

Organisational culture as a moderator in the High-Performance Work Systems [HPWS] innovative work behaviour relationship: Evidence from Ghanaian higher education

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the moderating role of organizational culture in the relationship between High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and employees' innovative work behaviour (IWB) in public tertiary institutions in Northern Ghana. A quantitative approach and cross-sectional survey design were adopted. Data were collected from 322 academic staff through self-administered questionnaires. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling were used to validate the measurement model, while the PROCESS macro was employed to test the moderation effect. The findings revealed that HPWS had a significant positive effect on employees' innovative work behaviour. The moderation analysis further showed that organizational culture had a positive strengthening effect on this relationship. Specifically, the positive influence of HPWS on innovative work behaviour became stronger when employees perceived higher levels of organizational support for innovation, recognition of creativity, outcome excellence, and task-related competence. Thus, supportive organizational culture enhances the effectiveness of HPWS in promoting innovative behaviour among academic staff. The study extends the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity framework and Social Exchange Theory by demonstrating that the effectiveness of HR practices is contingent on the cultural environment in which they are implemented. The findings provide practical implications for university leaders, HR managers, and policymakers, particularly in sub-Saharan African public institutions. Institutions should complement formal HR practices with a culture that promotes creativity, collaboration, recognition, and psychological safety.

Keywords: AMO Framework, Higher Education, High-Performance Work Systems, Innovative Work Behaviour, Organizational Culture, Social Exchange Theory

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced and increasingly competitive global economy, innovation is no longer a luxury but a critical necessity for organizational survival and growth. With constant shifts in consumer expectations, globalization, and technological advancements, organizations face growing pressure to remain agile and adaptive. One of the key drivers of innovation is the behaviour of employees, particularly their willingness and ability to engage in innovative work behaviour (IWB), which involves the generation, promotion, and implementation of novel ideas that benefit organizational goals (Bani-Melhem et al., 2018). Research suggests that employees are not only the bearers of innovation but also the catalysts through which creative ideas are transformed into concrete organizational outcomes (Awang et al., 2019). Among the human resource practices aimed at enhancing employee performance and innovation, High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) have attracted significant scholarly attention. HPWS is a bundle of interrelated human resource practices designed to improve employees' abilities, motivation, and opportunities to contribute to organizational goals (Jiang et al., 2012; Miao et al., 2020). These practices include selective recruitment, extensive training, performance-based rewards, employee participation, and information sharing (Kataria et al., 2019). HPWS has been linked to outcomes such as job satisfaction (Fabi et al., 2015), work engagement (Goyal & Patwardhan, 2020), organizational innovation (Zheng et al., 2020), and firm performance (Esch et al., 2016). Yet, the influence of HPWS on employee innovative work behaviour remains insufficiently understood, particularly within the context of developing economies like Ghana (Farrukh et al., 2021).

While evidence exists suggesting that HPWS can enhance innovative behaviours, emerging literature points to variability in these outcomes based on contextual factors such as leadership style, organizational support, and, notably,

organizational culture (Khan et al., 2020; Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2019). Organizational culture, defined as the shared values, beliefs, and assumptions that guide behaviour in organizations (Cameron, 2008), plays a central role in shaping how employees interpret and respond to HR practices. A culture that supports creativity, autonomy, and risk-taking can significantly strengthen the impact of HPWS on innovative work behaviours (Fareed et al., 2016). Despite the established role of both HPWS and organizational culture in fostering innovation, the intersection of these constructs has been underexplored. Much of the existing research focuses on the direct effects of HR practices on innovation or treats organizational culture as an outcome variable rather than a contextual moderator. For example, while Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal (2019) highlight the importance of supportive supervision and information sharing in predicting innovation, their study does not consider how organizational culture might alter these relationships. Similarly there is a question whether HR practices directly influence employee creativity or whether other variables intervene in this relationship. This suggests a significant gap in the literature: the need to understand how organizational culture moderates the relationship between HPWS and innovative work behaviour.

This paper aims to address this gap by investigating the extent to which organizational culture moderates the relationship between high-performance work systems and employee innovative work behaviour. By doing so, the study contributes to both theory and practice. Theoretically, it extends the AMO framework (Ability, Motivation, and Opportunity) by integrating it with cultural contingency theory, suggesting that the effectiveness of HR practices is conditional on the cultural context in which they are implemented (Diana et al., 2021). Practically, the study provides insights for HR managers and organizational leaders seeking to foster innovation among employees by tailoring HR practices to align with the prevailing organizational culture. Within the Ghanaian context, collectivist values may promote collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective problem-solving, while power-distance norms may discourage employee voice, risk-taking, and the open expression of novel ideas, thereby influencing the extent to which organizational culture strengthens the relationship between HPWS and innovative work behaviour (Hofstede, 2011). The study focuses on public tertiary institutions in the five Northern Regions of Ghana, where innovation is increasingly seen as vital for academic excellence and societal impact. While many HRM studies rely on managerial perceptions of HR practices, this study draws from employee-level data, which has been shown to more accurately predict employee attitudes and behaviours (Jensen et al., 2013).

