

Strategic international human resource management (SIHRM) framework: an integrated review and directions for future research

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to review all frameworks of strategic international human resource management (SIHRM) published between 1990 and 2022 to ascertain their relevance in the current context with a focus on methodologies and theories in the post-pandemic era.

Design/methodology/approach – In this study a pool of 69 papers published in 16 journals was considered for full-text evaluation using a set of relevant keywords and pre-defined inclusion/exclusion criteria.

Findings – The number of qualitative research papers is the highest (90%) and theoretical perspectives are dominated by research-based (17%), institutional (17%) and SIHRM (14%) theories that emphasize competitive advantage, resource dependence and multiple SIHRM frameworks.

Research limitations/implications – This research incorporates dominant theoretical perspectives and methodologies within an integrated SIHRM framework which accommodates the post-pandemic era.

Practical implications – The integrated SIHRM framework reinforces the alignment of multiple contexts, dimensions, models and proportions to enable effective decisions for mitigating the current crisis and future research.

Originality/value – This research integrated a hybrid model of SIHRM by aligning the relevant existing SIHRM frameworks, which management can choose from to leverage the benefits that distributed remote work in an international context and decide what is most suitable for their businesses as they prepare for the future.

Keywords Strategic International Human Resource Management (SIHRM), Covid-19 perspective, SIHRM theories, New normal, Hybrid SIHRM model

Paper type Literature review

Strategic international human resource management (SIHRM) is defined as “human resource management issues, functions, and policies and practices that result from the strategic activities of multinational enterprises and that impact the international concerns and goals of those enterprises” (Schuler *et al.*, 1993, p. 720). In the last 30 years, evolving SIHRM frameworks have delved into the relationship between strategy and international HRM by focussing on multiple theoretical perspectives, methodologies and gaps in the literature. Organizational resource-based contingency and institutional theories gave the foremost explanation about the frameworks of SIHRM (e.g. Schotter *et al.*, 2021; Zheng, 2013). These frameworks though associated, have limited alignment and amalgamation and need to be re-assessed for their relevance in the post-pandemic era. The traditional expatriate models of international work assignments models are on the decline and an increase in globally flexible work arrangements can be seen in multi-national enterprises (MNEs) (Jooss *et al.*, 2021). The opportunity to conduct research in these areas is accentuated by the everchanging dynamics of global work, and diverse levels of the workforce that is mobile beyond national limits, both inside and amongst organizations, which is further complemented by its decision-making process (Schotter *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, a shift in the emphasis from managers in leadership positions to boundary spanners who play a range of diverse, formal but critical roles by



enabling exchanges between teams in different countries can be seen in recent research pertaining to the “new normal” (Liu and Meyer, 2020; Schotter *et al.*, 2017, 2021). Thus, our review focuses on three fundamental research objectives, namely:

- RO1. Reviewing the theoretical foundations from 1990–2022 on which SIHRM has been grounded to deepen our understanding of the dominant and currently relevant theories applicable in the post-pandemic era.
- RO2. Review the methodologies and the search for relevant SIHRM research papers from existing databases to understand their categories and classification.
- RO3. Reviewing the evolution of existing SIHRM frameworks (e.g. strategy, structure, control, fit, flexibility, global-local dynamics and conceptual issues, etc.) to identify and integrate SIHRM frameworks that are contextually relevant whilst incorporating the post-pandemic perspective, along with suggestions for future research.

This review of SIHRM frameworks commences with a sharply defined methodology, followed by a deeper exploration of the specific research objectives mentioned, and analysis of relevant SIHRM frameworks in the current context. Subsequently, the discussion section would elucidate our propose integrated SIHRM framework and its implications to identify the relevant themes and opportunities that could be applied into practice in the post-pandemic scenario. At the end of this review, we propose relevant ideas for future research in SIHRM, warranted by practices to accommodate the post pandemic scenario.

Literature review methodology

This past three decades of SIHRM frameworks have been thoroughly reviewed in this study by aggregation and analysis of themes arising from methodologies and theories to adjust to the “new normal” in the post-pandemic era, which has ramifications for managing global human resources.

Article selection and assessment process

Underpinned by our stated research objectives for review, our studies have focused on inclusion of strategic HRM from international/global perspectives, studies comparing samples from different countries, SIHRM practices, models/integrative frameworks and studies linking strategy to human resource management (HRM) in multi-national companies (MNCs) operating in several countries using a range of specific keywords, i.e. “Strategic International Human Resource Management”, “Covid-19 perspective”, “SIHRM Theories”, “New normal” and “Hybrid SIHRM model”. We then applied the search algorithm on the SCOPUS database, further filtering the primary research outcomes for peer-reviewed articles written in English language for the period of 1990–2022 which generated 2,134 articles. Initially, our screening criteria of inclusion and exclusion (mentioned in Figure 1) yielded 355 articles, which were further screened based on the “titles” yielding 188 articles. The abstracts of all the articles were read to ensure relevance to the research topic, post which duplications in keywords were eliminated and articles which included keywords but were not relevant to the study were removed. This resulted in a focussed list of 56 papers published in 11 journals which were considered for full text evaluation. The process of review and inclusion of articles for the purpose of this study is depicted in Figure 1, the list of journals included in the research has been presented in Table 1 and the year wise count of papers included in the review has been presented in Table 2.

