



Special Issue Editor(s)

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Continuity and Change in National Human Resource Management

Explicit attention to more deeply contextualised explanations in HRM theory building would add value to the ongoing debate on universalism vs. contextualism and convergence v. divergence in the field of Comparative HRM. This special issue is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- To understand how time and national context shape HRM theory;
- To incorporate the roles of time and national context in conceptualising HRM in MNEs;
- To provide empirical insight into the effects of time, national context, and their interplay on the 'HRM chain', i.e. HRM strategy, policies, and practices and their relationship to employee perception and behaviour;
- To test different empirical research designs that consider time and national context in relation to HRM. Both qualitative and quantitative research are welcome.

Theoretical contributions

Changes in the labour market created by the recent pandemic and the war in Ukraine emphasise how our learning needs to be aware of developments in more than our own country and aware of how human resource management changes with time. This special issue seeks contributions to HRM that address together the issues of national or international context and time.

[Gooderham, Mayrhofer & Brewster \(2019\)](#) examined comparative human resource management that looks for differences and similarities in different geographical settings ([Brewster, Mayrhofer, & Fardale, 2018](#); [Fardale, Ligthart, Brewster, & Poutsma, 2017](#)) and articulated a concern with the relationship between context, organisations and the people that work for them. They contend that HRM has become overwhelmingly, though not exclusively characterised by often unstated 'universalist' assumptions, and has tended to overlook context, in particular national context which seems to be a powerful determinant of HRM policies and

practices ([Brewster, Parry, & Morley, 2021](#)). In addition, they argue that much mainstream HRM research needs to advance more evidence on cross-national variation in HRM policy and practice and needs to be more aware of cross-national institutional theorisation. Doing so will challenge the widespread attempts to develop 'universalist' explanations of HRM which have to date drawn evidence disproportionately from large organisations based in the United States of America. We also believe that a contextually based examination of HRM will bring it closer to the nationally constrained reality of practitioners.

Building on a long history of comparative HRM research ([Budhwar & Debrah, 2001](#); [Lazarova, Morley, & Tyson, 2008](#); [Sanders & Cieri, 2021](#)), [Gooderham et al. \(2019\)](#) offer a comparative contextual framework of HRM (see Figure 1, [Gooderham et al. \(2019\)](#)).

The framework can serve as a map that outlines this Special Issue's theoretical contributions. Key issues might involve the way that HRM, or aspects of HRM, is/are changing over time; the way that it is changing differently in different countries; the way that such changes are causing HRM in different countries to converge (or to maintain their differences); the difference between HRM outcomes when looking at various time horizons; the role of multinational enterprises operating across different contexts; or the factors (institutional or cultural) underpinning such developments.

This Special Issue seeks contributions that address issues of national context and time in human resource management. Papers for the Special Issue will address HRM or aspects of HRM in at least two countries and/or from at least two time-points.

International coverage and fit between the proposed Special Issue and IJHRM

Contributors to this special issue are encouraged to investigate rigorously the roles of time and national context for further understanding of HRM. Preference will be given to papers that make use of data from at least two points in time and that are comparative in that they draw on data from at least two countries.

Suggested research questions:

Regarding time, potential contributors are encouraged to explore various aspects, including but not limited to the following:

- What is the role of time in theorising HRM?
- What evidence do we have for changes to HRM, or aspects of HRM, over time? How do we explain change and continuity?
- What are the historical reasons that have caused some 'outdated' models and practices to continue enjoying legitimacy?
- What effects do different perceptions of time in various national settings have on HRM?

Regarding national context, the following research questions are indicative of those that could be addressed:

- What are the effects of varying national contextual characteristics?
- What effects do contextual dynamics, in particular the rate of change in cultural and institutional settings, have on HRM?
- What are the roles of various conceptualisations of national context in HRM in MNEs?

Regarding both time and context, researchers are encouraged to submit papers that address questions such as:

- How can we define, theoretically conceptualise, and empirically operationalise time and context as well as their interplay in research for HRM?
- What factors drive the differences between short term and long term HRM outcomes; and do they vary between contextual settings?
- What developmental tendencies over time do we see in different contexts for HRM in general and specific aspects such as recruitment and selection, training and development, evaluation, compensation and approaches to the labour market?

These are suggestions: there will be other options that are relevant to the objectives of this Special Issue. Empirical contributions, or conceptual contributions underpinned by empirical evidence, are particularly welcome and the editors are ready to discuss ideas for contributions at all stages.

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Submission Instructions

Full papers should be submitted between 31 May–31 July 2023. It is expected that the Special Issue will be published in 2024–25. Please feel free to contact any of the Special Issue's editors if you want further comment or guidance.

The title page should include the names, titles, professional affiliations and contact information of the authors. Authors' names should appear on the title page only. Authors should refrain from revealing their identity in the body of the manuscript. The paper will then go through a double-blind review of the paper 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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