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THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY IN SUSTAINABLE HRM AND UNIVERSITY TEACHER PERFORMANCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN CHINA

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Abstract

This study explores the mediating effect of professional role perception and role value perception between sustainable human resource management (SHRM) and organizational identity under SHRM internalization, as well as the chain mediating effect of professional role perception, role value perception, and organizational identity between SHRM and job performance. It also examines the positive correlation between organizational identity and job performance. Based on self-determination theory, this study employs quantitative research methods to investigate 851 teachers from undergraduate public universities in China. The results showed that SHRM was significantly positively correlated with professional role perception and role value perception. Both professional role perception and role value perception were positively correlated with organizational identity. Organizational identity significantly improved job performance. The mediating effect included that SHRM had indirect effects on job performance through professional role perception, role value perception, and organizational identity. By implementing staff development and training, promoting academic exchange and cooperation, establishing a mentor system, formulating reward and incentive mechanisms, and clarifying sustainable development goals, university administrators can use the results of this study to effectively enhance teachers' professional role perception and role value perception, thereby promoting the improvement of organizational identity and job performance.

Keywords: Sustainable Human Resource Management, Professional Identity, Organizational Identity, Job Performance, University Teachers

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Introduction

With the advent of the age of artificial intelligence and the increasing uncertainty brought about by the reform of the appointment system (Chen et al., 2020), Chinese university teachers are facing unprecedented challenges and changes (Zhang, 2020a). In this context, sustainable human resource management (SHRM) in higher education is gaining attention due to its advantages in balancing internal and external environments, realizing long-term benefits, and fulfilling social responsibilities (Sarma & Rao, 2020).

SHRM refers to a set of management practices designed to help organizations achieve sustainable competitive advantage (Wojtczuk-Turek et al., 2024), focusing on the sustainable operation of human resource management systems under the three constraints of economy, environment, and society (Fei & Wang, 2022). Research has shown that SHRM has an impact on employee engagement, employee satisfaction and employee outcomes (Sypniewska et al., 2023).

However, the implementation of SHRM faces various challenges at different stages of the organizational life cycle (Ehnert, 2009), especially in the internalization phase of SHRM. Successful internalization of SHRM can align individuals with the goals of the organization, thereby improving organizational identity (Riketta, 2005) and job performance (Christian et al., 2011).

Although the positive effects of SHRM on job performance have been thoroughly investigated, the internalization process still faces many challenges, especially in loosely coupled organizations such as universities. Most existing research focuses on the implementation of SHRM at different stages but neglects the profound integration of SHRM with organizational culture and employee psychology (Castro et al., 2020). Without the psychological identification and support of employees, it is difficult to integrate SHRM into daily work routines and thinking patterns, making it difficult to realize the incentive effect of SHRM on work performance. Therefore, once SHRM is implemented, managers need to focus on internalization and application at the individual employee level to ensure the practical impact on job performance.

In recent decades, research has focused on measures to improve the Job Performance of university lecturers. Studies have shown that human resource management is one of the most important factors influencing job performance. Armstrong (2011) pointed out that employees need continuous HRM support at different stages of their career. In an empirical study, Guest (1997) found a positive correlation between HRM and employee performance. Huselid (1995) also confirmed that HRM has a positive effect on job satisfaction and employee performance. In the context of SHRM adoption, Jeronimo et al. (2020) found that the relationship between SHRM and employee performance is not direct, but is mediated by employees' perceived organizational reasons for sustainability and organizational identity, thus creating a double mediation effect. However, the proposed model has not been extensively empirically validated and therefore cannot yet provide a reliable guideline for practice.

On the other hand, psychological identification is widely recognized as an important factor influencing the job performance of university teachers. Professional identity and organizational identity are core components of psychological identification and are closely related to job performance. According to London (1993), professional and organizational identity not only strengthen faculty members' sense of belonging and loyalty, but also promote their sustained development in their professional field, thus improving overall job performance.