Literature review indicated that propositions offered till date may be considered temporary and needs to be realigned across multiple contexts embedding all contextual, strategic, external and internal aspects of SIHRM (Schuler *et al.*, 1993) (see Table 3). This led to identification of key focus areas of this study: theoretical perspectives, methodologies and

SIHRM framework

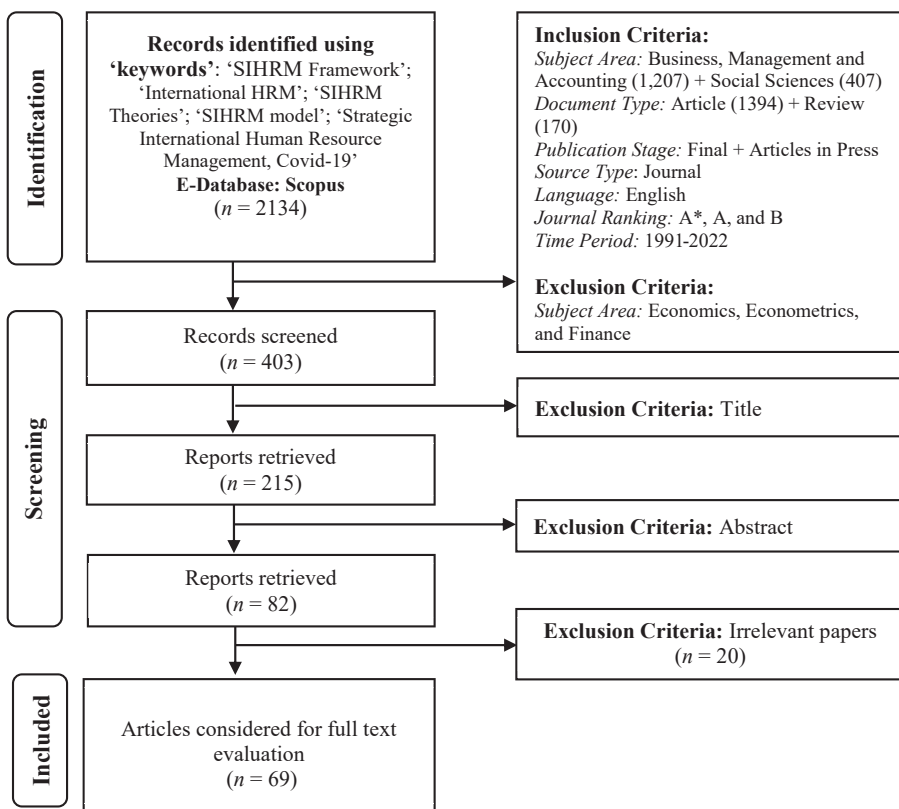


Figure 1. SIHRM framework – process of review and inclusion of articles for the purpose of this study

	Journal rating ABDC	#No. of papers
<i>Academy of Management Review</i>	A*	1
<i>Global Strategy Journal</i>	A*	2
<i>Human Relations</i>	A*	2
<i>Human Resource Management</i>	A*	7
<i>Human Resource Management Journal</i>	A	2
<i>Human Resource Management Review</i>	A	9
<i>Human Resources for Health</i>	A	1
<i>International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>	A	29
<i>International Journal of Management Reviews</i>	A	1
<i>Journal of Global Mobility</i>	B	7
<i>Journal of International Business Studies</i>	A*	1
<i>Journal of International Entrepreneurship</i>	B	1
<i>Journal of World Business</i>	B	2
<i>Management and Organization Review</i>	B	1
<i>Multi-national Business Review</i>	B	1
<i>Thunderbird International Business Review</i>	B	2
<i>Grand total</i>		69

Table 1. Journals included in the research

Year	#No. of papers	Year	#No. of papers
1993	1		
1995	1		
1996	1	2013	2
1997	1	2014	1
1998	2	2015	1
1999	1	2016	2
2002	2	2017	4
2005	4	2018	3
2008	1	2019	4
2009	2	2020	3
2011	4	2021	10
2012	2	2022	17
<i>Grand total</i>			<i>69</i>

Table 2.
Year-wise count of
papers included in
the study

review of the existing SIHRM frameworks to incorporate the post-pandemic perspective. Hence, the review started with an overview of theorizing on SIHRM which summarizes the research objectives; names of key researchers; variables used in the papers and finally their application in SIHRM.

ROI: Theoretical perspectives of SIHRM (1990–2022)

The first decade of the twenty first century focused on studies based on *institutional, social and management theories*. The second decade explored the conceptual extensions and refinements, but the third decade was dominated by *research based, institutional, SIHRM, multiple theory combinations* which elucidated the ambiguity in the application of IHRM and enabling frameworks to understand SIHRM (Table 1). Out of 69 papers reviewed, 10 papers (17%) used the resource-based theory to frame their arguments, 10 papers (17%) used institutional theories for establishing their framework, and 15 papers (27%) used two and more theories to support their hypotheses.

Resource-based theory. The fundamental principle underlying a firm's resource-based theory is the importance of its systems besides other characteristics which facilitate the achievement of success in comparison to its competitors (Barney, 1991; Penrose, 1959; Wernerfelt, 1984). This competing edge that a firm acquires and controls through the sustenance of tangible and intangible resources (e.g. managerial skills, organizational processes, controls, information, knowledge, etc.) is irreplaceable, uncommon and can neither be copied nor substituted, which makes the resource-based view attractive to researchers. From a SIHRM perspective, the resource-based theory has permitted researchers to view the determinants of SIHRM systems at three stages – the parent organization; the subsidiary, and explicit employee clusters within the subsidiary. By the application of the resource-based theory to SIHRM, Taylor et al. (1996) identified three distinct approaches towards IHRM (adaptive, exportive and integrative) which were implemented at the head office, affiliates and pertaining to human resource (HR) matters, roles and guidelines existing at the employee cluster level.

Resource dependence theory. According to the resource dependency theory, the entity which has rare and valuable resources has the ability to progress and impact the other entity (Casciaro and Piskorski, 2005; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978), since power increases with scarcity thereby highlighting and justifying the relevance of invaluable resources (e.g. human resources) to determine guidelines and processes. From an SIHRM perspective, the resource dependency theory helps in influencing the actions and decision making of organizations based on the situation, besides helping in classifying instances where control can be exercised by MNC's over SIHRM system of their affiliates.