1.1 Research Objectives

1. How do the mechanisms underlying HPWS influence employees' innovative work behaviour?
2. How does organisational culture facilitate or hinder the influence of HPWS on employees' innovative work behaviour?

By focusing on this interaction, the study not only contributes to closing a critical gap in HRM and innovation research but also offers practical pathways for organizations aiming to embed innovation into their human resource systems.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 The AMO Framework

The AMO framework, first popularized by Appelbaum et al. (2000), posits that employee performance is determined by three essential components: ability, motivation, and opportunity. Ability-enhancing practices include recruitment and training, which equip employees with the necessary skills and knowledge. Motivation-enhancing practices involve rewards, incentives, and performance evaluations that encourage employees to put forth discretionary effort. Opportunity-enhancing practices include employee involvement in decision making and team-based work structures that provide employees with avenues to contribute their ideas and creativity (Janssen, 2000). Within the context of HPWS, the AMO framework offers a compelling rationale for understanding how a bundle of HR practices can drive innovative work behaviour. HPWS strategies align with the AMO components by selecting the right individuals (ability), incentivizing them through rewards (motivation), and creating platforms for employee voice (opportunity). Studies have shown that HR practices such as training and employee involvement directly enhance the innovative capacity of workers (Escribá-Carda et al., 2017).

However, the AMO framework alone does not sufficiently account for the contextual and environmental factors that may influence the relationship between HR practices and innovative behaviour. This is where organizational culture becomes essential. According to Lepak et al. (2006), HR practices must not only be internally consistent but also aligned with the external and internal context of the organization to be effective. An organization that values innovation, risk-taking, and collaboration is more likely to see positive returns on its investment in HPWS. For instance, a culture that supports knowledge sharing and psychological safety can amplify the opportunity component of AMO by encouraging employees to voice novel ideas without fear of retribution (Park & Jo 2018; Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Cultural

factors can also strengthen or weaken the motivation to innovate. In organizations with clan or adhocracy cultures characterized by flexibility, autonomy, and participation, employees are more likely to feel psychologically empowered to take risks and think creatively (Cameron, 2008; Balaji et al., 2020). Conversely, in hierarchical or market-oriented cultures that prioritize stability, rules, and efficiency, the motivation to innovate may be dampened despite the presence of HPWS. Therefore, this study extends the AMO model by positioning organizational culture as a boundary condition that shapes the effectiveness of ability, motivation, and opportunity-enhancing HR practices in generating innovative work behaviour.

2.1.2 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET), originally developed by Blau (1964), offers another theoretical lens for understanding how HPWS influences employee behaviour. At its core, SET is based on the principle of reciprocity: individuals are likely to respond with positive attitudes and behaviours when they perceive that they have been treated fairly and supportively by their organization (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). In the workplace, this means that employees who view HR practices as signals of organizational support are more likely to reciprocate by engaging in behaviours that go beyond formal job descriptions, including innovation. Several studies support the application of SET in the context of HRM and innovation. For example, Chuang and Liao (2010) found that when employees believe HR practices are designed with their well-being in mind, they interpret these efforts as indicators of respect and investment. This perception enhances their affective commitment and encourages them to reciprocate through creative problem-solving and knowledge sharing. Similarly, Bos-Nehles and Veenendaal (2019) argue that HR practices such as supportive supervision and performance feedback contribute to innovative work behaviour by fostering relational trust between employees and the organization.

Organizational culture interacts with these social exchange processes in significant ways. A culture that emphasizes collaboration, mutual respect, and continuous learning reinforces the perception that HR practices are genuine and employee-focused. This enhances the reciprocal exchange relationship between employees and their employer. On the other hand, in a toxic or fear-based culture, even the most progressive HR practices may be perceived as manipulative or disingenuous, thereby weakening the exchange relationship and diminishing the likelihood of innovative behaviour (Nazir et al., 2019). Fareed et al. (2016) found that organizational culture moderated the relationship between HPWS and human capital development in the telecommunications sector of Pakistan. Similarly, Scott and Bruce (1994) demonstrated that positive organizational culture intensified the impact of affective commitment on job satisfaction. These findings suggest that culture plays a crucial role in either enabling or hindering the reciprocity process central to SET. Thus, combining SET with the AMO framework provides a robust foundation for understanding the mechanisms and conditions under which HPWS influences employee innovation.

The AMO framework and Social Exchange Theory provide a comprehensive explanation of how and why HPWS may lead to increased innovative work behaviour. The AMO framework emphasizes the functional design of HR practices, while SET focuses on the psychological mechanisms of employee reciprocation. By integrating organizational culture as a moderating variable, this study adds a contextual dimension that bridges both theories. It proposes that the effectiveness of HR practices in fostering innovation depends not only on their design and delivery but also on the cultural environment in which they are embedded. This theoretical integration is particularly relevant in the context of emerging economies like Ghana, where socio-cultural dynamics may significantly influence workplace behaviours. Prior studies have largely focused on Western or Asian settings, leaving a gap in our understanding of how HRM systems function in sub-Saharan African contexts (Singh et al., 2021; Afsar et al., 2019). By exploring the moderating role of organizational culture, this paper contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the HPWS–innovation relationship and advances both theory and practice in strategic human resource management.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Concept of Innovative Work Behaviour

