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# HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEM AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING ROLE OF EMPLOYEE HAPPINESS

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## **Abstract**

*The hospitality and tourism (H&T) sector grapples with an attrition rate significantly higher than other industries, leading to lost revenue and profitability. This situation could worsen, especially as more H&T organizations adopt High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS). Therefore, there is a need to explore the effect of such practices on employee experience (such as happiness at work) and attitudes (like turnover intentions) and present the findings to practitioners, enabling them to make well-informed decisions. The current study uses the conservation of resources theory to explore how HPWS impact happiness at work (HAW) and turnover intentions (TI) within the H&T context. Structural equation modelling was used to analyse data collected from 451 employees working in seven high-end luxury hotels. The results revealed that HPWS influence employee TI and HAW. Additionally, employee HAW serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between HPWS and TI. This study has theoretical significance by advancing our understanding of Conservation of Resource theory, HPWS and happiness at work in the H&T industry. It has practical relevance, providing insights to enhance employee happiness, reduce turnover, that may ultimately improve*

*guest experiences. Additionally, the study aligns with UN-SDG 3, focusing on well-being, and UN-SDG 8, emphasizing decent work.*

**Keywords:** *High Performance Work System, Happiness at Workplace, Turnover Intention, Hospitality and Tourism Employees*

## **Introduction**

The hospitality and tourism (H&T) sector face a daunting attrition rate of over 75 percent, significantly higher than the 10 percent average observed in other industries (KPMG, 2021). This elevated attrition rate places a considerable financial strain on organizations due to the continuous recruitment, selection, and training of new employees. Moreover, it results in lost revenue and profitability as a consequence of the unavailability of necessary personnel in the workplace (McGinley & Shi, 2022). The challenges in this sector have garnered the attention of both researchers and practitioners, urging them to find prompt solutions to address this pressing issue.

This situation may worsen further, especially as more H&T organizations adopt HPWS practices to meet the escalating customer demands (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2020). HPWS, intended to cultivate a ‘valuable,’ ‘rare,’ ‘inimitable,’ and ‘non-substitutable’ workforce by creating a unique combination of Human Resource Management practices (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2020), might adversely impact the employee experience in the workplace, potentially exacerbating attrition numbers. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate this phenomenon and present the results to practitioners for them to make informed decisions. The current study examines the impact of High-Performance Work Systems on Happiness at Work and Turnover Intentions within the Hospitality and Tourism context.

Scholars of HPWS have predominantly directed their focus toward the manufacturing sector, with only a limited number extending their studies to highly regulated service industries (Kaushik & Mukherjee, 2022). Importantly, there is scarce HPWS literature in the H&T context with a special focus on its influence on employee experience (Jensen et al., 2011), attitudes, behavior and performance (Kaushik & Mukherjee, 2022). The acceptance of HPWS among the H&T practitioners may be primarily because of its success in other sectors. However, the H&T context is different considering it is guest centric (Inversini et al., 2020), seasonal business (Pegg et al., 2012), odd working hours (Sommerville, 2007), dependency on human interaction (Lashley, 2008), and diversity of workforce (Madera, 2011) to name a few. This calls

for more focused research within this sector, as the results here may differ from those in other contexts.

The current study uses the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll et al., 2016) to study relationship between HPWS, HAW, and TI. According to COR theory, employees are motivated to cultivate and preserve resources that benefit them both in the short and long term (Westman et al., 2004). The integration of Human Resource Management practices within HPWS contributes to enhancing employees' available resources by fostering skill development (Fu et al., 2017), granting autonomy, and recognizing their contributions (Wattoo et al., 2020). This, in turn, may cultivate positive emotions among employees, potentially influencing their happiness at work (HAW) and may consequently reducing their intentions to leave the organization (TI).

Given the high turnover rate in the sector, conducting studies that explore the impact of emerging developments like HPWS in the industry, which may further affect employee morale, can offer valuable insights for both practitioners and academics. While there are numerous studies on the precursors of TI in the sector (e.g., Ashraf et al., 2023; Chan & James, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2017), understanding the influence of emerging trends on this attitude is crucial. Proactively managing such situations, rather than attempting to address attrition reasons retrospectively, is recommended (Holtom et al., 2005). Conducting a robust study to comprehend the triggers of TI in this sector will provide valuable insights for practitioners. This understanding can assist practitioners in developing strategic initiatives to enhance the employee experience and fortify efforts in employee retention. Importantly, the study examines the mediating role of happiness at work in the relationship between high performance work system and turnover intention. This aspect aids academicians in comprehending the process by which HPWS influences TI (via HAW).

