

EUR Research Information Portal

SHRM and context: why firms want to be as different as legitimately possible.

Published in:

Journal of Organizational Effectiveness

Publication status and date:

Published: 01/01/2018

DOI (link to publisher):

[10.1108/JOEPP-04-2018-0021](https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-04-2018-0021)

Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Document License/Available under:

Article 25fa Dutch Copyright Act

Citation for the published version (APA):

Farndale, E., & Paauwe, J. (2018). SHRM and context: why firms want to be as different as legitimately possible. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness*, 5(3), 202-210. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-04-2018-0021>

[Link to publication on the EUR Research Information Portal](#)

Terms and Conditions of Use

Except as permitted by the applicable copyright law, you may not reproduce or make this material available to any third party without the prior written permission from the copyright holder(s). Copyright law allows the following uses of this material without prior permission:

- you may download, save and print a copy of this material for your personal use only;
- you may share the EUR portal link to this material.

In case the material is published with an open access license (e.g. a Creative Commons (CC) license), other uses may be allowed. Please check the terms and conditions of the specific license.

Take-down policy

If you believe that this material infringes your copyright and/or any other intellectual property rights, you may request its removal by contacting us at the following email address: openaccess.library@eur.nl. Please provide us with all the relevant information, including the reasons why you believe any of your rights have been infringed. In case of a legitimate complaint, we will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website.



Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance

SHRM and context: why firms want to be as different as legitimately possible

Elaine Farndale, Jaap Paauwe,

Article information:

To cite this document:

Elaine Farndale, Jaap Paauwe, (2018) "SHRM and context: why firms want to be as different as legitimately possible", Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance, Vol. 5 Issue: 3, pp.202-210, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-04-2018-0021>

Permanent link to this document:

<https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-04-2018-0021>

Downloaded on: 17 October 2018, At: 04:21 (PT)

References: this document contains references to 32 other documents.

To copy this document: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

The fulltext of this document has been downloaded 105 times since 2018*

Users who downloaded this article also downloaded:

(2018), "A Research Revolution in SHRM: New Challenges and New Research Directions", Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management, Vol. 36 pp. 141-161 https://doi.org/10.1108/S0742-730120180000036004

(2007), "The Job Demands-Resources model: state of the art", Journal of Managerial Psychology, Vol. 22 Iss 3 pp. 309-328 https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115



Access to this document was granted through an Emerald subscription provided by emerald-srm:161405 []

For Authors

If you would like to write for this, or any other Emerald publication, then please use our Emerald for Authors service information about how to choose which publication to write for and submission guidelines are available for all. Please visit www.emeraldinsight.com/authors for more information.

About Emerald www.emeraldinsight.com

Emerald is a global publisher linking research and practice to the benefit of society. The company manages a portfolio of more than 290 journals and over 2,350 books and book series volumes, as well as providing an extensive range of online products and additional customer resources and services.

Emerald is both COUNTER 4 and TRANSFER compliant. The organization is a partner of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and also works with Portico and the LOCKSS initiative for digital archive preservation.

*Related content and download information correct at time of download.

SHRM and context: why firms want to be as different as legitimately possible

Elaine Farndale

*Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Texas, USA and
Tilburg School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Tilburg University, Tilburg,
The Netherlands, and*

Jaap Paauwe

*Department of Human Resource Studies, Tilburg University, Tilburg,
The Netherlands*

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to raise awareness that despite many calls for attention to a firm's context in considering consequences for human resource management (HRM) and performance, research progress to date has been limited at best, although promising signs of change are emerging. Moreover, what has been defined as “performance” is coming under increasing scrutiny, with a more holistic concept emerging that balances both a firm's financial performance and employee well-being. The question remains whether this is a mutual gains or conflicting outcomes situation for the firm *vis-à-vis* the employee.

Design/methodology/approach – This paper presents a framework that facilitates a broader context-centric analysis of the HRM and performance relationship. In so doing, the authors posit that context should no longer merely be an obligatory control variable in a research design, but instead should be explicitly incorporated in both theory development and empirical model testing.

