

INTRODUCTION



Introduction: Review issue

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It is with pleasure that we publish our third annual review issue in the *International Journal of Human Resource Management*. The past year has been particularly challenging for the journal after our Senior Editor in Chief, Dave Lepak, passed away last December. The Annual Review Issue was an innovation that Dave introduced to the journal and we are proud and pleased to continue with this.

As we discussed in our introduction to last year's review issue, scientific reviews are important in the advancement of knowledge, through providing a summary of extant knowledge in a particular area, integrating and providing new ways of synthesizing this knowledge, critiquing, and highlighting weaknesses in the knowledge base and by identifying future directions for academic research. The recent emphasis upon evidence-based management (see for example Briner, Denyer & Rousseau, 2009) has highlighted the importance of reviewing and synthesizing existing evidence in relation to any particular problem or phenomenon as a basis for both managerial decision-making and academic research.

In the field of international human resource management (IHRM) evidence reviews are perhaps particularly important. IHRM remains a relatively young field with its inception in the 1980s and is still maturing. As with the broader area of human resource management, IHRM has developed in a number of directions, meaning that it can be seen as somewhat fragmented and multi-faceted. For example, 10 years ago, Lazarova, Morley and Tyson (2008) noted three main trajectories of research in IHRM: that which examines the nature of HRM in the multi-national enterprise (MNC) (which they call IHRM); comparative HRM, which investigates HRM across different countries and the contextual variables such as institutional and economic regimes that might drive these

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differences; and finally cross-cultural HRM that positions national culture as the main driver of difference in HRM practices across countries. The diversity within IHRM research means that there is a particular need for reviews that compare and integrate research in these topics, in order to highlight areas of similarity and contradiction, and to allow us a more holistic view of the field.

Based upon this rationale, we therefore continue with our ambition to provide rigorous and useful reviews that both integrate and critique the existing knowledge within important areas of IHRM and broader HRM. This year, in line with our aim to be inclusive, we launched an open call for proposals for review papers. We issued invitations for a proportion of those to be developed into full papers. These were put through a developmental review process and approximately three quarters of those full papers appear in this annual review issue. We would like to thank here all of those authors and reviewers for their work in developing these papers.

In this issue, we present seven interesting review papers. The topics that these cover are extremely diverse, as might be expected given the open nature of our call for proposals. The first paper, by Gooderham, Mayrhofer and Brewster, focuses on comparative HRM and examined data from papers spanning 10 years of research from the Cranet Network. Gooderham et al. argue that a stronger focus on the institutional context in which HRM practices are developed is much needed. They move on to develop a layered conceptual framework using an institutional perspective and present this as a basis for future comparative HRM research.

In our second paper, Hong, Zhao and Snell focus on collaborative HRM practices and their relationship to open innovation. The paper focuses on identifying the barriers to open ended innovation, namely those relating to cognitive biases, concerns about transaction costs and shortfalls in organization capability. Hong et al. then discuss the role of collaborative HRM in addressing these barriers, specifically through four types of practices: teamwork-based recruitment; training in teamwork skills, team-based appraisals and rewards and rotational job design.

Boada-Cuarva, Trullen and Valverde examine the role of top management in our third paper, describing top management as the “missing stakeholder” in the HRM literature. This paper focuses on the idea that HRM research that includes the CEO and top management team is largely absent and that there is a need for further research in order to understand the role that top management plays within HRM. Boada-Cuarva et al. provide a systematic review of the literature in this area, providing a conceptual framework and agenda for future research.

The fourth paper, by Shirmohammadi, Beigi and Stewart, moves away from these broad examinations of the literature and instead focuses on an area of current importance in IHRM—that of the employment of skilled migrants. Specifically, this paper reviews the literature on qualification-matched employment of skilled migrants in their host country and its outcomes. The paper presented a range of individual level antecedents such as language proficiency, educational qualifications, network quality; organizational level antecedents such as equality and diversity policies; and country level antecedents such as visa regulations, qualification recognition and labour demand. They move on to identify a range of moderators between these antecedents and employment outcomes.

Our fifth paper, by Cooke, Xu and Bian examines “decent” work, industrial relations and social relations in China. Building on the idea of “decent work” launched by the International Labour Organisation in 1999, this review examines the literature on employment conditions in China and compares this to the idea of decent work. It argues that the achievement of decent work in China requires an ideological transition in relation to ethics of work and a greater focus on individual rights, as well as a stronger regulator context and the development of the role of trade unions.

Loon, Otaye-Ebede and Stewart, in the sixth paper, focus on practices relating to the psychological well-being of employees. The authors integrate the literature in this area using the novel lens of paradox meta-theory. This lens allows them to make several important contributions to the literature on psychological well-being including the identification of contradictory well-being and performance based HRM practices and a proposed solution to this tension.

Finally, our last paper in this review issue, by Presbitero, Newman, Le, Jiang and Zheng focuses on organizational commitment within the context of MNCs and thus contributes squarely to the IHRM literature. This paper reviews and integrates the literature on antecedents and outcomes of commitment in the MNC context specifically in order to identify the weaknesses in this literature and suggest a future research agenda.

The reader can see, the papers above are wide-ranging but all discuss important issues within the area of HRM. They partially reflect the wide range of interests that are being mirrored in the published articles in *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, where we are interested in national and international issues of IHRM, comparative and cross-cultural HRM. We hope that you will enjoy reading them and that they will lead to discussion, debate and future research in these areas.

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