Happiness at work is defined as the positive experience of the employees, where the employee feels connected with work, people and the organization (Fisher, 2010). Studies have suggested that employees experiencing higher levels of HAW are more motivated (Atan et al., 2021), possess desired work attitudes, and better behavior at the workplace (Fisher, 2017). There is a need to study happiness of employees in the hospitality context (Adam et al., 2023) that is plagued with emotional exhaustion and stress. HAW is the serving as a mediator in the association between HPWS and TI for the following reasons. Firstly, HPWS may foster a positive work environment, positively influencing employees' emotional state, reflected in their HAW (Kaushik & Mukherjee,

2021). Secondly, HAW has been shown to impact employee attitudes and behaviors (Fisher, 2010). Thirdly, HAW is malleable and can be developed through interventions (Luthans et al., 2004).

This research brings valuable contributions to academia, practitioners, and society at large. From an academic standpoint, it takes a step forward in theoretical knowledge by using the COR theory to unravel the connections between high performance work system, happiness at work, and turnover intentions among employees within the H&T sector. For practitioners, the study provides practical implications, guiding human resource practices and strategies to enhance employee well-being and retention. Societally, the research contributes to better workplace conditions, fostering happier and more engaged employees. Aligned with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2016), it addresses SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). In summary, this research bridges theory and practice, positively impacting both academic understanding and societal well-being in the hospitality and tourism industry.

## Literature Review

### *Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory*

The COR theory, rooted in the fundamental need to acquire and preserve essential resources, serves as an important tool to explain human behavior (Hobfoll & Freedy, 2017). Employed since its inception as a framework for understanding organizational dynamics, it underlines the necessity for individuals to cultivate personal strengths and maintain interpersonal connections (Wendling et al., 2018). At its core, the theory posits that individuals exert efforts to acquire, foster, and safeguard valued resources (Hobfoll & Freedy, 2017). In the current study, the conservation of resources theory serves as a framework for understanding the relationship between HPWS, HAW, and TI. Within the framework of HPWS, which prioritizes the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Wendling et al., 2018), employees may view these initiatives as valuable assets that enhance their workplace satisfaction. As a result, they may be inclined to preserve these resources by maintaining their dedication to the organization and diminishing their inclination to seek alternative employment opportunities. The authors have elaborately discussed each of these relationships within the premises of the COR theory during the development of the hypothesis.

## ***United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)***

In 2015, the members of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda, comprising 17 SDGs, provides a framework for fostering peace and growth among global citizens, both presently and in the future. The SDGs aim to end poverty, enhance health and education, promote inclusivity, and ensure economic growth, all while striving to create a better living environment for all.

The current paper contributes to SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) by empirically testing the influencer of employee happiness at work within the hospitality industry. By examining how HPWS can positively influence employee well-being, the study encourages the creation of happier work environments, which are essential for promoting psychological and physical health among employees. Additionally, by investigating the relationship between HPWS, HAW, and TI, the paper also aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). It provides valuable insights into how businesses can foster an ecosystem that supports employee happiness and retention, thereby contributing to the development of decent work conditions and economic growth within the hospitality sector.

## ***High-Performance Work System***

HPWS garnered substantial scholarly attention within the business sector (Boxall, 2003; Combs & Liu, 2006; Takeuchi et al., 2007). HPWS is designed to facilitate the development of workers' skills, competency, and commitment, thereby enhancing their effectiveness in task execution (Appelbaum et al., 2001). Datta et al. (2005) define HPWS as a collection of human resource practices characterized by internal consistency and coherence, intended to foster employee competence, motivation, and commitment.

Shahriari and Mahmoudi-Mesineh (2021) assert that High-Performance Work Systems play a pivotal role in cultivating an entrepreneurial environment and fostering innovation among staff members. It is found to influence various desired work-related attitudes and behaviours, such as overall quality of life (Dorta-Afonso et al., 2021), organizational ambidexterity, and knowledge absorptive capacity (Gürlek, 2021), as well as fostering employee participation (Lin & Liu, 2016) and mitigating absence intentions (Karatepe, 2013).

Considering the potential role of HPWS in enhancing employee and organizational performance, there is a call for more studies in the area

(Murphy et al., 2018). Current HPWS literature in the H&T context has identified its influence on employees' guest-centric behaviours, such as employee service innovative behaviour (Jaiswal & Tyagi, 2020), employee innovative work behaviour (Farrukh et al., 2021), service delivery (Lin & Liu, 2016), and extra-role performance (Homayoun Pasha Safavi, 2018). At the organizational level, HPWS is found to influence organizational performance (Lin & Liu, 2016) and financial performance (Ružić, 2015). This establishes the significance of HPWS in this customer-centric service sector like H&T.

