



Interrogating the Dynamics between Human resource management Practices and Perceived Gender Diversity: An Empirical Sectoral Analysis of Bangladesh's Business Process Outsourcing Industry

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study explores how human resource management (HRM) practices influence employee perceptions of gender diversity in Bangladesh's rapidly expanding Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector. As the industry grows, establishing an inclusive and gender-diverse workforce is increasingly seen as critical to sustainable development. **Methodology:** Using a structured survey conducted among employees in several BPO companies across Bangladesh, the study gathers quantitative insights into how these HRM practices affect perceptions of gender diversity within the workplace and uses Smart PLS 4 to analyse the data. **Results:** The findings indicate which HR policies are most effective in promoting a respectful and inclusive culture, while also highlighting gaps that may hinder progress toward diversity goals. Additionally, the study examines how an organization's commitment to diversity can enhance employee satisfaction, productivity, and a sense of belonging. **Conclusion:** This research enhances the understanding of HRM's impact on gender diversity, offering practical recommendations for BPO firms in Bangladesh aiming to foster more equitable workplace environments. By aligning HR policies with diversity objectives, organizations can boost morale, reduce employee turnover, and cultivate a more balanced, forward-looking workforce suited to the demands of today's

Keywords: Human Resource Management (HRM), Gender diversity, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO)

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Human resource management (HRM) practices have been identified as crucial factors for addressing gender diversity. HRM practices, such as hiring and selection, training and career development, workplace and policy management, and performance management, can be used to build a work environment that supports diversity (Mahmud 2021). For example, companies with inclusive hiring practices and clear anti-discrimination policies tend to attract and retain diverse workforces (Chowdhury & Rahim, 2020). Moreover, the creation of an organizational culture that promotes diversity and inclusion has been found to have a positive impact on employee satisfaction, morale, and commitment (Akter, 2022). However, in

the case of the Bangladeshi BPO industry, many companies still have difficulties practicing and maintaining such practices due to a shortage of resources, insufficient knowledge, or resistance to cultural change.

There is a notable global rise in interest in gender diversity in the workplace. It is increasingly recognized that diverse teams can offer opportunities for enhancing diversity in recruitment, career advancement, workplace inclusion, leadership commitment, anti-discrimination policies and organizational representation. The representation of multiple perspectives is particularly useful within the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector, which is characterized by its fast pace and competitiveness. [Jehn, Northcraft and Neale, \(1999\)](#) theorize that gender diversity is especially valuable because individuals with different points of view may contribute to more effective decision making and problem-solving within organizations. Industry, geography, and practice variation: while the ways in which gender diversity is addressed by policy are very variable, many organizations find it extremely difficult to implement the policy.

The business process outsourcing (BPO) industry in Bangladesh has become a significant contributor to the economy by offering employment to millions of workers, many of whom are women. However, disparities along gender lines persist, reflecting a pervasive and systemic bias in society. Though barriers to advancement remain extremely challenging for women in Bangladesh, particularly in male-dominated sectors such as business process outsourcing (BPO), according to research. This is even though the number of women in the workplace has grown steadily. These are challenges that are related to maintaining a work-life balance, gender-based discrimination, and no policies that accommodate or cater to the more specific needs of women staff. As a result, many organizations in Bangladesh that work in the business process outsourcing (BPO) field do not consider gender diversity to be a strategic goal. While it is well-established in the literature that gender diversity plays an important role in enhancing the effectiveness of organizations, more in-depth research is therefore required on how these practices are being adopted and their impact on the business process outsourcing industry of Bangladesh. This study aims to examine how HRM practices including recruitment and selection, professional development, work environment, and performance management shape employee perceptions of gender diversity in Bangladesh's BPO sector.

Problem Statement

While substantial research has explored the impact of human resource management (HRM) practices on organizational performance and employee engagement, few studies have specifically examined how these practices influence gender diversity in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector, especially in developing countries such as Bangladesh ([Akter & Hasan, 2023](#)). Existing literature on gender diversity often centers on traditional sectors such as manufacturing, technology, and finance, with relatively little attention paid to the BPO industry, which operates under unique cultural and organizational dynamics ([Qualid et al., 2017](#)). This gap is notable, as the BPO industry, being one of the fastest-growing employment sectors in Bangladesh, has distinctive workforce characteristics and operational challenges that influence the implementation of HRM practices aimed at promoting gender diversity ([Unity Connect, 2022](#)). Furthermore, although prior studies have examined HRM practices, such as recruitment, professional development, and anti-discrimination policies, there is limited empirical evidence on how these practices affect employee perceptions of gender inclusivity, specifically in the BPO context. Many of the available studies focus broadly on HRM's impact on diversity or organizational culture without delving into how gender diversity initiatives are perceived by employees, particularly in a BPO setting where client demands and operational pressures are high ([Rahman & Hasan, 2022](#)).

Objectives

To assess the impact of recruitment and selection procedures on the perceived gender diversity in the BPO industry.

1. To assess the impact of professional development and career management on the perceived gender diversity in the BPO industry.
2. To assess the impact of work environment and policy management on the perceived gender diversity in the BPO industry.
3. To assess the impact of performance management on the perceived gender diversity in the BPO industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The BPO Industry and Gender Dynamics in Bangladesh.

Business process outsourcing (BPO) has grown substantially in Bangladesh and has become an integral part of the economy, with a 24/7 working model and a burgeoning young workforce ([Akter et.al., 2019](#)). This expansion has led to new employment opportunities, as Bangladesh is increasingly being considered a focal player in the global outsourcing industry ([Monteiro & Joseph, 2022](#)). However, gender relations are still a matter of concern, as women's participation in the formal labor market is shaped based on sociocultural norms, though a number of governmental efforts, such as the National Women Development Policy, try to stand them up ([Ali & Akter, 2021](#)). Even though women's participation in the labor force is increasing, they are still encumbered by many hurdles ([Senan et al., 2022](#)), which in turn complicates the implementation of gender diversity initiatives in the BPO industry ([Dey & Basak, 2017](#)). At the global level, the BPO industry is perceived to be women-friendly, and hence, at the entry-level, the "glass ceilings" can have an impact on the career progress of women employees ([Akhter et.al., 1970](#)). The idea of "Perceived Gender Diversity" represents the perception of employees toward gender equality and equal opportunity for everyone in their organizations ([Haque et al., 2020](#)). There is little research on gender diversity in BPOs situated in Bangladesh, and there is limited information on how global trends manifest locally and the extent to which existing practices play a meaningful role in promoting gender equality.

