundations and associations that attempt to address social issues, citizen needs, and grievances, including humanitarian services at local, regional, and international levels. To specify the population of the study, this study will employ the definition used by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security according to the Social Welfare Promotion Act, 2003. Based on the statistics published by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security on 26 March 2013, 3,701 nonprofit organizations in 77 provinces throughout the country are accounted as the target population for calculating sampling size. Therefore, using Yamane's model, the total population for data collection is 361 nonprofit organizations. This number is based on a margin of error of 5 percent, reflecting the statistical confidence at 95 percent.

A cluster sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used for selecting participating organizations. The entire population is clustered into 77 groups according to lists of provinces. The first step is specifying the number of nonprofit organizations in each province by using sampling with probability proportional to size. The number of samples will be specified proportionally to the number of registered nonprofit organizations in each province compared to the entire population. After the number of samples is specified, a simple random sampling will be used. Finally, all names of nonprofit organizations will be written on pieces of paper, and the samples will be picked according to the required number.

As the unit of analysis for this study is the organizational level, the respondents are regarded as organization representatives. In the questionnaire survey, information can be mainly divided into three parts (60 questions). First, basic information about each organization and general information about respondents will be collected (7 questions). Second, information associated with the extent to which nonprofit organizations applied SHRM will be collected using the SHRM index developed for this study. The SHRM index consists of 25 questions relating to 5 areas of practice concerning SHRM. Finally, information pertaining to influencing factors that affect the application of SHRM will be asked (28 questions). As indicated in the conceptual framework, questions will link to the dependent, and independent variables developed in the model of this study. Each variable comes with specific quantifiable questions after the data is collected.

The respondents will be asked to rate the extent to which their organizations apply these strategic HRM practices by indicating scale. The scale for evaluating the questions is employed from the Likert-type Scale used by Vagias (2006). It ranges from 1-5, starting from 1) Strongly disagree, 2) Disagree, 3) Neither agree nor disagree, 4) Agree, and 5) Strongly agree. All collected information from the returned questionnaire will be rechecked and cleaned to ensure completeness and accuracy. The data will then be coded and analyzed using a statistical technique called multiple regression analysis using the SPSS program. For the information from semi-structured interviews, data will be recorded and transcribed. Then, a researcher will conduct a narrative analysis by compiling all content and analyzing the meanings. Similarities and differences among the answers from respondents will also be interpreted. Finally, the findings from a qualitative part will be incorporated into the analysis of survey findings.

For the qualitative part, a researcher will incorporate a purposive sampling method. A total of 12 interviewees who have participated in a questionnaire survey will be selected and contacted for semi-structured interviews. The criteria for selecting participants are: (1) They shall be actively involved in strategic human resource management systems, and practices in nonprofit organizations based in Thailand, and (2) They shall hold positions in the organization's top management; or are regarded as a leader, specialist, or professional of the human resource department; or are assigned to specifically plan and implement human resource management and other related activities within the organization.

Research Results

According to the sample size of 361 organizations, a questionnaire was distributed to 361 nonprofit organizations in 77 provinces as a proportional size of the population of nonprofit organizations in each province. As a result, the study received 224 completed responses, representing an overall response rate of 62 percent of the total distributed survey. With the response rate at 62 percent, the information received is thus adequate for quantitative data processing, analysis, and reporting. Responses are classified into five internal scales: starting with strongly disagree (1) to, disagree (2) to, neither agree nor disagree (3) to, agree (4) and, strongly agree (5). The table below summarizes and presents respondents' attitudes on the SHRM application disaggregated by questionnaire items.

The study found that the mean of the SHRM application consisting of 25 survey items was 3.841, with a standard deviation of 0.984. Therefore, the average value of the SHRM application represents an overall result at the "agree" level. Considering five elements of SHRM, the study found that the mean of HR and an Organization's strategic planning was 3.853, with a standard deviation of 0.901. Thus, the information represents an overall result at the "agree" level. The item with the highest score under this category is "Organization performance is in line with HR strategy formulated and executed for achieving the strategic goal." The mean of this item was 3.915, with a standard deviation of 0.900.