Although the positive effects of SHRM on Job Performance are well researched, the deep integration and effective internalization of SHRM within organizations still face challenges, especially in loosely coupled organizations such as universities. Existing studies mostly focus on the different phases of SHRM implementation but pay less attention to integration with organizational culture and employee psychology (Castro et al., 2020). Kanwal (2018) points

out that employee understanding and acceptance of SHRM is key to its effective internalization. Without employees' psychological identification and support, it will be difficult to integrate SHRM into their daily working and thinking patterns, limiting its impact on Job Performance. Therefore, once SHRM is implemented, managers should not only focus on the institutional level, but also on internalization and application at the individual employee level to ensure that SHRM has a practical impact on job performance.

Over the past few decades, research has focused on improving the job performance of university teachers, with numerous studies indicating that HRM is one of the important factors influencing their performance. Armstrong (2011), for example, found that the different stages of an employee's career require continuous support from human resource management. Guest's (1997) empirical study shows a significant positive correlation between human resource management and employee performance. Huselid (1995) also confirmed that HRM has a positive effect on job satisfaction and employee performance.

In the context of SHRM implementation, Jeronimo et al. (2020) found that the link between SHRM and employee performance is not direct but has a dual mediating effect through employees perceived organizational reasons for sustainability and organizational identity. However, this model has not been extensively empirically validated, leaving a research gap that needs to be filled by further studies, especially in the context of universities.

Psychological identification, especially professional identity and organizational identity is widely regarded as an important factor influencing the job performance of university teachers. Professional identity and organizational identity are core components of psychological identity and are closely related to job performance. According to London (1993), professional and organizational identity not only strengthens teachers' sense of belonging and loyalty to their profession, but also promote sustainable development in their professional field, thus improving overall job performance. Although the existing literature has discussed the relationship between SHRM and professional identity and the impact of professional and organizational identity on employees' job performance, few studies have examined the dual mediating role of SHRM in improving job performance through professional and organizational identity.

This study aims to fill this empirical gap by focusing on the internalization stage of SHRM and hypothesizing that enhancing Professional Identity and Organizational Identity can improve the Job Performance of university teachers, thereby enhancing the actual effectiveness of SHRM. By Exploring the mediating effects of two dimensions of Professional Identity (Professional Role Cognition and Role Value Cognition) on SHRM and the Job Performance of Chinese university teachers, this study not only addresses existing theoretical research gaps but also provides practical guidance for human resource management in universities. The structure of this paper is as follows: first, the literature on SHRM, Professional Identity, Organizational Identity, and Job Performance is reviewed. Then, the research model is proposed, and five core hypotheses are clarified. After that, the research method and data collection process are described. Finally, the analysis results are presented, and the theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Literature Review

Sustainable Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management (HRM) has developed significantly since the 1990s, evolving from traditional HRM theories centered on administrative functions to an integrated approach known as Sustainable Human Resource Management (SHRM) (Genari & Macke, 2022). Ehnert (2009) systematically discussed SHRM for the first time by proposing a "paradox theory" to balance short-term needs with long-term sustainable development goals. The key

objective of SHRM is to reconcile economic prosperity, social well-being, and stakeholders' ecological responsibility (Anlesinya & Susomrith, 2020).

In the context of the global digital revolution, HRM faces new challenges, especially driven by the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Companies are increasingly aware of the importance of upgrading employees' digital skills for organizational success (Amalia, 2024). Particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise of telecommuting has further exacerbated challenges such as addressing environmental responsibility, employee well-being, and workplace diversity (Piwowar-Sulej et al., 2024). As a result, adaptation, technology integration, and employee-centric management approaches are now central to SHRM research (Kess-Momoh et al., 2024). Multiple studies have shown that SHRM's sustainability measures have a significant impact on employee well-being and organizational competitiveness. For instance, SHRM practices help improve Job Performance, enhance workplace well-being, increase the use of work meaning, promote sustainable behavior, provide psychology and stimulate great creativity. However, psychological identification, including Professional Identity and Organizational Identity, has been identified as key to promoting employee well-being and improving organizational performance in the future.

