The Framework of First-Line Manager's HR Role Identity

and HR Implementation

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UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

A Thesis Submitted for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy (Ph.D.)

March 2023

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This thesis is based on the publication:

Kou, X., Kurdi-Nakra, H., & Pak, J. (2022). The framework of first-line manager's HR role identity: A Multi-actor HR involvement perspective. *Human Resource Management Review*, *32*, 100898. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2022.100898

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The field of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) has accentuated the crucial role first-line managers (FLMs) play in promoting both employees and organizational performance through their effective implementation of adopted HR practices. The discourse on SHRM is typically based on the premise that if the designed HR systems at the organization level can be appropriately adopted and implemented, the organization will achieve performance goals. Yet, research evidence has recently highlighted a potential gap between organizations' espoused HR strategies and the HR practices actually experienced by employees. This is so because HR practices may be carried out with considerable variation across workgroups even within organizations, with the FLM being the implementer of such HR practice. Therefore, research on how FLMs identify themselves as the HR implementer becomes critical.

Drawing on role identity and social context theories, this thesis introduces a framework of FLM's HR role identity that extends the current theorization of what precedes their effective HR implementation. This thesis suggests that FLMs' role identity will guide their HR implementation behavior by attaching the HR role to their self-concept. Although the framework of social context has emphasized the importance of contextual factors in influencing employee attitudes and behaviors, the process through which particular types of HR involvement would promote or prohibit role perceptions is still an undeveloped area of inquiry. This thesis recommends that, by examining HR involvement of immediate superiors and peers that impact FLMs' HR role identity and consequent HR implementation behaviors, the questions of *why some FLMs believe they are HR implementer while others do not* and *why FLMs react differently to their HR role* can be answered.

Hypotheses are tested through survey data collected from 105 FLMs and 518 team members in 9 Chinese companies. The results showed general support for the proposed research model. Therefore, the current thesis advances the existing research on FLM in the following ways. First, this study develops the concept of FLM's HR role identity and suggests it as a more stable cognitive process of FLMs to generate a self-view toward their HR role. Second, this research includes FLMs' perceptions of immediate superiors' and peers' HR involvement as important contextual factors that facilitate or impede the salience of FLMs' HR role identity. More specifically, immediate superiors' HR orientation and peers' HR implementation are found to positively influence FLMs' HR role identity, while immediate superiors' bottom-line mentality and peers' cynicism about HR have negative effects on FLMs' HR role identity. In addition, immediate superiors' and peers' workplace status is found to strengthen the positive effects of their HR involvement and FLMs' HR role identity. Third, this research adds to the FLM literature by characterizing multiple forms of FLMs' HR implementation behaviors within workgroups – strict implementation, externally adaptive implementation, and internally adaptive implementation – and establishes that FLMs' HR role identity triggers different behavioral patterns depending on their motivational processes (i.e., goal orientations). Finally, this research considers intra-team acceptance and FLMs' workplace status as important outcomes of FLMs' HR implementation. Taken together, this thesis develops several propositions that serve as the baseline for future endeavors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To date, in the research on FLMs' HR implementation, scholars have often focused on FLMs' HR-related abilities, motivations, and opportunities (AMOs) that enhance HR implementation effectiveness (e.g., Bos-Nehles et al., 2013; Gilbert et al., 2015; Trullen et al., 2016). Although this is a valuable pursuit, several lingering issues are not addressed. Despite the various AMO initiatives (Trullen et al., 2016) made available by the organization, FLMs may still lack the recognition of the HR role as an important part of their jobs, which prevents them from implementing HR practices as expected by the organization (Op de Beeck et al., 2016; Ryu & Kim, 2013). Therefore, more research efforts are needed to explore how FLMs develop a sense of self pertinence to the HR role (Kurdi-Nakra et al., 2022), which sustains their HR efforts (Ashforth, 2000; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Farmer et al., 2003). In essence, FLMs' motivation to carry out HR activities might be temporal and changeable, while the self-view is a more constant source rooted in their cognitive process (Biddle, 2013). As per Burke and Stets (2009), identity is the meaning one attributes to oneself in a role. To explore how FLMs attribute the meaning of the HR role to themselves and develop an identification toward the HR responsibility, this paper develops the concept of FLM's HR role identity and proposes it as a crucial antecedent to their effective HR implementation. In this research, FLMs' HR role identity is defined as an FLM's internalization of meanings associated with HR duties entrusted by the organization (c.f., Burke & Stets, 2009; Chen & Tang, 2018). In particular, FLMs who have a high HR role identity will regard HR responsibility as an inherent part of their jobs, so they are less likely to conclude that they will spend time on *extra* HR work at the expense of *core* operational tasks (Van Waeyenberg &

Decramer, 2018). In contrast, FLMs with low HR role identity may adopt self-interested manners where the costs of carrying out HR duties outweigh its benefits (Cook et al., 2013).

