



Journal of Idealistic Human Resources

Vol 01 (2) 2025 p. 147-170

© Hikmatul Khasanah, 2026

Corresponding author:
Khikmatulhasanah552@gmail.com

*Received 2 May 2026;
Accepted 12 June 2026;
Published 15 June 2026;*

This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted reuse, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.



Conflict of interest statement:
Author(s) reported no conflict of interest

DOI: [http://doi.org/10.70764/gdpu-ijhr.2025.1\(2\)-04](http://doi.org/10.70764/gdpu-ijhr.2025.1(2)-04)

HUMANIZING STRATEGIC HRM: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF EMPLOYEE-CENTRIC VALUE CREATION IN HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEMS

Hikmatul Khasanah¹

¹Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to conduct a systematic literature review on the integration of humanization principles into High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS), with a specific focus on employee-centered value creation mechanisms to bridge the “black box” gap in Strategic Human Resource Management.

Research Design & Methods: Using the PRISMA framework, a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted on 45 high-quality articles (2014–2026) sourced from Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The analysis combined qualitative thematic synthesis with bibliometric mapping using VOSviewer to identify conceptual evolution and research clusters.

Findings: This study identified five main clusters: performance-based practices, psychological mechanisms, humanization perspectives, organizational outcomes, and human capital. The findings indicate a paradigm shift from a performance-centric model (2014–2017) toward a contemporary focus on humanization (2021–2024), where HPWS acts as a “double-edged sword” influencing both work engagement and work intensification.

Implications & Recommendations: Organizations must balance job demands and resources (JD-R) to mitigate the dark side of HPWS. HR practitioners are recommended to prioritize “human-centered HRM” by integrating authentic leadership and flexible work policies to translate HPWS practices into positive experiences for employees.

Contribution & Value Added: This study contributes to the literature on Strategic Human Resource Management by integrating Social Exchange Theory and the AMO model to explain how psychological empowerment and well-being mediate the relationship between HPWS and performance, and offers a comprehensive framework for employee-centered sustainable value creation.

Keywords: High-Performance Work Systems; Humanization of HRM; Employee Well-being; Value Creation.

JEL codes: M54; O15; J24.

Article type: review paper

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the concept of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) has become one of the dominant approaches in Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) for improving organizational performance through the optimization of human resources. HPWS emphasizes a series of integrated HR practices, such as selective recruitment, intensive training, performance-based reward systems, and employee participation in decision-making. This approach is believed to

enhance employees' skills, motivation, and opportunities to contribute optimally to organizational goals.

The paradigm shift in strategic human resource management (SHRM) has reached a significant turning point, where the traditional focus on operational efficiency and maximizing shareholder value is beginning to transform toward a more humanistic and sustainable approach (Ren et al., 2023). However, global challenges, such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), have necessitated a reevaluation of the role of human resources. Global health crises and international conflicts have exposed the weaknesses of traditional models focused on short-term financial results, without regard for workforce well-being.

In this context of uncertainty, there is an urgent need to humanize HRM through High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS), which not only drive organizational productivity but also create substantial value for employees as individuals (C.-J. Wang & Jiang, 2024). Conceptually, HPWS is understood as a set of internally integrated and mutually reinforcing human resource management practices, strategically designed to enhance employees' capabilities, motivation, commitment, and overall performance (Arshad et al., 2024). Over the past three decades, numerous studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between the implementation of HPWS and unit performance, such as output, customer satisfaction, and profitability. However, there remains an unexplained "black box" phenomenon regarding these mechanisms (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2016). An employee-focused approach seeks to explain this by emphasizing psychological well-being and empowerment (Shi et al., 2024).

The urgency of this research is also driven by the shifting expectations of the modern workforce, which increasingly seeks work experiences aligned with motivation, personal values, and the need for life meaning (Meier & Oberholzer-Gee, 2024). Data shows that by 2024, less than a quarter of employees worldwide will feel truly engaged at work, indicating a significant gap between organizational strategies and the reality of the employee experience (Meier & Oberholzer-Gee, 2024). Issues such as burnout, mental exhaustion, and excessive work demands have become strategic challenges requiring systemic intervention through the design of more human-centered HPWS (Judijanto et al., 2025). Therefore, understanding how to design work systems that support psychological well-being while maintaining robust market competitiveness is an intellectual and practical challenge at the core of the current HRM discipline (Pandey et al., 2025).

Empirically, various studies indicate that empowered employees tend to make greater contributions to organizational performance improvement and innovation (Para-González et al., 2019). Furthermore, affective commitment plays a crucial role in strengthening the link between HR practices and organizational goals by fostering mutual trust and reciprocal relationships between employees and the organization (Kim & Wright, 2011). This aligns with the Resource-Based View (RBV) perspective, which positions human capital as a source of sustainable competitive advantage. By developing employees' skills, motivation, and capabilities, HPWS contributes to the creation of unique and valuable human capital, which ultimately drives innovation and improves organizational performance (Guthrie et al., 2009).

Employee-oriented HPWS implementation is also associated with various positive outcomes, such as reduced absenteeism and turnover rates, as well as increased work productivity (Wood, 2025). This system emphasizes the importance of the employee work experience, including engagement and individual development, which directly challenges traditional management approaches that are more control-oriented (Kim & Wright, 2011). On the other hand, recent literature has begun to reveal a paradox in HPWS implementation. Although designed to maximize employee potential, HPWS also has the potential to lead to negative consequences—or what is known as the "dark side"—such as intensified workloads, excessive performance pressure, and exploitative surveillance practices (Kidwell & Lunde, 2016). In certain contexts, economic pressures and a focus on shareholder interests can shift the focus of HPWS from a human-centered approach to one that is purely performance-oriented (Wood, 2025). This suggests that without the integration of humanistic values, HPWS risks neglecting aspects of employee well-being. Furthermore, the relationship between HPWS and organizational performance still raises questions regarding the underlying mechanisms (the "black box" problem). Several studies highlight the importance of

mediating variables, such as intra-organizational social capital and organizational unit ambidexterity, in explaining how HR practices translate into superior performance. Furthermore, alignment between top management values and HR strategies is also a crucial factor in determining the success of sustainable HPWS implementation.

Nevertheless, the majority of HPWS literature remains dominated by a performance-centric perspective, with relatively limited attention paid to employee-centric value creation. A humanization approach in SHRM that balances organizational performance and human well-being has not yet been comprehensively explored within the HPWS framework. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a systematic literature review that not only examines the effectiveness of HPWS in improving performance but also explores how these practices can be humanized to create sustainable value for employees.

Based on this background, this study aims to conduct a systematic literature review on the integration of humanization principles into HPWS, with a focus on employee-centered value creation mechanisms. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions by integrating various perspectives such as Social Exchange Theory, the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model, and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, while also offering practical implications for organizations in designing work systems that are not only productive but also oriented toward human well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) is a key concept in Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) that emphasizes the integration of various human resource practices to enhance organizational performance. HPWS is defined as a set of complementary HR management practices designed to enhance employees' skills, motivation, and opportunities to contribute to the organization (Babic et al., 2019; C. Zhu et al., 2018). These practices include selective recruitment, intensive training, performance-based compensation systems, and employee participation in decision-making. From the Resource-Based View (RBV) perspective, HPWS is viewed as a source of sustainable competitive advantage because it can develop human capital that is valuable, scarce, and difficult for competitors to imitate (C. Zhu et al., 2018).

To explain the mechanism by which HPWS influences performance, many studies employ the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework. This model posits that employee performance is a function of ability, motivation, and the opportunity to contribute (Shi et al., 2024). In this context, HPWS is viewed as a practical implementation of the AMO model through three main practice groups: enhancing capabilities through training and development, boosting motivation through reward systems and performance evaluations, and expanding opportunities through employee participation and empowerment (Mahdy & Alhadi, 2021). Empirical research indicates that the combination of these three dimensions significantly contributes to improved individual and organizational performance.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) provides a deep psychological explanation of why HPWS can drive better performance. Unlike economic exchange, which is based on formal contracts and specific transactional obligations, social exchange is grounded in emotional bonds, trust, and the norm of reciprocity (C.-J. Wang & Tsai, 2026). When organizations provide "inducements" or positive incentives through HPWS practices such as development training, job security, and autonomy, employees feel a moral obligation to reciprocate with discretionary effort and greater commitment to organizational goals (Jeong & Choi, 2016). This reciprocal process creates a positive cycle in which the organization's investment in employee well-being generates loyalty, which in turn strengthens the organization's capacity to innovate and grow (C.-J. Wang & Tsai, 2026). However, the quality of this exchange depends heavily on employees' perceptions of the organization's motives; investments perceived as sincere will elicit a far stronger response than those perceived as manipulative or purely transactional.

