

INVISIBLE NETWORK OF KNOWLEDGE FOR HUMAN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LITERATURE: COMPARATIVE
ANALYSIS OF HRM, IHRM, SHRM, AND SIHRM STUDIES

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore developments from 2008–2017 regarding the intellectual structure of human resource management (HRM) and its subfields: international HRM (IHRM), strategic HRM (SHRM), and strategic IHRM (SIHRM). Critical journals, publications, countries, and keywords related to these topics were identified. The historical method combined with citation, geographical, keyword, and tag cloud analyses were used to analyze and compare the fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM. This study analyzed 5,741 articles, which further cited 397,606 publications as references, on HRM published in Science Citation Index and Social Sciences Citation Index journals. The intellectual structure of these fields was mapped according to the analysis results.

Keywords: Human Resource Management (HRM), Citation Analysis, Intellectual Structure, Network of Knowledge

Introduction

Sir Isaac Newton (1645–1736) said, “If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.” In the present study, the “giants” are the frequently cited authors, papers, and books identified in our analysis.

Research on human resource management (HRM) has progressed rapidly. From 2008–2017, 5, 741 Science Citation Index (SCI) and Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) journal articles about HRM were published. The main subfields of HRM are international HRM (IHRM), strategic HRM (SHRM), and strategic IHRM (SIHRM). Popular topics in the literature include job satisfaction and performance. However, numerous research questions have not been addressed, including the following:

1. Which journals dominate the academic fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?
2. What are the most critical publications about HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?
3. Which countries dominate the academic fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?
4. What keywords represent active areas of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM research? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?

To approach these issues objectively, this study developed a generic model of an invisible network of

knowledge (INK) that can be used to map the intellectual structure of the HRM field. Based on the historical method combined with citation, keyword, and tag cloud analyses, the proposed model can be used to explore the intellectual structure of any field, delineate its knowledge network, and represent its knowledge diffusion process. The INK model is a set of interlinked invisible nodes representing publications and their citations as well as the correlations among publications (Ma & Yu, 2010). The INK is a comprehensive model that may be used to represent the invisible knowledge of a discipline (field). INK-xxx can generate a knowledge network of a discipline (or a field) and reveal the its development patterns (Ma, Lee, Lee, & Yu, 2007).

Therefore, if we aim to see further based on the shoulders of giants (the paradigms), we must determine the most critical journals and paradigms in the INK to answer the aforementioned questions.

Studies of Academic Literature

The most common technique for studying a body of literature is the literature review, wherein a highly subjective approach is used to present and analyze studies. Objective and quantitative techniques have recently gained popularity because the number of available online databases has increased. These techniques adopt author citations, keywords, and systematic reviews to examine the INK of the published works in a given field (Pilkington & Teichert, 2006). These techniques are unobtrusive and objective (Garfield, 1979).

Several studies have used the described quantitative techniques to study relevant literature. For example, Ponzi (2002) explored the intellectual structure of knowledge management in its early stage of development by conducting principle component analysis on an author co-citation frequency matrix. Etemad (2004) identified the most influential articles, authors, and journals in the electronic commerce field by using citation analysis. Ramos-Rodriguez and Ruiz-Navarro (2004) identified the stream of strategic management research by conducting a bibliometric study of the “Strategic Management Journal” archives. Culnan (1986) analyzed the intellectual development of management information systems from 1972 to 1982 using co-citation analysis. Finally, Lin, McLee, and Kuo (2011) explored the intellectual structure of web service research.

To our knowledge, no similar study has been conducted on the HRM, IHRM, SHRM, or SIHRM literature or has analyzed the differences among these fields. The present study aimed to fill this gap by identifying the journals, paradigms, countries, and keywords central to the past decade of relevant research and to analyze the differences among HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM in these regards.

Methodology

Historical Method

The historical method and geographical, keyword, tag cloud, and citation analyses were the main methods used in this study. Gottschalk (1969) defined the historical method as a critical review of past records and analysis processes. Golder (2000) defined the

historical method as an analysis of the processes used in previous studies to collect, verify, and interpret data as well as represent evidence from these studies. The historical method can be divided into five stages: 1) selection of a theme and evidence collection, 2) evaluation of the sources of evidence, 3) evaluation of the evidence, 4) analysis and interpretation of the evidence, and 5) presentation of the evidence and conclusions.