The mean of strategic selection and recruitment was 3.568, with a standard deviation of 1.028. The information represents an overall result at the "agree" level. The item with the highest score under this category is "The selection procedure was developed and implemented based on the personality-job fit perception." The mean of this item was 3.750 with a standard deviation of 1.050

The mean of strategic training and development was 3.807, with a standard deviation of 0.966. Thus, the information represents an overall result at the "agree" level. The item with the highest score under this category is "Training programs are beneficial and suitable for skills and knowledge development of employees." The mean of this item was 4.071, with a standard deviation of 0.896.

The mean of strategic performance appraisal was 3.950 with a standard deviation of 0.991. Thus, the information represents an overall result at the "agree" level. The item with the highest score under this category is "Employees have an opportunity to discuss the performance result with their supervisors." The mean of this item was 4.250, with a standard deviation of 0.918. The mean of employee participation and management was 4.097 with a standard deviation of 0.992. Thus, the information represents an overall result at the "agree" level. The item with the highest score under this category is "Organization promotes open space or open-door communications between the supervisors and subordinates. The mean of this item was 4.143, with a standard deviation of 0.978.

Comparing the five categories of the SHRM Index based on the outstanding results, the study found that the "Employee participation and management" category has the highest average value at 4.097.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was then used to test the relationship between dependent and independent variables based on the adjusted models. As the application of strategic human resource management includes various practices across the range of SHRM, the items should have an acceptable internal consistency. Besides, the problem of correlation and multicollinearity has been tested before moving to regression analysis. Using Pearson Correlation, VIF, and Tolerance to test correlations and multicollinearity of all equations, some factor has been removed from the model. That is DTWT or "Frequency of Twitter Use," which has a relatively high and significant relationship with SHRM, WEB, EMAIL, SOCM, SERV, OMT, DWEB, DMAI, DFB, DLINE, DIST, and DPOD. DTWT has a Pearson Correlation value higher than

an acceptable value (0.80). In addition, it exhibits a high value of VIF and a low value of Tolerance. This variable was therefore removed from the equations to solve correlations and multicollinearity issues.

Table 1 Regression analysis of strategic human resource management and the dependence on external funds.

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.582	0.147		24.356	< .001		
	AFGOVT	0.117	0.036	0.224	3.246	0.001	0.899	1.112
	AFINDO	-0.005	0.035	-0.011	-0.155	0.877	0.891	1.123
	AFPS	0.06	0.045	0.098	1.327	0.186	0.776	1.289
	AFIND	-0.035	0.048	-0.053	-0.721	0.472	0.795	1.258

a Dependent Variable: SHRM

R Square = 0.260; Adjusted R Square = 0.170; Durbin-Watson = 2.058; P value = .005

The data illustrates that dependence on external funds has a significantly positive effect on the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations, with the p-value of the model at .005. The level of funding support from the government as a proportion of total revenue (AFGOVT) is the only factor under this equation that shows a sign of a significant positive relationship with the dependent variable with the p-value at .005. That means it has a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, namely the SHRM application. Looking closely at the p-value, the data indicates that there is less than a five in a thousand chance of being wrong in predicting the relationship between the DVs and IV. Thus, the null hypothesis can be rejected.

Table 2 Regression analysis of strategic human resource management and dependence of relationship with external stakeholders.

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
2	(Constant)	3.776	0.143		26.472	< .001		
	FEXT	0.041	0.065	0.045	0.636	0.526	0.895	1.117
	ORGPO	0.008	0.069	0.008	0.117	0.907	0.895	1.117

a Dependent Variable: SHRM

R Square = 0.020; Adjusted R Square = 0.070; Durbin-Watson = 2.029; P value = .771

The data illustrates that the dependence on relationships with external stakeholders has no impact on the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations. Dependence of relationship with external stakeholders which consists of two critical factors on (1) organization policy relating to external stakeholder's requirements such as donor's protocol and (2) frequency of times external participants participating in the strategic decision meeting has no sign of a significant positive relationship with the dependent variable.

