<fresh page><cn>21.<en><ct>Strategic human resource management and organizational commitment

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Strategic human resource management (HRM) has attracted the attention of researchers and practitioners for three decades (Jackson et al., 2014). Wright and McMahan (1992) defined strategic HRM as a research field focusing on ‘the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable an organization to achieve its goals’ (p. 298). This definition distinguishes strategic HRM research, which is a relatively young research field, from traditional HRM research in two primary respects (Wright and Boswell, 2002). First, strategic HRM focuses on the influence of bundles or systems of HRM practices rather than that of single HRM practices on variables of interest. This systems perspective suggests that multiple practices within an organization work together to affect employee and organizational outcomes and, thus, should be studied as a system rather than as isolated practices (Delery, 1998; Jiang et al., 2012a; Lepak et al., 2006). Second, strategic HRM research examines HRM practices or systems at the organizational level of analysis (for example, firm, business units, and organizations), rather than at the individual level. This macro approach emphasizes the differences in the use of HRM practices between organizations, as well as the impact on outcomes associated with those differences. In line with the two features of strategic HRM research, scholars have conducted numerous studies to examine the influence of organizational-level HRM systems on important outcomes, including organizational commitment, at both the individual and organizational levels (Combs et al., 2006; Jiang et al., 2012b; Rabl et al., 2014; Subramony, 2009).

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a qualitative review of empirical research on the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment. In accordance with the definition of strategic HRM, this chapter focuses on studies examining organizational-level HRM systems as an antecedent of organizational commitment. Readers who are interested in understanding the influence of individual HRM practices on organizational commitment may refer to other review articles (e.g., Kooij et al., 2010). Moreover, this chapter is not intended to provide a comprehensive review including all studies related to the HRM systems‒organizational commitment relationship. Instead, it is intended as a primer for those interested in learning what we know and do not know about this relationship.

In the following, I first introduce the primary theoretical perspectives for the linkage between HRM systems and organizational commitment. Then I review empirical studies examining the influence of HRM systems on both individual-level and aggregate organizational commitment, as well as those examining the moderators of the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment. Finally, I shift my attention to discuss practical implications regarding how to utilize HRM systems to build organizational commitment as well as future direction of research on the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment.

<a>THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE HRM SYSTEMS‒ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT RELATIONSHIP

Organizational commitment has been examined as one of the most important employee outcomes in the field of organizational behavior and human resource management. Even though researchers may still have different opinions about the concept and structure of this construct (for example, see Chapters 3 and 4 in this volume), organizational commitment has commonly been studied as a multidimensional construct in the literature of strategic HRM, including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Meyer et al., 1993). In particular, as shown later in this chapter, affective commitment, which reflects an emotional attachment to organizations, has been most frequently studied in the literature on strategic HRM. Before I provide more details about the empirical findings of the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment, I first introduce several theoretical perspectives that can help to explain this relationship.

**<b>Behavioral Perspective**

The behavioral perspective is one of the primary theoretical perspectives that can explain how HRM systems influence organizational outcomes (Schuler and Jackson, 1987). This perspective suggests that organizations do not perform by themselves and, instead, use HRM systems as a means to manage and control desired attitudes and behaviors of employees that can further lead to positive organizational outcomes. Affective commitment can serve as a desired attitudinal outcome due to its positive relationships with important behavioral outcomes (Meyer et al., 2002). In order to elicit and sustain employees’ positive behaviors, organizations can design HRM systems to enhance employees’ commitment to organizations.

**<b>Ability‒Motivation‒Opportunity (AMO) Model**

As a variant of the behavioral perspective, the AMO model states that employee performance is a function of three elements: abilities, motivation, and opportunities to perform the work (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Gerhart, 2007). Accordingly, HRM practices can be categorized into three components that are intended to enhance the three elements of employee performance, including skill-enhancing, motivation-enhancing, and opportunity-enhancing practices (Gardner et al., 2011; Jiang et al., 2012a; Jiang et al., 2012b; Lepak et al., 2006). As affective commitment reflects employees’ emotional attachment to their organizations, it has often been considered as a representative construct of employee motivation that can be affected by HRM systems.