Despite this recognition, the current narrative on FLMs' HR role identity lacks a systematic view of how such role identity can be shaped. Indeed, organizational behavior scholars have long explicated that individuals' role identity is formed through relative self-views and feedback from social others (Riley & Burke, 1995). Because FLMs are not isolated in enforcing HR practices, normative expectations of social others are the main sources of their self-concept through reflexivity or seeing themselves through specific expectations (Farmer et al., 2003). HR involvement by social others makes FLMs recognize HR role expectations and identities, and the emerged role identity stimulates FLMs to engage in HR role behaviors (Ashforth et al., 2008; Lankau et al., 2006). Notably, social others within an organization include other HR actors who work with FLMs to ensure the effective enactment of HR practices (Garavan et al., 1998). Among studies on FLMs, HR implementation has been found to be facilitated if FLMs receive support from HR managers (e.g., Bos-Nehles et al., 2013; Gilbert et al., 2011; Guest & Bos-Nehles, 2013) and top managers (e.g., Thornhill & Saunders, 1998) alike. However, this research holds that this emphasis is incomplete, and FLMs' HR role identity is also affected by the involvement of their immediate superiors and peer FLMs within the same work unit (Op de Beeck et al., 2018). Simply put, perceived role expectations from immediate superiors and peers will also influence the salience of FLMs' HR role identity.

The theory of perceived supervisor support (Eisenberger et al., 2002) submits that individuals will reciprocate with desired work attitudes and behaviors when they perceive that their supervisors care about their well-being, appreciate their contributions, and are in general supportive. Similarly, being derived from the social exchange theory, leader-member exchange

(LMX) perspective suggests that immediate superiors who are perceived to be supportive will encourage FLMs and increase their performance (Bhanthumnavin, 2003; Wayne et al., 1997). However, LMX perspective also indicates that immediate superiors who care merely about the bottom-line outcomes but ignore FLMs' well-being would, on the other hand, demotivate FLMs and decrease their performance (Quade et al., 2020). In the similar vein, social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) demonstrates that peers or coworkers significantly influence an individual's work attitudes and behaviors because they are exposed to the same work environment and are often assigned the same tasks (Cohen & McKay, 1984; Joiner, 2007; Zhou & George, 2001). With the aim of extending the predominant investigation on the HR-related support from the top management and HR department, this paper pays particular attention to the roles HR involvement of immediate superiors and peer FLMs play in intensifying or diminishing focal FLMs' HR role identity. Remarkably, given the little research interest on the proposed relationships so far, there is also no empirical evidence provided to explore the boundary conditions that direct such effects. To fill this void, this study proposes that these relationships are conditional on immediate superiors' and peer FLMs' workplace status. This attempt is convincible because workplace status is viewed as a crucial relational attribute that determines the development of social exchange relationships (Lawler & Thye, 1999). In the process of FLMs making sense of who they are in the HR practices enactment process, high-status immediate superiors and peers are highly regarded and well accepted since they possess more task-relevant information and know-how (Groysberg et al., 2011; Jensen & Roy, 2008). As a result, FLMs will be more confident with heeding expectations of high-status immediate superiors and peers as what is required in the HR role.

Moreover, although the issue of examining FLMs' HR role identity in minimizing HR implementation gap has been acknowledged, what is curious is that deliberation on the behaviors

that FLMs demonstrate in implementing HR practices has yet to be investigated (c.f., Jackson et al., 2013; Nishii & Paluch, 2018; Pak, 2022). As discussed above, with the HR role identity being shaped, FLMs differ in the extent to the commitment to the HR duties and are discretionary to execute the espoused HR practices within their workgroups (López-Cotarelo, 2018; Pak & Kim, 2018). Although research on *why* some FLMs are more involved than others in the HR implementation has been established (e.g., capacity to manage HR duties; Bos-Nehles & Meijerink, 2018), there has been little empirical analysis of *how* FLMs are involved in the HR implementation, as well as the boundary conditions under which FLMs develop or demonstrate their ability in achieving HR goals (i.e., goal orientation, VandeWalle, 1997). Elaborating on the conceptualization of *how* and to what extent FLM engage in the HR implementation steps significantly further since it accepts that FLMs, as important HR implementers, are the major source of variance in not only the HR process (i.e., the extent of involvement) but, more importantly, the HR content (i.e., the adaptation of HR practices) of adopted HR practices (Kehoe & Han, 2020). On this matter, this thesis intends to examine the multiple forms of FLMs' HR implementation behaviors and the effect of each behavioral pattern on FLMs' HR implementation outcomes including employees' intra-team acceptance and FLMs' workplace status. Furthermore, in explaining the variance of FLMs' HR implementation behaviors, this thesis considers their goal orientations as an important motivating process which affects their decision-making on how to execute the espoused HR tasks. The major reason for respecting goal orientations as important moderating mechanisms is that goal orientations are relatively stable individual differences even though they are exposed in the same work environment and are assigned the similar tasks (Button et al., 1996; Murayama & Elliot, 2009; Pieterse et al., 2013). In this way, this research will be of benefit to advance our understanding of the nature of a FLM-induced discrepancy between

espoused and realized HR practices and examining relative effects of different implementation behaviors.

