

Unveiling the Link: HR Practices and Innovative Work Behavior Among IT Professionals in North India

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to empirically test the relationship and effect between innovative work behavior (IWB) and human resource (HR) practices, looking at how particular HR policies and practices encourage innovation and creativity in businesses. Businesses are placing a greater emphasis on innovation in order to stay competitive, therefore it's critical to comprehend how HR practices support employee-driven innovation. To test the statistical significance, the data was obtained from information technology (IT) professionals working in the IT sector through reliability-tested scales in northern India via a questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS. Correlation and regression analysis were used to examine the data. The study examined important HR aspects and examined how they affect workers' capacity to generate, promote and execute innovative ideas. Considering the findings, the results showed that IWB is greatly enhanced by HRP that will support employee empowerment, ongoing learning, and intrinsic motivation. For HR managers looking to foster an innovative atmosphere, this article offers insightful information.

Keywords

HR practices (HRP), innovative work behavior (IWB), SPSS version 30.0.0

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Introduction

Organizations nowadays encounter remarkable opportunities and challenges due to the increased competitiveness spurred by globalization, the rapid advancement

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of technologies, and shorter life-spans of product cycles and services in the 21st century. Organizations must deal with an abundance of issues, such as a lack of innovation and a lack of creative behavior in the workplace. Organizations suffer significant losses when they are unable to compete with other organizations due to a lack of innovative behavior. Therefore, innovation and originality are crucial components to obtain a competitive edge to adapt and embrace the changes taking place in the corporate environment to survive, maintain, and expand in the current dynamic and competitive climate. The continuous effort to innovate is crucial for organizations today. Innovation enhances the value of the organization and plays a key role in the rapidly changing environment to cope with the essential changes to gain a competitive edge over the rival organization (Janssen, 2000). Given the growing significance of innovation, researchers are increasingly trying to determine when and why people behave in innovative ways within their organizations. Scholars contend that achieving such important employee contributions requires the creation and execution of human resource management (HRM) (Guest, 1987). In order to obtain a competitive edge, HRM is commonly regarded to be the management of people and the workplace, comprising both line management and HR specialists. Although extensive study has been conducted over the past two decades, and strategic HRM researchers have agreed that HRM is linked to organizational outcomes, the understanding of the “HRM-performance” relationship, including innovative behavior, is still subject to debate (Nishii et al., 2008). Literature has indicated the importance of innovative work behavior (IWB) and how HRM practices play an essential role in it. Researchers in different articles studied different HRM practices with IWB. Previous research studies have linked the existence of HRM practices, mainly focusing on enhancing skills, motivation, or different opportunities to encourage extra-role behavior on the employee’s side in any particular context.

In general many studies look into the connection between HRP and IWB and has been seen in broad acceptance in the Hotel industry in Pakistan (Jan et al., 2021), the Manufacturing industry in Pakistan (Yasir & Majid, 2020) and Dutch (Bos-Nehlas & Veenendaal, 2019), ICT companies in Thailand (Koednok & Sungsanit, 2018), universities in Vietnamese and cape town (Opoku et al., 2020; Tran et al., 2020), Indian SMEs (Singh et al., 2021) but this study highlights the gap that HR practices and IWB are not covered in the information technology (IT) sector. In developing nations, not enough is known about the best HR practices for managing IT experts for global competitiveness (Kong et al., 2011). The IT/ITES sector is viewed as one of the fastest-growing sectors in India. To be successful in the market, IT companies need to adequately prepare employees for a global environment (Raman et al., 2013). The Indian IT industry is up against a ton of competition and obstacles in the international market. Employees must innovate and adapt to changes to remain competitive. The report will highlight various HR practices influencing innovative behavior among employees and how to improve it as well. Since there is a great need for research in this field due to the service sector’s explosive growth, particularly in the IT sector, this study has looked at how HR practices affect innovative behavior.