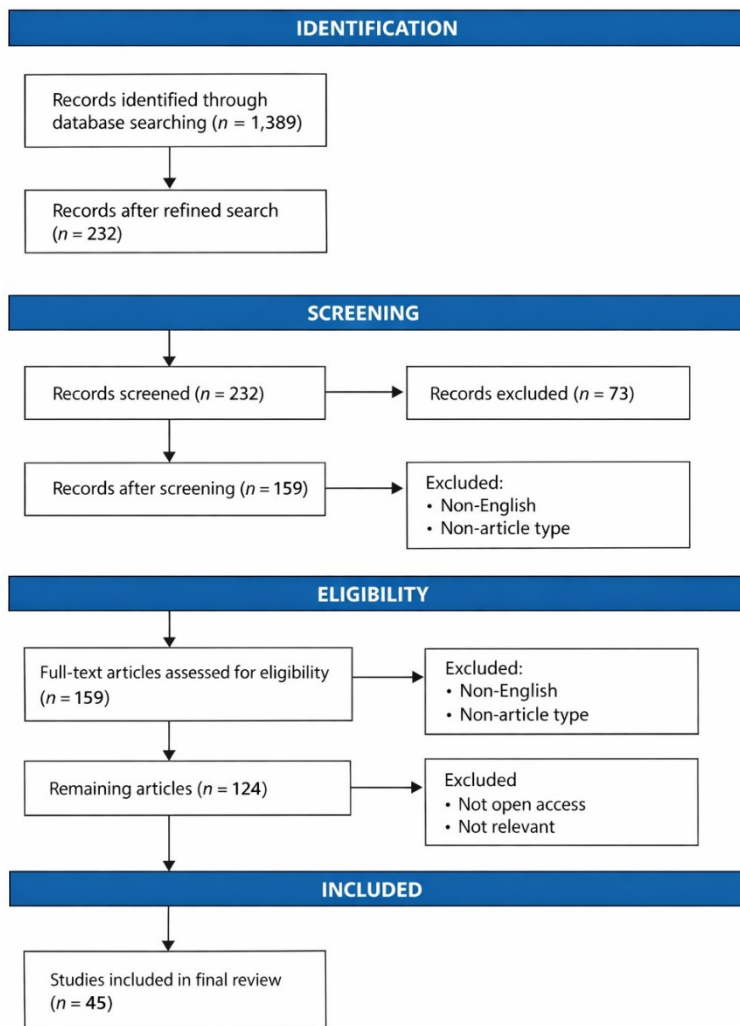
Humanization in human resource management (HRM) emphasizes the creation of an inclusive, supportive, and individual-development-oriented work experience, so that employees

are no longer viewed merely as tools of production, but as individuals with unique values and needs (Bargavi et al., 2023). This approach is reflected in the four main dimensions of psychological empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact, which together shape a more meaningful and motivating work experience (C.-J. Wang & Tsai, 2026). Additionally, a human-centered work system must also prioritize employees' holistic well-being, including mental health and work-life balance. The integration of the Social Exchange Theory (SET) perspective and the JD-R model indicates that the provision of job resources such as flexibility and participation not only helps employees meet work demands but also strengthens their perception of organizational support and prevents burnout (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005). Thus, the humanization of HRM also encompasses constructive and ongoing feedback as a tool for development, rather than merely a formal, judgmental evaluation.

METHODS

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to comprehensively examine the development of the High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) concept, with a focus on employee-centric value creation. The literature review process was conducted systematically in accordance with the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines to ensure transparency, replicability, and the validity of the article selection process.

Figure 1 Identification by PRISMA Flow chart



Source: edited by author (2026)

Data sources for this study were obtained from various reputable scientific databases, namely Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), and Google Scholar, to ensure a broad and representative

This cluster illustrates the classic approach to HPWS studies, emphasizing the direct relationship between HR practices and improved individual and organizational performance. In this context, HPWS is positioned as a set of practices designed to increase productivity by enhancing employee engagement and empowerment. Furthermore, the presence of organizational culture as part of this cluster indicates that the effectiveness of HPWS is also influenced by the internal organizational context that supports the implementation of high-performance work practices.

The second cluster represents strategic HRM and psychological mechanisms, encompassing concepts such as human resource management, affective commitment, social exchange theory, and employee performance. This cluster demonstrates the development of literature that no longer views the relationship between HPWS and performance directly, but rather through psychological and relational mediation mechanisms. This approach emphasizes that HR practices will be effective if they build affective commitment and positive reciprocal relationships between employees and the organization. Thus, social exchange theory becomes an important foundation in explaining how employees respond to HPWS practices.

The third cluster highlights well-being and the humanization perspective, with keywords such as employee well-being, perceived organizational support, and work intensification. This cluster reflects a paradigm shift in HPWS research from a performance-oriented approach to a more human-centered approach. The presence of concepts such as work intensification indicates that the literature is beginning to critique the negative impacts of HPWS, thus raising the need to balance performance demands with employee well-being. Thus, this cluster is an important representation of the development of the humanizing HRM approach in HPWS studies.

The fourth cluster relates to organizational outcomes and innovation, characterized by keywords such as organizational performance, innovation, leadership, and service quality. This cluster demonstrates that HPWS not only impacts internal employee performance but also impacts the broader competitiveness of the organization. Innovation and service quality are important indicators in measuring the success of HPWS implementation, particularly in the context of market-oriented organizations. The role of leadership in this cluster also demonstrates that the success of HPWS is highly dependent on strategic support from top management.

The fifth cluster focuses on human capital and organizational behavior, with keywords such as human capital, organizational citizenship behavior, and employee. This cluster emphasizes the importance of employees as strategic assets that serve as sources of organizational competitive advantage. From this perspective, HPWS plays a role in shaping extra-role behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior, which not only support individual performance but also overall organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, human capital development is a key foundation for creating long-term value for the organization.

Descriptive Analysis of Time Trends (Conceptual Evolution)

Based on the average publication year analysis from bibliometric mapping, the development of research on High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) shows a clear and gradual conceptual evolution. This evolution can be classified into three main phases, reflecting changes in focus and depth of study within the literature.

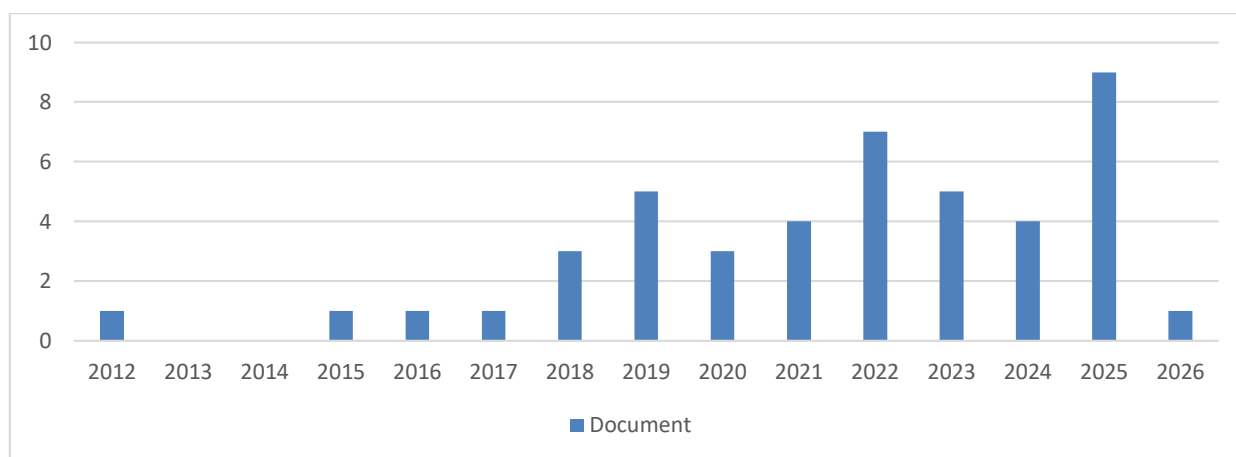
Table 1 Evolusi Konseptual dan Fase Perkembangan Penelitian High-Performance Work Systems

Period	Dominant Focus	Main Theme Description
2014–2017 (Early Phase)	Organizational Performance and HR Practices	Research has been dominated by general concepts such as organization, organizational culture, and job satisfaction. The primary focus remains on the direct relationship between HR practices and organizational performance, a linear and simplistic approach. The approach used is outcome-oriented, assuming that HPWS automatically increase productivity. Employee psychology and internal organizational dynamics have not received primary attention.

