Human Resource Management and Organizational Commitment Affecting Employee Performance in Modern Retail Businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province, Thailand

การบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์ และความผูกพันต่อองค์กรที่ส่งผลต่อประสิทธิภาพในการทำงานของพนักงานธุรกิจค้าปลีกสมัยใหม่ในจังหวัดนครพนม

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การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาอิทธิพลของการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์ที่มีต่อประสิทธิภาพในการทำงานของพนักงานธุรกิจค้าปลีกสมัยใหม่ในจังหวัดนครพนม รวมถึงศึกษาอิทธิพลของการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์ที่มีต่อความผูกพันต่อองค์กร ตลอดจนศึกษาอิทธิพลของความผูกพันต่อองค์กรที่มีต่อประสิทธิภาพในการทำงาน และศึกษาบทบาทการเป็นตัวแปรคั่นกลางของความผูกพันต่อองค์กรในความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์กับประสิทธิภาพในการทำงาน กลุ่มตัวอย่างคือ พนักงานธุรกิจค้าปลีกสมัยใหม่ในจังหวัดนครพนม จำนวน 305 คน เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลด้วยแบบสอบถาม วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลด้วยสถิติเชิงพรรณนา และการวิเคราะห์โมเดลสมการโครงสร้าง ผลการวิจัยพบว่า 1) การบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์มีอิทธิพลเชิงบวกต่อประสิทธิภาพในการทำงานอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ ($\beta = 0.78$, $p < 0.01$) อธิบายความแปรปรวนได้ร้อยละ 62.20, 2) การบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์มีอิทธิพลเชิงบวกต่อความผูกพันต่อองค์กรอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ ($\beta = 0.94$, $p < 0.01$) อธิบายความแปรปรวนได้ร้อยละ 84.30 3) ความผูกพันต่อองค์กรมีอิทธิพลเชิงบวกต่อประสิทธิภาพในการทำงานอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติ ($\beta = 0.83$, $p < 0.01$) อธิบายความแปรปรวนได้ร้อยละ 73.00 และ 4) ความผูกพันต่อองค์กรเป็นตัวแปรส่งผ่านแบบสมบูรณ์ในความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์กับประสิทธิภาพในการทำงาน โดยมีอิทธิพลทางอ้อมเท่ากับ 0.76 คิดเป็นร้อยละ 96.70 ของอิทธิพลรวม โดยด้านสุขภาพและความปลอดภัย มีอิทธิพลสูงสุดต่อประสิทธิภาพในการทำงาน ($\beta = 0.40$)

คำสำคัญ : การบริหารทรัพยากรมนุษย์; ความผูกพันต่อองค์กร; ประสิทธิภาพในการทำงาน; ธุรกิจค้าปลีกสมัยใหม่; สุขภาพและความปลอดภัย

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the influence of human resource management and organizational commitment and employee performance in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province as well as the influence of organizational commitment on work performance and study the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between human resource management and work performance. The sample comprised 305 employees from modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province. Data were collected using questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling (SEM). The research findings revealed: 1) Human resource management positively influenced work performance significantly ($\beta = 0.78$, $p < 0.01$), explaining 62.20% of the variance; 2) Human resource management had a statistically significant positive influence on organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.94$, $p < 0.01$), explaining 84.30% of the variance; 3) Organizational commitment positively influenced work performance significantly ($\beta = 0.83$, $p < 0.01$), accounting for 73.00% of the variance; and 4) Organizational commitment fully mediated the relationship between human resource management and work performance, with an indirect effect of 0.76, representing 96.70% of the total effect. Health and safety showed the strongest influence on work performance ($\beta = 0.40$).

Keywords : Human Resource Management; Organizational Commitment; Work Performance; Modern Retail; Health and Safety

Introduction

In today's rapidly changing and highly competitive business environment, organizations must continuously adapt and develop to ensure their survival and long-term success. This is particularly evident in the modern retail sector, which faces intense competition and ongoing challenges driven by shifting consumer behavior and rapid technological advancements. Modern retail businesses in Thailand face distinctive challenges: employee turnover rates average 30 - 40% annually (Nakhon Phanom Provincial Labour Office, 2024), staff must develop advanced customer service skills to compete with e-commerce platforms, and operations increasingly depend on point-of-sale technologies and inventory management systems that require continuous adaptation. High-quality human resources with strong job performance. Employees who perform effectively and maintain strong organizational commitment enable businesses to adapt and respond to customer needs with speed and consistency.

Nakhon Phanom Province has strong economic potential, as it is a border province that engages in trade with neighboring countries, particularly the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and has experienced continuous growth in the modern retail sector. As a border trade hub, retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom must manage workforce challenges unique to the region, including cross-border labor competition, the need for bilingual customer service capabilities, and rapid retail expansion that creates talent management pressures. These contextual factors make the province an important setting for examining how HRM practices and organizational commitment influence employee performance in the retail sector. The findings of such a

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study can provide valuable insights for executives and relevant stakeholders to enhance human resource management practices and strengthen organizational commitment, thereby enhancing employee work performance.