Table 3 Regression analysis of strategic human resource management and leader's competence.

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
3	(Constant)	3.455	0.094		36.690	< .001		
	HRS	0.285	0.095	0.193	3.006	0.003	1.000	1.000
	HRR	0.154	0.041	0.242	3.785	< .001	1.000	1.000

a Dependent Variable: SHRM

R Square = 0.940; Adjusted R Square = 0.860; Durbin-Watson = 2.133; P value < .001

The data illustrates that Leader's Competence has a significant positive impact on the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations. The frequency of times HR representatives participating in the strategic decision meeting (HRR) and the existence of HR specialist professionals specifically assigned for the implementation of HR systems (HRS) are factors under this equation that show a sign of a significant positive relationship with the dependent variable with the p-value at .001. That means it has a highly statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, namely the SHRM application. Looking closely at the p-value, the data indicates that there is less than one in a thousand chance of being wrong in predicting the relationship between the DVs and IV. Thus, the null hypothesis can be rejected.

Table 4 Regression analysis of strategic human resource management and organization culture.

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
4	(Constant)	2.114	0.174		12.181	< .001		
	OFB	0.104	0.128	0.051	0.812	0.417	0.757	1.320
	COMMIT	0.175	0.076	0.152	2.292	0.023	0.667	1.499
	EMP	0.520	0.081	0.465	6.430	< .001	0.564	1.774

a Dependent Variable: SHRM

R Square 0.351; Adjusted R Square = 0.343; Durbin-Watson = 2.153; P value < .001

The data illustrates that an organization's culture has a significant positive impact on the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations. The level of commitment of top management and managers (COMMIT) and level of employee participation (EMP) are factors under this equation that show a sign of a significant positive relationship with the dependent variable with the p-value at .001. That means it has a highly statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, namely the SHRM application. Looking closely at the p-value, the data indicates that there is less than one in a thousand chance of being wrong in predicting the relationship between the DVs and IV. Thus, the null hypothesis can be rejected.

Table 5 Regression analysis of strategic human resource management and organization's age.

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
5	(Constant)	4.275	0.288		14.836	< .001		
	YOPT	-0.094	0.061	-0.102	-1.527	0.128	1.000	1.000

a Dependent Variable: SHRM

R Square = 0.10; Adjusted R Square = 0.060; Durbin-Watson = 2.038; P value = .128

The data illustrates that an organization's age has no impact on the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations. It has no sign of a significant positive relationship with the dependent variable, with the p-value at < .001. Looking closely at the p-value, the data indicates that there is less than one in a thousand chance of being wrong in predicting the relationship between the DVs and IV. Thus, it fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 6 Regression analysis of strategic human resource management and organization's size.

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
6	(Constant)	3.600	0.135		26.683	< .001		
	NUMS	0.104	0.038	0.223	2.715	0.007	0.631	1.584
	NUMPS	0.032	0.035	0.062	0.913	0.362	0.918	1.089
	NUMV	0.031	0.040	0.051	0.760	0.448	0.948	1.055
	NUMP	-0.091	0.063	-0.122	-1.434	0.153	0.587	1.703
	NUMAP	-0.115	0.053	-0.167	-2.180	0.030	0.724	1.382
	NUMAD	0.084	0.041	0.149	2.057	0.041	0.810	1.234

a Dependent Variable: SHRM

R Square = 0.074; Adjusted R Square = 0.048; Durbin-Watson = 2.077; P value = .010

The data illustrates that an organization's size significantly impacts the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations, with the p-value at .010. The number of staff (NUMS), number of implementing areas at the provincial level (NUMAP), and number of implementing areas at the district level (NUMAD) are the factors under this model that have a sign of a significant relationship with the dependent variable. Therefore, the number of staff and the number of implementing areas at the provincial and district levels have a significant positive relationship with the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations.

