

STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AS AN ANTECEDENT TO THE BALANCED SCORECARD

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In this empirical study, Strategic Human Resources Management is considered as a precursor to the Balanced Scorecard. The aim of the study is to examine the relationship between Strategic Human Resources Management in organizations implemented using the three perspectives (customer, financial and process) of the Balanced Scorecard. Two hundred and twenty-two directors took part in this sample, all of whom were asked to carry out several self-administered tests covering aspects such as: demographic data of the interviewee and the company, the BSC-14 scale and the SHRM-53 scale. The results obtained and conclusions drawn suggest that Strategic Human Resources Management predicts the parameters of the Balanced Scorecard.

Key words: Strategic Human Resources Management, Balanced Scorecard, managers, prediction.

En el presente estudio empírico la Gestión Estratégica de Recursos Humanos se erige como antecedente del modelo Balanced Scorecard. El objetivo de dicho estudio es examinar la relación entre la Gestión Estratégica de Recursos Humanos implementada en las organizaciones con las tres perspectivas (clientes, finanzas y procesos) del Balanced Scorecard. En la muestra han participado 222 directivos a los cuales se les aplicaron varias pruebas auto-administradas que contemplaban aspectos como: los datos demográficos del entrevistado y de la empresa, la escala BSC-14 y la escala GERH-53. Los resultados y las conclusiones obtenidas hacen referencia a que la Gestión Estratégica de Recursos Humanos predice los parámetros del Balanced Scorecard.

Palabras clave: gestión estratégica de recursos humanos, Balanced Scorecard, directivos, predicción.

Organizations, in the twenty-first century, are immersed in a process of profound transformation. The context of the era of information and new technologies is a complex, dynamic one, demanding from both industrial organizations and services the design of new strategies to obtain a level of sustainability that will lead them to a successful future. In the 1990s, Kaplan and Norton (1992 and 1996) introduced the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) model, which allows organizations to be planned and evaluated. Since then, the model has become more and more widely established internationally, for example, in the USA (Kaplan & Norton, 2007; Klein & Nicholson, 2006), in Europe (Braam, Benders, & Heusinkveld, 2007; Schreiber, 2007; Wisniewski & Olafsson, 2004), in Asia (Keramati, Mehrabi, & Mousakhani, 2008; Rhodes, Walsh, & Lok, 2008) and in Oceanía (Greatbanks & Tapp, 2007).

Kaplan and Norton's (2001, 2005a, 2005b, 2006) BSC

model considers four strategic perspectives of organizations. The first of these is the *financial* perspective, which allows organizations to obtain returns higher than the investment made. From this perspective, the financial goals of the organization can be made explicit and adapted to the different units of business in the different phases of its growth and life-cycle. BSC permits the establishment of ratios of measurement of a correct financial strategy, such as (1) growth and diversification of income (e.g.: new products and services, applications, customers and markets, synergies and alliances, or pricing strategies), (2) the reduction of costs and the improvement of productivity (e.g.: increase in income, reduction of unit costs, or reduction of running costs), and (3) use of assets and investment strategy (e.g.: cash conversion cycle or improvement in use of assets).

Another perspective of the BSC is the so-called *customer* perspective. Modern organizations need to identify market segments and existing and potential customers, and then decide in which niches they are going to compete. Thus, they should have a set of core indicators for customers (increase, acquisition, satisfaction and profitability), for market share, and for

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the product/service. The organization should also measure its intrinsic attributes and the expectations associated with them, their image and their prestige.

The third perspective of this model is that of the *internal processes (or workflows)* of the organization, processes which are to be improved and should tend towards excellence, with a view to satisfying the demands and needs of both internal and external customers. In this regard, it is important to take into account the value chain of the internal operational process from receipt of the order to delivery of the product and/or service. The value chain of *workflows* covers innovation, operations and after-sales service.

