Impact of the Pursuit of an Equal Gender Balance on High Performance Work Systems

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: In the course of female underrepresentation and male dominance in the current organizational environment female talent stays underutilized. Therefore, equal gender balance issues experience growing attention and the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance is on the agenda of many organizations.

Objective: The primary objective of this study is to provide an idea on how the future of HPWSs looks like related to the achievement of an equal gender balance.

Method: A literature review and HR expert interviews were used to get into the topic. The literature review provided a theoretical view on the topic whereas the structured interviews added a practical view. The HR expert interviews were answered via email by six interviewees mainly working in the academic field.

Results: Combining theory and practice similar ideas evolved of how a HPWS should be designed to support gender equality. Literature as well as the HR experts give concrete suggestions on the design of HR practices comprising a HPWS.

Conclusion: There are two main categories of equal gender balance issues that need to be overcome by the organization to enable the achievement of gender quality. To actively work on an equal gender balance the organization needs to implement HR practices with the common goal of gender equality in the workforce. HR practices aiming at the same goal build a coherent system, a HPWS, that extensively contributes to the achievement of an equally gender mixed workforce in the organization's future.

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Keywords

HR Practice, High Performance Work System, Equal Gender Balance, Female Workforce, Gender Discrimination

1.   INRRODUCTION

The number of women in the organizational workforce is continuously rising and one can observe three main reasons for this trend.

First, an increasing number of countries introduced a quota to support the increase in the proportion of women especially in top management positions (Catalyst, 2014). Norway introduced a quota for female directors in 2006 and Germany followed in March 2015. In Germany the quota implies that in 2016 30% of supervisory board positions should be held by women and in 2018 the quota should have been raised to 50%. Similarly, other European countries including the Netherlands and Italy have also introduced measures related to the equal gender balance issue (BBC, 2014). In Australia, Britain, and Sweden governments plan to impose equal gender quotas if companies do not voluntarily include more female directors into their top management positions (The Economist, 2014).

Secondly, global competition puts pressure on organizations to promote more women in their workforce (Blum, Fields, & Goodman, 1994; Oakley, 2000). Firms seek to develop sustainable competitive advantages and for that rely increasingly on diverse and multi-skilled human capital consisting of a workforce that includes women as well as other minorities. As Blum et al. (1994) mention, for companies that heavily rely on personal interactions females and their superior interpersonal abilities in teams support the achievement of a competitive advantage.

Thirdly, there is a cultural development of moving away from the traditional family image of a working father and a staying-at-home mother. The trend is moving towards families in which both parents earn a living for their family.

Summarizing the aforementioned the three main factors contributing to a growing future trend of an equal gender balance implementation in the organizational workforce are the following: the change of the legal environment in favor of female employees, the increasing number of economically active women, and the fact that women are able to contribute to an organization's competitive advantage.

The importance of creating an equal gender balance in the workforce and especially in top management positions is demonstrated by the fact that in 2014 only 4.8% of Fortune 500 CEOs were women and only 17% of these companies' board seats were represented by women (Catalyst, 2014). There is still a prevailing mindset among managers and the rest of the workforce that women appointed to top management positions are *"less qualified, less competent and less legitimate in their role"* than their male colleagues (The Economist, 2014). However, women are able to offer informational and social diversity benefits to the work team and women in top management positions serve as a motivation for women working in middle management (Dezsö & Ross, 2012).

Current human resource (HR) practices do not contribute to the implementation of an organizational equal gender balance *"since [mainly male] managers control the bulk of power in organizations and largely determine a company's hiring, compensation and employee evaluation practices"* (Blum et al., 1994, p. 241). Due to the masculine way of management the different set of qualities women can bring into the workforce are neglected (Harel, Tzafrir, & Baruch, 2003). Also Dickens (1998) claims that in general the *"gender equality assumption in the HRM model is part of the rhetoric rather than the reality"* (p. 23).

Therefore, the responsibility of the HR function is to modify the HR practices in such a way as they treat the equal gender balance issue in an adequate way and contribute to the company's overall performance. The before mentioned notion is in line with the argument of Huselid (1995) that HRM policies and practices have an important impact on firm performance if they build a coherent system, that is called a high performance work system (HPWS). A HPWS is a system of complementary HR practices that enhance the overall work performance within a company and *"form a coherent, integrated 'bundle'; a system of complementarities whose effect is greater than the sum of its parts"* (Macky & Boxall, 2007, p. 537).

Since the HR practice configuration of current HPWSs does not pay sufficient attention to the implementation of an equal gender balance within the organization, one can assume that if the HPWS is designed in a certain way it may contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance. For instance, employment and advancement possibilities for female employees are currently restricted by the *"discrimination in recruitment, remuneration, inflexible working conditions, as well as insufficient services such as child care"* (Workinfo, 2003). A solution for the aforementioned problem might be that HR managers modify the company's recruitment and selection practices by including gender competence as a selection criterion (Workinfo, 2013). This would ensure that the company hires people that accept and value gender diversity and do not have problems coping with women's advancement. For this reason, certain HR practices need to be changed to facilitate the implementation of an equal gender balance. All HR practices should be aimed at achieving the same goal of gender equality. In aiming at the same goal and being matched appropriately, different HR practices become a HPWS and increase organizational overall performance (Posthuma, Campion, Masimova, & Campion, 2013). HPWSs not only increase an organization's performance they are also likely to be the source of an organization's sustained competitive advantage since a bundle of HR practices is harder to imitate than a single one (Gong, Chang, & Cheung, 2010). Further, as Bonias et al. (2010) argue *"employee attitudes can be influenced through high performance work systems by establishing a link between the objectives of the organisation and employee aspirations"* (p. 321).

The purpose of this paper is to provide an understanding of how the future of HPWSs looks like related to the achievement of an equal gender balance. That is which HR practices need to be present and how they need to be designed to contribute to an organizational equal gender balance. Therefore, the paper tries to answer the following research question:

"In which way should a HPWS be designed to support an equal gender balance within the organization?"

The paper is structured as follows. First, a literature review is used to provide an overview about HPWSs. Further, the literature review is about equal gender balance issues and how HR practices might help to establish an equal gender balance. In the methodology part of the paper expert interviews are conducted to identify HR experts' views on the topic. The discussion part includes a comparison of the recommendations extracted from state-of-the-art literature and the ones provided by the HR experts. After that theoretical as well as practical implications and limitations of the research are mentioned. In the conclusion section an overview of how a HPWS should be designed to support the implementation of an organizational equal gender balance is given combining ideas from theory and practice.

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1   HPWS and its Current HR Practices

Understanding the idea of HPWSs depends on the understanding of its history, that is, the theories it is based on. The notion of a HPWS as *"a system of complementarities whose effect is greater than the sum of its parts"* (Macky & Boxall, 2007, p. 537) highlights the system concept and implies that there need to be a fit between the HR practices a HPWS is comprised of.

Regarding the system's notion there are different systems approaches in the management and organization field and each of these approaches has their own view of an ideal work system (Boselie, 2010). Each systems approach is related to one of the historical schools of thought in management. For instance, the direct control systems approach is related to the scientific management school, the social attention systems approach is in line with the human relations school, the revisionism school talks about a high-commitment systems approach and the socio-technical systems theory includes the enrichment system approach (Boselie, 2010).

The HPWS approach as it is common today includes certain aspects of all of these different schools of performance management. For the purpose of this paper the common known definition of a system is used, that is, *"a system is a set of things working together as parts of a mechanism or an interconnecting network; a complex whole"* (Oxforddictionaries, 2015)

The notion of fit is in line with ideas of the configuration theory. The configuration theory intends to match environment-strategy-structure relationships that influence organizational performance (Baltazar & Brooks, 2007). Baltazar and Brooks (2007) argue that there needs to be a *"match between the characteristics of the organization's environment, strategy and structure"* (p. 383), since the fit of these three factors is seen as the main determinant of how the organization performs.

Considering HRM, HR practices need to fit key aspects of the organizational context such as the overall strategy, and the organizational structure and form, since the effectiveness of all of these aspects depends on the right HR practices (Baird & Meshoulam, 1998; Wright, 1998). The before mentioned argument can be referred to as vertical fit. The vertical fit within a company indicates that HR practices are aligned with the strategic management process of the company and in this way it supports the overall company performance (Schuler & Jackson, 1987). In case of HPWSs there also need to be an internal or horizontal fit between different HR practices that implies that HRM components support and complement each other rather than compete with each other (Baird & Meshoulam, 1998). The notion of horizontal fit is also known as internal alignment between different HR practices (Wright & Boswell, 2002).

For instance, the combination of individual performance appraisals with individual performance related pay and internal promotion opportunities is an illustration of how different HR practices can be aligned to match and enhance each other's effect (Boselie, 2010).

Regarding the question of which HR practices comprise a HPWS several suggestions can be found in existing literature. However, the different recommendations of HR practice configurations of HPWSs have two arguments in common. First, the importance of the right combination of HR practices is highlighted since the combination of these practices *"is crucial in leading to better organizational outcomes"* (Shih, Chiang, & Hsu, 2006, p. 742). Second, the majority of recommendations

of HR practice configurations from literature recognizes that, *"the actual practices of HPWSs vary across organizations"* (Wang & Verma, 2012, p. 415).

Due to the high number of different suggestions for HR practice configurations of HPWSs this paper uses the HR practices proposed by Huselid (1995). Huselid is viewed as a pioneer and his study on the relationship between different HR practices and firm performance is probably the most-cited work in this field of research (Wright & Boswell, 2002). He views the following HR practices as being part of an HPWS: employee recruitment and selection, performance management, compensation, training and development, and employee participation and involvement (Huselid, 1995). Huselid (1995) states that the combination of these HR practices *"can improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a firm's current and potential employees, increase their motivation, reduce shirking, and enhance retention of quality employees while encouraging nonperformers to leave the firm"* (Huselid, 1995, p. 635).

2.2   Organizational Equal Gender Balance Issues – Theoretical Perspective

To get an idea of how HPWSs need to be designed to support the achievement of an equal gender balance it is helpful to determine existing problems regarding the issue. Equal gender balance issues can be grouped into two main categories, namely issues relating to work and family life conflict and issues relating to gender discrimination. Additionally, Wang and Verma (2012) argue that external organizational factors such as the industry may also play an important role. Some industries face higher levels of pressure to pursue the implementation of an organizational equal gender balance than others (Wang & Verma, 2012).

The conflict between work and family life comprises several equal gender balance issues. As Konrad and Mangel (2000) state *"conflicts between work and family life may lead to employee turnover and withdrawal [and] reduced work effort, lateness, and absenteeism"* (p. 1225). Work and family life conflicts are faced by the entire organizational workforce, but since women still have the primary responsibility for childcare and homemaking they experience this conflict as stronger as their male counterparts do (Konrad & Mangel, 2000). In general men *"have fewer demands on their time which enables them to devote more visible time to the organisation – to display greater commitment' - and also makes them better placed to create the impression of so doing, whatever the reality"* (Dickens, 1998, p. 25). Women might be equally committed to the company, but they are perceived by managers as being less committed due to fewer hours spent in the company.