### ***Happiness at the Workplace***

HAW is defined as the experience of employees with frequent positive and infrequent negative affect at the workplace (Myers & Diener, 2016). Empirical studies suggest that happy employees are comparatively more productive than less happy employees (Graziotin et al., 2018). Common aspects in different definitions of HAW include feelings of well-being, a person's state and frame of mind (Salas-Vallina et al., 2018), and meaningful and purposeful work (Fisher, 2014).

HAW has three dimensions (Fisher, 2010): Job satisfaction, which encompasses the contentment derived from the job (Yalabik et al., 2017); work engagement, measuring the degree of vigour, absorption, and dedication displayed by the employee at work; and organizational commitment, reflecting their intent to continue working with the organization due to emotional attachment and loyalty (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004).

Studies on employee happiness and well-being in the H&T setting is limited (Adam et al., 2023). Schiffrin and Nelson (2010) identified that the happiness of employees in H&T negatively influences their stress levels. The happiness of frontline employees is found to influence their quality of interaction with guests (Bani-Melhem et al., 2018) and improves guests' happiness (Amin & Akbar, 2013).

### ***Turnover Intention***

The inclination of an employee to either continue or terminate their association with an employer is "intention to stay" or "quit" (Sulistiawan et al., 2021). It signifies the degree to which an employee manifests a voluntary willingness to part ways with their current employer (Krishnan & Singh, 2010). Several factors, including employee attitudes, sub-optimal human resource interventions, job discontent, and a lack of organizational commitment, exert influence on the propensity to leave (Joseph & Ang, 2003).

Intentions to quit are majorly influenced by employee attitudes and experiences at the workplace. Employees who are flexible and possess problem-solving abilities are more likely to be involved at the workplace and likely to stay associated with the organization for a longer time (Parker et al., 2006). Role overload (Jones et al., 2007), role conflict (Haji Mohammad Hoseini et al., 2021), role ambiguity (De Clercq & Belausteguigoitia, 2017), insufficient resources (Baoguo et al., 2023), work autonomy (Gillet et al., 2013), and job variation (Dole & Schroeder, 2001) are some of the antecedents of TI. Additionally, a lack of challenge (Esteves & Lopes, 2017) experienced by employees may also serve as an instigator for TI. Environmental factors such as government policy (Wynen & Op De Beeck, 2014), and the state of the economy (Chen et al., 2012) also influence employees' TI.

As discussed earlier, the H&T sector has some sector-specific characteristics that differentiate the experience of employees working in this sector. Such characteristics are found to have an influence on employee turnover intentions. Park and Min's (2020) meta-analysis encompassing 144 independent studies in the H&T sector revealed that employee attitudes at work, job strains, and role stressors/inter role conflicts exhibited substantial impact on TI. Analysing precursor variables for TI, the study identified significant corrected correlations for organizational commitment, job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, job stress, depersonalization, role conflict, and family-work conflict, surpassing the 0.5 threshold indicative of a substantial effect size in the realm of social science research (Cohen, 1992).

### ***High Performance Work System and Happiness at Work***

According to the conservation of resources theory (Westman et al., 2004), individuals are motivated to acquire and maintain resources that they perceive as important. In the workplace context, employee resources include skills (Liu et al., 2007), autonomy (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2017), and opportunities for growth (Saks, 2022). Considering that HPWS integrates HR practices and functions such as autonomy, training and development, compensation and benefits, and recruitment selection, among others, to improve the quality of work practices in the office. The emphasis on developing and connecting these practices may help create a collaborative work environment, improving the sense of competence, satisfaction, and happiness of employees at the workplace, as they find they are able to develop and maintain their vital resources at work.

*Hypothesis 1: High performance work system will positively influence happiness at work of employees in the H&T sector.*

## ***High Performance Work System and Turnover Intention***

Turnover intentions may be influenced by the perceived availability or depletion of critical resources (Carlson et al., 2017). According to the COR theory (COR), HPWS are designed to provide employees with enhanced resources (Kaushik & Mukherjee, 2022) as explained above. When employees experience a well-implemented HPWS, they gain access to resources that contribute to their professional development (Cao et al., 2020) and job satisfaction (Dorta-Afonso et al., 2021). The positive resource gain may lead to increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment. A well-implemented HPWS, by providing employees with valuable resources and support (Mukherjee & Tiwary, 2022), aligns with the principles of Conservation of Resources theory. Following the COR theory, this, in turn, can reduce the likelihood of perceived resource threats, contributing to lower turnover intentions among employees.