Literature Review

For reviewing the literature, the bibliometric analysis technique was used. The keywords used for identifying the articles on the topic were “HRM Practices” OR “HR Practices” AND “Innovative work behaviour” OR “Innovative work behavior.” A total of 27 articles were identified. The VOS viewer software was used to analyse the core authors with six clusters (Figure 1). It was found that HR practices have a significant impact on IWB in different sectors in India and other countries, but the main gap identified from this literature is that the IT sector is still unexplored in this topic (Table 1).

Research Objectives

- 1. To identify the relationship between HRP and IWB among IT employees.
- 2. To examine the impact of HRP on IWB among IT employees.
- 3. To determine whether there is an association between demographic variables and IWB among IT employees.

Hypotheses Development

Based on the objectives and literature review, the following hypothesis is proposed by the researcher:

- H_1 : There is a significant association between HRP and IWB among IT employees.
- H_2 : There is a significant impact of HRP on IWB among IT employees.
- H_3 : There is a significant difference in the levels of IWB among IT employees with regard to demographic variables (i.e., marital status, gender, age, years of experience, educational qualification)
- H_{3a} : There is a significant difference in the levels of IWB among IT employees with regard to marital status.

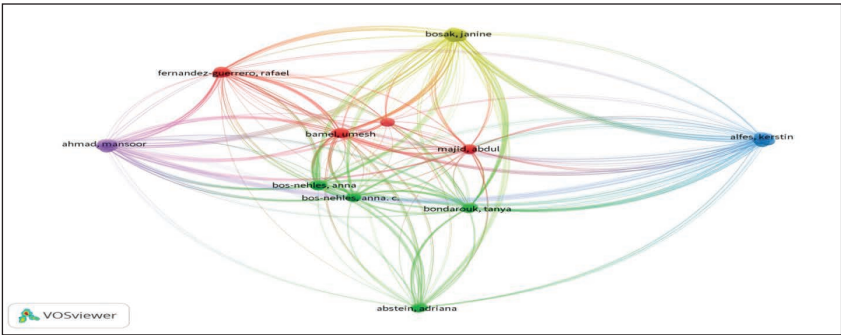


Figure 1. Network Visualization of Authors.

Source: Vosviewer.

Table 1. Literature Review.

Title	Authors and Years	Sample	Research Method and Techniques	Findings	Source Title
“Proud of my organization: Conceptualizing the relationships between high-performance HR practices, leadership support, organizational pride, identification and innovative work behaviour”	Deepa et al. (2024)	370 employees in India	Survey (purposive and snowball sampling)	High-performance HR practices influence IWB	“International Journal of Organizational Analysis”
“The impact of high commitment work practices on radical innovation: Innovative work behaviour and knowledge sharing as mediators”	Thneibat (2024)	408 employees; pharmaceutical, manufacturing and technological industries in Jordan	Survey	HRM practices impact IWB	“International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management”
“Middle-managers’ innovative behavior: The roles of psychological empowerment and personal initiative”	Mustafa et al. (2023)	110 middle managers	Survey	Focuses on the psychological factors that affect middle managers’ IWB and how HR practices might encourage middle managers to take initiative at work	“International Journal of Human Resource Management”
“Impact of HRM practices on innovative behaviour: Mediating role of talent development climate in Indian firms”	Datta et al. (2023)	307 and 403 employees working in Indian MNCs	A qualitative and quantitative approach	HRM practices serve as significant for employees’ IWB and highlight TDC’s mediation effect	“International Journal of Human Resource Management”

(Table 1 continued)

(Table 1 continued)