Sex diversity is of strategic significance to BPOs in the recruitment of talent, their perceived ability to innovate, client satisfaction, and CSR compliance (2023). A diverse workforce adds new approaches to problem-solving and decision-making, which are key to a competitive global economy. Recruitment and selection, professional development, work environment and performance management are HRM practices that have a significant impact on enhancing gender diversity. The objective of the current research is to investigate how these HRM practices affect perceived gender diversity in Bangladesh's BPO industry in the absence of stringent laws against workplace gender discrimination ([Chakraborty & Chatterjee, 2020](#)). Strategic HRM practices at the level of gender diversity are prerequisites for productive organizational success" ([Monteiro & Joseph, 2022](#)). Biases need to be avoided in recruitment, and professional development programmes should be geared towards the promotion of women. Workplaces that are inclusive and have a fair performance management system in place are needed to retain diverse talents ([Rajashekar & Jain, 2023](#)). By exploring how the perceptions of GD affected organizational outcomes through HRM practices in the context of the BPO sector in Bangladesh, through the current study we wish to investigate the potential GDOM among the critical BPO sector operating in the context of Bangladesh, hoping to inspire future researchers ([Mahmood & Absar, 2015](#)).

Recruitment and Selection Practices

Recruitment and selection practices are essential for shaping an organization's workforce, significantly affecting talent composition and diversity ([Dainty et al., 2004](#)). This series of practices includes all activities, from finding prospects to assessing and selecting individuals who fit into specific roles ([Chungyalpa, 2016](#) and [Opada et al., 2024](#)). One of the more critical issues in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry is recruitment and selection, where workforce diversity is rapidly becoming a strategic priority ([Azmy, 2018](#)). The success of these practices depends on whether they match organizational goals, are fair and inclusive, and use proper tools to attract a diverse pool of candidates ([Ryan & Tippins, 2004](#)). Furthermore, these practices help shape employee perceptions of organizational culture and strengthen their commitment to diversity. The BPO industry in Bangladesh is enlarged, and more women join; therefore, whether recruitment and selection practices can bring about gender diversity has become a crucial question ([Kanagavalli et al., 2019](#)). Even with all these advancements, obstacles exist, such as the "glass ceiling" and social norms that keep women from advancing their careers ([Ali & Akter, 2021](#)). It is important to understand recruitment and selection practices that can have a positive impact on gender diversity if one wants to create a fair work environment.

To achieve this, it is important for an organization to choose its personnel according to both objective and subjective criteria to ensure a high proportion of diversity in the members of its workforce ([Saad et al., 2014](#)). The present study posits that gender-inclusive recruitment and selection practices correlate positively with perceived gender diversity in Bangladeshi BPOs. Practices that increase an organization's likelihood of hiring qualified female candidates include using gender-neutral job descriptions, diverse hiring panels, structured interviews, targeted outreach, and unbiased screening processes. When hiring women or other underprivileged groups, using fair hiring practices affects not only a level field in the process but also assists with the communication of an organization's commitment to diversity ([Chakraborty & Chatterjee, 2020](#)). On the other hand, according to social identity theory, people are attracted to institutions that mirror their social identity, including gender. Gender-neutral job descriptions, together with broad-based hiring panels, can erase bias and foster justice ([Woodhams & Lupton, 2009](#)). Finally, targeted outreach combined with unbiased screening processes can help attract different things to the acceptance system, such as potential employees of other nationalities or people just starting out in their careers. Characterizing the last two job steps as ideal further ensures that people are evaluated based on professional experience rather than demographic factors.

H1: *Recruitment and selection practices are positively associated with the perceived gender diversity in the BPO industry.*

Professional development and career management practice

Professional development and career management practices play an essential role in forming perceptions of gender diversity in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry ([Bula et al., 2023](#)). If women are to move into the boardroom, they need to develop clear career paths through training and mentoring ([Adhikary, 2016](#)). By seeing women in different positions, it is believed that opportunities for women exist. Leading diverse roles creates a feeling of diversity beyond rudimentary ([Barkhuizen et al., 2022](#)). Companies that incorporate life into these practices show that they are inclusive in spirit. They become environments in which people are validated and encouraged ([Yousuf, 2014](#)). This is important not only for the development of a diverse workforce but also for those doing strategic planning within BPO organizations ([Ramli et al., 2024](#)). Such initiatives attract, retain, and develop talented women while driving creativity and improving organizational performance. Without institutionalizing diversity at every

tier from top to bottom, companies cannot unleash their full potential ([Mavriplis & Croft, 2013](#)). The resource-based view theory suggests that a diverse workforce, especially one with female leaders, can deliver a competitive edge. This may be due to the promotion of innovation or even increased flexibility ([Guha et. al., 2025](#)).

This belief represents the Social Identity Theory explain when employees feel that their company values diversity, they feel a part of it and become more involved ([Woodhams & Lupton, 2009](#)). Integration is an essential condition for maintaining the welfare of diversity in employment ([Provost 2024](#)). Labor policies conducive to equal opportunities are taken up on a sustained basis by organizations if the latter would like to see their performance improvement ([Mehari et al., 2024](#)). Poorly managed diversity may result in higher turnover rates and decreased performance (Kumar 2012). Diversity management aims to cultivate an environment that appreciates individual differences, thus enabling all members of the organization to contribute their best efforts towards common goals ([Patrick & Kumar, 2012](#)). Companies face the challenge of leveraging cultural diversity while avoiding friction caused by these differences ([Kreitz, 2008](#)). However, how can organizations deal with differences to educate retention and productivity ([Elamin et al., 2024](#))? Diversity is multifaceted, encompassing aspects such as race, sex, and thinking styles. ([Patrick & Kumar, 2012](#)) Organizations should recruit and support a diverse workforce to reflect consumer diversity, but few have achieved genuine multiculturalism ([Rabby and Rahman, 2023](#) and [Croitoru et al., 2022](#)). Two other major sources of prejudice are high mobility and lack of feedback for performance ([Konrad, 2006](#)).