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a fundamental aspect of organizational management in the modern era, particularly within the retail sector, which demands high levels of flexibility and adaptability to respond to rapid changes and intense competition. HRM and Human Resource Development (HRD) are related but conceptually distinct: HRM covers the full range of workforce management functions, including recruitment, compensation, and performance management, whereas HRD concentrates specifically on training, development, and career advancement. The present study treats HRM as the broader construct, within which HRD operates as one component. Effective HRM practices enable organizations to attract, develop, and retain high - quality employees, a critical factor in enhancing overall employee work performance. The HRM process includes key functions such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance evaluation, and compensation management (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

Organizational commitment is an important factor influencing employee behavior and work performance. Organizational commitment is broadly understood as a strong belief in and acceptance of organizational goals, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership (Yang & Mostafa, 2024 ; Pimenta et al., 2024). The concept was later expanded into a widely recognized three- component model distinguishing affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Van Rossenberg et al., 2022). It refers to employees' sense of attachment to and responsibility toward the organization. When employees have a high level of organizational commitment, they are more motivated to accomplish their tasks and demonstrate greater responsibility in their roles. Organizational commitment can be classified into three main types: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Yang & Mostafa, 2024 ; Otoo & Rather, 2024).

Despite extensive research on HRM and organizational commitment in various contexts, there remains a gap in understanding these relationships within provincial retail settings in Thailand. Most existing studies have focused on manufacturing sectors or metropolitan areas, with limited attention to border provinces with unique economic characteristics. Whether the same mediating pattern holds among Thai retail employees in provincial border settings, however, has not been empirically tested. The present study fills two gaps: empirically, evidence from provincial Thai retail settings remains sparse; theoretically, the mechanism by which HRM practices operate through organizational commitment to shape performance in this specific context has not been tested.

Employee performance is an important outcome of human resource management and organizational commitment. It refers to the extent to which employees are able to perform their duties in accordance with established goals and standards. High levels of employee performance enable organizations to achieve their goals and gain a competitive advantage (Campbell et al., 1993).

Against this backdrop, the present study examines how HRM and organizational commitment jointly shape the work performance of employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province. The aim is to identify practical guidelines for strengthening HRM practices and organizational commitment in this context.

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Such evidence can guide both policy decisions and management practice in a sector where retention and service quality remain persistent concerns, and where such challenges directly affect the long-term success of the organization.

Objectives

1. To examine the effects of human resource management on the work performance of employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

2. To examine the effects of human resource management on organizational commitment among employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

3. To examine the effects of organizational commitment on the work performance of employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

4. To examine the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between human resource management and the work performance of employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

Literature Review

Human Resource Management

Human resource management involves the comprehensive processes of workforce planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and benefits management, performance evaluation, and occupational health and safety management (Wafy & Deka, 2024 ; Alqudah et al., 2022). Contemporary research consistently demonstrates that HRM influences employee performance both directly and indirectly through mediating mechanisms such as organizational commitment and employee engagement (Pahos & Galanaki, 2022 ; Yang & Mostafa, 2024). In the retail sector specifically, Pahos & Galanaki (2022) demonstrated that HRM practices operate through attitudinal mechanisms such as commitment and engagement to strengthen employee behaviors and performance outcomes. In the Thai context, Wongsansukcharoen & Thaweepaiboonwong (2023) found that innovative HR practices among SMEs in the Eastern Economic Corridor significantly influence organizational performance through the mediating effects of innovation capabilities and competitive advantage.

Theoretical Foundation

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) provides the primary theoretical lens for this study. The theory holds that relationships are sustained through reciprocal exchanges: when organizations invest in HRM practices that benefit employees, those employees respond with increased commitment and effort. From this perspective, HRM does not improve performance directly; performance gains emerge through the cultivation of organizational commitment. The theoretical perspective explains why HRM practices do not directly improve performance but instead operate through the development of organizational commitment a form of social exchange where employees respond to organizational investment with psychological attachment.

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In the retail sector specifically, this mediating mechanism is particularly salient because retail employees have limited autonomy and their performance is highly contingent on motivational and attitudinal factors. When retail organizations invest in HRM practices such as health and safety, training, and fair compensation, employees perceive these investments as genuine organizational support, which fosters affective commitment a sense of belonging and obligation that in turn drives performance behaviors such as customer service quality, task completion, and adherence to operational standards (Gu et al., 2022). Hypothesis 4 draws directly on this mechanism, proposing that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance in the Nakhon Phanom retail context.

The Three-Component Model, which has been extensively reviewed and validated in HRM research (Van Rossenberg et al., 2022), complements Social Exchange Theory by specifying the structure of organizational commitment. This model distinguishes affective (emotional attachment), continuance (perceived costs of leaving), and normative (sense of obligation) components, and guides the measurement and interpretation of commitment adopted in the present study.

Organizational Commitment

The concept of organizational commitment has evolved significantly since its introduction. Organizational commitment was initially conceptualized as a unidimensional construct reflecting psychological attachment to the organization, measured through three related aspects: belief in organizational goals, willingness to exert effort, and desire to maintain membership (Yang & Mostafa, 2024). The concept was later expanded into a three-component model, distinguishing affective, continuance, and normative commitment, which has been extensively reviewed and remains central to HRM research (Van Rossenberg et al., 2022). The present study measures commitment through these three interrelated dimensions, which remain widely used and are particularly suited to retail settings where the affective dimension is most salient.

Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment and identification that employees develop toward their organization, characterized by acceptance of organizational goals and willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization (Yang & Mostafa, 2024 ; Pimenta et al., 2024). Contemporary conceptualizations distinguish three components: affective commitment (emotional attachment), continuance commitment (perceived costs of leaving), and normative commitment (sense of obligation to remain) (Otoo & Rather, 2024). Yang & Mostafa (2024) found that organizational identification mediates the relationship between high-performance HRM practices and employee commitment among 340 employees in Chinese state-owned enterprises. Similarly, Jiatong et al. (2022) reported that affective commitment mediates the relationship between leadership and employee performance, with engagement serving as a critical mechanism in this process.

Research has demonstrated that organizational commitment serves as a critical mediating mechanism in organizational settings. Gu et al. (2022) found that a positive workplace environment significantly increases employee commitment, which subsequently enhances task performance among 314 academic staff members. Their study confirmed that commitment mediates the relationship between workplace environment and employee performance, consistent with Social Exchange Theory, which posits that when organizations invest

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in favorable working conditions, employees reciprocate with higher levels of commitment and improved performance.

Work Performance

Work performance is defined as the ability to accomplish job responsibilities and objectives efficiently, meeting quality standards established by the organization (Wafy & Deka, 2024 ; Keltu, 2024). Keltu (2024) found that HRD practices significantly affect employee performance through the mediating effect of job satisfaction among academic staff at Mizan Tepi University in Southwestern Ethiopia. Alqudah et al. (2022) developed an integrative model demonstrating that high-performance HRM practices positively influence employees' affective commitment and readiness for change, with organizational culture serving as a moderating factor. Rahman & Karim (2024) further found that the relationship between HRM practices and employee engagement is moderated by supervisory roles in the manufacturing sector.

Recent empirical evidence supports the multi-dimensional nature of factors influencing employee performance. Gu et al. (2022) demonstrated that workplace environment positively and significantly affects employee task performance ($\beta = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$), explaining 63% of the variance. Their multi-mediation model revealed that employee commitment and achievement-striving ability serve as mediating mechanisms, indicating that performance improvement operates through both attitudinal and motivational pathways. This finding underscores the importance of creating supportive work environments to enhance employee performance outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

Based on a review of relevant literature and related studies, the researcher developed a conceptual framework for this study. In this framework, human resource management serves as the independent variable, organizational commitment as the mediating variable, and work performance as the dependent variable, as illustrated in Figure 1.

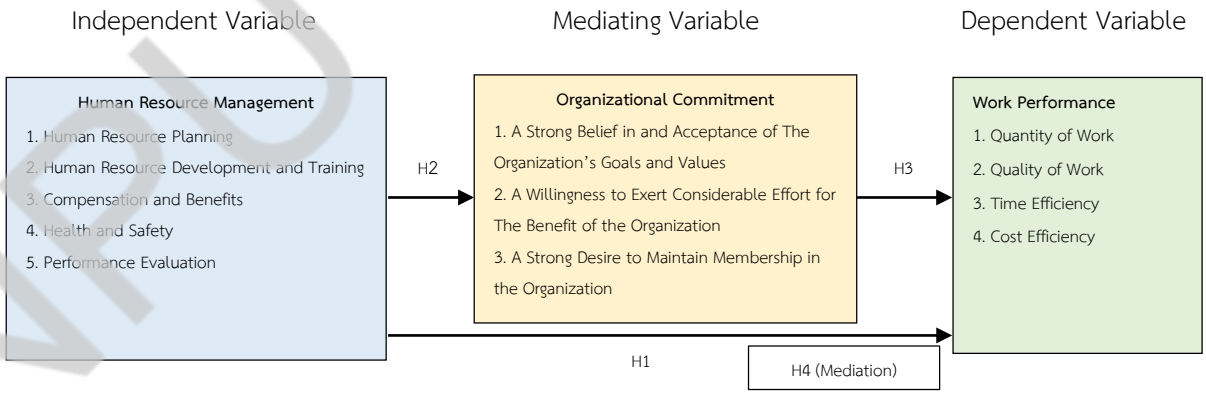

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

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Hypotheses

1. Human resource management has a significant effect on the work performance of employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

2. Human resource management has a significant effect on the organizational commitment of employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

3. Organizational commitment has a significant effect on the work performance of employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

4. Organizational commitment acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between human resource management and the work performance of employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

Research Methodology

Population and Sample

The population for this study consists of wholesale and retail employees in Nakhon Phanom Province. According to the Nakhon Phanom Provincial Labour Office (2024) the total number of employees in the wholesale and retail sector in the province was 42,340, comprising workers across various business sizes, including small, medium, and large enterprises engaged in wholesale and retail trade activities.

The sample of this study consisted of 396 employees, drawn from a population of 42,340 employees in retail businesses, including department stores, supermarkets, and convenience stores. Stratified random sampling was employed based on the type of retail business. The sample size was determined using Yamane (1967) formula at a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error. A total of 396 questionnaires were distributed, of which 305 valid responses were returned, representing a response rate of 77.02%. This sample size was adequate for structural equation modeling analysis, as it exceeded the minimum threshold of 200 cases recommended in the literature (Hair et al., 2019 ; Kline, 2016).