The fourth and final BSC perspective is fundamental to the success of the three others. The *learning and growth* perspective for employees refers explicitly to the importance of Human Resources in attaining business objectives. This perspective focuses on three key aspects. First, a high value should be placed on the capacities of employees. Ideas for improvement should come from employees who are close to processes and customers. Second, organizations should be equipped with systems providing information on employees' satisfaction, retention and diligence. And third, the members of an organization should feel motivated, should have the freedom to make decisions and act (*empowerment*), and should have coherent goals. For evaluating the parameters of the BSC we constructed a scale called *BSC-14* (Boada & Gil, 2007a).

Strategic Human Resources Management has seen tremendous progress in recent years (Arthur, 1992; Brewster, 1993, 1995 and 1999; Cascio, 1989; Decenzo & Robbins, 1988; Delery & Doty, 1996; Delery & Shaw, 2001; Edgar & Geare, 2005; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995; Milkovich & Boudreau, 1991;

Papalexandris & Panayotopoulou, 2004; Pfeffer, 1994; Schuler, 1987; Schuler & Jackson, 1987a and 1987b; Sparrow & Hiltrop, 1994; Stavrou & Brewster, 2005;

Tichy, Fombrun, & Devanna, 1982; Wright & Snell, 1991). Some studies have linked Strategic Human Resources Management with the BSC, though only descriptively (Hagood & Friedman, 2002; McPhail, Herington, & Guilding, 2008; Rhodes, Walsh, & Lok, 2008; Whitaker & Wilson, 2007).

In the present research we have considered the following areas of Strategic Human Resources Management, as cited by the aforementioned authors: (1) The "*Values and Culture*" of which employees should be aware, and which should bring about their

integration and commitment, together with adaptation to the environment and the achievement of results on the part of the company, (2) the description and analysis of all "*Jobs*", within a system for the Management of Competences, (3) "*Internal Communication*", involving the development of formal systems for the contribution of ideas and suggestions and of plans for organizational communication, (4) "*Training*", which implies the design, development and assessment of a plan congruent with the organization's strategy, (5) "*Appraisal of Diligence and Performance*", by goals and by competences, (6) "*Recruitment and Selection*", helping to make new incorporations successful and using various techniques, such as interviews and simulation tests, (7) "*Pay*" implies schedules personalized according to employees' needs, the identification of its position in the income market, and a salary structure that takes into account fixed and variable salaries and bonuses, (8) the "*Induction and Exit Processes*" applicable to employees, (9) "*Workforce Planning*", based on a set of forecasts both internal (retirements, turnover, production levels, development of new products/services, group conflicts, etc.) and external (strategic and marketing plans, evolution of legislation, etc.), (10) "*Climate and Motivation*", which refers to its influence on the functioning of the company, as well as plans of action for improving the working climate, motivation and employees' work-life balance, (11) "*Teamwork*", with the creation of work teams to solve problems or develop opportunities, (12) "*Change Management*", so that employees can accept change and perceive it as an opportunity and a challenge; likewise the organization should facilitate processes of adaptation to change, (13) "*Leadership*", which should facilitate the development of employees and processes of innovation and delegation, leaving a substantial margin of *empowerment*, within a well-defined model of management competences, (14) "*Industrial Relations*", which permits the management of conflicts in a positive and efficient way, with a proactive attitude of the company toward workers' representatives, and (15) "*Career Plan*", which makes possible not only the internal professional development of employees but also the identification of their potential or talent. With the aim of being able to diagnose Strategic Human Resources Management we designed the *SHRM-53* scale (Boada & Gil, 2007b).

