

High-performance work systems (HPWS)

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Keywords: high-performance work systems, HPWS, human resources management human resources practices, bundles of HRM practices, tourism workforce

High performance work systems (HPWS) are defined as unique interrelated HRM practices that act in concert to enhance employees' skills, motivation and participation within organizations (Sun *et al.*, 2007). HPWS include practices such as training, selection, employment security, work-life balance, paths for career development, performance appraisals, participation, incentive rewards, and job description (Dorta-Afonso *et al.*, 2021; Sun *et al.*, 2007). Sometimes, authors refer to HPWS using other terms such as "HRM systems" or "High-commitment HR practices". There is a call to establish a consensus on using the "HPWS" term to describe the systems of HRM practices in order to avoid confusion for researchers and practitioners (Kloutsiniotis and Mihail, 2020a) that have been followed on the hospitality and tourism studies that analyze the effects of HPWS on outcomes (Dorta-Afonso *et al.*, 2021; Gürlek, 2021).

Tourism and hospitality organisations (e.g., hotels, travel agencies, car rental companies, etc.) offer services to their clients that are characterized by their intangibility, perishability, heterogeneity and inseparability. The quality of the service provided highly depends on the face-to-face interactions between clients and workers of tourism organizations. Employees are one of the most important assets of tourism organizations due to their crucial role for the quality of service provided. Despite the importance of workers for organizational outcomes, employment is often characterized by negative characteristics such as low wages, lack of employment security and little opportunities for career development among others. Literature on human resources management (HRM) have grown remarkably, placing the focus on how systems or unique practices of HRM positively impact employees' and organizational outcomes. One of the research streams that have gained importance over the last decades is the one that focus on finding the best systems or bundles of HRM practices that are able to enhance outcomes in the hospitality and tourism industry (Kloutsiniotis and Mihail, 2020a).

Tourism and hospitality are labour intensive industries (Figure 1). Job Satisfaction determines employee loyalty and turnover (Stamolampros, Korfiatis, Chalvatzis, Buhalis, 2019). This is reflected on the engagement of employees in the operations and management of tourism organisations (Stamolampros, Korfiatis, Chalvatzis, Buhalis, 2020). Employees directly impact on tourist satisfaction and on organizational performance. Empirical studies on HWPS document the benefits on employment in

hospitality and tourism organizations. The extent to which tourism firms engage in such practices show employees that their employers want to build long-term relationship with them. Therefore, organisations positively impact attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of their workers, that will, in turn, improve organizational performance indicators. In this sense, most of the available empirical evidence on the effects of HPWS on employees' and organizational outcomes is conclusive on their positive repercussions in several sectors of the tourism industry such as hotels (Dorta-Afonso *et al.*, 2021; Gürlek, 2021; Karatepe and Olugbade, 2016), airlines (Alafeshat and Tanova, 2019; Vatankhah *et al.*, 2017) and restaurants (Yang, 2012).

For example Karatepe & Olugbade (2016) found in their study with upscale hotel employees in Nigeria that HPWS enhance workers' engagement which, in turn, leads to less absenteeism and enhanced service recovery and creative performance levels. Recently, Dorta-Afonso *et al.*, (2021) conducted a study with hotel workers in the Canary Islands to prove that HPWS positively impacted workers' motivation, organizational commitment and job satisfaction which would lead to higher levels of overall employees' quality of life and, in turn, to increased levels of individual performance. Gürlek, (2021) conducted a study with senior hotel managers in Turkey to find out that HPWS positively impacted intellectual capital, organizational ambidexterity and knowledge absorptive capacity. In a study carried out with flight attendants in Iran, Vatankhah *et al.*, (2017) found that HPWS are conducive to higher levels of perceived organizational support which would reduce workers counter productive work behaviours. Also in the airline industry, Alafeshat and Tanova, (2019) found that HPWS lead to increase levels of employee engagement that, in turn, improve their satisfaction and retention. Similarly, Yang (2012) carried out a study in the restaurant sector in Taiwan and found that HPWS leads to higher levels of organizational commitment and employees' organizational citizenship behaviours.

However, the recent review by Kloutsiniotis and Mihail, (2020) concluded that research on the HPWS topic has moved forward in the general business but remain delayed in hospitality and tourism. Recent attempts have been made to further understand differential effects of subdimensions of HRM practices and not complete HPWS on employees' outcomes. The ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) theory is one of the most common approaches to identify bundles of HRM practices within HPWS. The AMO model states that HRM practices provide employees with the ability, motivation and opportunity to perform (Macky and Boxall, 2007). Figure 2 captures the three bundles of practices (i.e., ability, motivation and opportunity) that constitute whole systems of HRM practices. Under this view HPWS are constituted by 1) *ability* HRM practices to attract and enhance employees' capabilities to perform properly (e.g., selective hiring, training, professional development), 2) *motivation* HRM practices to incentivise the use of employees' skills into discretionary effort (e.g., performance appraisals, compensation and job security) and 3) *opportunity* HRM practices empower and create appropriate conditions for employees to perform (e.g., employee participation, job enrichment and equal opportunities). Research under this approach still remains in its infancy in the hospitality and tourism context with few contributions bearing in mind the bundles of HRM practices within overall HPWS (Kloutsiniotis and Mihail, 2020b). Three bundles of practices positively impacted both justice climate and service climate in a study carried out in hotels in Greece.

-- Insert figure 1 around here --

In the near future more studies will be carried out to find out which specific bundles of HRM practices are more likely to positively affect employees' and organizational outcomes. Tourism and hospitality HRM practitioners should prioritise such bundles of practices depending on the specific outcomes they are willing to improve. Based on the assumption that not all employees have the same needs within their workplaces, recent studies also called for a closer examination on the effects of HPWS according to the departments in which employees are working (e.g., housekeeping, F&B, front-desk, etc.) (Dorta-Afonso *et al.*, 2021). Hospitality and tourism practitioners should be able to not only prioritize investments of bundles of practices but to maximize its efficiency by differentially orienting them to specific group of workers.

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