2018–2020 (Development Phase)	Psychological and Relational Mechanisms	A shift toward a more complex approach has occurred with the emergence of concepts such as high-performance work systems, social exchange theory, and well-being. Research has begun to emphasize that the relationship between HPWS and performance is mediated by psychological and relational factors. Perspectives such as Social Exchange Theory have been used to explain employee responses to HR practices. The focus has expanded from performance to employee work experiences.
2021–2024 (Contemporary Phase)	Humanization and Employee Well-Being	Research has evolved into a more critical and humanistic approach, focusing on employee engagement, psychological capital, emotional exhaustion, and the work environment. In addition to emphasizing well-being and psychological well-being, the literature has also begun to examine the negative aspects of HPWS, such as work intensification and emotional exhaustion. HPWS are no longer viewed simply as performance-enhancing tools, but as complex systems that impact employee well-being.

Based on the number of publications, research on High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) shows a trend that initially declined in the 2012–2017 period (0–1 publication per year), then began to increase in 2018–2020, and experienced significant growth in 2021–2025, peaking in 2025. A decline in 2026 is likely due to incomplete data. This quantitative trend aligns with the conceptual evolution of HPWS, where in the initial phase research focused on the direct relationship between HR practices and organizational performance, then evolved in the 2018–2020 phase with the emergence of more complex approaches such as social exchange theory and well-being that emphasize psychological mechanisms. Finally, the contemporary phase (2021–2024) is marked by increased attention to employee engagement, psychological capital, and dark side issues such as emotional exhaustion and work intensification. Thus, the increase in publications not only reflects growing research interest but also indicates a paradigm shift from a performance-oriented approach to a more integrative, human-centered HRM.

Figure 3 Annual Growth Trend of Publications



Source: edited by author (2026)

Descriptive Analysis of Dominant Keywords and Their Influence

Analysis of keyword frequency indicates that several concepts dominate the HPWS literature, including high-performance work systems, job satisfaction, psychological empowerment, employee engagement, and well-being. This keyword dominance reflects the primary focus of the research and the overall direction of HPWS research. The keyword "high-performance work systems," as a core concept, has the highest frequency of occurrence, indicating that research continues to focus on exploring and developing the HPWS concept itself. This indicates

that HPWS remains a primary framework for understanding the relationship between HR practices and organizational performance.

Conversely, the high frequency of keywords such as job satisfaction and psychological empowerment indicates that individual psychological aspects are important elements in explaining the effectiveness of HPWS. Job satisfaction reflects employees' evaluations of their work experiences, while psychological empowerment indicates the extent to which employees feel they have control, meaning, and competence in their work.

These two concepts act as mechanisms linking HR practices to organizational outcomes. Furthermore, the emergence of the keywords "employee engagement" and "well-being" as dominant concepts indicates a shift in research focus toward a more employee-centered approach. Employee engagement describes the level of emotional and cognitive attachment to work, while well-being reflects a broader psychological and emotional state. The dominance of these two concepts indicates that HPWS research is no longer solely oriented toward improving performance but also toward creating a positive and sustainable work experience.

Figure 4 Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis Using VOSviewer: Mapping Core Areas of Contemporary HPWS Research

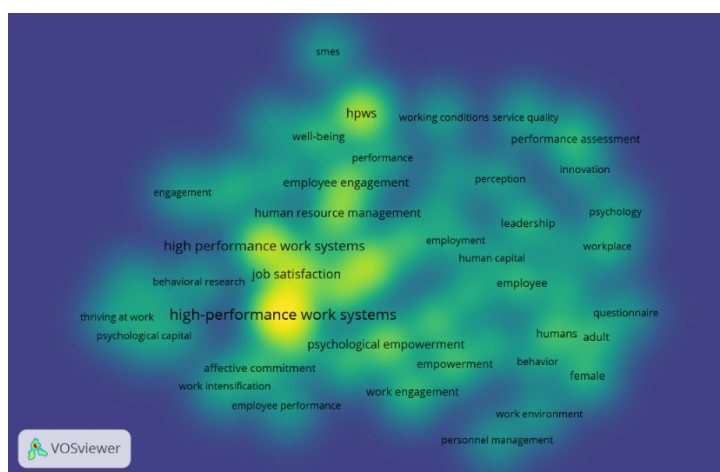


Table 2 Analysis Matrix of Selected Articles: Research Focus, Methodology, and Key Findings in the Contemporary Context of HPWS

Author & Year	Research Objectives	Research Methods	Mechanisms	Key Findings	Implications for Humanizing HRM
Srivastava & Rao (2025)	Analyzing the influence of organizational culture on employee performance and organizational resilience, as well as the mediating role of HPWS in the service sector in India	Quantitative; survey of 340 employees; purposive sampling; CB-SEM; 5-point Likert scale; bias tests (Harman's test & CLF)	HPWS as a mediator between organizational culture and employee performance and organizational resilience	OC does not have a significant direct effect on OR; OC has a positive effect on HPWS; HPWS enhances EP; HPWS significantly mediates the OC-EP and OC-OR relationships	The importance of integrating cultural values into HR practices; HPWS as a means of translating organizational values; fostering employee empowerment, engagement, and organizational readiness through the AMO approach
Hanu & Khumalo (2024)	Analyzing the moderating role of employee ambidexterity in	Quantitative; two-wave cross-sectional; 324	Employee ambidexterity (exploitation & exploration)	HPWS has a significant positive effect on	The importance of implementing AMO-based HPWS; the need

	the relationship between HPWS and employee resilience, as well as its impact on organizational resilience and employee well-being in the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector in Ghana	employees from 40 companies; simple random sampling; SEM-PLS	exploration) as a moderator	organizational resilience and employee well-being; organizational resilience enhances well-being; employee resilience is not significant; exploitation strengthens the relationship, while exploration tends to weaken it under certain conditions	for a balance of ambidexterity; creating a supportive work environment to enhance well-being; HPWS as a strategic tool for crisis management
Gong et al. (2024)	Analyzing the influence of procedural justice on job crafting, with mediation by organizational psychological ownership and moderation by HPWS in technology companies in China	Quantitative; survey of 1,049 employees (76 companies); HLM (SPSS & Mplus); standardized scale	Mediation: psychological ownership; Moderation: HPWS	Procedural justice has a positive effect on job crafting; mediated by psychological ownership; HPWS strengthens the ownership-job crafting relationship	The importance of organizational justice in fostering proactive behavior; strengthening employees' sense of ownership; HPWS as a system supporting the humanization of work
C.-J. Wang & Tsai (2026)	Analyzing the role of HPWS in enhancing psychological empowerment and stay intention, with moderation by LMX and TMX in the hospitality sector in Taiwan	Quantitative; survey of 350 respondents; SEM (AMOS); standardized Likert scale	Mediation: psychological empowerment; Moderation: LMX & TMX	HPWS enhances empowerment and stay intention; empowerment mediates; LMX strengthens the relationship; TMX is significant in the early stages	The importance of employee-centered strategies; strengthening work relationships (supervisors & teams); HPWS as a tool for retention and improved well-being
Rosa (2025)	Analyzing the implementation of Diversity and Equality Management Systems (DEMS) in SMEs and its influence on individual and group performance within the HPWS context	Quantitative; survey of 264 MTO SMEs in Italy; questionnaire + Delphi; K-means, MANOVA, and discriminant analysis	Context: HPWS as a foundation; Moderator: business unit membership; Mechanism: strategic vs. reactive approach	Three clusters were identified (strategic, reactive, traditional HPWS); DEMS integrated with HPWS yields high performance and well-being; the reactive approach results in low	The importance of integrating diversity strategies with HPWS; enhancing well-being, retention, and an inclusive work environment; employee empowerment through participation

Yun et al. (2022)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on thriving at work and job burnout, mediated by resilience at work, among nurses in Chinese hospitals	Quantitative; 3-stage time-lagged survey; 845 nurses; multiple regression analysis	Mediation: resilience at work	individual performance HPWS enhances resilience; resilience enhances thriving and reduces burnout; the effect of HPWS remains significant but weakens after mediation	HPWS as a tool to enhance resilience and well-being; the importance of resilience training; supporting the reduction of burnout and the improvement of working conditions
Chang et al. (2018)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on job satisfaction in China through job discretion and work intensification, as well as employees' affective responses	Quantitative; survey of 354 employees & 34 HR managers in China; HLM (Hierarchical Linear Modeling); based on Affective Events Theory	Mediation: job discretion & work intensification → positive/negative affect → job satisfaction	HPWS increases work intensification, which triggers negative affect and reduces job satisfaction; job discretion increases job satisfaction but does not always elicit positive affect; the effectiveness of HPWS is influenced by the Chinese cultural context	The importance of balancing productivity and well-being; HPWS implementation must be culturally adaptive; the need for sustainable HRM and harmonious work relationships
Rubio-Andrés et al. (2022)	Analyzing the role of HPWS in enhancing employee well-being and its impact on social value and financial performance of SMEs in Spain	Quantitative; 1,136 SMEs; PLS-SEM analysis; indicators of HPWS, well-being, reputation, social value, and financial performance	Mediation: well-being, reputation, and social value	HPWS has a positive effect on well-being; well-being enhances social value and financial performance; the direct effect of HPWS on financial performance is not significant without mediators	The importance of an integrated HRM approach; well-being as the key to value creation; organizations need to enhance participation, training, and fairness to boost motivation and performance
C. Li et al. (2019)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on employee performance and the mediating roles of job satisfaction, perceived organizational support (POS), and employee engagement in the textile	Quantitative; survey of 232 respondents; stratified sampling; PLS-SEM analysis	Mediation: job satisfaction, POS, employee engagement; supported by SET & AMO theories	HPWS has a positive effect on performance; job satisfaction, POS, and engagement significantly mediate this effect; HPWS also enhances these three mediators	The importance of creating a supportive and fair work environment; enhancing employee satisfaction and engagement; implementing strategic HRM based on employee well-