Findings – The Contextual SHRM Framework demonstrates how key organizational actors can balance competitive, heritage and institutional mechanisms to create an appropriate strategic HRM (SHRM) system capable of delivering organizational outcomes that balance financial and employee well-being outcomes, which in the long run impact societal well-being that, in turn, recreates the firm's operating context. At the heart of the framework is an iterative process between context and the SHRM system, achieving an appropriate level of dynamic fit across the various components.

Practical implications – In addition to empirical research, the framework has to date been widely used in executive development training, serving as a force field analysis tool allowing simultaneous consideration of the external and internal elements of a firm's context, key organizational actors and SHRM system outcomes. HR professionals applying the framework to their organization can add value by demonstrating the clear linkage between the business strategy, the HRM system and the firm's operating context.

Originality/value – This paper is designed to encourage new directions in future research and practice. The Contextual SHRM Framework is presented as a novel tool to facilitate advancement of the HRM and performance field of study.

Keywords Financial performance, Context, HR strategy, Organization health and well-being, Dynamic fit

Paper type Viewpoint

Introduction

Despite highlighting the importance of considering context in the human resource management (HRM) literature for more than three decades, there has been disappointing progress in capturing contextual issues. HRM scholars have been blinkered by a predominantly universalist, profit-driven perspective on studying the HRM–performance relationship, largely driven by US-based scholars as the initiators of this research stream (see e.g. Huselid, 1995; Huselid and Becker, 2000; Pfeffer, 1994, 1998). This is despite Beer *et al.*'s (1984) highly influential Harvard model of HRM that described how HRM policy choices lead to HRM outcomes, which, in turn, have long-term consequences for firms, individuals and society. They couched this process in a context that included both multiple stakeholder interests, and something they called “situational factors.” The latter was



intended to capture various aspects of the firm's operating context, including workforce characteristics, business strategy, management philosophy, technology, labor markets, unions, and societal values and legislation. At a similar time, Hendry and Pettigrew (1990) posited broadening HRM models by including economic, technical and socio-political topics, which were argued to include a range of factors that influence strategic decision making in HRM. Despite these early calls for attention to a firm's context in considering consequences for HRM, research progress has been limited at best, with more attention being paid to what happens inside the firm than the influencing effects of what is occurring outside the firm.

Moving swiftly to more recent times, Schuler and Jackson's (2014) reflection of the field led them to argue that "a deep understanding of a firm's external environment" (p. 35) is an integral component to achieving excellent HRM, incorporating many of the elements of the original Harvard model (Beer *et al.*, 1984). Building on this work, Jackson *et al.* (2014) presented an aspirational framework for strategic HRM (SHRM) that again reiterates the existence of both an external environment, in which the firm is operating (including unions, market conditions, labor markets, regulations and technologies) and an internal environment (including strategy, culture, prior history and structure) that influence actual HRM practice in the firm. This is part of a welcome trend in US-based scholarship that pays greater attention to a firm's context and stakeholders, with a revival of the Harvard model being published in 2015 (Beer *et al.*, 2015).

If we have established that organizational context (both external and internal) matters, what can we do with this knowledge? The understanding that this creates is that firms do not operate in a vacuum. There is therefore a need for organizational leaders to establish what they can and cannot control in their operating environment, and to balance the two elements appropriately to survive. Strategic balance theory (Deephouse, 1999) helps explain this balancing act, arguing that firms need to be perceived as legitimate in order to access essential resources, yet they also need to differentiate themselves to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. In this paper, we introduce the Contextual SHRM Framework as a tool for research and practice that can explain how such a balancing act can be achieved.

Predicting performance and well-being

The HRM and firm performance literature remains somewhat equivocal regarding empirical evidence of HRM's strategic contribution. Whereas some studies suggest a strong link between SHRM activities and performance outcomes, others have argued that such a link is spurious and cannot be replicated across firms, sectors or countries. Nevertheless, there is increasing support for a causal relationship, which scholars and practitioners alike are keen to pursue.

