

# IJRTBT | Human Resource Management Practice and Innovative Work Behaviour: The Mediating Role of Work Engagement

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## Abstract

Hotel employees' innovative behaviour and work engagement are critical to the quality of hospitality services. Although research has established that human resource management benefits individuals, teams, and organizations, it needs to be clarified whether it could promote innovative behaviour and work engagement among hotel employees. This study aimed to investigate the effect of human resource management practices on innovative behaviour among hotel employees and examine work engagement's mediating role in this relationship. Questionnaires from five four-star hotels were given to 152 respondents in order to collect data. The PLS-SEM model was used to evaluate the data. The result showed that human resource management practice significantly and positively affects innovative work behaviour and engagement. Similarly, work engagement substantially positively impacts the innovative work behaviour of hotel employees. The research also demonstrates that work engagement significantly mediated the association between human resource management practice perception and innovative work behaviour.

**Keywords:** *Hotel Employee; Human Resource Management Practice; Innovative Work Behaviour; Work Engagement*

## Introduction

Attaining business excellence in the current turbulent and dynamic business climate has become an enormous task for many corporations (Nyathi & Kekwaletswe, 2023). Research indicates that innovation enhances organizational performance and enables faster responses to issues by capitalizing on new goods and market opportunities (Mensah, Shukla, & Iqbal, 2023). Today, organizations must be able to innovate their products, services, and procedures continuously. Consequently, the past two decades have witnessed a rise in innovation-related scholarly research. Innovation studies focus on organizational, team, and individual innovation management (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Innovation is critical to an organization's competitiveness. However, with their employees, businesses can be innovative (Abstein & Spieth, 2014). Innovative work behaviour (IWB) refers to individuals' efforts to implement inventive ideas. Individuals are the primary and most essential actors in the innovation process (Baig, Azeem, & Paracha, 2022). IWB is "the purposeful generation, implementation, and integration of novel concepts within a work domain, group, or institution to enhance role performance, group efficacy, or organization efficiency." (Chang, Zhang, & Wu, 2021). Most of the innovative results come primarily from individuals. Therefore, it is necessary to examine what motivates individual IWBs.

Human resources management has gained increased importance in the past decade as organisations seek strategies to enhance their innovative outcomes. Most of these studies primarily examine innovation within organisations, specifically how HR policies or systems impact inventive results, sometimes mediated by characteristics such as knowledge or intellectual capital (Bos-Nehles &

Veenendaal, 2019). Human resource management practice (HRMP) enhances employees' competencies, expertise, and capacity to engage in their organisations' decision-making procedures (Wei, Han, & Hsu, 2010). Recent literature highlights the role that human resources play in innovation development. People who work in human resources are the ones who can come up with new ideas and make them into new goods, services, working methods, or systems. Recent research conducted under an open innovation approach emphasizes the importance of human resources as crucial factors in accelerating innovation. This approach involves managing both internal and external knowledge to drive innovation. Human resources play a vital role in acquiring the necessary knowledge for this type of innovation (Sanz-Valle & Jiménez-Jiménez, 2018).

Organizational managers communicate the behaviors considered important and rewarded; employees understand and act according to those signals. Employees who perceive the company as a source of value will feel compelled to reciprocate by contributing something valuable, such as assisting the business in attaining its objectives (Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, 2003). HRMP could encourage innovation structurally. The fundamental concept is that employees interpret HRMP as the firm's indication that creative behaviors are esteemed, acknowledged, and incentivized, hence motivating employees to investigate ways to demonstrate these behaviors. Several so-called 'high-involvement HRMPs have been demonstrated to influence employees' innovative behaviours (Renkema, de Leede, & Van Zyl, 2021). In today's highly competitive business world, the IWB of workers has become an important way for companies to gain a competitive edge and ensure they will be around for a long time. IWB stands for the process of generating, cultivating, and executing novel and useful concepts within the organization. (Rao Jada, Mukhopadhyay, & Titiyal, 2019).