Another category of equal gender balance issues is the prevailing gender discrimination which *"is most apparent in areas of job recruitment, promotion, remuneration and job assignments"* (Harel, Tzafrir, & Baruch, 2003, p. 249). Since mostly white male managers control *"the bulk of the power in organizations and largely determine a company's hiring, compensation and performance evaluation practices"* (Ng & Burke, 2005, p. 1196) it is hard to eliminate gender specific discrimination. And since the management of organizations is mostly comprised of men who value men's work more than women's, there are greater challenges for women regarding the organizational entry or moving up the organizational hierarchy (Ng & Burke, 2005).

Further discrimination is often manifested in policies and practices of the organization. For instance, *"HRM uses EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] policies to symbolize what*

they call 'good faith', while no actual practical activity results from these policies" (Harel, Tzafrir, & Baruch, 2003, p. 249). Also the missing control over one's own work schedule is an important equal gender balance issue since as Lyness et al. (2012) argue there is "a schedule control gap such that women, who presumably need it more, have less control than men over their work schedules" (p. 1045). Women often face low levels of acceptance by the male part of the organizational workforce due to a mindset of gender stereotyping or sexual harassment (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Gender equality issues related to work and family life conflict or gender discrimination need to be tackled by the HR department by putting effective HR practices in place that facilitate the implementation of an equal gender balance within the organization.

2.3 Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance – Theoretical Perspective

Existing literature proposes several ideas in which ways HR practices might support the achievement of a balance between male and female employees. In the following each of Huselid's five HR practices and the way in which they are contributing to an equal gender balance is mentioned. The following sections are organized according to Huselid's HR practices, namely employee recruitment and selection, performance management, compensation, training and development, and employee participation and involvement.

Starting with employee recruitment and selection organizations should be aware of the fact the women search for an employer whose mission fits their own personal values (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Further, "women place different values than White males on certain characteristics when evaluating potential employers" (Avery & McKay, 2006, p. 158). Avery and Mckay (2006) give concrete suggestions on how organizations might attract female talents more successfully. First, companies may attract women in form of targeted recruitment which includes targeted recruitment advertising in terms of portraying gender diversity in company information flyers or on the company website (Avery & McKay, 2006). Portraying gender diversity gives women the impression that the firm values this kind of diversity. Further Avery and McKay (2006) state that "promoting policies of inclusiveness [e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity] recruiting at colleges and universities with high minority and female enrollments, employing diverse [e.g. female] recruiters, and participating in job fairs in highly diverse communities" (p. 164) can extensively contribute the recruitment of female employees.

Regarding performance management organizations can support women to manage the interface between their work and personal responsibilities especially family in providing work schedule flexibility. Konrad and Mangel (2000) state that "providing work schedule flexibility reduces the level of work–family conflict and enhances satisfaction with family life" (p. 1226). Additionally and as most important for a change in performance management work schedule flexibility shifts the focus away from on face time towards "measuring and rewarding actual performance, regardless of where or when the work is done" (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008, p. 39). Organizations can provide more flexibility in work schedule options in terms of working schedules, working hours, the location of work, part-time work, and job-sharing programs (Konrad & Mangel, 2000).

In the case of compensation organizations that wish to implement an equal gender balance need to incorporate family friendly benefits in their compensation package. Family friendly benefits include paid maternity leaves and benefits, longer parental leaves, and excellent health care to retain highly talented women with family responsibilities in their workforce (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

Considering training and development as well as employee participation and involvement practices, diversity and equality management systems are a way in which an organizational equal gender balance might be supported. Diversity and equality management systems include diversity and equality training for employees, the generation of policies on diversity and equality management with active staff involvement, and the constant monitoring of development opportunities in terms of recruitment, promotion and compensation policies (Armstrong, Flood, Guthrie, Liu, Maccurtain, & Mkamwa, 2010).

In general, all HR practices should "handle employees according to their competencies, knowledge, skills and abilities rather than deal with irrelevant characteristics such as gender" (Harel, Tzafrir, & Baruch, 2003, p. 250).

Using the HR practices in a way as described in this section helps to build a HPWS that eliminates work and family life conflicts and gender discrimination. In eliminating equal gender balance issues the HPWS contributes to the implementation of an equal gender balance within the organization. The elimination of equal gender balance issues demonstrates women that family and work is combinable and therefore it supports organizations in convincing women to work for them.

3. METHODLOGY

Qualitative research in form of expert interviews has been conducted. The interviews are used to understand how experts view the role of HPWSs in achieving gender equality in practice. Personal interviews with HR experts are used to gain valuable insights in the topic from a practical perspective. In the following the interview sample, the structure of the interview, the research design and the aim of the interviews are specified.

3.1 Sample

The sample that was used for conducting the interviews consisted of six experts in the HR field. To obtain valuable answers the interviewees were selected according to a desired expert profile which is mentioned in the following:

- ➢ Gender: No specific gender
- ➢ Position: Leading HRM position
- ➢ Type of country: Countries that are aware of the equal gender balance topic; no female quota needs to be present
- ➢ Type of industry: Industries in which equal gender balance is an issue
- ➢ Type of organization: Organizations that are familiar with equal gender balance issues
- ➢ Language Requirements: Preferably English

Comparing the actual expert profiles with the desired one the majority of HR experts matches the desired profile. Not all of the interviewees work in leading HRM positions. However, they all work in the Netherlands which is a country that can be considered as being aware of the gender equality topic. Most of the experts are employed by universities since these kind of experts could be reached more easily than experts working in

other industries. All of the experts' organizations are familiar with equal gender balance issues.

By the reason of privacy matters the names of the HR experts are changed into the abbreviation HRM 1 to HRM 6.

3.2 Structure of the Interview

A structured interview was used to question the HR experts. The interview was designed in the following way. First, the interviewees were asked to provide general information about themselves as well as about the organization they are working in, such as what the current female ratio in their company is, how the company's attitude towards the current equal gender balance discussion is, etc. Second, more qualitative data was collected in form of closed questions. The first set of questions was related to prevailing equal gender balance issues in the experts' organization. The second set of questions was concerned with the possible contribution of HR practices to the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future. The second part of the interview was structured according to the information gained in the literature review. Therefore, the questions were related to the two main equal gender balance issues found in literature and to Huselid's five HR practices. The notion of HPWSs was left out deliberately due to the fact that many HR experts are not familiar with the term. For the complete interview template compare Appendix A.

3.3 Research Design

The contact information of potential interviewees was found in the personal network of University of Twente professors and in the Internet. When searching HR experts in the Internet criteria that were taken notice of included geographical distance and size of their organization. However, finding HR experts by the means of web search was rather difficult. All interviewees were contacted via email stating the purpose of the interview. If the HR managers were willing to participate in the interview the questions were sent to them via email.

The interviews were analyzed in the following way, first each HR expert interview transcript was read again. After reading the interview transcripts the different answers of each expert were compared for each question using different coding words. To develop a coding scheme attention was paid to commonly used words and key terms. The coding processes started with a list of initial codes that were derived from the interview questions. During the coding process additional coding ideas emerged and were used to analyze the data. By the means of word repetitions and key words the different expert answers were compared. By comparing the different point of views for each question similarities and differences in opinions of the interviewed HR experts could be detected and lead to the results of the analysis.

3.4 Aim of the Interviews

The intention of conducting interviews is to gain insight on the research topic from a practical perspective. The interviews help to analyze which organizational equal gender balance issues are observed by HR managers in real life.

Further, by means of the analysis of each HR expert interview and a general analysis of all interviews together it is sought to become an idea of which HR practices have to be present in a future HPWS when the organization aims at implementing an equal gender balance.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS
4.1 Organizational Equal Gender Balance Issues – Practical Perspective

4.1.1 Importance of an Equal Gender Balance

All of the interviewed HR experts share the opinion that the achievement of an equal gender balance is important for their organizations in the future. For most organizations gender inequality is already an important topic or at least a growing one as HRM 5 argues *"For many years the gender balance has been an important subject for [the organization]. The organization is doing a lot to further improve the balance, for instance by stimulating more women to achieve higher functions [...]."* Also HRM 3 states that *"We find it important, because we want the best people and do not want to exclude anyone on the basis of irrelevant criteria like gender. [...] men and women can both achieve higher positions, it is normal to have them both in an organization at all levels and with all different qualities and qualifications".* Therefore, all experts describe their organizations' attitudes towards an equal gender balance as positive even though the organizations may have different reasons for that. Some see diverse and competitive markets as a main reason to include women extensively into the organizational workforce, since as HRM 6 explains *"[...] in a tight labor market the [organization], aims to attract and retain all the available talent".* Other experts highlight the different views and feelings possessed by women and men that enrich organizational decision making as the reason for implementing an equal gender balance. In the words of HRM 6: *"Organizations working in diverse teams are more innovative and come up with better decision making and business results".*

4.1.2 Equal Gender Balance Issues

The two main categories of equal gender balance issues found in literature namely work and family life conflict and gender discrimination are also perceived as severe issues by the interviewed HR experts. All of the experts agree that the work and family life conflict hinders the achievement of an equal gender balance within the organization. HRM 2 mentions that *"The norm is still to work (more than) full time to be a successful [employee] – concerning output and the image people have of you. Many women [...] say no to a [...] career because they believe it is not possible to 'have a life' in combination with a [...] career."* But women with family responsibilities might not be able to spend the amount of time that is required by a full time position at their workplace. Therefore, organizations that support the view that only full time employees can be successful make it difficult for women to arrange work and family life in such a way that they are in balance. Even though the typical female and male roles and responsibilities concerning work and family are changing the HR experts agree that women make still a bigger contribution to household duties and child care. HRM 5 gives the following argument: *"I think in general females - mostly - have a larger contribution to a household, especially when children are involved, and therefore have less time available for their career."* Women contribute more time to family matters since *"in general females often feel a stronger responsibility towards family."* (HRM 6).

Gender discrimination as the second main category of equal gender balance issues is perceived as a severe issue by the majority of the six interviewed experts. Although explicit gender discrimination is not seen as a very relevant problem in today's business world anymore, implicit gender discrimination

still is. HRM 6 states that *"[...] explicit gender discrimination has been successfully tackled. However, implicit discrimination through a lack of awareness e.g. of one's different attitude towards a man or a woman, or of the fact that females in general react differently to hard criteria - we are all subject to male/female stereotyping - is harder to overcome as it occurs below the surface".* Implicit gender discrimination is seen as a severe problem since it is embedded in several organizational activities and practices. Specifically in the hiring process when recruiting and selecting new job applicants implicit gender discrimination can be observed. HRM 2 states that *"[...] implicit gender discrimination, [is observable] for instance in scouting for and evaluating new candidates for a [...] position [...]"*. Gender discrimination is seen as a result of stereotypic beliefs and behaviors as HRM 3 explains. These stereotypic beliefs are hold by women as well as men and they influence how their job potential is perceived by others but also how they evaluate their own potential. Implicit and unconscious gender discrimination is extremely crucial when employees with stereotype thinking work in positions that are responsible for recruitment, hiring and promotions in the organization, since *"Not very often women are deliberately denied access or given less opportunities, but stereotypic beliefs [...] does have this effect."*(HRM 3).

