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Article

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MANAGEMENT | REVIEW ARTICLE

HR system and work ethics: A systematic review

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Abstract: Human resource (HR) managers can provide significant value to their organizations by understanding the practices that develop HR systems, as well as the ethical implications of the work environment. However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the linkages between HR systems and ethical practices that govern workplace conduct. This study aims to fill this gap by demonstrating how past research has integrated HR systems and work ethics. We used a systematic literature review method to analyze the development of the field over the last decade. To synthesize a fragmented body of research and map out its relationships into a more integrated whole, we reviewed and analyzed 47 articles that met the selection criteria and extracted important information. Based on the findings, the relationships between HR systems and employee well-being are viewed from two contradictory points of view: mutual gain and a critical perspective. Our review also found that failing to adhere to ethical principles and values may result in numerous detrimental outcomes in the workplace, including poor performance, employee



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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

HR managers can enhance the value of their organizations by developing and implementing a set of practices that establish systems and their ethical implications for the work environment. HR systems cover a wide range of activities that span the entire employee life cycle, from the initial recruitment process to the final separation. The implementation of HR systems is expected to achieve organizational goals, improve work culture, provide effective training and development, increase employee motivation, empower employees, and enhance team coordination. In the past decade, numerous studies have been conducted on HR systems and work ethics. However, the available literature on HR systems and work ethics has the potential to cause confusion in the absence of a systematic process for organizing and integrating their perspectives. In light of this, the current research aims to provide an overview of the HR system and work ethics by synthesizing various conceptualizations from articles published between 2012 and 2022. This study identifies gaps in current knowledge and proposes actionable future research directions to address gaps in the existing literature.

conflict, and a lack of moral conviction. Finally, we identified gaps in current knowledge and proposed actionable research directions to address these gaps in the literature.

Subjects: Human Resource Management; Management & Organization;

Keywords: HR practice; HR system; human resource management systems; HR bundles; work ethics; review

1. Introduction

HR systems are logical and scientific approaches to managing human resources by integrating several HR practices to ensure effective management of business processes (Margherita, 2020). HR systems integrate all aspects of the employee cycle, from recruitment to separation (Augusta et al., 2021; Mei, 2018; Randev & Jha, 2019; Zeebaree et al., 2019). Similarly, Siraphattada (2020) confirmed that employee hiring, development, optimization, and separation are the main areas of HR systems that are typically used to develop specific capabilities for organizations. The HR system assists the process of managing human resources by providing logical analysis and objective facts rather than arbitrary personal viewpoints, and it helps organizations achieve their goals by providing formal standards that help them control their human resource activities (Boon et al., 2019). In addition, this system employs strategies to create and sustain a work environment that supports desired employee behavior and the organizational mission (Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018). The adoption of a robust HR system is critical for businesses to maintain their competitiveness in today's ever-changing market landscape (Valentine et al., 2018). Recent studies underscore the pivotal role of HR systems in enhancing organizational competitiveness by empowering a highly skilled workforce (Boon et al., 2019; Garcia-Arroyo & Osca, 2021) through the adoption of high-performance work systems and encouraging innovativeness. The support CEO (Ruiz et al., 2011; Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2023), servant leadership (Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2023), and strategic service differentiation, are plays pivotal role in robust HR system development and which ultimately leads to improved organizational performance (Nellen et al., 2020). Literature has given more attention to HR (human resource) systems than individual HR practices (Boon et al., 2019; Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018; Zeebaree et al., 2019), as employees are simultaneously exposed to an interrelated set of HR practices at a time rather than single practices, plus the effectiveness of one HR practice is most likely dependent on the other practices within the system (Boon et al., 2019).

Developing and implementing ethical leadership and behavior by Human resource managers can be one of the most important factors in cultivating ethics in the workplace (Smith et al., 2018). Previous studies (e.g. Ruiz et al., 2011; Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2013, 2023) have highlighted the importance of ethical behavior in the workplace and its impact on organizational effectiveness. For instance, Ruiz-Palomino et al. (2023) investigated the mediating effect of organizational citizenship behavior and internal social capital in the association between team-level servant leadership and team performance. Similarly, Ruiz-Palomino et al. (2013) explored ethical behaviors in the Spanish banking and insurance industries, while Ruiz et al. (2011) examined the impact of top management's ethical leadership. Ethical leadership styles can promote a strong work ethic by emphasizing job security, fairness, integrity, responsibility, accountability, and honesty in the workplace (Alizadeh et al., 2021, Einarsen et al., 2019; Ho, 2019). Ethical leadership can also help define work ethics by setting an appropriate standard of behavior at work and endorsing ethical norms (Margherita, 2020; Mitonga-Monga et al., 2016).

The HR system can play a crucial role in promoting ethical leadership and fostering a culture of ethics in the workplace. HR practices can develop an environment where staff members feel comfortable, leading to enhanced workforce performance and productivity (Lima & Galleli, 2021). By promoting an ethical code of conduct and providing employees with a clear understanding of what is and isn't appropriate conduct at work, HR practices can contribute significantly to developing and maintaining a strong work ethic (Augusta et al., 2021; Issn et al., 2022). A focus on

developing an ethical culture can also help organizations establish a qualified workforce capable of making ethical decisions, which can ultimately contribute to the long-term success and competitiveness of the organization (Victor et al. (2014). In this systematic review, we will examine the existing literature on the relationship between HR system and work ethics, with a particular focus on the role of ethical leadership in promoting work ethics in the workplace.

In the last decade, several studies have been conducted on HR systems and work ethics. However, available publications regarding HR systems and work ethics may create confusion if there is no systematic process for organizing and associating their points of view. Furthermore, the fast growth of scholars will also produce many more publications, which will create more confusion. Therefore, conducting a systematic review of existing literature is required to manage the overloaded information and minimize confusion.

Thus, our research empirically and practically contributes to the HRM body of knowledge in two ways: first, we effectively classify and integrate the existing research into various themes. As a result, our work is mainly relevant to academics, as it will help them integrate the body of literature from an empirical perspective and comprehend how HR systems and the work ethics concept have evolved together. Second, the study is important for future researchers, as we specify several potential directions for further investigation.

This paper aims to provide an overview of the HR system and work ethics by synthesizing a variety of conceptualizations from articles published between 2012 and 2022. Tranfield et al. (2003) five-step approach to a systematic review (question formulation, locating studies, study selection and evaluation, analysis, synthesizing, and reporting results) and thematic content analysis were used to draw the main emphasis of research on the HR system and work ethics. In doing so, the study intended to answer the following research question:

- RQ 1: What are the main labels of the HR system?
- RQ 2: What are the main components of the HR system?
- RQ 3: What are the main perspectives in HR systems?
- RQ 4: What are ethical issues in the HR system?

2. Literature review

2.1. HRM systems

No single and universal definition exists to define the HR system (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020). Most researchers (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020; Macke & Genari, 2019; Omidi & Dal Zotto, 2022; Peccei & Van De Voorde, 2019) define HR systems as an integrated set of HR practices with the potential to significantly improve organizational performance. Similarly, Boon et al. (2019) defined an HR system as a collection of human resources practices “that are asserted to be internally consistent and reinforcing to achieve certain overarching results.” HR practices frequently incorporate activities like selection processes (Jeske & Shultz, 2016), performance appraisals (Ogbonnaya & Messersmith, 2019), training (Kreismann & Talaulicar, 2021), teamwork (Bouranta et al., 2022; Frick et al., 2013), flexible work arrangements, harmonization, and job security (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020). Improving employees’ knowledge, skills, and abilities helps use these practices for organizational gain while improving the employee’s willingness to do so.

The ability, motivation, and opportunity (AMO) model is a which explains the relationship between HR practices and performance (Guerci et al., 2017). In the AMO model (Appelbaum et al., 2000), the policy scope is related to the: (i) Ability to operate as anticipated and accomplish predetermined corporate objectives, which involve procedures like hiring, selecting, and training; (ii) Motivation through performance management, remuneration, incentives, and rewards, to

perform as expected; (iii) Opportunity to adopt a particular behavior through labor relations, job design, and worker involvement policies (Boon et al., 2019).