This thesis will start with the argument that FLMs' HR role identity is critical for their effective HR implementation, and that such HR role identity could be influenced by the HR involvement of immediate superiors and peer FLMs. In the present research model, immediate superiors' and peers' workplace status is considered the boundary condition in the relationships between their HR involvement and FLMs' HR role identity. Following that, this thesis will conceptualize and articulate different patterns of FLMs' HR implementation behaviors, and then identify intra-team acceptance and FLMs' workplace status as the outcomes of effective HR implementation within workgroups. In so doing, this research makes contributions to theory and practice in several ways. First, and the most importantly, it benefits the research on both HR devolution and role identity. This thesis highlights FLMs' HR role identity as a vital cognitive mechanism in the process of them making sense of the HR role. This attempt which introduces FLMs' HR role identity to the FLM literature addresses the concern regarding FLMs' self-concept tied to their HR duties. Second, this research broadens the sources of external stimulations that lead to greater role identity. It establishes HR involvement as antecedents to FLMs' HR role identity. It proposes immediate superiors and peers as significant social others whose HR involvement would have different impacts on FLMs' HR role identity. Notably, this study also aims to contribute to the discourse on FLMs' HR role identity by examining *when* and *under what conditions,* namely the boundary conditions, that limit or enhance the influences of immediate superiors and peers on FLMs' HR role identity. Third, this research contributes to the literature and practice of HR implementation by characterizing three different HR implementation patterns of FLMs, as well as goal orientations which influence their adaption of HR practices. This

supplements the extant discussion on simply FLMs' adoption or resistance of the intended HR practices.

The remainder of this thesis is structured as follows. In the following sections it discusses relevant literature that supports the development of the conceptual framework. From the latter, a theoretical model of FLMs' HR role identity is proposed and tested using empirical data. This research tests team-level hypotheses after aggregating individual responses. Moreover, it tests the potential moderating and mediating influences between these relationships. After demonstrating the results, it concludes by suggesting the theoretical and practical contributions of this research. Prospective directions for future research are then provided.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

HR Devolution and the HR Role of FLMs

There has been increasing research interest concerning HR devolution in the previous literature (e.g., Budhwar & Sparrow, 1997; Freedman, 1990; Renwick, 2003; Torrington & Hall, 1996). According to Brewster and Larsen (1992, p. 412), HR devolution refers to "the degree to which HR practice involves and gives responsibility to line managers rather than personnel specialists". Given that FLMs act as the implementer of HR practices at the level of their team, they are in a pivotal position in the HRM-performance causal chain (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007). As Storey (1989) indicated, a collective relationship between HRM and business strategy involves two developments. First, HR managers become to show more initiatives to support the strategic direction of HR in business or management activities. As a result, HR department tends to take

less responsibilities for HR practices and such responsibilities were therefore devolved to FLMs. Second, FLMs are thus given a primary responsibility for HR activities to link strategy development and human resource development closely (Brewster & Larsen, 1992). In a similar vein, Guest (1987, p. 51) also argued that "HRM is increasingly being integrated and shared with line managers". Some researchers believe that within the main areas of HRM (attracting, retaining, motivating, and developing employee), FLMs should pay attention to the collective relationship between human, financial and physical resources. It is an effective way for FLMs to achieve organizational success by allocating time, money, and energy to the development of subordinate employees rather than for human resource managers (Brewster & Larsen, 1992). Later, Budhwar and Sparrow (1997, p. 477) identified five rationales for HR devolution: 1) certain issues are too complex for top management to comprehend; 2) local managers are able to respond more quickly to local problems and conditions; 3) it leads to employees being motivated and effective control, as FLMs are in constant contact with employees; 4) it helps to prepare future managers (by allowing middle managers to practice decision-making skills); and 5) it helps to reduce costs. It is augured that people management responsibilities have been delegated to FLMs in order to achieve organizational success (Brewster & Larsen, 1992). Therefore, FLMs must be involved in HRM implementation because they are perceived to take responsible for HR practices better than HR managers in hope of the organizational and financial effectiveness.