Innovative work behaviour is considered an important pre-requisite for organizational survival (Bani-Melhem et al., 2018; Lukes & Stephan, 2017) and a sustained competitive advantage (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Jada et al., 2019). With increasing competition, globalization, and an ever-changing global business environment, innovative work behaviour is seen as a major contributor to both employee job performance (Kim & Koo, 2017) as well as organizational performance (Omri, 2015;). As a result, this concept has piqued the curiosity of academics and practitioners alike (Akram et al., 2016; Bani-Melhem et al., 2018). Innovative work behaviour, sometimes referred to as innovative behaviour and employee innovative behaviour (Asurakkody & Shin, 2018), serves as the foundation for organizational innovation and may operate as a deterrent to rival duplication (Ottenbacher, 2007). Innovative work behaviour is even more critical in service-oriented firms because of continuously changing customer expectations that necessitate individuals with a proclivity for innovative behaviours (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Bani-Melhem et al., 2018). Work performance, which includes innovative behavior, is typically categorized as either "in-role" or "extra-role" performance

(Kwon & Kim, 2020). Innovative work behavior, however, has been argued by some authors to be conceptually distinct from in-role and extra-role performances due to its expansion beyond mandatory boundaries (Mehmood et al., 2022). Furthermore, even though innovative work behaviour is related closely to creativity, these concepts have been argued to be conceptually different (Kim & Lee, 2013; Xerri & Brunetto, 2013). Unlike innovative work behavior, which comprises a human socio-psychological process concerned more with the implementation of ideas, creativity is less goal-oriented and focuses on the generation of distinctive and fresh ideas (Xerri & Brunetto, 2013; Abstein & Spieth, 2014). Therefore, it may be argued that originality in the workplace necessitates a creative mindset. Innovative work behaviour is an extra role behaviour that ranges from developing incremental improvements to radically developing novel ideas that affect the organization's processes, products, or services (Zreen et al., 2020). This study adopts the definition proposed by Zreen et al. (2020) because it presents innovative work behaviour as a purposeful process that extends beyond the generation of creative ideas to their adoption and practical implementation within the organization. This perspective is appropriate for the present study because it links employee innovation directly to improvements in organizational processes, products, and services, as well as overall performance. It also aligns with the dimensions presented in Table 1, particularly idea generation, idea promotion or championing, and idea implementation or realization. Accordingly, innovative work behaviour is conceptualized in this study as the generation, promotion, adoption, and implementation of novel ideas that improve an organization's processes, products, or services and contribute to enhanced organizational performance.

2.2.2 Dimensions of Innovative Behaviour

As is the case with the definition of innovation, there is no agreement on the multidimensional nature of innovative work behaviour. The dimensions range from one (George & Zhou, 2001; Hu et al., 2009), through two (Dorenbosch et al., 2005; Krause, 2004), three (Janssen, 2000), four (Kleysen & Street, 2001), five dimensions (Lepak et al., 2006), six dimensions (Lukes & Stephan, 2017) and even eight (Asurakkody & Shin, 2018). According to some authors (Janssen, 2000, 2003; Scott & Bruce, 1994), innovative work behaviour is a three-stage process that entails idea development, idea promotion, and idea realization. Employees can contribute to innovation within their organization through the generation of new ideas, by communicating new ideas to their co-workers and supervisors, and by working to implement the ideas they or their co-workers have developed into innovations. Many researchers agree with this definition, stating that innovative workplace behaviour consists of four distinct phases: discovery, creation, advocacy, and actualization. According to Lukes and Stephan (2017), innovative work behaviour is a six-step process that includes coming up with ideas, looking for more ideas, sharing those ideas with others, developing a plan to put those ideas into action, enlisting help from others, facing and overcoming resistance, and producing Opportunities are explored, ideas are generated, promoted, realized, and maintained as part of a five-stage process that Zhu (2015) call "creative work behaviour." Table 1 presents a summary of dimensions of innovative work behaviour identified in the literature.

Table 1

Dimension of Innovative Behaviour

Author	Dimension
Janssen (2000)	Idea generation, idea promotion, and idea
	Realization
George & Zhou (2001)	One dimension
Kleysen & Street (2001)	innovative behaviour, opportunity exploration,
	generativity, formative investigation, championing and
	Application
Krause (2004)	generation and testing of ideas and implementation
Dorenbosch et al. (2005)	creativity-oriented behaviour, generation and implementation-oriented behaviour
Hu et al.(2009)	One dimension
De Jong & Den Hartog, (2010)	idea exploration, idea generation, idea championing and idea implementation
Lukes & Stephan (2017)	idea generation, idea search, idea communication, implementation starting strategies, involving others, overcoming obstacles and innovation outputs, opportunity exploration, idea generation
Asurakkody & Shin (2018)	opportunity exploration, idea generation, idea search, idea communication, idea promotion, championing, application, and overcoming obstacles
Lambriex-Schmitz et al., (2020)	Opportunity Exploration, Idea Generation, Idea Promotion, Idea Realization and Idea Sustainability.