Table 7 Regression analysis of strategic human resource management and the use of technology

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
7	(Constant)	3.414	0.138		24.704	< .001		
	WEB	-0.189	0.126	-0.129	-1.502	0.135	0.549	1.821
	EMAIL	0.238	0.137	0.163	1.737	0.084	0.462	2.165
	SOCM	0.353	0.169	0.209	2.087	0.038	0.407	2.457
	SERV	-0.037	0.127	-0.023	-0.289	0.773	0.645	1.551
	OMT	-0.110	0.055	-0.169	-2.008	0.046	0.578	1.730
	DWEB	0.090	0.060	0.152	1.493	0.137	0.391	2.558
	DMAI	-0.103	0.062	-0.179	-1.671	0.096	0.355	2.817
	DFB	-0.009	0.063	-0.015	-0.139	0.889	0.368	2.716
	DLINE	0.166	0.054	0.240	3.090	0.002	0.676	1.479
	DIST	0.003	0.073	0.003	0.044	0.965	0.687	1.455

a Dependent Variable: SHRM

R Square = 0.344; Adjusted R Square = 0.299; Durbin-Watson = 2.073; P value < .001

The data illustrates that the use of technology has a significant impact on the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations, with the p-value at .001. The use of social media (SOCM), frequency of online meeting OMT, and frequency of Line use (DLINE) are factors under this equation that show a sign of a significant relationship with the dependent variable. That means these factors have a highly statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, namely the SHRM application. Therefore, the existence of social media (SOCM) and frequency of Line use (DLINE), and the frequency of online meetings (OMT) have a significant positive relationship with the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations with a p-value at < .001.

Table 8 Regression analysis of strategic human resource management and diversity of employees.

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
8	(Constant)	3.722	0.405		9.190	< .001		
	NUMNT	-0.062	0.154	-0.030	-0.405	0.686	0.821	1.219
	NUMED	-0.071	0.379	-0.013	-0.187	0.852	0.950	1.053
	NUMSY	0.035	0.085	0.034	0.406	0.685	0.642	1.557
	NUMSM	0.133	0.064	0.196	2.076	0.069	0.497	2.012
	NUMSO	-0.018	0.062	-0.026	-0.298	0.766	0.568	1.759

a Dependent Variable: SHRM

R Square = 0.360; Adjusted R Square = 0.130; Durbin-Watson = 2.104; P value = .160

The data illustrates that the diversity of employees has no impact on the application of strategic human resource management in nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, all factors embedded in this model show no sign of a significant positive relationship with the dependent variable. Thus, it fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Qualitative Results

All 12 interviewees are senior management executives or have direct roles and responsibilities in nonprofit organizations' human resource management and development. Of these, eight of them are women, and four are men. Therefore, even a subjective interpretation in discussion is unavoidable; all of them have acknowledged that the information provided and discussed will represent an organization's perspectives, attitudes, and practices regarding human resource management and development.

Interviews results were analyzed thematically. Foundations seem to be a kind of nonprofit organization with better and stronger management as they have extensive years of operation, larger implementation areas, and the number of active projects and staff. Like foundations, associations show a similar pattern of their characteristics in terms of years of operation, implementing areas, and numbers of active projects and staff. However, the characteristics and profiles of the unregistered organizations differ from the other two types, as they have less paid staff and operational projects. Furthermore, legal obligations applied in these three types of nonprofit organizations are remarkably different as most foundations and associations were legally registered and enrolled in the Social Security Scheme. In contrast, none of unregistered CSOs, groups, or networks have a legal status, therefore, they are not obligated to the social security scheme and national labor laws. This might also reflect SHRM application in their organizations.

When asked about the SHRM application, these 12 organizations have shared a similar view on the importance of human resource management and development. They noted that personnel is a driving force of their work towards the expected goal. Hence, they have taken the SHRM principle into practice quite seriously. When asked whether the SHRM has been implemented in nonprofit organizations, the answer is remarkably similar to the employee participation practice regardless of organization type, strategic goals, size, or year of operation. All interviewees emphasize the workplace policies that foster the rights of employees and promote equity and inclusion in their work.