In the literature, Strategic Human Resources Management has been explored in relation to the

management of knowledge (Svetlik & Stavrou-Costea, 2007); innovation in organizations (Cano & Cano, 2006); satisfaction (Garrido, Pérez, & Antón, 2005); the quality of work (De Prins & Henderickx, 2007); empowerment, internal communication and internal justice (Tzafrir, Harel, Baruch, & Dolan, 2004); employees' performance (Ghebregiorgis & Karsten, 2007); organizational performance (Katou & Budhwar, 2006; Lin & Kuo, 2007; Harris, Cortvriend, & Hyde, 2007; Hansson, 2007); hospital patient care (Kabene, Orchard, Howard, Soriano, & Leduc, 2006); structural changes (Morris & Farrell, 2007); leadership (Zacharatos, Hershcovis, Turner, & Barling, 2007); the development of companies in the motor industry (Schuler & Tarique, 2007); and transcultural aspects (Aycan, Al-Hamadi, Davis, & Budwar, 2007).

In this context, and taking account of the theoretical approaches already mentioned, the objectives of the present study are: 1. To ascertain whether or not Strategic Human Resources Management (Predictive Variable) implemented in companies predicts that Processes or Workflows (Criterion Variable) considered in the BSC tend towards excellence; 2. To analyze whether or not Strategic Human Resources Management (Predictive Variable) implemented in organizations makes Customers (Criterion Variable) tend towards satisfaction and loyalty (BSC); and 3. To check whether or not Strategic Human Resources Management (Predictive Variable) designed in companies impacts on their Financial results (BSC) (Criterion Variable).

METHOD

Participants

Two hundred and twenty-two directors from organizations in the Autonomous Region of Catalonia (*Comunidad Autónoma de Cataluña*) took part in the study. The mean age of the cohort was 36 ($SD = 9.4$). The mean length of service in the company was 8.3 years ($SD = 10.4$) and the mean length of service in the job was 4.7 years ($SD = 4.8$). The distribution by sex was as follows: male (64.4%) and female (35.61%). The hierarchical position of the interviewees in their respective companies was as follows: Managing Directors or General Managers (18.5%); Human Resources Directors (17.6%); Other Human Resources Managers (11%); Functional Area Directors (not Human Resources) (18%); and Other Functional Area Managers (not Human Resources) (34.1%). Participants' professional qualifications were

distributed as follows: 31.5% held a BSc or Engineering degree; 47.0% held an MSc or were Chartered Engineers; 3.0% held a PhD.; and 18.5% had various other qualifications. In terms of educational background, their qualifications were in: Engineering (16%); Economics (23.7%); Law (9.3%); Psychology (8.8%); and Others (42.3%). As regards company characteristics, the mean number of employees was 1123, with a maximum of 134,000 and a minimum of 349. Regarding economic sectors represented, these were as follows: primary (agriculture, livestock, fishing and mining) (9.8%); secondary (pharmaceuticals, chemicals, metallurgy, rubber and plastic, perfumes and cosmetics, machinery and equipment, assembly, automotive, machinery and electricity) (45.29%); tertiary (services related to sales, insurance, trade and travel) (34.31%); and quaternary (telecommunications, IT, Internet, software and new technologies) (10.6%). There was no presence of the public sector in the sample.

Variables and Instruments

Data were applied to and recorded for all the directors in relation to:

Demographic Data of the Interviewee: Age, sex, level of responsibility of the interviewee in the company, length of service (in the job and in the company), qualifications, educational field and specialist training.

Demographic Data of the Company: Total number of employees, number of employees by grade, economic sector, business activity, concentration or decentralization of Human Resources functions.

BSC-14 scale (Balanced Scorecard) (Boada and Gil, 2007a). Having reviewed the literature on Kaplan and Norton's *Balanced Scorecard* and not having found any previous questionnaire, the creation of a 14-item instrument was considered in order to reflect three of the four parameters contained in the American model. The 14 items are evaluated using a five-point Likert scale. Overall, the reliability of the scale can be considered to be very reasonable (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.82). The *Financial* factor incorporates 4 items, and evaluates return, turnover and company profits. It explains 15.16% of total variance, and includes items such as "The organization's return on its investments is ..." Its reliability is .77. The *Customer* factor has 4 items, incorporating aspects related to satisfaction, loyalty, market share and quality standards attained (e.g., "The satisfaction of our customers is..."). It explains 8.67% of total variance, and has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70. And

the *Processes* or *Workflows* factor has 6 items. It reflects not only organizational efficiency and planning, but also the reduction of internal bureaucracy and the enhancement of technological levels (e.g., “*The development of new products and/or services is...*”). This is the factor that explains most variance, 31.53%. Its reliability index is 0.77.