Research Instrument

The research instrument was a self-administered questionnaire consisting of four sections: (1) Demographic characteristics; (2) Human resource management, comprising 30 items across five dimensions; (3) Organizational commitment, consisting of 19 items across three dimensions; and (4) Work performance, comprising 20 items across four dimensions. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

Instrument Sources and Development: The HRM scale was adapted from Armstrong & Taylor (2014) ; Wafy & Deka (2024), modified for the Thai retail context. The organizational commitment scale was adapted from the widely validated Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), which measures commitment through three interrelated dimensions: belief in organizational goals and values, willingness to exert effort, and desire to maintain membership (Yang & Mostafa, 2024 ; Otoo & Rather, 2024). The work performance scale was adapted from Campbell et al. (1993), which conceptualizes job performance as a multidimensional construct encompassing task proficiency, communication, effort, and discipline, and from Keltu (2024), who further operationalized these dimensions in the context of organizational performance measurement.

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Content validity was established through review by three experts in HRM and organizational behavior, with Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) values ranging from 0.67 to 1.00 for all items. Items with IOC below 0.50 were revised based on expert feedback.

A pilot study was conducted with 30 retail employees (not included in the main sample) to assess reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were: HRM overall (α = 0.94), with dimensions ranging from 0.81 to 0.89; organizational commitment overall (α = 0.92), with dimensions ranging from 0.83 to 0.88; and work performance overall (α = 0.93), with dimensions ranging from 0.82 to 0.87. All values exceeded the 0.70 threshold recommended by Nunnally & Bernstein (1994) who established this benchmark as indicative of acceptable internal consistency for research instruments in the social sciences.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess construct validity. Factor loadings for all items ranged from 0.65 to 0.89, exceeding the 0.50 threshold. Convergent validity was established through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values: HRM = 0.58, organizational commitment = 0.61, and work performance = 0.56. All AVE values exceeded the 0.50 criterion (Hair et al., 2022). Composite Reliability (CR) values were: HRM = 0.91, organizational commitment = 0.90, and work performance = 0.89, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold.

Given the high correlation between HRM and organizational commitment (r = 0.92), discriminant validity was carefully examined. The Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio yielded a value of 0.89, which approaches but does not exceed the 0.90 threshold (Roemer et al., 2021). Furthermore, a CFA model comparison confirmed that the two-factor model (HRM and OC as separate latent variables) demonstrated significantly better fit than the one-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2$ = 187.43, Δdf = 1, $p < 0.00$; two-factor: CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.07 vs. one-factor: CFI = 0.79, TLI = 0.76, RMSEA = 0.12), providing evidence that the two constructs are empirically distinct despite their strong theoretical association.

Data Collection

Data were collected by distributing 396 questionnaires via postal mail, each accompanied by a prepaid return envelope, between August and October 2025, over a three-month period. A total of 305 completed questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 77.02%. This sample size was sufficient for structural equation modeling analysis, as it exceeded the minimum threshold of 200 cases recommended in the literature (Hair et al., 2019 ; Kline, 2016).

Data Analysis

1. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to describe the data.

2. Inferential statistics involved structural equation modeling (SEM), which was conducted in two stages: analysis of the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and analysis of the structural model to test the research hypotheses.

3. Parameter estimation was performed using the Maximum Likelihood (ML) method. Model fit was assessed using the following criteria: chi-square/df < 3.00, CFI > 0.90, TLI > 0.90, NFI > 0.90, RMSEA < 0.08. (Hair et al., 2019 ; Kline, 2016). Mediation was tested using the causal steps approach supplemented by bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to establish confidence intervals for indirect effects (Hayes, 2022).

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Results and Discussion

This section reports the descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing results, following the stated research objectives.

The descriptive statistics and correlation matrix for all variables are presented in Table 1. Multicollinearity might occur when inter-correlation in each predictor variable is more than 0.80, which indicates the degree of correlation between variables is high (Hair et al., 2019). The correlation between human resource management and organizational commitment (r = 0.92) exceeded the conventional threshold of 0.80; however, this high correlation reflects the strong theoretical relationship between HRM practices and employee commitment rather than indicating problematic multicollinearity. To further assess potential multicollinearity issues, variance inflation factors (VIF) were calculated: HRM (VIF = 6.21), OC (VIF = 6.21), and WP (VIF = 2.56). All VIF values were below the threshold of 10, indicating no serious multicollinearity problem (Hair et al., 2019). However, the VIF value of 6.21 exceeds the more conservative threshold of 5 recommended by some scholars, and the high correlation (r = 0.92) raises concerns about potential construct overlap between HRM and organizational commitment. Discriminant validity should be carefully examined to ensure these constructs are empirically distinct. The correlations among variables at the $p < 0.01$ level indicate that the possible relationships of the variables in the conceptual model could be tested.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

Variables	Mean	S.D.	HRM	OC	WP
HRM	4.03	0.73	1.00		
OC	4.04	0.73	0.92***	1.00	
WP	4.02	0.71	0.78***	0.72***	1.00

Note: ***p < 0.01; HRM = Human Resource Management; OC = Organizational Commitment; WP = Work Performance

1. The Effects of Human Resource Management on Work Performance

The respondents' perceptions of overall human resource management were analyzed using means and standard deviations. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of the Analysis of Mean and Standard Deviation of Overall Human Resource Management

Variables	M	S.D.	Level of Opinion
Human resource planning	4.04	0.72	High
Human resource development and training	4.09	0.72	High
Compensation and benefits	3.97	0.76	High
Health and safety	4.04	0.71	High
Performance evaluation	4.02	0.73	High
Overall Mean	4.03	0.73	High