Stage 1: Selection of a theme and evidence collection

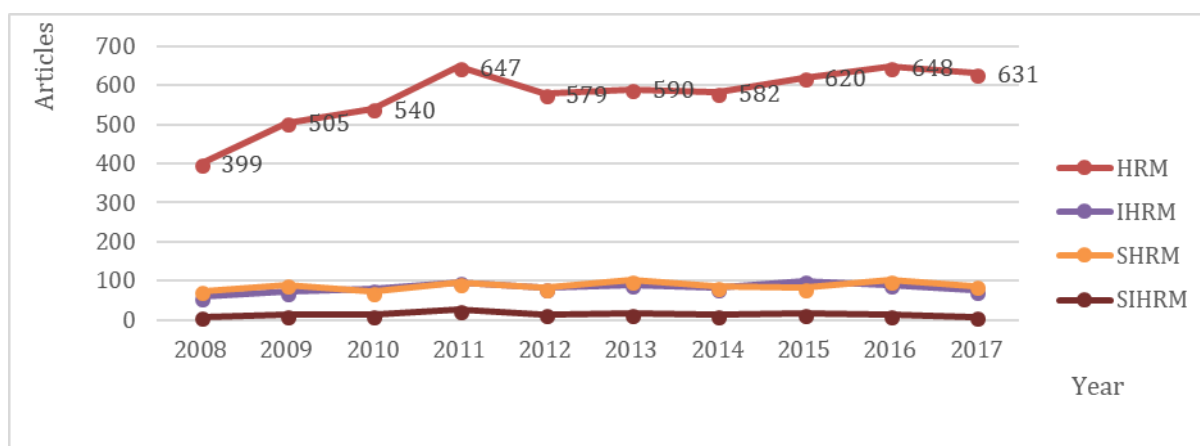
Based on the objectives of this study, the authors explored the intellectual structures of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM and their interrelationships using studies published from 2008 to 2017. The studies in this time period represent the most critical and up-to-date research in the field (Walstrom & Leonard, 2000). Unlike other related studies, the data used in this study were not drawn from journals chosen by peer researchers; rather, the entire databases of SCI and SSCI publications from 2008 to 2017 served as the body of literature for analysis. This study collected data by conducting a topic search within the SCI and SSCI databases. “HRM” and “Human Resource Management” were used as topics for searches of titles, abstracts, author keywords, and keywords given by editors. The fields were restricted to management, business, industrial relations labor, applied psychology, and economics because HRM corresponds with other meanings in other fields (for example, high resolution melting).

This study collected 5,741 journal articles, which further cited 183,532 publications as references. Subse-

quently, data were classified as within the field of IHRM if the corresponding topic result (title, abstract, author keywords, and keywords given by editors) included “international,” as SHRM if the topic included “strategy,” or as “SIHRM” if the topic included both of “international” and “strategy.” A graph was drawn to reflect the development of the HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and

SIHRM fields by plotting the numbers of articles from this data set against the corresponding years (Figure 1). As reflected in the graph in Figure 1, the field of HRM developed dramatically during the study period. The cited references in the sample papers included both books and journal articles. The data for 2008 to 2017 were all downloaded on 2018/03/08.

Figure 1. Source sampling distribution of article samples for HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM (2008–2017)



Stage 2: Evaluation of the sources of evidence

In this study, the SCI and SSCI databases were used for analysis. The SCI and SSCI are widely used databases. The SCI includes over 8,336 of the world’s leading scholarly journals and the SSCI includes over 2,000 of the world’s leading scholarly journals. Among the available databases, the SCI and SSCI provide the most comprehensive collections of HRM-, IHRM-, SHRM-, and SIHRM-related publications (Lin et al., 2011).

Stage 3: Evaluation of the evidence

We critically evaluated the collected data. For keyword analysis, we

combined the numbers of keywords with the same meaning. For example, the numbers of citations of “HRM,” “Human Resource Management,” and “human resource management (HRM),” were combined.