2.2.3 High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS)

HPWS, also known as High-Performance Human Resource Practices (Ma et al., 2017) or high-performance work practices (Jaiswal & Tyagi, 2020), is a collection of strategies for attracting, retraining, and motivating employees (Zheng et al., 2020). Thus, HPWS is a bundle of HR practices which are geared towards the enhancement of employee performance (Becker 1998; Guthrie et al., 2009) through training, staffing selectivity, job security, empowerment, internal promotion/career opportunities, rewards and teamwork (Farrukh et al., 2022). HPWS mainly focuses on bettering organizational human capital by giving enhanced autonomy, responsibility and decision-making powers to employees and therefore has a great potential as a source of competitive advantage (Farrukh et al., 2021). HPWS can be explained as the set of complementary work practices consisting of three broad areas, i.e., high employee involvement practices, human resource practices and rewards and commitment practices (Jaiswal & Tyagi, 2020) that has significance for the organizational success.

2.2.4 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is the process by which behaviours, attitudes, beliefs, and habits influence how individuals behave inside an organization (Khan et al., 2020). Hogan and Coote (2014) explain that organizational culture is a pattern of shared fundamental assumptions that a group develops as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration. These assumptions have been proven to be true, so they are taught to new members as the right way to see, think, and feel about those problems. Organizational culture is the organization's practical attitude, which is formed and recognized through time through a variety of formal or informal social activities (Fareed et al., 2016). Organizational culture can further be described as is the set of values, beliefs, and ways of doing things in a company. It defines the environment in which an employee works and how he or she should behave in order to perform his or her duties (Diana et al., 2021), as well as his or her awareness of what is going on in the organizational environment (Hofstede, 2011). It also has an impact on organizational decision-making, level of authority, and agency theory). Organizational culture acts as a glue, connecting employees and an institutional structure while also promoting good and innovative work behaviour (Khan et al., 2020) and it is, therefore, a critical determinant of innovative work behaviour, as it helps organizational leaders to gain a competitive edge (Eskiler et al., 2016). In addition, organizational culture, particularly a team-oriented culture, has been argued to foster innovation (Stamolampros et al., 2019). Promoting a culture of continuous learning, information sharing, employee empowerment, and social connections among its members, as proposed by Park and Jo (2018), has been shown to increase innovative behavior among workers. Martins and Terblanche (2003) found that innovative behavior is fostered by an organizational culture that places a premium on the contributions of teams and the ideas generated through collaboration and open dialogue among team members. Organizational culture has been found to positively influence work motivation, as well as organizational commitment (Al-Sada et al., 2017). Another study has revealed that organizational culture with flexible, external orientation as well as an open culture, has a positive influence on firms' innovative performance (Laforet, 2017). According to research conducted by Zhu (2015), the company's culture is a major factor in determining how employees feel about and react to technological innovation.

Organizational culture has been conceptualized as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of four dimensions: clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy dimensions (Cameron, 2008). The adhocracy dimension of organizational culture reflects an entrepreneurial and creative workforce, made up of organizational members who are mostly risk takers and have a drive to commit to innovations and scientific experiments (Heritage et al., 2014). Adhocracy organizational culture involves exploration of new opportunities and employee freedom to take calculated risks. Lau and Ngo (2004) also pointed out that this is the kind of organizational culture that mirrors employee participation, shared responsibility, and creativity. An adhocracy culture values flexibility and discretion while focusing on the external environment of the organization (Balaji et al., 2020). The Clan dimension reflects a responsive environment in which employees share many values. This is because an organization functions as a family or group of best friends (Cameron, 2008) while the market organizational culture is primarily result-oriented, and it is characterized by organizational managers who are defined by their productivity, directive capabilities, competitiveness, and focus (Ogbeibu et al., 2018). A clan culture values flexibility and discretion and focuses on the internal environment of the organization (Balaji et al., 2020). The Hierarchy dimension reflects structured and formalized work systems, which frequently consist of pre-defined procedures as well as strict rules and routines that govern employee behavior (Ogbeibu et al., 2018).

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Paradigm and Approach

The study adopted the positivist paradigm, which emphasizes observable, objective reality and uses empirical data to formulate and test hypotheses. This approach aligns with the goal of this study, which is to investigate the relationship between structured HRM practices and employee behaviours using verifiable data. Rooted in empiricism

and objectivism, the study assumes that innovative behaviour can be objectively measured and generalizable patterns can be derived from large samples through structured analysis (Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012). Given the study's focus on measuring relationships between variables such as HPWS, innovative behaviour, and organizational culture, a quantitative research approach was deemed appropriate (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2008). A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data from a representative sample at a single point in time, allowing for hypothesis testing without manipulation of variables (Malhotra et al., 2016).

3.2 Research Strategy

The study employed a survey strategy using self-administered questionnaires. This method was selected for its efficiency in collecting large amounts of standardized data across multiple institutions. The survey method is particularly effective for answering "what" and "how" questions, such as the degree to which HPWS is associated with innovative behaviour in varying cultural settings (Creswell, 2014).