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From Table 2, the overall mean score of human resource management was at a high level (M = 4.03, S.D. = 0.73). Human resource development and training received the highest mean score (M = 4.09, S.D. = 0.72), followed by human resource planning (M = 4.04, S.D. = 0.72) and health and safety (M = 4.04, S.D. = 0.71). Performance evaluation obtained a mean of 4.02 (S.D. = 0.73), while compensation and benefits received the lowest score (M = 3.97, S.D. = 0.76). All dimensions were rated at a high level, indicating that human resource management practices in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province were well implemented. This aligns with the argument by Wafy & Deka (2024) that comprehensive HRM practices, when properly executed, contribute to favorable employee perceptions of organizational management. Similarly, Otoo & Rather (2024) demonstrated that investment in employee development generates positive workforce assessments, a pattern corroborated by the present data.

The work performance of employees was similarly analyzed. The means and standard deviations of overall work performance are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Results of the Analysis of Mean and Standard Deviation of Overall Work Performance

Variables	M	S.D.	Level of Opinion
Quantity of work	4.00	0.71	High
Quality of work	4.06	0.69	High
Time efficiency	4.04	0.70	High
Cost efficiency	3.98	0.74	High
Overall Mean	4.02	0.71	High

From Table 3, the overall mean score of work performance was at a high level (M = 4.02, S.D. = 0.71). Quality of work received the highest mean score (M = 4.06, S.D. = 0.69), followed by time efficiency (M = 4.04, S.D. = 0.70) and quantity of work (M = 4.00, S.D. = 0.71). Cost efficiency had the lowest mean score (M = 3.98, S.D. = 0.74). All dimensions were rated at a high level, indicating that employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province maintained satisfactory work performance across all aspects. Keltu (2024) similarly reported that structured HRM practices facilitate high levels of task accomplishment, supporting the present findings. The prominence of quality of work as the highest-rated dimension supports Campbell et al. (1993) argument that quality reflects employees' capacity to meet organizational standards.

To test Hypothesis 1, the path analysis of the effects of human resource management on work performance was conducted, with organizational commitment serving as a mediating variable. The results are presented in Table 4.

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Table 4 SEM Path Coefficient Results: Effects of Human Resource Management on Work Performance

Path	β	S.E.	t	p	Result
Total Effect (HRM to WP)	0.78	0.05	15.60	< 0.01	Supported
Direct Effect (HRM to WP)	0.03	0.09	0.33	0.73	Not Supported
Indirect Effect (HRM to OC to WP)	0.76	0.07	10.86	< 0.01	Supported

Note: $R^2 = 0.62$; HRM = Human Resource Management; WP = Work Performance; OC = Organizational Commitment

From Table 4, the total effect of human resource management on work performance was statistically significant (**β** = 0.78, p < 0.01), with the model explaining 62.20% of the variance in work performance (R^2 = 0.62). However, the direct effect of human resource management on work performance was not statistically significant (**β** = 0.03, p = 0.73), whereas the indirect effect through organizational commitment was significant (**β** = 0.76, p < 0.01). These results suggest that human resource management primarily operates through organizational commitment as a mediating mechanism rather than directly improving work performance. However, this interpretation should be considered cautiously given the high correlation between HRM and organizational commitment (r = 0.92), which may influence the estimation of direct versus indirect effects. Among the five dimensions of human resource management, health and safety exerted the strongest influence (**β** = 0.40), which may reflect the nature of modern retail work where employees frequently encounter physically demanding and varied working conditions. The standardized path coefficients derived from the SEM solution for each HRM dimension confirm that health and safety (**β** = 0.40) exerted the highest influence on work performance, followed by performance evaluation (**β** = 0.31), human resource development and training (**β** = 0.28), human resource planning (**β** = 0.25), and compensation and benefits (**β** = 0.22), as illustrated in Figure 2. These dimension level coefficients are derived from the standardized structural equation model solution and provide empirical support for the management recommendations presented in the Suggestions section.

These results confirm Hypothesis 1, consistent with Meijerink et al. (2021) ; Bos-Nehles et al. (2023) who demonstrated similar positive relationships between HRM practices and performance outcomes. The result suggests that organizations that implement systematic human resource management practices, particularly those emphasizing employee health and safety, are more likely to achieve higher levels of employee work performance.

Regarding the relationship between HRM and job performance, Armstrong & Taylor (2014) underscored the fundamental role of well-designed HRM processes in supporting job performance, a position supported by the present data. The significant indirect effect through organizational commitment also corroborates Pahos & Galanaki (2022), who demonstrated that HRM systems tend to improve performance through attitudinal factors such as commitment and engagement rather than through direct influence alone. Gu et al. (2022) reported that the workplace environment affects employee task performance through employee commitment, with 63% of the variance explained, which supports the prominent role of the health and safety dimension observed in this study. These findings collectively suggest that organizations in the modern

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retail sector should focus on strengthening employees' organizational commitment as a key pathway through which human resource management practices can enhance work performance.