Lyu et al. (2025)	industry in Pakistan Analyzing the influence of HPWS on creative performance, with the mediating role of work involvement and the moderating role of LMSCS in SMEs in China	Quantitative; survey of 315 respondents; SEM analysis (AMOS, SmartPLS, SPSS)	Mediation: work involvement; Moderation: LMSCS	HPWS enhances creative performance; work involvement mediates significantly; LMSCS is generally not significant, but significant in the high-LMSCS group	being and perceptions The importance of increasing work engagement to foster creativity; HRM must support learning and innovation; organizations must create a work environment that empowers employees and encourages new ideas
F. Zhu et al. (2022)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on employee innovation behavior, with the mediating role of challenge stress and the moderating role of perceived organizational support	Quantitative; two-wave survey; 227 respondents; hierarchical regression analysis & CFA (AMOS)	Mediation: challenge stress; Moderation: perceived organizational support; based on Social Exchange Theory	HPWS has a positive effect on employee innovation; challenge stress mediates partially; organizational support strengthens this effect	The importance of creating a supportive work environment to foster innovation; positive stress management (challenge stress) can enhance creativity; organizations need to increase support for employees
Cao et al. (2020)	Analyzing the role of authentic leadership in the implementation of HPWS and its impact on employee perceptions, well-being, and performance	Quantitative; multilevel (834 employees, 145 departments); multilevel CFA analysis (Mplus)	Moderation: authentic leadership; Mediation: employee-perceived HPWS & HR attributions	Department-level HPWS enhances employees' perceptions of HPWS; authentic leadership strengthens this relationship; it enhances thriving at work, well-being, and performance	The importance of authentic leadership in HRM implementation; enhancing employees' positive perceptions of the organization; supporting well-being and performance through transparent and trustworthy working relationships
Qi et al. (2021)	Analyzing the double-edged sword effect of HPWS on employee well-being and the moderating role of union practices	Quantitative; survey of 243 respondents; questionnaire administered to companies in China; analysis based on the JD-R model	Mediation: perceived organizational support & work stress; Moderation: union practice	HPWS increases perceived organizational support but also increases work stress; work stress reduces well-being; union practices	The importance of balancing work demands and organizational support; the role of labor unions in protecting well-being; HRM must manage work-related stress to

H.-Y. Li & Yu (2017)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) through the psychological contract with moderation by Chinese traditionality	Quantitative; survey of 56 organizations in China; multilevel analysis (random regression)	Mediation: psychological contract (relational, balanced, transactional); Moderation: Chinese traditionality	mitigate the negative impact of stress HPWS enhances OCB through relational and balanced psychological contracts; transactional contracts have a negative impact; balanced contracts are the strongest; traditional culture moderates the relationship	prevent harm to employees The importance of building a balanced psychological contract; fostering long-term relationships between the organization and employees; HRM must consider cultural factors in enhancing positive employee behavior
X. Wang & Shaheryar (2020)	Developing a theoretical framework of HIHRM to enhance work-related flow through affective commitment, moderated by emotional intelligence	Conceptual-theoretical based on the JD-R model and HRM attribution theory	Mediation: affective commitment; Moderation: emotional intelligence; HIHRM as job resources & demands	HIHRM enhances affective commitment and work-related flow; affective commitment has a positive effect on flow and well-being; emotional intelligence strengthens the relationship; HIHRM can also become a burden if not managed	The importance of balancing work demands and resources; enhancing affective commitment and emotional intelligence; creating meaningful work experiences without sacrificing work-life balance
Saorín-Iborra & Cámara-Campos (2025)	Analyzing the role of HPWS in the relationship between gender diversity, generational diversity, and employee engagement	Quantitative; survey of 285 employees in Spain; PLS-SEM analysis	Moderation: HPWS	HPWS moderates the relationship between gender and generational diversity and employee engagement; effective diversity management enhances employee engagement	The importance of managing diversity through strategic HRM; HPWS as a tool to enhance engagement in a diverse workplace; supporting inclusivity and employee participation
Arshad et al. (2024)	Analyzing the influence of employee experience with HPWS on innovative behavior in	Quantitative; time-lagged survey (3 phases); 262 respondents; PLS-SEM analysis	Mediation: social capital & knowledge sharing; Moderation: need for cognition	HPWS increases social capital, which fosters knowledge sharing; knowledge	The importance of fostering a collaborative culture and knowledge sharing; HRM needs to

	professional service firms			sharing enhances innovative behavior; the need for cognition strengthens this relationship	encourage social interaction and learning to enhance employee innovation in a human-centered manner
B. Zhang et al. (2022)	Examining the relationship between HPWS and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as well as the role of organizational culture and identity	Quantitative; employee-supervisor pair survey; 1,231 respondents; CFA analysis	Moderation: error aversion culture & organizational identification	HPWS increases OCB; organizational culture and employee identification strengthen or modify this relationship	The importance of aligning organizational values with employee identity; HRM must foster a work culture that is not overly punitive toward mistakes to support positive behavior
Pahos & Galanaki (2022)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on employee performance with the moderating role of organizational commitment and tenure	Quantitative; multilevel; 342 employees & 115 supervisors; CFA	Mediation: affective commitment; Moderation: employee tenure	HPWS does not have a direct effect on performance, but acts through affective commitment; tenure strengthens the relationship between HPWS and commitment	The importance of building affective commitment to improve performance; HRM needs to focus on emotional connections and long-term employee loyalty
J. Zhang et al. (2018)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on job performance and job satisfaction with the moderating role of alignment with line managers' goals	Quantitative; multilevel (HLM); 397 employees, 84 teams, 21 companies; multisource data	Mediation: employee-experienced HPWS; Moderation: line managers' goal congruence	HPWS has a positive effect on performance and job satisfaction; managerial goal alignment reduces the gap between HR policies and employee experiences	The importance of line managers' roles in HRM implementation; HRM must ensure alignment of objectives so that policies are more humane and directly felt by employees
Shi et al. (2024)	Analyzing the role of well-being (happiness and health) in the relationship between HPWS and individual performance	Quantitative; longitudinal (4 waves over 1 year); SEM	Mediation: happiness, well-being, and health	HPWS enhances performance through happiness well-being; health well-being also has an effect but is more complex; there is no direct effect of HPWS on performance	The importance of holistic well-being (emotional and physical health); HRM must prioritize the balance between productivity and employee health

Eniola et al. (2023)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on sustainable organizational performance through innovative work behavior in SMEs	Quantitative; survey of 820 respondents; descriptive & explanatory approach	Mediation: innovative work behavior	without mediation HPWS enhances innovative behavior, which impacts sustainable organizational performance; the mediating effect is significant but relatively small	The importance of fostering human-centered innovation; HRM needs to create a work environment that supports employee creativity and participation for organizational sustainability
Babic et al. (2019)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on employee well-being through the work-to-family interface	Quantitative; SEM (LISREL); 170 respondents; CFA & bootstrapping analysis	Mediation: work-to-family enrichment (WFE) and work-to-family conflict (WFC); other variables: job engagement and job strain	HPWS increases job engagement and work-to-family enrichment; it reduces job strain; job strain increases work-family conflict; work-family balance plays a crucial role in well-being	The importance of work-family balance; HRM needs to reduce work conflicts and support employees' family well-being for a more human-centered approach
Arefin et al. (2019)	Analyzing the influence of HPWS on job engagement through psychological empowerment	Quantitative; survey of 287 employees; SEM & hierarchical regression; CFA (AMOS)	Mediation: psychological empowerment	HPWS has a positive effect on job engagement; psychological empowerment serves as the primary mediator; HRM enhances engagement through empowerment	The importance of employee empowerment in HRM; creating a work environment that provides autonomy and meaningful work to enhance engagement

DISCUSSION

High-Performance Work Systems as an Employee-Based Value Creation Mechanism

High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) can be understood as an employee-based value creation mechanism due to their ability to influence employee behavior, motivation, and contributions toward organizational goals. A number of studies indicate that HPWS do not directly create organizational value, but rather through how these systems are perceived and experienced by employees in their work context. When employees view HPWS practices as beneficial, they tend to demonstrate higher levels of engagement, satisfaction, and performance, thereby contributing to organizational value creation ([Eniola et al., 2023](#); [Pahos & Galanaki, 2022](#)).