H2: *Professional development and career management practices are positively associated with the perceived gender diversity in the BPO industry.*

Work Environment and Policy Management

Organizational policies and workplace management play a vital role in influencing the perception of gender diversity, especially in Bangladesh's BPO sector ([Kaushik et al., 2014](#)). Flexibility when women return to work, which is necessary because of the shift work in BPO firms, and strong policies that are well-enforced could be a means to make women comfortable and welcome in call-center setups ([Krekel et al., 2019](#)). Measures such as parental leave, equal pay audits, and safe late-shift transportation create a culture of inclusivity that will improve retention rates and perceptions of diversity ([Monteiro & Joseph, 2022](#)). Personalized health and wellness interventions, such as flexible schedules and improved leave policies, also support employee well-being and work-life balance, which is particularly important for women who are jugglers of family care ([Feeney & Stritch, 2017](#) and [Rajashekar & Jain, 2023](#)). However, the absence of inclusive HR practices to manage recruitment bias, performance appraisals, promotions, and equal employment opportunities can impede the career development of women and lead to a glass ceiling effect ([Ali & Akter, 2021](#)). The safety of women working at night shifts policy enforcement Microaggression These challenges are specific to India and work; inclusivity cannot be standalone; there has to be a gender-specific approach required ([Islam, 2018](#)). A growing number of IT organizations are realizing the significance of employee well-being management and investing in employee well-being initiatives ([Ajayi et.al., 2024](#) and [Monteiro & Joseph, 2022](#)).

Gender diversity and perceptions of work environment policies in BPOs: A major research gap exists with regard to the impact of work environment policies on perceived gender diversity in Bangladeshi BPOs. Attractive compensation benefits are reasons for employee satisfaction but may not be sufficient to deal with gender diversity in a sensitive way ([Chaudhary & Singh, 2021](#)). Institutions will have a responsibility to “walk the talk” by developing a caring climate wherein supportive work-life balance policies are

motivated to be used to address the range of needs held by employees. A supportive work environment represents an inclusive work environment, with the result that the diversity of employees is more visible, and an equitable working environment is developed ([Haque et al., 2020](#); [Wang et al., 2025](#)). Implementing diversity and inclusion policies is a way to keep pace with societal precepts and convey commitment to fairness and inclusion, thereby attracting diverse sets of employees ([Chaudhary & Singh, 2021](#)).

H3: *The work environment and policy management are positively associated with perceived gender diversity in the BPO industry.*

Performance Management Practices

PM is important for how perceptions of GD within organizations are shaped, as it may moderate gender bias in employee evaluations ([Haque et al., 2020](#)). Studies have shown that the application of objective, non-prejudiced performance criteria and transparent appraisal processes can help reduce gender bias in PA ([Ali & Akter, 2021](#)). In addition, the introduction of diversity goals in manager performance metrics provides a mechanism for holding individuals accountable and supporting the quality of the evaluation environment ([Castilla, 2008](#)). They show how a performance management system reflects a commitment to fairness and addresses diversity and inclusivity, which in turn makes employees feel included – a key antecedent of psychological empowerment ([Castilla, 2008](#) and [Maas & Torres-González, 2011](#)). However, it is difficult to use these principles in countries such as Bangladesh, where subjective judgements appear to be affected by cultural biases and where managers are not adequately trained about how to provide an unbiased rating ([Neeley & Dhanaraj, 2005](#)). This underscores the need for research into the association between the fairness of PM systems and employee perceptions of gender diversity, especially in the context of the Bangladeshi BPO industry, which grapples with gendered expectations about task and performance reviews (Sankar, 2019).

Reward-based PKI performance management systems with quantifiable KPIs are essential for constructive feedback ([Makasa & Hapompwe, 2024](#)). Further, the mission is translated into prioritized objectives associated with employees' roles in terms of critical success factors ([Hristov et al., 2022](#) and [Sapra et al., 2023](#)). An effective performance management system is one that objectively measures and improves performance ([Rabby et al., 2025](#) and [Purandare, 2022](#)). Performance-based bonuses and incentives encourage employees to recognize their performance ([Sapra et al., 2023](#)). In the BPO industry in Bangladesh, subjective judgement, which can be influenced by personal biases and cultural norms, may cause distortion and subjectivity in the review process, negatively affecting employee morale and perceptions of gender diversity. Thus, a new conjecture is formulated: HH1: Performance management is positively correlated with perceived gender diversity in the BPO sector. Well-reasoned evaluations will decrease perceived gender interestedness by elimination as a reward mechanism, potentially creating an environment in which all genders feel valued ([Sapra et al., 2023](#)). This is consistent with social identity theory, which underscores the need to belong and feel valued as a result of being part of a social group, and Signaling Theory, which suggests that fair practices signal an organization's commitment to diversity ([Castilla, 2015](#)).

H4: *Performance management positively associated with perceived gender diversity in the BPO industry.*

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study suggests that four fundamental aspects of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices namely Recruitment and Selection Practices, Professional Development

and Career Management, Work Environment and Policy Management, and Performance Management act as the main independent variables. These are hypothesized to significantly impact the dependent variable, Perceived Gender Diversity, within the specific setting of the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry in Bangladesh. The framework indicates that the effective, fair, and inclusive application of these HRM practices influences how employees perceive the existence, acceptance, and importance of gender diversity in their organizations.

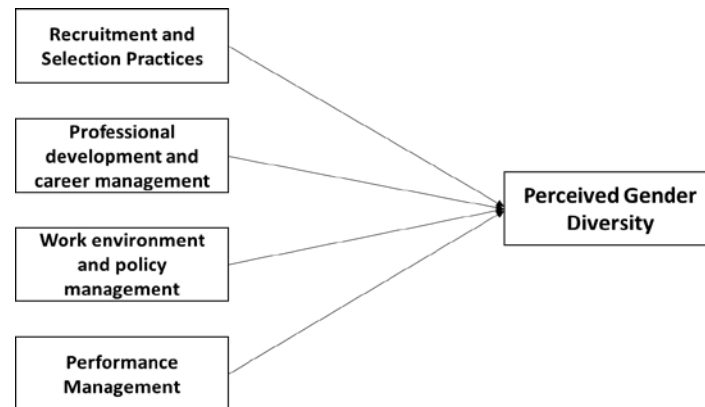


Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables:

Recruitment and Selection Practices (Independent Variable): Recruitment practices that emphasize inclusivity and unbiased hiring are foundational for promoting diversity in organizations. By employing structured interviews, equitable job postings, and proactive diversity recruitment, companies can better attract and retain diverse talent ([Avery & McKay, 2006](#)). Inclusive recruitment practices are particularly effective in industries where representation gaps are prevalent, such as BPOs ([Kundu & Mor, 2017](#)).

