

RESEARCH IN PERSONNEL
AND HUMAN RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH IN PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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RESEARCH IN PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

CONTENTS

<i>About the Contributors</i>	vi
Chapter 1 Forty Volumes of <i>Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management</i>: Reflecting on Impactful Contributions and Continuing Our Mission Into the Future <i>Anthony R. Wheeler, John E. Baur, Jonathon R. B. Halbesleben and M. Ronald Buckley</i>	1
Chapter 2 Cobblers, Let's Stick to Our Lasts! A Song of Sorrow (and of Hope) About the State of Personnel and Human Resource Management Science <i>Martin Götz and Ernest H. O'Boyle</i>	7
Chapter 3 Retaining Self-initiated Expatriates: Systematic Reviews and Managerial Practices <i>Caleb Lugar, Jeremy D. Meuser, Milorad M. Novicevic, Paul D. Johnson, Anthony P. Ammeter and Chad P. Diaz II</i>	93
Chapter 4 A Theory of Professional Touching Behavior in Organizations: Implications for Human Resource Scholars and Practitioners <i>Pok Man Tang, Anthony C. Klotz, Joel Koopman, Elijah X. M. Wee and Yizhen Lu</i>	127
Chapter 5 Looking Back to Move Forward: A 20-year Overview and an Integrated Model of Human Resource Process Research <i>Karin Sanders, Rebecca Hewett and Huadong Yang</i>	161
Chapter 6 Work-life Flexibility Policies: Moving from Traditional Views Toward Work-life Intersectionality Considerations <i>Ellen Ernst Kossek, Brenda A. Lautsch, Matthew B. Perrigino, Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Tarani J. Merriweather</i>	199
<i>Index</i>	245

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CHAPTER 1

FORTY VOLUMES OF *RESEARCH IN PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT*: REFLECTING ON IMPACTFUL CONTRIBUTIONS AND CONTINUING OUR MISSION INTO THE FUTURE

Anthony R. Wheeler, John E. Baur,
Jonathon R. B. Halbesleben and M. Ronald Buckley

This volume celebrates a milestone for *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management (RPHRM)* as the oldest and most prestigious annual series in human resources management (HRM). For 40 years, leading scholars within various domains of HRM have published their work which has helped to shape the body of knowledge used by researchers around the globe. This current volume, the 41st in the series, continues that legacy. As the current editors of this series, we take this opportunity to reflect on the history of the series from the original inception and founding editor. We then particularly celebrate five articles that we believe typify the quality, and trendsetting nature, of articles that *RPHRM* publishes each year. Selecting five manuscripts that represent more than 40 years of collective research presents challenges, as we cannot judge a manuscript as being qualitatively or quantitatively better than another. Rather,

we chose to highlight these five manuscripts as representing the types of research that have made *RHRM* the premier HRM annual series.

William Glueck, a distinguished professor at The University of Georgia, was contracted by JAI Press to be the first editor of this series. He passed away in May 1980 before producing a volume. The ubiquitous unfilled need for this research series was then passed on to two world-class scholars who became the editors of the initial volume – the late Kendrith M. Rowland (Professor of Management at the University of Illinois) and Gerald R. Ferris (then a doctoral student in Management at the University of Illinois – who developed into one of the most important contributors to research and a celebrated thought leader in HRM). Their vision was to create an annual series dedicated to publishing long-form, conceptual research for HRM scholars, analogous to the annual series *Research in Organizational Behavior*. Although organizational behavior and HRM complement each other, each field has distinct bodies of knowledge that are independent of the other.

The focus of the new research series was that every published *RPHRM* manuscript must prominently address HRM issues.

Since its inception, the editors of *RPHRM* have maintained two key requirements for authors who seek to publish a manuscript. One, *RPHRM* only publishes conceptual HRM research. Readers of the series will not see empirical research in any of the published volumes. Two, authors must commit to publishing more-than-typical-journal-length manuscripts, which typically amount to 20,000- to 40,000-word monograph-length manuscripts and published importantly in 1983. *RPHRM* seeks to publish conceptual research that does not just summarize past research on a given topic but pushes theory and research forward in new, important, fecund, and provocative ways. Thus, readers should notice that most *RPHRM* articles contain novel research questions or frameworks that establish and suggest future directions for research.