Although significant progress has been made in the SHRM field, most research has been focused on Europe and Asia, and cross-cultural, cross-industry comparative analysis remains relatively inadequate. Future research should further explore SHRM practices in different cultural contexts and industries to advance the overall development of the field.

Professional Identity

Professional identity has always been the focus of academic research. Erikson (1968) believes that professional identity is a dynamic process of individual self-development. Ma et al. (2021) emphasized that professional identity is the integration of self-cognition, social identity and professional attributes. In addition, the study of Johnson et al. (2012) shows that the occupational field of an individual has a significant impact on professional identity.

In the field of education, the research on professional identity is also very in-depth. For example, Beijaard et al. (2000) explored the impact of disciplinary background, teaching experience and professional learning experience on teachers' professional identity. As a complex concept, professional identity has been defined and measured in different ways by different scholars. Among them, Kremer & Hofman's (1981) four-dimensional model has a great influence, including Centrality, Value, Unity and Self-expression. Wei et al. (2013) divided occupational identity into four dimensions: occupational values, role values, occupational belonging and occupational behavior tendency. Based on the work of Xiao (2019), this study is simplified into a two-dimensional model focusing on Professional Role Cognition and Role Value Cognition.

Organizational Identity

Organizational identity, a key topic in management and organizational behavior, refers to the psychological connection between individuals and their organization, where they identify with its goals, values, and culture (Conteh & Yuan, 2022). This identification enhances knowledge sharing, job satisfaction, performance, and reduces turnover (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Dong (2022) divides organizational identity into two aspects: organizational fitness and organizational attribution. Organizational fitness refers to how well individuals align with the organization, reflected in job performance, satisfaction, and cultural fit. Organizational attribution is a subjective cognitive process, influenced by personalized perceptions and behavior within the organization.

Research indicates that organizational identity not only shapes individual behavior and attitudes but also significantly impacts an organization's culture and overall functioning.

University Teachers' Job Performance

The job performance of university teachers is a multidimensional concept that includes teaching, scientific research, social service and other aspects. With the diversification of the development goals of colleges and universities, the evaluation of faculty performance has gradually shifted from individual performance to multidimensional evaluation. The evaluation method has also shifted from quantitative indicators (number of published papers or research funding) to qualitative evaluation (student feedback and performance development). External evaluations such as peer reviews, feedback from social service users and evaluation by industry partners are also becoming important references for evaluating teacher performance (Gomez & Valdes, 2019). At the same time, evaluation is paying more attention to teachers' professional development, gradually moving from a simple reward and punishment mechanism to a development mechanism (Walker, 2014).

Lack of Literature

Although there is existing research on the impact of sustainable human resource management (SHRM), professional identity and organizational identity on the job performance of university faculty, significant gaps remain. Most studies focus on the impact of SHRM at the macro level or consider it as an external mechanism and neglect its internalization within organizations, especially among Chinese university teachers.

While Chinese higher education management increasingly emphasizes fairness and development, the human dimension is still insufficiently considered. Ehnert (2009) highlighted the role of SHRM in integrating organizational culture and values, but did not examine how this internalization affects faculty performance through professional and organizational identity. Chams & Garcia-Blandon (2019) also pointed to the potential of SHRM to strengthen organizational identity, but neglected the mediating role of professional identity.

Research suggests that professional identity is crucial for fostering a sense of belonging within organizations, which increases work motivation and performance (Zhang, 2020b). However, empirical studies investigating how internalizing SHRM can enhance professional identity and subsequently improve organizational identity and job performance are lacking.

This study aims to address these gaps by proposing a theoretical model that examines the mediating role of professional and organizational identity in improving university faculty members' job performance through internalizing SHRM, thereby providing both theoretical insights and practical guidance for effective application of SHRM in higher education management.

