



**Call for Papers for a Special Issue of  
*Human Resource Management***

**Total Compensation in a Post-Pandemic World**

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**Rationale and Objectives:**

Total compensation is an important topic in the human resource management literature, yet research on compensation has received less attention than other topics (Dulebohn et al., 2009). Total compensation refers to all pay forms that employees receive as part of their employment relationship—from base wages to benefits and pay for performance (Milkovich et al., 2014). Compensation is important to employees (Igalens & Roussel, 1999) and predicts performance, helping behavior, and voluntary turnover (He et al., 2021; Trevor et al., 1997). When designed effectively, compensation systems are aligned with a firm's business and HR strategies and help to address challenges in the external environment (Dulebohn & Welring, 2007) and be a source of competitive advantage (Schuler & MacMillan, 1984).

The pandemic introduced a number of significant challenges to businesses, workers, and the field of human resource management. Some of these challenges include rapidly changing product and service markets (Akpan et al., 2022), how to manage mental health in an unpredictable high-stress environment (Pichler et al., 2023), and how to staff an organization with unpredictable changes in labor supply and demand, respectively (Ng & Stanton, 2023). Concerns about work motivation – and presenteeism and quiet quitting – have been exacerbated (Lee et al., 2023). While governments, organizations, and workers have more experience with addressing these challenges (Babu et al., 2024), the post-pandemic world in which we live is arguably more dynamic and challenging when it comes to balancing sustainable competitive advantage as well as sustaining employee health and well-being. Compensation is an important tool that organizations can use to do just that—to balance sustainable competitive advantage and sustain employee well-being.

The purpose of this special issue is to organize a collection of papers that address the question: How can compensation be used to manage human resources in the post-pandemic world? Scholars need to better understand how compensation strategies, policies, and techniques can be used to address environmental challenges that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, such as hypercompetitive product and service markets. Now is a more important time than ever to understand how organizations can use various pay forms, such as work-family benefits, to

support employee health and productivity during times of unpredictable change. Now is also a more important time than ever to understand how organizations can attract, motivate, and retain a highly diverse and talented workforce with different job designs, including hybrid work. In addition to addressing the overarching question above, papers as a collection should represent the current state of the science in compensation research.

### **Potential Theoretical and Practical Contributions:**

It is important that theory and research explain how compensation can be a source of sustained competitive advantage (Larkin, 2019). Now is a more important time than ever to understand how organizations can use pay forms, such as work-family benefits, to support employee health and productivity during times of unpredictable change. Now is also a more important time than ever to understand how organizations can attract, motivate, and retain a highly diverse and talented workforce with different job designs, including hybrid work—and it is important to understand how compensation has changed to support newer work designs. Studies on these topics can help to, in total, develop a better understanding of compensation as a source of sustained competitive advantage for firms, and a source of motivation and support for employees.

Compensation and work design are interrelated; for instance, compensation requirements are higher for increased motivational work designs (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Scholars have suggested that compensation plays an important role in newer work designs. Organizations should consider how newer work designs are related to changes in compensation policies (Reiche, 2023). Pay for performance has been posited as a way to motivate workers through algorithmic HR management systems (Fraccaroli et al., 2024). Human resources practitioners must also consider unique pay forms that support new work designs, such as paying for internet fees when work is done from home (Teng-Calleja et al., 2023). From the employee perspective, work-from-home decisions are related to household income (Davis et al., 2021). In general, it is unclear how organizations align compensation with newer work designs, including hybrid work. Theory development and research are needed to better understand the ways in which compensation and new work designs are related.

Organizations are increasingly embracing emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, big data, and machine learning, within their human resource management practices (Budhwar et al., 2022; Fraccaroli et al., 2024). These technologies offer unprecedented opportunities for academic research, providing access to vast amounts of archival data, advanced analytical methods, and performance practices based on algorithms. These practices include automated performance feedback and algorithm-based performance evaluation. While scholars have begun to develop theories on how these emerging technologies influence job design, recruitment, monitoring, and performance evaluation, there is still limited knowledge regarding their impact on compensation management. For instance, we know relatively little about how emerging technologies assist organizations in determining compensation and benefits plans and how they affect employees' satisfaction, motivation, and work productivity.

