

CALL FOR PAPERS
SPECIAL ISSUE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT JOURNAL

Advancing robust scale development for human resource management research

Guest Editors

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Objective and overview

The aim of this special issue is to advance research on the development of robust measurement scales within the HRM field that better reflect contemporary contexts and emerging nature of work, HR policies and systems

In recent years, the field of HRM has experienced significant transformation driven by shifts in work environments, workforce expectations, and the integration of new emerging technologies (Chowdhury et al., 2023; 2024). These changes have generated extensive discourse both in academia and industry about their implications for the future of HRM. For instance, the increasing penetration of emerging technologies such as AI in talent recruitment, training and development, and performance management has introduced new phenomena concerning innovations in key HRM functions. However, much of the discourse remains speculative and conceptual (Brown et al., 2024; Budhwar, et al., 2023) due to a lack of robust measurement scales to empirically test speculations, bridge the gap between theory and practice and accumulate empirical knowledge about new HR practices.

Additionally, original understanding of constructs that have shaped the HRM role since the early 2000s may no longer be as relevant. For example, John Elkington, the pioneer of the 'Triple Bottom Line' (TBL) concept, which forms the foundation of sustainability by emphasizing the need for businesses to balance social, environmental, and economic performance, has called for a 'recall' of the TBL. Elkington argues that while the TBL framework has been widely adopted, it has often been misinterpreted or diluted by organizations, leading to superficial commitments rather than the systemic change it was intended to inspire (Elkington, 2018). His call for a recall was meant to spark a re-evaluation of the concept, encouraging businesses to refocus on achieving genuine, long-term sustainability across all three dimensions.

The HRM field is, unfortunately, known for borrowing scales from other domains, often adopting them without sufficient validation in the HRM context. At the infancy stage of the HRM field, this was perhaps acceptable. Measurement items developed in non-HRM domains may not capture the nuances and complexities inherent in HRM theory and practice. For instance, scales designed to measure technology adoption in general business contexts may not fully account for the human-centric elements of required change, including the role of leadership, emotional intelligence and organizational support or how digital tools affect employee motivation, engagement, and development. The misalignment presents significant challenges for HRM researchers and practitioners, as adapted scales may overlook critical dimensions specific to human resource practices, such as organizational culture, employee behaviour, or interpersonal dynamics within a workforce (Price, 1986, Hinkin, 1995). As a result, using these adapted scales can lead to incomplete or inaccurate assessments, limiting the applicability of research findings in HRM settings. The reliance on borrowed scales then

highlights the critical need for robust, HRM-specific scale development to ensure accurate, reliable, and meaningful empirical insights that can advance both theory and practice.

Lately, there has been emerging work to develop HRM specific scales to capture new phenomena in the field (e.g., Common good HRM reported in Pham et al., 2023; algorithm management reported in Parent-Rochelau et al., 2024). However, perhaps largely due to the insufficient attention to and emphasis on systematic scale development processes, they do not consistently incorporate modern, rigorous methods to assess the reliability and validity of the constructs and their corresponding items (Colquitt et al., 2019). While the primary goal of such studies may not always be the creation of psychometrically robust measures, the use of dated or inadequately tested scales can significantly undermine the credibility of the findings. The absence of comprehensively testing for validity (e.g., construct, convergent, and discriminant validity) and reliability (e.g., internal consistency, test-retest reliability, invariance, criterion validity etc.) increases the risk of measurement errors, which can distort the interpretation of relationships between key variables (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021). Inadequately developed scales can further lead to misrepresentations of constructs, especially when the complexities of modern HRM contexts—such as the integration of AI, remote work dynamics, or employee experience—are not fully captured.

In the approaches outlined above (borrowing/adapting scales from other domains and developing scales that do not comprehensively follow the established and new guidelines) that dominate empirical HRM research have taken so far, there is a gap between theoretical foundation and empirical tools used, weakening the overall rigor of HRM research and potentially leading to superficial or incomplete insights. A robust scale development in the HRM field will help to clarify HRM concepts, which are often complex and elusive due to their behavioural or cognitive orientation; advance theoretical development grounded in empirical evidence; enable cumulative knowledge for comparative understanding; and improve research rigor to build trust and relevance for practice (Hinkin, 1995, Colquitt et al., 2019).

This special issue is motivated to advance robust development of measurement instruments for HRM-specific constructs, enabling both academics and practitioners to assess, understand, and enhance HRM processes and practices. We invite researchers to submit papers that develop scales for novel constructs in HRM, using rigorous quantitative and/or qualitative methods, and that are applicable across various cultural and organizational contexts. Contributions from diverse industries, regions, and types of organizations (e.g., SMEs, large corporations, public institutions) are highly encouraged.

Expected contributions

This special issue encourages empirical contributions grounded in theory that either develop scales for novel concepts, refine existing measurement scales, developing scales for concepts which are deeply rooted in specific socio-cultural and regional contexts, or developing scales to operationalize well-established and theoretically sound HRM concepts.

Novel concepts and their measurement scales in HRM

Traditional HRM constructs and related measures, while valuable, often do not fully capture emerging dynamics such as employee well-being in remote work contexts, digital competencies, hybrid leadership styles, or the evolving definitions of diversity and inclusion. To advance HRM theory and practice, there is a critical need to develop and validate new scales that reflect these new conceptualizations, where literature is continuously evolving.