In recent decades, tourism has emerged as a global phenomenon. The sector has grown rapidly and is widely acknowledged for its significant impact on regional and national economic development (Alferaih, Sarwar, & Eid, 2018). The hotel industry is a major part of tourism, the largest and most rapidly growing industry (Al-Refaie, 2015a). Hotels must offer distinctive and superior services to entice patrons and generate positive word-of-mouth through social media platforms to effectively contend with the intensifying competition. In order to do so, tourist hotels have started encouraging their employees to use their creative abilities to develop innovative services, ultimately increasing their organization's effectiveness (Dhar, 2015). The service industry's success mostly depends on providing innovative services. Therefore, service innovation is paramount in a highly engaged corporate environment such as hotels, where clients dedicate their leisure time (Mohamed, 2016). Assume that employees believe HRMP highly regards innovative ideas and that the work environment is focused on generating and advancing new ideas. Under those circumstances, people will respond with inventive conduct. This research aims to examine the impact of HRMP on IWB.

Several previous studies examined the relationship between HRMP and IWB (Renkema, de Leede, & Van Zyl, 2021; Singh, Bamel, & Vohra, 2021; Yasir & Majid, 2020). This research study shows a positive relationship between HRMP and IWB. This study is different from past studies because empirical findings have yet to be found that examine the effect of HRMP on IWB, mediated by work engagement, in hotel employees. This study aimed to examine the impact of HRMP on IWB. In doing so, we also consider the mediating effects of work engagement (WE) and examine direct and indirect relations between these variables. Based on that assumption, HRMP is the primary mechanism by which companies can exercise influence over their human resources.

Innovation undoubtedly plays a central role in organizations. Creative abilities in producing innovative services will certainly increase organizational effectiveness for the hospitality industry.

## Literature Review

### Human Resource Management Practice

Human resource management is a strategy to efficiently employ and develop dedicated and skilled staff to accomplish the organization's goals (Hecklau *et al.*, 2016). HR practices include planning for human resources, hiring and firing, managing performance, setting up award systems based on results, and learning and development. (Katou & Budhwar, 2015). High-involvement HR practices should have an empowering influence on workers, resulting in actions that are beneficial to the company. As such, high-involvement HR practices are an element of the organizational setting that motivates people to do "whatever it takes" to achieve objectives (Prieto & Pérez-Santana, 2014). HRMP reflects an organization's intentions and strategies and reviews how employees are treated (Shipton *et al.*, 2017). Human resource practices are a collection of actions, such as job training and career counselling, that lead to improved organizational performance. Human resource management practices have been shown to impact staff members' talents and motivation positively and to pave the way for an environment rich in opportunities (ability, motivation, and opportunity) to inspire participation from all members of the team (Singh, Bamel, & Vohra, 2021). Researchers have investigated the role of HR practices in enabling productive employee behaviour, which further enhances an organization's competitive advantage (Jiang *et al.*, 2012).

### Innovative Work Behaviour

The concept of IWB is a dynamic and varied phenomenon that includes the aspect of creativity. The four elements constitute it: acknowledgment of the issue, creation of concepts, promotion, and recognition (Khan *et al.*, 2020). Innovation refers to the effective execution of inventive concepts. Therefore, IWB is the term used to describe employees' insights, recommendations, and actions on tasks connected to their jobs that improve the organization's performance (Akram *et al.*, 2018). IWB refers to identifying issues, deliberate initiation, and purposeful introduction of novel and valuable concepts, along with a collection of actions required to cultivate, launch, and execute ideas to improve individual and organizational effectiveness (Afsar, Badir, & Saeed, 2014). IWB is exemplified when knowledge workers actively pursue possibilities with a mindset of receptiveness and ingenuity (Miller & Miller, 2020). The explicit purpose of IWB is to offer certain advantages. The subject matter involves a more distinct practical aspect and is anticipated to generate inventive results. Creativity is a vital element of IWB, particularly at the initial stages of the innovation process. This phase involves identifying problems or deficiencies in performance and generating ideas to address the need for innovation (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010).