**<b>Employee‒Organization Relationship**

Another theoretical framework that can explain the influence of HRM systems on employee outcomes is the employee‒organization relationship (Tsui et al., 1995; Tsui et al., 1997). This framework suggests that HRM systems reflect organizations’ investments in their employees and expectations of their employees and, thus, can be divided into two categories: practices focusing on inducements and investments towards employees (for example, training, job security, and benefits), and those focusing on contributions from employees (for example, performance appraisal and performance-based compensation). Based on these two dimensions, organizations may establish four different types of exchange relationships with employees ‒ overinvestment, mutual investment, quasi-spot-contract, and underinvestment (Tsui et al., 1997) ‒ which may determine how likely it is that employees may commit themselves to their organizations.

**<b>Organizational Climate Perspective**

Researchers have also adopted an organizational climate perspective to explain the relationship between HRM systems and performance outcomes. This perspective suggests that HRM systems can communicate messages to employees to guide their attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). A strong HRM system can, therefore, lead to a shared climate among employees about what attitudes and behaviors are expected and rewarded in organizations; for example, climate for service (Chuang and Liao, 2010; Jiang et al., 2015), climate for safety (Zacharatos et al., 2005), justice climate (Walumbwa et al., 2010), and concern for employees climate (Takeuchi et al., 2009). These climates can further affect employees’ work attitudes and behaviors.

**<b>Social Exchange Theory**

In addition to the theoretical perspectives that explain the general influence of HRM systems on employee outcomes, two other theoretical perspectives have been used to specifically explain why HRM systems have an impact on organizational commitment: social exchange theory and self-determination theory. Social exchange theory is based on Gouldner’s (1960) norm of reciprocity and Blau’s (1964) work on social exchange relationships, and suggests that individuals who receive benefits from one party tend to respond in kind. Applying this logic to strategic HRM research, HRM systems intended to enhance employees’ benefits can be considered as the organizations’ investment in employees; in order to maintain the exchange relationship, employees may reciprocate by holding positive attitudes towards organizations such as affective commitment (Messersmith et al., 2011).

**<b>Self-Determination Theory**

Self-determination theory focuses on three psychological needs of individuals: the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci and Ryan, 1985). The factors that can satisfy the three needs can provide intrinsic motivation to employees and lead them to have positive attitudes toward work and organizations. More specifically, researchers have suggested that satisfaction of the three psychological needs is related to the psychological processes that drive affective commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). For example, HRM systems may enhance affective commitment by providing employees with autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Gardner et al., 2011).

<a>EMPIRICAL FINDINGS OF THE HRM SYSTEMS‒ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT RELATIONSHIP

Strategic HRM scholars have examined the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment at different levels of analyses. I searched for empirical studies published by the year 2015 by using Google Scholar with different combinations of the keywords of HRM systems (for example, ‘high-performance’ and ‘high-commitment’) and the keywords of organizational commitment (for example, ‘organizational commitment’, ‘affective commitment’, ‘continuance commitment’, and ‘normative commitment’). As strategic HRM research focuses on the use and the impact of HRM systems at the unit level according to Wright and Boswell’s (2002) framework, I included all studies examining HRM systems at the unit level no matter whether commitment was examined at the unit level or the individual level. As researchers have become increasingly interested in understanding employees’ perceptions of HRM systems in the past few years, I also included some examples of studies examining the HRM systems and organizational commitment relationship purely at the individual level. As shown in Table 21.1, I categorize the studies into unit-level analysis, cross-level analysis, and individual-level analysis.