When asked to name three main problems that prevent the achievement of an equal gender balance within organizations the majority of the HR experts named issues related to either the work and family life conflict, or gender discrimination. Explicitly mentioned problems concerning the work and family life conflict were the missing flexibility in organizational working schedules and conditions, and also the prevailing stereotype thinking of a staying at home mother and a working father. Regarding working schedule flexibility HRM 5 argues that there is *"a lack of autonomy to arrange an ideal work/private life situation".* And concerning typical gender role models HRM 1 mentions that *"There is the (forced) role of a mother that needs to stay at home raising the kids".* Problems related to gender discrimination included missing role models that show women in senior positions and competitive thinking of men who want to keep women out because they fear to be outperformed by women and their different way of doing things. Also there is an ongoing lack of urgency for organizations as a main problem. The lack of urgency might be connected to the fact that there is *"no leadership about the topic at top management level"* (HRM6). This might be the case because there is a *"lack of champions high up hierarchy that believe in the cause [of achieving an organizational equal gender balance]"* (HRM2). One of the HR experts makes a rather extreme statement and says that the one and only problem of achieving an equal gender balance within the organization is the choice of the organization's management since he states that female talent supply is sufficient, but underutilized: *"Today there is supply of talent enough, so the only [problem]: management choice"* (HRM 4).

4.2 Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance – Practical Perspective

4.2.1 Role of HRM in Achieving Gender Equality
In general, the HR experts see HRM as being a driving force for the implementation of an organizational equal gender balance in the future. *"The HRM department is the one driving policies around diversity and gender equality within the [organization]"* (HRM2). The human resource department has the task to

provide practices, instruments and if needed advice on equal gender balance matters. Further, HRM as a driving force has to stimulate the implementation of gender equality inside the organization. As HRM 3 states *"[HR managers] have the responsibility to stimulate the sense of urgency, they can make clear why [achieving an organizational equal gender balance] is important for the organization".*

4.2.2 Achieving an Equal Gender Balance by the means of HR practices
The HR experts mention several aspects next to Huselid's five HR practices that are necessary to obtain a future equal gender balance. They think for instance, that creating an organizational culture that is open for diversity and also appreciates and makes use of employees' differences supports the achievement of an equal gender balance. Additionally, the awareness of gender inequality needs to grow and should preferably lead to a strong sense of urgency for a change. That implies the creation of *"Awareness that both gender can do the same job but with another perspective on it"* (HRM 1). HRM 2 argues that the growing awareness of the existence of gender biased processes has to be among all employees. Further, rewards and punishments are seen as important to obtain an equal gender balance. This is highlighted by HRM 3's argument of using the carrot and stick approach which means *"[...] working on achieving the balance must be rewarded [and] bad results must have consequences".*

When asked about which HR policies and practices they view as most important for the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future the HR experts mention training as well as mentoring programs which can be seen as a component of Huselid's training and development practice. Further they see an explicit diversity policy which is made public among all employees of the organization as most important. HRM 4 gives the following statement: *"A diversity policy should be set up and shared with all people groups concerned, signed by the Board of Management and KPIs [Key Performance Indicators] made part of management targets".* An explicit diversity policy is important for always hiring who is best for the job regardless any gender preferences. Additionally, a diversity policy demonstrates the need that diversity needs to be organized within the organization and that achieving an organizational equal gender balance is *"work [and] it will not happen by itself"* (HRM 6).

The HR experts regard training and mentoring programs as well as an explicit diversity policy as most important for achieving an organizational equal gender balance in the future. However, they also give valuable advice on how each of Huselid's five practices, namely employee recruitment and selection, performance management, compensation, training and development, and employee participation and involvement might support a gender balance.

Concerning employee recruitment and selection it is important to attract potential female talents with gender neutral advertising since it is one of the first steps towards an organizational equal gender balance. A company's diversity policy should be translated into operational targets and an organization's recruitment team should *"especially try to attract young female leadership talent"* (HRM 4). When attracting women organizations need to be aware of the fact that women react differently to vacancies than their male counterparts. HRM 6 explains that it is crucial to demand *" [...] females to be on the shortlist of candidates [by] looking beyond the obvious - making the extra mile to find them. Being aware*

that women need to be 'spotted and asked'". Moreover, a gender neutral hiring process is important to enable an organizational equal gender balance. A gender neutral hiring process includes transparency and is conducted by trained hiring committees. Hiring committees should be of mixed gender as HRM 5 states: *"Always make sure women and men are part of the selection committee"*. Being of mixed gender also accounts for promotion committees within the company. Having a diverse promotion committee the organization assures that women are equally treated related to being selected for promotions. The aforementioned arguments imply that there needs to be an active search for potential female job candidates, but selection needs to be done on the basis of gender-neutral criteria.

For performance management it is important that organizations notice the difference between part and full time employees and evaluate them accordingly. HRM 2 gives the argument that organizations need to *"take into account that women sometimes get children and go on maternal leave. When evaluating their [...] output, keep in mind that they had less time to produce [that output]". When [...] women work part time, this is also valid".* That gives women with family responsibilities the chance to be evaluated in a fair way when compared to their male colleagues who work full time. It also shows women that maternity leaves or other family duties do not affect their performance evaluation and career ambitions. Which measures to include in performance management procedures also needs to be adapted in order to offer women the same chance of getting sufficient results compared to their male colleagues. Adjusted performance management is important since *"At individual level it helps the career flow of women, who in general tend to be more modest than men in taking credit for their achievements and it helps them to map and discuss their ambitions [...] with their superior"* (HRM 6).

Compensation as another of Huselid's HR practices has to be equal for women and men in the same job position. The HR department should try to close the pay gap and give employees the possibility to earn as much as they deserve according to their performance. HRM 2 provides the argument that it is important to make sure *"that women and men get the same reward for the same performance"*.

The majority of HR experts see training and development as contributing extensively to the achievement of an equal gender balance. First, organizations should implement gender awareness training to reduce stereotypic thinking and to prepare the organizational environment for an increasing number of female colleagues. HRM 1 argues that being *"[...] aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses is giving men and women the chance to see things from both perspectives [and] in that case the business will benefit from it"*. The before mentioned argument is underlined by HRM 5's statement: *"Learning more about someone else's view or perspective does always contribute, as does improving one's own skills to recognize other people's skills"*. Second, organizations should offer special career training for women to teach them about key skills and abilities that are needed to be successful in the organization and to be able to get promoted. In the words of HRM 2 career training for women is *"[...] to teach women what is needed to get ahead and how to build their career [...]"*. Organizations may also offer mentoring programs to provide young female talents with positive role models. Another kind of mentoring program might be aimed at simplifying the reintegration of women returning from their maternity leave. Supporting mothers in coming back into the workforce shows that the organization pays *"Special attention*

to women in childbearing periods [by giving] them when they come back a little time to recover and catch up with the speed" (HRM4). Third, decision makers as well as employees responsible for the hiring process of the organization have to be trained to make decisions on a gender neutral basis. HRM 2 views *"Training of decision makers on how policies reproduce gender imbalance and how to change that"* and *"Training of people who hire employees regarding implicit biases"* as essential aspects that contribute to gender equality in the workforce.

Employee participation and involvement is viewed as being important for implementing an equal gender balance by the minority of HR experts. Organizations should especially aim for a gender balance in decision making bodies like the Works Council or employee committees. This way women have the chance to speak up for their needs and demands and are given the possibility to change organizational issues in their favor. For instance, they may change the flexibility in working schedules. Equality in decision making bodies will provide a more diverse perspective on decisions being taken and therefore decisions can be considered as fairer to the whole organizational workforce. HRM 2 explains that *"[...] if women and men participate equally in bodies like the Works Council, then all voices are heard and weighed in the decision making process. This is fairer, and will provide more diverse perspectives on [organizational] policy. So it is very important that there is a gender balance in the representation of employees in these bodies".* Besides, it is critical that the whole workforce feels as being able to influence a certain outcome. The whole workforce means including also employees that are part of a minority group within the organization as is often applicable in case of female employees. HRM 1 mentions that *"If everyone is responsible for the results of the company they realize that they need each other to succeed"*.

Following the suggestions given by the HR experts all HR practices need to focus on the achievement of gender equality. In doing so, they make a joint effort towards achieving an equal gender balance. In pursuing the same goal, different HR practices build a system that enhances the individual effort of each HR practice. This system is a HPWS with the goal of gender equality in the organization.

5. DISCUSSION

After the literature review it became evident what a HPWS is and it is obvious that there are different views on which HR practice configurations are meant when talking about HPWSs. For the purpose of this paper a HPWS includes Huselid's five HR practices. Huselid's five HR practices comprise the following: employee recruitment and selection, performance management, compensation, training and development, and employee participation and involvement (Huselid, 1995). The literature review provides an understanding of which organizational equal gender balance issues hinder the achievement of an equal gender balance. The issues can broadly be grouped in two main categories. One category includes issues related to work and family life conflict and the other one includes issues related to gender discrimination. Besides this the ways in which different HR practices may contribute to the achievement of an organizational gender equality in the future are determined.

After the qualitative research which consisted of HR expert interviews it became clear that also experts from practice perceive the two main categories of organizational equal gender balance issues, namely work and family life conflict, and

gender discrimination as severe problems for the achievement of an equal gender balance. The HR experts offered additional suggestions on how HR practices can play a relevant role in the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future.

Having conducted a literature review as well as HR expert interviews the research includes a theoretical as well as practical perspective on which equal gender balance issues need to be tackled and on how HR practices have to be designed to achieve an organizational gender equality. Drawing a comparison between the most important theoretical and practical research outcomes two tables are used to demonstrate the findings in the following. Arguments of similar findings are placed next to each other.

Table 1. Organizational Equal Gender Balance Issues

	Theoretical Findings	Empirical Findings
Work and Family Life Conflict	Not being able to spend a lot of visible time in the organization and showing commitment High employee turnover Absenteeism Lateness	Not being successful because norm is to work full time Not believing in the possibility of combining work and family life Missing out on a possible career Not being successful because norm is to work full time Stereotypic thinking of staying at home mother
Gender Discrimination	White male managers determine organization's hiring, compensation and performance evaluation practices Discrimination embedded in organizational policies and practices Gender stereotyping Male managers value men's work more Women face low acceptance level by male workforce	Gender discrimination held by employees responsible for hiring and promotion Discrimination embedded in organizational policies and practices Gender stereotyping Implicit gender discrimination Lack of awareness of one's different attitude towards men and women

Comparing theoretical and practical perspective in matters of existing organizational equal gender balance issues one can recognize that there is a number of different issues to be found in literature as well as by means of the empirical study. Starting with issues related to the work and family life conflict literature in general discloses issues that are disadvantageous for the organization as lateness, absenteeism and high employee turnover. Whereas the HR experts in general illustrate issues that are especially harmful for female employees like missing out on career possibilities, not being successful because of organizations' preference for full time employment, and being a victim of gender role thinking that implies the typical staying at home mother and the father who is earning the family's living. Concerning issues regarding gender discrimination findings of the literature review demonstrate especially the counterproductive behavior of male employees and managers. For instance, male managers influence an organization's hiring and performance practices with their stereotypic beliefs, they value men's more than women's work, and they expose female colleagues to a lower level of acceptance than their male colleagues. The practical perspective on the other hand focuses extensively on indirect and unconscious gender discrimination. Several HR experts mention the lack of awareness of one' own behavior and way of thinking in terms of gender roles. Beyond that the theoretical as well as the practical perspective view discrimination as embedded in organizational practices, policies and overall activities. All of these organizational equal gender balance issues have to be overcome by an organization to allow for a successful equal gender balance implementation in the future.