### Work Engagement

Employee engagement refers to the employee's profound emotional and intellectual connection to their job, organization, supervisor, or colleagues, which drives them to put in extra effort (Rumawas, 2021). Work engagement encompasses the favourable outcomes of employment, offering a sense of satisfaction and a positive mental state (Kissi *et al.*, 2023). Employees' energetic (physical, emotional, and cognitive) connection to their employment fosters a positive, long-lasting state of motivation toward work, known as WE (Coetzee & van Dyk, 2018). The physical dimension of work engagement pertains to the physical exertion of energy by employees to participate in behaviours valued by the business, with heightened degrees of effort sustained for prolonged durations. The emotional dimension pertains to the affective experiences of employees concerning their work and the emotional resources required to fulfill the emotional requirements of their respective positions effectively. The

cognitive dimension of job engagement pertains to employee mindfulness, vigilance, and attention towards their work responsibilities (Eldor, 2016). Research on engagement is informed by social exchange theory, which posits that individuals become engaged in their work by investing cognitive effort, experiencing positive affect, and establishing meaningful interpersonal connections. This engagement is facilitated by antecedents communicating to employees that they are esteemed and relied upon (Alfes *et al.*, 2013).

### **Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses**

#### *Human Resource Management Practice and Innovative Work Behaviour*

According to Abstein & Spieth (2014), the manifestation of innovative behaviour within the workplace can be understood as a multifaceted process comprising various behaviours associated with distinct stages of the innovation process. Consequently, employee innovation is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by numerous factors, encompassing individual and contextual elements. The impact of HRMP has been examined as a significant determinant in this regard. Previous research has shown a positive relationship between HRMP and IWB (Bos-Nehles, Bondarouk, & Nijenhuis, 2017; Sanz-Valle & Jiménez-Jiménez, 2018; Tajeddini *et al.*, 2023). Consequently, we propose the subsequent hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: A positive relationship exists between HRMP and IWB.

#### *Human Resource Management Practice and Work Engagement*

One way for employers to show they want to invest in and help their workers is through HRMP. This means people's feelings about HRMP may be linked to WE (Alfes *et al.*, 2013). The existing body of literature has demonstrated a clear and affirmative correlation between the implementation of HRMP and the level of WE (Alfes *et al.*, 2013; Alias, Nor, & Hassan, 2016; Jose & Mampilly, 2021). This leads us to propose the following theory:

Hypothesis 2: A positive relationship exists between HRMP and WE.

#### *Work Engagement and Innovative Work Behaviour*

We have been associated with various productive employee behaviour-related organizational outcomes. IWB refers to employee conduct that contributes directly and indirectly to creating and introducing innovations (De Spiegelaere, Van Gyes, & Van Hootegem, 2016). Prior studies have indicated a favourable correlation between WE and IWB (De Spiegelaere *et al.*, 2014; De Spiegelaere, Van Gyes, & Van Hootegem, 2016; Koroglu & Ozmen, 2022).

Hypothesis 3: WE has a positive effect on IWB

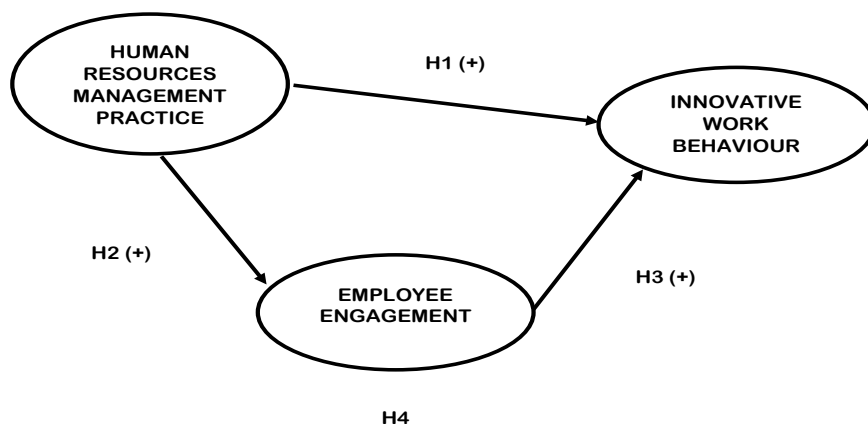
#### *Human Resource Management Practices, Innovative Work Behaviour, and Work Engagement*

