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Investigating the Association Between Human Resource Management Practices and Job Autonomy on Faculty Job Performance: Evidence From UAE Higher Education Sector

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the interplay between Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) and job autonomy concerning faculty job performance within private universities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) while considering the moderating role of faculty experience. The research explores how job autonomy and supportive HRMPs enhance job performance. The primary objective is to address the research gap concerning the functional independence of HRMPs and their impact on faculty job performance within higher education, specifically focusing on institutions in the (UAE). The significance of this research lies in the pivotal role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in higher education, as HRM has evolved from simply executing decisions to shaping strategic directions, making it a crucial factor in the success of universities through HRMPs related to finding and developing teaching staff to drive educational excellence. The HRMPs under scrutiny encompass recruitment, service ending, training, performance appraisal, promotion, and compensation as a cluster. A survey collected data from 225 faculty members, and statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS and SmartPLS software. The results reached through tests show a significant and positive impact of HRMPs and job independence on faculty performance. In addition, faculty members' experience affects the relationship between HRMPs, job independence, and faculty job performance as a moderating variable. This study has tremendous implications for tertiary institutions seeking to enhance the job performance of faculty members. It provides fresh insights into higher education and the specific context of the private tertiary sector in the UAE.

1 | Introduction

Tertiary institutions suffer from faculty performance challenges, which affect students' academic achievement (Karabchuk, Shomotova, and Chmel 2022; Sultan et al. 2021). Effective Human Resource Management Practice (HRMP) recruitment, training, rewards, performance evaluation, and promotion can enhance

performance (Farhan, Salamzadeh, and Richardson 2021). The responsibilities of faculty members in teaching, research, and community service are essential to evaluating performance (Chang, Lin, and Song 2011). Therefore, HRMPs are crucial for universities to maintain a competitive edge by attracting and retaining highly qualified faculty. Tailored HRMPs foster an environment conducive to academic excellence and innovation. Universities

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aim to attract talented, motivated personnel through research and training initiatives (Rathidevi and Brindha 2020).

Many studies have concluded the association between HRMPs and employees' academic performance in Western countries. Still, they need to address the variables of job autonomy in HRMPs and the role of faculty experience, which distinguished this study. However, these studies are scarce in the UAE (Waxin and Bateman 2016). Research efforts in the UAE focus on the service, financial, and construction sectors, lacking academic research on HRM in developing countries and Gulf countries (Mohammad and Darwish 2022; Rees, Mamman, and Braik 2007). Therefore, the tertiary sector needs attention. They are not just operational tools but strategic assets that contribute to achieving institutional goals consistent with national goals of economic diversification and global competitiveness.

Given these gaps, examining HRMPs in the context of higher education is necessary and timely. Effective HRMPs are pivotal for universities to maintain a competitive advantage by fostering an environment conducive to academic excellence and innovation. Empirical studies indicate that successful HRMPs implementation empowers faculty and enhances performance (Minghua 2022).

The current study aimed to determine the impact of HRMPs on the job performance of faculty members in the higher education sector, focusing on the moderating role of faculty experience. This contributes to the development of HRM from being a decision executor to a decision-maker. The most common HRMPs are attracting and hiring appropriate human resources, providing training and performance rewards, evaluating performance, planning career paths, engaging employees, and creating job security (Nor 2018). However, no consensus exists on these practices' number, classification, or nomenclature (Nawal et al. 2021). The current study's originality is to provide practical recommendations to tertiary institutions on improving HRMPs and their relationship to job performance, which leads to enhancing the performance of faculty members and contributing to the development of the tertiary sector in general and the UAE private sector.

As discussed throughout, the research has broader implications for global higher education research by expanding the theoretical understanding of how HRMPs and job autonomy operate under different social, economic, and cultural conditions. Insights from this research can inform policy and practice in developing similar contexts to improve faculty performance and institutional effectiveness. Furthermore, through social exchange theory, the study contributes to ongoing discussions about the precise role of expertise in the success of HRMPs and autonomy mechanisms in the higher education sector, thus enriching the global HRM discourse.

2 | Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 | HRMPs and Faculty Performance in Context Tertiary

HRM is essential to university effectiveness and efficiency, but HRM systems vary significantly between countries and universities within the same country. Alsayed, Sweis, and

Suifan (2023) and Bateman and Konopaske (2023) highlight significant gaps in research on strategic HRMPs in higher education, especially in Arab countries. These gaps may affect scholars' abilities to study HRM practices. To address these gaps, the UAE Ministry of Education launched a strategic initiative in 2017 to promote higher education by 2030 to develop Emirati professionals with technical and practical skills to achieve economic growth (UAE Government 2024). This initiative provides a unique opportunity to study the impact of HRMPs on job and organizational performance in a developing country. This research attempts to benefit from human resources performance studies from Western contexts in higher education in the UAE, as these studies have proven that HRMPs significantly affect job and organizational performance (Bieńkowska et al. 2022).

The Head of HRM at the University of Leeds highlighted the critical role of HRM in the university's success through staff provision and development (Anyangwe 2017). (Kudaiberenov et al. 2021). They stated that human resources management has yet to achieve its full potential in universities and higher education institutions and achieving full autonomy in human resources management remains a significant challenge (Blom, Voorn, and Borst 2022). Organizations that provide employees with more agency and choice are more attractive and retain staff better (Cantrell et al. 2022). Ramada (2020) found that sound HR practices and job satisfaction drive faculty members with satisfactory performance.

Recruitment and selection are foundational HR practices essential for building a candidate pool. Mihut (2022) highlighted the importance of HR in hiring, particularly in skill-prioritized sectors. Rigorous and transparent recruitment processes directly impact teacher efficiency by identifying qualified and motivated candidates. Institutions employing such processes are likelier to have a skilled and committed teaching staff (Tiwari and Singh 2024).

Training significantly influences organizational goals and job performance (Haryono, Supardi, and Udin 2020; Khan, Sehrawat, and Singh 2021). HRM should focus on refining training operations (Iqbal, Arif, and Abbas 2011) and is responsible for designing educational events to enhance teaching and learning, beginning with identifying faculty and staff training needs (Palloff 2011). Effective policy implementation greatly enhances faculty professionalism and proficiency (Tanang and Abu 2014).