Theoretical Model and Hypotheses

Improving job performance requires cultivating positive attitudes at the individual, group and organizational levels (Saha et al., 2016). In the SHRM internalization phase, management processes are integrated into daily operations, but organizations often struggle to translate these practices into employee behavior. This challenge is related to the creation of individual and organizational identity (Elias et al., 2023).

As implementers of SHRM, employees must understand the organization's goals in order to put strategic intentions into action. Social identity theory states that an individual's identity is formed through interaction with the organization and fosters collaboration and information sharing (Ehnert, 2009). Empirical evidence suggests that a values-based professional identity promotes collaboration, shared beliefs and organizational identity (Touati et al., 2019). In environments such as universities, professional and organizational identities interact significantly (Lu et al., 2023).

To foster intrinsic motivation and improve performance, universities need to focus on both professional and organizational identity while supporting employees' career development and job satisfaction during SHRM internalization. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Professional Role Cognition mediates the relationship between SHRM and organizational identity.

H1a: SHRM is positively correlated with Professional Role Cognition.

H1b: Professional Role Cognition is positively correlated with organizational identity.

Effective SHRM implementation requires that employees recognize the value of their role and are encouraged to embrace change and risk. Employees who see their role as critical to organizational goals show more commitment and responsibility (Fei & Wang, 2022). We therefore hypothesize the following:

H2: Role Value Cognition mediates the relationship between SHRM and organizational identity.

H2a: SHRM is positively correlated with Role Value Cognition.

H2b: Role Value Cognition enhances organizational identity.

Organizational identity has a significant impact on employee motivation and initiative (Tajfel, 1978), promotes collaboration and reduces burnout, and thus correlates with job performance. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H3: Organizational identity is positively correlated with teachers' job performance.

Professional Role Cognition involves understanding one's responsibilities and career path (Lu et al., 2023). SHRM initiatives that promote employee well-being deepen this understanding (Aboramadan et al., 2022). When employees identify with SHRM, they exhibit positive behaviors that improve organizational performance (Ostroff & Bowen, 2016). Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

H4: Professional Role Cognition and organizational identity mediate the relationship between SHRM and job performance.

SHRM promotes employees' perception of their own value, which leads to higher self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation, which has a positive impact on performance (Lu et al., 2023). As the perception of role value increases, organizational identity also increases, which increases emotional commitment and aligns behavior with organizational goals (Guo et al., 2022). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Role Value Cognition and organizational identity mediate the relationship between SHRM and job performance.

Based on these hypotheses, this study creates a research model that integrates SHRM, professional identity, organizational identity and the job performance of university teachers.