Stage 4: Analysis and interpretation of the evidence

In this stage, the collected data were analyzed and systematized through classification, sorting, summing, subtotaling, and ranking. First, for citation analysis, we identified the top 10 most cited journals and articles for HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM by analyzing the 397,606 cited references. Second, for geographical analysis, this study classified data based on

the corresponding author's nationality and then analyzed the top 10 countries using subtotalling and ranking methods. This procedure was individually performed for HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM, and differences among these fields were then compared. Third, for keyword analysis, this study subtotaled and ranked the frequencies of certain keywords used by authors during the study period to identify the top 10 keywords associated with HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM.

This study omitted "human resource management" in the field of HRM; "international HRM," "international human resource management," and "IHRM" in the field of IHRM; "strategic human resource management," "strategy," and "strategic HRM" in the field of SHRM; and "strategic international human resource management" and "strategic and international management" in the field of SIHRM because these keywords were tautologies of the topic. The top 10 keywords for the study period represented active areas of research. After a series of operations, key nodes in the INK of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM were identified and the structures were developed.

Stage 5: Present the evidence and conclusions

To present the conclusions, table and tag cloud analyses were used and the knowledge network of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM was mapped to describe the knowledge distribution process and compare the fields. The tag cloud is a display mode for folksonomy-based search results. The cloud presents key word tag sizes according to their frequency of input

(Furner, 2010). Tag clouds offer a spatial and intuitive view of the frequency of keywords and draw viewers' attention to high-frequency keywords (Slings by, Dykes, Wood, & Clarke, 2007).

Results

Citation Analysis

To identify the key journals and publications (paradigms) in the HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM research fields, citation data were tabulated for each of the 5,741 source documents and 397,606 references using the Hypertext Preprocessor programming language and Microsoft Excel. The citation analysis produced background statistics, which are presented in the following tables.

Question 1: Which journals dominate the academic fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?

The journals with the most citations were identified as being the most influential. Table 1 lists the top 10 most frequently cited journals for 2008 to 2017 in the fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM.

As evident in Table 1, three journals ranked within the top five most cited journals for HRM and its sub-fields, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM: "Academy of Management Journal," "International Journal of Human Resource Management," and "Academy of Management Review."

Additionally, "Strategic Management Journal" was the sixth most

Table 1. *Frequently Cited Journals: 2008–2017*

No.	HRM		IHRM		SHRM		SIHRM	
	Abbreviated Journal Title	Frequency	Abbreviated Journal Title	Frequency	Abbreviated Journal Title	Frequency	Abbreviated Journal Title	Frequency
1	acad manage j	16377	int j hum resour man	3395	acad manage j	3207	j int bus stud	584
2	int j hum resour man	12967	j int bus stud	2578	strategic manage j	2166	acad manage j	497
3	j appl psychol	10843	acad manage j	1971	int j hum resour man	2032	strategic manage j	461
4	acad manage rev	10099	acad manage rev	1589	acad manage rev	1947	int j hum resour man	435
5	j manage	8329	strategic manage j	1356	j manage	1634	acad manage rev	345
6	strategic manage j	7088	j world bus	1340	j appl psychol	933	j manage	252
7	pers psychol	4763	j manage	1007	j int bus stud	879	j world bus	215
8	human resource manag	4489	j manage stud	748	j manage stud	797	j manage stud	194
9	j manage stud	4211	human resource manag	708	organ sci	796	admin sci quart	164
10	admin sci quart	4178	j appl psychol	647	admin sci quart	774	organ sci	153

Table 2. *Frequently Cited Documents About HRM: 2008–2017*

Full Citation Index For Document	Total Citations
Huselid 1995, acad manage j, v38, p635	869
Barney, 1991, j manage, v17, p99	683
Podsakoff, 2003, j appl psychol, v88, p879	597
Delery & Doty, 1996, acad manage j, v39, p802	535
Bowen, 2004, acad manage rev, v29, p203	422
Macduffie, 1995, ind labor relat rev, v48, p197	408
Arthur, 1994, acad manage j, v37, p670	385
Becker, 1996, acad manage j, v39, p779	368
Baron, 1986, j pers soc psychol, v51, p1173	345
Combs, 2006, pers psychol, v59, p501	327