Key topics/words	“SIHRM framework”; “international HRM”; “SIHRM theories”; “SIHRM model”; “strategic international human resource management”, “Covid-19”		
Literature	<i>Publisher</i>	<i>No. of papers</i>	
	Academia	1	
	Academy of Management	1	
	BioMed Central Ltd	1	
	Blackwell Publishing Ltd	3	
	Elsevier	10	
	Emerald Group Holdings Ltd	7	
	Emerald Publishing	1	
	John Wiley & Sons Inc	4	
	Palgrave Macmillan Ltd	1	
	Routledge	16	
	Springer	1	
	Taylor & Francis	13	
	The Author(s)	1	
	The Tavistock Institute 2011	1	
	Wiley	8	
	<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>69</i>	
Research objectives (RO)	<p>RO 1: Reviewing the theoretical foundations from 1990–2022 on which SIHRM has been grounded to deepen our understanding of the dominant and currently relevant theories applicable in the post-pandemic era</p> <p>RO 2: Reviewing the methodologies and the search of relevant SIHRM research papers from existing databases to understand their categories and classification</p> <p>RO 3: Reviewing the existing SIHRM frameworks (e.g. strategy, structure, control, fit, flexibility, global-local dynamics and conceptual issues etc.) to define an integrated SIHRM framework relevant for multiple contexts whilst incorporating the post-pandemic perspective, along with suggestions for future research</p>		
Variables used	Integration, Responsiveness, Control, Management Mentality regarding overseas operation, Structure v/s Business Environment, Orientation, View of the world, Associated Strategy for Business Environment, Key Assets, Strategy Type, SIHRM Orientation, Parent-Affiliate HRM, Affiliate Roles, Cultural Distance, Legal Distance, Employee Type, HRM Competence, Approach, Imprinting, Attribution of Problems, Sharing of HRM Innovations, Organizational Learning, Cost, Coordination and Integration, Flexibility, Structure, Internationalization, Task Context, strategic action fields		
Theoretical perspectives		<i>Papers</i>	<i>% age</i> <i>Authors</i>
	Resource based	10	17% e.g. Schuler and Jackson, Cieri and Dowling
	Institutional	10	17% e.g. Schuler and Jackson, Cieri and Dowling
	Congruence	2	3% e.g. Milliman, Glinow, Nathan
	Convergence	6	10% e.g. Akram Al Ariss, Yusuf Sidani, Di Fana
	Behavioural	2	3% e.g. Schuler and Jackson, Cieri and Dowling
	Agency	1	1% e.g. Schuler and Jackson, Cieri and Dowling
	Contingency	4	7% e.g. Marion Festing, Fang Lee Cooke
	Organizational	2	3% e.g. Cieri <i>et al.</i>
	SIHRM	8	14% e.g. Cieri <i>et al.</i>
	Psychological	3	5% e.g. Marilyn Fenwick, Marion Festing
	Other HRM	3	5% e.g. Yongsun Paik and Mary B. Teagarden
	Multiple	15	27% e.g. Akram Al Ariss, Yusuf Sidani
Studies by country/(s)	<p><i>Single Country Studies (14%):</i> China, Germany</p> <p><i>Multiple Countries Studies (86%):</i> US, Europe, Japan, North America, Africa, Korea, Spain, China, UK</p>		

Note(s): SIHRM = Strategic International Human Resource Management

Table 3.
Overview of SIHRM:
key words, literature,
objectives, variables,
theories and studies by
country

Institutional theory. According to institutional theory, organizations function in ways that are aligned to a wide range of stakeholders and are under pressure to adopt appropriate structures and implicit practices to comply with their outside environment in their quest for

acceptability and appreciation (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). From an SIHRM perspective, institutional theorists analyse HRM approaches of foreign-owned affiliates of MNEs to tackle problems caused due to multiple circumstances and safeguard their survival by taking the burden of adapting and being consistent with the local environment to gain legality (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

Convergence theory. According to the convergence theory, societies tend to become isomorphic in terms of industrialization, technology usage and ultimately end up leaning towards values convergent with western capitalism (Ralston, 2008).

Congruence theory. Congruence or fit is the extent to which the requirement, purpose, aim and expectation and/or structure of a constituent is similar to another constituent (Nadler and Tushman, 1980). From an SIHRM perspective, the complexity between corporate and foreign affiliate relationship within MNEs justifies the need to have an additional concept of flexibility along with the concept of fit to accommodate several challenges of dealing with MNE's. The concept of fit and flexibility is important because its complexity increases in the MNC context, producing higher effectiveness in organizational behaviour across hierarchies (Chandler, 1962; Galbraith, 1977; Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967; Nadler and Tushman, 1989; Joan, 1965).

Internalization theory. This theory can act as a bridge between international business strategy and international management by analysing how the structure of the firm adapts to the job that the firm needs to do. The need for firms to have "dynamic capabilities" for adjusting to varying situations (Teece, 2011) can only be explained by the internalization theory which highlights in detail the specific alterations required to achieve comprehensive change (Verbeke, 2013).

RO2: Review of research methodologies used

Regarding methodologies, a detailed analysis of 69 papers reviewed (mentioned in Table 1) revealed that 4 (7%) papers were empirical studies and used quantitative methods, 2 (3%) papers used both quantitative as well as a qualitative method for analysing data, while 63 (90%) papers were non-empirical conceptual papers. These 63 papers were further classified basis usage of qualitative method of interviews, multiple case studies methods, literature reviews, theory-building methods and conceptual papers (mentioned in Table 4).

	Methodologies	No. of papers	% Age
Empirical	Quantitative Methods – Survey Data	4	7%
Mixed method	Mixed Method	2	3%
Non-empirical	Qualitative Methods – Interviews	63	90%
	Qualitative Methods – Multiple Case Studies	1	
	Qualitative Methods – Others	6	
		56	
	<i>Grand total</i>	69	

Table 4.
Summary of the
research
methodologies used

RO3: SIHRM frameworks – evolution over time

Our review indicated the shifting dynamics of the evolution of SIHRM frameworks over time (mentioned in Table 5) e.g. integration-responsiveness, strategic variety and strategic control, fit versus flexibility, model of SIHRM, MNC strategies and related organizational structures, global virtual teams to name a few (Pralhad, 1975; Doz, 1979; Doz and Prahalad, 1986; Milliman et al., 1991; Schuler et al., 1993; Taylor et al., 1996; Bird et al., 1998; Peng et al., 2011; Fan et al., 2016; Adamovic, 2018).