<Insert Table 21.1 about here>

Most of those studies examined the influence on organizational commitment of a specific type of HRM systems, which is called high-performance work systems (HPWSs). HPWSs refer to a bundle of HRM practices that ‘can improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a firm’s current and potential employees, increase their motivation, reduce shirking, and enhance retention of quality employees while encouraging non-performers to leave the firm’ (Huselid, 1995, p. 635). Typical HRM practices included in HPWSs are comprehensive recruitment, rigorous selection, extensive training, developmental performance management, performance-based compensative, extensive benefits, internal promotion and career development, job security, flexible job design, work teams, employee involvement, and information-sharing (Lepak et al., 2006; Posthuma et al., 2013). Researchers have also labeled the same type of HRM systems as high-commitment, high-involvement, and high-investment HRM systems. Even though those labels are expected to reflect different objectives of HRM systems, Posthuma et al. (2013) found significant overlap among practices included in HRM systems with different names. Also, I found that some authors provided no specific name for the HRM systems examined in their studies, but the practices of those systems were similar to those included in HPWSs.

**<b>Unit-Level Analysis**

I identified ten articles examining the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment at the unit level of analysis. In general, those studies found a significantly positive relationship between the two variables. Most of these studies examined affective commitment as a mediator of the influence of HRM systems on other outcomes (for example, collective organizational citizenship behavior, task performance, turnover, and unit performance). For example, based on a sample of 119 service departments, Messersmith et al. (2011) found that HPWSs first affected employee attitudes as represented by affective commitment which further led to organizational citizenship behaviors and department performance. Similarly, with a sample of 50 autonomous business units, Wright et al. (2003) found that affective commitment mediated the influence of HRM systems on operational performance (for example, quality and productivity), which was further related to financial performance (for example, expenses and profits). Those findings were consistent with the behavioral perspective that considers employees’ attitudes and behaviors as mediating mechanisms of the relationship between HRM systems and more distal performance outcomes. Among the few studies that considered affective commitment as a unit-level outcome, Veld et al. (2010) found that climate for quality (emphasis on providing good-quality care) partially mediates the relationship between HRM systems and affective commitment in healthcare organizations.

Differently from most studies that focused exclusively on affective commitment, Gong et al. (2009) provided one of the first investigations on the influence of HRM systems on both affective and continuance commitment. Consistent with the employee‒organization relationship framework, those scholars divided HRM systems into two subsystems, with maintenance-oriented HRM practices focusing on employee protection, and equality and performance-oriented HRM practices focusing on employee motivation and empowerment. They found that performance-oriented HRM practices were significantly related only to affective commitment, but not to continuance commitment; and in contrast, maintenance-oriented HRM practices were positively associated only with continuance commitment, but not affective commitment. Furthermore, they found that affective commitment was the only commitment that was positively related to firm performance. Gong et al.’s (2009) study suggests that the components of HRM systems may have differential effects on different types of commitment. Along these lines, Gardner et al. (2011) drew upon the AMO model and self-determination theory to examine the influence of skill-enhancing, motivation-enhancing, and empowerment-enhancing HRM practices on collective affective commitment and turnover, and found that collective affective commitment mediated the influence of only motivation-enhancing and empowerment-enhancing HRM practices but not that of skill-enhancing HRM practices on turnover. Gardner et al. (2011) further suggested that the motivation and empowerment components may rely more on psychological processes, but the skill component may rely on labor market processes and, thus, have different effects on affective commitment.

**<b>Cross-Level Analysis**

With the development of multilevel theory and methodology, strategic HRM scholars have also started to examine the cross-level influence of HRM systems on organizational commitment. All of the six studies I found focused on affective commitment and most of the studies treated commitment as a dependent variable and explored the mediating process through which HRM systems can be related to affective commitment. Focusing on unit-level mediators, Takeuchi et al.’s (2009) study was among the first to integrate micro and macro views of HRM to understand the underlying process of the influence of HRM systems on individual work attitudes. Takeuchi et al. (2009) found that a concern-for-employees climate serves as an important mediator that translates the cross-level influence of HPWSs on affective commitment. Their findings indicate that HRM practices may not directly affect individual attitudes; instead, a concern-for-employees climate may help employees to interpret HRM practices and, thus, play an important role in eliciting employees’ affective commitment.