*Hypothesis 2: High performance work system will negatively influence the turnover intentions of employees in the H&T sector.*

## ***Happiness at Work and Turnover Intentions***

Looking from the perspective of the COR theory, employees may perceive HAW as a psychological resource comprising positive emotions at work that may lead to commitment towards the organization. Additionally, when they experience HAW, they may perceive the workplace to be a source of financial well-being, social well-being, and psychological well-being. This may create a sense of fulfillment and thereby, reduces their intent to leave in the organization.

Additionally, happiness at work is linked to reduced stress and burnout (Chiva & Guinot, 2021), creating a positive work environment that diminishes the desire to seek alternative employment as an escape. Positive interpersonal relationships within a joyful workplace further strengthen the emotional attachment to the organization (Harter et al., 2004). Finally, happiness at work may foster the perception of ample opportunities for personal and professional growth within the current organization, reducing the inclination to explore external job options.

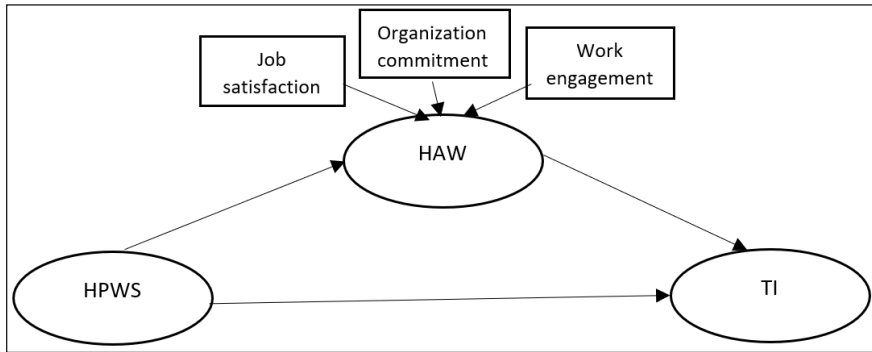
In essence, organizations that prioritize employee happiness are likely to experience lower turnover rates as a result of these interconnected influences.

*Hypothesis 3: Happiness at work will negatively influence the turnover intentions of employees in the H&T sector.*

## ***Happiness at Work as a Mediator***

In accordance with the above-mentioned scientific rationale rooted in the COR theory, the possible influence of HPWS on HAW, along with the consequential role of HAW in influencing TI, is theoretically substantiated (check figure 1 for the conceptual model). Thereby, we propose:

*Hypothesis 4: Happiness at work serves as a mediator in the relationship between high performance work system and turnover intentions.*



*Note: HPWS- High performance work system, HAW- Happiness at work, TI-Turnover intentions.*

**Fig. 1: Conceptual Model to be Tested**

## **Research Methodology**

### ***Data Collection***

This study analyzes data obtained from employees working in hotels situated across diverse regions in India, affiliated with four distinct hotel chains in the country. Refer to Table 1 for details of these hotel chains. For the sake of anonymity, the names of the hotel chains are not mentioned. The initial point of contact with these hotel chains was established by the first author through a professional networking platform, where details were exchanged with the Human Resource Heads. Subsequently, the study particulars were shared with each HR director, who directed the author to various hotels within their respective chains. Upon engaging with the HR heads of these hotels and elucidating the study's aims and scope, unanimous agreement was reached for their participation in the research.

**Table 1: Description of Data Collection. \*Hotel & Restaurant Approval & Classification Committee (HRACC) Update New. Accessed from: <https://hotelassociationindia.com/hracc2-new.html>. Accessed on: 12 March 2024.**

Hotel Chain No.	Hotel Category*	Hotel Description	Hotel Property Details	Samples Collected from Which Properties?	Responses Collected	Usable Responses
1	Three star	Midscale business and leisure hotels	Over 100 hotels in 64 cities across India.	Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore, Kozhikode, Visakhapatnam	181	158
2	Five star	Luxury Hotel	Over 100 hotels in 70 cities across India.	Kolkata, New Delhi, Bengaluru, Kolkata	171	136
3	Five star	International Luxury Hotel chain	International- more than 1,250 hotels. India - 100 hotels across 60 locations.	Bengaluru, Ahmedabad	98	75
4	Five star	Prominent midscale international hotel brand	International- 559 hotels in 65 countries. India-61 hotels.	Pune, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Chandigarh	161	82

300 hard copies of the questionnaire, sealed in six envelopes, were provided to the HR Heads of the Bengaluru (India) properties of each chain, who then distributed them to various properties across India (refer to Table 1 for details). The HR professionals were requested to keep track of the number of questionnaires physically distributed to different properties across the country. The data collection phase took place during March-April 2022, during which 863 questionnaires were distributed.