Based on substantial reviews of extant literature, starting this trend for substantiating causality, Wright and Gardener (2003, p. 312) concluded that: "[...] evidence mounts that HR practices are at least weakly related to firm performance." Similarly, Boselie *et al.* (2005, p. 81) drew on a comprehensive sample of 104 studies note that: "[...] much—though by no means all—of the empirical HRM research in its 'systems' form has been found to matter (in a positive sense) for organizational performance." Combs *et al.*'s (2006) meta-analysis demonstrated that an increase of one standard deviation in the use of high performance work practices (HPWP) is associated with a 4.6 percent increase in return on assets, and with a 4.4 percent decrease in employee turnover, leading them to conclude that: "[...] HPWPs' impact on firm performance is not only statistically significant, but managerially relevant" (p. 518). Evidence is thus mounting that HRM is linked to firm performance, but we still lack a solid understanding of the detailed mechanisms through which this occurs. Some progresses have been made to date, such as the meta-analysis conducted by Jiang *et al.* (2012), which identifies important human capital and employee motivation mediators in linking HRM to individual and firm-level performance outcomes.

We argue that the complexity of this issue is largely due to the fundamental role of context in these relationships.

Furthermore, what we define as “performance” has been under question, with a more holistic concept emerging that balances both firm financial performance and employee well-being. Well-being is increasingly recognized as both a goal in itself and a means to an end, opening up possibilities for joint optimization of both performance and well-being and investing in a positive employment relationship (Guest, 2017). This is labeled the “mutual gains” approach, in which both employees and employers benefit from HRM, in contrast to the “conflicting outcomes” approach in which HRM pays off in terms of firm performance but has no or even a negative impact on employee well-being (Van de Voorde *et al.*, 2012). This dichotomy between a mutual gains or conflicting outcomes approach to HRM and performance emphasizes even more how context can play a role, which seemed irrelevant in the early work when performance was only considered in terms of productivity or profit figures (Pauwe *et al.*, 2013; Guest, 2017).

Toward the development of a more holistic approach to exploring HRM and performance, Pauwe (2004) introduced the Contextually Based Human Resource Theory, which combined a range of theoretical perspectives to argue that HRM cannot be understood as a stand-alone phenomenon; HRM is part of a firm, which, in turn, is part of a broader society/operating context. Building on this core argument, developing further how strategy, HRM and performance are linked, we discuss how our understanding of this relationship relies on our consideration of context. We posit that context should no longer merely be an obligatory control variable in a research design. Context, as a series of situational opportunities and constraints (Johns, 2017), should be explicitly incorporated in both theory development and empirical model testing. Too often HRM and performance research starts with the HRM system or practice, ignoring what has preceded the development of this system, i.e. the context.

How are context and HRM related?

We present here the Contextual Strategic HRM Framework (Pauwe and Farndale, 2017) which models the interrelationships between HRM systems and the firms in which they are formed (see Figure 1). The framework distinguishes between a macro-level context that influences the formation of the SHRM system, and a mezzo-/micro-level process whereby the SHRM system is translated into various outcomes at the employee level, that, in turn, affect the macro-level context through organizational and societal level outcomes. We explain each component of the framework here.

The Contextual SHRM Framework focuses on three broad contextual mechanisms that affect the SHRM system adopted by a firm. The first are the competitive mechanisms that encapsulate how a firm positions itself in the marketplace based on its products or services, competitors in the market, and technology. Resource-based view (RBV) theorizing (Barney, 1991) underpins this mechanism, focusing on how firms build unique resources that lead to the creation of valuable internal organizational capabilities (such as speed, efficiency or innovation).