The fundamental premise of research on HR systems is that the effectiveness of one HR practice depends on the effectiveness of the other practices within the system (Delery, 1998). When practices are internally or horizontally integrated into a system, they support and collaborate more effectively. When practices clash, the results of each one may be diminished. As a result, HR practices should be examined as a whole rather than separately (Zeebaree et al., 2019).

2.2. Ethical work climate

The essay by Max Weber (1904 and 1905) titled “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” is recognized as the source of a lot of work on work ethics (Crispin et al., 2019). Hard work is highly valued in the Protestant work ethic (Nielsen & Massa, 2013). According to Morrow and McElroy (2001), someone’s willingness to put a lot of effort into his or her task can be assessed using protestant work principles, and striving for success is worthwhile as well as a measure of one’s moral standing. As stated by Morrow and McElroy (2001), a “work ethic” is a good moral that is characterized by diligence and hard work and can assist people in living better lives and combating poverty in a community. Work ethic is demonstrated by employees who put in a lot of effort, take pride in what they do, go above and beyond the call of duty, and strive for perfection in all sides of their work (Alizadeh et al., 2021; Aniekan, 2022; Einarsen et al., 2019).

The term “work ethics” slightly differs from “work ethic” in its meaning. Work ethics refers to a set of moral rules for professions and behavior in the workplace (Phau & Kea, 2007). Every profession or job has a set standard of ethical behavior that the majority of its workers agree upon (Angonga et al., 2019). Workplace ethics are established by these standards. Employers or institutions have a responsibility to establish standards of behavior for their workforces and to evaluate whether their acts conform to the criteria of the moral law of right and wrong (Bhave et al., 2020; Kloutsiniotis et al., 2021; Villegas et al., 2019). In many organizations, their institutional Work ethics are derived from industry regulations and laws (Mitonga-Monga et al., 2016).

2.3. HR system and work ethics

Ho (2019) states that HR systems cover a variety of HR practices, like hiring, training and development, performance evaluations, and incentive programs, which work together to achieve objectives. HR practices functioning together as a system have a higher impact on how people perceive the ethical atmosphere than HR practices acting separately (Ombanda & Obonyo, 2019). HR systems can be viewed in the eyes of the beholder in terms of ethical decision-making about HR practices. The competitiveness of a firm and its long-term existence may depend on how successfully its HR systems support and foster (Crispin et al., 2019) an ethical culture that is then translated into ethical work behavior. Therefore, organizations can use their HR systems to influence the necessary ethical behaviors that will lead to a competitive advantage (Valentine et al., 2018, Wothaya Sang Joseph Kirui, 2019; Mazur, 2014).

3. Methodology and review process

3.1. Study design

This study used the systematic literature review method, following the guidelines of Paul and Criado (2020). There are various types of systematic literature reviews, including structured reviews, framework-based reviews, bibliometric reviews, and meta-analysis reviews (Paul & Criado, 2020). Among these, our preference lies with the structured review method. This method allows us to gain a comprehensive understanding of the HR system and work ethics trends. It also aids in identifying any gaps in the current literature and provides valuable insights for future research directions. Additionally, we favor this method due to its ability to present a succinct overview of the most significant and up-to-date research on our study subject. It employs systematic techniques to identify and consolidate relevant studies.

The study used the review procedure developed by Tranfield et al. (2003), which consists of three stages: *i.* reviewing the relevant literature using specific inclusion and exclusion criteria; *ii.* reviewing the literature using review objectives; and *iii.* reporting the results. A systematic literature review enables us to organize and synthesize a body of literature on a topic (Kunisch et al., 2015).

3.2. Data collection

Multiple keywords were used to find relevant papers. The first defined terms for the search were “human resources”, “HR”, “HRM”, and “personnel”. These terms were cross-referenced with the terms “system” and “practices”. The second set of search terms includes “work”, “code,” “moral,” and “principle.” These terms were also cross-referenced with “ethics.” Once the key terms were defined, we selected the database to be searched. This study searched studies from nine databases, such as Science Direct, Elsevier, JSTOR, Emerald, Springer, Wiley Online Library, Taylor and Francis, SAGE, and Google Scholar. These databases are preferred because they are reputable and well-known for publishing studies in the fields of Human Resource Management, Organizational Management, and Business Studies.

3.2.1. Inclusion and exclusion

The current study used some inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria include search boundary, time of publication, language, and search string. The search boundary was determined by focusing on the domains of “human resources”, “business”, and “organizational” management. The search was restricted to peer-reviewed articles published in English in the past decade (January 2012- December 2022). Finally, the search string used as inclusion criteria focused on the themes of HR systems and work ethics.

The exclusion criteria include poor quality, irrelevance, and duplication. We examined the quality of the article through the careful analysis of the abstracts, introductions, and conclusions. In addition, the study excluded unpublished articles, working papers, and conference papers to ensure the quality of the papers. The relevance was determined by deciding whether articles fit the keywords used as search strings. Duplicated articles were excluded by assigning codes to each article and by manual detection.

In the initial search, 2,411 articles in the scope of “HR systems” and “work ethics” were identified. After inspection of the inclusion-exclusion criteria, the final 47 papers were selected (See Appendix A). To ensure the rigor of this SLR procedure, minimize subjectivity, and enhance validity, the authors read each article separately. These procedures are considered in the literature review to ensure the high quality and integrity of this study. The review procedure enables this study to create a systematic, replicable, and transparent analysis, and the paper follows a systematic article selection process as summarized in Figure 1.

3.3. Data analysis

In this study, descriptive analysis and thematic content analyses were used to address the review questions. The descriptive analysis provides a brief background for readers by describing the study’s characteristics (Tranfield et al., 2003). Moreover, in the thematic content analysis process, first, the researchers manually encoded the main issues addressed in the selected articles, and then an interpretative approach was used to analyze the results of the study. We prefer using thematic content analysis because it enables us to link the frequency of each theme with the study topic. This would provide greater accuracy and improve our understanding by presenting the overall picture of the study topic.

4. Results

4.1. Study method

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of research approaches and study approaches used in the selected studies. In terms of the research approach used, the majority (51% of selected studies)

Figure 1. Process of article selection.