The significance of WE as a mediating element has been well-acknowledged in academic literature (Yang *et al.*, 2019). Evidence shows that WE mediates the relationship between HRMP and IWB. The job demands-resources model has been tested and found that HRM-related job resources like training opportunities, task variety, and interpersonal and performance feedback are positively linked to WE. WE, in turn, mediates the relationship between job resources and positive outcomes like proactive behaviour and well-being (Alfes *et al.*, 2013).

Hypothesis 4: WE mediates the relationship between HRMP and IWB.

Based on the review of the literature and the supporting hypotheses, the research conceptual model shown in Figure 1 below is suggested.

**Figure 1: Integrated Conceptual Model**



## Methodology

### Sample and Data Collection

To test the proposed hypothesis, hotel employees participated in an empirical investigation. Employees of 5 four-star hotels in Manado were interviewed as part of the data collection procedure. This study's sampling method is a technique of non-probability convenience sampling. One hundred eighty questionnaires were distributed, and 152 were returned. Using a questionnaire survey, researchers gathered data to verify the research hypothesis. To assure confidentiality, each questionnaire was completed anonymously. The questionnaire consists of 27 statements designed to evaluate a variety of variables. The application contains queries regarding HRMP, WE, and IWB. The Structural Equation Model (SEM) and SmartPLS software were utilized to test the given models and assumptions.

### Measures

Every item was derived from a prior study and subsequently adjusted to suit the present research environment with minor modifications. There was a five-point Likert scale used to rate each item, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" and 5 meaning "strongly agree."

The measurement of HRMP is based on four HR practice domains (Al-Refaie, 2015b), which include 12 items. First, selection and recruitment; second, workforce planning; and third, employment design, followed by training and development. Six items from Yasir & Majid (2020) are used to evaluate innovative work behaviour. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006) assessed WE. The UWES items are categorized into three subscales, each representing a fundamental aspect of engagement: Vigour (consisting of 3 items), dedication (consisting of 3 items), and absorption (consisting of 3 items).

## Results

The poll findings reveal that 52.6% of the respondents self-identified as male, while 47.4% self-identified as female. The most significant proportion, including 50 percent, falls within the age range of 30 to 40. A significant portion, 28.9 percent, is below 30. Additionally, 15.8 percent falls between



the ages of 40 and 50, while a smaller proportion of 5.3 percent is above 50. Based on the educational achievements of the participants, it was found that 40.2% possessed a diploma, 53.9% possessed an undergraduate degree, and 5.9% possessed a postgraduate degree.

### Measurement Model

Assessing reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity allows for evaluating the measurement model. Reliability can be assessed by measuring Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). According to Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2011), Cronbach's alpha is deemed acceptable if it exceeds the threshold of 0.70. Similarly, construct reliability (CR) is regarded as acceptable if it surpasses 0.70. Additionally, the average variance extracted (AVE) is considered appropriate if it reaches the value of 0.5. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients obtained in this study varied from 0.907 to 0.967, all above the recommended threshold of 0.70. The coefficient of reliability (CR) exhibits a range of 0.941 to 0.968, surpassing the acceptable threshold of 0.70. The AVE (average variance extracted) value falls within the range of 0.813 to 0.843, surpassing the recommended threshold of 0.5.

The assessment of validity can be conducted through the utilization of convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is determined by assessing factor loading and the average variance extracted (AVE). According to the findings presented in Table 1, the factor loading values of thirteen items across three variables surpass the recommended threshold of 0.7, as proposed by Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2011). According to Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2011), it is necessary for the average variance extracted (AVE) of each variable to exceed 0.5. The Fornell-Larcker criterion is employed as a means of assessing the discriminant's validity. According to Fornell & Larcker (1981), utilizing the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for latent variables is recommended. The AVE (average variance extracted) value must exceed the correlations observed between latent variables. The square root of the average variances extracted (AVEs) from Table 2 was more statistically significant than the correlation coefficients between the constructs.