Table 3. *Frequently Cited Documents About IHRM: 2008–2017*

Full Citation Index for Document	Total Citations
Dimaggio, 1983, am sociol rev, v48, p147	89
Hofstede, 1980, cultures consequence	86
Rosenzweig, 1994, j int bus stud, v25, p229	86
Barney, 1991, j manage, v17, p99	85
Taylor, Beechler, & Napier, 1996, acad manage rev, v21, p959	76
Kostova, 2002, acad manage j, v45, p215	75
Huselid, 1995, acad manage j, v38, p635	68
Podsakoff, 2003, j appl psychol, v88, p879	64
Hofstede., 2001, cultures consequence	61
House, 2004, culture leadership o	59

Table 4. *Frequently Cited Documents About SHRM: 2008–2017*

Full Citation Index For Document	Total Citations
Barney, 1991, j manage, v17, p99	209
Huselid, 1995, acad manage j, v38, p635	168
Delery, 1996, acad manage j, v39, p802	140
Youndt, 1996, acad manage j, v39, p836	111
Macduffie jp, 1995, ind labor relat rev, v48, p197	91
Arthur jb, 1994, acad manage j, v37, p670	91
Becker b, 1996, acad manage j, v39, p779	89
Lepak, 1999, acad manage rev, v24, p31	81
Delaney, 1996, acad manage j, v39, p949	79
Wright, 2001, j manage, v27, p701	72

Table 5. *Frequently Cited Documents About SIHRM: 2008–2017*

Full Citation Index For Document	Total Citations
Barney, 1991, <i>j manage</i> , v17, p99	29
Huselid, 1995, <i>acad manage j</i> , v38, p635	17
Bartlett., 1989, <i>managing borders tra</i>	17
Delery, 1996, <i>acad manage j</i> , v39, p802	15
Rosenzweig pm, 1994, <i>j int bus stud</i> , v25, p229	14
Kostova, 2002, <i>acad manage j</i> , v45, p215	14
Taylor, 1996, <i>acad manage rev</i> , v21, p959	14
Hofstede, 1980, <i>cultures consequence</i>	13
Dimaggio, 1983, <i>am sociol rev</i> , v48, p147	12
Edstrom, 1977, <i>admin sci quart</i> , v22, p248	11

cited journal in HRM in the study period, and was the fifth, second, and third most cited journal in the fields of IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM, respectively. The second most cited journal for IHRM and most cited journal for SIHRM was “Journal of International Business Studies.”

Question 2: What are the most critical publications and who are the most critical scholars of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?

The documents with the most citations were identified. Table 2 lists the top 10 most cited HRM related publications for 2008 to 2017; Table 3 lists the top 10 most cited IHRM related publications for 2008 to 2017; Table 4 lists the top 10 most cited SHRM related publications for 2008 to 2017; and Table 5 lists the top 10 most cited SIHRM-related publications for 2008 to 2017.

The top 10 most influential publications about HRM were identified by citation frequency. The most cited publication about HRM between 2008 and 2017 was Huselid’s (1995) paper

“The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance,” followed by Barney’s (1991) paper “Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage” (see Table 2). For SHRM and SIHRM, the top two most cited publications were the same as those for HRM but were reversed in rank. Thus, these two articles represented the paradigms of HRM and its subfields SHRM and SIHRM. For IHRM, the most cited publication between 2008 and 2017 was DiMaggio and Powell’s (1983) paper “The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutionalism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields,” followed by Hofstede’s (1980) book *Culture’s Consequences*. The influential articles and book are reviewed subsequently.

Paradigm review

1. Huselid’s (1995) paper “The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance”

This study comprehensively evaluated the links between firm per-

formance and systems of high-performance work practices. Based on a national sample of approximately 1,000 firms, the author identified practices that exhibited an economically significant effect on intermediate employee outcomes of turnover and productivity and short- and long-term measures of corporate financial performance. The results offer limited support for predictions that the effect of high-performance work practices on firm performance is partly contingent upon links with competitive strategy (Huselid, 1995).