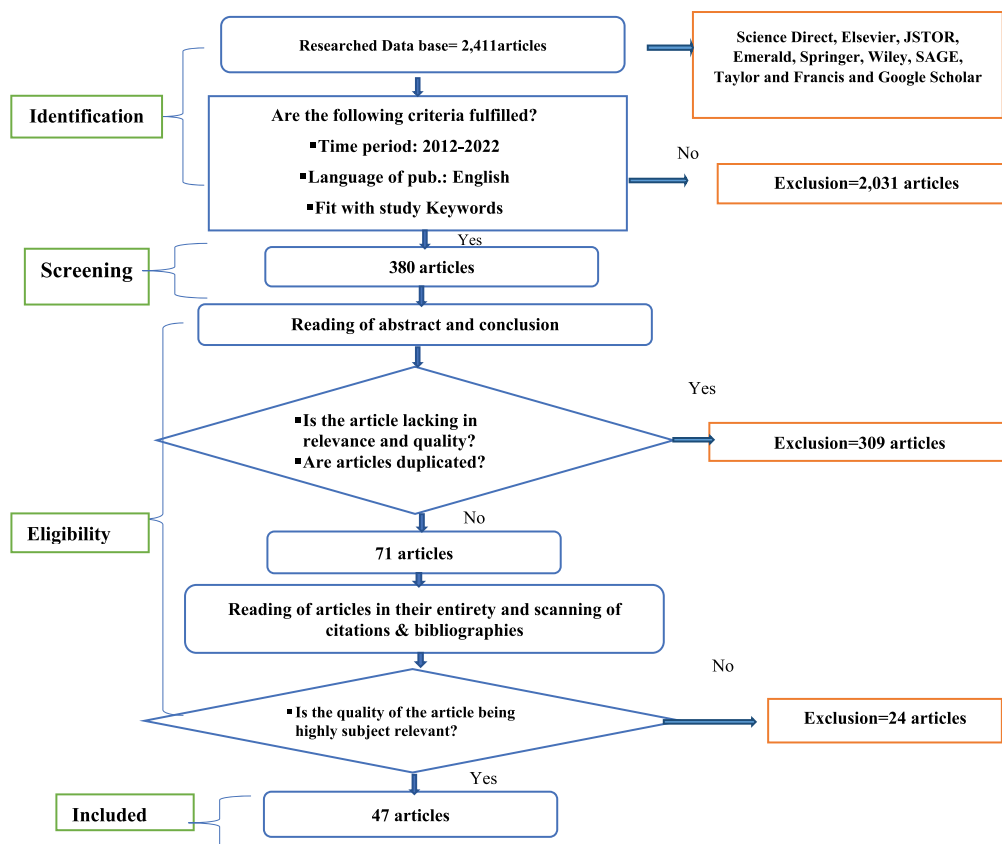
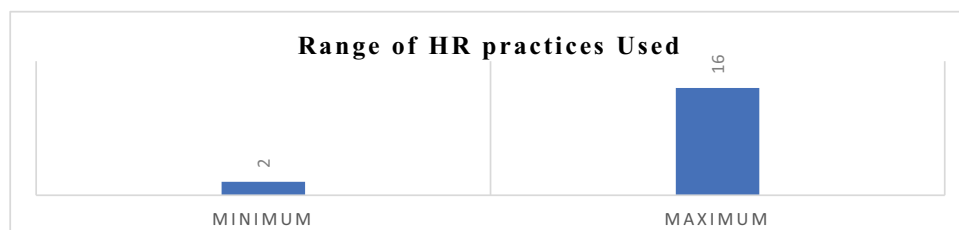


Figure 2. Range of HR practices used in a study.

Note: The range of HR practices used in a given study ranged between 2 and 16 practices.



used qualitative research methods, 40% used quantitative methods, and the remaining 9% used a mixed research methodology. Concerning the study approach, 79% of studies utilize cross-sectional approaches; only 21% of studies are longitudinal, and the majority of longitudinal research examines the association between HR systems and their outcomes (e.g., Shin & Konrad, 2017).

According to the findings of the level of analysis, the organization level accounts for about 67%, the group/unit level accounts for 8%, the individual level accounts for 25%, and the multi-level accounts for 13%. The analysis was coded as being at the organizational level when theory assumed that organizations differed from one another or when workers were viewed as belonging to one uniform entity. The group/unit analysis assumes variations between units; however, units are identical and are treated as individuals when individual differences are taken into account.

The majority of respondents in the selected studies (36%) are HR professionals, followed by higher- or middle-level managers (40%), lower-level managers (10%), or employees (34%), and 1%

Table 1. Study Design

Study method		Studies in %
Types of the Study	Quantitative	40
	Qualitative	51
	Mixed	9
Time Points	One	79
	Multiple	21
Level of Analysis	Organization	67
	Group/unit	8
	Individual	25
	Multilevel	13
Data Source	HR professionals	36
	High/middle manager	40
	Line manager	10
	Employee	34
	Unclear	5
	Other	1
Answer Scale	Presence (yes/no)	23
	Coverage	17
	Likert-type scale	69
	Unclear	8
	Other	11

of the research used other sources (e.g., union reps, students). 5% of studies have an undefined respondent, and those typically rely on secondary data. There is also a range of variation in the answer scales: presence (23%), coverage (17%), Likert-type scales (69%), ambiguous (8%), and other scales (often a count, e.g., training hours), which account for 11%.

5. Range of HR practices

According to Figure 2, the combinations of HR practices used in studies vary considerably from study to study, which implies how broadly the HR system is conceptualized. Studies provide much detail on the respective HR practices they measure, but no commonly accepted standardized measure has been provided yet.

6. Label of HR system

Figure 3 presents the variety of labels used in HR systems. The result shows that in most (34% of studies), the label was unspecified or unclear, such as HR bundles, HR systems, HR practices, and HR configuration. Moreover, HR systems are also frequently labeled with terms like “high-performance HR systems” (35%), “high commitment HR systems” (8%), “high involvement HR systems” (8%), and “strategically targeted HR systems” (12%).

Although some studies interchangeably use ideally different HR practices (for instance, performance and commitment are strategically different HR practices focused on increasing performance vs. commitment), however, they are frequently used interchangeably in studies (e.g., Kwon et al., 2010; Yamamoto, 2013)

7. Mainly investigated HR practices

Based on our results, the most frequently used HR practices are training and development (89 times), participation and autonomy (71 times), incentive compensation (69 times), performance

Figure 3. HR system labels.

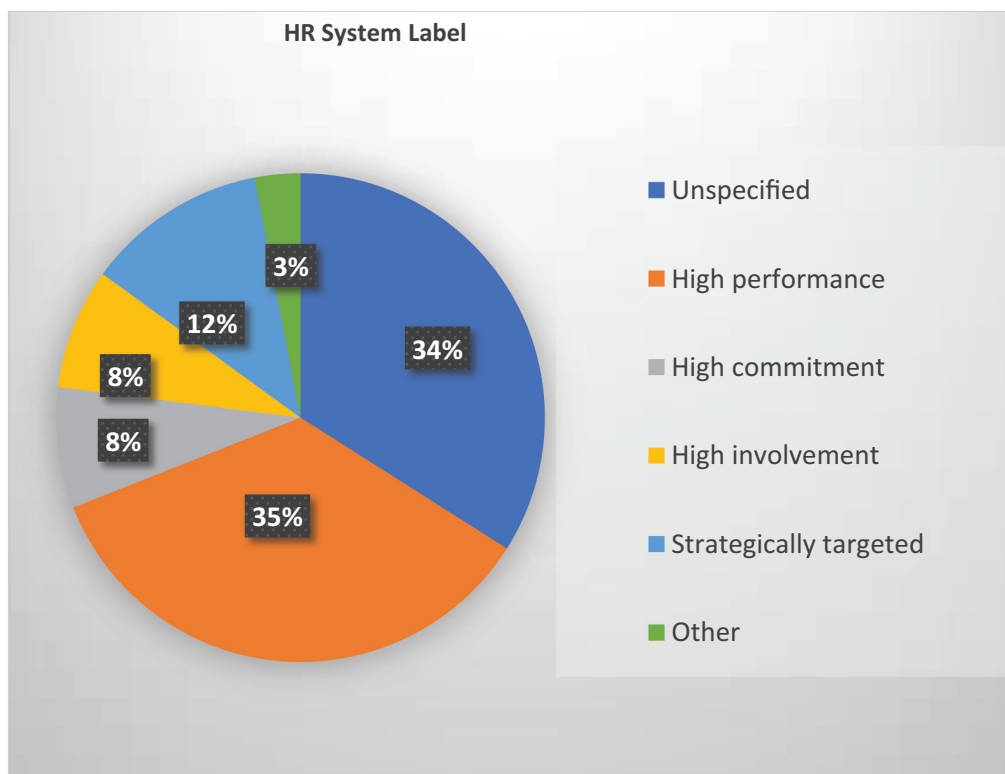
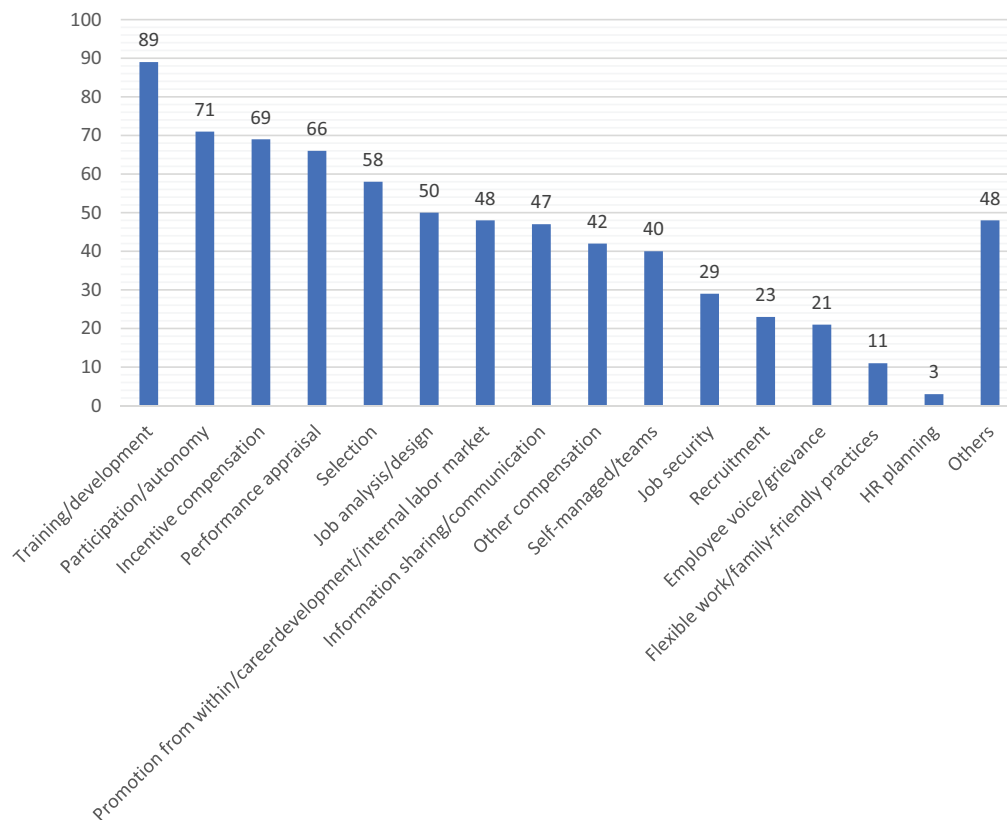