The study examines essential elements that constitute SHRM in Thai nonprofit organizations. As a result, the study found that patterns in SHRM practices in each organization are highly varied depending on the context. Considering specific types of organizations, the data analysis suggested that foundations, associations, and unregistered CSOs use different approaches to applying SHRM.

Foundations show a well-structured human resource system. SHRM practices in this type of organization are more likely to be formal by having consistent human resource practices across

the organization's departments with clear and explicit documents and policies supporting the functions. Furthermore, the interviews show that SHRM practices in foundations are more likely to align with the SHRM standards applied by other public or private organizations. However, on the other hand, the SHRM practices applied in associations and unregistered CSOs tend to be less formal. Associations and unregistered CSOs have rarely established and used a formal recruitment and selection and performance appraisal process due to the limited resources and autonomy for internal management. Most associations and unregistered CSOs mainly rely on donor organizations' funding support. Donors' influence determines their organization and management system. Such dependence associated with donor compliance has resulted in less formal human resource management processes. The human resource activities are then made in an attempt to support donors' requirements rather than a higher-level objective and goal of organizations. Moreover, the lack of legal registration makes several unregistered CSOs have limited management capabilities. It leaves them without a clear long-term strategic organization plan and only pursues the ad-hoc mission in operations.

From HR planning, foundations prove that standard processes were applied in their organizations. These include: (a) Identifying organizational goals and objectives, (b) Analyzing organizational human resources; existing staff capacities, (c) Analyzing current gaps and needs, (d) Finding solutions to fill the gaps and needs, and (e) Reviewing the effectiveness of HR plan and revising the plan as needed. Foundations also implement more comprehensive practices in recruitment and selection. A series of activities, including the job requirement analysis, advertising the vacancy, attracting candidates to apply for the job, and reviewing and shortlisting candidates, have been illustrated to support their human resource management approaches. They regularly conduct training programs based on the identified needs and establish a feedback mechanism that allows inclusive participation of all employees. Most importantly, foundations have demonstrated a solid and proper performance appraisal system in their organization and applying performance-based payment and incentives, regular performance review, including annual raises and incentive packages.

On the contrary, the study found that patterns and approaches in SHRM application in associations are comparatively different. Associations and unregistered CSOs have used a mix of formal and informal processes in HR planning, recruitment, selection, training, employee participation and performance appraisal. Associations and unregistered CSOs failed to implement the performance-based payment and incentive package as they are facing extremely limited resources and funding support. The employee salary often is a fixed rate established at the onset of the project development process with the donor's approval. Thus, it seems very difficult for them to apply for a raise in payment or incentive package for their employees.

Another specific context worth to be noted is that most unregistered CSOs are less likely to establish clear and long-term goals in human resource management and development. As most of them were not legally registered, the level of commitment to human resource management is perceived as low compared to other categories of nonprofit organizations. Unregistered CSOs tend to implement their work voluntarily, whereby human resource management functions are thus less considerable by executives and top-management teams.

Differences and commonalities in human resource management and development practices demonstrated by these three types of nonprofit organizations comprehend our understanding of the SHRM application. The illustrative data indicated that foundations might have more stable and better support to enhance organizational capacities and the potential to apply human resource management and development. Meanwhile, closer attention should be given to seemingly less structured organizations: associations and unregistered CSOs to ensure that policies exhibited and involvement from external stakeholders should be made to support them in applying human resource management and development more effectively.

Conclusion and Discussion

Considering the illustrative findings drawn by this study, it may reflect the complementary quality other studies and past research may not have clearly articulated. Although the nonprofit organizations in Thailand demonstrate a similar general pattern of SHRM as explained by past scholars like Berger & Berger, 2004; Morton, 2004; Delery, 1998; or Wright et al., 1994, they have applied certain human resource practices that differ from the mainstream knowledge due to some specific context.