S.No	SIHRM framework	Authors
1	Integration-responsiveness framework	Prahalad (1975), Doz (1979)
2	Strategic Variety and Strategic Control	Doz and Prahalad (1986)
3	Fit versus flexibility framework	Milliman <i>et al.</i> (1991), Schuler <i>et al.</i> (1993)
4	Integrated model of strategic international HRM in MNE's	Schuler <i>et al.</i> (1993)
5	Thematic framework of IHRM in MNE's	adapted from Schuler <i>et al.</i> (1993)
6	Model of Strategic International Human Resource Management	Taylor <i>et al.</i> (1996)
7	Typology of approaches to the design of IHRM in MNCs	Bird <i>et al.</i> (1998)
8	MNC strategies and related organizational structures	Peng <i>et al.</i> (2011)
9	Convergence–divergence–crossvergence Architecture	Fan <i>et al.</i> (2016)
10	Global Virtual Teams framework	Adamovic (2018)
11	Four Models for International Organizations: The post pandemic perspective	Tippmann <i>et al.</i> (2021)
12	Strategic action fields (SAF) method for making norms of globalizing actors in MNCs	Edwards <i>et al.</i> (2022)
13	Three Global Disruptions	Meyer and Li (2022)

Table 5.
The evolution of
SIHRM frameworks
over time

Integration-responsiveness framework (Prahalad, 1975; Doz, 1979; Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989). This framework balancing local demands and global visions' is typically regarded as the most inclusive explanation of the framework (see Figure 2).

Strategic variety and strategic control (Doz and Prahalad, 1986). This framework is differentiated by category of business, affiliate and ownership with typically reducing degree of strategic control as we diverge from the origin.

Fit versus flexibility framework (Milliman *et al.*, 1991; Schuler *et al.*, 1993). This framework focuses on the extent to which SIHRM is *fit* with the objectives of the firm and addresses the need for *flexibility* as well (see Figure 3).

Framework of integrated strategic international HRM in MNE's (Schuler *et al.*, 1993). An MNE's strategic components of SIHRM anchors this framework, usage of propositions which represent the individual and collective impact of the MNE's strategic components along with many exogenous and endogenous SIHRM aspects (see Figure 4).

Thematic framework of IHRM in MNE's (adapted from Schuler *et al.*, 1993). Though similar to the initial version, aspects of this variant emphasize critical sub-variants that can be seen in the literature of IHRM during the past decades.

SIHRM Model (Taylor *et al.*, 1996). This model scrutinizes SIHRM at three stages: parent, subsidiary and clusters of employee groups in the subsidiary, basis which adaptive, exportive and integrative orientations have been identified (see Figure 5).

Typology of approaches to the design of IHRM in MNCs (Bird *et al.*, 1998). This provides a unifying framework that is generalizable and comprises of four different, mutually exclusive models which can be differentiated.

Strategies and organizational structures of MNCs (Peng *et al.*, 2011). The approaches of Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) were rechristened to circumvent misunderstanding, add lucidity and "structure strategy" paradigm by connecting typical organizational explanations to the individual strategy types (see Figure 6).

Convergence–divergence–crossvergence architecture (Fan *et al.*, 2016). This links IHRM of emerging market multi-national enterprises (EMNEs) to the predicament of international vis-à-vis local option (see Figure 7).

Global virtual teams framework (Adamovic, 2018). This framework introduces an HRM viewpoint focused on the employee to manage GVTs concentrating explicitly on improving employee well-being.

Three global disruptions (Meyer and Li, 2022). In the early 2020's, these disruptions were seen which can impact the globalization patters of the past three decades: reduced global mobility of people, conflicting national regulatory institutions, and populist policies (Figure 8).

Making norms of globalizing actors in MNCs using the approach for Strategic action fields (SAF) (Edwards et al., 2022a, b). Using the approach which analyses the growth of norms in modern multi-nationals, the SAF method provides an insight into conducting research to make global norms that are contextual, customized and questioned.

Analysis of relevant SIHRM frameworks in the current context: an overview

The framework of integration versus responsiveness (Prahalad, 1975; Doz, 1979; Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989). Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) proposed a classification of four dissimilar business scenarios (see Figure 2) namely global, multi-national, international and the transnational environment as mentioned above.



Figure 2. Industry types and corresponding MNC strategies

Source(s): (Prahalad, 1975; Doz, 1979; Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989)

The framework of fit versus flexibility (Milliman et al., 1991; Schuler et al., 1993). Nadler and Tushman (1980) described fit as “the degree to which the needs, goals, objectives, and/or structure of one component are consistent with the needs, demands, goals, objectives, and/or structure of another component” (p. 40). Flexibility is defined as “the capacity of HRM to enable the organization’s capability to adapt efficiently and in a timely manner to altering or varied demands from either its environment or from within the firm itself “ (Milliman et al., 1991, p. 325). At any organization, the various SIHRM practices need to be compatible amongst themselves at the level of affiliate as well as corporate (Figure 3).

	Intrinsic Fit within IHRM Functions	Extrinsic Fit of IHRM to Organizational Context
Within Organizational level of Analysis	Intrinsic IHRM Fit (Selection, Training, Appraisal, Rewards)	IHRM Fit to Organizational Life Cycle Stage
Outside Organizational level of Analysis	Foreign Subsidiary Fit to Corporate IHRM	IHRM Fit to Cross-cultural and Cross-national Environment

Source(s): Adapted from Milliman et al. (1991)

Figure 3. Four fits of strategic international human resource management (SIHRM)

Integrated framework of strategic international HRM in MNEs (adapted from Schuler *et al.*, 1993). This SIHRM model (Figure 4) is most current and encapsulates the significant aspects recognized by earlier researchers, by accommodating the twin requirement for inter-unit connections (*integration*) and the difficulties faced by affiliates while functioning efficiently in their localized environment (*differentiation*), and both external factors and internal factors impact the SIHRM strategy of the firm (Schuler *et al.*, 1993). The inter-unit connections and core operations (Hennart, 1982; Phatak, 1992) are key *strategic MNE components* that impact SIHRM, whose issues are addressed by inter-unit and intra-unit needs and challenges of MNE's. The *SIHRM functions* are represented by the positioning of human resources of the MNE, i.e. the investment of time, effort and money dedicated to the functioning of HR and its overall position as a function. The *SIHRM guidelines and practices* involve the creation of generic protocols regarding the management of individuals and the development of precise processes and are the most significant to the MNE's strategic requirements are related to recruitment, appraisals, compensation and training and development (Dowling and Schuler, 1990). The *exogenous (external)* include industry and country/regional characteristics whereas the *endogenous (internal)* factors comprise of the structure of worldwide processes, the MNE's headquarters worldwide positioning, competitive approaches adopted and the MNE's understanding of handling international processes. The *MNE concerns and goals* are significant and the manner of how the significance is created may differ with different MNE's.