Researchers have also examined individual-level mediators of the cross-level relationship between HRM systems and affective commitment. For example, Wu and Chaturvedi (2009) examined the role of procedural justice in the relationship between HPWSs and affective commitment and found that HPWSs can enhance individual employees’ perceived fairness of the means used to make decisions (that is, procedural justice), which may further make employees more likely to reciprocate with high affective commitment. As another example, Bal et al. (2013) examined the mediating role of psychological contract, which refers to employees’ perceptions about the nature of their relationship with their organizations (Rousseau, 1995: see Chapter 9 in this volume), and found that developmental HRM practices, including training, internal promotion, job enrichment, lateral job movement, and second career, can be related to affective commitment by reducing the transactional contract and enhancing the relational contract. In a recent study, Van De Voorde and Beijer (2015) identified another mediator, HR attributions. They followed Nishii et al.’s (2008) work to argue that employees have two types of attributions for the use of HRM systems in organizations, with one attributing HRM practices to enhancing employees’ well-being and the other attributing HRM practices to maximizing employee performance. They found that even though the use of HPWSs is positively related to both well-being attribution and performance attribution, only well-being attribution mediates the influence of HRM systems on affective commitment. In general, these studies suggest that other psychological factors, reviewed in other chapters of this book (for example, Chapter 25 on organizational justice, Chapter 23 on empowerment, and Chapter 24 on perceived organizational support), may help to explain how HRM systems can influence affective commitment.

Two other studies also examined affective commitment as an individual-level mediator that translates the influence of HRM systems on consequence variables. Chang and Chen (2011) found that affective commitment mediates the positive influence of HPWSs on job performance. Kehoe and Wright (2013) also found a role of affective commitment in mediating the influence of HPWSs on intention to remain and organizational citizenship behaviors, but not on absenteeism. These findings suggest that affective commitment is an intermediate variable that links HRM systems and more distal behavioral outcomes, that are reviewed in other chapters of this book (for example, Chapter 14 on retention and attendance, Chapter 15 on in-role and extra-role performance, and Chapter 16 on counterproductive work behavior).

**<b>Individual-Level Analysis**

Even though HRM systems have traditionally been measured by asking managers to report the use of HRM practices at the unit level (for example, the proportion of the workforce covered by an HR practice), some scholars have recently started to emphasize the importance of employees’ perceptions of HRM systems. For example, Nishii and Wright (2008) argue that the intended HRM practices are different from what are implemented in organizations, which are also different from what are perceived by employees. To support this argument, Liao et al. (2009) found weak relationships between manager-perceived HRM practices and employee-perceived HRM practices, and suggest that it is important to examine HRM systems from both employees’ and managers’ perspectives. In particular, when examining the influence of HRM systems on individual outcomes, researchers need to consider how employees perceive and interpret HRM systems because it is arguably employees’ perceptions, rather than intended or actual HRM systems, that affect employees’ attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, I also include six sample studies that examine the influence of perceived HRM systems on organizational commitment.

Similar to the above-reviewed cross-level studies, all individual-level studies focused on affective commitment rather than other forms of commitment. Most of those studies explored the mediating processes through which perceived HRM systems are related to affective commitment. For example, Boxall et al. (2011) and Butts et al. (2009) demonstrated that psychological empowerment is a more proximal outcome of HRM systems that can enhance employees’ affective commitment, because employees generally value enhanced autonomy in their work. Macky and Boxall (2007) also found that job satisfaction and trust in management are two mediating mechanisms through which HPWSs can be related to affective commitment. From the person‒environment fit perspective, Boon et al. (2011) theorized and found that person‒organization fit mediates the relationship between HRM systems and affective commitment.

In addition to the studies on the mediating processes between HRM systems and affective commitment, individual-level research also examined potential moderators of the HRM‒commitment relationship. Sanders and Yang (2016) found that employees’ interpretation of HRM systems may moderate the relationship between high-commitment HRM systems and affective commitment. More specifically, they found that the perceived high-commitment HRM systems are more likely to be associated with affective commitment when HRM systems are high in distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus. This is because distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus of HRM systems can help employees to make confident attributions about the use of HRM practices and help them have a better understanding of behaviors that are expected, encouraged, and rewarded by organizations.