Table 2. Contribution of HPWSs to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance

HPWS	Theoretical Findings	Empirical Findings
Employee Recruitment and Selection	Focus on attracting young female talent Promoting policies of inclusiveness Targeted recruitment advertising in terms of portraying gender diversity & recruiting at universities with high female enrollment & employing female recruiters	Focus on attracting young female talent Applying organization's diversity policy to hiring process Gender neutral hiring process with trained and mixed gender hiring and promotion committees
Performance Management	Shifting performance evaluation focus from face time to actual output Providing flexible work options (job-sharing; part-time; etc.)	Noticing the difference between part and full time employees in terms of performance evaluation Adjusting performance management procedure to recognize female employees' output since they are more modest about their achievements
Compensation	Including family friendly benefits in compensation package (paid maternity leave; excellent health care; etc.)	Closing pay gap for same job position & introducing salary according to performance
Training and Development	Diversity and Equality training for employees Monitoring of development opportunities for female employees	Implementing gender awareness training Implementing career training for women Implementing mentoring programs for young women and women returning from maternity leaves Implementing training for decision makers and managers to make gender neutral decisions
Employee Participation and Involvement	Generating policies on diversity and equality management with staff involvement	Aiming for gender balance in decision making bodies
Other Practices		Creating organizational culture open for diversity Developing organizational diversity policy

In terms of how HR practices need to be designed to facilitate the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future literature and practice offer complemental ideas. Concerning

employee recruitment and selection both perspectives stress the fact to focus on attracting young female talent. However, literature highlights the importance that everything should to be targeted at potential female employees, like targeted recruitment advertising, promoting policies of inclusiveness, and recruiting at universities with a high proportion of females. In contrast the HR experts view gender neutrality as one of the main success factors in employee selection and recruitment. The organizational hiring and promotions process needs to be gender neutral. For performance management both perspectives view the adjustment of performance management procedures as crucial in terms of evaluating actual performance output instead of evaluating the time an employee spends in the organization. This change offers women with family responsibilities the same possibilities to achieve equally good results as their male counterparts. According to literature compensation needs to be designed in such a way that it includes family friendly benefits as paid maternity leave and health care benefits. In this way compensation is especially targeted at women whereas for the majority of HR experts gender neutral compensation is seen as most important. They mention salary corresponding to performance and the closure of the pay gap as supporting an equal gender balance in the future. Regarding training and development literature is far less precise on what should be included in the design of the HR practice in comparison to the HR experts. Literature brings in the idea of general diversity and equality training for employees. By comparison the HR experts specify in detail how this training and development should look like to support a future equality of genders. They consider gender awareness training, career training for women, mentoring programs for young women and women returning from maternity leaves, as well as training for decision makers and managers to achieve gender neutral decisions as valuable. The practice of employee participation and involvement includes according to literature the active involvement of the whole workforce in creating diversity and equality policies. The idea of the HR experts goes beyond the suggestions from literature and proposes an equal gender balance in important decision making bodies to provide women with a voice in relevant organizational matters. Next to Huselid's five HR practices the HR experts mention additional HR practices that they consider as being important in achieving gender equality. The experts suggest that the creation of an organizational culture which values diversity as well as developing an organization-wide diversity policy might contribute to an equal gender balance in the workforce.

All of the suggested design ideas of Huselid's five HR practices that result from literature review as well as HR expert interviews provide a concrete picture on how these HR practices can contribute to the organization's plan of achieving an equal gender balance in the future. In aiming at the same goal of gender equality the HR practices build a coherent system. The resulting HPWS contributes to the organization's effort of implementing an equal gender balance.

5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

There neither exists any literature or research that applies the current equal gender balance discussion to HRM issues, nor one that focuses on the impact of this discussion on HPWSs. This might be the case since the discussion about an equal gender balance within organizations is a relatively new occurrence. However, the topic is nowadays widely discussed and should receive some attention in future studies.

The paper complements prior academic research in the field of HR practice configurations in the way that it seeks to give an understanding of which HR practices need to be present in future HPWSs and how they need to be designed to achieve an equal gender balance within the organization.

Considering the paper in terms of its practical relevance managers can clearly benefit from using the insights of the study. The result of the paper combines suggestions from theory and practice. Therefore, it provides managers with a thorough picture of matters related to the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance. First, the paper offers an analysis of equal gender balance issues that potentially hinder or even prevent the achievement of gender equality within the organization. Second, the research gives practical recommendations on how HR practices need to be designed or modified to enable the organization's gender balance achievement in the future. Different HR practices that aim at the same goal of gender equality and therefore build a HPWS support an organization's effort in achieving an equal gender balance extensively.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research

There are a few limitations of this research that should be mentioned. The paper is based on academic literature and also on practical evidence, but the practical evidence part might be not extensive enough and too homogenous to generalize the research findings since most of the experts are employed by universities. Therefore, the paper can be seen as having only limited validity. Also, reliability is missing since no statistical tests are included in the research and each expert interview provides different opinions on each question. Additionally choosing structured interviews as research method might have limited the possible variety of HR expert answers that would have been possible.

It is recommended to conduct further research on the topic of the future of HPWSs to increase its generalizability. More empirical research in the form of a higher number of expert interviews might provide a more thorough insight in the topic. The additional information that is gained by conducting more expert interviews may lead to a revision of the conclusion of this paper. Also it might be that the conclusion of the paper becomes invalid in the following years since the paper includes a future study of the upcoming five years and tries to give only an idea of how HPWSs should be designed in the future to support an equal gender balance in the organization. However, the reality might look different.

6. CONCLUSION

To answer the research question this paper provides the reader with an introduction into the topic of why the achievement of an equal gender balance is important nowadays. Further, it states in the literature review which organizational equal gender balance issues need to be solved and how HR practices need to be designed to facilitate the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future. The empirical part consistent of HR expert interviews provides a practical view on the topic and adds aspects to the overall research findings.

The findings of the literature review and the HR expert interviews are used to answer the following research question:

"In which way should a HPWS be designed to support an equal gender balance within the organization?"

To give an idea of how the future of HPWSs should look like in order to support the achievement of organizational gender equality two figures are used. The figures combine and summarize the findings from literature as well as from the empirical study. Figure 1 states which organizational equal gender balance issues need to be solved to make the achievement of an equal gender balance possible. Figure 2 shows how HR practices of an HPWS need to look like to support the organization in achieving gender equality.
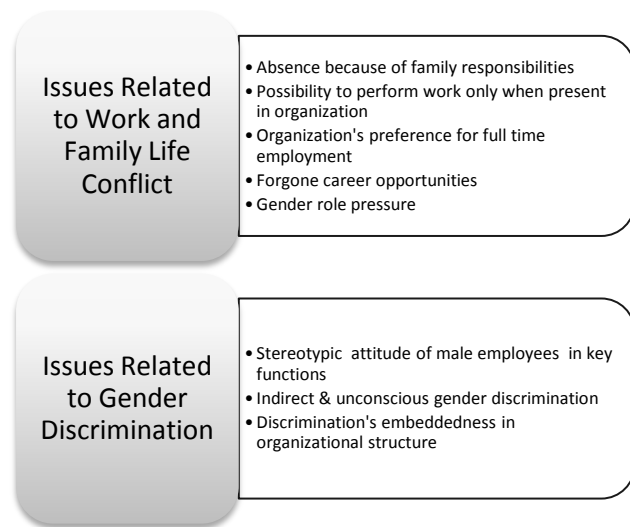

Figure 1. Organizational Equal Gender Balance Issues related to Work and Family Life Conflict, and Gender Discrimination

The most important issues that impede an equally gender mixed workforce are related to work and family life conflict, and gender discrimination. Issues of the work and family life conflict that need to be overcome by the organization include the absence that occurs because women have to take care of family responsibilities and the possibility to perform work solely in the workplace. Not being able to perform work from their home offices or other locations constrains women in their ability to get their work done on time and in an appropriate way. Additionally, organizations that prefer full time instead of part time employment discourages women to apply for certain job positions. Women miss out on important career opportunities because they are not able to make an arrangement between the duties imposed by their employers and their families. In feeling gender role pressure many women decide to stay at home and conform to the traditional image of the woman as a housekeeper and caretaker for the family's children.

Issues that are concerned with gender discrimination are the prevailing stereotypic attitude of male employees towards their female colleagues or female job applicants. Especially, when men with stereotypic beliefs hold important functions within the organization they present a major problem for women in the organization or the ones who want to become part of it. The failure of gender equality is often caused by indirect and unconscious discrimination which is visible in the case of hiring and promotion processes. Discrimination may also be entrenched in organizational structures and produces in this way gender inequality within the organization.

Having solved the aforementioned issues it still remains the question on how HR practices need to be designed to enable an organizational workforce's gender equality in the future. Figure 2 provides specific design ideas of HR practices that contribute to an equal gender balance.
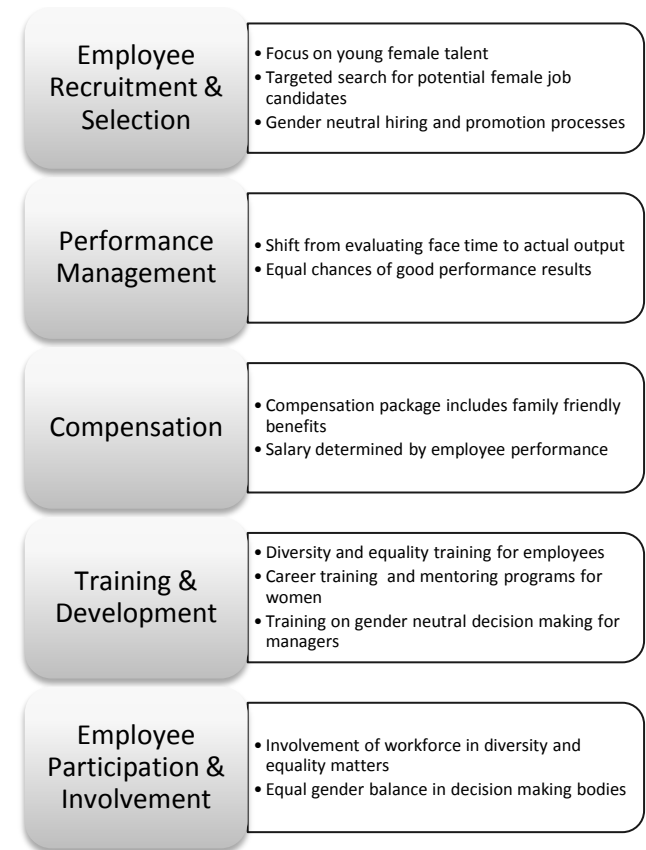

Figure 2. HPWS Design to Achieve an Organizational Equal Gender Balance

The HR practice of employee recruitment and selection should be focusing on attracting especially young female talents, but it needs to pay attention to gender neutral recruiting, hiring and promotion processes. Performance management has to shift its focus from the evaluation of employees' time spend in the company towards actual output produced by employees. In this way it is assured that each employee has equal chances of good performance results. When introducing a gender balance friendly compensation system the HR department has to pay attention to benefits for employees with families. Benefits which are profitable for an employee's family help to attract and retain female workers. Besides family friendly benefits it is important to close the gap between female and male wages for the same job position. This shows women that their job performance is of identical value to the performance of their male coworkers. Training and development has to pay attention to support and promote everyone in the organization. Employees should be able to take part in training about diversity and gender equality topics. Women should have access to training that supports their career ambitions and women that had to leave the organization because of family issues need to get reintegration support. Managers and other decision makers benefit from training coping with gender neutral decision making. When designing the HR practice of employee participation and involvement it is important to achieve the involvement of the whole organizational workforce when diversity and equality matters are discussed. Furthermore, the achievement of gender equality is fostered by a gender balance in important organizational decision making functions.