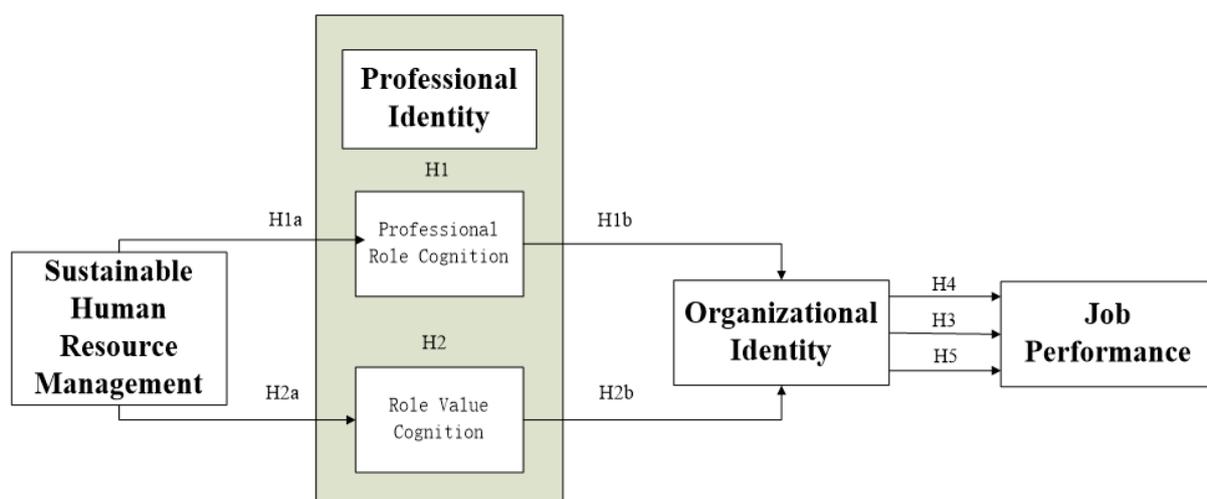


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Method

Research Design

In this study, quantitative research methods were applied by using online questionnaires to test the proposed model. First, three experts were invited to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the questionnaire. Based on their feedback, the research team revised several questions. To further validate the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, 30 university professors from China participated in a pretest. The study used the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) method to assess the content validity of the questionnaire (Innis & La Londe, 1994), with the three experts achieving an average score of .78. Questions that scored less than .5 were revised accordingly.

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency (Weisberg et al., 1989). The pretest with 30 valid responses resulted in an alpha coefficient of .985, which is above the threshold of .70 and indicates high reliability and suitability for further analysis. The predictive results indicated that all dimensions of the questionnaire were standardized as expected, allowing the study to proceed to the formal data collection phase.

Sample Selection and Data Collection

The minimum sample size recommended by Nunnally (1975) for this study was 540 participants, based on a 1:10 ratio of measurement items to respondents, with 54 items in the questionnaire. A stratified sampling procedure was used, selecting from a total population of 851 public colleges and universities divided into two categories: Key colleges and universities and general colleges and universities. To ensure representativeness, a weighted sampling method was used, resulting in a total of 610 respondents — 203 from key colleges and universities and 407 from general colleges and universities. This sample size exceeded the theoretical requirements and ensured the reliability and validity of the study.

Measurement Tools

The formal questionnaire consists of four sections, where each variable is measured with several items. All scales are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The details are as follows:

Sustainable Human Resource Management (SHRM): Based on the scale developed by Genari & Macke (2022), SHRM is measured in three dimensions: Recruitment and Retention of Professionals, Retention of Healthy and Motivated Professionals, and Skills Development of Professionals, with a total of 14 items.

Professional identity: Based on the study by Dong (2022), professional identity is defined by two dimensions: Cognition of professional role and cognition of role values. Each dimension is measured with 3 items (Dong, 2022).

Organizational identity: Following Xiao (2019), this variable is measured by two dimensions: Organizational Fitness and Organizational Attribution. The study includes 3 items for organizational fitness and 5 items for organizational attribution (Xiao, 2019).

Job Performance of University Teachers: Following Shen (2023), this study measures the work performance of university teachers in three dimensions: Talent development performance, research performance and community service performance. A total of 16 items are used to assess job performance.

Data Analysis

In this study, Smart-PLS was used for data analysis, which mainly included descriptive statistical analysis, reliability and validity evaluation of the measurement model (Cronbach's Alpha, composite reliability, AVE, etc.), and path analysis of the structural model (path coefficient, R², etc.). In addition, the mediation effect was tested by Bootstrapping method, and the relationship between variables was evaluated.

Research Result

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

A descriptive statistical analysis of the basic information of the sample was carried out. The respondents were mainly young teachers and teachers aged 31-40 years and constituted 56.07%. Their working years amounted to less than 10 years (70%), the title of associate professor accounted for 38.36%, and the title of master accounted for 73.77%. 41.8 % respondents had a monthly income of 5,001-10,000 yuan. The sample is highly representative covering university teachers of different genders, ages and professional titles.