Professional Development and Career Management (Independent Variable): Professional development opportunities, such as mentorship and equitable promotion pathways, are critical to gender inclusivity. When organizations provide equal access to skill-building and career advancement, employees feel valued and supported in their growth, promoting an inclusive culture ([Ragins et al., 1998](#); [Singh & Vinnicombe, 2019](#)).

Work Environment and Policy Management (Independent Variable): The creation of an inclusive work environment depends on policies that support flexible working arrangements, anti-discrimination measures, and a supportive culture. Studies emphasize that a supportive policy environment significantly improves perceptions of diversity and inclusion ([Kossek et al., 2011](#); [Clark, 2018](#)). Organizations with clear, supportive policies experience higher employee satisfaction and retention, especially in high-stress sectors like BPO ([Bianchi & Milkie, 2020](#)).

Performance Management (Independent Variable): Proper performance in diversity is essential for fostering an inclusive workplace culture. When performance management is concerned about the diversity goals, employee perceptions of gender equity improve, promoting a culture of inclusion ([Pekuri et al., 2011](#)). In the BPO industry, performance management is particularly impactful, as it sets the tone for inclusivity across the organization ([Evans & DiMarco, 2019](#)).

Dependent Variables:

Perceived gender equality: This variable measures employees' perception of how equitably people of different genders are treated and represented within the organization ([Shore et al., 2018](#)).

METHODOLOGY***Research Design***

This study used a quantitative research methodology to investigate the impact of HRM practices on perceived gender diversity practices within the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector in Bangladesh. The justification for using a quantitative approach is based on the requirement to gather objective, numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to detect patterns and correlations among variables ([Creswell, 2014](#)). Utilizing a standardized survey, this quantitative technique facilitates the evaluation of employees' impressions of HRM practices that impact gender diversity, thus permitting a methodical study of the collected data.

Sample and Population

This study focuses on 2788 employees from ten Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) businesses in Bangladesh. A stratified random sample method is used to guarantee a comprehensive representation of all genders, job positions, and hierarchical levels within organizations. This approach facilitates the inclusion of a wide variety of viewpoints and reduces the influence of selection bias ([Fowler, 2013](#)). The calculated sample size of 338 was based on Cochran's formula for a population of 2,788 employees, ensuring a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error. In total, 405 valid responses were obtained from the distributed questionnaires, exceeding the minimum required sample size. This response rate (approximately 14.5% of the 2,788 employees contacted) provides sufficient statistical power for the analysis and ensures adequate representation across genders, job positions, and hierarchical levels within the sampled BPO organizations.

Research Instrument

The most important instrument for collecting data is a structured questionnaire that was developed to obtain the opinions of workers regarding the HRM practices implemented within their respective organizations that impact gender diversity. On a scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree", the questionnaire contains statements that are expressed using a Likert scale. Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed with their assertions. The survey instrument was a self-administered questionnaire comprising 15 questions. While three of these questions are demographic, the questionnaire is composed of two main components: Human Resource Management (HRM) practices with nine questions and Perceived Gender Diversity (PGD) with three questions.

Data Collection Procedure

Information was gathered by means of an online survey sent via email to the HR of the 10 BPO companies after communicating with them about the purpose of the survey. The decision was made to use the online format because of its ease of use and effectiveness in reaching participants in a variety of areas inside Bangladesh. To encourage participants to provide honest and accurate feedback, they were given the assurance that their replies would be kept confidential and anonymous. The initial phase of the data-gathering procedure consisted of contacting the human resource departments of 16 different BPOs, both verbally and via email, to seek a list of email addresses for their employees. A brief explanation of the

goal of the study, the processes for distributing the questionnaire, and the procedures for collecting data through email from their employees are all included in the letter requesting the information. With the purpose of gathering information, the researcher contacted 16 different BPO institutions, and ten of those institutions consented to participate. To this end, the researcher gathered 2788 email addresses belonging to employees from ten different BPO institutions. The link to the questionnaire, as well as information regarding the objectives and methodology of the research project, was included in an email sent to each of the 2788 personal email accounts.

Data Analysis

SmartPLS 4 was used to analyze the data with a consistent PLS (PLSc) algorithm to improve the accuracy of the parameter estimates (Calantone., 2014 and Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015). The analysis was performed according to the recommended two-step PLS-SEM method (Hair et al., 2022). First, the measurement model is tested. Reliability analysis included Cronbach's alpha (α), Composite Reliability (ρ_c), and Dijkstra-Henseler's indicator ρ_A (ρ_A), with a threshold of 0.70 as sufficient (Hair et al., 1994; Hair et al., 2022). Convergent validity was met on the basis of Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with values > 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and indicator reliability, where the outer loadings were > 0.7 (Hair et al., 2022). Items with loadings of 0 indicated that the models were predictively relevant (Geisser 1974; Stone 1974). Effect sizes (f^2) were used to determine the practical significance of exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs, with 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 representing small, medium, and loading effects, respectively (Cohen, 1988). Model fit was evaluated based on the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) of 0.85 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) and the exact fit tests (d_{ULS} , d_G) relative to the bootstrap quantiles (Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015). Control variables were considered covariates in the model when they influenced the endogenous constructs.

Ethical Consideration

This study has received ethical approval from the participants who have been given informed consent forms which details the study's aim, purpose and procedures which also give them the right to withdraw whenever they want to without any consequences. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, no personally identifiable information was collected, and responses were stored securely. The participants were assured that their answers would only be used for research purposes and reported in aggregate form.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile

The demographic profile (Table 1) of the sample population in Bangladesh's BPO sector provides valuable insight. The majority of respondents were in the age bracket of 26–35 years (58.87%, $n = 156$), showing that the workforce is mostly early-to mid-career-orientated, which, for the majority of the world's service sector. Gender: Representation is highly disproportionate with males (62.96%, $n = 255$) to females (37.04%, $n=150$), which reflects structural inequities reflected in liberal professions in the South Asian BPO industry as well, where women struggle due to sociocultural barriers in corporate culture (Ng & Mitter, 2010). Such bias may affect the interpretation of gender diversity, as male-dominated samples tend to underreport the discrimination faced by women. Of note, ten companies are represented; SkyTech (16.60%, $n = 44$) and Avian (14.72%, $n = 39$) are the largest, and Digicon (0.75%, $n = 2$) and SEBPO (2.26%, $n = 6$) are the least represented

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Basis of the demographic data	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-25	42	15.85%
	26-35	156	58.87%
	36-45	43	16.23%
	46+	24	9.06%
Gender	Female	150	37.04%
	Male	255	62.96%
Company Name	Aamra	27	10.19%
	Avian	39	14.72%
	Digicon	2	0.75%
	Enroute	32	12.08%
	FifoTech	29	10.94%
	Intellie	20	7.55%
	Magnito	30	11.32%
	Quantigo	36	13.58%
	SEBPO	6	2.26%
	SkyTech	44	16.60%

Measurement Model Assessment

As part of the measurement model evaluation, one estimates convergent validity (in terms of reliability and movement in average loadings). The model is particularly good for Table 2 and Fig. 2, and with the exception of low values, the impact of the loading on the recommendation worth is augmented by 0.60. Some factors were excluded from the scale because of their relatively low factor loadings.