The second mechanism is institutional, based on prevailing social, political, cultural, legal and regulatory aspects of the environment in which the firm is operating. Such values and norms and their institutionalization can alter the outcomes of competitive mechanisms as they are part of an externalized context over which a firm may have limited control. Neo-institutional theory argues that the HRM system embedded in a firm needs to be legitimate within prevailing conditions in a specific organization field, rejecting the notion of one best way of doing things in all contexts (Delery and Doty, 1996). This raises the issue of the need for external legitimacy (such as being seen as being compliant with appropriate regulations and as a fair employer in order to gain access to necessary resources).

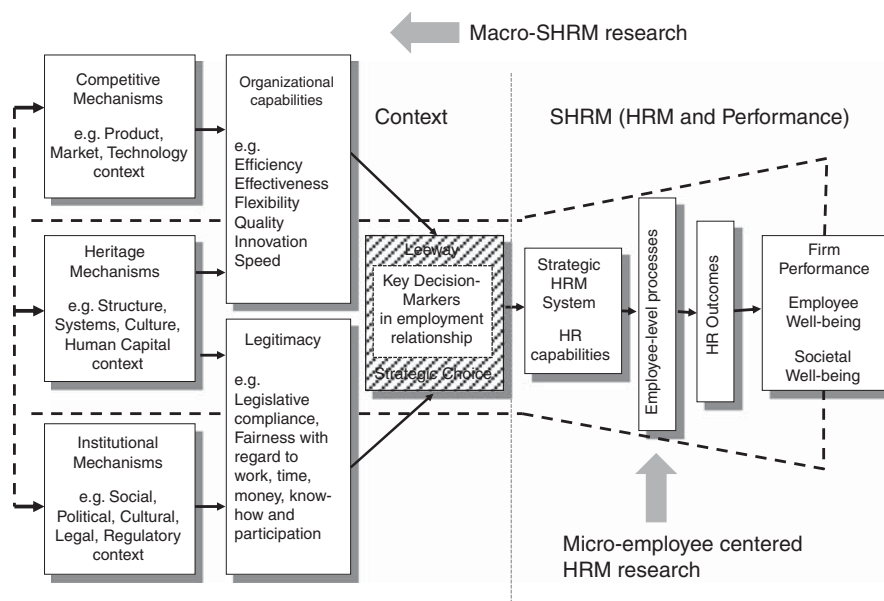


Figure 1.
The contextual strategic HRM model

Each firm has a different operating context (i.e. they are subject to different institutional mechanisms), which means that any SHRM system is more likely to be effective when it matches those operating conditions, creating best fit or contingent rather than universal HRM.

The third mechanism is based on the firm's heritage, which may be considered the outcome of past strategic choices interacting with the organizational structure and culture that they engender (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989). This mechanism is based on path dependency associated with the way in which a firm has operated in the past (Barney, 1995), creating a configuration (Delery and Doty, 1996) that to some extent at least determines future activities. This heritage context can either constrain or facilitate desired future organizational activities.

In an ideal scenario, all three mechanisms are aligned so that they are mutually reinforcing, but there may be situations in which the different mechanisms can incur inherent tensions. For example, firms need to differentiate themselves to achieve competitive advantage (based in RBV theorizing and competitive mechanisms), while at the same time conforming and being perceived as legitimate in their operating context (based in neo-institutional theorizing and institutional mechanisms). So how legitimate or different does a firm need to be in order to be successful? There is of course no universal answer to this question, and similarly no universal approach to SHRM that can fit all organizational contexts.

Taken together, the three mechanisms paint the backdrop of the firm's reality, but this picture is incomplete. This is largely an open systems way of thinking (input—transformation—output); however, firms comprise a multitude of actors, each with their own desires, abilities and agendas (Lammers, 1990). This creates leeway for strategic choice within firms, determining the extent to which actors are willing to conform to or manipulate the context (Oliver, 1991), affecting the status quo or what is considered legitimate action.