Strategic human resource management that is carried out by public and private sectors tends to be made by the investment-centric approach. To obtain the highest result, organizations are expected to strategically invest their money, time, and people to improve their human resources to support the higher objectives and goals of the organization. As designed and irritated by other HR scholars and practitioners in the past, SHRM practices comprise core strategic functions that support comparative advantage and achievement of organizational goals. However, nonprofit organizations in Thailand possess a specific distinction in actual practices compared to the mainstream SHRM reflecting the balance between the suitability, fitness, and uniqueness presented in Thai nonprofit organizations.

Employee participation is central to SHRM application in the Thai-nonprofit sector. Among the five categories of the SHRM Index, the study found that the "Employee participation and management" category has the highest average value at 4.097. Combined with qualitative results of interviews with organization executives, most nonprofit organizations have provided excellent services around this attribute to support the well-being and promote the rights of employees as well as the communities they represent. For instance, during the interviews, the study repetitively recorded keywords on *"we are a family," "they are like sisters and brothers,"* and *"this is our home,"* which have been mentioned by several interviewers when describing the working environment. It can anticipate how meaningful "employee participation" is to their HR policies and practices. In addition, every interviewed organization emphasized closeness and friendliness as part of their organizational culture. The interview finding supports the statistical results and can represent the working environment of Thailand's nonprofit sector, which is less hierarchical and structured than other types of organizations.

The distinctive practice of employee engagement stems from the specific nature of the organization's goals that strives for the human rights-based approach. Rooted in the United Nations pillar developed in 1945, the human rights-based approach (HRBA) was introduced as a central framework for development programs and missions worldwide. This notion influences most nonprofit organizations in Thailand. They adopt the international agencies' human-right-based approach and apply it in organization and project management. Human rights principles are significantly reflected in the SHRM of nonprofit organizations with an emphasis on universality, invisibility, equity and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion and accountability, and the rule of law. All nonprofit organizations, regardless of size, type of mission, location, nation, or goals, are therefore obligated to human rights principles. As a result, it shows specific patterns of SHRM practices, particularly in the employee participation attribute. The quantitative and qualitative analysis revealed that nonprofit organizations in Thailand have widely integrated rich activities to support "employee participation" as part of their SHRM practice.

On the contrary, the mean of other categories that constitute the SHRM index seems lower than that of employee engagement. HR and organization's strategy strategic planning, selection and recruitment, training and development, and performance appraisal were 3.853, 3.568, 3.807, and 3.950, respectively. The descriptive data suggested that nonprofit organizations have applied less comprehensive mentioned attributes. Dilution in some SHRM practices has led to an essential part of this study aiming to examine the factors determining these practices in the Thai nonprofit sector.

Against the backdrop of the SHRM application, there is empirical evidence to confirm that dependence on external funds, leaders' competence, organization culture, organization size, and use of technology have a statistically significant impact on the level of SHRM application.

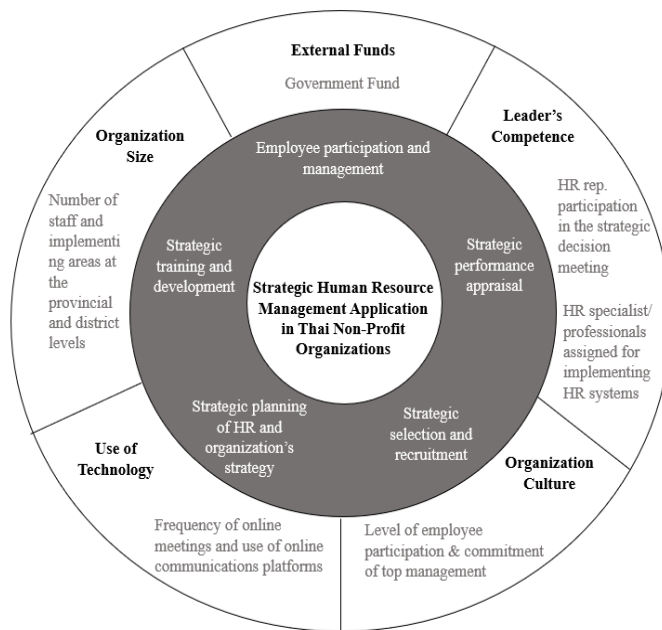


Figure 2 Determinant Factors on Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Practices in Thai Non-Profit Organizations