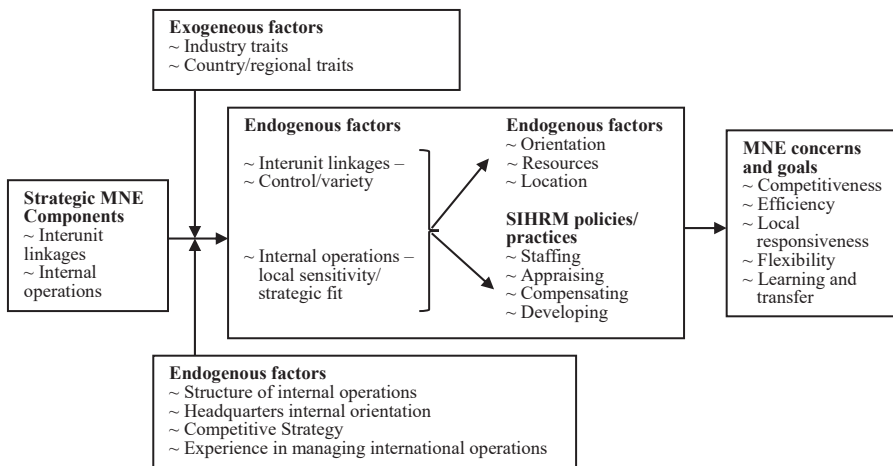


Figure 4.
Integrated framework
of strategic
international HRM in
multinational
enterprises

Source(s): Adapted from Schuler *et al.* (1993)

SIHRM Model (Taylor *et al.*, 1996). This framework scrutinizes the classification at three stages: the parent corporation, associate and explicit employee clusters within the associate (see Figure 5). The MNC's SIHRM positioning is the strategy adopted in developing the overarching IHRM framework by the MNC's top management team, especially for usage in the foreign subsidiaries, basis which three generic MNC's SIHRM situations have been recognized, namely, adaptive, exportive and integrative.

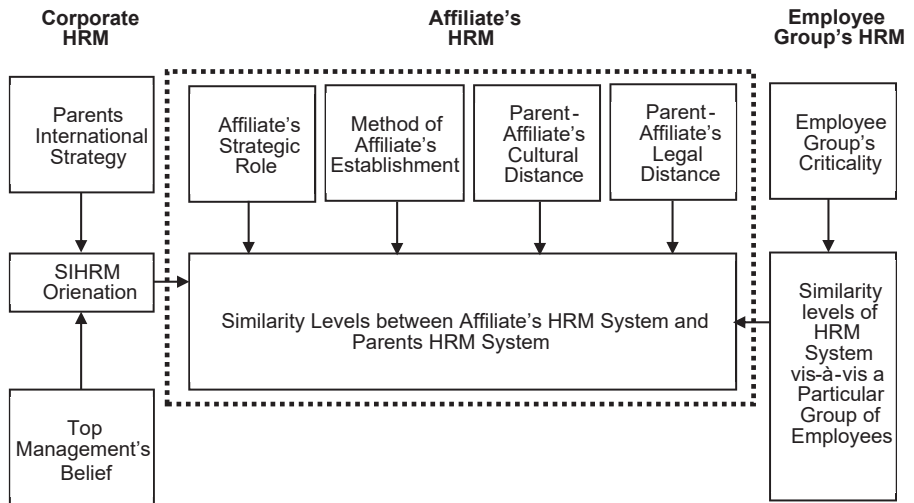


Figure 5. Strategic international human resource management framework

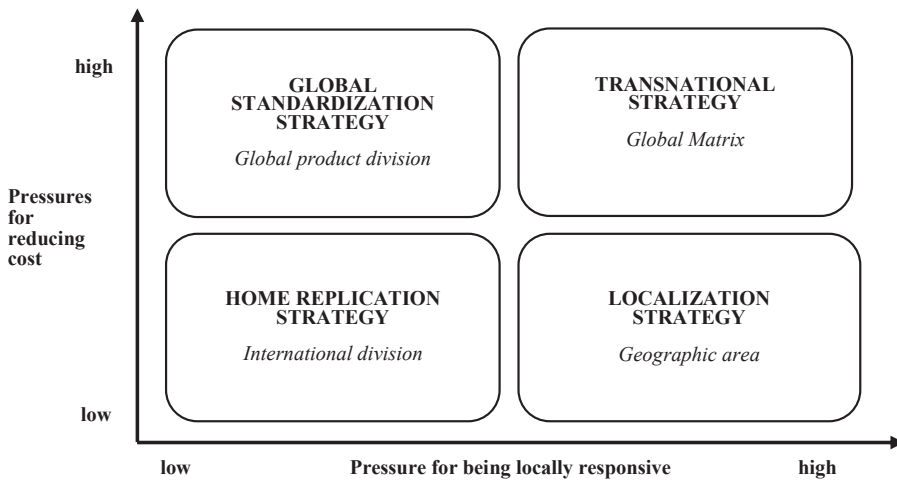
Source(s): Taylor *et al.* (1996)

Typology of approaches to the design of IHRM in MNCs (Bird *et al.*, 1998). This typology provides a unifying framework that is generalizable to all MNCs, irrespective of their nationality and comprises of four different, mutually explicit models which are different based on three specific aspects: (1) the similarity levels between the associate's HRM structure and the parent corporation's structure (2) the basis used by affiliates for attributing problems when the system is unsuccessful, and (3) the degree of sharing of HRM innovations created by the affiliate by the MNC with other affiliates and/or the parent firm (Bird *et al.*, 1998).

Strategies and organizational structures of MNCs (Peng *et al.*, 2011). Peng *et al.* (2011) rechristened the approaches of Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) and Chandler's (1962) structure and strategy (Figure 6) by linking organizational explanations to the individual approach categories. (1) "International plan" was renamed as "home replication strategy" which is strengthened by an "international division structure" (2) "Global plan" is rechristened as "global standardization strategy" and put in motion by a "global product division structure" (3) The "multinational plan" (occasionally called "multi-domestic strategy") is referred to as "localization strategy" and connected to the "geographical area structure." (4) However, "transnational strategy" was retained as is by Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989) who associate their transnational plan to the global network structure, unlike Peng *et al.* (2011) who associates it to a global environment structure.