In fact, value can only be added to other resources through incentives and commitment of labor force. The communication process can also be achieved by FLMs rather than specialist employee functions. FLMs are considered to be the represent of the management of company for most employees. In order for a more effective people management, organizations should provide these FLMs with the authority and responsibility to administrate and award their subordinates

7

(Brewster & Larsen, 1992). FLMs are considered to be increasingly important in organization's management team because they are expected to build a cooperativity effect among human, financial and physical properties through allocating time, money, and energy to the development of employees (Brewster & Larsen, 1992). FLMs' role has changed from the operational supervisor of a team to the team leadership and strategic business management. The nature of the new role can be suggested as a "mini-manager model" (Storey, 1992, p. 219), as FLMs are taking more responsibilities, more authority, higher pay and status as well as better training, and, they will be carefully selected to be qualified with improved competencies. They are also responsible for reaching the HRM goals to make sure their subordinates to demonstrate commitment, quality, flexibility and profitability (Lowe, 1992). Additionally, Legge (1989, p. 27) argued that HRM is "vested in line management as business managers responsible for co-ordinating and directing all resources in the business unit in pursuit of bottom line profits".

Some scholars have suggested in the similar way and classified five reasons for the 'failure' of devolution (e.g. Bond & Wise, 2003; Bos-Nehles, 2010): 1) FLMs lack the desire to execute HR responsibilities (Cunningham & Hyman, 1999; Harris et al., 2002; Kulik & Bainbridge, 2006); 2) FLMs lack adequate capacity to pay attention to both personnel and practical responsibilities (McGovern et al., 1997); 3) FLMs do not have the necessary HR-related competences (Hall & Torrington, 1998; Renwick, 2000); 4) FLMs need but do not have consistent support and guidance from HR managers to implement HR practices effectively (Bond & Wise, 2003; Gennard & Kelly, 1997; McConville & Holden, 1999; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003); and 5) FLMs need understandable policies and procedures regarding their HRM objectives and the way to achieve them (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; McConville, 2006). However, these reasons are basically considered by HR managers rather than by FLMs. It seems to be different when FLMs'

consideration is taken into account. FLMs are found motivated about their involvement in workplace (McConville, 2006; Nehles et al., 2006; Renwick, 2003), they are also found to need a visible general HR strategy and a clear understanding on their responsibilities and the ways of implementing them. In addition, FLMs need an accurate communication system to transmit their roles and responsibilities (Lowe, 1992; Nehles et al., 2006), otherwise they will believe that managing people is not their duty (McGovern et al., 1997).

The Role Identity Perspective

An FLM is the lowest level of the managerial staff within an organization and a manager "to whom nonmanagerial employees report" (Hales, 2005, p. 473). Under HR devolution, FLMs have more control over HR responsibilities than before (Pak & Kim, 2018; Hope-Hailey et al., 1997). Central to devolution research is the proposition that HRM will be effective when FLMs successfully communicate the organization's intentions to employees (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Guest & Bos-Nehles, 2013; Trullen et al., 2016; Van Waeyenberg & Decramer, 2018). For instance, based on the AMO framework (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Chung & Pak, 2020), scholars contended that effective HR implementation depends on FLMs' competencies, willingness to enact HR practices, and opportunities that are provided by the organization (e.g., Bos-Nehles et al., 2013; Gilbert et al., 2015; Ozcelik & Uyargil, 2015; Perry & Kulik, 2008; Van Waeyenberg & Decramer, 2018). However, even if HR practices are well designed within the organization, FLMs may still fail to take their HR role seriously (Leicester, 1989; Pak et al., 2016). Due to the conflicting priorities between daily functional roles and the newly devolved HR role, it is critical to understand FLMs' identification with the HR role, as their role perception determines how they behave (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Stets & Burke, 2000). In this light, this paper incorporates role identity theory into this inquiry of research to underscore how FLMs attribute themselves as HR

9

implementers. As such, current theorization on the FLM's HR implementation would benefit from understanding *why some FLMs believe that HR is their job while others do not*.

In the prominent acknowledgment of role identity theory, role identity refers to the self-view, or a meaning attributed to oneself regarding a particular role (Burke, 1991), to answer the questions of 'who one is' and 'what one does' (Mathias & Williams, 2017; Navis & Glynn, 2011). This theory states that individuals performing in the context of the social environment identify each other and themselves in the sense of recognizing one another as occupants of positions (i.e., roles) (Reay et al., 2017; Stets & Burke, 2000). This identification relates to meanings in the form of expectations regarding others' and one's own behaviors (Farmer et al., 2003; Stryker, 1980). In this sense, such expectations and meanings represent a collection of standards that guide behaviors (Burke, 1991; Stets & Burke, 2000). Role identity derives from both feedback about the self from social relations and related self-views, which is inherent in the literature (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Waldman et al., 2013). Therefore, self-meaning, which is developed by role identity, indicates an interpretative filter of sense-making in which necessary actions of others and oneself are harmonized to verify, support, and validate identity (Caza et al., 2018; Riley & Burke, 1995). In addition to extensive theorization, some research evidence shows that employees' role identification can be influenced by adequate supervision and harmonious coworker relations, and such identification, in turn, affects role-based behaviors (Chen & Tang, 2018).