Title		Authors and Years	Sample	Research Method and Techniques	Findings	Source Title
"Collaboration-based HR systems and innovative work behaviors: The role of information exchange and HR system strength"		Colakoglu et al. (2022)	204 employees working in seven manufacturing sectors across 50 departments in Turkey	Survey	HR practices influence their IWBs: Idea generation, promotion, and execution	"European Management Journal"
		Phairat and Potpiroon (2022)	710 individuals; the telecommunication sector in Thailand	Two-stage cluster sampling	Psychological empowerment and the perceived climate for innovation acted as a full and sequential mediating factor between HPWS and employees' IWB	"ABAC Journal"
"Do HR practices facilitate innovative work behaviour? Empirical evidence from higher education institutes"		Zreen et al. (2021)	367 participants working in Pakistani universities	Survey	Training and development, as well as the selection, are key factors in encouraging innovative work behavior	"Human Systems Management"
"HRM practices and innovative work behavior within the hotel industry in Pakistan: Harmonious passion as a mediator"		Jan et al. (2021)	220 employees; working in hotels; Pakistan	Survey	Harmonious passion mediates the relationship between HR practices and IWB	"Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism"

(Table 1 continued)

(Table 1 continued)

Title	Authors and Years	Sample	Research Method and Techniques	Findings	Source Title
"The mediating effect of meaningful work between human resource practices and innovative work behavior: A study of emerging market"	Singh et al. (2021)	199 employees; Indian SMEs	Cross-sectional study	HR practices (training, staffing, and participatory decision-making) are positively associated with IWB and performance-based evaluation and reward are negatively associated with IWB	"Employee Relations"
"High-involvement HRM practices and innovative work behavior among production-line workers: Mediating role of employee's functional flexibility"	Yasir and Majid (2020)	894 employees; manufacturing industry	Survey	Ability, motivation, and opportunity-enhanced practices are the three aspects of HI HRM practices that directly impact IWB	"Employee Relations"
"New times for HRM? Well-being oriented management (WOM), harmonious work passion and innovative work behavior"	Salas-Vallina et al. (2020)	362 senior managers; Spanish firm	Survey	WOM significantly impacts IWB	"Employee Relations"
"High involvement HR systems and innovative work behaviour: The mediating role of psychological empowerment, and the moderating roles of manager and co-worker support"	Rehman et al. (2019)	51 software firms in Pakistan; 800 employees	Survey	Motivation-enhancing HR practices directly influence IWB	"European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology"

(Table 1 continued)

(Table 1 continued)

Title	Authors and Years	Sample	Research Method and Techniques	Findings	Source Title
"Perceptions of HR practices and innovative work behavior: The moderating effect of an innovative climate"	Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal (2019)	463 participants working in four Dutch Manufacturing companies	Survey	HR practices (information sharing, training and development) are supportive supervision) are favorable with IWB and compensation is negatively associated with IWB	"International Journal of Human Resource Management"
"Perceptions of HRM and their effect on dimensions of innovative work behaviour: Evidence from a manufacturing firm"	Veenendaal and Bondarouk (2015)	328 workers working in Dutch manufacturing companies	Survey	Three dimensions of IWB are influenced by perceived HR practices	"Management Revue"
"How do high performance work systems influence organizational innovation in professional service firms?"	Fu et al. (2015)	195 employees; 120 Irish accounting firms	Survey	High-performance work systems significantly associated with employees' IWB	"Employee Relations"
"Exploring HRM meta-features that foster employees' innovative work behaviour in times of increasing work-life conflict"	Abstein and Spieth (2014)	Service and manufacturing industries in Germany	Qualitative, interview-study approach	HRM contributes to IWB and diminishes the feeling of work-family conflict	"Creativity and Innovation Management"
"The relationship between line manager behavior, perceived HRM practices, and individual performance: Examining the mediating role of engagement"	Alfes et al. (2013)	1796 participants; service sector; UK	Survey	HRM practices influence IWM through employee engagement	"Human Resource Management"

H_{3b} : There is a significant difference in the levels of IWB among IT employees with regard to gender.

H_{3c} : There is a significant difference in the levels of IWB among IT employees with regard to age.

H_{3d} : There is a significant difference in the levels of IWB among IT employees with regard to years of experience.