In adherence to inclusion criteria, data was gathered from employees possessing a minimum of one year of work experience, ensuring familiarity with the organizational culture, values, and practices. Exclusion criteria encompassed contractual or part-time employees, tourist guides/agents, freelancers, etc. After filling out the questionnaire, respondents returned it to their respective HR heads in their properties, who collected all the questionnaires and posted them back to the Bengaluru office. The authors coordinated with Bengaluru office HR professionals to facilitate the collection of filled questionnaires from employees. The researchers then collected the filled questionnaires from the Bengaluru office. Subsequently, data retrieval transpired in June 2022, resulting in the collection of 611 questionnaires. After removing the incomplete responses, 451 completed instruments were deemed usable for analysis. The sample size is acceptable considering as it exceeds the recommended rule of thumb, which suggests having at least 10 times more respondents than the number of survey items (Kline, 2011). Descriptive statistics were conducted using SPSS version 21, and the hypotheses were tested using the structural equation model (SEM) in AMOS version 22.

### ***Measures***

A five-point scale was employed to gauge the level of agreement (5) or disagreement (1) among respondents concerning each item.

### **High Performance Work System**

HPWS was assessed through a 27-item scale developed by Sun et al. (2007). This comprehensive scale encompasses eight dimensions, namely: selective staffing, extensive training, internal mobility, employment security, clear job description, result-oriented appraisal, incentive reward, and participation.

The model, which comprised eight first-order factors ( $\chi^2[228] = 443.96$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ; CFI = 0.92; NNFI = 0.91; RMSEA = 0.04; SRMR = 0.03) showed strong interrelationships (average  $r = 0.61$ ) indicating the existence of a higher-order

shared factor. The model, comprising eight primary factors and an overarching second-order factor representing happiness at work, demonstrated a strong fit with the data.;  $\chi^2[230] = 490.152$ ,  $p < .01$ ; comparative fit index [CFI] = .96; non-normed appropriate index [NNFI] = .96; root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = .05; standardized root mean square residual [SRMR] = .03.

### **Happiness at Work**

The level of happiness employees experience at work was measured using Salas-Vallina & Alegre (2021) 9-items scale. This scale comprises nine items, with each component of HAW—namely, work engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment—represented by three items each.

The model, which comprised three first-order factors ( $\chi^2[22] = 51.38$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ; CFI = 0.95; NNFI = 0.92; RMSEA = 0.03; SRMR = 0.02) showed strong interrelationships (average  $r = 0.59$ ) indicating the existence of a higher-order shared factor. Incorporating three main factors and an overarching second-order factor that represents happiness at work, exhibited a robust fit with the collected data.; ( $\chi^2[24] = 66.13$ ,  $p < .01$ ; comparative fit index [CFI] = .96; non-normed appropriate index [NNFI] = .94; root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = .05; standardized root mean square residual [SRMR] = .02.

### **Turnover Intentions**

The 6-item ‘turnover intentions scale’ (TIS-6) (Bothma & Roodt, 2013), also known as the turnover intention measure, was used to measure TI. The Cronbach alpha reliability was found to be 0.81.

### **Control Variables**

Employees age, gender, and work experience were considered as control variables in the study. Age and work experience were measured as a continuous variable. Gender was considered as categorical variables. Male was assigned a code of one and Female as two. Employee age and work experience job tenure were measured in years.

### **Convergent and Discriminant Validity**

We conducted several Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA) at the dimension level to determine whether the constructs considered in the research

reflected distinct aspects or were influenced by common source effects. The three-factor (HPWS, HAW, and TI) model fitted the data well ( $\chi^2[41] = 149.50$ ,  $p < .01$ ; RMSEA = .05; CFI = .96; IFI = .93; SRMR = .03; goodness-of-fit index [GFI] = .93). The two-factor model, obtained by combining HPWS and HAW, gave a very poor fit ( $\chi^2[44] = 333.93$ ,  $p < .01$ ; RMSEA = .16; CFI = .78; IFI = .88; SRMR = .12; GFI = .87). One-factor model too gave a very poor fit with the data ( $\chi^2[45] = 1221.92$ ,  $p < .01$ ; RMSEA = .29; CFI = .79; IFI = .71; SRMR = .18; GFI = .74). These results offered confirmation of the discriminant validity (e.g., Gupta & Singh, 2014; Sujatha et al., 2023) of HPWS, HAW, and TI.

## Results

The analysis of the study was conducted at an individual employee level. The descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations among HPWS, HAW, TI and demographic variables are detailed in Table 2. To streamline the analysis and maintain a reasonable degree of freedom for the model, the researchers combined the items, creating dimension-wise scores for each respondent. These scores for each dimension were subsequently used as indicators for their respective constructs in the structural equation model.