Folger and Greenberg (1985) perfectly demonstrated how scholars have used the series to not only summarize previous research but also to extend research in new directions. They selected a nominally organizational behavior topic – organizational justice – but extend research into an HRM domain. Both Folger and Greenberg established robust research streams on social comparisons and perceptions of equity that arise from those comparisons. Until their *RPHRM* publication, HRM scholars focused more attention on equity perceptions, often distributive equity perspectives, in compensation settings. After all, it is in the compensation setting that employees most often experience justice considerations early in their employment in terms of monetary exchange. Folger and Greenberg widened the lens on justice and HRM to explicate how procedural justice perceptions infiltrate entire HRM systems. They also expanded the consideration of procedural justice throughout total HRM systems. That focus on process and systems also laid the foundations for strategic HRM research that abounded in the early 1990s through the early 2000s.

Employers and managers who standardize discrete HRM processes develop more trust between employers and employees. Folger and Greenberg (1985) later published multiple empirically based articles that provided evidence to support

their conceptualizations in their *RPHRM* manuscript; simply put, if companies strengthen their processes around selection, performance management, and even decisions whereby employees receive training opportunities, employees will experience a greater sense of fair treatment. That in turn tends to increase positive employee and company outcomes such as stronger organizational commitment, improved job satisfaction, and reduced turnover. From a 2023 vantage point, these findings seem mundane; but at the time, Folger and Greenberg's conceptualization created a framework that they and others used to create a common body of knowledge around the interplay between fairness perceptions and HRM systems.

RPHRM has published several manuscripts that advanced the body of knowledge for strategic HRM, but the manuscript by [Delery and Shaw \(2001\)](#) stands out for several reasons. *RPHRM* published this manuscript as the early empirical research on strategic HRM was peaking. Several strategic HRM theories, such as the resource-based view of HRM (e.g., [Boxall, 1996](#)), agency theory (e.g., [Tosi & Gomez-Mejia, 1994](#)), and transaction cost theory (e.g., [Wright & McMahan, 1992](#)), had gained empirical support. Delery and Shaw systematically summarized the empirical findings supporting the various theories, while also clearly identifying opportunities for scholars to address voids in the literatures of those theories.

The [Delery and Shaw \(2001\)](#) manuscript has been cited more than 1,000 times since its publication, and it has served as the foundation of meta-analyses (e.g., [Jiang et al., 2012](#)), multilevel models of strategic HRM (e.g., [Ployhart & Moliterno, 2011](#)), and explorations of international HRM (e.g., [Takeuchi et al., 2007](#)). A more underappreciated aspect of the Delery and Shaw manuscript is the identification of commonalities among the various strategic HRM theories. It is this type of conceptual research that advances fields of study by breaking down silos and pushing for more comprehensive, perhaps even meta-theories that again kickstart new empirical research.

Whereas *RPHRM* has published several highly cited strategic HRM manuscripts, the series also has published functional HRM manuscripts that have pushed respective bodies of knowledge forward. [Bauer et al. \(1998\)](#) advanced newcomer socialization research into new directions. Notable in Bauer et al.'s summary of previous research on newcomer socialization was the work they did to fully summarize the costs associated with unsuccessful orientation programs. Increasingly, in the 1990s, and perhaps spurred by the connections that strategic HRM research made to the value and costs of HRM systems, HRM researchers even in the functional area made specific attempts to connect those functions to what were viewed as important organizational performance metrics, namely productivity and turnover. Bauer et al. provided a comprehensive review of the linkages between organizational socialization and employee productivity and turnover cost estimates.

[Bauer et al. \(1998\)](#) then systematically identified voids in the research around organizational socialization. From methodological issues to often ignored temporal aspects to process issues to newcomer learning issues, Bauer et al. highlighted voids and noted opportunities for scholars to advance the body of knowledge for

organizational socialization. From the view of the field in the early 2020s, Bauer et al. also specifically address a topic that is at the forefront of researchers' minds now, but one that was not often addressed two decades ago: the role of diversity. They highlighted research not only on cultural diversity (e.g., how newcomer socialization occurs in the USA vs. Japan) but also on how individual diversity characteristics can affect newcomer socialization. Bauer et al. laid out a series of propositions around cultural and individual diversity that would go on to be tested over the decades to come.