Measurement Model

The measurement model was tested for internal consistency, reliability, aggregation validity and discriminant validity. The test criteria were as follows: Internal consistency reliability passed Cronbach's alpha test with a value greater than .7; aggregation validity was assessed using mean variance extraction (AVE), which should be greater than .5; combined reliability (CR) should also be greater than .7.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients of this study are all greater than .7, the factor loadings of all indicators are greater than .5, the average variance extraction (AVE) of all variables is greater than .5 and the combined reliability (CR) is greater than .7, indicating good reliability and convergent validity. The discriminant validity by analyzing the correlation and cross-loading of the underlying structure shows that the square root of the variable AVE is greater than the correlation coefficient and the model has good discriminant validity.

Table 1 Correlations between each two constructs.

	DSP	PRC	TDP	MHMP	ARP	RP	SSP	OA	OF	RVC
DSP	.857									
PRC	.192	.882								
TDP	.239	.311	.838							
MHMP	.622	.245	.185	.856						
ARP	.602	.245	.247	.609	.859					
RP	.289	.218	.56	.249	.31	.856				
SSP	.284	.22	.568	.272	.31	.605	.862			
OA	.283	.29	.309	.248	.286	.263	.291	.847		
OF	.341	.247	.296	.345	.331	.277	.254	.606	.886	
RVC	.234	.6	.324	.205	.235	.252	.22	.29	.268	.886

Table 2 Cross-loadings of the constructs.

	DSP	PRC	TDP	MHMP	APP	RP	SSP	OA	OF	RVC
Q10	.529	.214	.218	.517	.861	.229	.230	.244	.285	.187
Q11	.488	.214	.212	.485	.847	.271	.263	.250	.263	.215
Q12	.538	.187	.222	.550	.873	.284	.291	.263	.336	.224
Q13	.510	.228	.196	.536	.853	.282	.282	.224	.250	.182
Q14	.486	.204	.163	.846	.521	.217	.244	.225	.298	.160
Q15	.516	.208	.138	.832	.492	.209	.209	.213	.319	.203
Q16	.539	.206	.168	.857	.527	.232	.212	.187	.266	.162
Q17	.554	.212	.167	.870	.530	.202	.249	.201	.281	.188
Q18	.533	.194	.141	.861	.526	.199	.254	.199	.273	.124
Q19	.565	.234	.172	.869	.528	.223	.228	.247	.335	.217
Q20	.861	.139	.171	.518	.533	.236	.263	.264	.319	.151
Q21	.853	.192	.259	.516	.490	.282	.274	.271	.307	.243
Q22	.862	.156	.188	.534	.502	.222	.210	.235	.295	.193
Q23	.850	.173	.202	.563	.535	.252	.229	.200	.251	.216

Q24	.287	.232	.252	.295	.261	.236	.240	.530	.874	.232
Q25	.303	.214	.274	.325	.308	.259	.252	.561	.894	.240
Q26	.318	.211	.261	.296	.310	.239	.182	.520	.890	.241
Q27	.234	.241	.244	.230	.240	.223	.255	.842	.497	.194
Q28	.263	.212	.255	.158	.236	.225	.239	.841	.514	.235
Q29	.257	.248	.268	.227	.214	.241	.280	.851	.536	.252
Q30	.206	.252	.293	.189	.264	.221	.252	.855	.511	.284
Q31	.238	.275	.247	.245	.257	.205	.205	.847	.510	.263
Q32	.125	.875	.273	.174	.172	.181	.173	.279	.221	.525
Q33	.174	.883	.293	.184	.233	.206	.194	.242	.214	.535
Q34	.205	.887	.259	.281	.241	.190	.212	.249	.220	.529
Q35	.195	.528	.252	.174	.182	.180	.168	.274	.216	.886
Q36	.215	.514	.320	.181	.202	.278	.211	.243	.240	.881
Q37	.213	.553	.290	.190	.239	.211	.205	.255	.257	.892
Q48	.182	.241	.847	.139	.187	.451	.437	.207	.209	.257
Q49	.219	.273	.824	.157	.214	.496	.476	.286	.258	.271
Q50	.228	.269	.837	.193	.239	.484	.482	.282	.290	.317
Q51	.238	.261	.84	.180	.219	.455	.470	.274	.265	.289
Q52	.168	.270	.843	.099	.158	.431	.449	.256	.192	.268
Q53	.159	.221	.838	.130	.210	.496	.466	.209	.241	.233
Q54	.202	.286	.839	.168	.206	.472	.508	.285	.256	.282
Q55	.206	.260	.834	.171	.220	.463	.514	.266	.271	.254
Q56	.211	.213	.525	.156	.223	.855	.493	.196	.202	.251
Q57	.266	.208	.492	.205	.269	.855	.512	.236	.214	.229
Q58	.260	.144	.447	.256	.298	.856	.547	.224	.270	.180
Q59	.255	.180	.451	.239	.274	.859	.522	.247	.263	.200
Q60	.264	.225	.528	.245	.269	.507	.851	.229	.229	.230
Q61	.247	.161	.469	.256	.255	.533	.870	.239	.229	.178
Q62	.213	.167	.441	.198	.259	.506	.86	.268	.199	.163
Q63	.255	.202	.515	.236	.286	.539	.866	.267	.218	.185