Convergence-divergence-crossvergence Architecture (Fan *et al.*, 2016). This links IHRM of emerging market multinational enterprises (EMNEs) to the predicament of international vis-à-vis local option (see Figure 7), and the association of headquarters and subsidiaries (Bjorkman, 2003; Dewettinck and Remue, 2011; Pudelko and Harzing, 2007) by theorizing crossvergent IHRM into *intentional crossvergent IHRM* (high degree of localization mindset) and *developing crossvergent IHRM* (uncluttered, nimble and proactively receptive to its subsidiaries).

Global virtual teams framework (Adamovic, 2018) based on job demands-resources (JDR) Framework (adapted from Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; and Walton, 1976). This framework combines the JDR framework and exploration of the lived experience to launch an employee-



SIHRM framework

Figure 6. Strategies and organizational structures of MNCs

Source(s): Peng (2011)

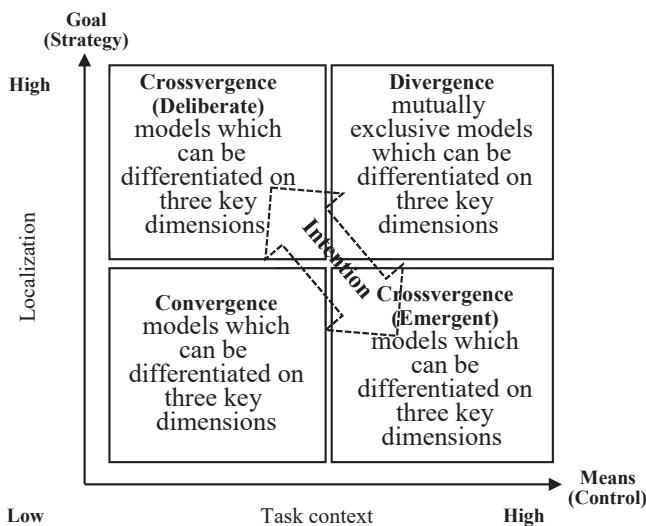


Figure 7. Convergence-divergence-crossvergence architecture

Source(s): Fan *et al.* (2016)

focused HRM viewpoint for managing GVTs which clearly lays emphases on refining the well-being of employees by using nimble work policies, international training and development avenues, and reasonable pay and procedures. This helps members of GVTs in coping with demands of the job triggered by their interpersonal problems, stressful atmosphere and cultural dissimilarities.

Three global disruptions (Meyer and Li, 2022). These disruptions were witnessed in the early 2020's which have the capacity to impact globalization patters of the past three decades: reduced global mobility of people, conflicting national regulatory institutions and populist

policies (Figure 8). *In lieu* of the same, MNEs need to gear up to absorb rising costs and operational logistical challenges (Schotter and Beamish, 2014). However, these disruptions may be alleviated by innovative technologies to enable virtual teams (Gibson and Gibbs, 2006; Tippmann *et al.*, 2021) and other unified forms of managing across locations (Autio *et al.*, 2021), which can radically alter MNEs' organizational structures and processes.

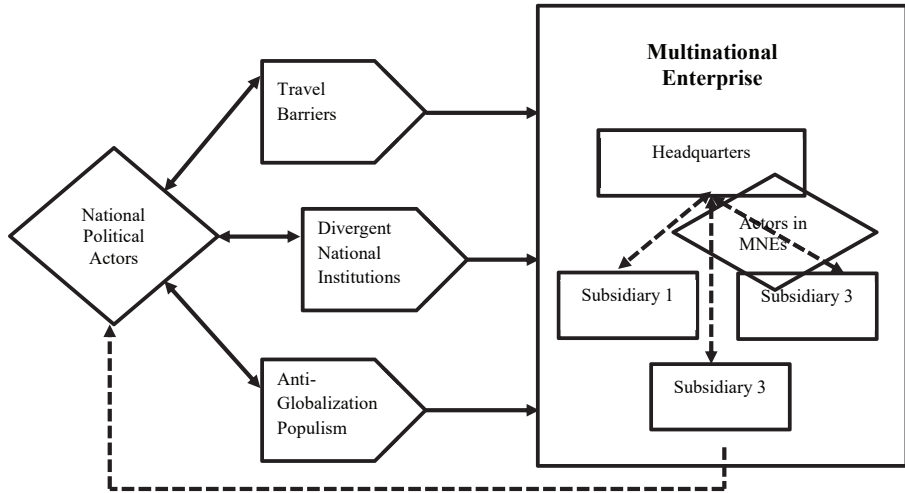


Figure 8.
Analytical framework:
three big disruptions

Source(s): Meyer and Li (2022)

Making norms of globalizing actors in MNCs using the approach for SAF (Edwards *et al.*, 2022a, b). This framework (adapted from, e.g. Howell, 2003; Fligstein and McAdam, 2012) analyses the expansion of standards in modern-day MNCs, extends the SAF method to create a standardized way of researching and making global norms that makes it contextual, personal and contested. Such an approach is required for progressing a self-motivated view of the MNC in which a variety of hierarchies become spaces to make norms. The complex challenges of global norms, and the relevance of the difficulties created by these methods for managers, employees and regulators globally necessitates focus on the responsibilities levied on individuals tasked with taking decisions about management "travel" internationally across companies within the capabilities they deploy.