**Table 1: Test Results of the SEM Measurement Model**

Variable	Indicator	Factor loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Human Resource Management Practice	HRMP1	0.893	0.923	0.946	0.813
	HRMP2	0.897			
	HRMP3	0.896			
	HRMP4	0.921			
Work Engagement	WE1	0.916	0.907	0.941	0.843
	WE2	0.922			
	WE3	0.916			
Innovative Work Behavior	IWB1	0.895	0.960	0.968	0.833
	IWB2	0.924			
	IWB3	0.899			
	IWB4	0.915			
	IWB5	0.895			
	IWB6	0.924			

Source: smartPLS-3 output (2022)

**Table 2: Fornell Larcker Criterion**

	HRMP	WE	IWB
HRMP	<b>0.902</b>		
WE	0.456	<b>0.918</b>	
IWB	0.575	0.430	<b>0.913</b>

Source: smartPLS-3 output (2022)

### Structural Model

The predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) and coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) can be employed to assess the structural model. The  $R^2$  values for all endogenous variables indicate the degree to which each variable accounts for variance. According to Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2011),  $R^2$  values of 0.75, 0.5, and 0.25 represent strong, moderate, and poor levels of association, respectively. The study's findings revealed that the  $R^2$  values for WE and IWB were 0.208 and 0.366, respectively. As stated by Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2011),  $Q^2$  measures the predictive efficacy of models when applied to data not used during the model's development, indicating its predictive relevance. A  $Q^2$  score greater than zero indicates the model's adequate predictive capability. All  $Q^2$  values, including WE (0.166) and IWB (0.297), were more significant than 0, indicating the model has predictive relevance.

The variance inflation factor (VIF) was used to assess the existence of multicollinearity among the variables. The findings suggest that the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for HRMP and WE are 1.262 and 1.261, respectively. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values derived from the multicollinearity test were all less than 3.3. (Kock, 2015) offered evidence to back up the claim that common method bias and multicollinearity did not affect the structural model under investigation.

**Table 3: Result Structural Model**

Variable	Path Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value
HRMP -> IWB	0.478	5.528	0.000
HRMP -> WE	0.456	4.986	0.000
WE -> IWB	0.212	2.491	0.013
HRMP -> WE -> IWB	0.097	2.250	0.025

Source: smartPLS-3 output (2022)

### Hypotheses Testing

The results of the hypothesis testing are displayed in Table 3, derived from the analysis of the structural equation model. The results of the analysis indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between HRMP and IWB ( $\beta = 0.478$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). Given that the p-value is less than or equal to 0.05, it can be concluded that HRMP has a positive and significant impact on IWB. The findings of this study provide empirical support for Hypothesis 1, which posits a positive relationship between HRMP and WE ( $\beta = 0.456$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). Given that the p-value is less than or equal to 0.05, it can be concluded that HRMP has a statistically significant and positive impact on EE. The findings of this study provide empirical support for Hypothesis 2. The regression analysis shows that there is a strong negative relationship between WE and IWB ( $\beta = -0.212$ ,  $P = 0.013$ ), which means that WE has a positive and statistically significant effect on IWB, as shown by the p-value being less than or

equal to 0.05. The findings of this study provide empirical support for Hypothesis 3, which suggests a relationship between HRMP and IWB mediated by WE ( $\beta = -0.097, P = 0.025$ ). The significance level of  $p \leq 0.05$  indicates that WE is a mediator in the relationship between HRMP and IWB.

## Discussion

The goal of this study was to find out how HRMP affects IWB. In doing this, we also consider how WE can act as mediator and examine the direct and indirect links between these variables. This is explained in terms of how it relates to research hypotheses.