Figure 4. Mainly investigated HR Practices.



appraisal (66 times), selection (58 times), and job design (89 times). However, the agreement about which practices should be included in HR systems has varied from study to study.

Besides the lack of agreement on what an HR system constitutes, we identified the most commonly used HR practices, like training, participation, compensation, performance appraisal, selection, job design, and career development (See Figure 4).

7.1. The systemic components of the HR system

According to studies (e.g., Diaz-Carrion et al., 2018; Manroop, 2015), HR practices are interrelated and should be studied together rather than separately to reach favorable outcomes. Ogbonnaya and Messersmith (2018) stated that individual HR practices support each other when they are used together, and then they could produce harmonized results. Similarly, Jiang et al. (2012) specified that HR practices collectively offer channels of communication between employees and managers about things related to manpower management. The fundamental premise of research on HR systems is that each activity inside the system affects the effectiveness of the others (Bello-Pintado, 2015). HR practices strengthen one another and provide synergies when they are integrated into a coherent system. As a result, HR practices should be examined as a whole rather than separately (Jackson et al., 2014).

HR practices in a system relate to one another in different ways. The most popular way to operationalize synergies used in the HR system is through an additive technique that can be either the sum or average of the practices. An additive relationship assumes that HR practices independently affect the HR system without interfering with each other. Podsakoff et al. (2016) and Jiang et al. (2012) specified that an additive approach to measuring HR systems is based on the family resemblance idea, where each practice has characteristics in common.

As stated by Boon et al. (2019), in an interactive relationship, the effectiveness of one HR practice is influenced by the existence or intensity of other HR practices. Three types of interaction relationships have been described by studies. Substitutes are the first type of interaction (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020). When two practices produce the same results, they are considered equivalent, and if one is already in use, adding a second practice will only add the cost of implementation. For instance, Jackson et al. (2014) stated that leadership styles and leadership skills supplant or act as substitutes in the HR system. The second type of interactional relationship is positive synergy. When two practices complement one another's strengths or the whole is more successful than the sum of its parts, this is referred to as having a positive synergistic effect. Negative synergy is the third type of interaction. When two practices conflict with one another, they are said to have a negative synergistic impact; when combined, the two practices perform poorly, or the whole is less effective than the sum of its parts (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020). To evaluate these interaction features, studies (e.g., Guerci et al., 2017; Ho & Kuvaas, 2020) break down HRM systems into the abilities-motivation-opportunities (AMO) model.

As Guerci et al. (2017) stated, ability bundles attempt to improve workforce capabilities. Organizations can raise the ability level of their workforce by selecting the most qualified candidates and offering ongoing training and development opportunities to current employees. Indeed, studies have demonstrated a strong relationship between employee ability and selective hiring and training. Jiang et al. (2012) combined training and selective hiring to develop the ability bundle. In addition, the purpose of the opportunity bundle is to give chances to workers directly influencing the production process. Ho and Kuvaas (2020) employed involvement and empowerment practices (supportive management, information sharing, job autonomy, teamwork, and participatory decision-making) in the creation of the opportunity bundle. As Ho and Kuvaas (2020) stated, the motivation bundle seeks to inspire workers to do their duties. Organizations can use a variety of HR practices to improve employee motivation (e.g., compensation for performance and a flexible schedule). Performance-related compensation and flexible scheduling, however, have differing effects on employee motivation. The former

(performance-related compensation) extrinsically encourages individuals by connecting their efforts at work to rewards; however, the latter (flexible schedule) stimulates intrinsic employee motivation by giving workers autonomy over their work, which eventually leads to a more engaged and effective staff (Jiang et al., 2012; Ogbonnaya et al., 2016). As a result, Ho and Kuvaas (2020) combined flexible work and performance-based remuneration to produce a motivation bundle.

According to Ho and Kuvaas (2020), the ability, opportunity, and motivation bundles are mutually reinforcing; in other words, when the ability, opportunity, and motivation bundles are used together, the overall impact is much bigger than if they were used separately (Jiang et al., 2012). For instance, if skilled personnel are not motivated to put their knowledge and talents to use for the success of the business, their efficacy can be very limited. Similarly, motivated employees' efficacy is constrained if they lack the abilities and information necessary to complete their duties. Finally, if organizational structure constrains employees' ability to make decisions, their effectiveness is reduced. Boon et al. (2019) believe that businesses must implement all three bundles to get the greatest benefits from their HRM system investments. Likewise, Ogbonnaya and Messersmith (2018) argued that HRM practices may not be used to their full potential and impact organizational results unless they are integrated into unified systems.

Ho and Kuvaas (2020) argued that if the cost of introducing new HRM practices outweighs the benefits, doing so will result in reduced per-unit returns and may even lead to negative returns. This circumstance is known as "the law of diminishing returns" by economists. As Boon et al. (2019) stated, bringing the ability, opportunity, and motivation bundles together will create a net profit that is noticeably less than the bundles' returns alone. The term "deadly combination with substitutes" or "negative synergy" refers to this circumstance.

As stated by Boon et al. (2019), some measurement scales bring together general HR practices (e.g., "How many employees receive formal performance reviews?") and techniques (e.g., "How much of the workforce is subjected to an employment test before hiring?"). Some integrate practices (e.g., "We frequently involve our workers in decision-making regarding work-related issues") with policies (e.g., "In our organization, excellent achievement is always acknowledged and rewarded"). Boon et al. (2019) specified that these combinations may include several HR practices.

Our analysis reveals that there has been a significant amount of heterogeneity in the measurements utilized in HR system research. The number of items utilized could be relatively small (only 3; Litwin, 2013) or large (up to 60; Shin & Konrad, 2017).

7.2. HR system-wellbeing-performance

There has been an increase in interest among researchers (e.g., Guest, 2017; Ho & Kuvaas, 2020; Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2014; Van De Voorde et al., 2012) in recent years about the impact of HR systems on both organizational performance and employee outcomes, particularly various aspects of employee well-being (Jackson et al., 2014). Voorde De et al. (2019) believe that employee well-being is a fundamental mechanism to explain the impact of HR systems on both individual and organizational performance. Psychological well-being is defined as "happiness," "work satisfaction," "positive affect," and "affective commitment," while health-related well-being is defined in terms of being free from job stress, burnout, and anxiety.