SHRM-53 scale (*Strategic Human Resources Management*) (Boada and Gil, 2007b). This scale contains 53 items, which were subjected to Exploratory Factor Analysis through principal axis extraction and oblimin rotation. A set of factors contained in Human Resources Policies was obtained. The 53 items had to be scored using a five-point Likert scale. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the whole scale reaches a value of 0.95, so it can be asserted that its internal consistency is very good. The factors found were: 1) *Values and Culture* (Alpha = 0.84), which includes items such as “*The Values of the organization are explicit, well-defined, and widely known*”, 2) *Job* (Alpha = 0.76) incorporates items such as “*The organization has a document with the Description and Analysis of all its Jobs*”, 3) *Internal Communication* (Alpha = 0.75), an example of an item being “*There is a Downward Communication Scheme*”, 4) *Training* (Alpha = 0.89) is made up of items such as “*The company has an Annual Training Scheme based on a Strategic Training Plan*”, 5) *Appraisal of Diligence and Performance* (Alpha = 0.77), an item of reference being “*The company has a system of evaluation of performance by goals*”, 6) *Recruitment and Selection* (Alpha = 0.70), which contains items such as “*The interview is the most significant test in the selection process at my company*”, 7) *Pay* (Alpha = 0.70), a representative item being “*The company uses pay surveys to identify its competitive position in the income market*”, 8) *Induction and Exit Processes* (Alpha = 0.70) includes items such as “*All the new recruits undergo a formal process of induction and integration*”, 9) *Workforce Planning* (Alpha = 0.72) incorporates items such as “*In the organization the required staff levels are determined according to a set of internal forecasts based on retirement, turnover, leakage, production level, development of new products/services, group conflicts, etc.*”, 10) *Climate and Motivation* (Alpha = 0.70), an example item being “*My organization carries out work climate studies*”, 11) *Teamwork* (Alpha = 0.80), which is made up of items such as “*The organization promotes the creation of work teams to solve problems or to develop opportunities*”,

12) *Change Management* (Alpha = 0.80), an item of reference being “*The organization facilitates processes of adaptation to change*”, 13) *Leadership* (Alpha = 0.80) contains items such as “*People have a substantial margin for decision-making (empowerment)*”, 14) *Industrial Relations* (Alpha = 0.74), a representative item being “*Labour conflicts are managed positively and efficiently*”, and 15) *Career Plan* (Alpha = 0.70), which includes items such as “*There are internal professional development programmes for employees*”.

Procedure

The study used random accidental sampling (Kerlinger, 2001), also known as nonprobability convenience sampling (Gómez, 1990; Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2000), for participants and companies alike. Questionnaires were given out personally to the directors, whose participation in the study was voluntary. Furthermore, total confidentiality of the data was guaranteed. Participants were instructed how to fill out the questionnaires in an interview carried out by specially trained psychologist-researchers. At least one psychologist-researcher was present throughout the administration of the questionnaire, ready to resolve any doubts arising while at the same time maintaining the guarantee of complete confidentiality. Data collection took place on the premises of the participant's own organizations, during work hours and at their desks.

Data analysis

The information obtained through the application of the assessment instruments was analyzed by means of the SPSS 15.0 program. Given that the object of our analysis was the common variance between the predictor variables (*Strategic Human Resources Management*) and the criterion variables (*Balanced Scorecard*), we carried out several linear regression analyses between two variables to check their interaction. Within the framework used we did not carry out regressions with progressively additive variables, in order to avoid the relationships between several variables becoming blurred as a result of a more complex interaction.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the regression equations of Strategic Human Resources Management (Predictive Variables or PVs) over the Processes or Workflows variable of the BSC (Criterion Variables or CVs). This table also shows 15 statistically significant results ($p < 0.01$). As it can be

seen, the Beta values obtained are all positive. Thus, the Strategic Human Resources Management variables are predictive of Processes or Workflows.