Promotions significantly impact job performance more than training (Haryono, Supardi, and Udin 2020). Higher education institutions evaluate faculty abilities and merit for advancement. Mustapha and Zakaria (2013) and Nezhad, Tatari, and Borji (2019) recommend promotions to retain top faculty. Promotion-related HRMPs positively affect job performance (Tessema and Soeters 2006; Truss 2001).

Compensation significantly influences faculty job performance (Supriani et al. 2024; Zafar et al. 2021) and overall university performance (Amin et al. 2014). Performance-based remuneration reduces voluntary departures (Chênevert and Tremblay 2009). Universities can attract and retain top educators with effective compensation policies (Alam 2022). Compensation structures

should consider the academic labor market, external factors like the projected decline in retiring senior faculty, and internal factors such as faculty position autonomy (Abdullahi, Musa, and Isyaka 2024). Based on this discussion, the first hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1. *The collective implementation of HRMPs positively influences the faculty job performance.*

2.2 | The Connection Between Job Autonomy and Faculty Job Performance

Job autonomy is employees' independence to make choices and decisions (Spagnoli and Molinaro 2020). This includes respecting their duties and decision-making power without interference (Evetts 2002). It also encompasses acting independently without management approval (Burke 2023). In higher education, job autonomy is crucial in HRM, allowing faculty to exercise freedom in their roles, benefiting the institution (Fujii 2020).

Faculty job performance, essential for evaluating effectiveness in educational institutions, includes teaching, research, and service (Burke 2023). Student feedback, learning outcomes, and peer reviews are tools for evaluating teaching effectiveness. Research performance is assessed by publication quality and quantity and grant acquisition. Faculty service is measured through participation in community and institutional activities (Cadez, Dimovski, and Zaman Groff 2017). According to self-determination theory, when employees have greater job freedom, they feel more motivated and satisfied, enhancing their job performance. (McAnally and Hagger 2024).

Many studies have proven the existence of a positive relationship between job independence and performance, as some deal with job independence as an independent variable, and others study job performance in this role, as stated in studies (Dysvik and Kuvaas 2011; Jaiswal and Dhar 2017; Johari, Yean Tan, and Tjik Zulkarnain 2018; Khoshnaw and Alavi 2020), these studies have not been applied in higher education in the UAE, and the Gulf Cooperation Council region, but they are essential and influential in this field, although these regions are diverse in their economies and the extent of their focus on educational development. The UAE's strategic initiatives in higher education highlight the need to attract and retain talented faculty through effective human resources practices, including granting a significant amount of functional autonomy. Therefore, the second hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 2. *Job autonomy positively affects the job performance of faculty.*

2.3 | The Connection Between HRMP and the Job Experience of Faculty

Effective HRMPs significantly enhance the quality of faculty experience (Blandford 2000; Rubery et al. 2015). Cheerful and proficient HRMPs boost faculty enthusiasm and satisfaction, enriching experiences (Felten and Lambert 2020). Key factors such as feedback asses, personalized training, and incentive-tied promotions

directly impact the faculty experience (Khan et al. 2020). Faculty experience in institutions with effective HRMPs positively influences their tenure, indicating stability, satisfaction, and commitment. (Bibi, Ahmad, and Majid 2018; Hong et al. 2012).

Previous literature has indicated that faculty who receive constructive feedback and well-structured training effectively improve their performance (Alrajeh 2021; Valiandes and Neophytou 2018). The financial aspect of promotions stimulates their contributions to teaching, research, and service. (Seifert et al. 2012).

All of this demonstrates the role of human resources management practices in enriching the experience of faculty members (Malik et al. 2023). Conversely, it hampers the potential of faculty members (Grawitch et al. 2009; McCoy and Evans 2005). Strategic HRMPs enhance faculty experiences (Moustaghfir, El Fatihi, and Benouarrek 2020).

2.4 | The Role of Faculty Experience as a Moderator

Research has concluded that demographic factors such as gender, race, and years of experience affect the relationship between job independence and faculty performance (Fairchild et al. 2012; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley 1990; Kavanaugh, Duffy, and Lilly 2006). For instance, job satisfaction varies with the amount of time in a profession (Kavanaugh, Duffy, and Lilly 2006); female faculty members often have more job autonomy than males (Muthoka 2016), and minority faculty members usually have less job autonomy than their White counterparts (Melendez 2019). Yucel and Bektas (2012) suggest that demographic characteristics affect the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher achievement.

The connection between HRMPs and faculty achievement is well-documented. However, recent studies have not systematically examined the direct correlation between faculty work experience and the specific variables in this research. Some studies have approached this indirectly; Kwapong, Donyina, and Opoku (2015) found that teaching staff's research experience influences motivation and performance. Faculty experience moderated the connection between HRM practices and job satisfaction, with a stronger relationship for less experienced faculty. Iqbal, Zia, and Khizar (2021) also suggest that job experience significantly moderates the interplay between organizational support and commitment.

These findings align with social exchange theory, which posits that employees' perceptions of organizational support moderated the connection between HRM practices and job performance (Cook and Rice 2006; Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). Employees who feel valued and supported by HRM practices are likelier to exhibit high achievement. However, the perception of support may vary based on experience; HRM practices may influence less experienced employees, while more experienced employees may rely on established perceptions (Sepahvand and Bagherzadeh 2021). This research aims to determine the moderating role of faculty experience on the impact of HRM practices on job performance, leading to the third and fourth hypotheses.