3.3 Population and sampling

The target population comprised academic staff from Traditional Universities and Colleges of Education located in the five Northern Regions of Ghana. A total sample size of 384 was used, calculated based on Slovin's formula and informed by the requirements of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which was the chosen analytical technique. This sample size exceeds the commonly recommended threshold for SEM, which ranges from 300 to 500 respondents (Hoe, 2008). Primary data were collected using structured self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaire was pretested for clarity and reliability before the main data collection. Secondary data from published journals and institutional reports supplemented the primary data to enhance contextual understanding.

Thus,

$$n = \frac{Z^2 (pq)}{e^2}$$

Where n= sample size

z= the score on the z-table at

e= sampling error or the desired level of precision or margin of error

p= maximum variability of the population

q= 1-p

With the assumption that the maximum variability, which is equal to 50% (p =0.5) and taking a 95% confidence level with ±5% precision, the calculation for the required sample size will be as follows:

p = 0.5 and hence q =1-0.5 = 0.5; e = 0.05; z =1.96

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 (0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

n = 384.16

The sampling frame consisted of professors and lecturers in the selected institutions. The study adopted a convenience sampling technique, a non-probability approach, which allowed the researcher to collect data efficiently from available and willing respondents (Malhotra et al., 2016). While this limits generalizability, the diverse spread of institutions and departments helped to mitigate sample bias.

3.4 Measures and Instrumentation

The questionnaire consisted of three core constructs: HPWS was measured using the Likert scale item covering ability, motivation, and opportunity-enhancing practices. Organizational Culture was measured with a 5-item scale based on Cameron (2008) Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument, which includes clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy dimensions.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25 and LISREL 8.5. The PROCESS Macro was used to test for moderation effects, following Hayes' (2013) approach. Descriptive statistics summarized the demographic data, while Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) assessed construct validity. Model fit indices included the Chi-square statistic, RMSEA, RMSR, TLI, and CFI, with accepted thresholds guiding the interpretation of model fit (Hair et al., 2014).

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

This section of the paper presents the descriptive statistics of the items that were used to measure the variable in the study. The variables were high-performance work systems, innovative work behaviour and organizational culture. Each variable's questions were all scored using a five-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree," 2 denoting

"disagree," 3 denoting "neutral," 4 denoting "agree," and 5 denoting "strongly agree." Based on this Likert scale approach, the average ratings for each variable are to be interpreted.

4.2 Demographics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents have been presented in Table 4.1. The study found that the majority of the respondents were males, representing 74.2% and 25.8% were females. For age, most respondents were between 41 – 50 years, representing 54.9%, followed by 31 – 40 years, representing 27.6% and 11.6% between 51 – 60 years. In terms of respondents' educational background, bachelor's degree holders constituted 5.8%, master's degree holders constituted 84.2%, and PhD constituted 9.7%. Results on the current status of the respondents showed that the majority of them were Assistant Lecturers, representing 44.3%, Lecturers constituted 19.5% and Senior Lecturers constituted 14.6% as well as senior staff. Finally, on how long the respondents have been working, 47.7% indicated they have worked for 5 – 10 years, 25.1% have worked for 11 – 15 years, and 13.6% each have worked for less than 5 years and 16 years and above.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Categories	Count	%
Gender	Male	213	74.2
	Female	74	25.8
Age	20 – 30 years	16	5.6
	31 – 40 years	79	27.6
	41 – 50 years	157	54.9
	51 – 60 years	32	11.2
	61 years and above	2	0.7
Highest education	Bachelor	16	5.8
	Masters	234	84.2
	PhD	27	9.7
	Others	1	0.4
Current status	Associate Professor	4	1.4
	Senior Lecturer	42	14.6
	Lecturer	56	19.5
	Assistant Lecturer	127	44.3
	Senior staff	42	14.6
	Junior staff	16	5.6
Length of service	Under 5 years	39	13.6
	5 – 10 years	137	47.7
	11 – 15 years	72	25.1
	16 years and above	39	13.6

4.2.1 High-Performance Work Systems

High-performance work systems were measured using six (6) items. The item that scored the highest mean was "Employees are provided with systematically structured training". This item had a mean score of 3.16, which suggests that, on average, a participant in the study was neutral about the fact that employees are provided with systematically structured training. The item that scored the least mean was "More time and money are spent on employee training compared to our competitors." This item had a mean score of 2.96. This information is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

High-Performance Work Systems

Items	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
HP1: More time and money are spent on employee training compared to our competitors.	1	5	2.96	1.050
HP2: Employees are provided with systematically structured training.	1	5	3.16	1.075
HP3: Both new and old employees are provided with systematically structured training	1	5	3.12	1.046
HP4: Training programs are evaluated on a regular basis.	1	5	3.11	1.098
HP5: Regular surveys are conducted on employee attitudes and opinions	1	5	3.11	1.125
HP6: A constructive feedback system is in place.	1	5	3.10	1.090