RPHRM also has published manuscripts on emerging bodies of knowledge in HRM. Glomb et al. (2011) published a manuscript on the confluence of mindfulness and HRM. Whereas research on mindfulness has become mainstream, even to the point of popular media attention on the topic, mindfulness research in organization in the early 2000s was not considered mainstream. The application of an emerging body of knowledge such as mindfulness to HRM represented boundary expansion to an even greater level at the time.

Glomb et al. (2011) begin their chapter discussing the emergence of mindfulness, particularly noting that the topic had gone mainstream in such a rapid period of time that a backlash had already emerged, which was fueled in part by beliefs that mindfulness had explicit religious connotations. Perhaps the rapid ascent of interest in mindfulness as a popular media panacea for workplace stress and employee burnout coincided with the full maturation of the internet era, that is, mindfulness went viral, especially in the realm of mental health and individual well-being.

Glomb et al. (2011) sought to formulate this increased popular and research attention into a coherent theoretical framework that explained how and why mindfulness impacted employee performance and well-being. They connected research previously siloed outside of the organizational context with research emerging inside of the organizational context. It is this type of theorizing in which *RPHRM* manuscripts shine. Authors can utilize the monograph-length parameters of *RPHRM* to make theoretical connections, propose connective processes and mechanisms, and proffer testable propositions for empirical scholars and approaches to evaluate. In the decade since Glomb et al. connected disparate literatures to organizational literatures, their manuscript has been cited nearly 500 times.

We have focused attention on four manuscripts that have become the foundations for now established research. However, the final *RPHRM* manuscript we highlight here focuses on a topic that dominates the consciousness of individuals, organizations, and societies across the world. The topic is social media. Kluemper et al. (2016) provided one of the first extensive explorations into the role that social media plays in how organizations and HRM can operate. Although ubiquitous now, back in 2016, very little research existed on the topic of social media in organizations, and almost none existed on the topic of social media and HRM. This pushed Kluemper et al. to delve into myriad emerging literatures to theorize about a future where social media would in fact make significant impacts on how organizations run and HRM systems connect with social media applications.

How do you forecast the impact of social media on organizational operations when limited research exists on that topic? That was the challenge for [Kluemper et al. \(2016\)](#). At the time when *RPHRM* published their work, *Facebook* had yet to turn 10 years old. *Twitter* existed but did not have the same cache as it does now. *LinkedIn* functioned more like an online recruiting platform instead of the true social network, backed by artificial intelligence, we see today. [Kluemper et al. \(2016\)](#) summarized disparate literatures around organizational branding, employee recruitment and selection, communication channels, and counterproductive work behaviors to then project forward the power of social media in the organizational context. We take this for granted now due to pervasiveness of social media in every aspect of daily life, but Kluemper et al.'s work in the mid-2010s required the ability to see trends and play them forward.

What is next for *RPHRM*? In the near term, we as editors have consciously committed to seeking out researchers who can provide manuscripts on nascent or emerging topics that will become mainstream research topics over the next decade. To do so, we actively work to identify thought leaders, nascent scholars, and area experts within HRM. We endeavor to help the field get ahead of the next wave. We have lived through a once-a-century global pandemic that reoriented how modern organizations function. Although telework has existed in some form for multiple decades, work-from-home policies have expanded to the point where some companies have started to develop work-from-office policies. What does the future hold for HRM scholars who study how HRM functions and HRM strategy works in an in-person, remote, or hybrid workplace?

The pandemic also accelerated the adoption of technologies associated with the “Fourth Industrial Revolution” – automation, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and the internet of things. We should expect the adoption of those technologies to accelerate over the next decade as those technologies mature. Inevitably, this will lead to disruption across jobs, organizations, industries, and societies. How will HRM adapt to this disruption, and how will HRM scholars develop an understanding of the causes, effects, mechanisms, and processes around this disruption? The pandemic and “Fourth Industrial Revolution” coincide with a larger macro trend, that of climate change. This exogenous, multidimensional threat will reorient every aspect of society. Expect more manuscripts in *RPHRM* that will seek to explicate the relationships between climate change and how organizations strategize and operationalize their HRM systems.