The study showed a strong and positive relationship between the hotel employees' perception of the organization's HRMP and their IWB. The present findings support previous studies (Bos-Nehles, Bondarouk, & Nijenhuis, 2017; Sanz-Valle & Jiménez-Jiménez, 2018), which suggest a positive relationship between hotel employees' perceptions of HRMP and their IWB. The study's findings indicate a favourable relationship between employees' perceptions of HRM practices and the enhancement of innovative work behaviour. These findings indicate that employees' perceptions that understanding human resource practice is likely to play an essential role in helping improve the efficiency and generalizability of human resource management practice models provide insight into how hotel employees can be motivated to produce innovative work outcomes.

According to the findings, hotel employees' perceptions of the organization's HRMP and WE had a considerable positive correlation. This result confirms the findings of (Alfes *et al.*, 2013; Alias, Nor, & Hassan, 2016) that the perception of HRMP by hotel employees is a predictor of WE. The discovery suggests that how employees view the organization's practices in managing human resources impacts their level of engagement. Robust HRM attributions assure employees have access to psychological resources, enhancing motivation. As a result, employees have increased engagement in their work due to finding it both stimulating and gratifying (Chacko & Conway, 2019).

The data suggested a significantly positive correlation, as measured by statistical significance, between the perceptions of hotel employees toward WE and IWB. The results of this investigation support the conclusions of several earlier studies that have demonstrated a favourable relationship between WE and IWB (De Spiegelaere *et al.*, 2014; De Spiegelaere, Van Gyes, & Van Hootegem, 2016). The findings of this study suggest that individuals who exhibit high levels of work engagement are more inclined to provide innovative outputs in their profession. The findings of this study suggest that hotel employees exhibit greater levels of innovative behaviour in their professional practice when they allocate higher levels of personal energy and resources toward their work.

The examination of the structural equation model demonstrated that WE played a significant role in mediating the connection between HRMP perception and IWB. Individuals who positively perceive their organization's HRM practices are more likely to be engaged with their employment and, consequently, have a greater propensity to implement IWB. WE are suitably situated to mediate the association between HRM practices and innovative work behaviour. This is due to its comprehensive nature, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and physical aspects.

## Conclusion

This study investigates and comprehends the impact of HRMP on the IWB of hotel employees. The results of this study suggest that HRMP has substantial beneficial impacts on both individual work behaviour (IWB) and work engagement (WE). Similarly, WE substantially positively impacts the



IWB of hotel employees. The research also demonstrates that WE significantly mediated the association between HRMP perception and IWB.

When hotel employees receive support from the organization through human resource management practices, they will show involvement in their work. The finding shows that positive perceptions of the HRMP system will trigger employee work engagement. Likewise, hotel employees' high levels of involvement will provide innovation in their work. The study results also show that hotel employees with positive perceptions of human resource management practices will continue to involve themselves in work and behave innovatively. The findings indicate that human resource management practices have the potential to stimulate hotel employees to dedicate personal energy to their tasks, thereby fostering their motivation to introduce novel concepts and solutions.

## **Recommendations**

This study's findings hold significance for theoretical frameworks and practical applications. This study provides a theoretical framework that seeks to clarify the cause-and-effect relationship between variables and the innovative work behaviour of hotel employees. Additionally, this study contributes to the understanding of hotel employees' perceptions of other constructs within the context of HRMP. The findings of this research hold practical significance for managers in the field of human resource development within the hotel industry. The study presents a conceptual framework that enables management to comprehensively understand how human resource management practices and work engagement influence the innovative work behaviour of hotel workers. Furthermore, this study offers a strategic approach for managers to cultivate innovative work behaviour among hotel employees by emphasizing human resource management (HRM) techniques. Thirdly, implementing HRMP to promote creative work behaviour within a company may be hindered if the organization lacks employee involvement.

## **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

## **Acknowledgment**

The Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) at Sam Ratulangi University in Manado, Indonesia, assisted with this research. [Grant number: 573/UN12.13/LT/2022].

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