Approximately 70% of employees across seven countries perceive pay transparency as beneficial for business and employee satisfaction (Glassdoor, 2015). Yet, 41 percent of private companies

discourage salary discussions, and another 25 percent explicitly prohibit such dialogues, penalizing those who partake (Hayes, 2017). While emerging evidence suggests that pay transparency could be an effective policy to diminish pay disparities based on gender and ethnicity (e.g., Bamberger, 2023; Lyons & Zhang, 2023) and reduce turnover under high distributive justice (Alterman et al., 2021), its effectiveness and ethical implications warrant further exploration (e.g., Bamberger & Belogolovsky, 2017; Colella et al., 2007). Pay transparency research remains nascent (Bamberger & Alterman, 2024). To offer more precise and tangible policy guidance for organizational and governmental leaders, further theoretical development on whether, how, and why pay transparency might enhance both organizational efficiency and societal fairness is needed.

## **Key Themes of the Special Issue**

We invite papers on any aspect of total compensation. This includes research on various pay forms, which include but are not limited to base wages, merit pay, retirement benefits, pension programs, work-family benefits, and variable pay. We invite papers that cover any aspect of pay research, from pay dispersion to pay for performance to pay transparency to CEO pay. Our intention is to solicit papers that represent the cutting edge of compensation research in terms of research methods and theoretical approaches. We invite both qualitative and quantitative papers, as well as conceptual and theoretical papers, including reviews (narrative and meta-analytic). Each paper should contribute new knowledge as to how organizations use compensation in a post-pandemic world. Papers can draw on and test seminal theories, but they can also involve the development of new theories or approaches to studying compensation. Papers should also have clear, actionable recommendations for organizations and human resource practitioners.

Key themes of the special issue include, but are not limited to:

1. Compensation and competitive advantage.
2. Pay forms, structures, and systems to support employee health and well-being.
3. Attracting, motivating, and retaining a diverse, talented workforce.
4. Benefits and worker productivity.
5. Changes to pay strategy and pay administration with hybrid work
6. New technologies and compensation management
7. Employee negative reactions to pay, such as quiet quitting as part of the environment.
8. Pay transparency, ethics, and social justice.

We invite manuscripts that address, but are not restricted to, the following questions:

- How have shifts towards hybrid workplaces influenced pay forms or pay mix?
- In what ways have compensation strategies or practices changed to address concerns about quiet quitting and presenteeism?
- What are the factors that promote or hinder organizations from adopting pay transparency? How does pay transparency influence wage equality (e.g., gender and race) in the workplace?
- How have organizations changed benefits offerings in a post-pandemic world to respond to concerns about employee well-being?

- In what ways have organizations changed compensation systems to better align with hybrid work?
- What changes have organizations made when it comes to compensation strategy and/or pay mix in response to challenges around presenteeism and quiet quitting?
- How the use of new technology (e.g., AI and machine learning) in organizations shapes the design and implementation of pay policies and their efficiency and effectiveness.
- What new approaches are organizations using when it comes to external competitiveness of total compensation in response to an increasingly competitive marketplace?
- How can compensation strategies or practices enhance organizational resilience, especially in times of economic downturn and high external environment uncertainty?
- How are organizations using compensation to respond to diversity, such as increased diversity of the labor force and issues?

**Submission Window:** January 1–January 31, 2025

### **Submission Process:**

Authors can submit papers between January 1–January 31, 2025, to *Human Resource Management* for review. Details on the manuscript submission process will be made available nearer to the submission period. Papers should be prepared and submitted according to the journal's guidelines: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/1099050x/homepage/forauthors.html>.

All papers will be subject to the same double-blind peer review process as regular issues of *Human Resource Management*.

If you have questions about a potential submission, please contact Shaun Pichler ([spichler@fullerton.edu](mailto:spichler@fullerton.edu)), Wei He ([whe@nju.edu.cn](mailto:whe@nju.edu.cn)), or James Dulebohn ([dulebohn@msu.edu](mailto:dulebohn@msu.edu)).

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