Regarding the relationship between employee well-being and organizational performance, the two most extensively researched positions in the HRM literature are the "mutual gains perspective" and the "conflicting outcomes perspective."

7.2.1. Mutual gains perspective

Studies (e.g., Ho & Kuvaas, 2020; Ogbonnaya & Messersmith, 2018; Van De Voorde et al., 2012) on the mutual gain perspective specify that the HR system produces beneficial results for both

organizations and employees. As Van De Voorde et al. (2012) stated, the basic tenet of this perspective is that HRM procedures foster a win-win situation in which improved performance depends on having happy employees. According to studies (e.g., Alfes et al., 2013; Guest, 2017; Ho & Kuvaas, 2020; Ogbonnaya et al., 2016), if employees have better jobs, they have a stronger sense of loyalty to the organization, which has a positive impact on performance. Thus, as Prieto and Pérez-Santana (2014) stated, HR systems have a set of consistent HR practices that aim to enhance the performance of organizations by improving employees' ability, motivation, and opportunities to participate at work.

7.2.2. *Conflicting outcomes perspective*

According to studies in the “conflicting outcomes” approach, the HR system is detrimental to employee well-being (Jensen et al., 2013). For instance, Oppenauer and Van De Voorde (2018) have argued that high-performing HR systems may intensify jobs to increase organizational effectiveness, which makes the work harder and worsens the perceptions of exploited employees.

Oppenauer and Van De Voorde (2018) found that due to the level of workloads put on employees by management, the HRM practices that are incorporated into the HR system, such as greater “employee autonomy,” may produce a more complex job environment that boosts levels of stress. In addition, Topcic et al. (2016) found that “continuous education and training” may make work more stressful for employees by making it more complex and by raising supervisor expectations.

Likewise, the evidence obtained from Ogbonnaya et al. (2016), Jensen et al. (2013), and Van De Voorde et al. (2012) was consistent with the perspective of “conflicting outcomes” and demonstrates an inverse relationship between the HR system and well-being. Their main argument is that advanced HR systems are subject to increased workloads, anxiety levels, stress levels, and job intensification, all of these may hurt employees' physical and mental health. Also, studies (see Cooper et al., 2019; Ogbonnaya & Messersmith, 2018) stated that hiring competent employees may raise managers' expectations for increased organizational performance and productivity. As a result, efforts to achieve these expectations may put stress on employees. Similarly, “training” that sounds obliged to meet organizational standards rather than a focus on improving employees' skills may have a negative psychological impact on workers and increase work-related fatigue.

According to Oppenauer and Van De Voorde (2018), practices related to “performance management” basically motivate staff to strive for better ratings, requiring constant effort and resulting in increased strain. In sum, the main argument of the “conflicting outcomes perspective” is that the HR system can be a contextual stressor due to its stringent demands for improved performance and greater effort, which ultimately result in an intensification of job demands and could result in various health issues, such as mental and physical disease (Cooper et al., 2019).

7.3. *Work ethics*

Studies (e.g., Alzola, 2018; Mitonga-Monga et al., 2016) have specified “work ethics” as a set of moral principles that guide what is and isn't appropriate conduct at work. Code of ethics (e.g., Alizadeh et al., 2021; Chabke & Haddad, 2018; Crispin et al., 2019, 2019; Furlotti & Mazza, 2020); ethical climate (e.g., Alizadeh et al., 2021; Crispin et al., 2019; Manroop, 2015; Parboteeah et al., 2014); ethical leadership (e.g., Mitonga-Monga et al., 2016; Siraphatthada, 2020); ethical challenges (e.g., Smith et al., 2018), and organizational ethics (e.g., McLeod et al., 2016; Sekerka et al., 2014) were the most frequently examined topics in work ethics studies. In this area of study, statistical methods such as factor analysis, regression, analysis of variance, and structural equation modeling were widely used (McLeod et al., 2016).

7.3.1. *Code of ethics*

Alizadeh et al. (2021) and Furlotti and Mazza (2020) argued that a code of ethics is required to successfully establish and develop the ethical climate in an organization. According to Ombanda

and Obonyo (2019), a code of ethics is a collection of broad rules that govern behavior as well as a set of principles that guide decision-making. Beeri et al. (2013) stated that strong ethical standards within the framework of an organizational culture that maintains the highest standards of moral conduct (Furlotti & Mazza, 2022) will minimize a company's compliance (Lašáková et al., 2021) with ethical principles.

7.3.2. Ethical climate

Studies (e.g., Ekuma et al., 2017; Sekerka et al., 2014) on work ethics suggest the importance of developing an ethical environment and culture among leaders, managers, and workers. Manroop (2015) found that organizational norms, practices, and procedures all reflect the ethical climate and give behavioral clues about organizational members. The way that people think and act in an organization affects the ethical climate as well as their ability to differentiate between what is true and what is false, what is right and wrong, and what is ethical and unethical (Mathani, 2016).

According to Smith et al. (2018), today's organizations continue to face operational and moral dilemmas due to long-standing workplace ethics problems. Human resource management is crucial in stimulating the growth of an ethical organization (Sekerka et al., 2014) and outlined the characteristics of strong ethical principles to minimize corporate misconduct.

According to Crispin et al. (2019), the working environment can have an impact on employee ethical behavior. According to Lašáková et al. (2021), an ethical work climate can influence the morality of both individual and group employee behavior within the organization.

7.3.3. Ethical leadership

Mitonga-Monga et al. (2016) found that ethical leadership is crucial for influencing the ethics culture and employee engagement at work. Similarly, Siraphatthada (2020) found that the management of human capital in the workplace is directly influenced by ethical leadership. Rahaman and Camps (2022) specified that ethical leaders set and implement rules and policies in a way that gives the impression of respect, decency, and dignity to their staff members. As Beeri et al. (2013) stated, an increase in employee involvement in ethical decision-making, an improvement in the ethical climate, stronger organizational commitment, and a higher standard of living at work were all positively correlated with ethical leadership.

8. Ethical issues in the HR system

Guerci et al. (2015) found that the basic ethical values that employees are rooted in are influenced by HR systems. Alizadeh et al. (2021) also found that an ongoing process of building capacities for people and organizations to learn more and perform better while maintaining ethical standards can be characterized as an effective HR system. In addition, Valentine et al. (2014) found that there are a variety of negative effects of not using the HR system in line with ethical principles (Beeri et al., 2013), which include employee conflict and a lack of moral conviction when doing work. Therefore, an effective HRM department ethically frames its roles and responsibilities to thoroughly encompass all HR functions, such as the designing of jobs, recruiting and selecting employees, training them, compensating them, providing them with benefits, and managing their performance (Boon et al., 2019; Guerci et al., 2017). In light of existing research (e.g., Ekuma et al., 2017), the most commonly investigated ethical issues in HR systems also include job insecurity, ethical conundrums, and unethical hiring, which are summarized in the following section:

8.1. Job insecurity

In today's technological economy, job losses outnumber jobs created in most industries. Even in industrialized countries like the U.S., job availability is already a persistent issue (Nam, 2019). The changes in working life like mass unemployment, delaying, outsourcing, and redundancy have created feelings of uncertainty about the future existence of jobs (Chabke & Haddad, 2018; Mishra et al., 2022). In addition, Nam (2019) stated that technology use is strongly correlated with sentiments of job instability. The study by Nam (2019) noted that, in addition to a near-future

job loss, perceived job insecurity also includes a longer-term prediction of employment extinction. Thus, employees' feelings about the possibility of potential unemployment are referred to as "perceived job insecurity." Moreover, a study by de Witte et al. (2016) confirmed that a sense of employment instability might cause work-related stress, which negatively affects health and well-being indicators, including job satisfaction, work engagement, burnout, and mental health. Based on the result of our review Job insecurity is one of the top psychosocial dangers and sources of stress. Thus, the human resources system plays a crucial role in creating secure jobs (Nam, 2019).