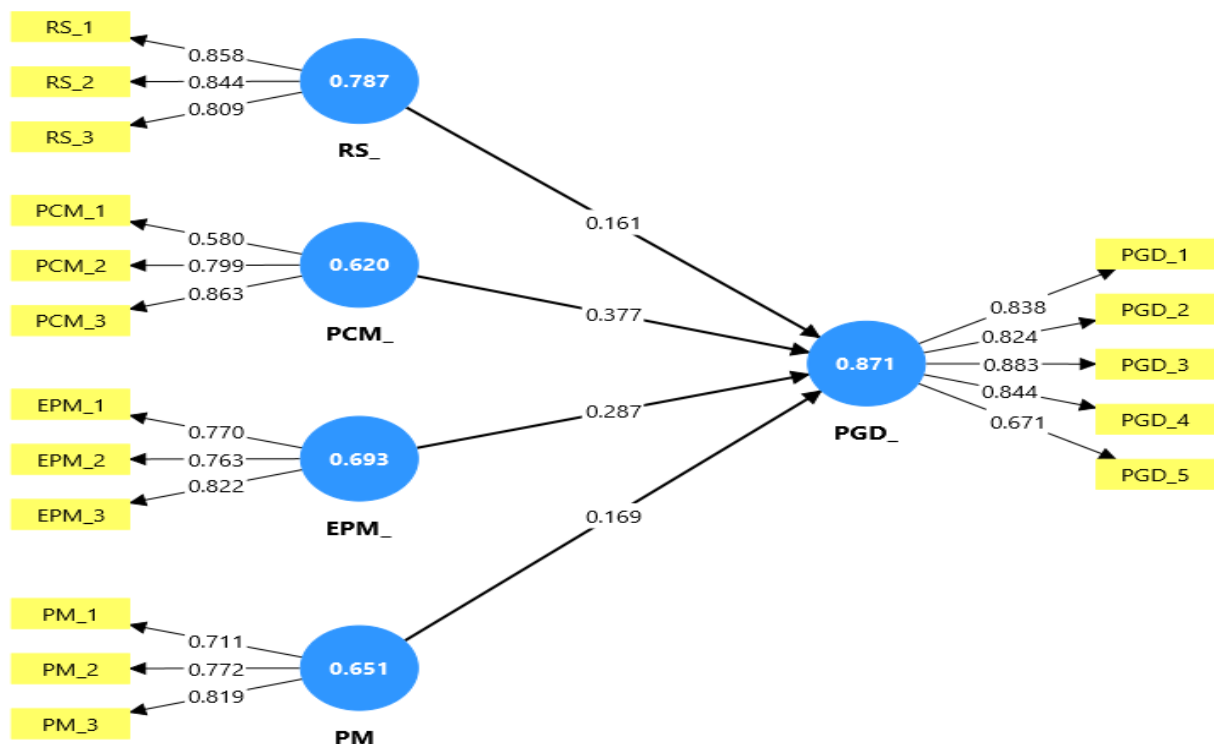


Figure 2: Measurement Model

In addition, the discrimination of the variables was examined using the Farnell-Lacker and HTMT approaches. After removing a couple of items (from the model), all principles satisfied this criterion and were therefore considered to have discriminant validity. Conclusions There was no discriminant validity problem based on the distribution, percentage, and cumulative percentage results of the studies.

Table 2: Measurement Model Analysis

Items	Outer Loading	VIF	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Composite reliability	(AVE)
EPM_1	0.770	1.199	0.693	0.697	0.828	0.617
EPM_2	0.763	1.549				
EPM_3	0.822	1.679				
PCM_1	0.580	1.105	0.620	0.677	0.797	0.573
PCM_2	0.799	1.399				
PCM_3	0.863	1.441				
PGD_1	0.838	2.849	0.871	0.880	0.908	0.665
PGD_2	0.824	2.742				
PGD_3	0.883	2.985				
PGD_4	0.844	2.529				
PGD_5	0.671	1.418				
PM_1	0.711	1.138	0.651	0.650	0.812	0.591
PM_2	0.772	1.451				
PM_3	0.819	1.518				
RS_1	0.858	1.673	0.787	0.795	0.875	0.701
RS_2	0.844	1.696				
RS_3	0.809	1.588				

The measurement model evaluation indicated the sound psychometric properties of the constructs examined. All constructs have good internal consistency, as shown by composite reliability (ρ_c) above 0.70 ($EPM=0.828$, $PCM=0.797$, $PGD=0.908$, $PM=0.812$, $RS=0.875$), which is better than Cronbach's alpha commonly used in PLS-SEM to estimate reliability. Taken together, these results provide evidence that the measurement model is statistically appropriate for testing structural relations in the analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Table 3: Fornell-Larcker criteria.

ITEMS	EPM_	PCM_	PGD_	PM_	RS_
EPM_	0.785				
PCM_	0.695	0.757			
PGD_	0.778	0.787	0.815		
PM_	0.737	0.618	0.718	0.768	
RS_	0.650	0.659	0.706	0.654	0.837

As demonstrated in Table 3, the square roots of AVE (diagonal elements) for EPM (0.785), PCM (0.757), PGD (0.815), PM (0.768), and RS (0.837) were all higher than the off-diagonal correlations of the constructs, supporting sufficient discriminant validity. For example, the highest correlation was found for PCM and PCG with PGD (0.787), which is below the SQRT of the AVE of PGD (0.815), confirming the discriminant validity of the constructs.

Table 4: Correlation matrix.