In combining ideas from theory and practice the illustrated figures provide an overview on which gender equality problems a HPWS needs to solve and on how a HPWS should be designed to support the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance in the future.

If the HR department designs the organization's HPWS according to the ideas given in this paper it creates a horizontal fit between the different HR practices. The horizontal fit is the result of the HR practices' common goal of establishing a gender balance within the organization. The HR practices are internally aligned to reinforce and complement each other in the achievement of the overall goal. Examples of how aligned HR practices in a HPWS might support each other are shown in Figure 3:

	Employee Recruitment & Selection	Performance Management	Compensation	Training & Development	Employee Participation & Involvement
Employee Recruitment & Selection		Evaluating actual output rather than face time helps to attract women that may be forced to work from home due to family responsibilities	Female talent is more easily attracted if the organization is known for gender neutral pay	Training supports women in acquiring necessary skills to be selected for promotions	Young female talent can be attracted by the possibility of having a voice in the organization by well organized employee committees
Performance Management			Giving men and women equal chances for achieving good performance results is required for fair performance related pay	Employees conducting performance evaluations need to be trained to produce gender neutral evaluations	If only actual performance is evaluated employees are more likely to participate in off-the-job activities like developing a organizational diversity policy
Compensation				Training women on important skills enables them to get good performance results which is important considering performance related pay	Including family friendly benefits like organizational childcare in the compensation package allows women to invest more time in employee participation activities
Training & Development					If employees are trained in diversity and equality matters they are able to make a valuable contribution if these issues are discussed in the organization

Figure 3. Horizontal Alignment within the HPWS

Next to the horizontal fit there should be a vertical fit which implies that the achievement of an equal gender balance is not only on the agenda of the HR department, but also aligned with the overall strategies of the organization. In creating vertical alignment not only the organizational strategy, but also the organizational climate as well as its external environment are important. Which means that the organizational climate should hinder stereotypic thinking and behavior. As for the organization's external environment the organization should recognize demographic developments as the increasing number of female graduates to support its goal of gender equality.

With a HPWS in place that is designed according to the ideas proposed in this paper and the resulting horizontal fit the organization is given the opportunity to move closer or even achieve an organizational equal gender balance in the future. Beyond that the organization may work on creating a vertical fit to stabilize the successful change towards gender equality.

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8. APPENDICES
8.1 Appendix A: Interview Template

Name of interviewee:

Email address of interviewee:

Company:

Job title:

Experience in working in HRM field (in years):

Current male-female ratio in the company:

Equal Gender Balance Issues in the Organization

1. How would you describe your company's general attitude towards the achievement of an equal gender balance?
    a. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as important, please explain why.
    b. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as unimportant, please explain why.

2. Do you perceive the work and family life conflict as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.

3. Do you perceive gender discrimination as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.

4. According to your opinion what are the three main problems that prevent the achievement of an equal gender balance within companies?

Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance

1. In general, what is necessary to obtain an equal gender balance in the future?

2. In which way do you consider HRM as having an impact on the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance?

3. Which HR policies and practices do you consider important in the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future?

4. Do you think that employee recruitment and selection contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

5. Do you think that performance management contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?

6. Do you think that compensation contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?

7. Do you think that training and development contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

8. Do you think that employee participation and involvement contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

8.2   Appendix B: Interview Transcripts

Name of interviewee: HRM 1

Email address of interviewee:

Company:

Job title: Owner

Experience in working in HRM field (in years): 1

Current male-female ratio in the company: 1/1

Equal Gender Balance Issues in the Organization

1. How would you describe your company's general attitude towards the achievement of an equal gender balance?
   50/50 is the best of both worlds! In that way you "force" each other to see both perspectives.

   a. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as important, please explain why.
      See above.

   b. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as unimportant, please explain why.
      N/A

2. Do you perceive the work and family life conflict as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.
   Not at all in my case! My husband and I both do equally much in the business both at home.

3. Do you perceive gender discrimination as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.
   Not in my company but I see/hear it a lot!

4. According to your opinion what are the three main problems that prevent the achievement of an equal gender balance within companies?

There is the (forced) role of a mother that needs to stay at home raising the kids. There is also the possible threat for men that a woman can have the same job and be good (sometimes better) at it! And of course our culture the views women at home and men at work is a problem.

Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance

1. In general, what is necessary to obtain an equal gender balance in the future?
   Awareness that both gender can do the same job but with another perspective on it. Due to the roles that we always had to do as a boy/girl in the past. The girl/woman stays at home with the kids. The boy/man goes to work and earn the money. Stupid but true…

2. In which way do you consider HRM as having an impact on the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance in the future?
   If the company is so big that you have an HRM department, please let them be aware of this, pointed out at question nr. 1.

3. Which HR policies and practices do you consider important in the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future?
   The combination of the 2 genders can learn from each other!

4. Do you think that employee recruitment and selection contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
   N/A

5. Do you think that performance management contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?
   N/A

6. Do you think that compensation contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?
   I sincerely hope not!

7. Do you think that training and development contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
   I think, yes. To be aware of each others strengths and weaknesses is giving them the change to see things in both perspectives. In that case the business will benefit from it!

8. Do you think that <u>employee participation and involvement</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
   I think, yes. If everyone is responsible for the results of the company they realize that they need each other to succeed.

Name of interviewee: HRM 2

Email address of interviewee:

Company: Radboud University

Job title: Postdoctoral researcher

Experience in working in HRM field (in years): 5 years as researcher (PhD + Postdoc)

Current male-female ratio in the company: I don't know exact numbers, but about 50% female PhD students and 21% female professors university-wide.

Equal Gender Balance Issues in the Organization

1. How would you describe your company's general attitude towards the achievement of an equal gender balance?
   a. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as important, please explain why.
      I think the general attitude is that people at this university, e.g. the university board and many deans and research directors, are quite aware of gender inequalities in academia in general and at our university specifically. The university prides itself in being the university with the most female profs in the Netherlands (though still very low…). There are HR policies and budgets for gender equality related measures and interventions, and several research projects run here that aim to increase the gender ratio at the university.

      Caution: It may very well be that I'm biased towards this positive attitude, as I myself am very much involved in gender related issue at the university: I run a women's network, work on a gender in academia research project, and speak with policy makers about this issue...

   b. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as unimportant, please explain why.

2. Do you perceive the work and family life conflict as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.

Yes, I do. The norm is still to work (more than) full time to be a successful academic – concerning output and the image people have of you. Many women (and men) say no to an academic career because they believe it is not possible to 'have a life' in combination with an academic career. I think this is due to a lack of role models and policies that change culture for the better (and not just individual solutions).

3. Do you perceive gender discrimination as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.

I do, possibly overtly, but mostly more implicit gender discrimination, for instance in scouting for and evaluating candidates for an academic position in a hiring process.

4. According to your opinion what are the three main problems that prevent the achievement of an equal gender balance within companies?
- Awareness of implicitly biased hiring processes
- Lack of role models for women students and PhD candidates (especially in STEM field)
- Lack of champions high up hierarchy that believe in the cause

Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance

1. In general, what is necessary to obtain an equal gender balance in the future?
- Champions that keep the topic on the agenda and visible.
- A culture that is open for diversity and is inclusive: difference is appreciated and used.
- Growing awareness among all employees that gender biased processes exist within the organization and that merely blaming women is not fair.

2. In which way do you consider HRM as having an impact on the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance in the future?

Very important within the university. The HRM department is the one driving policies around diversity and gender equality within the university. For instance, they have recently written an HR agenda 2020, within which an important part is devoted to diversity policies.

3. Which HR policies and practices do you consider important in the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future?

- Training of people who hire employees regarding implicit biases
- Training of decision makers on how policies reproduce gender imbalance and how to change that
- Stimulation of hiring more women in positions higher than postdocs
- Role models
- Mentoring programs

4. Do you think that <u>employee recruitment and selection</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
   Yes, gender neutral hiring processes (networking, evaluating). Transparency is needed for that, as well as training of hiring committees.

5. Do you think that <u>performance management</u> contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?
   Yes, if it is more adapted to people's personal situation. For instance, take into account that women sometimes get children and go on maternal leave. When evaluating their academic output, keep in mind that they had less time to produce articles and give lectures. When men or women work part time, this is also valid.

6. Do you think that <u>compensation</u> contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?
   Yes, if it is made sure that women and men get the same reward for the same performance. Reduce the pay gap.

7. Do you think that <u>training and development</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
   Yes, to teach women what is needed to get ahead and how to build their career, but also training of decision makers and hiring committees (see point 3).

8. Do you think that <u>employee participation and involvement</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
   Yes, if women and men participate equally in bodies like the Works Council, then all voices are heard and weighed in the decision making processes. This is fairer, and will provide more diverse perspectives on university policy. So it is very important that there is a gender balance in the representation of employees in these bodies.

Name of interviewee: HRM 3

Email address of interviewee:

Company: Hogeschool Windesheim

Job title: Lector

Experience in working in HRM field (in years): 0, I am a researcher, but in the HR field

Current male-female ratio in the company: N/A

Equal Gender Balance Issues in the Organization

1. How would you describe your company's general attitude towards the achievement of an equal gender balance?
    a. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as important, please explain why.
       In our organization, a university of applied sciences, we have a pretty good gender balance at all job levels except the board. We find it important, because we want the best people and do not want to exclude anyone on the basis of irrelevant criteria like gender. We also want to give an example to our students: men and women can both achieve higher positions, it is normal to have them both in an organization at all levels and with all different qualities and qualifications.

    b. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as unimportant, please explain why.

2. Do you perceive the work and family life conflict as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.
   No, not as such. I do perceive rigid organizations and rigid persons as a severe threat since they make it hard to make arrangements to balance work and family life. The ´rigid persons´ here are both managers and workers themselves, both men and women, with rigid ideas about gender roles concerning family obligations but also about how to be a good worker, what is expected, how work can be organized etc.

3. Do you perceive gender discrimination as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.
   Yes, I think this is still an issue. Mainly the unconscious gender discrimination. Not very often women are deliberately denied access or given less opportunities, but our stereotypic beliefs and behavior does have this effect. Again, both men and women have these stereotypes. They have an effect on how we (men and women) use our potential, how we apply for jobs etc. and on the actions of the men and women responsible for

recruitment, hiring and promotions in organizations.