8.2. Ethical conundrums

The study by Alzola (2018) titled "The Society of HR Systems" found that about 70% of 395 randomly selected HR professionals say their company does not provide ethical training. In addition, only 43% of human resources experts indicated their companies evaluate employees' ethical behavior as part of their performance appraisals. Only 23% of HR experts claim that their companies have established thorough ethical and compliance programs. These findings show how serious ethical conundrums are raised in the HR system.

According to Fulmer and Ployhart (2014), most organizations extensively focus on their performance and neglect the value of their employees, and they record their employees as costs rather than as assets. Linehan and O'Brien (2017) stated that neglecting the value of employees in the HR system has ethical implications, and ignoring the operational and financial contributions of human capital may negatively affect organizational performance.

8.3. Ethics in hiring employees

Villegas et al. (2019) stated that an organization's recruiting decisions may have significant ethical implications. Given that the primary role of HR systems is to maintain ethical standards, the HRM manager should be aware of the ethical consequences of making the appropriate recruitment decision.

Parboteeah et al. (2014) noted that, with today's ethnic, religious, language, gender, and ideology diversity experienced by most global societies, hiring managers are influenced by these diversity attributes when they recruit new employees. According to Villegas et al. (2019), every decision HR managers make, including who they interview, how they interview, who they hire, how they assign roles, how they promote, or whether they take a risk in hiring, is impacted by unconscious biases, that can be established either individually or collectively. Reducing both overt and covert hiring discrimination is necessary to manage workplace diversity (Villegas et al., 2019).

As noted by Valentine et al. (2014), when recruitment and selection follow established policies and ethical procedures, it is said to be "fair" hiring, which eliminates bias or discrimination. As a result, the hired individual has the skills and competencies necessary for the position. Sang and Kirui (2019) point out that the way an applicant is presented with a position and the way an interview is carried out can be influenced by the ethical practices of the HR system.

Smith et al. (2018) specified that firms must create and implement HR systems that support ethical behavior in addition to emphasizing the need to recruit the "right people." Therefore, HRM systems, like selective hiring, encourage ethical behavior by integrating employee interests with organizational objectives (Ogbonnaya & Messersmith, 2018).

9. Discussion

The purpose of this study is to review the literature on HR systems and work ethics to recognize progress and trends over time and identify gaps in progress (Cooper et al., 2019). Different scholars (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020; Omidi & Dal Zotto, 2022; Peccei & Van De Voorde, 2019) have different views on which HR practices should be included in HR systems. There is at least some consensus on the most commonly used HR practices, such as selection, performance evaluation, incentive and compensation, participation and autonomy, training and development, and job design. We also

assessed how researchers integrate HR practices into systems. In most investigations (Boon et al., 2019; Jackson et al., 2014; Jiang et al., 2012; Podsakoff et al., 2016; Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2014), an additive index strategy was adopted. The additive method assumes that every component of the HRM system is equal and interchangeable. Additionally, the additive approach assumes that the practices or policies under evaluation are independent components, meaning that the impact of any one practice or policy is not dependent on the existence or efficacy of other components. Additionally, there may be interactive relationships (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020) among practices within HR systems. In an interactive approach, the effectiveness of one HR practice is based on how other practices are well-developed within the system.

Researchers (e.g., Guest, 2017; Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2014; Voorde De et al., 2019) views on how HR systems affect employee well-being and how these systems affect organizational performance are varied. On the one hand, researchers who support the “mutual gain” perspective have argued that HRM systems are advantageous to both organizations and employees. On the other extreme, researchers that support the “critical” perspective have argued that HRM systems are beneficial to employers but not to employees. Both perspectives have been effective in providing evidence, but they seem fundamentally incompatible. We argue that these disparate results in the literature could be due to the existing literature’s failure to consider potential nonlinear relationships between HRM systems and well-being, as well as their failure to consider trade-offs between various well-being components. Our study also contributes to the field of work ethics by offering empirical evidence of the relationship between the HR system and work ethics. Our result shows that the ethical behavior of individuals, groups, and the organization itself in the workplace influences the organizational outcome.

10. Implications

The findings have important managerial and research implications about how bundles of HR practices interact within the HR system. Organizations should know how to integrate bundles of HRM practices into the system to develop effective HR policies, gain more benefits from it, and be able to efficiently invest in its implementation. Therefore, the findings of this study offer essential information to organizations about HR systems that can equip employees with the necessary integrated skills to perform their jobs effectively.

The result also shows that organizations that maintain ethical values in their HR systems rank better than those that do not maintain ethical values (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020). Similarly, evidence revealed, that HR systems and work ethics play vital roles in the efficient achievement of organizational goals (Manroop, 2015). This implies that the HR system and work ethics are mutually dependent and may have both interactive and independent effects on the performance of firms. Our finding also shows that a robust HR system is needed to direct employees toward certain ethical behaviors and should be expected to have fundamental ethical principles deeply rooted in the system (Guerci et al., 2015). Therefore, our paper has important research and practical implications by reflecting recent evidence on how integrating work ethics with HR practice is associated with favorable workplace outcomes, including employee well-being, job satisfaction, and staff commitment.

Work ethics and the HR system work together harmoniously to create a healthy workplace. The human resource manager serves as the organization’s key driver for establishing, maintaining, and enforcing ethical behavior. Organizations must focus on creating an ethical HR system to develop an ethical organization. Therefore, putting more emphasis on the HR system and work ethics may help organizations perform better. Therefore, this study provides vital information on ethical issues of the HR system that will support human resource experts as well as scholars in understanding existing evidence on the topic.

11. Conclusion

In conclusion, our systematic review on HR systems and work ethics aimed to examine the research themes, methods, and contexts of this field while proposing a future research agenda. We conducted an analysis of 47 scholarly articles published in reputable journals from 2012 to 2022 and used the

findings to suggest possible directions for future research. Our review provided a conceptualization of methods, ranges, labels, and ethical issues in the studies of HR systems. We identified widely investigated HR practices and explored how different studies combine HR practices into systems. This will aid scholars and practitioners in understanding the progress of the field.

However, the majority of studies did not offer consistent evidence regarding the alignment of HR practices within a system. The diverse view of measurements and multiple approaches to the integration of HR practices limit our understanding of the “system” elements of HR systems. Further research is needed to understand how interactions and synergies occur in an HR system.

Regarding ethical dilemmas at the workplace, our findings indicate that ethical behavior within the HR system has a high impact on the image and performance of organizations. Human resource professionals play a crucial role in transforming an organization’s culture and encouraging ethical behavior and decision-making. Therefore, the HR system should be consistent with the code of ethics, ethical culture, job security, fairness, integrity, and justice to minimize the risk of ethical problems emerging in the organization. Our article is significant to the growing body of literature on HR systems and work ethics as it analyzes and integrates the most recent research in this area. It establishes a research agenda to inspire further investigation and provides insights into conceptualization, methods, ranges, and ethical issues in the studies of HR systems.

11.1. Future research direction

This study systematically reviews the studies to develop better knowledge regarding HR systems and the underlying concept of work ethics. Based on our results, researchers have diverse perspectives on the premise of how HR practices are integrated into systems (Podsakoff et al., 2016). Additionally, the dimensions of HR practices that are included in HR systems vary from study to study. In this context, we offered actionable suggestions for further studies to fix the ambiguities of conceptualizing, measuring, and combining HR practices in systems by developing a less ambiguous and more rigorous HR system. Future researchers may also identify which practices are more significant in different organizational contexts, as well as how time influences the interactions between practices in a system and how HR systems are conceptualized in various nations, organizations, and managerial hierarchies.