Taken together, the individual-level research emphasizes the influence of the perceived HRM systems rather than actual or intended HRM practices on affective commitment. The findings shed light on the psychological mechanisms through which HRM systems affect affective commitment. The research also provides some preliminary information about the boundary conditions of the relationship between HRM systems and affective commitment.

<a>DISCUSSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

HRM systems have been examined as an important antecedent of organizational commitment in the strategic HRM literature. Previous research has demonstrated the positive relationship between HPWSs and affective commitment using unit-level, individual-level, and cross-level analyses. Researchers have also examined the mediating effect of affective commitment on distal performance outcomes, psychological processes translating HRM systems’ influence on affective commitment, as well as boundary conditions for the HRM‒commitment relationship. These studies have made important contributions to both the commitment and strategic HRM literatures by helping us to understand how, why, and when HRM systems can impact affective commitment. The accumulated knowledge about the HRM‒commitment relationship has also offered managerial implications for firms to build organizational commitment, and has suggested several avenues that might be pursued in future research to give a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment.

**<b>Practical Implications**

The findings of the HRM systems‒organizational commitment relationship offer important implications for organizations aimed at enhancing employees’ organizational commitment. In order to foster affective commitment, organizations can invest in training and development programs and provide employees with clear career paths, which may make employees feel that organizations care about their personal growth and development. Moreover, organizations can accurately evaluate employees’ performance and compensate them based on performance, which may make employees feel that the organizations recognize and value their contributions. In addition, organizations can empower employees to make work decisions and share work-related information with them in a timely manner, which may enhance job autonomy and the feeling of belongingness. All those practices together can help to strengthen employees’ emotional bonds with organizations. Furthermore, other organizational HRM practices might be likely to enhance continuance commitment. For example, organizations can provide more job security and develop firm-specific skills that cannot be easily transferred to other organizations.

**<b>Future Directions**

**<c>Components and types of HRM systems**

Most of the existing studies focus on the influence of whole HRM systems on organizational commitment. This systems approach is useful for us to understand the overall relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment, but may overlook the possibility that different components of HRM systems may affect organizational commitment in different ways. For example, Gong et al. (2009) and Gardner et al. (2011) have shown that not all dimensions of HRM systems have the same relationship with organizational commitment, and thus suggest that researchers investigate what components of HRM systems are most important to influence employees’ commitment to their organizations. Relatedly, previous research has primarily focused on the influence of HPWSs on organizational commitment rather than other types of HRM systems. However, scholars have found that there are multiple configurations of HRM practices (Arthur, 1992; Toh et al., 2008). Future research can explore how other types of HRM systems influence organizational commitment and whether we can identify certain types of HRM systems that can reduce employees’ commitment to their organizations.

**<c>Forms and foci of commitment**

Another issue that needs more research attention is to examine how HRM systems influence other types of commitment. Almost all empirical studies have focused on HRM’s influence on affective commitment, except for Gong et al. (2009) who found that managers’ affective commitment and continuance commitment are driven by different subsystems of HRM systems. Given the fact that all forms of organizational commitment (that is, affective, continuance, and normative commitment) are negatively related to turnover outcomes and have differential relationships with performance outcomes (Meyer et al., 2002), it is important to understand how HRM systems, or different components of HRM systems, may affect behavioral outcomes through different forms of organizational commitment. In addition, organizational commitment is just one of the multiple foci of employee commitment (see Chapter 4 as well as the chapters in Part III, ‘Foci of Commitment’, in this volume). In future, researchers may also examine whether and how HRM systems may influence other foci of employee commitment in addition to organizational commitment. For example, it is possible that HRM systems that select individuals based on person‒organization fit and provide training and career development opportunities may also enhance employees’ commitment to their occupation or profession. Also, how organizations treat employees by using HRM practices may also affect their commitment to outside organizations (for example, union commitment).