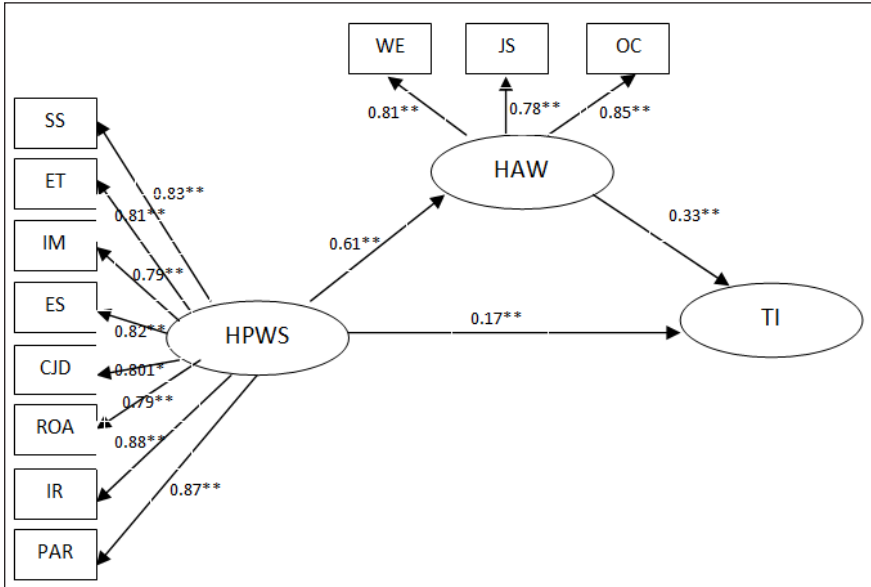
To address common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003), the researchers implemented both procedural (PC) and statistical (SC) controls. PC was incorporated into the research design by ensuring anonymity of the respondents and maintaining the confidentiality of collected responses. For statistical control, a Structural Equation Model (SEM) was utilized, with all indicator variables (items-averaged dimensions) were loaded onto their respective latent constructs.

SEM results indicated that the proposed model exhibited a good fit with the data ( $\chi^2[74] = 221.70$ ,  $p < .01$ ; CFI = .95; RMSEA = .05; SRMR = .04; GFI = .92). The tested model with standardized path coefficients is displayed in figure 2. From the SEM results, we find that the experience of HPWS among employees was negatively related to their TI ( $\beta = .17$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and positively to their HAW ( $\beta = .61$ ,  $p < .01$ ). HAW is negatively related to TI ( $\beta = .33$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Thus, the outcomes supported Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. The indirect effect of HPWS on TI was found to be .37 ( $p < .01$ ). HAW is serving as a mediator in the relationship between HPWS and TI, supporting hypothesis 4. Thereby, both the paths from HPWS to TI is found to be significant, suggesting a partial mediation model.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations**

	Mean	SD	Age	Gen	Exp	hpSS	hpET	hpIM	hpES	hpCJD	hpROA	hpIR	hpP	hwWE	hwJS	hwOC
Age	29.55	7.84														
Gen	1.71	0.45	-0.115*													
Exp	7.3	6.26	0.974**	-0.106*												
hpSS	4.08	0.46	-0.277**	0.111*	-0.261**											
hpET	3.94	0.49	-0.317**	0.094*	-0.336**	0.614**										
hpIM	2.90	0.34	-0.042	-0.029	-0.043	0.034	-0.009									
hpES	3.68	0.59	0.011	-0.015	0.027	0.410**	0.366**	-0.091								
hpCJD	3.80	0.55	-0.047	0.021	-0.026	0.428**	0.383**	0.011	0.458**							
hpROA	3.67	0.54	-0.036	-0.046	-0.03	0.377**	0.393**	-0.017	0.427**	0.441**						
hpIR	3.60	0.58	-0.05	-0.023	-0.041	0.271**	0.329**	0.004	0.417**	0.386**	0.500**					
hpP	3.57	0.51	-0.04	-0.007	-0.035	0.373**	0.416**	-0.002	0.407**	0.504**	0.561**	0.505**				
hwWE	3.44	0.54	0.061	0.044	0.083	0.265**	0.281**	0.049	0.396**	0.489**	0.415**	0.343**	0.502**			
hwJS	3.38	0.59	0.181**	-0.006	0.209**	0.177**	0.147**	0.123**	0.346**	0.402**	0.377**	0.277**	0.426**	0.588**		
hwOC	3.03	0.64	0.102*	0.055	0.126**	0.219**	0.177**	0.126**	0.326**	0.371**	0.297**	0.278**	0.343**	0.468**	0.519**	
TI	2.62	0.25	0.137**	-0.120*	0.139**	-0.169**	-0.145**	-0.049	-0.157**	-0.157**	-0.046	-0.054	-0.069	-0.116*	-0.206**	-0.223**