As regards the explained covariance (r^2) between Strategic Human Resources Management and Processes or Workflows, it can be observed that two (1 and 13) surpass 0.300; eight (2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 15) are between 0.200 and 0.299; and five (5, 6, 7, 8 and 14) are between 0.100 and 0.199. The variables with the highest r^2 are “1) Values and Culture” and “13) Leadership”; and with the lowest, 5) “Appraisal of Diligence and Performance” and 8) “Induction and Exit Processes”. The mean r^2 of Processes/Workflows is 0.242.

In Table 2, it can be seen that the fifteen Strategic Human Resources Management PVs have a significant

impact on the CV (BSC Financial). In 12 instances there is a correlation (seven are $p < 0.01$ and five are $p < 0.05$) and in three instances there is no correlation between the variables (PV numbers 8, 11 and 14). As it can be seen, the Beta values obtained are all positive. Thus, it is concluded that twelve of the fifteen variables considered in the present study are predictive of BSC Financial. As for the r^2 , it can be appreciated that all the variables are in the range 0.001 to 0.079. The variables with the highest r^2 are “1) Values and Culture” and “15) Career Plan”; those with the lowest are 14) “Industrial Relations” and 8) “Induction and Exit Processes”. The mean r^2 of Financial is .036.

Table 3 shows the regressions of the PV (Strategic Human Resources Management) over the CV (BSC Customer). It can be seen that all the PVs have a good VC predictive power, hence the 15 statistically significant results, all of which are $p < 0.01$. Thus, it is found that the 15 variables considered in this study are predictive of the BSC Customer variable. It is also shown that the *Beta* values obtained are all positive.

As regards the explained covariance, it can be seen that one variable is between 0.200 and 0.299; ten are between 0.100 and 0.199; and four are between 0.000 and 0.099. The variables with the highest r^2 are 1) “Values and Culture” and 13) “Leadership”; those with the lowest are 7) “Pay” and 5) “Appraisal of Diligence and Performance”. The mean r^2 of Customer is 0.139.

Finally, Table 4 shows the 15 Coefficients of Determination (r^2) of the Strategic Human Resources Management variables, sorted in descending order (highest to lowest) by mean r^2 , taking account of the three BSC parameters (Processes/Workflows, Financial and Customer). We have also obtained the mean r^2 for each of the indicators.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study we set out to ascertain the relationship between a set of Strategic Human Resources Management variables and the three essential components of the BSC. The data obtained provide empirical evidence of a relationship between the variables we have put forward, although some clarification is required, and which we shall attempt to provide.

The results obtained in this empirical study cannot be compared with others, since we have found no equivalent studies to our own, considering both the theoretical framework and the methodology and statistical analyses. Some of them, which we discuss

Table 1
Regression equations of Strategic Human Resources Management variables over the Processes or Workflows variable of the BSC

Predictor V.	Beta	r^2	t
1) Values and Culture	.617	.380	11.38
2) Jobs	.471	.221	7.63
3) Internal Communication	.506	.256	8.55
4) Training	.520	.270	8.86
5) Appraisal of Diligence and Performance	.368	.136	5.76
6) Recruitment and Selection	.422	.178	6.67
7) Pay	.411	.169	6.45
8) Induction and Exit Processes	.382	.146	5.98
9) Workforce Planning	.531	.282	9.02
10) Climate and Motivation	.545	.297	9.37
11) Teamwork	.544	.296	9.41
12) Change Management	.526	.276	8.98
13) Leadership	.574	.329	10.00
14) Industrial Relations	.406	.165	6.25
15) Career Plan	.487	.237	8.10

Note. Criterion Variable = Processes/Workflows. All Student's t are significant beyond $p < .001$