2. Barney's (1991) paper "Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage"

This article examines the link between sustained competitive advantage and firm resources. Four empirical indicators of the potential of firm resources to generate sustained competitive advantage are discussed: rareness, value, substitutability, and imitability. The study applied a proposed model to analyze the potential of several firm resources to generate sustained competitive advantages. The article concludes by examining implications of this firm resource model of sustained competitive advantage for other business disciplines (Barney, 1991).

3. DiMaggio, and Powell, 1983: "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutionalism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields"

In this article, the authors posit that a paradox arises when a set of organizations emerges as a field: rational actors attempt to change their organizations but ultimately increase the similarity of their organizations in the

process. The authors describe three isomorphic processes that lead to this outcome: coercive, mimetic, and normative leading outcomes. The paper presents hypotheses about the effects of resource centralization and dependency, goal ambiguity and technical uncertainty, and professionalization and structuration on isomorphic change. Finally, the authors suggest implications of their findings for theories of organizations and social change.

4. Hofstede's (1980) book *Culture's Consequences*

This book explores the differences in social action and thinking among members of 40 modern nations. The author argues that people carry "mental programs," which are developed in the family in early childhood and reinforced in schools and organizations, and that these mental programs involve a national culture component. The author further claims that these mental programs are most clearly expressed in the dominant values associated with various countries (Hofstede, 1980).

Geographical Analysis

Question 3: Which countries dominate the academic fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?

Following the five stages of the historical method, geographical analysis was conducted. The top 10 most influential countries were identified based on the corresponding numbers of SCI and SSCI articles in the fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM from 2008 to 2017 (Table 6).

Table 6. *Top 10 Countries for SCI and SSCI Published Articles on HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM: 2008–2017*

No	HRM	IHRM	SHRM	SIHRM	
Country	Number	Country	Number	Country	Number
1	USA 1142	ENGLAND 145	USA 181	ENGLAND 20	
2	ENGLAND 664	USA 135	ENGLAND 92	USA 18	
3	AUSTRALIA 522	AUSTRALIA 88	SPAIN 80	SPAIN 17	
4	SPAIN 325	GERMANY 38	AUSTRALIA 61	AUSTRALIA 10	
5	PEOPLES R CHINA 252	SPAIN 35	TAIWAN 42	TAIWAN 10	
6	GERMANY 248	CANADA 30	PEOPLES R CHINA 42	PEOPLES R CHINA 9	
7	CANADA 243	PEOPLES R CHINA 30	CANADA 31	GERMANY 5	
8	NETHERLANDS 200	TAIWAN 27	GERMANY 25	FINLAND 4	
9	TAIWAN 186	NETHERLANDS 22	FRANCE 23	ITALY 3	
10	FRANCE 142	FRANCE 21	SOUTH KOREA 23	NETHERLANDS 3	

As denoted in Table 5, the top 13 countries in the fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM for the study period were the United States, England, Australia, Spain, the People’s Republic of China, Germany, Canada, the Netherlands, Taiwan, France, South Korea, Finland, and Italy.

Keyword Analysis

Question 4: What keywords represent active areas of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM research? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?

After the five stages of the historical method, tag cloud analysis was performed (Figure 2). Tag clouds visually emphasize dominant words, thereby making trends explicit. Figure 2 presents a tag cloud of the 30 most popular keywords in all relevant SCI and SSCI journal articles (5,741 articles) published during the study period. The largest tag in the cloud was “China” (244). The words “strategic human resource management” (165), “innovation” (141), “job satisfaction” (135), “performance” (127), “knowledge management” (114), “organizational performance” (103), “training” (87), “leadership” (83), “tal-

ent management” (83) , and “India” (75) were also dominant (Figure 2).

According to the result of cloud and keyword analyses, the top five keywords in the HRM field were “China,” “innovation,” “job satisfaction,” “per-

formance,” and “knowledge management.” The frequency of “job satisfaction” (top three) was higher than that of “performance” (top four). Thus, more studies related to “job satisfaction” than studies related to “performance” were conducted during the study period.