Note: HpSS=high performance selective staffing, hpET=extensive training, hpIM=Internal mobility, hpES=Employment Security, hpCJD=clear Job description, hpROA=Result oriented appraisal, hpIR=Incentive reward, hpP=Participation, hwWE=happiness at work, work engagement, hwJS=job satisfaction, hwOC=organisational commitment, TI=turnover intention



Note: SS- selective staffing, ET-extensive training, IM-internal mobility, ES-employment security, CJD-clear job description, ROA- result-oriented appraisal, IR-incentive reward, PAR- participation. HPWS- High performance work system, HAW- happiness at work, WE- work engagement, JS- job satisfaction, OC- organization commitment, TI- Turnover intentions.

**Fig. 2: Tested Model**

## Discussion

The current study uses an established theory, conservation of resources theory to examine the impact of HPWS on HAW and TI of employees in H&T industry. Additionally, it tests the mediating role of HAW in the association between HPWS and TI of employees.

The findings of the research conducted in the H&T sector, revealing a negative influence of HPWS on employee turnover intentions (H1), align with the COR theory. According to COR theory, individuals strive to acquire and preserve valuable resources to safeguard their overall well-being (Padma & Wagenseil, 2018) (H2, H4-mediating role). The negative relationship observed suggests that when employees perceive the organization as providing valuable resources, such as skill development, autonomy, and support, they experience positive emotions and they are less inclined to entertain intentions of leaving. Earlier studies also found a relationship between HPWS and TI (Saiful Bakhtiar, 2021; Zungbey et al., 2020). However, the results of the current

study is significant considering it outlines the process how HPWS influences TI (via HAW).

In the current study, HPWS is found to influence HAW of employees. Considering that HPWS involves the integration of HR practices and functions such as autonomy, training and development, compensation and benefits, and recruitment selection, among others, to enhance the quality of work practices in the office (Kaushik & Mukherjee, 2022). The emphasis on developing and connecting these practices may help create a collaborative work environment (Al-Ajlouni, 2021), improving the sense of competence, satisfaction (Riaz et al., 2021), and happiness of employees at the workplace. As a result, employees find that they are able to develop and maintain their vital resources at work. This experience improves the level of happiness of employees at the workplace.

The study results also suggest a negative influence of HAW on TI of employees (H3). The dimensions HAW including job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment, can negatively influence employees' turnover intentions through a network of interconnected factors. Employees experiencing higher levels of job satisfaction feel positively about their jobs and their different aspects (Rafferty & Griffin, 2009). Such employees may be less inclined to seek alternative employment opportunities. Similarly, employees with higher levels of work engagement exhibit greater levels of vigor, absorption, and dedication, and they are deeply connected to their work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Additionally, employees with higher levels of organizational commitment demonstrate greater loyalty and a sense of attachment (Tremblay et al., 2010), resulting in reduced intentions to leave the job. Overall, employees who are satisfied with their workplace are less likely to entertain the idea of leaving their current position. Moreover, the connection between happiness at work and decreased stress and burnout (Fisher, 2010) contributes to fostering a positive work environment (Salas-Vallina et al., 2018), reducing the inclination to seek alternative employment as an escape.

## **Limitations and Direction for Future Research**

This study offers valuable insights; however, certain limitations should be considered. Firstly, the research concentrated on a specific context within the H&T sector, potentially restricting the generalizability of findings to other sectors. Future researchers are encouraged to test this relationship in diverse contexts for a more comprehensive understanding. Moreover, though

the researchers have conducted confirmatory factor analysis, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of response biases. Additionally, the cross-sectional design employed in this study hinders the establishment of causal relationships. To address these limitations, future research should explore alternative research designs to enhance the robustness and applicability of the findings.

Furthermore, the study used HAW as a mediating variable to explain the process how HPWS influence TI however, future researchers can explore potential conditions (moderating variables) that could influence the observed relationships. Exploring moderating variables, such as organizational culture or leadership styles, may uncover additional factors influencing these dynamics. Comparative studies across various industries could provide a broader perspective on the applicability of findings. Additionally, investigating the role of technology and remote work, especially in post-pandemic scenarios, could offer valuable insights into evolving work dynamics.