Hypothesis 3. *Faculty experience moderates the relationship between HRM practices and faculty job performance.*

Hypothesis 4. *Faculty experience moderates the relationship between job autonomy and faculty achievement.*

There is a large body of literature on HRMPs individually or as a cluster in the higher education sector; there is a significant gap in understanding their role in the performance of faculty members and their failure to address variables such as functional autonomy and the role of faculty experience. Studies in Western contexts have focused on HRMPs in higher education with various variables, not including job autonomy and faculty experience. The economic, cultural, and institutional factors differ significantly from those in the UAE (Alsayed, Sweis, and Suifan 2023; Bieñkowska et al. 2022). Studies by Kudaibergenov et al. (2021) and Blom, Voorn, and Borst (2022) focused on the scarcity of research on the independence of HRMPs that affect performance and its limitations in higher education contexts in general and in the Gulf region. (Dysvik and Kuvaas 2011; Jaiswal and Dhar 2017). These studies leave critical unanswered questions about how HRMPs and autonomy mechanisms can enhance faculty performance in dynamic environments.

2.5 | Conceptual Framework

Social exchange theory posits that the correlation between individuals or entities is based on a give-and-take dynamic, where each party strives to maximize their benefits while minimizing costs (Cook and Rice 2006). This theory has been applied to the context of (HRM) and employee performance, assuming that employees are more likely to perform well when they perceive that their organization is investing in them and providing them with opportunities for personal and professional growth (Newbold 2022). In

addition, social exchange theory suggests that when employees are given autonomy, they perceive their organization as trusting and valuing their skills, increasing their motivation and job performance. Based on the preceding discussion of the literature, the conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 is proposed:

3 | Research Method

The study used a quantitative survey design to explore an underexamined topic. The research instrument included original questions based on established literature for content validity; the primary reason for choosing a quantitative survey design was its efficiency in collecting and analyzing data from a large population, essential for examining broad patterns and relationships among variables (Hair et al. 2021). Three experts reviewed the questionnaire following (Creswell and Creswell 2017), and their feedback was incorporated. The finalized questionnaire was hosted on Survey Monkey and used a Likert-type scale from 6 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). By selecting a 6-point scale, researchers can improve the reliability and validity of their measurements, encourage more decisive responses, and reduce biases associated with the middle option, thereby obtaining more accurate and actionable data. (Garland 1991). The study variables were HRMPs and job autonomy (independent), faculty experience (moderator), and faculty job performance (dependent).

- HRMPs: A six-item scale by Iqbal, Arif, and Abbas (2011) evaluated faculty perceptions of HRM practices, with an example item being, “HRM is accountable for faculty compensation.” Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was 0.747.
- Job autonomy: Bhupla’s (2022) six-item scale measured perceptions of job autonomy, exemplified by “HRM has freedom and clarity to make successful decisions.” This scale had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.721.

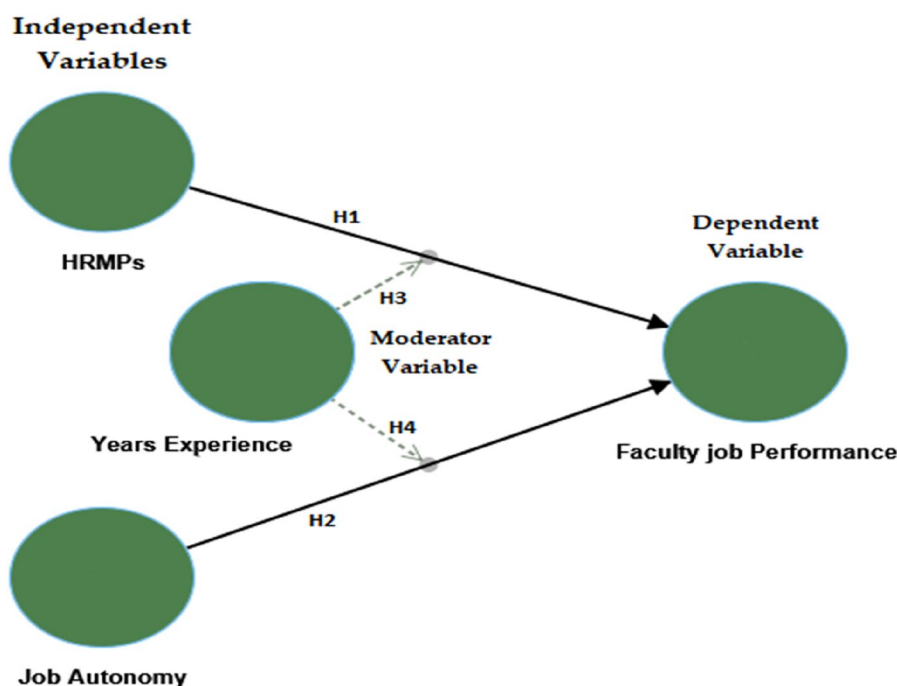


FIGURE 1 | The conceptual framework of the study.

- Faculty job performance: A seven-item scale from Nasir, Bamber, and Mahmood (2023) assessed job performance, including, “I consistently meet the expectations for research productivity in terms of publications.” The alpha was 0.718.
- Faculty experience: Measured in years, categorized into six groups from 0 to 2 years to 21 years and above, assessing its impact on performance, teaching, and research outcomes (Iqbal, Zia, and Khizar 2021).

3.1 | Data Collection

Data were collected using a probability sampling method for cost and convenience (Etikan 2016). The study targeted faculty at 65 private universities in the UAE, encompassing 6029 faculty members. The study population was drawn from private universities and college faculties in the UAE, ranging from senior management to instructors. Participants were selected via a random sample. The Sample Size Calculator (n.d.) (n) is calculated according to the formula: $n = 261$.

3.2 | Data Analysis

The data analysis employed multiple statistical techniques for comprehensive results. Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha assessed data summary and internal consistency (Babbie, Wagner, and Zaino 2023). Independent samples t -tests and one-way ANOVA examined control variable effects (Aliberti, D'Elia, and Cherubini 2023). Correlation analysis using SPSS version 27 explored variable relationships (Pallant 2020). Hierarchical regression analyzed the impact of independent variables on faculty job performance (Ziglar 2024). Moderator analysis with the PROCESS macro assessed faculty experience's moderating effect (Igartua and Hayes 2021). PLS-SEM with SmartPLS version 4.0.5.9 evaluated model fit and effects, thoroughly examining the moderator variable's role (Hair et al. 2021).

