Special Issue Call for Papers
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Special Issue Topic: Understanding Strategic Human Resource Management in the Context of the Global South

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Summary
This special issue aims to uncover HRM challenges, particularities, innovations, and outcomes in the Global South to inform the SHRM debate. Accordingly, we call for empirical and conceptual papers that:
 i) Unravel contextual factors that shape the form and functioning of HR systems.
 ii) Contribute to SHRM theory development by identifying contextually informed mechanisms through which HR systems influence stakeholder outcomes.
 Keywords: Strategic HRM, Contextual Factors, Labor Market Dynamics, Employee-Organization Relationship, Global South

Rationale of Special Issue

Firms around the world increasingly face context-related Strategic human resource management (SHRM) challenges that are more manifest and acute in the Global South. Examples include the influence of religion or worldviews on workforce management, higher volatility in capital and labor markets causing intermittent talent shortages and oversupply, institutional voids surrounding informal and gig work, and growing inequality in the distribution of skills, job stability, income, and opportunity. Organizational responses to these challenges typically involve flexibility in and alternative approaches to SHRM. The general dynamics of global economic integration driven specifically by migration, foreign direct investment from non-traditional countries (e.g., Brazil, China, and India), the emergence of global value chains, and technology-mediated geographical distribution of goods and services have implications for the strategic management of organizational workforces across the globe. Consequently, understanding how and why organizations in the Global South manage their employees will provide SHRM scholars an opportunity to not only test the limits of Western-inspired HRM models but also the development and testing of contextually-informed theory.

Defined as "the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable the firm to achieve its goals" (Wright & McMahan, 1992: 298), SHRM research has repeatedly been criticized for its failure to account for context (Batt & Banerjee, 2012; Brewster, 2007; Mayrhofer et al., 2019). Notwithstanding the contextual embeddedness of early SHRM

models (e.g., Beer et al., 1984), researchers have predominantly focused on unraveling the mechanisms inside the 'black box' (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Jiang et al., 2013; Jiang and Messersmith, 2018; Wright & Nishii, 2013) paying little attention to how, why, and when contextual influences impact these mechanisms. However, over the past decade, researchers have made significant progress in bridging SHRM research with the context-centric fields of international and comparative HRM (Batt & Hermans, 2012; Paauwe & Farndale, 2017). Building on cross-cultural (e.g., Dastmalchian et al., 2020) and comparative institutional perspectives (e.g. (Edwards et al., 2016; Farndale et al., 2017), researchers increasingly examine the role of context in understanding patterns of planned HR deployments, the associated activities, and the resulting outcomes. Within this stream, the majority of studies have been conducted in WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic) countries (Mayrhofer et al., 2019), leaving unanswered important questions regarding the nature and functioning of HR systems and their outcomes in the Global South (Cooke, 2019; Hermans, 2018).

We advance the view that focusing on workforce management in the Global South will highlight the limits of WEIRD country-informed approaches to SHRM and provide an opportunity to uncover alternative approaches to people management that are attuned to contextual conditions. The term Global South originally referred to economically disadvantaged nations with a colonial past. It has since been used to describe alternatives and responses to neo-liberal global capitalism (for an overview of definitions, see (Kloß, 2017; Mahler, 2017) as reflected in the literature on varieties of capitalism (Fainshmidt et al., 2016; Witt et al., 2018) and critical management studies (Alvesson et al., 2009; Jayawardena, 2021). Prior special issues of IJHRM identified particularities of HRM in Asia (Rowley et al., 2016), Africa (Kamoche, et al., 2012), the Middle East (Afiouni et al., 2013), India (Jain et al., 2012), and Latin America (Elvira & Davila, 2005). Although these comparative studies represented important progress towards understanding SHRM in specific geographic regions, they were less concerned with providing a holistic understanding of the nature of workforce management (Cooke et al., 2017), hybridization of different approaches (Su & Wright, 2012) or with how and why workforce management shapes cognitions, attitudes and behavior (Johns, 2018). By contrast, a contextual approach to SHRM, informed by the Global South, requires researchers to 'formally specify what is special, distinct, or even unique about situations' (Johns, 2018:24). This approach allows for enhanced understanding of different realities that both local and internationally operating firms need to manage, as well as learning to cope with challenges typically associated with the Global South but that have now become relevant to WEIRD countries as well (Cooke, 2019).