Table 2
Regression equations of Strategic Human Resources Management variables over the Financial variable of the BSC

Predictor V.	Beta	r^2	t	sig.
1) Values and Culture	.281	.079	4.16	.000
2) Jobs	.211	.045	3.02	.003
3) Internal Communication	.182	.033	2.64	.009
4) Training	.201	.040	2.92	.004
5) Appraisal of Diligence and Performance	.208	.043	3.02	.003
6) Recruitment and Selection	.178	.032	2.54	.012
7) Pay	.179	.032	2.57	.011
8) Induction and Exit Processes	.112	.013	1.60	.111
9) Planificación Plantillas	.182	.033	2.60	.010
10) Climate and Motivation	.196	.038	2.83	.005
11) Teamwork	.120	.014	1.72	.087
12) Change Management	.164	.027	2.36	.019
13) Leadership	.183	.033	2.59	.010
14) Industrial Relations	.028	.001	.39	.696
15) Career Plan	.280	.078	4.14	.000

Note. Criterion Variable = Financial

below, deal with these issues in merely descriptive fashion, and do not analyze the correlations between any types of variables. One of them, published by Hagood and Friedman (2002), was carried out in an American public institution and considers a set of indices such as customer satisfaction, time employed in internal processes, and congruence between the skills and the learning needs of employees. Another, implemented in an American bank, takes into account variables such as performance, pay and the identification of talent (Whitaker & Wilson, 2007). A third (Rhodes, Walsh, & Lok, 2008) is developed in an Indonesian bank, and explores aspects such as the organizational culture, leadership and Human Resources practices. And a fourth (McPhail, Herington, & Guilding, 2008) is carried out in the hotel sector (N =14,

Human Resources managers), and focuses on one of the four areas of the BSC, "learning and growth".

Given that all the Strategic Human Resources Management variables are predictive ($p < 0.01$) of the *Process/Workflow* perspective of the BSC (Kaplan and Norton, 2006 and 2007), the *first objective* for all 15 variables considered is confirmed. Thus, Strategic Human Resources Management (PV) implemented in companies predicts that Processes or Workflows (CV) tend towards excellence. Consequently, we are able to consider the importance of a set of aspects. Firstly, when the culture and values of a company are shared by the people working for it, both the company's quality standards and the organization's internal planning will be strengthened. Obviously, if the directors' leadership style facilitates employee growth and development and if, in addition, training is considered to be a fundamental component of employee growth, all of this will assist the development of new products and/or new services. Secondly, if a formal system is in place for employees to provide ideas and make suggestions with the aim of gathering creative, innovative solutions, it will have a clear impact on the efficiency with which organizational problems are resolved. Furthermore, the encouragement of talent and the drawing up by companies of their own model of management according to competences will facilitate appropriate technological levels and the information systems implicit in them. Therefore, Strategic Human Resources Management contributes to the development of the value chain implicit in Processes, ranging from the detection of customers' needs to the satisfaction of those needs. Indeed, it has an impact on the innovation process (market identification and creation/offer of products

and/or services), on the operational process (construction and delivery of products and/or services) and on the after sales service process (maintenance and derivatives).

Regarding the *second objective* of our study, which consists in checking whether or not Strategic Human Resources Management designed in organizations impacts on their Financial results, we can see that 12 of the 15 variables contained in Strategic Human Resources Management are predictive (seven are $p < 0.01$ and five are $p < 0.05$) of the *Financial* perspective of the BSC (Kaplan and Norton, 2006 and 2007). Thus, we can consider that if the organizational

Table 3
Regression equations of Strategic Human Resources Management variables over the Customer variable of the BSC