The Contextual SHRM Framework demonstrates how the combination of systems (competitive, heritage and institutional mechanisms) and actors (key decision makers

in the employment relationship) ultimately determines the context within which a firm develops its SHRM system. This is built on a foundation of theorizing drawing from strategic management (competitive mechanisms), neo-institutional theory (institutional mechanisms), RBV (heritage mechanisms) and the actor's perspective (key decision-maker leeway). The challenge for an organization is simultaneously to meet the demands for organizational capabilities arising out of the competitive dimension and the demands for legitimacy, fairness and well-being arising out of the institutional dimension, at the same time as taking into account the constraints of the firm's heritage.

Dynamic fit as part of a coevolutionary process

At the heart of the Contextual SHRM Framework is an iterative process between context and the SHRM system, achieving an appropriate level of fit across the different elements (see Figure 2). First, there is the fit or alignment between the firm's heritage and its SHRM system. This can best be described as "organization" fit, i.e. creating an appropriate linkage between the SHRM system and other relevant systems in the firm including technological, production and control systems (Wood, 1999). Second, there is the "strategic" (vertical) fit between the competitive mechanisms and the SHRM system, ensuring alignment with business strategy. This, in turn, helps the effective implementation of strategy and hence has important performance implications (Boxall and Purcell, 2015). The third type of fit is "environmental": this entails ensuring an appropriate alignment of the SHRM system with the institutional environment of the firm, including the social, cultural, political and legal contexts. Finally, "internal" (horizontal) fit is present in the SHRM system itself, as its various components must be aligned to maximize the synergies of the system.

The notion of "fit" implies achieving a stable link between one system and another related system. However, in a dynamic world, the SHRM system needs to balance fit and flexibility in order to achieve sustained competitive advantage (Wright and Snell, 1998). Thus, while achieving fit can lead to short-term success, a dynamic fit is needed to cope with changes in order to continue achieving fit in the long run. The firm similarly cannot focus

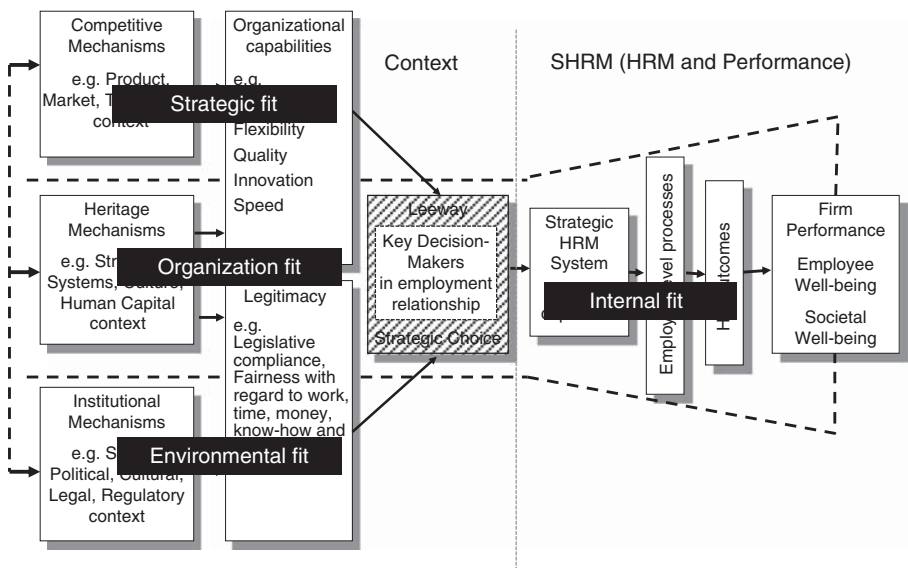


Figure 2.
Dynamic fit and
coevolution

independently on achieving each type of fit, as there is a concomitant need for a higher level of fit, balancing organizational, strategic, environmental and internal sources of fit.