Structural Model

Smart-PLS software was used for path analysis to evaluate the path coefficient and significance of the model. The path analysis results in Smart-PLS are shown in Figure 2.

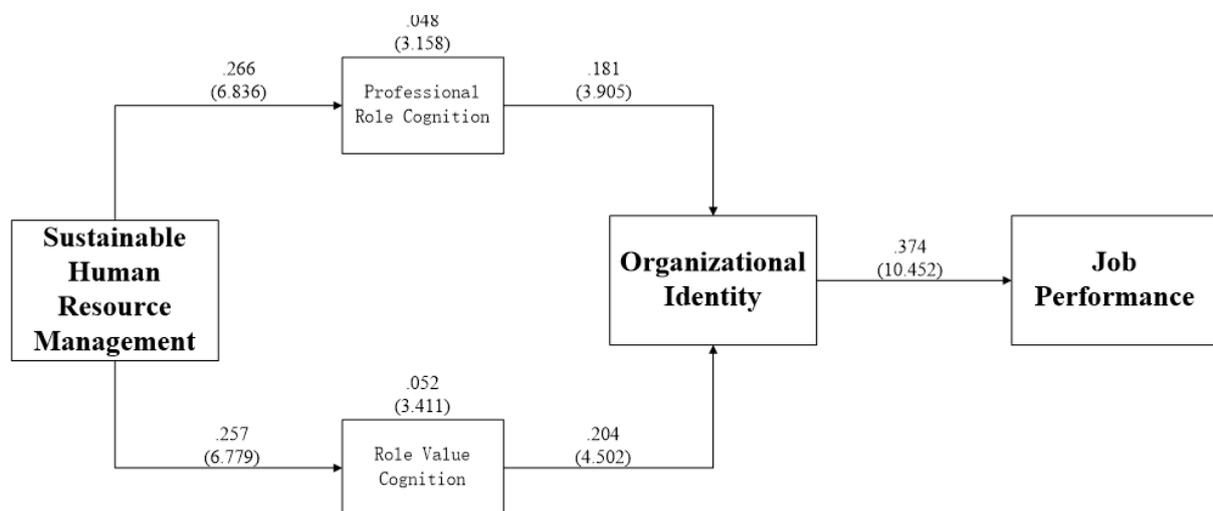


Figure 2 Structural equation model analysis results

The results indicate significant positive correlations between sustainable human resource management and both professional role cognition ($\beta = .266, t = 6.836$) and role value cognition ($\beta = .257, t = 6.779$), supporting hypotheses H1a and H2a ($p < .01$). Additionally, professional role cognition ($\beta = .181, t = 3.905$) and role value cognition ($\beta = .204, t = 4.502$) are positively correlated with organizational identity, confirming hypotheses H1b and H2b ($p < .01$). Furthermore, there is a positive correlation between organizational identity and job performance ($\beta = .374, t = 10.452, p < .01$), validating hypothesis H3. The mediation effects in hypotheses H4 and H5 are also supported, with path coefficients of .020 and .018, respectively, both significant at $p < .01$.