From the perspective of employee benefits, HPWS offers various advantages that foster engagement and positive behavior. One key aspect is involvement in decision-making, where HPWS practices open up broader opportunities for employee participation. This not only enhances work control through job discretion but also fosters positive affect and a sense of ownership toward one's work ([Gong et al., 2024](#); [H.-Y. Li & Yu, 2017](#); [J. Zhang et al., 2018](#)). Furthermore, HPWS also plays a

role in skill development and career advancement through training and team-based work design, reflecting the organization's commitment to long-term relationships with employees (Cao et al., 2020; Rosa, 2025). This approach simultaneously strengthens employee empowerment and autonomy, differing from traditional top-down management models, thereby fostering more sustainable human capital stability (C.-J. Wang & Tsai, 2026; X. Wang & Shaheryar, 2020).

In terms of value creation, HPWS operates through various psychological and behavioral mediation mechanisms. One of the primary mediators is job satisfaction, where the implementation of HPWS can enhance job satisfaction, which ultimately impacts improved employee performance. When organizations provide practices such as fair reward systems, training, and work engagement, employees tend to respond positively as a form of reciprocity for the organization's investment (C. Li et al., 2019; H.-Y. Li & Yu, 2017; Pahos & Galanaki, 2022; J. Zhang et al., 2018). Additionally, employee engagement serves as a key mediator, where HPWS provides supportive organizational resources such as a participatory work environment and managerial support that foster employees' emotional and cognitive engagement, thereby enhancing performance and productivity (Eniola et al., 2023).

Another mediator is perceived organizational support (POS), which reflects the extent to which employees feel valued and supported by the organization. HPWS has been shown to enhance this perception, which in turn positively impacts employee performance and innovative behavior (F. Zhu et al., 2022). Furthermore, HPWS also fosters creativity and innovative performance by enhancing work involvement and active participation in work. A work environment supported by HPWS enables employees to develop ideas, share knowledge, and contribute to the organization's innovation process (Arshad et al., 2024; Lyu et al., 2025). Additionally, this practice contributes to the formation of social capital by enhancing interpersonal trust, fostering strong work relationships, and fostering a shared vision among employees.

However, the effectiveness of HPWS as a value-creation mechanism heavily depends on how the system is implemented and perceived by employees. There is often a gap between the HPWS designed by the organization and what employees actually experience, making it crucial for organizations to ensure alignment between policies and actual work experiences (Cao et al., 2020; J. Zhang et al., 2018). Furthermore, although HPWS aims to improve performance, its implementation can also increase work demands and the burden of responsibility, which may lead to stress and reduce employee well-being. This indicates that HPWS has a double-edged sword nature, where its benefits can turn into risks if not managed properly (Chang et al., 2018; Qi et al., 2021). Therefore, organizations need to strike a balance between performance achievements and employee well-being so that the humanizing principles of HRM can be fully realized (Shi et al., 2024).

Theoretically, the mechanism by which HPWS creates value and enhances employee performance can be explained through Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) model. SET explains that the relationship between the organization and employees is reciprocal, wherein the organization provides various benefits through HRM practices such as training, involvement in decision-making, and a fair reward system, which are then reciprocated by employees through increased commitment, effort, and performance (H.-Y. Li & Yu, 2017; Pahos & Galanaki, 2022; F. Zhu et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the AMO model emphasizes that employee performance will improve when the organization is able to develop employees' ability, motivate them, and provide opportunities for them to contribute. HPWS integrates these three dimensions through practices such as training, empowerment, and performance-based rewards (Hanu & Khumalo, 2024; Srivastava & Rao, 2025).

The Role of Psychological Mediation in Humanizing HRM

Psychological mediation plays a key role in explaining how High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) contribute to the humanization of Human Resource Management (HRM). HPWS not only directly influence performance but also operate through changes in employees' internal states—such as perceptions, attitudes, and emotions—which in turn drive various organizational outcomes. Thus, this approach helps open the “black box” in Strategic Human Resource

Management (SHRM), namely explaining how HRM practices translate into performance through employees' psychological mechanisms (Pahos & Galanaki, 2022).

One of the primary mediators is psychological empowerment, which explains how HPWS can enhance employee engagement and retention (Arefin et al., 2019; C.-J. Wang & Tsai, 2026). HPWS practices such as training, providing incentives, and involvement in decision-making contribute to the formation of the dimensions of empowerment, namely meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Organizational investments through practices such as selection, training, and performance evaluation have been shown to increase employee empowerment levels (Chamberlin et al., 2018; Shaw et al., 2009). Furthermore, HPWS directly creates work conditions that provide autonomy, feedback, and skill development, thereby strengthening employees' sense of responsibility and commitment to the organization (C.-J. Wang & Tsai, 2026).

In addition to empowerment, the psychological contract also serves as a key mediator in explaining the relationship between HPWS and employee behavior. HPWS influences the type of psychological contract that forms, particularly by fostering the development of relational and balanced contracts that emphasize long-term relationships between employees and the organization (H.-Y. Li & Yu, 2017). Through practices such as intensive training and internal mobility, organizations demonstrate their commitment to employee development, thereby reducing the transactional contract orientation focused on short-term gains.

Furthermore, employee well-being also serves as a key mediator in the relationship between HPWS and individual performance. Well-being, encompassing the dimensions of happiness (happiness well-being) and health (health well-being), has been shown to act as a mechanism linking perceptions of HPWS to improved performance over a specific period (Shi et al., 2024). This indicates that the impact of HPWS is dynamic and evolves over time, such that initial perceptions of HRM practices influence employees' psychological state, which in turn affects future performance.

Furthermore, organizational commitment—particularly affective commitment—also serves as a key mediator in the relationship between HPWS and employee performance. HPWS fosters the development of affective commitment through positive work experiences, which in turn contribute to improved individual performance (Pahos & Galanaki, 2022). Work experiences supported by effective HRM practices serve as the primary predictor of such commitment (Dorta-Afonso et al., 2021). This underscores that the emotional bond between employees and the organization is a critical factor in creating human-centered value.

As an implication of these various mediating mechanisms, employee performance and innovation emerge as indirect outcomes of HPWS implementation. HPWS has been shown to enhance individual performance through various psychological mediators, although in some cases it does not have a significant direct effect (Jiang et al., 2013). Furthermore, HPWS also has a positive effect on employees' innovative behavior, indicating that this system not only improves work efficiency but also fosters creativity and the development of new ideas (F. Zhu et al., 2022). Thus, performance and innovation can be understood as the result of psychological processes triggered by HRM practices.

HPWS as a “Double-Edged Sword” (Perspektif JD-R Model)

High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) are understood as a double-edged sword because they can have both positive and negative impacts on employee well-being, as explained in the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model (Qi et al., 2021). This model classifies job characteristics into job resources and job demands, thereby helping to explain how HPWS influences the balance between the two (Demerouti et al., 2001). On the positive side, HPWS provides various job resources such as autonomy, feedback, and social support that can enhance employee motivation, engagement, and well-being (Babic et al., 2019; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Additionally, HPWS strengthens perceived organizational support and work resilience, and encourages skill development that helps employees maximize their potential (Chung, 2016; Yun et al., 2022).

However, HPWS can also increase job demands, which may lead to work-related stress and reduce well-being (Qi et al., 2021). Within the JD-R framework, this condition is explained through the health impairment process, in which high job demands can deplete psychological resources and trigger health problems (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; Demerouti et al., 2001). This indicates that increased demands without adequate support can have a negative impact on employees. Overall, the JD-R model explains that HPWS operates through two mechanisms: a motivational process that enhances engagement and well-being, and a health impairment process that can lead to stress. Therefore, organizations need to balance work demands and resources so that HPWS can support performance while optimally maintaining employee well-being.

Kesejahteraan Karyawan sebagai Inti Value Creation

Employee well-being is a crucial aspect of organizational success because it reflects the overall quality of the work experience perceived by individuals in the workplace (Hanu & Khumalo, 2024; Qi et al., 2021). This concept encompasses various dimensions that contribute to positive experiences, satisfaction, and the comprehensive development of employees. Indeed, even in crisis situations, employee well-being serves as a key indicator for assessing the health and happiness of the workforce (Braaten & Huta, 2016). Therefore, well-being is not merely viewed as an end result but also as a strategic process in creating organizational value.