Predictor V.	Beta	r ²	t
1) Values and Culture	.506	.256	8.49
2) Jobs	.320	.103	4.80
3) Internal Communication	.389	.151	6.12
4) Training	.411	.169	6.54
5) Appraisal of Diligence and Performance	.243	.059	3.62
6) Recruitment and Selection	.301	.090	4.50
7) Pay	.273	.074	4.05
8) Induction and Exit Processes	.309	.096	4.69
9) Planificación Plantillas	.388	.151	6.03
10) Climate and Motivation	.387	.150	6.02
11) Teamwork	.419	.176	6.66
12) Change Management	.418	.174	6.64
13) Leadership	.432	.187	6.79
14) Industrial Relations	.338	.114	5.05
15) Career Plan	.368	.135	5.71

Note. Criterion Variable = Customer. All Student's t are significant beyond $p < .001$

Table 4
Coefficients of Determination (r²), ordered by mean r² from highest to lowest, between the Strategic Human Resources Management variables and the Processes/Workflows, Financial and Customer variables of the BSC

Predictor V.	Criterion V. Processes r ²	Criterion V. Financial r ²	Criterion V. Customer r ²	mean r ²
1) Values and Culture	.380	.079	.256	.238
13) Leadership	.329	.033	.187	.183
11) Teamwork	.296	.014	.176	.162
10) Climate and Motivation	.297	.038	.150	.161
12) Change Management	.276	.027	.174	.159
4) Training	.270	.040	.169	.159
9) Planificación Plantillas	.282	.033	.151	.155
15) Career Plan	.237	.078	.135	.150
3) Internal Communication	.256	.033	.151	.146
2) Jobs	.221	.045	.103	.123
6) Recruitment and Selection	.178	.032	.090	.100
14) Industrial Relations	.165	.001	.114	.093
7) Pay	.169	.032	.074	.091
8) Induction and Exit Processes	.146	.013	.096	.085
5) Appraisal of Diligence and Performance	.136	.043	.059	.079
mean r ²	.242	.036	.139	

culture favours its adaptation to the socioeconomic environment on the one hand, and employees' professional development on the other, the organization's performance is likely to be positive and efficient. It is also likely that the organization of jobs and, explicitly, their description will facilitate organizational performance. Similarly, if the company has a system of appraising employee performance on the basis of "appraisal by goals", there will be a positive effect on business gains. Furthermore, it is clear that the drawing up of annual training plans for employees will redound to the benefit of the company in terms of results. Thus, such policies will permit the enhancement of each phase of the life cycle of an organization, ranging from a gradual increase in market share to eventual sustainability. Likewise, these policies can enable the company to adapt to new financial demands emerging from the market situation.

Finally, the *third objective* involves the analysis of whether or not Strategic Human Resources Management implemented in organizations makes customers tend towards satisfaction and loyalty, and it is considered that the 15 variables contained in Strategic Human Resources Management are predictive ($p < 0.01$) of the *Customer* perspective of the BSC (Kaplan and Norton, 2006 and 2007). Thus, we can consider that when an organization's cultural values aimed at strengthening customer learning are explicit and employees are aware of them, it is likely that the organization will maintain and possibly increase its market share in the sector in which it undertakes its business activities. Also, optimal upward and downward communication at the organizational level between employees and departments may help to achieve optimal response to customer complaints. Furthermore, we can assume that if a company designs a training plan that includes training actions aimed at customer care, it is likely that the organization's customers will become more loyal. Likewise, if teamwork is a value shared throughout the organization, in the sense of assuming responsibilities vis-à-vis the customer, it is plausible that customer satisfaction will increase. Moreover, when an organization facilitates processes for its employees to adapt to change, and when these processes are accepted and the employees themselves perceive the changes as an opportunity and a challenge, that is when new customers will be secured. Thus, Strategic Human Resources Management will impact on customer numbers, causing them to rise, and on customer

retention and loyalty; all of which contributes to an increase in market share, image and reputation.