2. The Effects of Human Resource Management on Organizational Commitment

The level of organizational commitment among employees is shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Results of the Analysis of Mean and Standard Deviation of Overall Organizational Commitment

Variables	M	S.D.	Level of Opinion
Belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values	4.06	0.71	High
Willingness to exert effort for the benefit of the organization	4.07	0.72	High
Desire to maintain membership in the organization	3.97	0.76	High
Overall Mean	4.04	0.73	High

From Table 5, the overall mean score of organizational commitment was at a high level (M = 4.04, S.D. = 0.73). Willingness to exert effort for the benefit of the organization received the highest mean score (M = 4.07, S.D. = 0.72), followed closely by belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values (M = 4.06, S.D. = 0.71). Desire to maintain membership in the organization had the lowest mean score (M = 3.97, S.D. = 0.76). All three dimensions were rated at a high level, suggesting that employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province had a strong sense of commitment to their organizations. Yang & Mostafa (2024) similarly observed that effective HRM practices foster strong psychological attachment among employees, a finding reinforced by the present results. Moreover, the high rating on willingness to exert effort reinforces Pimenta et al. (2024) perspective that committed employees demonstrate greater motivation to contribute toward organizational goals.

To test Hypothesis 2, the path analysis of the effects of human resource management on organizational commitment was conducted. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 SEM Path Coefficient Results: Effects of Human Resource Management on Organizational Commitment

Path	β	S.E.	t	p	Result
HRM to OC	0.94	0.03	31.33	< 0.01	Supported

Note: R^2 = 0.84; HRM = Human Resource Management; OC = Organizational Commitment

From Table 6, human resource management had a statistically significant positive effect on organizational commitment (β = 0.94, $p < 0.01$), with the model accounting for 84.30% of the variance in organizational commitment (R^2 = 0.84). The correlation between the two variables was 0.92. This strong path coefficient indicates that effective human resource management practices are closely associated with higher levels of employee commitment in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province. However, a path coefficient of 0.94 is unusually high for social science research and warrants careful interpretation. Three factors may contribute to this magnitude. First, common method bias arising from single-source, self-report data collection is likely to have inflated the observed relationship; respondents who rate their organization's HRM

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practices favourably may, through consistency motives, also report higher commitment. Second, despite the HTMT value of 0.89 and the significant CFA model comparison reported above, some degree of measurement overlap between the two constructs cannot be ruled out entirely. Third, the homogeneous occupational context (retail employees within a single province) may reduce between-person variance in ways that amplify bivariate associations. Readers should therefore treat the precise magnitude of this coefficient with caution; the key substantive finding is the direction and statistical significance of the relationship rather than the exact point estimate.

Hypothesis 2 is therefore supported. Van Rossenberg et al. (2022) theoretical framework posits that organizational practices shape employees' psychological attachment-a pattern borne out by the present data. The strong relationship observed in this study corroborates the findings of Alqudah et al. (2022) who demonstrated that high-performance human resource management practices positively influence employees' affective commitment. When organizations invest in comprehensive HRM practices, employees develop stronger emotional bonds and identification with their organization.

Social Exchange Theory accounts for this pattern directly. Employees who perceive their organization as investing in quality HRM practices tend to respond with greater commitment (Ahmad et al., 2023). This interpretation is supported by Yang & Mostafa (2024), who studied 340 employees in Chinese state-owned enterprises and found that high-performance human resource practices positively influenced employee commitment through organizational identification. Otoo & Rather (2024) reported that human resource development practices contributed to stronger organizational commitment in the hotel industry. Gu et al. (2022) also found that a supportive workplace environment led to higher commitment among 314 academic staff members. These studies, together with the present findings, point to a consistent pattern. Well-managed human resource practices build a sense of reciprocity between the organization and its employees, which in turn strengthens organizational commitment.

The full mediation observed in the present study can be explained by two specific tenets of Social Exchange Theory: (1) the reciprocity norm, which posits that employees who receive organizational investment in the form of comprehensive HRM practices feel obligated to reciprocate through increased psychological commitment and discretionary effort; and (2) the social-emotional resource exchange, where by organizations that provide supportive and safe working conditions satisfy employees' fundamental needs for belonging and security, thereby generating affective commitment as an emotional response to perceived care. These two mechanisms jointly explain why HRM practices exert their performance effect exclusively through the commitment pathway rather than directly, a pattern consistent with the full mediation finding (indirect effect = 96.70% of total effect) observed in this study.

3. The Effects of Organizational Commitment on Work Performance

The results of path analysis and mediation analysis for Hypotheses 3 and 4 are presented in Tables 7-8.

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Table 7 SEM Path Coefficient Results: Effects of Organizational Commitment on Work Performance

Path	β	S.E.	t	p	Result
OC to WP	0.83	0.08	10.38	< 0.01	Supported

Note: R^2 = 0.73; OC = Organizational Commitment; WP = Work Performance

From Table 7, presents the path analysis results examining the relationship between organizational commitment and work performance. The analysis revealed a statistically significant positive effect (β = 0.83, p < 0.01), explaining 73.00% of the variance (R^2 = 0.73). This finding indicates that employees with higher levels of organizational commitment demonstrated better work performance. When employees feel attached to and identify with their organization, they are more motivated to accomplish their work goals and demonstrate greater responsibility in their roles.

Hypothesis 3 finds robust support in the data. As Pimenta et al. (2024) observed, committed employees exhibit stronger motivation toward work goals and demonstrate increased responsibility patterns replicated in the present study.