H_{3e} : There is a significant difference in the levels of IWB among IT employees with regard to educational qualification.

Research Methodology

1. Data collection and sample

The sample was selected from the IT companies working in the northern region of India. Middle-level management from IT organizations are the study's respondents. Questionnaire surveys were used to collect the data. The questionnaire included questions on HRP and IWB. The eligibility requirements set forth for the sample selection process were used to choose the respondents. A total of 250 respondents from IT organizations in the northern region received questionnaires. After the screening process, all irrelevant or incomplete responses were eliminated and the remaining samples included 180 (72%) respondents. A non-probability snowball strategy was used to generate additional connections with respondents. The questionnaire was created in both modes, that is, a self-administered questionnaire and via E-mail digitally.

2. Measure

The data for this study were gathered through a survey method. The questionnaire is divided into three pieces. There are 35 items on the HR practices scale. Responses are gathered using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The 10-item IWB Scale is included in the second section. The Likert scale included five points, with 1 denoting "never" and 5 denoting "always." Demographic variables are included as research control variables in the third section.

3. Data analysis

SPSS version 30.0.0. software was used to analyse the researcher's hypothetical model using correlation, regression, independent *t*-test, and one-way ANOVA.

Finding and Analysis

According to reliability analyses, the Cronbach alpha values of every construct are higher than the generally accepted cut-off point of .70. IWB was measured by the 10-item scale of which the alpha value is 0.939. HRP was measured by the

Table 2. Reliability Analyses.

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Human resource practices	35	0.801
Innovative work behavior	10	0.939

Table 3. Summarizes Correlation Results.

		HRP	IWB
HRP	Pearson correlation	1	0.358
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	180	180
IWB	Pearson correlation	0.358	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	180	180

Notes: At the 0.001 level (2-tailed), Correlation is significant.

35-item scale of which Cronbach alpha is 0.801 (Table 2). So, it is clear from these results that our scales are valid for measuring the research variables and moving forward with additional analyses to test the study’s hypotheses.

*H*₁: Correlation analysis.

HRP and IWB have a weak positive and statistically significant Pearson correlation ($r = 0.358, p < .001$). *H*₁ was therefore supported. This explains that HRP is significantly correlated with IWB. The results are summarized in Table 3.

*H*₂: Regression analysis.

The hypothesis examines the substantial effect of HRP on IWB. To test *H*₂, the dependent variable IWB was regressed on the predictive variable HRP. HRP significantly predicted IWB, $F(1,178) = 26.179, p < .001$, which shows that HRP can play a key role in shaping IWB ($b = 0.465, p < .001$). These findings show that HRP has a statistically significant effect on IWB. Additionally, $R^2 = 0.128$ shows that the model predicts 12.8% of the variance in IWB. The results are summarized in Table 4. Hence, *H*₂ is supported. This demonstrates that IWB was affected by HR practices.

*H*₃: Descriptive analysis.

Table 5 reports the demographic details of respondents in the form of gender, age, educational qualification, marital status, and years of experience.

The first demographic variable was gender, in which respondents comprised 109 (representing 60.4%) males and 71 (representing 39.4%) females. After that, marital status in which respondents comprised 52 (representing 28.9%) married and 128 (representing 71.1%) unmarried/single. Next, age in which respondents comprised 51 (representing 28.3%) fall under the age group of 18–25 years, 115 (representing 63.9%) fall under the age group of 26–35 years, 13 (representing 7.2%) fall under the age group of 36–45 years. Next, the educational qualification of the respondents, in which most of them are post-graduate (representing 49.4%).

Table 4. Regression Results.

Hypothesis	Regression Weights	Beta Coefficients	R ²	F	p Value	Hypothesis Supported
H ₂	HRP→IWB	0.465	0.128	26.179	.000	Yes

Notes: $p < .001$.