Items	EPM_	PCM_	PGD_	PM_	RS_
EPM_	1.000	0.695	0.778	0.737	0.650
PCM_	0.695	1.000	0.787	0.618	0.659
PGD_	0.778	0.787	1.000	0.718	0.706
PM_	0.737	0.618	0.718	1.000	0.654
RS_	0.650	0.659	0.706	0.654	1.000

The correlation matrix reveals a positive relationship between the major constructs, namely Employee Performance Management (EPM), Performance Compensation Management (PCM), Perceived Gender Diversity (PGD), Performance Management (PM), and Reward System (RS). The strong positive relationship between PGD and other HRM practices (EPM_ $r = 0.778$; PCM_ $r = 0.787$; PM_ $r = 0.718$; RS_ $r = 0.706$) indicates that effective HRM practices are closely linked with higher perceived gender diversity in the BPO sector in Bangladesh. The high intercorrelations between HRM practices (e.g., EPM_ and PCM_: $r = 0.695$; EPM_ and PM_: $r = 0.737$) also underscore the synergistic contribution of practices to gender diversity, which is an outcome consistent with SET. These findings prove the significance of incorporating HRM practices to promote gender diversity, warranting policy recommendations for BPO industry stakeholders to adhere to gender-inclusive HR regimes.

Table 5: Predictive relevance and Explanatory.

Item	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
PGD_	0.754	0.751

Table 6: Q Square

Item	Q ² predict	RMSE	MAE
PGD_	0.740	0.514	0.384

This study demonstrates the significant predictive and explanatory powers of human resource management (HRM) practices on perceived gender diversity (PGD) in Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies in Bangladesh. Taken together, these results indicate that HRM practices play a significant role in the perception of gender diversity in the BPO sector, which calls for gender-inclusive policies that would foster workplace diversity and organizational outcomes.

Table 7: F Square_ predictive relevance (effect size)

Item	EPM_	PCM_	PGD_	PM_	RS_
EPM_			0.118		
PCM_			0.253		
PGD_					
PM_			0.046		
RS_			0.048		

As shown by the f-square (effect sizes) explanation provided in Table 7, the results indicate differential effect sizes among HRM practices on perceived gender diversity in Bangladesh's BPO industry. The variable PCM_ (presumed to be Performance and Compensation Management) has a medium effect on PGD ($f^2 = 0.253$), exceeding Cohen's (1988) critical value of $f^2 > 0.15$ for medium effects. This implies that performance management and fair pay systems are more relevant in influencing employees' perceptions of gender diversity in BPO firms. EPM_ (if considered Employee Performance Management,

previously not confirmed) has a small-to-moderate effect ($f^2 = 0.118$: weak to moderate); thus, performance feedback mechanisms and goal-setting practices moderately contribute to the establishment of a climate that makes gender diversity visible. Both PM_ (assumed to represent Promotion Management, $f^2 = 0.046$) and RS_ (assumed to represent Reward Systems; $f^2 = 0.048$) indicate small size effects based on Cohen's criteria ($f^2 \geq 0.02$), suggesting that, despite transparent promotion routes and non-financial recognition systems being part of PGD, relative contributions were less compared to pay for performance.

Table 8: Model fit

Item	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.104	0.104
d_ULS	1.670	1.670
d_G	0.706	0.706
Chi-square	1058.665	1058.665
NFI	0.640	0.640

When looked at as a whole, these indices suggest that the proposed relationships may not accurately reflect the empirical structure for BPO settings in Bangladesh. This means that the measurement model needs to be changed, either by rethinking how HRM practices interact or by adding mediators that haven't been taken into account yet, like organisational culture. Before interpreting the path coefficients for submission of the Q1 journal, this needs to be done to have confidence in the model.

Direct Effect

Table 9: For direct effect

Path	Original sample	Standard deviation	T statistics	2.5%-97.5%		P values	Hypothesis
EPM_ -> PGD	0.287	0.056	5.132	0.169	0.389	0.000	Supported
PCM_ -> PGD	0.377	0.053	7.112	0.274	0.479	0.000	Supported
PM_ -> PGD	0.169	0.061	2.780	0.052	0.284	0.005	Supported
RS_ -> PGD	0.161	0.054	2.958	0.052	0.265	0.003	Supported

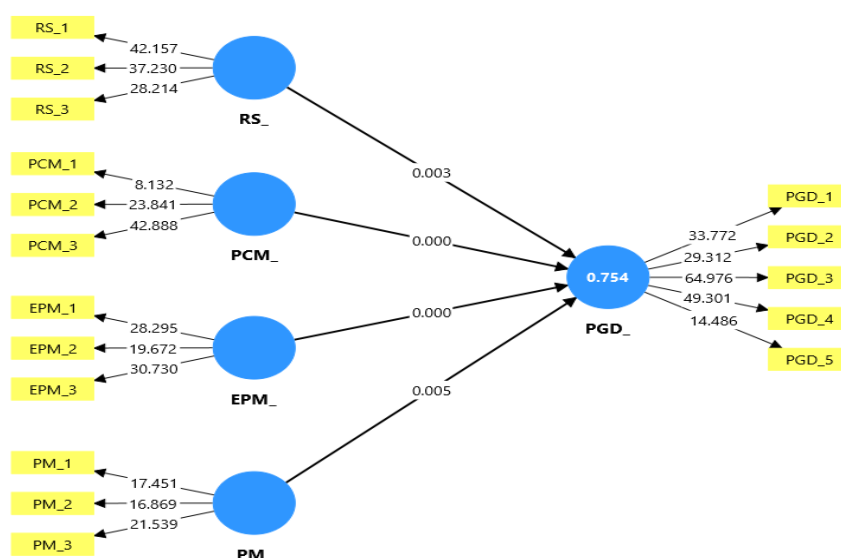


Figure 3: Structural model.

Critically, all T-statistics exceed 2.78 (surpassing Hair *et al.*'s 1.96 threshold), while the 95% bootstrap confidence intervals exclude zero, affirming result robustness and supporting all hypotheses. Collectively, these findings establish that synergistic HRM bundles, particularly PCM and EPM, are pivotal catalysts for gender-inclusive cultures in Bangladeshi BPO industry.

DISCUSSION

While discussing about Table 1 In a study it has been recognized as increasing ecological validity through the inclusion of a range of HRM practices throughout its industry (Cooke *et al.*, 2020), although results will be less relevant to firms with minimal participation. This age profile indicates that respondents have sufficient organizational tenure to provide a credible evaluation of HRM practices, although it may also represent generational bias with respect to workplace diversity policies, depends on younger talent because of the need for operational agility and adaptability (Batt *et al.*, 2002).