Some scholars argue that HR systems are beneficial to both organizations and employees (the “mutual gains” perspective). Other scholars have argued that HR systems are beneficial to organizations but not to employees (the critical perspective). In our view, there are two basic causes for this paradox. The first reason is that in past studies, well-being has been measured as a single dimension, but several dimensions (e.g., happiness, health, and social relationships) can be used to measure well-being (Ho & Kuvaas, 2020). As we suspect, the second reason is that prior studies assumed a linear association between HRM systems and well-being, which led to wrong inferences due to the model fitness problem, as their relationship is logically non-linear. Therefore, future researchers can investigate the possible nonlinear relationships between HRM systems and various well-being indicators. In addition, taking environmental diversity into account and evaluating the trends of HR systems and work ethics from various nations’ perspectives could be a valuable future research area.

11.2. Limitations

Despite the overall strengths, this review has the following main limitations: The review is limited to the period from 2012 to 2022 and excludes pre-2012 contributors to the field. Also, it was limited to publications that were selected from only nine databases. The search for studies was limited to English-language articles. Additionally, the process of article identification was through a keyword-based search, and that limited authors’ ability to gather data based on selected keywords only. Future researchers may find manageable ways to broaden their search boundaries, language, and time to conduct more generalizable studies. Also, future scholars can consider more databases to reach more reliable results. Moreover, there is another limitation in our review due to the adoption of content analysis as a method of data analysis. This data analysis technique is

susceptible to possible subjectivity; thus, future research can reduce the subjectivity issue by utilizing a variety of systematic review software tools. For instance, Castelfranchi (2017) recommended “Alceste software,” as it is one of the computerized text analysis software packages that enable researchers to find structures and patterns in the text.

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Appendix A

Table A1. In the table below, we detail the 47 articles included in our systematic literature review.

No	Authors and Year	Journals	Country of research	The sector of research/data source	Purpose	Type of study	Theme
1	Diaz-Carrion et al. (2018)	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management. Wiley online library	Spain	194 firms are listed on the main stock exchange in Germany, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.	to identify the development requirements of an HR system with a focus on corporate social responsibility.	Qualitative methodology: Delphi technique	HR system
2	Manroop (2015)	Business Ethics: A European Review. Wiley & Sons Ltd	USA	Literature review	to investigate how HR systems could support the creation and upkeep of ethical environments, thereby contributing to competitive advantage.	Qualitative: Theoretical insights	HR system and ethical climate
3	Ogbonnaya and Messersmith (2018)	Human Resource Management Journal. Wiley online library	USA	The Practices of Working Life Survey data.	to investigate the impacts of three components of HRM systems (skill, motivation, and opportunity-enhancing HRM practices) on the creative behavior and overall well-being of employees.	Quantitative: structural equation modelling (SEM)	HR system: Employee performance and well-being
4	Podsakoff et al. (2016)	Organizational Research Methods. SAGE	USA	A more thorough discussion of the HR system and practice concepts was conducted.	to explain the reasons why comprehensive conceptual definitions of HR systems and organizational behavior are crucial for advancing science and to offer a practical guide for researchers.	Qualitative	HR system
5	Jiang et al. (2012)	Academy of Management Journal.	USA	Three aspects of HR systems—skills enhancement, motivation enhancement, and opportunity enhancement—were evaluated by meta-analysis.	to determine how the use of human resources affects organizational effectiveness.	Quantitative: Meta-analysis	HR system
6	Boon et al. (2019)	Journal of Management. SAGE	Netherlands	HR management literature, of three decades (1991–2017)	To review empirical studies on HR systems over time and identify important trends.	Qualitative: Systematic Review	HR systems

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Table A1. (Continued)

No	Authors and Year	Journals	Country of research	The sector of research/data source	Purpose	Type of study	Theme
7	Ho and Kuvaas (2020)	Hum Resource Manage. Wiley online library	Norway	The study used 14,384 employees, nested among 1,347 private businesses.	to analyze firm performance, employee well-being, and HR systems from a critical and mutually beneficial perspective.	Quantitative.	HR system
8	Guerci et al. (2017)	Journal of Business Research. Elsevier Inc.	Italy	The study was conducted based on a dataset of 6000 employees from six distinct EU nations—Italy, Germany, Poland, the United Kingdom, Spain, and France	to evaluate the type of synergies in HRM systems aimed at enhancing the employees' sense of morally upright workplace environments.	Mixed methods	HR system
9	Litwin (2013)	Industrial relations. Wiley Periodicals	UK	The Workplace Employment Relations Survey data are used in this study.	To examine the connection between information technology and HR system.	Quantitative	HR practices
10	Shin and Konrad (2017)	Journal of Management. SAGE	Canada	More than 6,000 employers from Canadian businesses participated in the longitudinal study	to examine the relationship between high-performance work systems and organizational performance.	Quantitative	HR system
11	Van De Voorde et al. (2012)	International Journal of Management Reviews. Blackwell Publishing Ltd	Netherlands	36 quantitative studies published between 1995 and May 2010 are included in the review.	to explain the relationship between the HR system, organizational performance, and employee well-being.	Qualitative: systematic literature review	HR System
12	Prieto and Pérez-Santana (2014)	Personnel Review. Emerald Group Publishing Limited	Spain	The study was carried out on a sample of 198 Spanish firms.	to investigate how innovative work behaviors are influenced by the HR system, with supportive workplace behavior as a moderator.	Quantitative: Regression analysis	HR system
13	Voorde De et al. (2019)	Human Resource Management Journal. Wiley & Sons Ltd	UK	The study considered the 46 papers published from 2000 to 2018	to provide a theoretical review of the research on performance-well-being-HR systems	Qualitative: Review article	HR system
14	Anwar and Abdullah (2021)	International journal of Engineering, Business, and Management. AI Publications	Iraq	The study used a sample of 240 respondents from government institutions.	to measure how human resource management affects an organization's performance.	Quantitative	HR system

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Table A1. (Continued)

No	Authors and Year	Journals	Country of research	The sector of research/data source	Purpose	Type of study	Theme
15	Alfes et al. (2013)	The International Journal of Human Resource Management. Taylor & Francis	UK	Sample data from 297 workers at service sector firms was used.	to determine the mediating and moderating mechanisms by which human resource management (HRM) practices and behavioral outcomes are related.	Quantitative	HR system
16	Ogbonnaya et al. (2016)	Journal of Occupational Health Psychology. Advance online publication	UK	The British Workplace Employment Relations Survey was used in the study.	to determine the connections between high-performance work methods, staff well-being, and health	Quantitative	HR system
17	Guest (2017)	Human Resource Management Journal. Wiley & Sons Ltd	UK	The study determined how HRM research and policy requirements impact employee well-being.	to look into the relationship between HRM and employee well-being	Qualitative	HR system
18	Jensen et al. (2013)	Journal of Management. SAGE	USA	data collected from a sample of 1,592 government organizations employees among 87 departments.	to investigate the relationships between high-performance work systems, employee anxiety, job control, role overload, and turnover intentions.	Quantitative	HR system
19	Oppenauer and Van De Voorde (2018)	International Journal of Human Resource Management. Taylor & Francis	Netherlands	A sample of 360 employees was asked to rate their levels of work overload, responsibility, and emotional tiredness.	to investigate the effects of high-involvement work system practices on the emotional exhaustion of employees.	Quantitative	HR system
20	Topic et al. (2016)	The International Journal of Human Resource Management. Taylor & Francis	Germany	Computer-assisted in-person interviews are used to poll a representative sample of German citizens.	to look into the relationship between high-performance work methods and personal perceptions of stress.	Quantitative	HR system
21	Cooper et al. (2019)	Human Resource Management. Wiley online library	China	The data was collected via a survey carried out at 62 bank branches of 16 banks between 2014 and 2015 in Chengdu and Chongqing, the two main cities in southwest China.	to explain the relationship between employee performance and well-being-focused HRM strategies.	Quantitative	HR system

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Table A1. (Continued)