According to Purcell and Hutchinson (2007), the fulfillment of FLMs' HR role often relies on their sense of motivation and commitment. It is therefore likely to be more discretionary than other aspects of FLM duties, especially those related to the primary task of the work unit. The extent and nature of this discretionary behavior will be influenced by the design and range of HR practices they are expected to implement. In cases where there are few formal policies, FLMs are

left more to their own devices and encouraged or discouraged by senior management. Alternatively, where an extensive range of HR policies exist and are well known, FLMs are provided with the tools, techniques, and procedures for people management. Considering that identity is a function of commitment to FLMs' pertinent HR role, it is beneficial to tie the role identity perspective to HR devolution research. In this way, the potential organizational factors that form the internalized set of role expectations of FLMs can be fully explored (Chen & Tang, 2018; Farmer et al., 2003).

Social Context and Organization-Level HR Involvement

Before introducing the conceptual framework of this study, it is necessary to claim that the research model is based on the social context theory (Ferris et al., 1998). In general, social context is a dynamic mechanism taking into account organizational culture, organizational climate, politics, and social interaction components and/or processes that foster an environmental and organizational framework to explain the effectiveness of HR practices and systems (Ozcelik & Uyargil, 2015). Among prior studies, such contextual factors and processes have been widely accepted to contribute to the effectiveness of HR systems and practices (e.g., Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Ferris et al., 1998; Sikora & Ferris, 2014). Being involved in the dynamic HR implementation process, FLMs may possess an HR role identity that is context-specific (Waldman et al., 2013). This proposition triggers two aspects of theoretical extension that can be achieved in this paper. First, with respect to the motivation of FLMs to take on their HR role, scholars have accentuated the importance of sufficient and constant HR-related support from social others (Gilbert et al., 2011; Hutchinson & Purcell, 2010; Mansour et al., 2021; Perry & Kulik, 2008; Renwick, 2003). For example, Op de Beeck et al. (2016) suggested that FLMs needed HR instruments and information (e.g., visible HR policies) provided by the HR department to advise on their HR implementation. Ozcelik and Uyargil (2015) suggested that HR-related support from top management influenced

FLMs' HR implementation effectiveness. However, these studies commonly lack an integrative perspective on the process through which group-level HR actors engage in HR implementation and stimulate FLMs' HR role perception. This argument is also germane to this research which focuses on the essential role of FLMs' perception of immediate superiors' and peers' HR involvement in the dynamic process of FLMs making sense of what is expected by the HR role (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; De Winne et al., 2013). Such perceptions of FLMs' HR role also relate to the degree to which particular aspects of role behavior are rewarded and desired by the organization (Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schneider et al., 2000; Zohar & Luria, 2005). Even so, over the course of HR implementation, different HR actors may create a different environment concerning how they expect FLMs to behave (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Stets & Burke, 2000). Thus, it becomes necessary to research how FLMs' perceptions can be construed by different social others in different ways.

Second, social context theory points out that along with support, FLMs' perceptions of their work environment also influences their experience of HR responsibility and assists FLMs through encouragement and recognition of their HR role (Joiner, 2007; Shadur et al., 1999). Scholarship on the link between HR systems and subsequent deliveries has recognized the significance of FLMs' perceptions of the work environment (i.e., organizational climate; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004, Ngo et al., 2009; Op de Beeck et al., 2016). For example, Paarlberg et al. (2008) submitted that both formal and informal aspects at work influenced FLMs' perceptions of organizational support. In this regard, there exists socially construed environment related to norms of the enactment of HR practices (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Schneider & Bowen, 2019; Zohar & Luria, 2005). It describes actor-specific interpretations or perceptions of particular HR involvement as indicators of FLMs' HR role expectations. According to the social context theory

12

(Ferris et al., 1998), such perceptions are based on context-specific interpretations as perceptions or appraisals of applicable HR involvement as information of HR role expectations (Zohar & Luria, 2005). It assumes that since FLMs face multitude HR involvements, they strive to make sense of it all by understanding discrete facilitating conditions as universal patterns indicative of HR tasks in the HR enactment process (Zohar, 2000, 2003).