Taking a step back and looking at the broad scope of *RPHRM* over the past 40 years, this important research series has provided HRM scholars with the opportunity to describe what, when, how, and why the future of work will exist. In this current volume of *RPHRM* – number 41 of the series – we present five manuscripts that again push the study of HRM forward in thought-provoking ways. As the current editors of this series, we take great pride in continuing the tradition of moving HRM research forward; a trend that Professor Kendrith M. Rowland and Professor Gerald R. Ferris established over 40 years ago!

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CHAPTER 2

COBBLERS, LET'S STICK TO OUR LASTS! A SONG OF SORROW (AND OF HOPE) ABOUT THE STATE OF PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SCIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The overall goal of science is to build a valid and reliable body of knowledge about the functioning of the world and how applying that knowledge can change it. As personnel and human resources management researchers, we aim to contribute to the respective bodies of knowledge to provide both employers and employees with a workable foundation to help with those problems they are confronted with. However, what research on research has consistently demonstrated is that the scientific endeavor possesses existential issues including a substantial lack of (a) solid theory, (b) replicability, (c) reproducibility, (d) proper and generalizable samples, (e) sufficient quality control (i.e., peer review), (f) robust and trustworthy statistical results, (g) availability of research, and (h) sufficient practical implications. In this chapter, we first sing a song of sorrow regarding the current state of the social sciences in general and personnel and human resources management specifically. Then, we investigate potential grievances that might have led to it (i.e., questionable research practices, misplaced

incentives), only to end with a verse of hope by outlining an avenue for betterment (i.e., open science and policy changes at multiple levels).

Keywords: Academic-practice divide; credibility of science; open science; philosophy of science; replicability crisis; reproducibility crisis; science-practice gap

Cordwainer. (Old-fashioned) A person who makes new shoes from leather.

Cobbler. (Old-fashioned) A person who repairs shoes.

The health of an applied science, such as personnel and human resources management (PHRM), and, more generally, industrial and organizational psychology (I/OP), can be broadly captured as a multiplicative function of its (a) relevance to practitioners, (b) rigor of its methodology, (c) accuracy of its findings and claims, and (d) ability to build cumulative knowledge. We stress multiplicative because if any one of these four hallmarks is absent or lacking, then the health of the entire scientific field will be poor, regardless of the strength of the other hallmarks. We put forth that all of these hallmarks are present in the PHRM field. Further, in many respects, each hallmark has increased the overall health of PHRM research over time. For example, advances in statistical analysis, increased grant funding for PHRM research, open access (OA) publishing, and growing membership in both PHRM academic and practitioner societies all suggest the current scientific paradigm is robust and relevant. However, improvements in the questions we ask, the advances in methodologies and statistics we employ, and greater access to the cumulative knowledge of the field for both researchers and practitioners are not the only changes seen in PHRM. For each of these improvements to the PHRM health, there are detriments and unintended consequences.

These detriments and unintended consequences manifest as (a) academic navel gazing in the form of research with little chance (or interest) in practitioner implications or implementation, (b) insufficient forethought in study design and measurement, which leads to (c) an overreliance on statistics to analyze what should have been designed around, and (d) a rose-tinted literature containing a non-trivial amount of findings that appear rigorous and relevant but are in fact tainted by non-ideal research and reporting practices.

In this chapter, we review and, at times, critique the current state of PHRM rigor and relevance. We begin with a review of the PHRM science along with the four hallmarks of a healthy science introduced above. We then propose a set of impeding factors that detriment PHRM research by adversely affecting one or more of the four hallmarks. We then offer a set of recommendations that reflect both strategies successfully employed in other social sciences as well as the unique features of the PHRM and I/OP domains.

In framing this paper, we use the distinction in the English language between a cordwainer and a cobbler: While the former makes new leather shoes, the latter