3.3 | Common Method Bias (CMV)

To mitigate the issue of standard method bias (CMV) in our investigation, the authors employed Harman's Single-Factor Test, utilizing principal component analysis (PCA) in SPSS. The test indicated that the first component explained merely 31.1% of the variation, falling short of the 50% requirement (Tehseen, Ramayah, and Sajilan 2017). This suggests that CMV is not a noteworthy concern in our dataset. This result was confirmed by the variance inflation factor (VIF) analysis.

4 | Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 225 respondents, providing key insights. Of these, 19.1% were female and 80.9% male, with gender potentially influencing HRMP perceptions, especially in the UAE (Khan, Sehrawat, and Singh 2021). Most respondents (53.3%) were assistant professors, and 67.1% were university faculty members, with job

TABLE 1 | Sample demographic characteristics.

Variables	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	182	80.9
	Female	43	19.1
Job position	Chancellor	3	1.4
	Dean/Associate Dean	12	5.3
	Head of department	21	9.3
	Faculty	151	67.1
	Others	38	16.9
Job title	Teaching assistant	17	7.6
	Instructor	37	16.4
	Assistant Professor	120	53.3
	Associate Professor	36	16
	Full Professor	15	6.7
Age (years)	25 and below	3	1.3
	26–30	8	3.6
	31–35	9	4
	36–40	48	21.3
	41–45	53	23.6
	46 and above	104	46.2
Years of experience	Less than 2	8	3.6
	3–5	12	5.3
	6–10	27	12
	11–15	66	29.3
	16–20	44	19.6
	21 and above	68	30.2

titles and positions significantly impacting HRMP perceptions. Additionally, 46.2% were aged 46 or older, and 30.2% had over 20 years of experience. Age and experience can also affect perceptions of HRMPs, job satisfaction, and commitment. Understanding these demographics is crucial for analyzing their influence on the main study variables.

4.1 | The Effect of the Demographic Variables

Before the primary analyses, it was crucial to assess the influence of control variables (gender, job position, and job title) on the study variables using independent sample t -tests and one-way ANOVA tests.

The first part of the questionnaire captured demographic characteristics (gender, job position, job title). Analyzing these variables helps identify significant differences or patterns early on, leading to a more nuanced later analysis. For instance, ANOVA can show if HRMP perceptions vary by job title or position, and t -tests can

reveal gender-based differences in primary variables. These preliminary tests ensure the study's robustness.

The study found significant gender-based differences in perceptions of HRMPs: males ($M=4.49$, $SD=0.89$) had a more favorable view than females ($M=4.13$, $SD=0.82$), a statistically significant difference, $t(223)=2.365$, $p=0.019$.

Table 2 presents an ANOVA evaluating HRMP differences based on demographic variables. Significant differences were noted for job titles but not for faculty positions, leading to the exclusion of faculty positions from further analysis.

Given the significant ANOVA findings on the relationship between job titles and HRMPs, a detailed investigation was necessary to identify specific job titles with substantial variations in HRMP perceptions. Data review revealed notable disparities among job titles, limiting the use of equal variance tests. Thus, a Games–Howell test for uneven variances was used, as shown in Table 3.

The study found significant discrepancies in HRMP perceptions among job titles. Teaching Assistants had significantly higher mean differences than Assistant Professors (0.64641, $p=0.015$) and Full Professors (1.00196, $p=0.021$). Assistant Professors showed significant differences compared to Associate Professors

TABLE 2 | ANOVA test for HRMPs according to demographic variables.

Control variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Age groups	Between groups	8.904	5	1.781	2.304	0.046
	Within groups	169.306	219	0.773		
Job title	Between groups	17.421	4	4.355	5.959	0.000
	Within groups	160.789	220	0.731		
Faculty position	Between groups	4.677	4	1.169	1.482	0.209
	Within groups	173.533	220	0.789		

TABLE 3 | Post hoc (Games–Howell test).

(I) Job title		Mean difference (I–J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Teaching assistant	Instructor	0.46953	0.21096	0.193	−0.1358	1.0749
	Assistant Prof	0.64641 ^a	0.18632	0.015	0.1005	1.1923
	Associate Prof	0.05011	0.19755	0.999	−0.5225	0.6227
	Full Professor	1.00196 ^a	0.30059	0.021	0.1182	1.8857
Instructor	Teaching assistant	−0.46953	0.21096	0.193	−1.0749	0.1358
	Assistant Prof	0.17688	0.15769	0.795	−0.2647	0.6184
	Associate Prof	−0.41942	0.17082	0.113	−0.8979	0.0591
	Full Professor	0.53243	0.28373	0.358	−0.3091	1.3740
Assistant Prof	Teaching assistant	−0.64641 ^a	0.18632	0.015	−1.1923	−0.1005
	Instructor	−0.17688	0.15769	0.795	−0.6184	0.2647
	Associate Prof	−0.59630 ^a	0.13925	0.000	−0.9845	−0.2081
	Full Professor	0.35556	0.26592	0.673	−0.4509	1.1620
Associate Prof	Teaching assistant	−0.05011	0.19755	0.999	−0.6227	0.5225
	Instructor	0.41942	0.17082	0.113	−0.0591	0.8979
	Assistant Prof	0.59630 ^a	0.13925	0.000	0.2081	0.9845
	Full Professor	0.95185 ^a	0.27391	0.018	0.1301	1.7736
Full Professor	Teaching assistant	−1.00196 ^a	0.30059	0.021	−1.8857	−0.1182
	Instructor	−0.53243	0.28373	0.358	−1.3740	0.3091
	Assistant Prof	−0.35556	0.26592	0.673	−1.1620	0.4509
	Associate Prof	−0.95185 ^a	0.27391	0.018	−1.7736	−0.1301

^aThe mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

(-0.59630 , $p=0.000$) and Full Professors (0.35556 , $p=0.673$). Associate Professors also had significantly different perceptions than Full Professors (0.95185 , $p=0.018$).

These results highlight varying HRMP beliefs across job titles, underscoring the need to consider these differences when developing and implementing HRM procedures to meet the diverse demands and viewpoints of all job classifications.