The top management. In the HRM literature, the role of top management in delivering and enforcing the strategic direction of the HR function is well known (Boxall & Macky, 2007; Boxall & Purcell, 2003; Guest, 1997; Lepak & Snell, 1999; Wright et al., 1994). Top managers are regarded as the driving force for organizational behaviors and subsequent performance (Auh & Menguc, 2005; Steffensen et al., 2019). As Hutchinson and Purcell (2010) recommended, a lack of support from top management regarding recognition, role clarity, time, and realistic goals would prevent FLMs from developing necessary team leadership. Similarly, in the study of Ngo et al. (2009), top management support is found to positively impact employee market- and HR-related performance. Well-established value systems help organizations obtain employees' commitment and shape their behaviors at work. Therefore, the top management team's HR involvement acts as a focal organization-level factor influencing FLMs' HR role perceptions. This involvement includes the top management team's constant investment in HR initiatives, clear communication on HR strategies, and support to ensure the effective implementation of HR practices within the organization (Dong et al., 2009; Pak, 2016). In general, for HR implementation to be effective, FLMs should adequately understand the relationship between HRM and the strategic direction of the organization to behave as required in managing people (Thornhill & Saunders, 1998). In the process of HR implementation, top managers provide FLMs with directions and empowerment to operationalize HR strategies (Stanton et al., 2010), such as transformational leadership, through

the establishment of an organization's mission and values and high visibility to share their vision for goal achievement with other employees (Thornhill & Saunders, 1998). Moreover, top managers set up the reward and control system and clear the way for the employment relationship (Valentine et al., 2006). Research evidence has shown that FLMs' perceptions and interpretations of the espoused HR practices largely rely on the top managers' investments in HR (Arthur et al., 2016), communication about the stated values held by the organization (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Nutt & Backoff, 1997), and ongoing sponsorship for change (Kanter, 1985). The SHRM literature demonstrates that top managers' actions influence FLMs' sense-giving process since their values and beliefs influence the extent to which *intended* HR practices are actually interpreted and enacted by FLMs (Arthur et al., 2016). Similarly, in Stanton et al.'s (2010) study, a CEO's commitment to linking HR strategy with organizational strategy is regarded to lead to FLMs' better understanding of the HR process.

Motivated by the research evidence that top managers' commitment to HR implementation enables positive social relationships and dedication of FLMs (Ngo et al., 2009; Valentine et al., 2006), it is convincing that the top management team's involvement has an effect on FLMs' HR role perception by influencing their perceptions of how they should behave (Mathias & Williams, 2017). From the social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), FLMs engaging in mutual exchanges may reciprocate by being committed and showing expected attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Farndale et al., 2011; Whitener, 2001). The model of motivation, such as expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), also clarifies that the meaning of goals is necessary for fostering a shared understanding of what the organization expects to achieve. As such, goal setting ensures emphasis on shared values, raising expectations about what is desired to be accomplished and increasing commitment to improving specific work performance (Mathibe, 2008). As suggested by expectancy theory,

individuals' behaviors are a function of perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs toward the work environment and the resulting consequences of personal expectations. It mainly depends on extrinsic motivations to explain reasons for behaviors, self-concept, and the generation of feedback that matches the self-view. Specifically, it relates to the perceptions of 1) particular role performance is achievable (Karathanos et al., 1994); 2) such role performance is associated with rewards bestowed (Fudge & Schlacter, 1999); and 3) whether the reward is valuable (Fudge & Schlacter, 1999; Van Erde & Thierry, 1996). In this case, FLMs develop perceptions of HR events, practices, processes, as well as the type of attitudes and behaviors that are expected by the top management team (Ozcelik & Uyargil, 2015).

Thus, in the HR implementation process, FLMs who perceive a higher level of rewards and incentives from the top management team are more likely to repay the organization by reacting positively to the HR role expectations and attributing meanings of themselves regarding the HR role. The top management team's HR involvement makes FLMs share HR values and visions by internalizing HR role expectations and identity. As a result, FLMs adopt self-meanings and expectations that accompany the HR role (Stets & Burke, 2000). In other words, if the salience of the HR role perception is rooted in FLMs' self-cognition, they will act to fulfill the expectations of the HR role, coordinate and negotiate interaction with top managers, and control the environment to manage the resources for HR responsibilities. Consequently, they are likely to be committed to such expectations and identity and engage in HR duties.