Moreover, whereas context might be considered deterministic, actors in firms explain more the dynamism in firms. Actors as active agents decide how to react to context and how to create dynamic fit, which, in turn, determines the context for the adoption of SHRM systems. This is a process of coevolution, whereby a recurring feedback loop running throughout the interaction between context and the SHRM system, determines the future context and systems. This process of coevolution describes “situations in which organizations and populations not only respond to influence from their environments, but also affect their environments” (Aldrich, 1999, p. 38). The Contextual SHRM Framework demonstrates how actors can balance competitive, heritage and institutional factors to create an appropriate SHRM system capable of delivering organizational outcomes that balance financial and employee well-being outcomes, which in the long run impact societal well-being that, in turn, recreates the firm’s operating context.

Future research

Our presentation of the Contextual SHRM Framework has highlighted two important boundary conditions related to extant HRM and performance literature. The first is the adoption of a definition of performance that has been limited, largely driven by a managerialist, profit motive, with little regard for the human element. The second boundary condition is that HRM takes place “in context,” that is, the outcomes of HRM are not universalistic but need to be understood against the setting in which a firm is operating. We argue that these two boundary conditions have started to receive some attention in HRM and performance research (as we will demonstrate), but that our understanding remains limited. We are therefore proposing adopting a more balanced approach toward measuring performance (between firm financial performance and employee well-being) and a context-centric perspective on the origins and outcomes of SHRM systems.

We are encouraged by the recent move to focus more on understanding the impact of SHRM systems on employee well-being as well as on firm performance (see e.g. Guest, 2017; Van de Voorde *et al.*, 2012), and look forward to seeing this stream develop further. Alongside these developments, the incorporation of context still, however, needs our attention. Future research in HRM and performance might focus on incorporating more macro-level neo-institutional theorizing. SHRM research has identified the role of strategy as fundamental to creating a clear link between the direction of the firm and its workforce. This role is not, however, context-neutral. As we have argued, firms do not exist in a vacuum, but coevolve with and influence their context (which includes employees inside the firm and the broader society in which the firm is situated). For example, legislation might require firms to adopt practices for bringing unemployed people back into the workforce. As a result, all things being equal, unemployment would, over time, be expected to subside, and hence societal pressures for such practices would reduce. Similarly, if firms by choice decide to adopt extensive programs focused on employee health, we might expect citizens’ needs for doctors and hospital services to decline, reducing societal health-care spending. These are merely illustrative examples, but emphasize how firms are embedded in society and should not be considered as independent entities.

As we have noted, such factors highlight the relevance of strategic, organizational, internal and environmental fit to SHRM research, emphasizing that the effectiveness of the SHRM system is context specific. Research has, to date, had difficulty in capturing these multiple dimensions of fit, raising the issue of the “black box” in HRM and performance research. The black box refers to the underlying mechanisms and processes that explain why and how HRM systems contribute to performance (Boselie *et al.*, 2005). We posit that this black box can be opened further at least in part by applying contextual thinking: why

does this relationship occur within this particular setting? What do we know about the external and internal environments of the firm that can help to explain whether an SHRM system delivers effective performance outcomes or not?

Developing this level of understanding requires multilevel thinking about the relevance of context. Similarly, addressing the dynamic fit and balance perspectives emphasizes the need to incorporate context in SHRM research through multiple levels of analysis: moving from macro (e.g. country/sector/region) to *mezzo* (e.g. organization/unit/team) to micro (e.g. employee) back to *mezzo* and macro levels. For example, multilevel research that incorporates both macro-SHRM and micro-organizational behavior perspectives can help uncover a fuller picture of what is occurring inside firms. Such research allows for the analysis of constructs and their interaction at different levels of analysis simultaneously (Peccei and Van De Voorde, 2016), and can uncover specific types of unit-level SHRM system configurations that are more likely to contribute simultaneously to enhance both employee well-being and firm performance.