As per Table 2, an acceptable value of the composite average variance extracted was received over the learner theory and meta-study recommendation of 0.50 (Sarstedt *et al.*, 2014). The process of Evaluation made in Table 2 is better than Cronbach's alpha commonly used in PLS-SEM to estimate reliability (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Although Cronbach's alpha for EPM (0.693), PCM (0.620), and PM (0.651) is slightly below 0.70, it is acceptable for exploratory research if accompanied by good rho_c coefficients (≥ 0.70 all) (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Convergent validity is fulfilled as AVE scores are higher than 0.50 for all constructs (EPM=0.617, PCM=0.573, PGD=0.665, PM=0.591, RS=0.701), proving that each latent variable explains more than 3/4 50% of the variance of its indicator cross on average (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Most indicator loadings are >0.70 , except for PCM_1 = 0.580 and PGD_5 = 0.671, which remain in the final model because of their theoretical importance and fairly acceptable values >0.50 when AVE and composite reliability values are satisfied (Hair *et al.*, 2022). This result is supported by all VIF values <3 , which also indicates no multicollinearity issues. (maximum=2.985), which is substantially less than the conservative cutoff value of 5.0 (Kock & Lynn, 2012).

As per Table 3, The discriminant validity of the study constructs was examined using the Fornell-Larcker criterion to verify that each construct differs from the others by comparing the square root of the AVE with the constructs' correlation coefficient (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The square roots of AVE (diagonal elements) were all higher than the off-diagonal correlations of the constructs, supporting sufficient discriminant validity (Hair *et al.*, 2017). This finding is consistent with the demand for constructs to demonstrate more shared variance with their own indicators than with variable items that represent other constructs in the model (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). Hence, the results support the measurement model's robustness to the extent that all latent constructs are theoretically and empirically distinct and can be subjected to analysis in a structural model (Sarstedt *et al.*, 2022).

In Table 4, The Observations made is consistent with the literature, according to which organised performance management and fair reward systems help to make the workplace more inclusive (Ali *et al.*, 2021). The high intercorrelations between HRM practices also underscore the synergistic contribution of practices to gender diversity, which is an outcome consistent with SET. According to SET, when HRM practices are delivered equitably, employees develop perceptions that the organization will provide support for them (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

In Table 5 & 6, The R^2 value of 0.754 (adjusted $R^2 = 0.751$) suggests that about 75.4% of the variance of perceived gender equality can be explained by the HRM practices included in the model, providing evidence of strong explanatory power (Hair *et al.*, 2022). Definition: 'cosa', our high R^2 579 cards played

here, is our R^2 level, which is in line with previous research suggesting that there is a significant impact on gender diversity ([Cooke & Saini, 2015](#)). The added value of the model, indicated by the Q^2 predictive relevance value of 0.740 (Stone–Geisser criterion), also supports the model's high level of predictive accuracy. (Scores higher than zero indicate that the models have strong out-of-sample predictive power) ([Hair et al., 2022](#)). The root mean square error (RMSE) was 0.514, and the mean absolute error (MAE) was 0.384, which shows that the model is quite accurate because the lower the values of these error metrics, the better the fit ([Shmueli et al., 2019](#)).

In Table 7, Taken together, our findings are consistent with resource-based view theory, which suggests that strategic HRM bundles, such as the bundle of performance-compensation integration, can generalize and act as valuable organizational resources that boost diversity perceptions ([Rabby & Mumtahina, 2024](#); [Barney, 1991](#); [Jiang et al., 2012](#)). The mediating role of PCM in this model highlights the importance of perceived pay equity and performance-based rewards in demonstrating organizational commitment to gender inclusivity, aligning with international research on the HRM-diversity linkage ([Shen et al., 2009](#); [Ali et al., 2021](#)).

In Table 8, The evaluation of model fit returns a Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) of 0.104, which marginally exceeds the value of ≤ 0.08 ([Hu & Bentler, 1999](#)) but lies within the PLS-SEM permissible threshold of ≤ 0.10 ([Henseler et al., 2015](#)), suggesting a slightly acceptable fit, where the difference in the model's covariance is manageable but calls for caution. The unweighted least-squares discrepancy ($d_{ULS} = 1.670$) and geodesic discrepancy ($d_G = 0.706$) also indicate a misspecification of the model because they are considerably higher than the bootstrap-based critical values, which are in the range of the 95% quantile of the distribution of the bootstrapped samples ([Henseler, 2017](#)). The chi-square of 1058.665 (unreported df) is probably sufficiently large to suggest specification concerns. Most importantly, this model has a very low Normed Fit Index (NFI = 0.640), which is well below the accepted 0.90 criterium ([Bentler & Bonett, 1980](#)), meaning that the model lacks explanatory power compared to a null model. The unweighted least-squares discrepancy ($d_{ULS} = 1.670$) and geodesic discrepancy ($d_G = 0.706$) also indicate a misspecification of the model because they are considerably higher than the bootstrap-based critical values, which are in the range of the 95% quantile of the distribution of the bootstrapped samples ([Henseler, 2017](#)). The chi-square of 1058.665 (unreported df) is probably sufficiently large to suggest specification concerns. Most importantly, this model has a very low Normed Fit Index (NFI = 0.640), which is well below the accepted 0.90 criterium ([Bentler & Bonett, 1980](#)), meaning that the model lacks explanatory power compared to a null model.

In Table 9, The Smart PLS 4 analysis revealed statistically significant positive relationships between all hypothesized HRM practices and perceived gender diversity (PGD) in Bangladesh's BPO sector. Pay and compensation management (PCM) demonstrates the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.377$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that equitable salary structures and gender-neutral reward systems substantially enhance employees' perceptions of diversity. This aligns with global evidence that pay transparency and merit-based compensation reduce perceptions of gender inequity ([Ali et al., 2021](#)). Employee performance management (EPM) has the second-largest impact ($\beta = 0.287$, $p < 0.001$), underscoring that objective performance evaluations and bias-free feedback mechanisms foster inclusive environments, consistent with findings that standardized appraisals mitigate gender discrimination in Global South workplaces (Nishat and Ahmed 2021). Recruitment and selection (RS) practices significantly influence PGD ($\beta = 0.161$, $p = 0.003$), confirming that diverse hiring panels and gender-neutral job descriptions reshape organizational diversity perceptions, as established in institutional theory frameworks ([Ng & Burke, 2022](#)). Finally, performance management (PM) systems show meaningful effects ($\beta = 0.169$, $p = 0.005$),

suggesting that clear promotion criteria and development opportunities amplify gender inclusivity perceptions, reinforcing resource-based views that strategic HRM leverages diversity as a competitive asset in emerging economies ([Ferdous, 2022](#)).