Conceptually, employee well-being is multidimensional and has various definitions in the literature (Jackson et al., 2014). First, well-being reflects the overall quality of the work experience employees have. Second, well-being is also related to life assessment, which encompasses life satisfaction and emotional balance in the context of work. Additionally, subjective dimensions such as happiness well-being describe the balance between positive and negative emotions felt by employees (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2011). Meanwhile, health well-being highlights aspects of physical and psychological health, including work-related stress, anxiety, fatigue, and burnout. Well-being can also be viewed through how employees perceive HRM practices as organizational efforts to support their well-being, which positively influences commitment and job satisfaction (X. Wang & Shaheryar, 2020). In practice, employee well-being can be measured through indicators such as job satisfaction, emotional commitment, and low levels of emotional exhaustion (Qi et al., 2021).

In the context of value creation, employee well-being serves as a key mechanism explaining the relationship between HRM practices and organizational performance (Shi et al., 2024). Improving well-being not only benefits individuals but also serves as a source of competitive advantage and organizational sustainability. Good well-being has been shown to enhance employee performance and creativity (Rubio-Andrés et al., 2022), individual productivity (Hanu & Khumalo, 2024), as well as overall organizational performance (Qi et al., 2021). Furthermore, well-being also contributes to reducing employee turnover and absenteeism, which impacts the organization's operational efficiency.

Furthermore, employee well-being influences work attitudes and behaviors, such as increased motivation, engagement, and participation in work (Rubio-Andrés et al., 2022). Well-being employees tend to be able to balance personal interests with organizational goals, thereby creating more harmonious and productive work relationships. Broader impacts indicate that employee well-being generates not only economic value but also social value for the organization. This makes well-being a critical factor in building organizational reputation while enhancing financial performance.

In practice, organizations bear an active responsibility for ensuring employee well-being (Grant et al., 2007). This includes providing fair treatment, equitable rewards, and opportunities for competency development, promotion, job security, and work variety (C. Li et al., 2019). By viewing employees as unique and valuable strategic assets, organizations can create a work environment that supports sustainable well-being. Therefore, employee well-being is not only an ethical goal but also a critical strategy for creating sustainable organizational value.

The Role of Social and Cultural Context in HPWS Implementation

Social and cultural context plays a crucial role in determining the success of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) implementation, as it influences how HRM practices are designed, implemented, and perceived by employees. Organizational culture serves as the primary foundation shaping values, norms, and work behaviors, thereby determining the effectiveness of practices such as selection, employee engagement, and reward systems (Srivastava & Rao, 2025). To be effective, HPWS must align with organizational cultural values such as trust, adaptability, and innovation. Additionally, national culture and institutional factors also influence the strength of the relationship between HPWS and performance, particularly in specific contexts such as a paternalistic culture that affects work relationships (Chang et al., 2018).

The success of HPWS depends heavily on the alignment between culture, HR practices, and institutional conditions, thereby fostering sustainable performance. From the employees' perspective, the implementation of HPWS requires active engagement and an understanding of the practices being implemented, which in turn fosters commitment and positive reciprocity in line with Social Exchange Theory (Arshad et al., 2024; Babic et al., 2019). Additionally, HPWS has the potential to strengthen social relationships, enhance trust, and foster a sense of inclusivity within the organization (Saorín-Iborra & Cámara-Campos, 2025).

However, the effectiveness of HPWS is not universal; therefore, a contingency approach is necessary to adapt to the specific organizational context and socio-economic environment (Woodward et al., 2015). This is particularly important in developing economies facing challenges such as regulatory instability and resource constraints. Thus, the organizational context, including aspects of procedural justice, becomes a key factor in determining the success of HPWS implementation and its impact on performance (Gong et al., 2024).

Leadership and Work Relationships as Enablers of Humanization

The humanization of Human Resource Management (HRM) is determined not only by systems and policies, but also by the quality of interactions between leaders and employees, which influence well-being, motivation, and organizational performance. Leadership and HRM practices are closely interrelated because both aim to influence employee behavior; therefore, they must be understood in an integrated and dynamic manner (dynamic fit) in line with organizational development (Cao et al., 2020). The role of line managers is crucial in bridging the implementation of HRM policies, as they determine how these practices are perceived by employees. In this context, authentic leadership has been shown to strengthen the relationship between High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and employee perceptions, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of their implementation (Ostroff & Bowen, 2016). Furthermore, the success of HRM implementation heavily depends on leaders' positive and well-being-oriented behaviors, as these directly impact employees' emotions, engagement, and well-being (X. Wang & Shaheryar, 2020), ultimately reinforcing a human-centered approach to HRM through supportive and sustainable workplace relationships.

The relationship between leaders and employees has a significant impact on employee motivation, perceptions, and well-being within an organization. Leaders who are able to build strong relationships and empower employees can create work that is more challenging yet also more satisfying, thereby increasing motivation and job satisfaction (Lovelace et al., 2007). From the employees' perspective, empowerment is often viewed as a form of trust from leaders that provides opportunities for growth and skill development. However, on the other hand, empowerment can also be interpreted as a leader's attempt to avoid making difficult decisions. Employees' perceptions of the reasons behind the implementation of HRM practices (attributions) are also a key factor; when these practices are perceived as aimed at improving well-being, they have a positive impact on commitment and job satisfaction (Nishii et al., 2008). Conversely, if it is perceived as a form of exploitation or as being solely focused on improving performance, it will have a negative impact on employee attitudes.

Furthermore, core HRM practices such as recognition, empowerment, information sharing, fair rewards, and competency development play a role in meeting employees' basic psychological needs, boosting motivation, granting autonomy, and expanding skills and knowledge (X. Wang & Shaheryar, 2020). Employee participation in human resource development programs, such as training, leadership development, and mentoring, has also been shown to enhance cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement (Shuck et al., 2014). In a broader context, High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) as a leading HRM practice are closely linked to employee well-being. When employees view HPWS as an organizational effort focused on well-being and performance, this fosters commitment and motivates them to grow and contribute optimally in the workplace.

Employee Empowerment, Participation, and Inclusivity

High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) play a crucial role in fostering employee empowerment, participation, and inclusivity within organizations. These systems are designed to enhance employees' knowledge, skills, motivation, and flexibility through the creation of supportive work structures and processes (Saorín-Iborra & Cámara-Campos, 2025). From this perspective, employees are no longer viewed as objects in Human Resource Management (HRM), but rather as active actors who contribute to the creation of organizational value. Therefore, HPWS serves as a strategic approach that places employees at the center of sustainable organizational development.

Furthermore, HPWS plays a role in enhancing employee engagement and participation by fostering positive work attitudes and behaviors (Lyu et al., 2025). Employees who experience the implementation of HPWS tend to have higher levels of work autonomy and support, thereby fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment to the organization (Arshad et al., 2024; Rubio-Andrés et al., 2022). This increased engagement also impacts collaborative behaviors such as knowledge sharing, information exchange, and brainstorming. Additionally, HPWS provides opportunities for employees to engage in decision-making, skill development, and career advancement, which indirectly enables them to shape and develop their job roles (job crafting) (C. Li et al., 2019). Therefore, organizations need to strengthen their training, selection, and participation policies to ensure that employee empowerment is achieved optimally.

High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) play a crucial role in supporting the integration of diversity management and equity systems within organizations, which ultimately strengthens employee inclusivity and well-being (Saorín-Iborra & Cámara-Campos, 2025). In the context of diversity management, HPWS can boost motivation, recognize individual contributions, and strengthen employee capabilities, thereby creating a more inclusive work environment. The implementation of a diversity-oriented HPWS has also been shown to improve perceptions of inclusion and strengthen interpersonal relationships among team members. When employees feel that the organization provides support and values individual differences, they tend to demonstrate higher levels of engagement. Furthermore, proper implementation of HPWS can drive social change, strengthen the bond between employees and the organization, and build trust through fair practices such as performance evaluations and equitable reward systems.

On the other hand, HPWS also contributes to enhancing creativity, innovation, and employee engagement by creating a supportive work environment (C. Li et al., 2019). Opportunities to develop new skills enable employees to enhance their creativity and generate a wide range of innovative ideas (Lyu et al., 2025). HPWS also fosters a more open and diverse mindset, which is a key factor in organizational innovation. In terms of engagement, HPWS serves as a primary driver by creating a work environment that motivates and values employee contributions. Employees who feel supported by the organization will have greater motivation and capacity to contribute to achieving organizational goals, making employee engagement one of the primary outcomes of HPWS implementation.