Discussion

Proposed integrated SIHRM framework and its implications

Based on the fundamental premise of the integration-responsiveness framework that was defined about three decades ago, we have analysed the extensions and refinements of conceptual ideas of multiple SIHRM frameworks, i.e. integration versus responsiveness, control, management mentality regarding overseas operation, structure, business environment, orientation, view of the world, key assets, strategy type, SIHRM orientation, parent-affiliate HRM, affiliate roles, cultural distance, legal distance, employee type, HRM competence, approach, imprinting, attribution of problems, sharing of HRM innovations, organizational learning, cost, coordination and integration, flexibility, structure etc. (e.g. Prahalad, 1975; Doz, 1979; Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1989; Schuler *et al.*, 1993; Taylor *et al.*, 1996; Peng *et al.*, 2011) and integrated these variables (refer to Table 6) with the *internationalization* versus *task context*

S.No	International (I)	MNC (II)	Global (III)	Transnational (IV)
	Low Int., Low Resp	Low Int., High Resp	High Int., Low Resp	High Int., High Resp
Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989)	Administrative Control	Personal Control	Operational Control	Transnational Control
1	Formal organization planning and control systems permit tighter HQ-subsidary connect	Informal HQ-subsidary relationships overlaid with modest fiscal controls	Tight central control over choices, resources and information	Large movements of components, products, people, resources and information among independent units
2	Attachments to a central domestic company	Portfolio of independent businesses	Delivery pipeline for an integrated global market	Intricate process of organization and collaboration in an environment of joint decision making
3	Coordinated Federation	Decentralized Federation	Centralized Hub	Integrated Network
4	Centralization of highly valuable resources.	Needs decentralization of self-sufficient units	Needs centralization and scaled resources and capabilities globally	Requires dispersed, interdependent and speculated capabilities simultaneously
5	Decentralization of others, e.g. marketing, distribution etc	Polycentric	Mixed	Geocentric
6	Ethnocentric	National Markets	Global Markets	Global Markets
7	Extension markets	Flexibility to country differences by strong, resourceful, entrepreneurial and independent country or regional operations	Create cost advantage by centralization, global scale operations	Create global efficiency, flexibility and global learning
8	Transfer parent company knowledge and capabilities using global dispersion, local marketing and adaptation	Decentralization of many key resources, tasks and choices; controlled from HQ	Centralization of most strategic resources; tasks and choices	Distribution, specialization, and interdependence of resources and capabilities
9	International Explorative	Multi-domestic Adaptive	Global Integrative	Global
Bartlett and Ghoshal (1990)				
10	Key Assets			
Taylor et al. (1996)				
11	Strategy Type			
12	SIHRM Orientation			

(continued)

Table 6.
Integrated SIHRM
framework
incorporating the post-
pandemic perspective

Table 6.

S.No	International (I)	MNC (II)	Global (III)	Transnational (IV)
13	<i>Similarity: Parent-Affiliate HRM</i>	High	Moderate	
14	<i>Affiliate Roles</i>	Integrated Player	Global Innovators and Implementors	
15	<i>Cultural Distance</i>			
16	<i>Legal Distance</i>	Low		
17	<i>Employee Type</i>	Local Innovators		
18	<i>HRM Competence</i>	High High		
19	<i>Bird et al. (1998) Approach</i>	Context specific	Generalizable	
20	<i>Inprinting</i>	Adaptive Local Companies	Closed Hybrid Parent Company HRM Philosophy	Open Hybrid Dual
21	<i>Attribution of Problems</i>	Internal	Internal/External	Internal/External
22	<i>Sharing of HRM Innovations</i>	No Diffusion	Low Diffusion, Unidirectional	High Diffusion, Multi-lateral
23	<i>Organizational Learning</i>	Moderate	Moderate	High
24	<i>Cost</i>	Least expensive	Inexpensive	Expensive
25	<i>Coordination and Integration</i>	High	Low	High
26	<i>Flexibility</i>	Constrained	Constrained	High
<i>Renamed strategy types (Peng et al., 2011)</i>				
Re-articulated				
Home replication strategy				
Strategy Types of Bartlett and Ghoshal				
(international division structure)				
Localization (geographical area structure) strategy				
Transnational strategy (global matrix structure)				
Note(s): SHRM = Strategic International Human Resource Management				

(continued)

S.No	International (I)	MNC (II)	Global (III)	Transnational (IV)
<i>The Covid-19 perspective: Four models for international organizations (Tippmann et al., 2021)</i>				
27	Structure Large Hubs Organization	Hubs-and-Satellites Organization	Global-Virtual Organization	Distributed Organization
28	Internationalization v/s Task Context Relational office-centric work and Low employees in some countries	Relational office-centric hybrid work and High employees in many countries	Transnational office-centric hybrid work and High employees in many countries	Transnational office-centric hybrid work and Low employees in some countries
S.No	Conceptual challenges for understanding making norms in MNCs	Methodological requirements	SAF insights	Applying SAF to understand norm-making in MNCs
<i>Making norms of globalizing actors in MNCs (Edwards et al., 2022a, b)</i>				
29	<i>An adapted strategic action fields (SAF) method for making norms of globalizing actors in MNCs</i> Multiplicity of norms across levels and within different environmental contexts Multiplicity of roles and actor agency in MNC norm-making	Contextual: understanding the nature of the work of globalizing actors within intra/extra corporate settings Customized: roles and inventiveness that actors contribute requires a view of norms and longitudinal analysis Challenged: power and conflict to understand top down and bottom-up processes	“Rolling turbulence” and impermanence of intersecting intra organizational norms Understanding challenges as an expression of structural position within a field (capabilities) in shaping their immediate context Conflicts between actors in through the emergence of shared understandings and coalitions	Locating micro-level social orders within macro- and meso-level fields - intersection, complexities and interdependencies Encapsulating the variety of roles and how actors fashion elements of these roles, and hence the importance of other social skills in these processes Giving importance to the “shared understandings” of SAF to competing for positions where actors defend their interests

Note(s): SIHRM = Strategic International Human Resource Management; MNCs = multi-national companies; SAF = Strategic action fields

and SAF which is relevant from a post-pandemic perspective (Tippmann *et al.*, 2021; Lazarova *et al.*, 2023) and the norm-making of globalizing actors in MNCs (Edwards *et al.*, 2022a, b).