This study reveals strong support showing that strategic HRM practices have a significant positive influence on the PGD of BPO enterprises in Bangladesh. The study finds that PCM has the most profound effect ($\beta = 0.377, p < 0.001$), suggesting that just and transparent compensation systems are fundamental indicators of the organization's commitment to gender equality. This is consistent with equity theory ([Adams, 1965](#)) and international evidence that merit-based pay systems go a long way toward reducing perceptions of gender inequity practices ([Ali et al., 2021](#)). The medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.253$) provides further evidence that PCM is not a pseudo mechanism but a true mechanism for promoting inclusion. Enlarges the resource-based view perspective in the context of emerging economies, and repositions strategic compensation integration as a competitive lever that enables organizations to shift gender diversity into a firm advantage ([Barney, 1991](#); [Jiang et al., 2012](#)). EPM stood as the second-highest driver ($\beta = 0.287, p < 0.001$) towards the importance of objective performance appraisals and unbiased feedback against the subjective biases rooted in the collectivist, paternalistic work context of Bangladesh. The mediating influence of PCM and EPM indicates that employees think of these practices as strong signals of organizational fairness, and as a result, solidify the sense that an inclusive climate exists where gender-based impediments are removed.

Considering the strong explanatory capacity of our model ($R^2 = 0.754$) and the substantial intercorrelations among HRM constructs (e.g., $PCM-PGD: r = 0.787$; $EPM-PGD: r = 0.778$), our results reveal that HRM practices work in combination rather than independently. This evidence is in line with the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) framework, in which bundled practices combine to improve PGD by developing employees' capabilities (through Performance Management systems), motivating employees through performance-related rewards (through PCM), and providing opportunities through fair career paths (through Recruitment and Selection) ([Appelbaum et al., 2000](#)). Both Reward Systems (RS) and Performance Management (PM) separately revealed weaker effects (RS: $\beta = 0.161$; PM: $\beta = 0.169$) than in combination as patterns of a holistic HRM system. This helps us understand the failure of piecemeal diversity efforts, and systemic coherence is necessary to signify the universal presence of these values ([Shen et al., 2009](#)). The high predictive power ($Q^2 = 0.740$) adds to the confidence of both HRM bundles in their ability to shape perceptions of diversity in Bangladesh's BPO setting.

These relationships were significantly driven by contextual factors. This demographic profile, including a strong male sex (63%) and younger worker bias (59% were aged 26–35 years), suggests that structural and generational factors influence PGD. Sociocultural obstacles, such as patriarchal values restricting night shift participation among women ([Rabby, 2024](#); [Ng & Mitter, 2005](#)), require in-context adaptations of HRM practices. For example, RS practices, such as flexible scheduling or childcare supports, indirectly enhance PGD by facilitating female retention. Likewise, EPM's strong effect indicates that younger employees have a stronger need for transparency and objective feedback (Twenge, 2010). The prevalence of companies such as SkyTech (which accounted for 17% of the sample) that dominated the dataset indicates that organizational or firm culture may moderate the effectiveness of HRM, a factor that should be explored in the future ([Imtiaz et al., 2024](#); [Sarstedt et al., 2022](#)).

Practical Implication

These results have important implications in practical applications. BPOs need to focus on pay parity through annual gender pay audits and align managers' incentives to diversify KPIs. However, inclusion

can be cyclical if the PCM and EPM systems feed into each other, such as appraisers with bias scores evaluating performance for compensation. Policymakers can deliver force through public–private partnerships, for example, by subsidizing childcare infrastructure through Bangladesh's Skills for Employment Investment Program ([Asadullah, 2022](#)). There are also limitations to the study, such as cross-sectional studies that do not support causal assertions, and the dominance of the male sample could imply under-representation of the female point of view (Khan & Rao-Nicholson, 2020). For future research, it is recommended to use longitudinal designs to study the lagged effect of HRM on the actual (instead of perceived) diversity level and to include BPOs compared to other sectors to increase the generalization of findings.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the impact of HRM practices on perceived gender diversity in Bangladesh's Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector. Key HRM dimensions—recruitment and selection, professional development and career management, work environment and policy management, and Performance Management—were found to positively influence employees' perceptions of gender diversity. By focusing on these areas, BPO companies can foster a more inclusive culture where gender diversity is actively supported, thus benefiting employee satisfaction, morale, and overall organizational productivity. These findings underscore that HRM practices aligned with diversity goals lead to enhanced perceptions of fairness, belonging, and inclusivity within the workplace, all of which are essential for sustaining gender-diverse teams. The results of this study suggest that targeted improvements in HR policies especially those aimed at reducing hiring biases, providing equal career advancement opportunities, and cultivating a supportive work environment can help BPO firms in Bangladesh bridge existing gender gaps and create a culture that values all employees' contributions. By prioritizing gender diversity through supportive management and fair practices, BPO companies can improve their adaptability and innovation, thereby strengthening their competitive position.

Future Scope

Future research should build upon these findings by employing a longitudinal design to address the limitations of the current cross-sectional study and to establish causal relationships between HRM practices and gender diversity outcomes over time. Researchers could also expand the scope by incorporating objective, quantifiable metrics of diversity, such as promotion rates and pay equity, to complement the current focus on "perceived" diversity and measure "actual" diversity levels. A comparative analysis across different industrial sectors would enhance the generalizability of the results beyond the BPO industry. Furthermore, future studies would benefit from a more gender-balanced sample to correct for the potential under-representation of the female point of view, given the male-dominated sample in this study. Finally, exploring the moderating role of organizational culture could provide a more nuanced understanding of how HRM effectiveness is influenced within different company environments. Investigating these areas will provide a more comprehensive and actionable framework for fostering genuine workplace inclusivity in Bangladesh. This study examines the impact of HRM practices on perceived gender diversity in Bangladesh's Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector. Key HRM dimensions recruitment and selection, professional development and career management, work environment and policy management, and Performance Management were found to positively influence employees' perceptions of gender diversity.

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