**<c>Moderators of the HRM‒commitment relationship**

Strategic HRM research has examined HRM systems as the most primary antecedent of employee attitudes and behaviors including organizational commitment. Therefore, there is a dearth of studies examining how HRM systems may work with other antecedents to affect organizational commitment. For example, Chapter 22 in this volume reviews studies focusing on leadership as one of the drivers of commitment. If both HRM systems and leadership can affect organizational commitment, examining only one of them may lead to an incomplete understanding of how to promote employees’ organizational commitment in a more effective way. Several recent studies have suggested that HRM systems and leadership may serve as substitutes for one another to affect employee outcomes in small work units. For example, Chuang et al. (2016) found that the relationship between HRM systems for knowledge-intensive teamwork was more positively related to team knowledge acquisition and sharing when empowering leadership was low than when it was high. Jiang et al. (2015) also found that service leadership substitutes for the effect of service-oriented HPWSs on customer knowledge and service climate. These findings suggest that leaders who work closely with employees may have a substantial impact on employees’ organizational commitment and, thus, substitute for the influence of HRM systems on commitment. However, it is also possible that HRM systems and leadership may work in a synergistic way to affect organizational commitment, which means that when both are present, employees are more likely to experience the highest level of organizational commitment, and the absence of either may weaken the positive effect of the other. In order to understand the nature of these relationships, both theoretical developments and empirical evidences are needed in the future.

In addition to leadership, researchers can study other boundary conditions of the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment. This is consistent with the vertical-fit argument of the strategic HRM literature, which suggests that HRM systems are more likely to achieve desirable outcomes when the systems fit with the internal and external environments (Jackson and Schuler, 1995; Jackson et al., 2014). Previous research has examined the moderating effects of some internal and external factors on the influence of HRM systems on performance outcomes. For example, Youndt et al. (1996) found that business strategy focusing on quality can magnify the influence of human capital-enhancing HRM systems on employee productivity. Datta et al. (2005) also found that industrial characteristics (for example, industry capital intensity, growth, and differentiation) can moderate the relationship between HRM systems and employee productivity. Future research may follow these studies to better understand when HRM systems are more or less likely to improve employees’ organizational commitment.

Another set of potential moderators includes individual characteristics. As suggested by several scholars (e.g., Lepak et al., 2012; Nishii and Wright, 2008), individuals may respond to HRM practices in different ways depending on their personal characteristics (for example, needs, experiences, and personality traits). For example, those with high exchange orientation may be more likely to reciprocate organizations that invest in HPWSs than those with low exchange orientation. Future research examining the moderating effects of such individual characteristics can help researchers to better understand the variation of the influence of HRM systems on individuals’ organizational commitment, and facilitate practitioners to design and implement HRM systems that can better address employees’ needs and preferences.

**<c>Team-level analysis**

The empirical studies reviewed in this chapter have primarily examined the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment at either the individual or unit level, with a lack of research on this relationship at the team level of analysis. Both the strategic HRM literature (Jiang et al., 2013) and the commitment literature (e.g., Porter, 2005) have emphasized the importance of team-level research. Future research may study the variance in collective commitment among teams or subunits within the same organization, and examine how HRM systems may help to understand why different groups or teams of employees within the same organization have different levels of collective commitment. Researchers can also examine how team-level factors may affect cross-level influence of HRM systems on individual-level organizational commitment. For example, Chang et al. (2014) found that team cohesion and task complexity at the team level enhance the influence of high-commitment work systems on individual-level creativity, thus suggesting that team characteristics may influence how HRM systems at the organizational level influence the organizational commitment of individual employees. Future studies along these lines may shed more insight on the HRM systems‒commitment relationship by integrating the individual level, team level, and unit level of analysis.