4.2.2 Organisational Culture

Organisational culture was measured using four (4) items. The item that scored the highest mean was “My institution believes ability related to a task is the most important requirement for employees”. This item had a mean score of 3.60, which suggests that, on average, a participant in the study agreed that their institution believes ability related to a task is the most important requirement for employees. The item that scored the least mean was “My institution gives more incentives to creative people”. This item had a mean score of 3.09. This information is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3

Organizational Culture

Items	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
OC5: My institution fairly compensates for innovation	1	5	3.28	1.045
OC6: My institution gives more incentives to creative people	1	5	3.09	1.119
OC7: My institution emphasizes competition and outcome excellence	1	5	3.44	1.111
OC8: My institution believes that ability related to a task is the most important requirement for employees	1	5	3.60	1.038

4.3 Measurement Model Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was done using LISREL 8.5 to check whether the measurement items are satisfactorily represented by their constructs. The CFA results have been presented in Table 4 and Figure 1. The CFA table below shows the list of the items that were retained in the analysis for each construct, including their respective standardized factor loadings, the Cronbach Alpha (CA), Construct Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the various constructs.

Initially, high-performance work systems were measured with twenty-two (22) indicators; however, after going through the modification and purification process, only six (6) items were used to measure the construct. Again, innovative work behaviour was initially measured with ten (10) indicators; however, after going through the modification and purification process, only five (5) items were used to measure the construct. Finally, organizational culture was measured with thirteen (13) indicators; however, nine (9) items were dropped. The construct was therefore measured with four (4) indicators. All the factor loadings were positive and significant. Likewise, the CA, CR and AVE were all above the minimum thresholds. Finally, the CFA model fit indices were good and acceptable (Chi-Square = 264.73; Df = 87; $X^2/Df = 3.04$; $p = 0.00$; RMSEA = 0.08; GFI = .90; CFI = .92; SRMR = .05; NNFI = .91). The indicators and the constructs demonstrated both convergent and discriminant validity; hence, the data is valid and appropriate for further analysis.

Table 4

Construct Validity and Reliability

Constructs and Measures	Estimate	T-value
<i>High Performance Work Systems: CR = .87; AVE = .51; CA = .87</i>		
HP1: More time and money are spent on employee training compared to our competitors.	0.58	Fixed
HP2: Employees are provided with systematically structured training.	0.77	10.21
HP3: Both new and old employees are provided with systematically structured training	0.78	10.31
HP4: Training programs are evaluated on a regular basis.	0.76	10.10
HP5: Regular surveys are conducted on employee attitudes and opinions	0.71	9.66
HP6: A constructive feedback system is in place.	0.71	9.72
<i>Organizational Culture: CR = .87; AVE = .62; CA = .87</i>		
OC5: My institution fairly compensates for innovation	0.74	Fixed
OC6: My institution gives more incentives to creative people	0.84	14.31
OC7: My institution emphasizes competition and outcome excellence	0.82	14.07
OC8: My institution believes that ability related to a task is the most important requirement for employees	0.75	12.94

Model Fit: Chi-Square = 264.73; Df = 87; $X^2/Df = 3.04$; $p = 0.00$; RMSEA = 0.08; GFI = .90; CFI = .92; SRMR = .05; NNFI = .91