Work-Life Balance as a Dimension of Humanizing HRM

Work-life balance is a crucial dimension in the humanizing approach to Human Resource Management (HRM) because it emphasizes that employees are whole individuals with lives beyond

work. This balance is often understood through the work–family relationship, which encompasses two main aspects: work-to-family enrichment (WFE) and work-to-family conflict (WFC). WFE describes how experiences and resources gained at work—such as skills, positive emotions, and recognition—can improve the quality of family life, whereas WFC illustrates how work demands interfere with family roles and reduce well-being (Babic et al., 2019). In this context, the implementation of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) can promote an increase in WFE while reducing WFC, thereby creating a better balance between work and personal life.

As an integrated HRM practice system, HPWS plays a role in enhancing employees' knowledge, skills, motivation, and flexibility, which ultimately influences work–life balance (Saorín-Iborra & Cámara-Campos, 2025). On the one hand, HPWS can improve work-life balance through increased work engagement, as it creates a supportive work environment and accommodates employees' needs (C. Li et al., 2019). This engagement is positively associated with WFE and negatively associated with WFC, particularly when organizations provide resources such as training, work autonomy, and fair compensation (Babic et al., 2019). However, on the other hand, if not managed properly, HPWS can also increase job strain, which in turn has a negative impact on work–life balance, as it increases work–family conflict and reduces the benefits derived from work. This indicates that the relationship between HPWS and work–life balance is complex and influenced by employees' occupational well-being.

Furthermore, work flexibility and family support are key factors in strengthening a humanizing HRM approach. The implementation of work flexibility, such as adaptive work schedules and telecommuting, has been shown to help reduce work-related stress and improve employees' mental well-being, particularly for those with family responsibilities (Saorín-Iborra & Cámara-Campos, 2025). Organizational support for work–life balance also enables employees to manage their personal and professional roles more effectively, thereby positively impacting overall well-being (Hanu & Khumalo, 2024). Thus, the integration of HPWS with flexibility policies and family support is a key strategy in creating a more humane and sustainable work environment.

Practical Implications: Toward Human-Centered HRM

Based on the overall discussion, the implementation of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) must be guided by a human-centered HRM approach, which places employee well-being, experience, and needs at the core of organizational strategy. Practically speaking, organizations must not only design performance-oriented HRM practices but also ensure that these practices are positively translated into employees' work experiences through psychological mechanisms such as psychological empowerment, perceived organizational support, and organizational commitment. This requires organizations to strengthen communication, transparency, and fairness in the implementation of HR policies so that employees perceive them as a form of support, not pressure.

Furthermore, organizations need to balance job demands and job resources, as described in the JD–R model, to avoid the negative effects of HPWS, which acts as a double-edged sword. The provision of resources such as work autonomy, training, managerial support, and a fair reward system must be balanced with effective workload management to prevent stress and job strain. In this context, employee well-being must be positioned as a key indicator of HRM success, as it has proven to be the link between HRM practices and organizational performance, as well as a source of sustainable competitive advantage.

From an implementation perspective, leadership and workplace relationships are key factors in humanizing HRM. Leaders, particularly line managers, need to adopt an authentic, supportive, and employee-wellbeing-oriented leadership style, as they play a direct role in translating HR policies into daily practices. Additionally, organizations must foster an inclusive work culture by integrating values of diversity, equity, and employee participation into the HPWS system. This approach not only enhances engagement and trust but also strengthens social bonds within the organization.

Furthermore, to support human-centered HRM, organizations need to pay special attention to work-life balance through flexible work policies and support for family needs. Flexible working

hours, remote work, and wellness programs are concrete steps that can improve employees' quality of life while maintaining productivity. On the other hand, organizations must also adopt a contingency approach by adapting the implementation of HPWS to the social, cultural, and institutional contexts, ensuring that the policies applied are relevant and effective in various situations.

Overall, these practical implications underscore that the transformation toward human-centered HRM requires integration among systems, leadership, organizational culture, and employee well-being. By placing people at the center of strategy, organizations are not only able to improve performance but also create a sustainable, inclusive, and long-term value-oriented work environment.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review confirms that High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) have evolved from mere tools for organizational efficiency into complex socio-technical systems capable of fostering the creation of humanistic value. By synthesizing a decade of research, this study elucidates the crucial role of psychological mediators—such as empowerment, affective commitment, and well-being—in bridging the “black box” between HR practices and sustainable performance. However, these findings also serve as a warning against purely performance-oriented implementation, as the “double-edged sword” nature of HPWS can trigger work intensification and emotional exhaustion if not balanced with adequate job resources and supportive leadership.

Ultimately, humanizing Strategic HRM requires a fundamental paradigm shift toward an employee-centered model, in which worker well-being is viewed as a strategic core, not merely a byproduct. The integration of the JD-R model and Social Exchange Theory provides a robust framework for organizations to design work environments that promote autonomy, inclusivity, and work-life balance. Future research needs to further explore the impact of digital transformation and diverse cultural contexts on this humanistic HPWS configuration to ensure that efforts to achieve high performance remain aligned with the intrinsic value and dignity of the workforce.

REFERENCES

- Arefin, M. S., Alam, M. S., Islam, M. R., & Rahaman, M. (2019). High-performance work systems and job engagement: The mediating role of psychological empowerment. *Cogent Business & Management*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2019.1664204>
- Arshad, B., Hassan, H., & Azam, A. (2024). The impact of employees' experience of high-performance work systems on innovative behavior in professional service firms. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1324474>
- Babic, A., Stinglhamber, F., & Hansez, I. (2019). High-Performance Work Systems and Well-Being: Mediating Role of Work-to-Family Interface. *Psychologica Belgica*, 59(1), 301–320. <https://doi.org/10.5334/pb.473>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: state of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2018). Multiple levels in job demands-resources theory: implications for employee well-being and performance. E. Diener, S. Oishi, & L. Tay (Eds.), *Handbook of Well-Being* Noba Scholar.
- Bakker, A. B., & Oerlemans, W. (2011). Subjective well-being in organizations. *Oxf. Handb. Posit. Organ. Scholarsh*, 49, 178–189. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.1145.4723>
- Bargavi, N., Roy, A., Kumar, V., Shrivastava, G., Varma, R. A., & Shrivastava, A. (2023). An Empirical Study On Employee Turnover And Job Satisfaction In Human Resource Management Practices. *E3S Web of Conferences*, 399, 07001. <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202339907001>
- Braaten, A., & Huta, V. (2016). A preliminary exploration of how worldviews relate to eudaimonic and hedonic orientations. *International Journal of Special Existential Psychology & Psychotherapy*, 7(2), 1–11.

- Cao, M., Zhao, Y., & Zhao, S. (2020). Facilitating the Implementation Process of High-Performance Work Systems: The Role of Authentic Leadership. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.550711>
- Chamberlin, M., Newton, D. W., & LePine, J. A. (2018). A meta-analysis of empowerment and voice as transmitters of high-performance managerial practices to job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 39(10), 1296–1313. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.v39.10>
- Chang, P.-C., Wu, T., & Liu, C.-L. (2018). Do High-Performance Work Systems Really Satisfy Employees? Evidence from China. *Sustainability*, 10(10), 3360. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10103360>
- Chung, S. W. (2016). Industrial relations (IR) changes in China: a foreign employer's perspective. *Employee Relations*, 38(6), 826–840. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-06-2015-0120>
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499–512. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.499>
- Dorta-Afonso, D., González-de-la-Rosa, M., García-Rodríguez, F., & Romero-Domínguez, L. (2021). Effects of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) on Hospitality Employees' Outcomes through Their Organizational Commitment, Motivation, and Job Satisfaction. *Sustainability*, 13(6), 3226. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13063226>
- Eniola, A. A., Kenzhin, Z., Chimwai, L., Kairliyeva, G., Adeyeye, M. M., Chidoko, C., & Mutsikiwa, M. (2023). HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEM ON SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATIONS PERFORMANCE IN SMES. *Business: Theory and Practice*, 24(2), 447–458. <https://doi.org/10.3846/btp.2023.17342>
- Gong, Z., Ren, M., Sun, Y., Zhang, Z., Zhou, W., & Chen, X. (2024). How Does Procedural Justice Affect Job Crafting? The Role of Organizational Psychological Ownership and High-Performance Work Systems. *Behavioral Sciences*, 15(1), 4. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15010004>
- Gould-Williams, J., & Davies, F. (2005). Using social exchange theory to predict the effects of hrm practice on employee outcomes. *Public Management Review*, 7(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1471903042000339392>
- Grant, A. M., Christianson, M. K., & Price, R. H. (2007). Happiness, Health, or Relationships? Managerial Practices and Employee Well-Being Tradeoffs. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 21(3), 51–63. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2007.26421238>
- Guthrie, J. P., Flood, P. C., Liu, W., & MacCurtain, S. (2009). High performance work systems in Ireland: human resource and organizational outcomes. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20(1), 112–125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190802528433>
- Hanu, C., & Khumalo, N. (2024). From high-performance work systems and resilience to employee well-being during crises: exploring the moderating role of employee ambidexterity. *Current Psychology*, 43(11), 9955–9968. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-05138-3>
- Jackson, S. E., Schuler, R. S., & Jiang, K. (2014). An Aspirational Framework for Strategic Human Resource Management. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1), 1–56. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520.2014.872335>
- Jeong, D. Y., & Choi, M. (2016). The impact of high-performance work systems on firm performance: The moderating effects of the human resource function's influence. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 22(3), 328–348. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2015.38>
- Jiang, K., Takeuchi, R., & Lepak, D. P. (2013). Where do We Go From Here? New Perspectives on the Black Box in Strategic Human Resource Management Research. *Journal of Management Studies*, 50(8), 1448–1480. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12057>
- Judijanto, L., Soesanto, D. R., & Pahrijal, R. (2025). Employee Well-Being Research Trends in HR Management. *West Science Interdisciplinary Studies*, 3(03), 530–541. <https://doi.org/10.58812/wsis.v3i03.1781>
- Kidwell, R. E., & Lunde, M. B. (2016). Human resource innovation or another iron cage?: The ethical line(s) between high performance work systems and abusive supervision. *Understanding the High Performance Workplace: The Line Between Motivation and Abuse*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315755144-14>
- Kim, S., & Wright, P. M. (2011). Putting Strategic Human Resource Management in Context: A Contextualized Model of High Commitment Work Systems and Its Implications in China.