Figure 2. Tag cloud analysis on keywords of HRM publications for 2003 to 2012



Top 30 keywords

Based on the results, the top 30 keywords representing the active areas of HRM research for the study period were determined. However, the differences among HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM in this regard remained unclear. As previously presented, the final question posed in this study was “What are the popular keywords that represent active areas of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM research? What are the differences among the fields in this regard?” To address this question, this study con-

ducted further analysis of the identified keywords. Thus, the top 10 keywords used in SCI and SSCI articles for the fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM from 2008 to 2017 were identified and are listed in Table 7.

The top keyword across the fields of HRM, IHRM, and SIHRM was “China.” According to Table 7, from 2008 to 2017, the most active areas of research were “innovation” for HRM and SHRM, “expatriates” for IHRM, “innovation” for SHRM, and “strategy” for SIHRM.

Table 7. *Top 10 Keywords Used in SCI and SSCI Articles About HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM (2008–2017)*

HRM		IHRM		SHRM		SIHRM	
Keyword	Frequency	Keyword	frequency	Keyword	frequency	Keyword	Frequency
1 China	244	china	53	china	36	China	11
2 Innovation	141	expatriates	28	innovation	36	Strategy	10
3 Job satisfac- tion	135	human capi- tal	23	organizational performance	29	international busi- ness	6
4 Performance	127	institutional theory	21	firm perform- ance	28	human capital	6
5 Knowledge management	114	international assignments	21	human capital	28	Russia	5
6 Organizational performance	103	international management	20	performance	25	human resources	5
7 Strategic hu- man resource management	165	performance	20	knowledge management	21	Internationalization	4
8 training	87	india	19	resource- based view	18	institutional theory	4
9 leadership	83	talent man- agement	19	india	16	emerging econo- mies	4
10 Talent man- agement	83	culture	17	spain	16	international man- agement	4

Conclusion

Extensive and rapid development in HRM research occurred from 2008–2017. This study explored critical journals and research paradigms in the fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM using the historical method combined with citation, geographical, keyword, and tag cloud analyses on SCI and SSCI data from 2008 to 2017. The aforementioned analysis methods were used to answer the following research questions. Which journals dominate the academic fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? What are the most critical publications about HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? Which countries dominate the academic fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? What keywords

represent active areas of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM? In answering these questions, this study also analyzed the differences among the fields in each regard and interpreted the findings.

According to the results of the citation analysis, the top three most cited journals in the fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM from 2008 to 2017 were “Academy of Management Journal,” “International Journal of Human Resource Management,” and “Academy of Management Review.”

According to the results of the citation analysis, the most critical publications about HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM from 2008 to 2017 were Huselid’s (1995) paper “The Impact of

Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance,” Barney’s (1991) paper “Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage,” DiMaggio and Powell’s (1983) paper “The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutionalism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields,” and Hofstede’s (1980) book *Culture’s Consequences*.

According to the results of the geographical analysis, the countries that dominated the academic fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM from 2008 to 2017 were the United States, England, Australia, Spain, the People’s Republic of China, Germany, Canada, the Netherlands, Taiwan, France, South Korea, Finland, and Italy.

According to the results of the keyword analysis, the keywords representing active areas of HRM from 2008 to 2017 were “China,” “innovation,” “job satisfaction,” “performance,” and “knowledge management.” The number of studies related to “job satisfaction” was greater than that of studies related to “performance.” The most active area of HRM research was “innovation”; the most active area of IHRM research was “expatriates”; the most active area of SHRM research was “innovation”; and the most active area of SIHRM was “strategy.”

The results of this study may serve as a critical reference for academics and new scholars who are interested in the literature on HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM. The identified intellectual structure includes the top 10 journals, the most influential publications, and

keywords. Researchers new to the fields of HRM, IHRM, SHRM, and SIHRM may concentrate on these key journals, articles, and themes as an entry point to the field (Ma, Liang, Yu, & Lee, 2012).

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