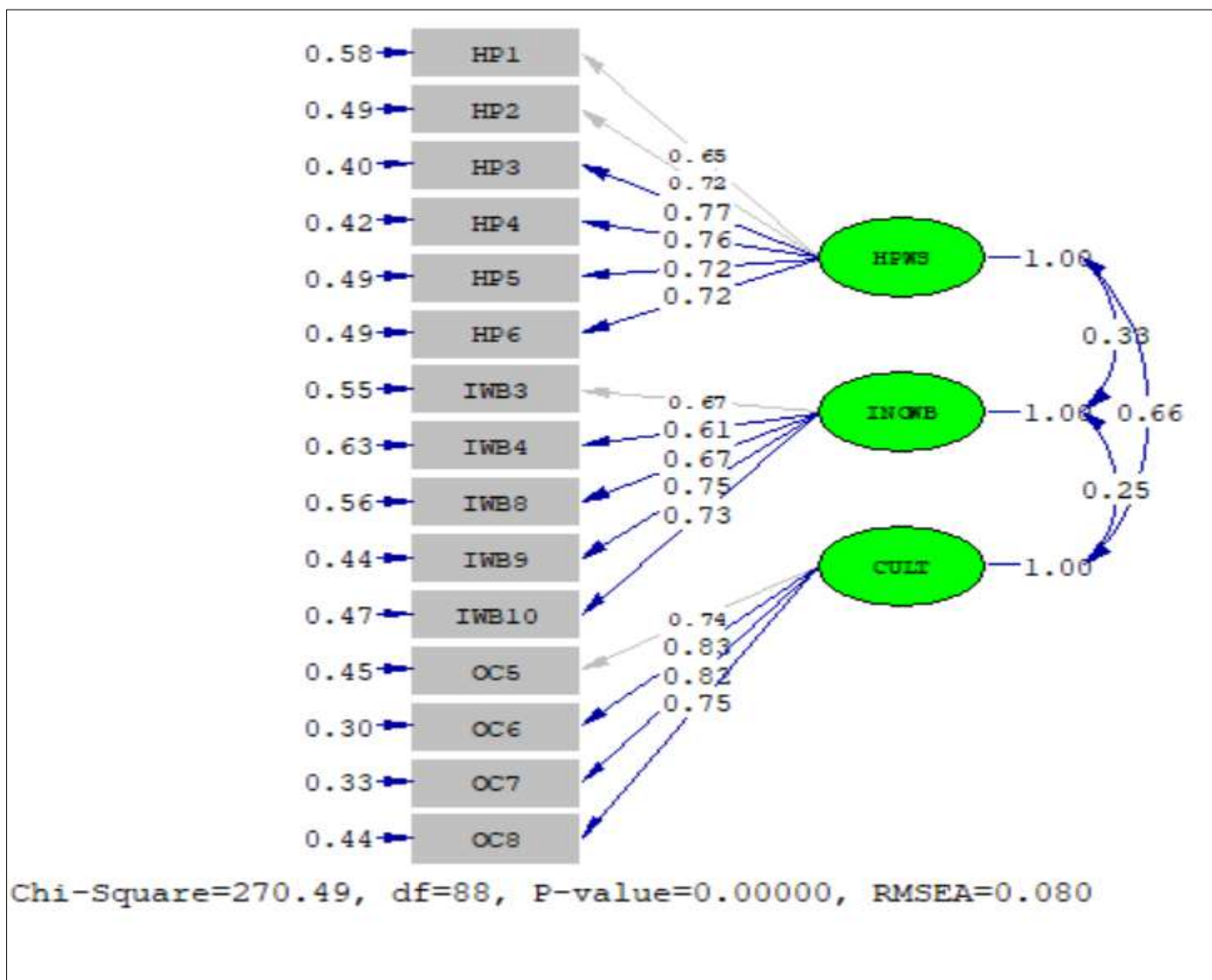


Figure 1
CFA Results

4.3.1 Correlation Matrix and Descriptive Statistics

This section of the analysis presents the composite descriptive and correlation analysis results. The descriptive statistics results, as presented in Table 5, showed that high-performance work systems had a mean score of 3.093, which suggests that, on average, participants in the study had a moderate score on the use of HPWS. Organizational culture also had a mean score of 3.353, suggesting that participants in the study had a moderate score on this construct. Finally, innovative work behaviour had a mean score of 4.104, which suggests that, on average, participants in the study scored high on this construct.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Results

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	4	5	6
HPWS	3.093	.835	1				
CULT	3.353	.910	.578**	1			
Gender	.776	.417	-.078	-.023	1		
Status	.677	.468	-.027	-.011	-.003	1	
Experience	.425	.495	.056	.008	.057	-.531**	1

** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed)

The results, as presented in Table 5 above, indicated that high-performance work systems positively relate to organizational culture ($r = .578$, $p < 0.01$). This means that as high-performance work systems are enhanced,

organizational culture is as well. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the complex relationship between High Performance Work Systems (HPWS), innovative work behaviour (IWB), and the moderating role of organizational culture in the context of public tertiary institutions in Northern Ghana. The results confirm that HPWS positively relates to innovative work behaviour, and importantly, that this relationship is significantly moderated by organizational culture. The descriptive statistics indicate that while the mean scores for HPWS ($M = 3.093$) and organizational culture ($M = 3.353$) were moderate, innovative work behaviour ($M = 4.104$) scored relatively high. This implies that although institutions may be operating with moderately structured human resource practices and cultural support, employees still report a relatively strong engagement in innovative behaviour. This supports prior research suggesting that employees can exhibit innovative tendencies even in environments with only modest formal support structures, provided that individual or informal factors such as autonomy and peer support are present (Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2019).

The significant positive correlation between HPWS and organizational culture ($r = .578, p < 0.01$) underscores the complementary nature of these constructs. This is consistent with the findings of Fareed et al. (2016), who argued that the effectiveness of HPWS is enhanced when organizational culture is aligned with innovation-oriented values. A similar conclusion was reached by Park et al. (2018), who found that organizational cultures that support knowledge sharing, experimentation, and psychological safety strengthen the positive impact of HR practices on innovation outcomes. Theoretical interpretations based on the AMO (Ability, Motivation, Opportunity) framework offer a robust lens through which to interpret these findings. The moderate implementation of HPWS practices, such as structured training and feedback systems, directly addresses the "ability" and "opportunity" components of the framework. However, the relatively low means for items such as training expenditure and performance-based incentives suggest that the "motivation" component may be underdeveloped in this context. This is a critical limitation since motivation-enhancing practices have been identified as key drivers of innovative behaviour. Nonetheless, the results also validate propositions drawn from Social Exchange Theory (SET). The significant correlation between HPWS and IWB indicates that when employees perceive HR practices as investments in their development, they reciprocate with discretionary behaviours, including innovation (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). However, as SET also posits, this reciprocity is contingent upon the broader organizational environment. In this study, organizational culture plays that pivotal contextual role. A culture that values ability, competition, and outcome excellence, as seen in the item with the highest mean score, reinforces the perception that innovation is both expected and rewarded, thereby strengthening the reciprocal relationship.