4. The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment in the Relationship between Human Resource Management and Work Performance

To test Hypothesis 4, the mediation analysis was conducted to examine the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between human resource management and work performance. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 Summary of Mediation Analysis: Organizational Commitment as Mediator

Effect Type	β	% of Total	p	Interpretation
Total Effect	0.78	100.00	< 0.01	-
Direct Effect	0.03	3.30	0.73	Not Supported
Indirect Effect	0.76	96.70	< 0.01	Full Mediation

Note: Sobel test z = 10.62, p < 0.01; Indirect Effect = β (HRM to OC) × β (OC to WP) = 0.94 × 0.81 = 0.76 (note: the OC to WP coefficient in the mediation model is 0.81, which differs from the bivariate path of 0.83 due to simultaneous estimation)

From Table 8, summarizes the mediation analysis, which reveals that organizational commitment functioned as a full mediating variable in the relationship between human resource management and work performance. The indirect effect through organizational commitment (β = 0.76) accounted for 96.70% of the total effect, while the direct effect was not statistically significant (β = 0.03, p = 0.73). The Sobel test (z = 10.62, p < 0.01) confirmed the significance of this mediating effect. This result suggests that human resource management did not directly influence employees' work performance but exerted its effect primarily through the development of organizational commitment.

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These findings are consistent with Alqudah et al. (2022) who demonstrated that high-performance HRM practices positively influence employees' attitudes and behaviors through affective commitment. Jiatong et al. (2022) also reported that affective commitment mediates the relationship between leadership and employee performance, with engagement serving as a critical mechanism. Pimenta et al. (2024) further argued that employees with high organizational commitment are more motivated to achieve their work goals and demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility toward their duties. Similarly, Gu et al. (2022) found that employee commitment serves as a mediating mechanism between workplace environment and employee task performance, indicating that performance improvement operates through attitude-based mechanisms. Collectively, these findings from different contexts support the proposition that HRM practices improve employee performance primarily by building organizational commitment.

The model fit indices for the structural equation model are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 Model Fit Indices

Index	Value	Criterion	Result
Chi-square/df	2.51	< 3.00	Acceptable
RMSEA	0.07	< 0.08	Acceptable
CFI	0.93	> 0.90	Acceptable
TLI	0.92	> 0.90	Acceptable
NFI	0.88	> 0.90	Close to criterion
SRMR	0.05	< 0.08	Acceptable

From Table 9, the model fit indices indicate that the structural equation model demonstrated an overall acceptable fit with the empirical data. The Chi-square/df ratio (2.51), RMSEA (0.07), CFI (0.93), and TLI (0.92) all met the recommended thresholds proposed by Hair et al. (2019) ; Kline (2016). The SRMR value of 0.05 fell well below the 0.08 threshold, confirming acceptable absolute model fit. Although the NFI value (0.88) was slightly below the acceptable criterion of 0.90, this deviation is consistent with methodological literature indicating that NFI is sensitive to sample size and model characteristics, often producing lower values in smaller samples. McNeish & Wolf (2023) demonstrated that traditional fixed cutoffs for fit indices may not generalize across different model specifications and sample conditions, recommending that researchers interpret incremental fit indices such as NFI with caution when sample sizes are modest.

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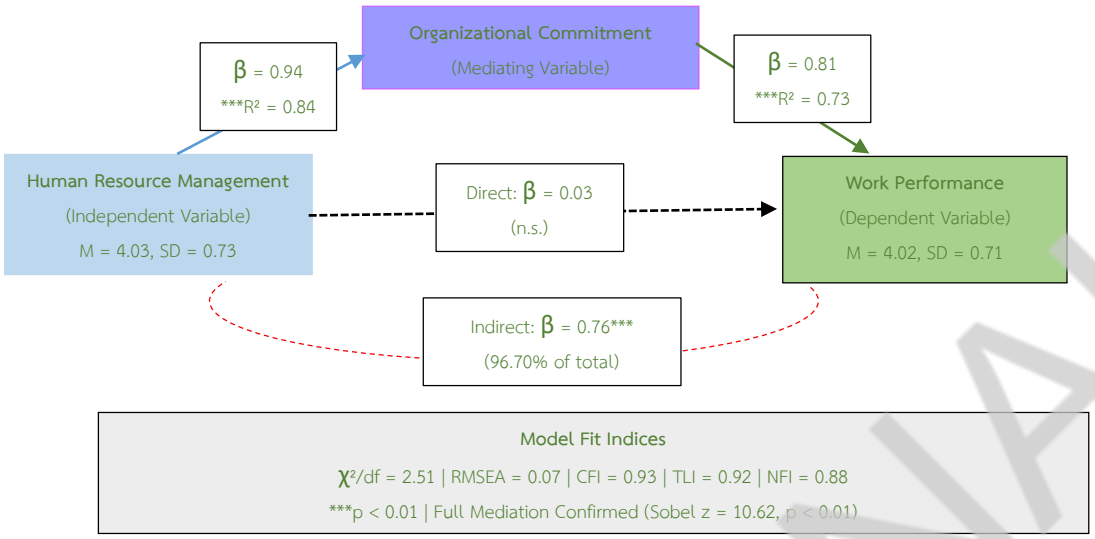

Figure 2 Structural Equation Model: HRM → OC → Work Performance

Conclusion

1. The analysis reveals that human resource management positively influences work performance, with a standardized path coefficient of 0.78, explaining 62.20% of the variance in work performance. This level of explanatory power is considered substantial in the retail sector context, as comparable studies have reported variance explained ranging from 0.35 to 0.65, indicating that HRM practices are among the stronger predictors of work performance in service-oriented environments. Notably, health and safety emerged as the most influential dimension, with the highest path coefficient of 0.40, which is consistent with the descriptive statistics showing health and safety received high ratings and is further supported by the path analysis results. This finding is particularly relevant to Nakhon Phanom's border retail context, where employees handle diverse customer demands from both Thai and Lao customers.