Table 5. Demographic Variables.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	180	1	2	1.39	0.49		
Male						109	60.4
Female						71	39.4
Marital status	180	1	2	1.71	0.455		
Married						52	28.9
Unmarried/single						128	71.1
Age	180	1	4	1.80	0.583		
18–25 years						51	28.3
26–35 years						115	63.9
36–45 years						13	7.2
46–59 years						1	0.6
60 years and above						0	0
Educational qualification	180	1	4	1.71	0.722		
Graduate						75	41.7
Post-graduate						89	49.4
Professional course						10	5.6
Others						6	3.3
Total work experience	180	1	5	1.47	0.828		
1–5 years						125	69.4
6–10 years						35	19.4
11–15 years						12	6.7
16–20 years						7	3.9
21 years and above						1	0.6

The last demographic variable was years of experience in which the respondents have experience of more than 21 years, comprising 1 (representing 0.6%) respondent, 7 (representing 3.9%) having experience between 16 and 20 years, 12 presenting 6.7%) having experience between 11 and 15 years, 35 (representing 19.4%) having experience between 6 and 10 years and the last 125 (representing 69.4%) having experience between 1 and 5 years.

Table 6. Difference in Job Satisfaction in Married and Single.

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances							t-test for Equality of Means				
		Mean	SD	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper
DV	Married	3.8096	0.7673	0.358	0.550	0.348	178	0.728	0.04165	0.11976	-0.19469 0.27798
	Single	3.7680	0.7119								

H_{3a} : Independent sample T-test.

To compare the IWB of married and single, a *t*-test of independent samples was used. The scores varied significantly ($t(178) = 0.348, p = .728$), with the mean score for married people ($M = 3.81, SD = 0.76$) being higher than that of single people ($M = 3.76, SD = 0.71$). There was no statistical significance in the magnitude of the mean differences (mean difference = 0.042, 95% IWB: -0.195 to 0.278). The findings are summarized in Table 6. Hence, H_{3a} was NOT supported. The results showed that there was no noticeable change in the degree of IWB among IT professionals based on their marital status.

H_{3b} : Independent sample T-test.

To compare the IWB among males and females, an independent samples *t*-test was used. The scores varied significantly ($t(178) = -0.318, p = .751$), with the mean score for males ($M = 3.7661, SD = 0.7112$) being lower than that of females ($M = 3.8014, SD = 0.7539$). There was no statistical significance in the magnitude of the mean differences (mean difference = -0.035, 95% IWB: -0.254 to 0.183). The findings are summarized in Table 7. Hence, H_{3b} was NOT supported. This explains that there was no significant change in the levels of IWB among the employees with respect to gender.

H_{3c} : One-way ANOVA.

The hypothesis tests whether IWB differs across varied age groups within the IT professional. IT professionals were put together into five Groups (A: 18–25 years; B: 26–35 years; C: 36–45 years; D: 46–59 years; E: 60 years and above). The findings of the ANOVA indicate that there is no significant distinction between the groups' scores for IWB. Table 8 shows the summary of the findings. Hence, H_{3c} is NOT Supported ($F_{3, 176} = 0.573, p > .05$).

H_{3d} : One-way ANOVA.

The hypothesis tests if IWB differs across levels of experience among IT professionals. So, these employees were put together into five Groups (A: 0–5 years; B: 6–10 years; C: 11–15 years; D: 16–20 years; E: 21 years and above). The findings

Table 7. Difference in Innovative Work Behavior Between Males and Females.