<a>CONCLUSION

The primary objective of this chapter is to summarize primary theoretical perspectives and key empirical findings of the relationship between HRM systems and organizational commitment. This chapter also explores the potential directions for future research to delve into this important relationship in both commitment and strategic HRM literatures. The hope is that future research on this relationship will offer more insights into why, how, and when different types of HRM systems can affect multiple types of employee commitment at different levels of analysis, and help organizations to better manage employee commitment in order to realize their strategic objectives.

*Table 21.1*<em>*Empirical studies examining the influence of HRM systems on organizational commitment*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Articles | Type of HRM systems | Level of HRM systems | Type of commitment | Level of commitment | Role of commitment | Other key variables |
| Gardner et al. (2011) | Skill-enhancing, motivation-enhancing, and empowerment-enhancing practices | Unit | Affective  | Unit | Mediator | Turnover as a dependent variable |
| Gong et al. (2010) | High-performance work systems | Unit | Affective  | Unit | Mediator | Collective organizational citizenship behavior as a dependent variable |
| Gong et al. (2009) | Maintenance-oriented and performance-oriented HRM practices | Unit | Affective and continuance  | Unit | Mediator | Firm performance as a dependent variable |
| Hoque (1999) | Unspecified HRM systems | Unit | Affective  | Unit | Outcome | Job satisfaction, quality of work, and absenteeism as parallel dependent variables |
| Katou et al. (2014) | Unspecified HRM systems | Unit | Affective | Unit | Mediator | Organizational performance as a dependent variable; HR practices features as a moderator |
| Messersmith et al. (2011) | High-performance work systems | Unit | Affective  | Unit | Mediator | Job satisfaction and psychological empowerment as parallel mediators, and organizational citizenship behavior and department performance as dependent variables |
| Ramsay et al. (2000) | High-performance work systems | Unit | Affective  | Unit | Mediator | Job discretion and job strain as parallel mediators, and workplace performance as a dependent variable |
| Veld et al. (2010) | Unspecified HRM systems | Unit | Affective  | Unit | Outcome | Climate for quality and climate for safety as mediators |
| Wright et al. (2003) | Unspecified HRM systems | Unit | Affective  | Unit | Mediator | Operational performance and profits as dependent variables |
| Zheng et al. (2006) | Unspecified HRM systems | Unit | Overall commitment | Unit | Mediator | Enterprise performance as a dependent variable |
| Bal et al. (2013) | Developmental and Accommodative HRM systems | Unit | Affective  | Individual  | Outcome | Psychological contract as a mediator; selection and compensation as moderators |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Chang and Chen (2011) | High-performance work systems | Unit | Affective  | Individual | Mediator | Job performance as a dependent variable; human capital as a parallel mediator |
| Kehoe and Wright (2013) | High-performance work systems | Unit | Affective  | Individual  | Mediator | Organizational citizenship behavior, intention to remain, and absenteeism as the dependent variables |
| Takeuchi et al. (2009) | High-performance work systems | Unit | Affective  | Individual | Outcome | Concern for employees climate as a mediator |
| Van De Voorde and Beijer (2015) | High-performance work systems | Unit | Affective  | Individual | Outcome | HR attribution as a mediator |
| Wu and Chaturvedi (2009) | High-performance work systems | Unit | Affective  | Individual | Outcome | Procedural justice as a mediator; organizational power distance as a moderator  |
| Boon et al. (2011) | Unspecified HRM systems | Individual | Affective | Individual | Outcome | person‒organization fit and person‒job fit as meditators and moderators |
| Boxall et al. (2011) | Espoused HR practices | Individual | Affective | Individual | Outcome | Empowerment as a mediator |
| Butts et al. (2009) | High-involvement work processes | Individual | Affective | Individual | Outcome | Empowerment as a mediator |
| Kuvaas (2008) | Developmental HRM practices | Individual | Affective | Individual | Moderator | Individual work performance as a dependent variable |
| Macky and Boxall (2007) | High-performance work systems | Individual | Affective | Individual | Outcome | Job satisfaction and trust in management as mediators |
| Sanders and Yang (2016) | High-commitment HRM systems | Individual | Affective | Individual | Outcome | HR attributions as a moderator |

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