Aims/Objectives of Special Issue

The SI seeks to provide a forum for researchers to re-assess the nature and contextual influences on the functioning of HR systems. Drawing on comparative HRM research that examines how the socio-economic history, geography, worldviews, ideologies, and institutions inform HRM, the overarching objective of the SI is to address the question of how these

differences affect HRM systems and stakeholders' outcomes. This SI represents an exceptional opportunity for researchers from underrepresented countries in the global debate on SHRM, as well as those who seek to share knowledge and insights based on less frequently applied research methodologies (e.g., ethnographies, phenomenological approaches, Delphi studies) and theoretical perspectives (e.g., indigenous). Manuscripts discussing case studies in the Global South or a cross-country/region comparison that involves countries from south-south or south-north are especially welcome. In sum, the SI provides a forum to bring together research that addresses SHRM issues in the Global South such as:

- · What factors shape the adoption of HR systems?
- · What are the forms and nature of HR systems?
- · How do contextual factors shape the dynamics of HR system implementation?
- · What processes underlie the relationship between HR systems and stakeholder outcomes?

Potential Themes for the Special Issue

Contributions should facilitate an in-depth understanding of the origins of specific approaches to SHRM and how they compare to approaches that are prevalent in WEIRD countries. Empirical papers may draw on quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods, but should enrich or develop theory and consequently, redirect or re-energize the field through addressing new or novel questions. Below are broad themes and indicative topics.

Factors that Shape the Adoption of HR Systems

- o How do culture, religion, and worldviews inform SHRM in the Global South?
- o How do the centrality of natural resources to the economy and the cyclicity of commodity prices affect people's management?
- o How does the concentration of firm ownership (in families, Royalty, ethnic groups, or the State) shape people management?
- o What are the implications of structural oversupply of labor (as evidenced in unemployment rates), informal labor, migration, and subsistence entrepreneurship for people management?

Forms and Nature of HR Systems

- o How does the content of local (native, indigenous) HR systems evolve as a consequence of exposure to global competition?
- o What are the effects of implementing labor codes by MNEs or within global value chains for employees in the Global South?

Dynamics of HR Systems Implementation

- o To what extent are HR departments professionalized? What role (if any) do international certifications of HR professionals play?
- o How do stakeholders perceive the effectiveness of HR departments and what factors shape their perceptions and outcomes?

- o What is the nature of the interaction between HR departments and line managers (collaboration, cooperation, conflict) in the implementation of HR practices and how do we account for it?
- o How strategic is the adoption of technology in HR functions and what are driving factors in the Global South?

Processes and Stakeholder Outcomes
- o What attributions do employees make to their organizations' adoption of HR practices and their experiences of these practices?
- o What are the payoffs of investment in human capital in the Global South?

Submission deadline and Instructions

Full paper submission deadline is **February 26th, 2024**. Expected date for special issue publication will be end 2025. Authors of prospective papers are welcome to discuss their ideas with any of the guest editors in advance. Please contact Aneeqa Suhail at a.suhail_1@tilburguniversity.edu, Michel Hermans at mhermans@iae.edu.ar and Samuel Aryee at s.aryee@surrey.ac.uk.

For papers to be considered for this special issue, at the time of the submission to IJHRM, authors must select "yes" to the special issue question, select which special issue the submission is for, and also state the name of this special issue: "*Understanding Strategic Human Resource Management in the Context of the Global South*" in the cover letter to the editor. All papers will go through a double-blind review using similar criteria to those for any paper submitted to IJHRM. For additional guidelines with respect to formatting and so on, please consult '*Instructions for Authors*' on the IJHRM's website.

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