For instance, as organizations increasingly rely on technology, there is a growing need to measure and understand how HRM practices are adapting to these changes, particularly in specific contexts such as industry sectors, organizational sizes, or geographic regions, and with a focus on units of analysis like individual employees, teams, or organizational systems

(Budhwar et al., 2023). Without the creation of robust, validated scales tailored to these emerging constructs, the literature risks becoming dated, unable to address the continuously evolving realities of the modern workforce. Example topics include, though not limited to:

- Employee experience in digital work
- AI-enabled HRM
- Hybrid leadership styles
- Augmented recruitment and hiring practices
- Working with robots and automatons

Refining existing scales

In HRM, the integration of concepts from adjacent fields like organizational behaviour, psychology, sustainable operations, and technology management has enriched research, yet the challenge remains to ensure that these adapted constructs reflect the specific nuances of HR practices (c.f. Ren et al., 2018). By doing so, researchers can establish both the novelty of their contributions and the robustness of the tools they develop, ensuring they resonate with the evolving landscape of HRM. Below are examples of indicative themes, where existing scales need to be adapted and further developed through robust procedures.

- Sustainable HRM
- Green HRM
- Interface of employee and AI technologies
- Employee experience / engagement in digital environments and hybrid working

Well-established and/or niche HRM concepts, where a suitable scale is missing

Some of the well-established concepts in HRM often lack dedicated scales and therefore tend to borrow measures from other similar, yet distinct, concepts. While this may seem like a practical solution, it can introduce several risks, particularly because HRM constructs are highly contextual and nuanced. Relying on scales developed for other concepts can lead to misalignment between the measurement tool and the actual construct being studied, potentially undermining the validity, accuracy, and relevance of the findings. Similarly, there are also concepts that are niche and region-specific, such as ‘*Jugaad*’ and ‘*Wasta*’, which represent unique cultural or contextual phenomena but lack widely recognized or validated measurement scales in HRM research (e.g., Prabhu & Jain, 2015; Harbi et al., 2017). Developing and validating scales for such constructs will not only enrich HRM research by bringing cultural nuances into focus but also ensure that global HR practices can be tailored to meet the unique needs of different regions and work environments. Ignoring them in HRM research risks oversimplifying the ways in which employees innovate, leaders are chosen, or careers progress in these regions.

Example topics include and not limited to:

- Quiet quitting, Moonlighting and Presenteeism
- Jugaad
- Wasta
- Ubuntu

Additionally, given the nature of this special issue, there are themes related to **empirical uniqueness**. Specifically, as this special issue is committed to empirical research that develops measurement scales to advance HRM scholarship, we welcome various methodological choices that align psychometric properties of the measure and design properties (e.g., sampling) of the procedure with the HRM-specific phenomenon concerned.

We also encourage and welcome innovations in scale development processes and techniques that are not only robust and rigorous but also contribute new and significant methodological advancements to the field of HRM. These innovations should aim to enhance the accuracy, reliability, and validity of measurement tools, while offering fresh insights into how complex HRM constructs can be more effectively assessed.

Specifically, we expect submissions to provide transparency and justification on the following key features:

- Methodological innovations adopted
- Statistical advances in the development of a new measure
- Decisions related to procedure for the selection and development of measures
- Comparison of alternative procedure and techniques for assessing reliability and validity
- Compliance of research ethics involved

Submission process

Month	Activity
November 2024	Special issue announced
30 April 2025	Extended abstract submission
01 June 2025	Decision of extended abstracts that pass this stage are invited to submit full papers
August 2025	Paper development workshops for extended abstracts invited for full paper submission
30 November 2025	Full paper submission
31 December 2027	Special issue completion

Extended abstract submission

Deadline 30 April 2025

Email to: s.chowdhury@tbs-education.fr

We invite authors to submit extended abstracts (maximum of 10 pages, including references, figures, and appendices) that address the rationale for development of new scale or related methodologies in the HRM field. The submission should critically engage with the existing HRM literature and demonstrate a clear research gap, leading to the justification for the new scale or methodological innovation. Submissions of the extended abstracts should cover the following elements in a structured and cohesive manner:

- A. Knowledge gap
- B. Objective and research significance of the scale being developed, or the new methodological approach proposed
- C. Scale development process and methodology
- D. Theoretical and practical contributions

Formatting guidelines: Font size 12, and double spaced.

Extended abstracts that successfully pass this stage will be invited for full paper submissions. However, an invitation does not guarantee acceptance. The submitted full papers will undergo HRMJ's rigorous peer review process, which includes evaluation first by the guest editorial team and then three independent reviewers.

Full Paper submission

Full papers should be submitted between 1 October- 30 November 2025 at <https://wiley.atyponrex.com/journal/HRMJ> . Manuscripts should follow the Human Resource Management Journal submission guidelines and formatting requirements, which can be found [here](#). Please select the ‘Special Issue Article’ as the article type on submission. On the Additional Information page during submission, select ‘Yes, this is for a Special Issue’ and select “*HRM Scale*” from the dropdown list. Please note that papers may not be submitted until 1st October 2025.

Paper Development Workshops

We will host paper development workshops for authors whose extended abstracts are invited for full paper submission. Details of the workshops will be released after April 2025. The aim of these workshops is to provide guidance and support, helping authors refine and strengthen their papers to align with the scope of the SI before full submission. However, participation in the workshops does not replace HRMJ’s formal peer review process.

Enquiries related to the call for papers should be directed to Soumyadeb Chowdhury (s.chowdhury@tbs-education.fr).

Enquiries related to the online submission process should be directed to: HRMJ.journal@wiley.com

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