Changing scenario for IHRM post pandemic

During the pandemic crisis, many international organizations realized that they were able to sustain their operations with efficiency and effectiveness, notwithstanding an unexpected and literally complete withdrawal of the workforce from the office. However, to ascertain how virtual or office-centric a company should be, the context of tasks to be performed and the relevance of international talent for success needs to be considered. The signs of the changing IHRM scenario post pandemic is evidenced by the manner in which top leaders are thinking and can be seen in the framework for international organizations (see Figure 9). This framework is based on two new design principles which facilitates the identification of the most relevant option for working remotely at scale, namely (1) *Task context* of the fundamental activities of organizations and (2) *Level of internationalization*, i.e. the competitive relevance of stationing employees in international markets varying between the choice between few or many countries (low or high internationalization). These four frameworks namely *huge-hubs organization*, *dispersed organization*, *centres-and-satellites organization* and *global-virtual organization* are of relevance in the important domain of global competitiveness during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

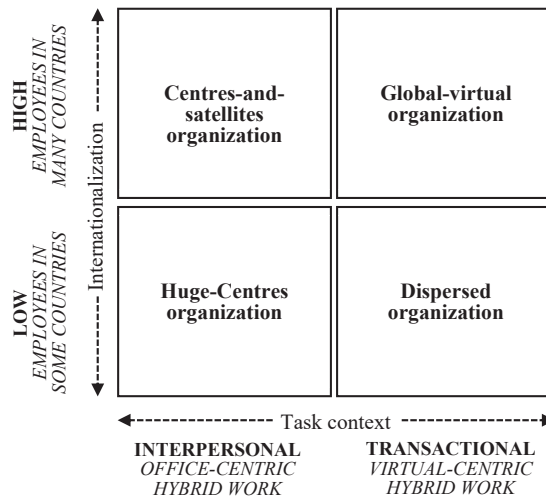


Figure 9.
Framework for
international
organisations

Source(s): Tippmann *et al.* (2021)

Huge centres (low internationalization, interpersonal task context). This office centric model drives greater employee collaboration to fulfil specialized, knowledge-intensive or creative activities. Remote working is selectively allowed only near the hubs, since frequent collaboration is anticipated through physical presence in the office.

Centres and satellites (high internationalization, interpersonal task context). This office-centric model depends on global key hubs, enabled with satellite processes to extract benefit of smaller clusters of knowledge workers or regional specialties.

Dispersed (low internationalization, transactional task context). This model is easily digitalized since most tasks are monotonous and high volume due to which the organization

lends itself to distribution. Accessibility and cost of talent determines the positioning of work and hence this extends to a small number of countries only. Larger markets are accessed for the company's products (if required) without physically being present.

Global virtual (high internationalization, transactional task context). Models which are virtual enable worldwide access to talent, without being influenced by an explicit pursuit for talent or satisfactory labour costs, and thereby works well for the success of corporations whose business warrants a global presence with fewer employees per country.

Consequently, leaders of these international companies can evaluate, adopt and start reconsidering their operating model and reorienting organizational structures, by judiciously identifying the most appropriate hybrid work model which is best suited for their businesses (Tippmann *et al.*, 2021).

Theoretical implications

By analysing all the pre-existing SIHRM frameworks to understand the experiences of leading and managing people working for international organizations, we developed a revamped SIHRM framework which aligns the current reality and the dynamic characteristics of SIHRM's evolution including working in the post pandemic era (e.g. work from home etc.) based on the *task context* and *internationalization* (as shown in Figure 9).

Practical implications

During and after the Covid-19 pandemic, many MNE's expedited the digitalization of routine tasks and activities, wherein employees demonstrated a fair amount of receptivity to online engagement vis-à-vis in-person interactions. Needless to say, that having employees in multiple countries increases costs and creates complexity. Additionally, the nature of the company's product or offering that can be promoted, transported and supported via electronic means is a crucial factor for determining its international presence as compared to tangible products that are costly or hard to distribute, even if promoted and sold by electronic means. By considering these two aspects in conjunction, companies can take a decision regarding employee presence in few or many countries (low or high internationalization) (Tippmann *et al.*, 2021).

Another critical component which affects work and impacts how MNEs accomplish a threshold of integrating HR globally is by creating a framework of "strategic action fields" to direct and aid research in making global norms and analysing the work of "globalising actors" who play a crucial role in globalizing a company's management of its human resources. This framework besides benefiting the field of IHRM by accomplishing a methodology for making global norms is contextual, customized and challenged (Edwards *et al.*, 2022a, b).

Limitations

This study was limited due to our sharply defined criteria (mentioned in Figure 1) and could further provide enhanced understanding by including additional databases (e.g. Emerald, Ebscohost, JSTOR, Social Science Citation Index, etc.). However, the selection criteria were purposefully defined to make the landscape of study realistic, reasonable and within the limits of the researchers.

Directions for future research (DFR)

DFR 1. A basic question necessitating future research would be whether employees prefer working from home (WFH) which consequently would restrict the future candidate pool for global mobility, and thereby reduce the pool of future global leaders.

DFR 2. Future research could study the impact of key performance outcomes in MNEs who make the choice of having few in-countries versus virtual global projects and identify specific roles (if any) wherein this choice impacts in a significant manner.

DFR 3. Analysis of the impact of control and synchronization mechanisms between headquarters and affiliates diminish in MNEs opting for lesser in-country global assignments.

DFR 4. Analysis of whether there are changes in the plans for corporate expatriation, and the characteristics of virtual international projects which could still result in the growth of critical cross-cultural capabilities can also be researched in future.

DFR 5. Lastly, exploring the redesign of jobs in MNEs for enabling the synchronization of work and facilitation of high performance of employees irrespective of location, including exploring the leverage that work automation might provide MNEs via balancing costs and mitigating risk in manufacturing and supply chains (Lazarova *et al.*, 2023).

Conclusion

Our study clearly indicates that the research of SIHRM in the current context is devoid of alignment, consistency and universal applicability in the current context of the post pandemic era. The complex challenges which globalization creates for multiple stakeholders, i.e. managers, employees and regulators globally, warrants focussed research pertaining to the critical role played by individuals taking these decisions regarding management “travel” globally across companies (Edwards *et al.*, 2022a, b). Therefore, since the scope of SIHRM is evolving, an on-going review of existing research models, field of study, ideological differences and contexts can facilitate greater contribution, moving us beyond the obsolete and dated concepts of SIHRM frameworks towards a more vibrant and progressive view in which a variety of relevant frameworks can become norm-making spaces. In conclusion, management must judiciously select the most suitable framework for their companies to make the most of the opportunities which globally dispersed remote work offers and prepare for the future accordingly in the post-pandemic era.

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