The theme of balance runs throughout this debate on the role of context in HRM and performance research. We have attempted to present balance from the perspective of economic rationality relative to institutional embeddedness, focusing on SHRM systems that meet the criteria both of added value (in its economic sense) and moral values (such as fairness, legitimacy and sustainability). Similarly, we make a plea for greater balance between focusing on firm financial performance alongside employee well-being, exploring the mutual gains vs conflicting outcomes approaches. For example, performance-related pay systems may balance organizational output with salary bills, but is this at the expense of employee well-being (with the promise of higher pay pushing some employees to burn out)?

We also note the somewhat idealistic thinking presented throughout much of the discussion here. The goal of the Contextual SHRM Framework is to demonstrate that clear alignment between the SHRM system and the organization's context can help achieve maximal outcomes for all stakeholders. There is, however, the reality that such alignment may never be achieved. As operating conditions change (especially in dynamic market circumstances), it is challenging to keep recreating an appropriate SHRM system. This is when the importance of dynamic fit becomes apparent. Moreover, HR departments may not be as focused on a strategic role in the organization and might instead be content with a traditional administrative role (Paauwe and Boon, in press). Balancing the effort required in establishing a fully aligned SHRM system with the potential outcomes becomes a critical organizational endeavor.

Why do firms want to achieve balance? Why should scholars attach value to a balanced approach? Ultimately, we argue, balance is essential for "healthy" performance. We believe that primary advantages of a balanced approach to HRM and performance include employees having a higher willingness to trust management; more willingness to change, even when personal risk might be involved; a "they will treat me fairly" feeling; and more managerial leeway. The Contextual SHRM Framework demonstrates how actors balance competitive, heritage and institutional factors to create an appropriate SHRM system capable of delivering organizational outcomes that balance financial and well-being outcomes, which in the long run have a positive impact on societal well-being. This balance emanates from a humanistic, values perspective, in turn creating sustainability for organizations, employees and the broader society.

Conclusions

To date, the framework has been applied in various forms by more than 850 organizations in practice, both in the public and private sectors, serving as a force field analysis tool allowing simultaneous consideration of the market, institutional and business heritage contexts. For HR professionals, applying the framework can demonstrate valuable

understanding of the business, and how the HR function can be fully aligned with the business direction, developing appropriate organizational capabilities while maintaining fairness and legitimacy. The framework allows the development of a customized approach to fitting the SHRM system with an organization's context and strategy, directly highlighting problem areas that may need to be resolved in this process.

In conclusion, we hope that in addition to the practical application of the Contextual SHRM Framework, future research might develop theorizing to incorporate these essential HRM and performance themes (balance, coevolution, dynamic fit) and adopt appropriate (multilevel) methodologies that can capture simultaneously both context (often through qualitative research) and systems (often through quantitative research). This can help us to understand the balancing act firms are playing in differentiating themselves yet meeting legitimacy requirements.

References

- Aldrich, H. (1999), *Organizations Evolving*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Barney, J.B. (1991), "Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 17 No. 1, pp. 99-120.
- Barney, J.B. (1995), "Looking inside for competitive advantage", *Academy of Management Executive*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 49-67.
- Bartlett, C.A. and Ghoshal, S. (1989), *Managing across Borders: The Transnational Solution*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.
- Beer, M., Boselie, P. and Brewster, C. (2015), "Back to the future: implications for the field of HRM of the multistakeholder perspective proposed 30 years ago", *Human Resource Management*, Vol. 54 No. 3, pp. 427-438.
- Beer, M., Spector, P., Lawrence, P., Mills, D.Q. and Walton, R. (1984), *Human Resource Management: A General Manager's Perspective*, Free Press, New York, NY.
- Boselie, P., Dietz, G. and Boon, C. (2005), "Commonalities and contradictions in HRM and performance research", *Human Resource Management Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 3, pp. 67-94.
- Boxall, P. and Purcell, J. (2015), *Strategy and Human Resource Management*, 4th ed., Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Combs, J.G., Liu, Y., Hall, A. and Ketchen, D.J. Jr (2006), "How much do high-performance work practices matter? A meta-analysis of their effects on organizational performance", *Personnel Psychology*, Vol. 59 No. 3, pp. 501-528.
- Deephouse, D.L. (1999), "To be different, or to be the same? It's a question (and theory) of strategic balance", *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp. 147-166.
- Delery, J.E. and Doty, D.H. (1996), "Modes of theorizing in strategic human resource management: tests of universalistics, contingency, and configurational performance predictions", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 39 No. 4, pp. 802-835.
- Guest, D.E. (2017), "Human resource management and employee well-being: towards a new analytic framework", *Human Resource Management Journal*, Vol. 27 No. 1, pp. 22-38.
- Hendry, C. and Pettigrew, A. (1990), "Human resource management: an agenda for the 1990s", *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 17-43.
- Huselid, M.A. (1995), "The impact of human resource management practices on turnover, productivity, and corporate financial performance", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 38 No. 3, pp. 635-672.
- Huselid, M.A. and Becker, B.E. (2000), "Comment on 'Measurement error in research on human resources and firm performance: how much error is there and how does it influence effect size estimates?' by Gerhart, Wright, McMahan, and Snell", *Personnel Psychology*, Vol. 53 No. 4, pp. 835-854.