4. According to your opinion what are the three main problems that prevent the achievement of an equal gender balance within companies?
   1. Lack of urgency. As long as this is not seen as a real problem, no real actions are taken to overcome it;

   2. Unrealistic optimism. Even (or especially) the people who do not want to discriminate tend to think that they are not doing it. But we are all influenced by the stereotypes etc. and their effect is stronger than we usually want to admit;

   3. Habits. It is in general very hard to change habits, so even when we are willing to change, we very often don't. We fall back on what we have always done.

Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance

1. In general, what is necessary to obtain an equal gender balance in the future?
   1. Creating a sense of urgency.
   2. Using carrots and sticks, working on achieving the balance must be rewarded, bad results must have consequences.

2. In which way do you consider HRM as having an impact on the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance in the future?
   HR must stimulate and provide the right instruments, advice etc. They are not responsible, unless they are the ones who decide on who is selected for new positions, promotions, schooling and training etc. They also have a responsibility in stimulating the sense of urgency, they can make clear why it is important for the organization.

3. Which HR policies and practices do you consider important in the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future?

4. Do you think that <u>employee recruitment and selection</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

5. Do you think that <u>performance management</u> contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?

6. Do you think that <u>compensation</u> contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?

7. Do you think that <u>training and development</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

8. Do you think that <u>employee participation and involvement</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

Name of interviewee: HRM 4

Email address of interviewee:

Company: Manager Engagement and Retention PostNL until June 2014

Job title: Director/ owner

Experience in working in HRM field (in years): 30

Current male-female ratio in the company: N/A

Equal Gender Balance Issues in the Organization

1. How would you describe your company's general attitude towards the achievement of an equal gender balance?
   a. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as important, please explain why.
      In a Company that's works for everyone, everyone is the market, and since that market is very diverse and competitive you must welcome everyone to help you being successful, make them feel at home.
   b. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as unimportant, please explain why.

2. Do you perceive the work and family life conflict as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.
   Despite all rules, laws, and facilities…most of the time you see women taking most care of the kids, with the known effect on balance.

3. Do you perceive gender discrimination as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please

explain why.
Strange question: sure if there is gender discrimination it's severe, not only for the balance.

4. According to your opinion what are the three main problems that prevent the achievement of an equal gender balance within companies?
    Today there is supply of talent enough, so only one: management choice.

Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance

1. In general, what is necessary to obtain an equal gender balance in the future?
    Recruit enough, good female talent and put them into good MD programs.

2. In which way do you consider HRM as having an impact on the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance in the future?
    ZERO, until management sets vision, goals, and practices what they preach. HR has a pure facilitating role.

3. Which HR policies and practices do you consider important in the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future?
    A diversity policy should be set up and shared with all people groups concerned, signed by the Board of management and KPI's made part of management targets.

4. Do you think that employee recruitment and selection contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
    Once policy is set and translated into operational targets, recruitment is important, especially young female leadership talent.

5. Do you think that performance management contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?
    In some way yes, it's also a business case: more female graduate today's with better result, a company is stupid when they not hire them and remain focusing on male student.

6. Do you think that compensation contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute? No.

7. Do you think that training and development contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

Diversity awareness trainings in all aspects of MD development. Special attention for women in childbearing periods, give them when they come back a little time to recover and catch up with the speed. Special mentoring programs work!

8. Do you think that <u>employee participation and involvement</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute? No, not as such.

Name of interviewee: HRM 5

Email address of interviewee:

Company: University of Twente

Job title: HR manager

Experience in working in HRM field (in years): 20 years

Current male-female ratio in the company: 50/50 for supporting staff, about 73/27 (male/female) for scientific staff (university-wide)

Equal Gender Balance Issues in the Organization

1. How would you describe your company's general attitude towards the achievement of an equal gender balance? Since many years the gender balance has been an important subject for Twente University. The organization is doing a lot to further improve the balance, for instance by stimulating more women to achieve higher functions, like associate and/or full professor.
    a. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as important, please explain why.
        I consider it to be very important since females and males have different views or feelings. A balanced mix or blend will further improve the organization.
    b. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as unimportant, please explain why.

2. Do you perceive the work and family life conflict as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.
    I do. I think in general females - mostly - have a larger contribution to a household, especially when children

are involved, and therefore have less time available for their career.

3. Do you perceive gender discrimination as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why. No.

4. According to your opinion what are the three main problems that prevent the achievement of an equal gender balance within companies? A. Lack of 'autonomy' to arrange an ideal work/private life situation (= this is certainly not an issue for Twente University!). B. too little women that take part in selection committees. C. Females in higher positions in my view tend to be quite aggressive towards incoming (female) talents (= they could/should instead become more of a mentor….).

Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance

1. In general, what is necessary to obtain an equal gender balance in the future?
   An open mind (-: And transparency towards - wanting to - building balanced teams (also the executive board)

2. In which way do you consider HRM as having an impact on the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance in the future?
   Mostly by focusing on balanced teams and on the several and diverse needed competences to develop and maintain a successful organization.

3. Which HR policies and practices do you consider important in the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future?
   Always choose the best one for the job! And always listen to each other before acting, thus by creating a 'solid environment' for cooperation and building bridges.

4. Do you think that employee recruitment and selection contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute? Always make sure women and men are part of the selection committee.

5. Do you think that performance management contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute? No.

6. Do you think that compensation contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?

I really do not understand what is meant with 'compensation' here….? In general I see it as follows: if you need to compensate something (= anything, no matter what…), things are probably simply not well arranged from the start.

7. Do you think that training and development contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
Sure. Learning more about someone else's view or perspective does always contribute, as does improving one's own skills to recognize other people's skills.

8. Do you think that employee participation and involvement contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?
Don't know what is meant with this, sorry…

Name of interviewee: HRM 6

Email address of interviewee:

Company: University of Twente

Job title: N/A

Experience in working in HRM field (in years): 2

Current male-female ratio in the company:

Equal Gender Balance Issues in the Organization

1. How would you describe your company's general attitude towards the achievement of an equal gender balance?
   a. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as important, please explain why.
   Organizations working in diverse teams are more innovative and come up with better decision making and business results. Moreover, in a tight labor market the University of Twente, aims to attract and retain all the available talent. Last but not least, we aim to increase the number of female students in the exact sciences. To encourage this, his role models are essential.
   b. If you consider the achievement of an equal gender balance as unimportant, please explain why.

2. Do you perceive the work and family life conflict as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender

balance? Please explain why.

Yes. Pregnancy and childbirth have a more severe impact on a female career, as temporary absence often also causes a research & publication a/o applying for funding gap. Also in general females often feel a stronger responsibility towards family. Finally, presuming there is a 'standard family' only if M/F both work at the same organization M&F can benefit from parental leave. But if a female scientist has a spouse outside of the UT, I expect arrangements to be less supportive.

3. Do you perceive gender discrimination as a severe issue in the achievement of an equal gender balance? Please explain why.

I think explicit gender discrimination has been successfully tackled. However, implicit discrimination, through a lack of awareness e.g. of one's different attitude towards a man or a woman, or of the fact that females in general react differently to hard criteria –we are all subject to male/female stereotyping- is harder to overcome as it occurs below the surface.

4. According to your opinion what are the three main problems that prevent the achievement of an equal gender balance within companies?

1) Being represented in the organization less than 1/3rd of the group (one always remains 'the outsider to the norm'
2) No leadership about the topic at top management level
3) Stigmatization in the use of targets or quota: that in the organization quantity of females is favoured over quality.

Contribution of HR Practices to the Achievement of an Equal Gender Balance

1. In general, what is necessary to obtain an equal gender balance in the future?
   Leadership advocacy at top levels. Awareness training at decision-making levels, preferably at all levels of an organization.

2. In which way do you consider HRM as having an impact on the achievement of an organizational equal gender balance in the future?
   Taking leadership in the topic towards top and senior management

3. Which HR policies and practices do you consider important in the achievement of an equal gender balance in the future?
   Having (financial) instruments aimed at individual women and at organization level all measures that help the organization to be aware that diversity needs to "organized" (it's work it will not happen by itself).

4. Do you think that <u>employee recruitment and selection</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

Transparency (going public) in filling vacancies.

Gender neutral recruitment (advertising).

Males and females in recruitment teams.

Demanding females to be on the shortlist of candidates (looking beyond the obvious – making the extra mile to find them. Being aware that women need to be "spotted and asked").

Gender diversity in selection & promotion committees.

5. Do you think that <u>performance management</u> contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?

It depends at what level it is measured. One would expect diversely populated group to perform better. Yet it depends also on the criteria of the performance.

At individual level it helps the career flow of women, who in generally tend to be more modest than men, to take credit for their achievements and helps them to map and discuss their ambitions (so make known to) with their superior.

6. Do you think that <u>compensation</u> contributes to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how does it contribute?

This is a broad question. Compensation to the organization for hiring women? For replacing women/men at maternity / parental leave? For individual women / men to make up for careertime lost? At any case the word implies that something that is not Ok needs to be made up for.

7. Do you think that <u>training and development</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

Yes, see also above.

Offering Specific training and other programs for individual women, and train their environment.

8. Do you think that <u>employee participation and involvement</u> contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance? If yes, how do they contribute?

Yes, although it cannot be done without leadership, at management levels this is part of what more or less needs to be 'organised'. Gender balance cannot be 'delegated' to the management or the HR department.

8.3 Appendix C: Literature Matrix

RQ: In which way should a HPWS be designed to support an equal gender balance within the organization?

Articles	Which HR practice configurations are included in current HPWSs?	In which ways do HR practices of current HPWSs contribute to the achievement of an equal gender balance in the organization?	How should practices of a HPWS look like in order to achieve an equal gender balance?	Which problems regarding equal gender balance exist and need to be tackled?	Other information
The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Turnover, Productivity, and Corporate Financial Performance (Huselid, 1995)	An increasing body of work contains the argument that the use of High Performance Work Practices, including comprehensive employee recruitment and selection procedures, incentive compensation and performance management systems, and extensive employee involvement and training, can improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a firm's current and potential employees, increase their motivation, reduce shirking, and enhance retention of quality employees while encouraging nonperformers to leave the firm. (p.635)				[…] human resource management practices can help to create a source of sustained competitive advantage, especially when they are aligned with a firm's competitive strategy. (p.636) […] there is a growing consensus that organizational human resource policies can, if properly configured, provide a direct and economically significant contribution to firm performance. (p.363) […] effective systems of HRM practices, which […] exploit the potential for complementarities or synergies among such practices and help to implement a firm's competitive strategy are sources of sustained competitive advantage. (p.363)