4.2 | Coefficients of Outer Loadings

Table 4 presents a PLS-SEM analysis of the HRMPs, job autonomy, and faculty job performance constructs. The HRMP items show strong representation with loadings from 0.422 to 0.76. The job autonomy items are adequate, though JA3 is low at 0.396. The faculty job performance items are vital, except JP7, which has a low loading of 0.088, suggesting it should be removed. Overall, the constructs are well-represented, with a few items needing adjustment.

4.3 | Quality Criteria Analysis

The Quality Criteria Analysis assesses a statistical model's strength through indicators like R -square (variance explained), F -square (association strength), Construct Reliability and Validity (internal consistency), Discriminant Validity (distinct concepts), and Collinearity Statistics (multicollinearity impact

via VIF). These metrics validate the model's quality and identify potential flaws.

4.3.1 | R -Square

Table 4 shows an R -square of 0.569 for "Faculty Job Performance," meaning that the model's predictors explain 56.9% of the variance. The adjusted R -square is 55.7%, indicating that most predictors are relevant. The close and adjusted R -square values highlight the model's efficiency and explanatory solid power.

4.3.2 | F -Square

Table 4 shows F -square values in PLS-SEM, indicating effect size: HRMPs have a negligible effect (0.049) on faculty job performance, while job autonomy has a medium effect (0.187). Both variables impact faculty job performance, with job autonomy having a more significant influence than HRMPs.

4.3.3 | Construct Reliability and Validity

Table 4 evaluates three constructs' internal consistency and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

TABLE 4 | Quality criteria analysis and outer loadings.

Latent	Manifest	Loadings	VIF	CA	(rho_a)	(rho_c)	AVE	F^2	R^2	R^2A
HRMPs	HRMP1	0.58	1.315	0.745	0.785	0.82	0.539	0.049	0.569	0.557
	HRMP2	0.687	1.458							
	HRMP3	0.422	1.138							
	HRMP4	0.724	1.423							
	HRMP5	0.736	1.416							
	HRMP6	0.76	1.457							
Job autonomy	JA1	0.756	1.229	0.645	0.698	0.749	0.488	0.187		
	JA2	0.574	1.283							
	JA3	0.396	1.126							
	JA4	0.523	1.315							
	JA5	0.461	1.158							
	JA6	0.718	1.198							
Faculty job performance	JP1	0.696	1.718	0.721	0.794	0.804	0.501			
	JP2	0.77	1.821							
	JP3	0.504	1.264							
	JP4	0.753	2.228							
	JP5	0.598	1.804							
	JP6	0.737	1.618							
	JP7	0.088	1.14							

Abbreviations: CA, Cronbach's alpha; (rho_a) (rho_c), composite reliability.

- Cronbach's Alpha: HRMPs (0.745) and faculty job performance (0.721) show adequate consistency, while job autonomy (0.645) is slightly below optimal but acceptable.
- Composite Reliability: All constructs exhibit good reliability, with values of 0.794 (faculty job performance), 0.785 (HRMPs), and 0.698 (job autonomy).
- Average Variance Extracted (AVE): HRMPs (0.539) and faculty job performance (0.501) meet the 0.5 threshold, while job autonomy (0.488) falls slightly below.

4.4 | Discriminant Validity

The heterotrait-monotrait Ratio (HTMT) in PLS-SEM measures discriminant validity, with values below 0.85 indicating high validity. Table 2 shows high discriminant validity between "Faculty Job Performance" and "HRMPs" (0.803) and "Faculty Job Performance" and "Job Autonomy" (0.794). However, the HTMT value between "HRMPs" and "Job Autonomy" is 0.897, close to the stricter 0.9 cutoff, suggesting that these concepts need further differentiation. This does not affect their links to "Faculty Job Performance" but indicates an overlap between the predictors.

4.5 | Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) assesses multicollinearity in regression models. A VIF below 5 indicates an acceptable correlation among predictors. Table 2 shows VIF values for variables HRMP1 through JP7 ranging from 1.126 to 2.228, well within the acceptable range. This suggests multicollinearity is not a concern, supporting a confident interpretation of the predictors' contributions to the model.

4.6 | PL Predict Analysis

Standard model evaluation metrics include Q^2 predict, RMSE, and MAE. Higher Q^2 predict values indicate better predictive significance, while lower RMSE and MAE values reflect better accuracy. The model for predicting faculty job performance has a Q^2 predict of 0.533, showing modest predictive significance (Hair et al. 2021), an RMSE of 0.692, and an MAE of 0.552, indicating highly accurate predictions and low average error. Overall, the model is robust and reliable for forecasting faculty job performance.

4.7 | Path Coefficient Analysis

Based on hypothesis testing, Table 5 reveals that the results presented provide empirical evidence on the links between HRMPs, job autonomy, and faculty job performance.

4.7.1 | HRMPs to Faculty Job Performance (H1)

The original sample estimate for HRMPs' impact on faculty job performance is 0.239, closely matching the bootstrap sample mean of 0.25, confirming reliability. A T statistic of 2.514 and a p -value of 0.012 (below 0.05) support the hypothesis (H1) that HRMPs significantly impact faculty performance. This suggests a significant positive correlation between improved HR practices and enhanced faculty job performance.

4.7.2 | Job Autonomy to Faculty Job Performance (H2)

Table 5 shows a coefficient of 0.489 for job autonomy's impact on faculty job performance, supported by a bootstrap mean of 0.487. The high T statistic (5.74) and a p -value of 0.000 indicate

TABLE 5 | Path coefficients and moderator path analysis.

H	Paths	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	p	Significance
H1	HRMPs→Faculty job performance	0.239	0.25	0.095	2.514	0.012	Supported
H2	Job autonomy→Faculty job performance	0.489	0.487	0.085	5.74	0.000	Supported
H3	Years experience×HRMPs→Faculty job performance	0.206	0.2	0.069	2.976	0.003	Supported
H4	Years of experience×job autonomy→Faculty job performance	−0.255	−0.246	0.064	3.995	0.00	Supported
	Years experience (HRMPs)→Faculty job performance	−0.167	−0.157	0.106	1.574	0.116	Not supported
	Years of experience (job autonomy)→Faculty job performance	0.042	0.038	0.112	0.373	0.71	Not supported

a robust and significant association, supporting hypothesis H2. This finding suggests that greater job autonomy leads to higher faculty job performance, emphasizing the importance of autonomy in academic roles.