Informed by the data analysis, figure 2 illustrates the overall framework of how SHRM practices in nonprofit organizations in Thailand are determined by internal and external factors. First, regression analysis reveals that dependence on external funds has a statistical impact on SHRM. Likewise, the qualitative results from interviews strongly support this finding, as most nonprofit organizations in Thailand rely on funding support from the government as a primary source of organizational revenue. An increase in government funds support to foundations, associations, and unregistered CSOs will ultimately lead to the increased capacity of nonprofit organizations to apply and implement SHRM in their organizations. On the contrary, a decrease in funding support from the government might diminish the ability of nonprofit organizations in Thailand to apply and implement SHRM practice and therefore hinder the capability to operate their organization to achieve goals.

Supported by interview results, the internal management of nonprofit organizations is negatively affected by funding limitations, particularly in performance appraisal. Most organizations that have adopted the SHRM have a well-structured performance appraisal practice. For example, Bramham (1994) noted that a survey of private UK companies in 1986 found that 82 percent of UK firms have implemented performance appraisal practices. Specifically, it is used to review and improve staff performance and evaluate the results of firms' training and development programs. In addition, organizations have applied salary raises, job promotions, or other benefits to incentivize employees. However, this practice is rarely found when operating nonprofit programs or organizations. The main reason is that the nonprofit sector, especially associations and groups or networks with no legal registration, has been facing an extreme challenge in funding support. Limited funding and restrictions in contract agreements with donor institution make it difficult for most nonprofit organizations to effectively apply the performance appraisal to support its effectiveness. They rely significantly on donor guidelines and policies, which leave them without a clear long-term strategic

organization plan and only pursue the ad-hoc mission. For instance, fixed salaries and no staff promotions are common limitations in Thai nonprofit organizations. Nevertheless, many organizations invest more in human resource training and development to fill the human resource practice gap. Therefore, a wide variety of capacity-building programs, e.g., on-the-job training, coaching, mentoring support, etc., exist to increase staff capacity and capability. The table 3 data illustrates that the competence of leaders, which can be illustrated through the frequency of times HR representatives participate in the strategic decision meeting and the existence of HR specialist professionals specifically assigned for the implementation of HR systems, are also crucial to SHRM in the Thai nonprofit sector. To enhance the capacity of nonprofit organizations to apply SHRM practices, competent leaders should be explicitly assigned to lead this part of the organizational function. Confirmed by qualitative data, nonprofit organizations with effective and comprehensive SHRM applications will assign HR specialist professionals to implement HR functions and activities. Additionally, HR representatives will always participate in the strategic decision meetings held within their organizations to ensure that HR plans and practices align with the strategic direction and broader goals and objectives to be reached by organizations or projects.

Another determinant that has a statistically significant positive impact on the application of SHRM in nonprofit organizations is the organization's culture as shown in table 4. That being said, nonprofits with a higher level of commitment from top management and manager will have a higher level of applying SHRM in their organizations. As a result, to promote and enhance the capacity of nonprofit organizations to implement HR management practices more widely and effectively, organizations should encourage more employee participation and make sure that top executives or senior management teams give HR management practices close attention.

The quantitative data also suggested that organization's size is another determinant that has a statistically significant impact on the application of SHRM in nonprofit organizations in Thailand as illustrated in the table 6. The more staff and implementing areas at the provincial and district level nonprofit organizations have, the higher level of SHRM is being implemented to support their operations. Therefore, the expanded size of organizational operation and project implementation will significantly impact the level of SHRM in nonprofit organizations in Thailand. However, most interviewed organizations noted that the organization's size has been reduced over the past two years due to the rapid decrease in funding support. Organizations were, therefore, applied SHRM in staffing plan to cope with this challenge.