- Jackson, S.E., Schuler, R.S. and Jiang, K. (2014), "An aspirational framework for strategic human resource management", *The Academy of Management Annals*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 1-56.
- Jiang, K., Lepak, D.P., Hu, J. and Baer, J.C. (2012), "How does human resource management influence organizational outcomes? A meta-analytic investigation of mediating mechanisms", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 55 No. 6, pp. 1264-1294.
- Johns, G. (2017), "Reflections on the 2016 decade award: Incorporating context in organizational research", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 42 No. 4, pp. 577-595.
- Lammers, C.J. (1990), "Sociology of organizations around the globe: similarities and differences between American, British, French, German and Dutch brands", *Organization Studies*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 179-205.
- Oliver, C. (1991), "Strategic responses to institutional processes", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 145-179.
- Paaauwe, J. (2004), *HRM and Performance: Achieving Long-Term Viability*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Paaauwe, J. and Boon, C.T. (in press), "Strategic HRM: a critical review", in Collings, D., Wood, G. and Szamosi, L.T. (Eds), *Human Resource Management: A Critical Perspective*, 2nd ed., Routledge.
- Paaauwe, J. and Farndale, E. (2017), *Strategy, HRM and Performance: A Contextual Approach*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Paaauwe, J., Guest, D.E. and Wright, P.M. (2013), *HRM and Performance: Achievements and Challenges*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester.
- Peccei, R. and Van De Voorde, K. (2016), "The application of the multilevel paradigm in human resource management-outcomes research: taking stock and going forward", *Journal of Management*, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316673720>
- Pfeffer, J. (1994), *Competitive Advantage through People*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.
- Pfeffer, J. (1998), *The Human Equation: Building Profits by Putting People First*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.
- Schuler, R. and Jackson, S.E. (2014), "Human resource management and organizational effectiveness: yesterday and today", *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 35-55.
- Van de Voorde, K., Paaauwe, J. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2012), "Employee well-being and the HRM-organizational performance relationship: a review of quantitative studies", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 391-407.
- Wood, S. (1999), "Human resource management and performance", *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 1 No. 4, pp. 367-413.
- Wright, P.M. and Gardener, T.M. (2003), "The human resource-firm performance relationship: methodological and theoretical challenges", in Holman, D., Wall, T.D., Clegg, P., Sparrow, P. and Howard, A. (Eds), *The New Workplace: A Guide to the Human Impact of Modern Working Practices*, John Wiley & Sons, London, pp. 311-330.
- Wright, P.M. and Snell, S.A. (1998), "Toward a unifying framework for exploring fit and flexibility in strategic human resource management", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 23 No. 4, pp. 756-772.

Corresponding author

Elaine Farndale can be contacted at: euf3@psu.edu

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:

www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm

Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com