No	Authors and Year	Journals	Country of research	The sector of research/data source	Purpose	Type of study	Theme
22	Alzola (2018)	Journal of Business Ethics. <i>Springer</i>	USA	The study explore how the UN Global Compact labor principles may help taking ethics seriously in HRM.	to critically analyze a set of assumptions that support HR practices and management.	Qualitative	Work ethics and HR system
23	Mitonga-Monga et al. (2016)	Journal of Psychology in Africa. <i>Taylor & Francis</i>	Democratic Republic of the Congo	The data collected from railroad transportation organizations.	to look into how ethical leadership affects the relationship between workplace ethics and employee engagement.	Quantitative	Work ethics and HR system
24	Crispin et al. (2019)	Business Management Dynamics	Kenya	A Critical Literature Review	to review studies on employee ethical behavior, ethical workplace culture, and human resource management practices	Qualitative	Work ethics and HR system
25	Chabke and Haddad (2018)	Hybridity in the Governance and Delivery of Public Services. <i>Emerald Publishing Limited</i>	Lebanon	Information was gathered from 30 respondents who worked for a United Nations Relief and Works Agency.	to research how human resources practices affect corruption in the humanitarian aid industry	Qualitative	Work ethics and HR system
26	Alizadeh et al. (2021)	European Journal of Training and Development. <i>Emerald Publishing Limited</i>	USA	To develop a conceptual model, the authors looked at the literature on ethics and HRD, their own experiences, and the curricula of graduate HRD programs at various universities.	to assess the value of HRD having an ethics-related course and the ability of HRD to reduce ethical misconduct by creating an ethical filter in organizations.	Qualitative: Conceptual	Work ethics and HR system
27	Parboteeah et al. (2014)	The International Journal of Human Resource Management. <i>Taylor & Francis</i>	USA	Data was collected from five companies in Nigeria and South Africa.	To identify the association between HRM, ethnic diversity, and ethical climates.	Qualitative study: Case study approach	Work ethics and HR system
28	Siraphattthada (2020)	A multifaceted review journal in the field of pharmacy	Thailand	Data was collected from the north of Thailand at Herbal City community enterprises.	to evaluate the impact of ethical leadership and knowledge management on human capital management	Mixed method	Work ethics and HR system

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Table A1. (Continued)

No	Authors and Year	Journals	Country of research	The sector of research/data source	Purpose	Type of study	Theme
29	Smith et al. (2018)	International Journal of Public Leadership. Emerald Publishing Limited	USA	the study focused on building a culture for an organization's success	The five ethical content issues of Hosmer's (1987) model related to HRM themes for the twenty-first century were the emphasis of the study.	Qualitative: Conceptual	Work ethics and HR system
30	Sang and Kirui (2019)	International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies.	Kenya	The study was based on a literature review of some of the moral dilemmas that HR practices confront.	to examine some specific HR management techniques and the moral conundrums that HR professionals encounter.	Qualitative: Literature review	Work ethics and HR system
31	Sekerka et al. (2014)	Journal of Business Ethics. Springer	USA	The study largely focused on what causes workers to make unethical decisions	to determine how a supportive perspective could improve our comprehension of ethical cognition, feelings, and conduct in the workplace.	Qualitative	Work Ethics
32	McLeod et al. (2016)	Journal of Business Ethics. Springer	USA	the study used an electronic search of 45 publications mentioned in the Financial Times to obtain sample articles.	to conduct a thorough evaluation of studies on organizational ethics.	Qualitative: Systematic review	Work Ethics
33	Furlotti and Mazza (2020)	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management. Wiley online library	Italy	The study used the documents of 202 (808) Italian firms for the period between 2013 and 2016.	to determine whether the communication policies that employees are required to follow under the company's code of ethics are influenced by corporate governance traits including duality, board size, and independence.	Mixed: content analysis, Regression analyses	Work ethics
34	Furlotti and Mazza (2022)	Social Responsibility Journal. Emerald Publishing Limited	Italy	The research was done on Italian businesses listed on the Milan Stock Exchange that are available on Compustat Global.	to investigate the relationship between corporate social responsibility and business ethics, paying particular attention to employee policies, to determine whether or not the two ideas are related, and to improve the management of the employer-employee relationship.	Mixed method: content & Regression analyses	Work Ethics

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Table A1. (Continued)

No	Authors and Year	Journals	Country of research	The sector of research/data source	Purpose	Type of study	Theme
35	Beeri et al. (2013)	Journal of Business Ethics. Springer	Israel	Data were collected from 192 employees of the Israeli regional council	to investigate the association between ethics and the performance of local governance.	Quantitative	Work ethics
36	Loštková et al. (2021)	Business Ethics. Wiley online library	Slovakia	The study overviews recent improvements in Central and Eastern European ethics management.	to map out the best practices in ethics management to advance theory and bridge it with practice.	Qualitative	Work Ethics
37	Ekuma et al. (2017)	Human Resource Management Research. Scientific & Academic Publishing.	UK	The study highlights developments in HR ethics.	to critically evaluate frameworks, current discussions, and developing themes in HR ethics	Qualitative: A Review	HR system and work ethics
38	Mathani (2016)	European Scientific Journal	Jordanian	Data gathered from 350 Greater Irbid Municipality employees	to determine the most significant areas in human resource management where work ethics are applied.	Quantitative	HR system and work ethics
39	Rahaman and Camps (2022)	International Association of Applied Psychology. Wiley online library	Bangladesh	Data was collected from MBA program students who were working as full-time employees in different sectors such as insurance, banking, financial, educational, and information technology in South Asian countries.	to investigate the reasons for which formalization, moral leadership, and interpersonal justice may contribute to employee flourishing at work.	Quantitative	Work ethics
40	Valentine et al. (2014)	Personnel Review. Emerald insight	USA	Data were collected from 187 workers at a medium-sized financial services company in the Midwest of the United States.	to examine the relationship between reduced ethical conflict, favorable work attitudes, and selection practices	Quantitative	HR system and work ethics
41	Nam (2019)	Technological Forecasting and Social Change. Elsevier Inc.	South Korea	The study used U.S.-based survey data from the 2015 Pew Research Center report	to investigate the associations between the perception of job insecurity, technological adoption, and long-term forecasts for the shift to the fourth industrial revolution.	Quantitative	HR system and work ethics

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Table A1. (Continued)

No	Authors and Year	Journals	Country of research	The sector of research/data source	Purpose	Type of study	Theme
42	Mishra et al. (2022)	Journal of Business Ethics. Springer	India	A review of 31 empirical studies conducted between 2010 and 2020 looked into the phenomenon of unethical pro-organizational behavior in the workplace.	to review the existing research on unethical pro-organizational behavior and provide a thorough theory-based analysis of the field's developments.	Qualitative: Systematic review	Work ethics and HR system
43	de Witte et al. (2016)	The Australian Psychological Society	South Africa	57 longitudinal studies from various nations around the world that had been published since 1987 were considered.	to give a brief overview of the results from long-term research on the effects of job insecurity on health and well-being.	Qualitative. Review article	Work ethics and HR system
44	Villegas et al. (2019)	Journal of Leadership, Accountability, and Ethics	USA	a review of the body of knowledge regarding hiring practices and ethics.	to identify the ethical considerations that affect employees' hiring	Qualitative. Review article	Work ethics and HR system
45	Linehan and O'Brien (2017)	Journal of Business Ethics. Springer	Ireland	Human resource experts from a variety of industries, including the manufacturing and retail sectors, were interviewed in-depth.	to examine the nature of employees' emotions and their importance in comprehending ethical conundrums in organizations	Qualitative	Work ethics and HR system
46	Fulmer and Ployhart (2014)	Journal of Management. SAGE	USA	A multidisciplinary review of prior research on the estimation, disclosure, and management of an organization's human resources	to conceptualize and implement the valuation of human capital by utilizing multilevel theory and taking into account viewpoints from various disciplines.	Qualitative: Review article	Work ethics and HR system
47	Jackson et al. (2014)	Academy of Management Annals. Taylor & Francis	New Jersey	to comprehensively examine and assess three decades of research on strategic HRM theory.	to study HRM systems in terms of internal (employees and their managers) and external (owners, customers, society, other organizations) stakeholders.	Qualitative: Systematic review	HR system