This finding mirrors that of Nazir et al. (2019), who emphasized that the cultural tone of the organization can enhance or diminish the perceived sincerity of HR initiatives. In cultures that are hierarchical or lack psychological safety, even well-designed HPWS may be viewed as manipulative or performative, thus dampening employee motivation to innovate. Furthermore, empirical findings from Martins and Terblanche (2003) support the argument that innovation flourishes in environments characterized by flexibility, openness, and support. While the institutions in this study displayed moderate scores on culture-related items, it is worth noting that these elements were still sufficient to create an enabling environment for innovative behaviour, particularly when reinforced by HPWS.

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge that emphasizes the importance of fit between HR systems and organizational context. Lepak et al. (2006) argue that strategic HR practices must be aligned not only internally but also with external and cultural contexts to maximize effectiveness. The interaction between HPWS and culture observed in this research provides empirical support for this perspective. The context of a developing economy like Ghana adds an additional layer of relevance. Prior studies, such as those by Afsar et al. (2019) and Singh et al. (2021), have pointed out the limited generalizability of Western-centric HRM models to sub-Saharan African environments. This study helps bridge that gap by demonstrating that, even in resource-constrained settings, organizational culture can significantly shape the effectiveness of HR systems in promoting innovation.

It is also significant that the institutions in this study are educational, a sector traditionally viewed as bureaucratic and resistant to rapid change. The relatively high mean score for innovative work behaviour suggests that there may be untapped innovation potential even in such environments, provided the right cultural and structural enablers are present. This is consistent with Zheng et al. (2020), who argued that innovation is increasingly necessary in the academic sector, not only for pedagogical advancement but also for institutional sustainability and societal impact.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The findings of this study reinforce the argument that employee innovation does not occur in a vacuum; rather, it is the outcome of well-integrated HR practices embedded within a supportive organizational culture. The application of the AMO framework confirmed that ability-enhancing (e.g., training), motivation-enhancing (e.g., rewards), and opportunity-enhancing (e.g., feedback and involvement) practices are essential but insufficient on their own to produce

sustained innovation. It is the cultural environment characterized by trust, recognition, and openness to experimentation that provides the psychological safety and motivation necessary for employees to engage in innovative behaviours. Additionally, this study affirms the value of contextualized research in sub-Saharan Africa. The relatively high levels of innovation despite only moderate levels of HPWS and cultural support suggest that employee-driven innovation is possible even in resource-constrained and bureaucratic settings, provided that a baseline of trust, autonomy, and recognition is present. These insights are particularly relevant for the higher education sector in Ghana, which faces increasing pressure to be both academically competitive and socially impactful. Ultimately, this study concludes that organizational culture is not merely a backdrop against which HR practices operate; it is an active moderating force that can amplify—or constrain—the impact of those practices on innovation outcomes. Institutions seeking to foster innovation must, therefore, go beyond designing best-practice HR systems and focus on cultivating cultures that value creativity, risk-taking, and collaborative learning.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed for policymakers, university leadership, and human resource managers seeking to enhance innovative work behaviour (IWB) through the integration of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and supportive organizational cultures. Universities should institutionalize HR practices such as structured training, fair appraisal systems, participatory decision-making, and transparent reward mechanisms. These practices not only enhance employees' abilities, motivation, and opportunities but also create the foundation for sustained innovation in teaching, research, and administration. University leaders must intentionally cultivate cultures that emphasize collaboration, creativity, and recognition. Initiatives such as innovation awards, cross-disciplinary research teams, and platforms for idea sharing can reinforce a culture of psychological safety where staff feel valued and empowered to innovate.

At the policy level, ministries and higher education councils should embed innovation-driven HR and cultural practices into institutional frameworks. Providing funding incentives for universities that demonstrate effective cultural transformation and innovative outcomes can further motivate adoption. Institutional leaders play a pivotal role in shaping culture. Universities should invest in leadership development programmes that equip managers and department heads with the skills to champion innovation, build trust, and encourage experimentation. Given the resource constraints of sub-Saharan African institutions, universities should prioritize cost-effective, contextually relevant practices. For example, peer mentoring, recognition schemes, and collaborative problem-solving initiatives can be implemented with minimal resources but have significant cultural and behavioural impact.

Creating mechanisms for regular feedback and open dialogue between management and staff enhances alignment between HPWS and cultural expectations. This ensures that HR practices remain relevant, employee-centred, and supportive of innovative outcomes. Universities should establish innovation tracking systems and participate in benchmarking networks with other institutions. This can facilitate knowledge exchange, enable continuous improvement, and institutionalize best practices for integrating HPWS and organizational culture to foster innovation. Taken together, these recommendations highlight that innovation in public tertiary institutions is not solely the product of HR practices, but of the synergistic interaction between HPWS and a supportive organizational culture. By adopting these strategies, universities in resource-constrained environments can position themselves as hubs of creativity and sustainable growth, while also contributing to broader educational and national development goals.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Data Availability

The data for this study would be made available upon request from the corresponding author.

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