4.8 | Moderator Analysis

The authors used the Mean-Centering and Interaction Creation Process to examine the moderating effect of “Year of Experience” on the relationships between “Faculty Job Performance” (dependent variable), “HRMPs,” and “Job Autonomy” (independent variables). This method addresses multicollinearity and improves coefficient interpretability, which is crucial for testing moderation in regression models.

4.8.1 | Moderator Path Analysis

The study examined the associations between “Faculty Job Performance” as the dependent variable and the independent variables “HRMPs” and “Job Autonomy.” Additionally, the moderating influence of “Year of Experience” was investigated. Several hypotheses were formulated and empirically tested in this research.

4.8.2 | Year of Experience (HRMPs) in Faculty Job Performance

Table 5 shows a path coefficient of -0.167 for the relationship between “Years of Experience” and “Faculty Job Performance,” with a similar bootstrap mean of -0.157 . A T statistic of 1.574 and a p -value of 0.116 indicate insufficient evidence to support a direct relationship, revealing no significant link between years of experience and faculty job performance.

4.8.3 | Years of Experience (Job Autonomy) to Faculty Job Performance

The route coefficient has a value of 0.042, whereas the bootstrap sample mean is calculated to be 0.038. The hypothesis is not

supported based on the T statistics value of 0.373 and the high p -value of 0.71.

4.8.4 | Years of Experience $\times$ HRMPs to Faculty Job Performance (H3)

In the original sample, the interaction term between “Years of Experience” and “HRMPs” generates a coefficient of 0.206, verified by a sample mean of 0.2. The T statistic value is 2.976, and H3 is supported with a p -value of 0.003 (less than 0.05). This suggests that years of experience considerably moderate the connection between HRMPs and faculty job performance. Specifically, the impact of HRMPs on job performance varies with years of experience. Figure 2 shows the simple slope analysis (YE $\times$ HRMPs).

4.8.5 | Years of Experience $\times$ Job Autonomy to Faculty Job Performance (H4)

The original sample reveals a coefficient of -0.255 , while the bootstrap sample mean is -0.246 . With a T statistic of 3.995 and a p -value of 0.00 (less than 0.05), H4 is supported. This result indicates that years of experience significantly moderate the relationship between job autonomy and faculty job performance. As years of experience progress, so does the impact of job autonomy on job performance. Figure 3 presents the simple slope analysis (YE $\times$ JA).

5 | Discussion

The PLS-SEM analysis of HRMPs, job autonomy, and faculty job performance shows robustness, with an R -square of 0.569 for faculty job performance. Construct reliability and validity measures support the methodology. Discriminant validity and collinearity statistics bolster credibility, forming a foundation for HRM strategies addressing demographic factors in UAE higher education. Gender-based differences in HRMP perceptions (19.1% females, 80.9% males) and impacts of job titles underscore the need to tailor HRM practices to faculty demographic needs. These insights are crucial for enhancing job satisfaction

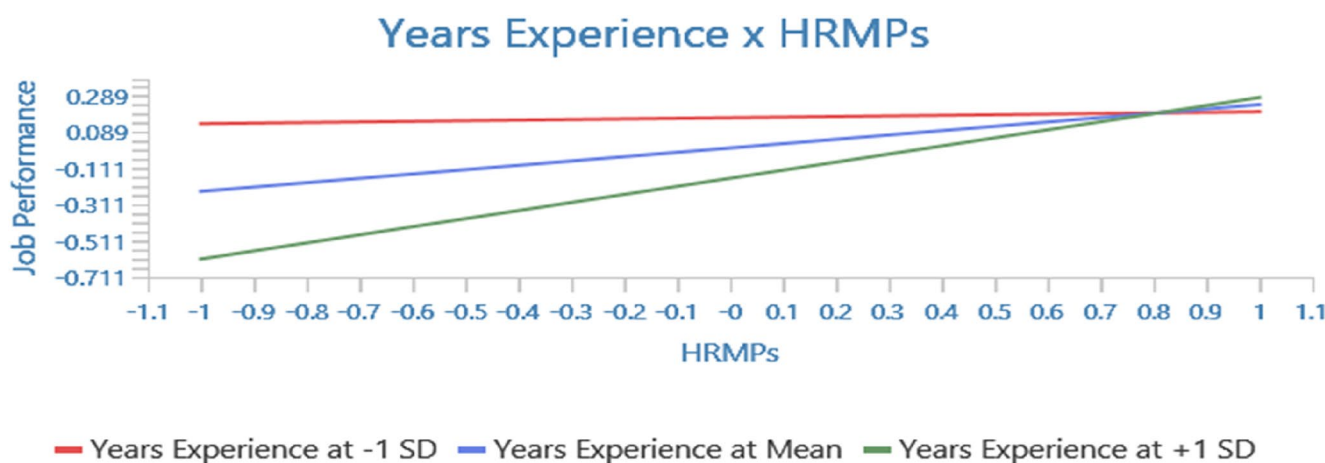


FIGURE 2 | Simple slope analysis (YE $\times$ HRMPs).