The HR department. It is suggested that devolution strategies can be successful only when FLMs receive adequate HR-related support, encouragement, and advice from HR professionals (Perry & Kulik, 2008). The extant HR devolution literature has abundantly emphasized the importance of the HR department in developing HR practices and ensuring FLMs' willingness to

carry out HR tasks (Brewster & Söderström, 1994; Guest & Bos-Nehles, 2013; Op de Beeck et al., 2016; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007) but generally lacks attention to how the assistance from HR professionals influences how FLMs define their HR role. It is worth noting that HR professionals engage in the HR implementation process and convince FLMs to take the HR job seriously by answering their inquiries when necessary (Evans, 2017; McCullough & Sims, 2012; Trullen et al., 2016), making clear duties during implementation (Evans, 2017; Makhecha et al., 2018; McGovern et al., 1997), and providing a clear plan or road map (Gilliland & Schepers, 2003; McCullough & Sims, 2012; Mirfakhar et al., 2018). That is, the HR department's involvement indicates the extent to which the HR department coordinates HR implementation processes by assuring the quality of HR practices to be adopted and being accessible concerning HR issues that arise during the HR enactment phase (Guest & Bos-Nehles, 2013; Pak, 2016). In most cases, support from the HR department can be identified as three types: 1) expert knowledge on regulations and employment policies, 2) content-related advice and coaching, and 3) up-to-date information on changes in procedures (Gilbert et al., 2011).

It is suggested that FLMs also need HR managers to work coordinately by equipping them with sufficient HR-related knowledge and skills in addressing HR issues. Discussion of the shared HR responsibilities between HR managers and FLMs leads to the idea of an HR partnership (Hall & Torrington, 1998; Papalexandris & Panayotopoulou, 2005; Renwick, 2003; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003). In other words, FLMs and the HR department need to have a shared understanding of FLMs' HR role and responsibility (Maxwell & Watson, 2006). In the same vein, Papalexandris and Panayotopoulou (2005, p. 282) pointed to the importance of a "close collaboration" between HR and FLM in creating synergies and adding value to the HR function. HR professionals participate in FLMs' HRM implementation process by stepping in when

necessary and by coping with acute problems either proactively or reactively in response to the FLM's requests and by providing advice and administrative services to help FLMs in their HR role (Brewster & Söderström, 1994; Op de Beeck et al., 2017). Furthermore, social exchange theory suggests that if the HR department is perceived as committed to meeting customer needs, FLMs will experience a high level of affective commitment (Blau, 1964). Relatedly, the POS perspective proposes that when FLMs are provided with necessary support and resources, FLMs will react by being committed to the organization and attributing meanings of people management responsibilities to themselves (Sluss et al., 2008). This necessitates the HR department to socially develop an identity crucial for FLMs to establish a shared understanding of the meaning of the HR strategic partnership (Sheehan et al., 2016). As a result, if FLMs feel that the environment for HR implementation is in place, they will hold a higher level of intrinsic control or self-generated motivation to perform well (Chen et al., 2007; Spreitzer, 1995). Otherwise, perceptions of unfavorable environment for HR implementation may be attributed to the reluctance of HR professionals to work in partnership with FLMs.

Despite the extensive research evidence that HR professionals provide FLMs with assistance and guidance to enhance their HR-related knowledge, skills, and abilities to efficiently implement HR practices (Cunningham & Hyman, 1999; Harris et al., 2002; McGovern et al., 1997; Trullen et al., 2016; Woodrow & Guest, 2014), it is recognized that the extent to which FLMs enact HR practices as expected may also depend on how they utilize the resources provided by HR professionals and incorporate the incentives into their self-definition (Waldman et al., 2013). In this sense, the HR department's involvement may impact FLMs' perception of the HR role. Embedded in this view is the assumption that resources provided by HR professionals should be associated with not only incentives but also cognitive implications that derive from FLMs'

development and integration of the HR role perception (Terry & Hogg, 1996). In this light, HR professionals take part in the HR implementation process by specifying the meanings of HR responsibility. Moreover, the extent to which FLMs attach these meanings to their self-concept plays a vital role in guiding their HR implementation (DeRue et al., 2009).

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Antecedents to FLMs' HR role identity

3.1. Immediate Superior's HR Involvement

In contrast to mounting evidence on the organization-level HR involvement from top managers or HR professionals, there is much less information about how managers at lower hierarchical levels (i.e., FLMs' immediate superiors) are involved in actual HR implementation processes and then influence FLMs' HR implementation. With a few exceptions, scholars advocate that support received from FLMs' own supervisors motivate FLMs and enhance their performance by managing resources and providing information on their expectations regarding FLMs' HR role (Bhanthumnavin, 2003; Lankau et al., 2006; Op de Beeck et al., 2018). Even so, this stream of research has relied largely on the social exchange perspective – including perceived supervisor support and LMX – to establish that perceptions of supervisor support promoted employee attitudinal and behavioral reactions (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 2002; Wayne et al., 1997), while overlooked how such social interactions could influence FLMs' internalization of their HR responsibility. To address this issue, this research supplements traditional theorization of supervisor support by proposing HR role identity as the outcome of FLMs' perceived HR involvement of their immediate superiors. As mentioned earlier, FLMs' HR role identity stems

from their recognition of HR role expectations (Riley & Burke, 1995). Prior studies on organizational role theory have advocated that organizations are systems of roles whereby a role is defined as comprising a range of expectations relative to the incumbent's position within the organization (Biddle, 1986; Katz & Kahn, 1978). This position involves interactions with people occupying other related positions who define behavior expectations for the role holder and are referred to as 'role partners' (Merton, 1968). Namely, individuals' role identity can be stimulated by the context, depending on specific relationships formed between them and other role partners (Waldman et al., 2013).