In order to give greater clarity to the results obtained, we should point out that having calculated the mean of the three coefficients of determination (r^2) obtained for each of the Strategic Human Resources Management variables, if we put these coefficients in order from highest to lowest, three groups can be formed. The first group, called *Alpha*, would be made up of four of these variables, and the mean coefficient of determination would range between 0.238 and 0.161. We consider that the four Strategic Human Resources Management variables 1) Values and Culture, 13) Leadership, 11) Teamwork and 10) Climate and Motivation would be those which most influence the optimization of the organization's parameters (Financial, Customer and Processes) proposed by the BSC (Kaplan & Norton, 2006 and 2007). The second group, called *Beta*, would be composed of seven Strategic Human Resources Management variables, 12) Change Management, 4) Training, 9) Workforce Planning, 15) Career Plan, 3) Internal Communication, 2) Jobs and 6) Recruitment and Selection, which have an intermediate influence on the attainment of positive BSC indices (Kaplan & Norton, 2006 and 2007). The mean coefficient of determination would range from 0.159 to 0.123. And the third group, *Omega*, would be that with the least influence on the BSC indicators proposed by Kaplan and Norton (2006 and 2007). The mean coefficient of determination would range from 0.093 to 0.079. This group would be made up of four Strategic Human Resources Management variables, 14) Industrial Relations, 7) Pay, 8) Induction and Exit Processes and 5) Appraisal of Diligence and Performance.

In the light of these results we can draw some conclusions. First, the three objectives put forward in this study have been accomplished, given that Human Resources policies are predictive of the three BSC parameters analyzed. A second very important issue is that the variable "1. Values and Culture" is the most predictive Strategic Human Resources Management variable of all those considered. Third, as already seen earlier, not all the Strategic Human Resources Management variables have the same importance and, in this sense, there is a group of four variables that contribute more added value. Fourth, it can be seen that the Strategic Human Resources Management variables are more predictive for the Process (mean $r^2 = 0.242$) and Customer (mean $r^2 = 0.139$) perspectives than for

the Financial perspective (mean $r^2 = 0.036$). The evidence of the results indicates that companies should give a high priority to *Alpha* policies, since they make them more sustainable. And fifth, with regard to our participants, it was observed that 70% of the directors in the survey are not linked to the Human Resources area, though they still associate the effectiveness of Strategic Human Resources Management with BSC outcomes.

As regards the applicability of the present empirical study, we can suggest some of its potential applications, without attempting to be exhaustive. First, in the light of our findings it is clearly of crucial importance for Human Resources managers to forge stronger links with management systems designed to assess organizational results by means of the BSC. Secondly, given that some elements of Strategic Human Resources Management contribute to significant increases in the value chain of different areas of the organization, it follows that they cannot be outsourced, and indeed, should be reinforced and prioritized by the organization's managers and directors. Third, we have observed that the intangible aspects of the organization, in this case Strategic Human Resources Management, are destined to play an increasingly strategic role within the company, so that it is essential for directors and employees to orient their management policies toward the growth and training of employees (as persons). Fourthly, Strategic Human Resources Management is necessary not only for the creation of a sustainable organizational strategy, but also so that employees and directors can develop both personally and professionally. Fifth, it is necessary to prioritize Strategic Human Resources Management, making efforts to identify those aspects which do most to facilitate employee growth, as well as those most closely aligned with the strategy of the organization itself. And sixth, there should be an initiative to create synergies between the different elements making up Strategic Human Resources Management, so as to avoid contradictions arising between them, which could lead to negative interference; in this regard, experience of inter-relating the different policies and maintaining coherence between them can provide us with information for improving internal procedures and enhancing the training and capacities of work teams.

With regard to future research deriving from the present work, three different lines could be suggested. On the one hand, we feel it necessary to check the consistency of the results obtained both in small or medium-sized companies and family businesses, as well as in Public

Administration. A second aspect to consider is the need to take into account the differences between socio-economic sectors (primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary). And finally, it would be advantageous to explore relationships between Strategic Human Resources Management and aspects which up to now, to judge from the literature reviewed, have not been the object of research in this connection, such as psychosocial risks, motivation, commitment, absenteeism and employee turnover.

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