2. A strong relationship exists between human resource management and organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.94$, $p < 0.01$), with HRM practices accounting for 84.30% of commitment variance. This exceptionally high explanatory power warrants careful interpretation, as such values are uncommon in social science research. While discriminant validity analysis suggests these remain distinct constructs, future research should further examine potential measurement overlap.

3. Committed employees perform better ($\beta = 0.83$, $p < 0.01$), with commitment explaining 73.00% of performance variance ($R^2 = 0.73$). This confirms that organizational commitment is a strong predictor of work performance in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province.

4. Organizational commitment fully mediates the relationship between human resource management and work performance. The indirect pathway ($\beta = 0.76$) accounts for 96.70% of the total effect, while the direct effect proved negligible ($\beta = 0.03$, $p = 0.73$). The Sobel test confirmed this mediation ($z = 10.62$, $p < 0.01$). In practical terms, HRM practices do not directly boost performance; rather, they cultivate commitment, which in turn drives better work outcomes. For retail managers in Nakhon Phanom, this means that simply installing HRM systems such as formal appraisal procedures, compensation structures, or training programs

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without ensuring that these practices are genuinely perceived by employees as organizational support and care may yield limited performance gains. The key distinction lies in implementation quality: HRM practices must foster employees' psychological attachment to the organization rather than serving merely as administrative compliance. Retail managers should therefore monitor organizational commitment levels as a leading indicator of future performance outcomes, and use commitment data to evaluate the effectiveness of their HRM investments.

Additionally, the structural equation model demonstrated acceptable fit with the empirical data. The Chi-square/df ratio of 2.51, RMSEA of 0.07, CFI of 0.93, and TLI of 0.92 all fell within recommended thresholds. The NFI value of 0.88 was marginally below 0.90, though this is a known limitation of the index in modest sample sizes. Because CFI and TLI-both adjusted for sample size-exceeded 0.90, the model was deemed adequate for hypothesis testing. On balance, the fit statistics indicate that the proposed model adequately represents the relationships among HRM, organizational commitment, and work performance in Nakhon Phanom Province's retail sector.

In summary, all hypotheses of the research are empirically supported. The finding that organizational commitment serves as a full mediator, accounting for 96.70% of the total effect, offers a noteworthy empirical contribution. This suggests that organizations seeking to improve employee work performance should not focus solely on implementing HRM practices but should pay careful attention to how these practices foster employees' psychological attachment and commitment to the organization. The strong influence of health and safety practices (β = 0.40) further indicates that creating a safe and supportive work environment functions as a genuine driver of both commitment and performance in the modern retail sector, not simply a regulatory obligation.

Contribution

This study offers empirical evidence on the links between human resource management, organizational commitment, and work performance in Thailand's modern retail sector. The finding that organizational commitment fully mediates the HRM-performance relationship clarifies the pathway through which management practices shape employee outcomes. Rather than influencing performance directly, HRM practices appear to operate by first fostering employee commitment, which in turn drives performance gains. For practitioners and executives in the modern retail sector, this study offers practical guidance for improving employee performance by prioritizing health and safety practices and developing HRM systems that foster commitment rather than expecting direct performance improvements from HRM interventions alone.

Suggestions

1. Executives should give priority to health and safety practices in their HRM systems, as this dimension had the greatest impact on work performance. Practical steps include regular safety training, ergonomic workplace design, and adequate health benefits.

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2. Because organizational commitment fully mediates the HRM–performance relationship, executives should direct their efforts toward building employee commitment through transparent communication, participatory decision-making, and fair recognition. Compensation and benefits also require attention, given that this dimension scored lowest among all HRM practices.

3. Future research should compare Nakhon Phanom Province with other provinces to determine whether these findings hold across different regional settings.

4. Longitudinal studies are needed to clarify the direction of causality among HRM practices, organizational commitment, and work performance.

5. Qualitative approaches such as in depth interviews or focus group discussions would provide richer understanding of how employees perceive HRM practices and develop commitment to their organizations.

Limitations

1. This study focuses exclusively on employees in modern retail businesses in Nakhon Phanom Province, which is a border province with distinctive economic and social contexts. Therefore, the findings may not be directly generalizable to employees in other provinces or regions of Thailand.

2. This study collected data using self-administered questionnaires at a single point in time (i.e., a cross-sectional design). As a result, it cannot clearly explain the true causal relationships among the variables.

3. Collecting data on all variables from the same source using self-report questionnaires may lead to common method bias (CMB) and may inflate the observed correlation between HRM and organizational commitment (r = 0.92). While Harman's single-factor test suggested that CMB was not severe (the first factor explained 38.2% of variance, below the 50% threshold), future research should consider collecting predictor and criterion variables from different sources or at different time points to mitigate this concern.

4. This study examines only human resource management and organizational commitment as predictors of work performance. There are other factors that may influence employees' work performance, including leadership style, organizational culture, job characteristics, and individual differences.

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