- Management and Organization Review, 7(1), 153–174. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1740-8784.2010.00185.x>
- Kundu, S. C., & Gahlawat, N. (2016). High performance work systems and employees' intention to leave. *Management Research Review*, 39(12), 1587–1615. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-04-2015-0088>
- Li, C., Naz, S., Khan, M. A. S., Kusi, B., & Murad, M. (2019). An empirical investigation on the relationship between a high-performance work system and employee performance: measuring a mediation model through partial least squares–structural equation modeling. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, Volume 12, 397–416. <https://doi.org/10.2147/PRBM.S195533>
- Li, H.-Y., & Yu, G.-L. (2017). A Multilevel Examination of High-Performance Work Systems and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: A Social Exchange Theory Perspective. *EURASIA Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 13(8). <https://doi.org/10.12973/eurasia.2017.01032a>
- Lovelace, K. J., Manz, C. C., & Alves, J. C. (2007). Work stress and leadership development: The role of self-leadership, shared leadership, physical fitness and flow in managing demands and increasing job control. *Human Resource Management Review*, 17(4), 374–387. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2007.08.001>
- Lyu, Z., Zhang, C., & Jin, X. (2025). Organizational Work System as the Predictor of Creative Performance: A New Approach to the Learning Method System of Comprehensive Systems and Expansion of Research Field. *Systems*, 13(4), 298. <https://doi.org/10.3390/systems13040298>
- Mahdy, F. M., & Alhadi, A. Y. (2021). The effect of high-performance work systems according to AMO model on HRM performance outcomes: An analytical study on the banking sector. *Management Science Letters*, 11, 1755–1764. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2021.2.007>
- Meier, S., & Oberholzer-Gee, F. (2024). Competing on Employee Centricity How Organizations Achieve Competitive Advantage by Focusing on Employees. *CALL FOR PAPERS Special Issue of California Management Review Competing*.
- Nishii, L. H., Lepak, D. P., & Schneider, B. (2008). Employee attributions of the “why” of HR practices: their effects on employee attitudes and behaviors, and customer satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology*, 61(3), 503–545. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2008.00121.x>
- Ostroff, C., & Bowen, D. E. (2016). Reflections on the 2014 Decade Award: Is There Strength in the Construct of HR System Strength? *Academy of Management Review*, 41(2), 196–214. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2015.0323>
- Pahos, N., & Galanaki, E. (2022). Performance Effects of High Performance Work Systems on Committed, Long-Term Employees: A Multilevel Study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.825397>
- Pandey, A., Maheshwari, M., & Malik, N. (2025). A systematic literature review on employee well-being: Mapping multi-level antecedents, moderators, mediators and future research agenda. *Acta Psychologica*, 258, 105080. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.105080>
- Para-González, L., Jiménez-Jiménez, D., & Martínez-Lorente, Á. R. (2019). Do SHRM and HPWS shape employees' affective commitment and empowerment? *Evidence-Based HRM: A Global Forum for Empirical Scholarship*, 7(3), 300–324. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBHRM-01-2019-0004>
- Qi, W., Enhua, H., Jiandong, S., & Hongmei, S. (2021). Double-Edged Sword Effect of High-Performance Work System on Employee Well-Being–Moderating Effect of Union Practice. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.619345>
- Ren, S., Cooke, F. L., Stahl, G. K., Fan, D., & Timming, A. R. (2023). Advancing the sustainability agenda through strategic human resource management: Insights and suggestions for future research. *Human Resource Management*, 62(3), 251–265. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22169>
- Rosa, A. (2025). The impact of diversity and equality management systems on organisational dynamics: an Exploratory Analysis in small and medium enterprises. *PuntOorg International Journal*, 10(1), 27–54. <https://doi.org/10.19245/25.05.of.21.01.24>

- Rubio-Andrés, M., Ramos-González, M. del M., Gutiérrez-Broncano, S., & Sastre-Castillo, M. Á. (2022). Creating Financial and Social Value by Improving Employee Well-Being: A PLS-SEM Application in SMEs. *Mathematics*, 10(23), 4456. <https://doi.org/10.3390/math10234456>
- Saorín-Iborra, M. C., & Cámara-Campos, B. (2025). The mediating or moderating effect of high-performance work systems on the relationship between gender diversity, generational diversity and employee engagement. *European Journal of Management and Business Economics*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJMBE-05-2023-0144>
- Shaw, J. D., Dineen, B. R., Fang, R., & Vellella, R. F. (2009). Employee-Organization Exchange Relationships, HRM Practices, and Quit Rates of Good and Poor Performers. *Academy of Management Journal*, 52(5), 1016–1033. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.44635525>
- Shi, L., Van Veldhoven, M., Kooij, D., Van De Voorde, K., & Karanika-Murray, M. (2024). High-performance work systems and individual performance: a longitudinal study of the differential roles of happiness and health well-being. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1261564>
- Shuck, B., Twyford, D., Reio, T. G., & Shuck, A. (2014). Human Resource Development Practices and Employee Engagement: Examining the Connection With Employee Turnover Intentions. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 25(2), 239–270. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21190>
- Srivastava, S., & Rao, M. K. (2025). The influence of organizational culture on organizational resilience and employee performance through the mediation of high-performance work systems. *Discover Psychology*, 5(1), 170. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44202-025-00496-4>
- Wang, C.-J., & Jiang, Z.-R. (2024). Exploring High-Performance Work Systems and Sustainable Development in the Hospitality Industry. *Sustainability*, 16(22), 10019. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su162210019>
- Wang, C.-J., & Tsai, C.-H. (2026). Employee-Centric HPWSs: Building Sustainable Hospitality Through Social Exchange, Empowerment, LMX, and TMX. *Sustainability*, 18(3), 1623. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su18031623>
- Wang, X., & Shaheryar. (2020). Work-Related Flow: The Development of a Theoretical Framework Based on the High Involvement HRM Practices With Mediating Role of Affective Commitment and Moderating Effect of Emotional Intelligence. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.564444>
- Wood, S. (2025). HRM and Organisational Performance. In *Human Resource Management* (pp. 82–109). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781032625560-5>
- Woodward, I. C., Vongswasdi, P., & More, E. A. (2015). Generational Diversity at Work: A Systematic Review of the Research. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2630650>
- Yun, Z., Zhou, P., & Zhang, B. (2022). High-Performance Work Systems, Thriving at Work, and Job Burnout among Nurses in Chinese Public Hospitals: The Role of Resilience at Work. *Healthcare*, 10(10), 1935. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare10101935>
- Zhang, B., Liu, L., Cooke, F. L., Zhou, P., Sun, X., Zhang, S., Sun, B., & Bai, Y. (2022). The Boundary Conditions of High-Performance Work Systems–Organizational Citizenship Behavior Relationship: A Multiple-Perspective Exploration in the Chinese Context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.743457>
- Zhang, J., Akhtar, M. N., Bal, P. M., Zhang, Y., & Talat, U. (2018). How Do High-Performance Work Systems Affect Individual Outcomes: A Multilevel Perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00586>
- Zhu, C., Liu, A., & Chen, G. (2018). High performance work systems and corporate performance: the influence of entrepreneurial orientation and organizational learning. *Frontiers of Business Research in China*, 12(1), 4. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s11782-018-0025-y>
- Zhu, F., Gao, Y., & Chen, X. (2022). Tough Love: Impact of High-Performance Work System on Employee Innovation Behavior. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.919993>