In the realm of H&T, which involves about 3 percent of the global workforce, research is on the rise. However, there is a need for more emphasis on discovering ways to improve and enhance attitude, behavior, and performance, particularly given the stress employees face while working long hours in challenging conditions. It is crucial that these ideas are practical and easy to incorporate into daily routines, ensuring high acceptance among both employers and employees.

Given the diverse age range within the working population in this industry, future researchers might consider focusing on identifying and developing a combination of preferred Human Resource Management (HRM) practices. Researchers should appreciate that the combination of HRM practices effective in the manufacturing sector may not be the ideal fit for the service sector, especially in H&T. There is a need to figure out the right combination of factors that work for the specific industry being studied. This is key for guiding research in this important sector.

## **Conclusion**

On one hand, the hospitality and tourism sector grapples with high attrition rates stemming from intense work pressure, spanning almost 18 hours a day, poor working conditions, and the seasonal nature of the business. On the other hand, organizations within this sector are increasingly adopting high-performance work system practices to enhance employee agility and strengthen internal processes. These initiatives are designed to improve

guest satisfaction. However, there is a concern that such efforts may place additional burdens on employees, potentially compromising their well-being and escalating turnover intentions.

Using the conservation of resources theory, this paper aimed to explore the impact of HPWS practices on employee happiness at work and turnover intentions. Data was collected through a survey questionnaire from 451 employees working in seven high-end luxury hotels in India. The authors utilized a structural equation model to examine the hypothesized relationships among the study variables. The results revealed that both HPWS and happiness at work influence turnover intentions. HPWS also positively influences HAW. Therefore, HAW acts as a mediator in the relationship between HPWS and TI.

This research supports the increasing adoption of HPWS in the sector, as it proves beneficial for both employee retention and well-being. Happy employees, in turn, may contribute to creating satisfied customers. The study holds theoretical significance through the applicability of the COR theory, advancing our understanding of HPWS and happiness at work in the hospitality industry. Moreover, it has practical relevance by offering insights to enhance employee happiness, reduce turnover, and ultimately improve guest experiences.

### ***Recommendations***

#### **Practical Implications**

Reduced employee attrition positively influences the work environment, contributing to a positive employee experience (Lovejoy et al., 2021) that ultimately enhances business sustainability (Al Kurdi et al., 2020). In the current study, both HPWS and employee happiness are found to have a negative influence on employee turnover intentions.

This serves as an invaluable resource for industry practitioners who often grapple with finding ways to reduce turnover intentions. The study's results indicate that well-designed and interconnected HRM practices create a positive experience among employees, serving as a deterrent to those planning to leave their jobs. Organizations should invest time and resources to understand the ideal combination of HRM practices for their specific context and connect these practices to create a synergistic effect. Additionally, they should focus on creating a workspace that enhances employees' happiness at work. In the H&T industry, studies have shown that moments of recognition for professional achievements (Melie et al., 2020) and a positive work

environment (Fried & Ferris, 1987) improve HAW levels. Social activities and connections (Clark & Watson, 1988) are also found to positively contribute to employees' happiness. Organizations may enhance such social interactions by involving employees in corporate social activities.

From a commercial standpoint, implementing the suggested strategies to reduce turnover rates can lead to substantial savings for hotel business professionals. This initiative not only cuts down on recruitment and training expenses but also has the potential to enhance employee performance, thus positively influencing guest satisfaction (Chand, 2010) and encouraging repeat visits (Choi & Chu, 2001). Ultimately, these measures can significantly improve the bottom line for hotel businesses.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The paper contributes to the application of the conservation of resource theory in studying the relationship between HPWS, HAW, and TI. Employees are motivated by the integrated human resource practices (HPWS), which may cultivate positive emotions (HAW) and consequently reduce their intentions to leave the organization (TI). The paper also adds to the growing body of literature on HPWS and HAW in the H&T context. It makes significant contributions to the literature by addressing several research gaps including improving our knowledge on the application of HPWS in H&T. It helps researchers to identify two additional antecedents of TI in H&T. The study goes beyond previous research by describing a process (mediating role of HAW in the relationship between HPWS and TI), providing a nuanced understanding of the underlying processes.

### **Social Implications**

By empirically testing the effectiveness of HPWS on employees' HAW and TI, the study provides valuable insights towards developing a happy and sustainable workforce. The contagious effect of such a happy workforce can contribute to fostering a joyful society. The study also aligns with broader societal goals, as described by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2016). Specifically, the research aligns with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) (United Nations, 2016) by emphasizing the importance of creating better workplaces and practices. Furthermore, it resonates with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) by providing a pathway to enhance happiness and well-being among employees.

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