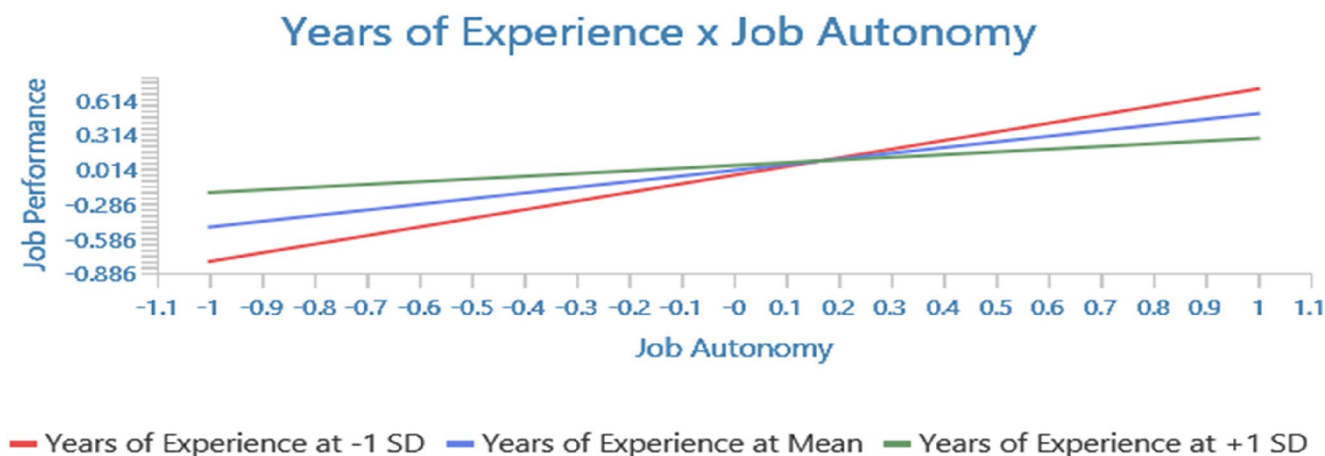


FIGURE 3 | Simple slope analysis (YE×JA).

and performance in academic institutions (Khan, Sehrawat, and Singh 2021).

The prediction was evaluated using Q^2 prediction (0.533), which indicates moderate predictive power, along with low RMSE (0.692) and MAE (0.552), which indicates high accuracy. Path coefficient analysis provided empirical evidence of the associations between HRMPs, job autonomy, and faculty job performance, supporting (H1) (Sørli et al. 2022). These HR practices were scrutinized within a social exchange theory framework, where faculty perceive HRMPs as beneficial assets (Tumwesigye et al. 2020), enhancing dedication and job performance (Layek and Koodamara 2024).

The analysis results proved a statistical correlation between job autonomy and faculty job performance, with a coefficient of 0.489 in the original sample and an average of an introductory sample of 0.487. The high T-statistic value of 5.74 and a p -value of 0.000 indicate a robust and highly significant association. These results provide strong empirical support for hypothesis (H2); this suggests that HRMPs with greater autonomy in their roles tend to exhibit higher levels of faculty job performance. This is consistent with previous research in this area (Khoshnaw and Alavi 2020; Manzoor et al. 2019; Meilani, Bernardo, and Nahar 2022) that emphasizes the critical importance of autonomy in academic settings for enhancing job performance.

The research investigated the moderating effect of “years of experience” on faculty job performance and revealed critical empirical results. Hypothesis H3 showed a significant interaction between “years of experience” and HRMPs on job performance, with a coefficient of 0.206, a T-statistic of 2.976, and a p -value of 0.003. Figure 2’s Simple Slope Analysis highlighted that variations in faculty experience significantly affect HRMPs’ impact on performance. Supporting this, Kooij et al. (2010) found that employee age and tenure moderate the relationship between HRMPs and work outcomes. Similarly, Alharbi, Jaafar, and Azizi (2022) indicated that employees’ experience influences HRMPs’ effectiveness, impacting job performance.

For Hypothesis H4, the analysis showed a significant moderating effect of years of experience on the relationship between

job autonomy and faculty job performance. The coefficient was -0.255 in the original sample, supported by a T statistic value of 3.995 and a p -value of 0.00. Figure 3 examines the relationship between “Years of Experience” and “Job Autonomy,” confirming the positive moderating impact of experience on the connection between job autonomy and faculty performance. This finding aligns with Ryan and Deci (2000), who suggested that experienced employees benefit more from job autonomy due to their developed self-regulatory skills and intrinsic motivation. Conversely, Spector (1986) argued that the benefits of job autonomy might not necessarily increase with years of experience, suggesting that individual differences and job characteristics also play significant roles.

These empirical results offer valuable insights into the nuanced dynamics of HRMPs and job autonomy in shaping faculty job performance. They contribute to the literature on HRMPs and job autonomy, highlighting the importance of considering demographic years of experience when developing HRM strategies in academic settings. Figure 4 shows the complete path analysis for all variables.

5.1 | Theoretical and Practical Implications

5.1.1 | Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to several aspects related to the literature in the field of HRM. First, it focuses on functional independence in HRMPs and its role in the performance of faculty in higher education institutions. The research emphasizes the crucial role of job independence in promoting successful and healthy job performance among faculty. This result aligns with and extends self-determination theory, which posits that autonomy is a basic psychological need that enhances motivation and performance (Ryan and Deci 2000).

Second, the two previous variables, HRMPs and job autonomy, are significantly positively related to faculty experience. This relationship suggests that experienced faculty may benefit more from HRMPs and job autonomy, leading to improved job performance. This contribution extends existing theories by clarifying how these three variables interact, thus providing a nuanced