Table 3 Path Route Results

H	Path Relation	β	SE	t	p	95% CI	Results
H1	SHRM → Professional Role Cognition → Organizational Identity	.048	.015	3.158	.002	.022~.082	support
H1a	SHRM → Professional Role Cognition	.266	.039	6.836	.000	.191~.346	support
H1b	Professional Role Cognition → Organizational Identity	.181	.046	3.905	.000	.092~.273	support
H2	SHRM → Role Value Cognition → Organizational Identity	.052	.015	3.411	.001	.027~.086	support
H2a	SHRM → Role Value Cognition	.257	.038	6.779	.000	.184~.332	support
H2b	Role Value Cognition → Organizational Identity	.204	.045	4.502	.000	.119~.293	support
H3	Organizational Identity → Job Performance	.374	.036	10.452	.000	.304~.444	support
H4	SHRM → Role Value Cognition → Organizational Identity → Job Performance	.020	.006	3.040	.002	.009~.034	support
H5	SHRM → Professional Role Cognition → Organizational Identity → Job Performance	.018	.006	2.810	.005	.008~.033	support

Conclusion and Discussion

Implications

Sustainable human resource management (SHRM) has a significant impact on job performance (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Kramar, 2014). Consistent with self-determination theory, SHRM not only has a direct impact on job performance, but also has an indirect impact on behavior through professional identity and organizational identity. Research suggests that SHRM significantly influences job performance through these two identity dimensions (Sypniewska et al., 2023). In addition, professional identity and organizational identity mediate the relationship between SHRM and job performance.

This study hypothesizes that teachers' job performance is jointly influenced by their professional and organizational identity. SHRM has both direct and indirect effects on teachers' job performance, which is consistent with SHRM theory. The theory emphasizes that SHRM practices are not limited to strengthening professional or organizational identity, but permeate the entire SHRM process. Specific practices include organizing regular training, facilitating academic exchanges, implementing mentoring programs (e.g., the mentor-apprentice system), and conducting career planning to enhance teachers' professional role cognition. At the same time, teachers' role value cognition is strengthened through well-structured reward and punishment mechanisms, an optimized work environment, work-life balance initiatives and emotional support.

The results of this study confirm the influence of the above factors and show that both professional identity and organizational identity play a key role in the internalization of SHRM and significantly influence teachers' job performance.

Research Findings

Drawing on social identity theory, organizational support theory, and self-determination theory, this study developed a model to examine the combined effects of SHRM, professional identity, and organizational identity on job performance. Through a questionnaire survey of teachers in 857 public undergraduate universities in China, 610 valid questionnaires were collected. The results show that organizational identity has a direct positive influence on job performance. However, occupational role perception and occupational value perception have an indirect effect on job performance through organizational identification. In addition, SHRM affects job performance indirectly through job role perception, job value perception and organizational identification. This shows that SHRM plays an important role in promoting teachers' recognition to improve their job performance.

Limitations

Although the study provides new insights into the role of professional and organizational identity in the relationship between SHRM and job performance, certain limitations remain. First, the study treated two sub-dimensions of job identity (job role perception and values perception) as independent potential variables. In the future, they may be integrated into a comprehensive indicator for assessment. Second, the sample of the study is limited to public universities in China, and the generalizability of the results may be limited by specific regions and cultural contexts. In the future, the results may be extended to other types of schools or examined on a global scale. Finally, the study used cross-sectional data and did not examine the dynamic changes between variables. The reliability of the study can be improved in the future through longitudinal research.

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