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances							t-test for Equality of Means				
							Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Mean	SD	F	Sig.	t	df					Lower	Upper
DV Male	3.7661	0.7112	0.100	0.752	-0.318	178	0.751	-0.03535	0.11107	-0.2545	0.18383
Female	3.8014	0.7539									

Table 8. Summarizes One-way Anova Results.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				ANOVA		
Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Statistics	Sig.	F	Sig.
1	3.7490	0.78673	0.579	0.561	0.573	0.633
2	3.8122	0.67215				
3	3.6769	0.96190				
4	3.0000	—				

Table 9. Summarizes One-way Anova Results.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				ANOVA		
Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Statistics	Sig.	F	Sig.
1	3.6984	0.72200	0.350	0.789	1.902	0.112
2	3.9657	0.74120				
3	4.1000	0.66195				
4	3.8714	0.63170				
5	3.0000	—				

of the ANOVA indicate that there is no significant distinction between the groups' scores for IWB. Table 9 shows the summary of the findings. Hence, H_{3d} is NOT Supported ($F_{3, 175} = 1.902, p > .05$).

H_{3e} : One-way ANOVA.

The hypothesis tests if IWB differs across levels of educational qualification among IT professionals. So, employees were put together into four Groups (Group 1: Graduate; Group 2: Post-Graduate; Group 3: Professional Courses; Group 4: Others). The findings of the ANOVA indicate that there is no significant distinction between the groups' scores for IWB. Table 10 shows the summary of the findings. Hence, H_{3e} is NOT Supported ($F_{3, 176} = 0.651, p > .05$).

Table 10. Summarizes One-way Anova Results.

Groups	Test of Homogeneity of Variances				ANOVA	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Leneve's Statistics	Sig.	F	Sig.
1	3.7400	0.85298	2.759	0.044	0.651	0.583
2	3.7910	0.62752				
3	3.7500	0.66374				
4	401667	0.44121				

Discussion and Conclusion

This study sought to explain the connections between employees’ creative behavior and HRM practices (training and development, job security, autonomy, rewards, etc.). All of the constructs’ measuring scales were adapted from the pertinent literature. This study adds to literature knowledge by showing the connection between HRM practices and creative work practices, who work in the IT sector. The proposed model’s variables were examined in connection to one another using SPSS version 30.0.0. The findings showed that IWB and HRM practices are positively correlated. The results were consistent with earlier studies (Bos-Nehlas & Veenendaal, 2019; Yasir & Majid, 2020; Koednok & Sungsanit, 2018; Opoku et al., 2020; Singh et al., 2021; Tran et al., 2020). By observing the direct effects of HR practices on IWB, we have thereby developed a profound grasp of the effects that HR practices have on employees’ creativity. Innovation is essential for long-term success because nowadays organizations operate in a highly competitive and dynamic environment, as creative and original ideas reside in the minds of employees, people are essential to innovation. In the course of their regular work, employees become thoroughly acquainted with the operation and procedures of the company. They are able to highlight any gaps and find possible areas for advancements or enhancements. Employees not only come up with ideas, but also help to secure support for them and eventually see to it whether they are executed successfully because of their conviction, enthusiasm, and dedication. Organizations must understand how to encourage and mold workers’ creative work behaviors.

There are various constraints to this study. The stated hypotheses mentioned in this study were examined based on the perceptions of middle-level employees in the North Indian IT sector, which is the first aspect of the current study. The findings may be more broadly applicable if future research additionally examines how top-level and lower-level employees perceive HR practices and IWB. Therefore, it is important to use caution when attempting to generalize the study’s findings to other domains. Second, cross-sectional data served as the foundation for the analysis. In order to get over this restriction, additional research can evaluate the suggested links using longitudinal data from a different industry or geographic area.

Implications of the Study

As a result of answering the research objectives, the study's conclusions have significant conceptual and practical ramifications for the worldwide scenario in general and the IT sector of India in particular. The study adds to the HRM literature by validating the links that already exist. The findings will assist managers in making sure that HRM practices are planned to minimize job shifts, employee churn, and feel motivated, which will encourage IT professionals to stay with their existing company even if they are offered opportunities by rivals. Also, if they feel valued at the company, they will remain loyal to their work and that will help to build a long-term relationship with the company. The study affirms that IWB and HR practices are positively correlated. The findings support the widespread implementation of HR practices, which are thought to be crucial for Indian IT companies.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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