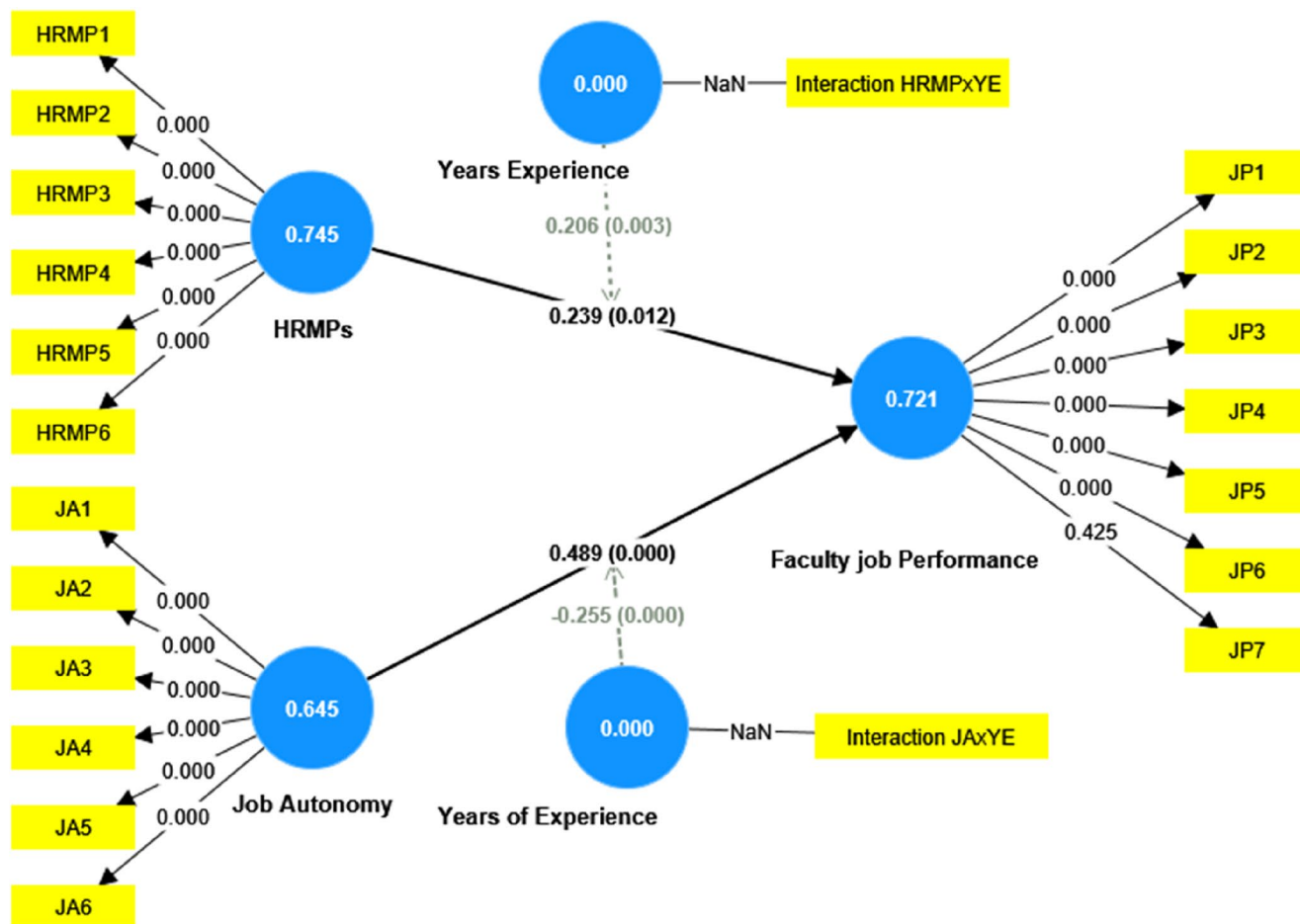


FIGURE 4 | Bootstrapping results.

understanding of how these variables operate in the context of higher education.

Third, these results provide a new perspective on the interaction between faculty experience and HRMPs, suggesting that the effectiveness of HRMPs and the impact of job autonomy on job performance can vary depending on the faculty experience level. Furthermore, the study findings contribute to the broader HRM literature by incorporating insights from HRMP theories, emphasizing the importance of job characteristics such as autonomy in enhancing employee motivation and performance (Li 2024).

5.1.2 | Managerial Implications

The results of this study have several practical implications. Higher education institutions should prioritize these factors when designing policies and procedures to improve faculty job performance. Specifically, institutions should create policies and procedures that promote job autonomy and provide adequate resources for HRMPs. This recommendation implies that chancellors and senior management must emphasize implementing effective HRMPs tailored to higher education institutions' specific context and needs, which suit UAE's higher education system and policies. In addition, institutions should consider faculty members' level of experience when implementing functional independence policies.

6 | Conclusion

The study examined the relationship between HRMPs and job autonomy on faculty job performance and their experiences as a moderating variable. The HRMPs examined were associated with the faculty's job performance. This study has added to the literature on HRM in the tertiary sector by demonstrating the positive relationship between job autonomy, HRMPs, and job performance. Managers should use these results to inform their HRMPs and ensure that their HRM teams are adequately trained and are given the autonomy to make decisions. Furthermore, going forward, more research should be conducted to explore the impact of autonomy on faculty job performance in higher education institutions.

This study highlights the significant impact of HRMPs and job autonomy on faculty job performance, moderated by years of experience. The robust PLS-SEM analysis, with an *R*-square value of 0.569, confirmed that HRMPs positively influence job performance (H1), supporting social exchange theory. Additionally, job autonomy significantly enhanced job performance (H2), aligning with self-determination theory. Years of experience were shown to significantly moderate the relationships between HRMPs and job performance (H3) and between job autonomy and job performance (H4). Experienced faculty members benefit more from HRMPs and job autonomy due to their developed self-regulatory skills and intrinsic motivation.

These findings have added to the current knowledge and theory of HRMPs in the private sector of higher education in the UAE, a conceptual framework that shows the positive relationship between job autonomy, HRMPs, and job performance. Managers should use these results to ensure their HRM teams are adequately trained and are given the autonomy to make decisions. Furthermore, going forward, more research should be conducted to explore the impact of autonomy on faculty job performance in higher education institutions. The study extends the understanding of HR-performance relationships from Western to non-Western contexts, particularly in the UAE. It suggests that supportive HRMPs can improve faculty job performance, thereby advancing institutional strategic goals.

6.1 | Future Considerations and Limitation of the Study

The findings of this study are limited due to the sample size of 225 participants and the fact that it was conducted in the UAE during the 2022–2023 academic year. Exploring the results further by conducting research with a larger sample size in various settings would be beneficial. This would enable us to determine whether the effects observed in the current study are consistent in different contexts. To this end, it is essential to research employee settings in multinational universities in various countries. Future studies could combine quantitative or qualitative methods. Moreover, this study combines HRMPs, while researchers believe that every HRMP should be correlated with job autonomy in higher education and faculty job performance separately in research papers. Further research may investigate the role of leadership in HRMPs, job autonomy, and faculty job performance.

Ethics Statement

This study did not involve collecting or using personal or sensitive information from participants.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The authors of this essay will provide the raw data that support their conclusions without any unwarranted hesitation.

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