					[...]the impact of High Performance Work Practices on firm performance is contingent on both the degree of complementarity, or internal fit, among these practices and the degree of alignment, or external fit, between a firm's system of such practices and its competitive strategy. (p.363)
The relationship between 'high-performance work practices' and employee attitudes: an investigation of additive and interaction effects (Macky & Boxall, 2007)	[...] a common theme is the notion that the HR practices involved should form a coherent, integrated 'bundle'; a system of complementarities whose effect is greater than the sum of its parts (p.537)				[...]assumption that there are complementarities among the relevant HR practices. (p.538) [...]such practices have a synergistic or mutually reinforcing influence on organizational performance. (p.538) [...]there seems a clear theoretical basis for presupposing that HR practices included under the HPWS rubric can serve to modify employee behaviour, and the context within which that behaviour occurs, in ways that enhance employee performance. (p.540)
Linking competitive strategies with human resource management	When deciding what human resource practices to use to link with competitive strategy, organizations can choose from				

practices (Jackson, 1987)	six human resource practice "menus." Each of the six menus concerns a different aspect of human resource management. These aspects are planning, staffing, appraising, compensating, and training and development. (p.211) […]each of the choices runs along a continuum.(p.211)				
The global impact of quotas: On the fast track to increased female legislative representation (Tripp & Kang, 2008)					[…] the introduction of quotas has helped overcome constraints on women's representation posed by economic underdevelopment, cultural influences, and even electoral systems.(p.338) […]the incremental model of increasing women's representation […] that led to high rates of female representation in the Nordic countries in the 1970s has been replaced by the "fast-track" model one finds in many countries, where dramatic jumps in […] representation are brought about by the introduction of gender quotas. (p.338) As of 2006, more than 84 countries have some form of quota to improve the

					selection of female candidates running for office. Many other countries have discussions under way over whether to implement quotas.(p.339) The adoption of quotas reflects a growing consensus that women should have greater representation or even equal representation with men. (p.340)
Can high performance work systems really lead to better performance?(Shih, Chiang, & Hsu, 2006)	[…] choosing the right combination of practices is crucial in leading to better organizational outcomes. (p.742) […] although different industries may demand somewhat different work arrangements as a precursor of enhanced performance, there is a set of core HR practices that leads to better performance in every line of business. (p.744) […] "core high-performance work systems" involve […] two categories: job infrastructure and job security. (p.744) The corresponding HR practices [to job infrastructure] are: proper work selection and				Certain HRM practices are alleged to support better firm performances. (p.741) Rather than focusing on individual HR practices, scholars of strategic human resource management (SHRM) have turned their attention […] to a "bundle" of mutually reinforcing and synergistic HR practices that facilitate employee commitment and involvement. (p.741-742) […] use the term "high-performance work practice" (HPWS) to refer to a set of HRM practices that can enhance firm performance. (p.742) […] a company's adoption of

	training programs; information sharing and worker involvement mechanisms; compensation related to performance and promotion opportunities. (p.744)			HPWS can have an economically and statistically significant impact on employee turnover, productivity, or corporate financial outcomes. (p.742)
A high performance work practices taxonomy: Integrating the literature and directing future research (Posthuma, Campion, Masimova, & Campion, 2013)	[competency] models are used to align the selection, training, appraisal, and reward systems to enhance and reward those competencies. When there is alignment among the HPWPs, they synergistically enhance and reward those competencies. (p.1187) Organizations will often develop […] competency models and then design their recruiting, selection, training, performance management, and reward systems around these models. (p.1189) […] [different HR practices within] nine HPWPs categories: Compensation and Benefits; Job and Work Design; Training and Development; Recruiting and Selection; Employee Relations; Communication; Performance Management and Appraisal; Promotions; Turnover, Retention and Exit Management; (p.1191)			High Performance Work Systems are designed to enhance organizational performance by improving employee capability, commitment, and productivity. (p.1184) HPWSs can be viewed as coordinated bundles of High Performance Work Practices (HPWPs) that create synergistic effects in which certain practices reinforce one another to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness. (p.1185) Increases in organizational performance due to the bundling of specific HPWPs into HPWSs result from the appropriate matching of the implemented HPWPs.(p.1185) The HR architecture becomes a high-performance system when […] the different elements within the system (e.g., practices) are working

					toward achieving the same goal.(p.1185) High-performance practices lead to high-performance products. The products of high-performance systems are […] competencies[…] (p.1189)
Human resource management and firm performance: A systems perspective (Delery, Gupta, & Shaw, 1997)	five categories: staffing, training, appraisal, compensation, and participation.				
Desegregating HRM: A Review and Synthesis of Micro and Macro Human Resource Management Research (Wright & Boswell, 2002)	In summary, empirical categorization schemes do not reveal consistent patterns of HR practices. However, it appears that consensus is emerging around the conceptual categorizations of employee skills (practices aimed at attracting and developing the skills of the workforce), motivation (practices that elicit high motivation), and empowerment (practices enabling employee voice and influence). (p.253) […] identify six categories: selection, training and development, recruitment, compensation, performance				Huselid's (1995) study on the relationship between HR practices and corporate financial performance serves as probably the seminal, and definitely most-cited work in this area.(p. 251) […] one aspect of strategic HRM consisted of creating a horizontal fit among the various HR practices such that they complemented, rather than competed with one another. This concept also has been referred to as "internal alignment". (p.267)

	management, and participation/work design. (p.255)				
High performance work systems in corporate turnaround: A German case study (Mihail, Links, & Sarvanidis, 2013)					The notion of HPWS is identified "as a specific combination of HR practices, work structures and processes", which are integrated into "an overall system" in order to "enhance employee involvement and performance". (p.191)
Exploring the impact of high performance work systems in professional service firms: A practices-resources-uses-performance approach (Fu, 2013)	HPWS include staffing, training and development, compensation, performance control, and communication and information sharing. (p.244) These practices represent the general HRM practices commonly used in most HPWS research, such as staffing, training and development, compensation, performance control, and communication and participation. (p.244)				
Does psychological empowerment mediate the relationship between high performance work systems and patient care quality in hospitals?	[...] it is not entirely clear what the essential components of the HPWS bundle are [...] (p.322) [...]representative [practices] of HPWS, comprising: job security, selective hiring,				[...] employee attitudes can be influenced through high performance work systems by establishing a link between the objectives of the organisation and employee aspirations. (p.321)

(Bonias, Bartman, Leggat, & Stanton, 2010)	contingent reward, extensive training, teams and decentralized decision-making, reduced status distinctions, information sharing, transformational leadership, high –quality work (defined as appropriate workload, role clarity, and employee control). (p.322)				
High performance work system and collective OCB: a collective social exchange perspective (Gong, Chang, & Cheung, 2010)	[…] eight HPWS practices […]: selective hiring; extensive training; career planning and advancement; regular performance appraisal; participation in decision making through teams; comparatively high pay contingent on firm performance; employment security; information sharing. (p.120)				[…] multiple and mutually reinforcing HR practices define the nature of the system. (p.120) […]while individual HR practices provide value, they are not likely to be sources of sustained competitive advantage because they are more easily imitated. (p.120)
Unlocking the Black Box: Exploring the link between high-performance work systems and performance (Messersmith, Lepak, Patel, & Gould-Williams, 2011)	[…]HPWS have traditionally included practices related to structured and comprehensive approaches to recruitment and selection, pay for performance and other incentive-based compensation plans, information sharing, rigorous performance appraisal processes, and training in both generic and company-specific skills. (p.1105)				High-performance work systems (HPWS) have recently been defined as "a group of separate but interconnected human resource (HR) practices designed to enhance employees' skills and effort" (p.1105) Despite this growing body of work, theorists have lamented a lack of clear understanding of the key mediating factors that link the utilization of HPWS

					to firm performance. In short, researchers have fairly strong evidence that HPWS "work" but are less clear as to exactly how this relationship unfolds. (p.1105) […]organizational performance does not stem from the HR practices themselves but rather from the human efforts that result from using HR practices. (p.1107)
Modes of theorizing in strategic human resource management: Tests of universalistic, contingency, and configurational performance predictions (Delery & Doty, 1996)	Seven key strategic human resource practices are identified […] (p.802) [7 HR practices are]: Internal career opportunities; Training; Results-oriented appraisals; Profit sharing; Employment security; Participation; Job descriptions (p.809)				
The impact of human resource management practices on turnover, productivity, and corporate financial performance (Huselid, 1995)	[…] High Performance Work Practices, including comprehensive employee recruitment and selection procedures, incentive compensation and performance management systems, and extensive employee involvement and training, can improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a firm's current				[…]human resource management practices can help to create a source of sustained competitive advantages, especially when they are aligned with a firm's competitive strategy. (p.636) The presumption is that more effective systems of HRM practices, which simultaneously exploit the

	and potential employees, increase their motivation, reduce shirking, and enhance retention of quality employees while encouraging nonperformers to leave the firm. (p.635)			potential for complementarities or synergies among such practices and help to implement a firm's competitive strategy, are sources of sustained competitive advantage. […]very little empirical evidence supports such a belief. (p.636) […]Barney's (1991) resource-based theory of the firm, contended that human resources can provide a source of sustained competitive advantage […].(p.637) Examples of firm efforts to direct and motivate employee behavior include the use performance appraisals that assess individual or work group performance, linking these appraisals tightly with incentive compensation systems, the use of internal promotion systems that focus on employee merit, and other forms of incentives intended to align the interests of employees with those of shareholders. (p.637-638)

					[…]the behavior of employees within firms has important implications for organizational performance and that human resource management practices can affect individual employee performance through their influence over employees' skills and motivation and through organizational influence over employees' skills and motivation and through organizational structures [e.g. cross-functional teams, job rotation, etc.] that allow employees to improve how their jobs are performed. (p.638) The internal fit perspective suggests that the adoption of an internally consistent system of High Performance Work Practices will be reflected in better firm performance […] (p.643)
Explaining organizational responsiveness to work-life balance issues: the role of business strategy and high-performance work systems	High-performance work systems: Training effort; Variable pay; Employee involvement; Staff within. (p.409) high-performance work systems mediate	The issue of work-life balance has received extensive publicity during the past two decades as the number of women with children […] have […] increased in the workforce. (p.407) This demographic change has, in		[…]some organizations offer WLBPs and others don't, some researchers argue that there are systematic differences across industries in adopting work-life balance programs because different	High-performance work systems, […] are a set of human resource management practices that give employees the skills, knowledge, and motivation to help an organization gain a competitive advantage.