Finally, the study found that the use of technology also has a statistically significant impact on the application of SHRM in nonprofit organizations in Thailand (as stated in table 7). All 12 organizations participated in interviewed noted that the prolonged pandemic and the spread of COVID19 shifted how nonprofit organizations in Thailand operate, work, and manage social projects. It drives rapid digital communications and social media deployment to support individual desires and organizational goals. By focusing on the influence of the existence of social media, frequency of online meetings, and frequency of Line use, organizations tend to apply human resource management practices more widely and comprehensively. Due to the rise of digital communications, capacity building activities are essential to SHRM practices. All 12 organizations indicated that the budget for training on digital related topics increased dramatically since 2020. The organizations employ various strategies to increase employees' digital fluency, leading to a more effective organizational response to the rise of digital and technological advancement. Since then, technology significantly determines the work approaches and methods for implementing HR activities in nonprofit organizations.

Implications and Recommendations

Five out of eight variables have a significant impact on SHRM. These include dependence on external funds, the leader's competence, the organization's culture, the organization's size, and

the use of technology. Taken together, quantitative data confirmed that all five determinant factors are comparatively highly important for nonprofit organizations to consider when developing an organization's strategy, goal, and HR plan. In addition, details on how SHRM has been carried out differently by foundations, associations, and unregistered CSOs have raised an important question on how government can better support the nonprofit sector to achieve higher organization and social impact goals.

The qualitative data reveals that nonprofit organizations with higher revenue or funding support tend to implement more comprehensive human resource activities than organizations with less funding support. Illustrative results can be seen in more robust management of foundations compared to associations or unregistered CSOs. With adequate funds, the budget is obligated for several HR activities, including planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal system, and employee participation.

Besides, the findings reveal internal factors determining SHRM practices in the Thai nonprofit sector. The lack of leadership and leader's competency, culture, size and capacity to adapt to the digital disruption and the rise of technology appear to be important opportunities and challenges nonprofit organizations face in real-world situations.

To enhance the capacity of nonprofit organizations in Thailand to apply SHRM in support of their comparative advantage, the following recommendations should be considered by relevant stakeholders and policymakers:

- 1) Given the increasingly urgent need and demand in securing funding to enhance operations and human resource management systems in nonprofit organizations, a relevant government policy should be formally exhibited to support the funding allocation to nonprofit organizations. The increased fund is a prerequisite to enhance the capacity of the nonprofit organizations to apply more effective SHRM practices contributing to a greater capability in creating positive change for marginalized and vulnerable populations to social issues and unable to access governmental services. With sustainable funding support, nonprofit organizations will compete not for their business advantage but for the social impact they strive for. The government could benefit from a win-win scenario in which nonprofit organizations can take part in providing social services to underprivileged people by drawing on their key strengths in a human-rights-based approach.

- 2) Apart from the Thai government, international donor institutions should also support SHRM improvement in nonprofit sector. Future support from institutional donors should be made to support more sustainable work by providing flexibility to funding related to human resource management and development activities. Instead of imposing a restrictive condition such as a fixed-rate salary, the budget procedure imposed by donor organizations should be reviewed and adjusted with an increased and more reflective budget on human resources for grant awardees. Such improvement in donors' policies and regulations will significantly support more effective SHRM practices in nonprofit organizations and, at the same time, lead to greater organizational performance and impact on targeted communities.

- 3) The capacity-building program is crucial to addressing the internal challenges facing nonprofit organizations. A wide variety of technical assistance and training programs are essential to ensure that SHRM principles will be properly and effectively translated into practice. As SHRM practices in nonprofit organizations are more likely to be impacted by externalities and changes in social contexts and issues they aim to address, size of operations, and digital disruption, the organization leaders need to be equipped with the skills necessary to cope with existing and emerging challenges. Therefore, government, institutional donor agencies, and other stakeholders can support nonprofit organizations to achieve the expected goals more efficiently by conducting training and technical assistance that will ultimately create a working environment conducive to change adaption.

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