(Wang & Verma, 2012)	the relationship between business strategy and the adoption of WLBPs.(p.409) […] [high performance work] practices include intensive investment in training, variable pay, job rotation, and delegation; emphasis on team structure to improve quality and problem solving; encouragement of employees to become involved as corporate citizens and to submit their suggestions to management; and promotion from within. (p.411) […]the actual practices of HPWSs vary across organizations. (p.415) Most researchers, however, agree that HPWSs must involve three sets of essential practices: Investing in employee skills and abilities [e.g. training and development]; Encouraging employees to participate in teamwork and decision making; Offering nontraditional compensation systems, such as group incentives systems. (p.415)	turn, increased the demand for organizations to adopt work-life balance programs (WLBPs), such as on-site daycare centers, […], employee assistance programs, and flex time.(p.407) […] [industries] with a high percentage of women are more likely to adopt such [work-life balance] programs. (p.408) […] as women have entered the workforce in greater numbers, organizations have become more dependent on them and have had to adopt WLBPs to accommodate these employees' child care needs and other family responsibilities. (p.408) Current work-life balance programs: Employee assistance; Child care program; Elder care program; Fitness and recreation program; other personal support program. (p.409)		industries experience different levels of institutional pressures. (p.408)	(p.411) […] experts disagree on what practices fall under the HPWS rubric. (p.411) […] the characteristics of an organization, and in particular its business strategy, determine whether the organization will adopt HPWSs or not (p.411-412) […]organizations with high-performance work systems in their workplaces are more likely to adopt WLBPs than those without HPWSs. (p.413)
The impact of work-		[…]firms work-life programs had	Work-life programs are initiatives	Since conflicts between work	[…]the percentage of women

life programs on firm productivity (Konrad & Mangel, 2000)		a stronger positive impact on productivity when women comprised a larger percentage of the workforce[…] (p.1225) Work-life initiatives encompass a variety of practices that aid workers in balancing the demands of work and personal life. Many of these practices are aimed in particular at helping workers to deal with family obligations. Some programs provide specific services such as on-site daycare for children or emergency daycare, where other programs provide flexibility in work hours and parental leaves. (p.1226)	adopted by organizations to help employees manage the interface between their paid work and other important life activities, including family. (p.1225) […] work-life benefits are likely to have a substantial marginal benefit for organizations that [...]have a high percentage of female employees. [...]work-life initiatives will have an especially positive impact on workforce productivity for such firms. (p.1226) Organizations can enhance their ability to recruit and retain a top quality workforce if they provide employees with flexibility and resources to help them combine work and family more easily. (p.1226) Providing work schedule flexibility reduces the level of work–family conflict and enhances satisfaction with family life (p.1226) […]organizations providing longer parental leaves, greater flexibility in the location of work, and higher supervisor support generate greater job satisfaction among new mothers. (p.1226)	and family life may lead to employee turnover and withdrawal, initiatives that reduce this conflict can help companies retain valuable workers they have recruited and trained. Work-life programs may also reduce other withdrawal behaviors that diminish the value of investments in employees such as reduced work effort, lateness, and absenteeism. (p.1225) Because primary responsibility for homemaking and childcare tasks falls on women, female employees face particularly strong work–family conflicts. (p.1229) […] reduced work effort, distraction, lateness, and absenteeism resulting from work–family conflict has a greater productivity impact on firms dependent upon a largely female workforce. (p.1229)	employed were positively related to the development of more extensive work-life programs. (p.1225) Though some programs may involve little cost on behalf of the organization, e.g., providing information about local daycare centers, many programs designed to significantly aid the worker are expensive. On-site childcare centers can be quite costly to set up and run, and implementing flexible hours may lead to problems with adjusting work schedules and changing managerial practices. (p.1226)

Work-family human resource bundles and perceived organizational performance (Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000)		Eight work-family policies […]: on-site day care, help with day care costs, elder care assistance, in-formation on community day care, paid parental leave, unpaid parental leave, maternity or paternity leave with reemployment, and flexible scheduling.(p.1110)	A work-family bundle can be defined as a group of complementary, highly related and, in some cases, over-lapping human resource policies that may help employees manage non work roles. (p.1107) […]the types of individual policies that may be part of such a bundle include dependent care services, flexible scheduling programs (including various types of family leave), and information and referral services.(p.1107) […] a work-family bundle may be part of a broader system of innovative HR practices. (p.1109)		[…] the relationship between work-family bundles and firm performance is stronger for […] firms employing larger proportions of women. (p.1107)
The impact of diversity and equality management on firm performance: Beyond high performance work systems (Armstrong, Flood, Guthrie, Liu, Maccurtain, & Mkamwa, 2010)			a diversity and equality management system […]includes diversity training and monitoring recruitment, pay, and promotion across minority or other disadvantaged groups.(p.977) Diversity and equality management systems (DEMS) may be composed of many facets, including written policies on diversity and equality management, diversity/equality training for staff, and monitoring recruitment, promotion, and relative pay by gender, age, and ethnic origin. (p.978)		[…]the traditional definition of HPWS should be expanded to include diversity and equality management. (p.978) […]using a package or system of HR practices that includes comprehensive employee recruitment and selection procedures, compensation and performance management, extensive communication and employee involvement, and training and development can improve acquiring,

					developing, and retaining a workforce that is a source of potential competitive advantage. (p.978)
Target Practice: an organizational impression management approach to attracting minority and female job applicants (Avery & McKay, 2006)		[…] companies have increased recruitment targeting female […] job applicants. (p.157) […]firms […] begin considering alternative recruitment sources, using […] female (i.e., nontraditional) organizational representatives and changing recruitment messages to highlight issues of importance to the targeted applicant pool. (p.158) Portraying racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in photographs depicted in recruitment advertising has become […] the norm […]. (p.160) Portraying highly diverse ads will convey the impression to women and minorities that the firm values diversity. (p.167)	[…]women place different values than White males on certain characteristics when evaluating potential employers. (p.158) […]preliminary impressions influence job seekers' perceptions of fit with organizations, which subsequently affect job-choice decisions[…] (p.159) […]employee diversity, work–family balance, and the presence of similar colleagues were more important to women, whereas a high starting salary was more important to men.(p.159) […]you must show diversity if you hope to attract diverse applicants. (p.160) […](minorities) won't apply unless they can see evidence that people like themselves are already successfully employed by the organization. […]female job seekers consciously look for evidence that women are successfully employed when		[…]employing a diverse workforce has considerable potential benefits. (p.157)

			evaluating prospective employers. (p.160) […]promoting policies of equal opportunity enhances female and minority applicants' perceptions of organizations. (p.161) […]female applicants are attracted by different factors than their […] male counterparts, organizations should seek to make a different impression on members of these groups. […]targeted recruitment practices could serve as a means for organizations to influence these job seekers' impressions of them. (p.163) […]practices [to attract females] such as targeted recruitment advertising, promoting policies of inclusiveness (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity) recruiting at colleges and universities with high minority and female enrollments, employing diverse [e.g. female] recruiters, and participating in job fairs in highly diverse communities. (p.164) Placing recruitment ads in targeted media will convey the impression to women and		

			minorities that the company values diversity. (p.166)		
What HRM means for gender equality (Dickens, 1998)			[…]time flexibility could help in facilitating women's integration into the primary labour market[…]. (p.27)	Men usually have fewer demands on their time which enables them to devote more visible time to the organization to`display greater commitment' and also makes them better placed to create the impression of so doing, whatever the reality. (p.25)	[…]gender equality assumption in the HRM model is part of the rhetoric rather than the reality.(p.23)
Achieving organizational effectiveness through promotion of women into managerial positions: HRM practice focus (Harel, Tzafrir, & Baruch, 2003)			[…]strategic HRM practices [are] a possible means of reducing gender discrimination. (p.248) […]organizations can and should apply specific best practices for females' career progress.(p.249) [high performance work] practices handle employees according to their competencies, knowledge, skills and abilities rather than deal with irrelevant characteristics such as gender. (p.250)	The human asset most […] under-utilized in organizations is women, particularly those at the management level. (p.248) […]discrimination due to gender affects the largest population group and workplace discrimination is most apparent in the areas of job recruitment, promotion, remuneration and job assignments. (p.249) […]discrimination originates in bias in the approach of top management to women, as well as in structural and systematic discrimination, manifested in organizational policies and practices. (p.249) […]HRM uses EEO policies to symbolize what	A broader movement of women into the workforce is apparent in all sectors of public and private enterprises. (p.247) It is a pity that in many countries the impetus for diversity and equality stems from the legal environment rather than the organizational performance and effectiveness side. (p.249) Proper utilization of the entire labour-force pool is an essential ingredient for sustained competitive advantage in the global marketplace. Encouraging women into employment and, into management in particular is a strategy adopted by some leading

				they call 'good faith', while no actual practical activity results from these policies. (p.249) […]women bring a different set of qualities into management, which may be needed but are neglected due to the 'masculine' way of traditional management. (p.249) Women are shown to be behind their male colleagues with regard to career progression, salary received and training undertaken. (p.250) Women[…] suffer from […] discrimination in selection, promotion and wage. (p.251)	companies to improve competitiveness (p.249)
Equity Sensitivity and Gender Differences(Kim, Yang, & Lee, 2013)				[…]pay inequity between male and female employees is the most significant, persistent and endemic problem throughout the world. (p.374) […]women are still not considered equal to men in the increasingly diverse corporate culture. (p.379)	[…][a] major global trend is the increased number of female workers in the workplace. (p.374)
It's all about control: Worker control over schedule and hours			[…]flexibility [in working schedule and hours] can help women combine work and family	[…]low levels of control are linked to negative outcomes for […] women[…]. (p.1023)	

in cross-national context (Lyness, Gornick, Stone, & Grotto, 2012)			responsibilities[…] (p.1024) […] [there is] a schedule control gap such that women, who presumably need it more, have less control than men over their work schedules.(p.1045)	
Person-organization fit and the war for talent: does diversity management make a difference? (Ng & Burke, 2005)				[…]white male managers continue to control the bulk of the power in organizations and largely determine a company's hiring, compensation and performance evaluation practices.(p.1196) […]men seemed to appreciate men's work more than women's, received higher performance ratings and commanded higher salary levels. Thus, women and minorities faced greater challenges in organizational entry and in moving up the organizational ranks. (p.1196) […]gender […] stereotyping also contributed to the lack of acceptance of women […] (p.1196)	
Using the Kaleidoscope Career Model to understand the changing patterns of women's careers: Designing		Instead of focusing on face time, progressive companies are already measuring and rewarding actual performance, regardless of where or when the work is done. Changing focus from face time to	[…]as a retention strategy for women, firms should focus on corporate social responsibility and company efforts to promote total wellness— in mind, body, and spirit.(p.38)	In addition to childcare and eldercare demands, women's career decisions are also influenced by discrimination, sexual harassment, and poor gender-related policies	

| HRD programs that attract and retain women (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008) | | performance encourages the use of such programs as flexible work schedules and telecommuting. (p.39) | Women want to work for firms that have organizational missions that align with their own values. (p.38)

[…]women, who tend spend fewer hours at the workplace than men because of their greater care-giving and household responsibilities, are at a disadvantage, paying a penalty in terms of reduced pay, fewer opportunities for advancement, and lower retirement income. (p.39)

In addition to reasonable work hours and the elimination of face time for promotion, salary, and other reward decisions, organizational support programs must be put in place that enable employees to better manage work and non work demands.(p.39)

[…] [firms] offer extended paid maternity leave and benefits, paid and extended family leave […] and excellent health care.(p.40)

Proactive organizations often offer a variety of work schedule options including flexible schedules, part-time work, and | including inequities in salaries and training opportunities. Many women turnover because their jobs are boring, their chances for advancement are low, and the company requires unreasonable working hours. (p.33)

[…]women leave organizations for many of the same reasons as men— boring jobs and lack of advancement opportunities. (p.40)

Organizational cultures that insist on traditional career values and long hours naturally serve as an impediment to women's advancement, especially during their care-giving years. (p.43) | |

			job-sharing programs. (p.40) […]firms also have generous absenteeism policies, vacation days, and work benefits and offer time-saving services such as on-site dry cleaning, prepared family meals, and concierge services. Firms must continue to develop innovative ways in which to help their women employees achieve equilibrium between work and non work demands. (p.40) […]firms must insure that women[…] have equitable access to challenging, meaningful job assignments and training opportunities, including expatriate assignments. (p.40) By effectively using technology, women can remain hooked into the work networks and maintain workplace relationships while completing challenging work assignments from their homes.(p.41)		