This research regards the immediate superior as one of the most important sources of social influence and job-related attitudes in the workplace for two main reasons (Potipiroon & Ford, 2019). On the one hand, because immediate superiors are the closest link between FLMs and the organization, they have a direct obligation to lead, assess, and encourage FLMs. Considering their formal power, authorized control over organizational resources, and routine communication with FLMs, immediate superiors can provide FLMs with emotional and instrumental support which can relieve job-related demands (Kossek et al., 2011). Namely, immediate superiors can provide FLMs with HR-related orientation in the process of HR implementation. On the other hand, immediate superiors themselves act as one of the most important sources of work stressors that threaten FLMs' commitment with the HR role (Duffy et al., 2002). When immediate superiors pay more attention to pursuing bottom-line outcomes (e.g., profits or losses, as of a business) regardless of other seemingly important goals, they are viewed to be having a bottom-line mentality (BLM, Greenbaum et al. 2012). In the daily interactions with immediate superiors, FLMs may attribute immediate superiors' BLM as the intent of the organization and then devalue the HR role. In what follows, this research examines immediate superiors' HR orientation and BLM as different types

of HR involvement to articulate both the positive and negative effects of their HR involvement on FLMs' HR role identity.

Immediate Superior's HR Orientation

Social support theory suggests that supervisors play a critical role in offering social support at the workplace, with vital impacts on their subordinates' commitment to work (Chen et al., 2007). However, the extant discourse on supervisor support focuses more on employees' attitudinal outcomes, such as turnover intention and job satisfaction (e.g., Kalliath & Beck, 2001; Yoon & Thye, 2000), therefore lacking an extended focus on the interactions between FLMs and their immediate superiors. During the HR implementation process, immediate superiors have direct responsibilities for overseeing, evaluating, and supporting FLMs on the daily HR tasks. According to the LMX perspective, the quality of the relationship between FLMs and their immediate superiors indicates superiors' expectations of FLMs' behaviors with the provision of challenging tasks, feedback, and training (Dawley et al., 2008; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001). As such, immediate superiors' HR involvement might influence how FLMs perceive their HR role with meanings attributed and how they react. Specifically, this research develops the concept of immediate superiors' HR orientation (MHRO). It is defined as FLMs' perceptions of their own immediate superior's public approval and authorization of HR implementation to set priorities and allocate resources in the context of daily HR routines (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Wooldridge et al., 2008). In line with the theory of role dynamics (Kahn et al., 1964), the recognition of interactions between FLMs and their immediate superiors is viewed as an interpersonal factor that enriches FLMs' perceptions of being supported in their HR role (McConville, 2006).

It is suggested that knowing immediate superiors' expectations helps FLMs meet these expectations and guarantees that they are globally accepted as HR implementers. Perceived supervisor support is critical in explaining one's perception and commitment to the work role (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2012; Eisenberger et al., 2002; Kalliath & Beck, 2001). According to this theory, immediate superiors are responsible for advising on their management routines (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Perceived supervisor support, in this case, refers to the extent to which FLMs form impressions that their immediate superiors care about their well-being, value their contributions and are generally supportive. Immediate superiors who are viewed to foster an instructive climate are likely to increase FLMs' affective commitment to HR work (Dawley et al., 2008). In line with organizational support theory, the actions of immediate superiors present the intent of HR strategies (Levinson, 1965) and shape FLMs' perceptions of HR practices (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010). When the immediate superior offers resources and instructions in a way that is believed to be beneficial and equitable, FLMs will perceive a positive relationship and reciprocate through advanced effort and commitment to HR duties (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Sluss et al., 2008).

Additionally, immediate superiors are recognized as a supportive resource for FLMs concerning day-to-day employee coaching and managerial activities (Wooldridge et al., 2008) so that immediate superiors provide FLMs with information and clarification on their HR role expectations (Lankau et al., 2006). Rooted in the social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), LMX also suggests that positive exchange relationships will not only increase one's propensity to reciprocate effort but also increase one's self-worth and enhance one's identity (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). If an immediate superior shows more HR orientation, a high-quality exchange relationship occurs between them and FLMs. Consequently, FLMs are more

likely to reciprocate with positive work attitudes (Ilies et al., 2007). Moreover, perceived respect and relative status authorize FLMs to have a sense of supremacy and a positive self-concept within their workgroups. Consequently, feelings of self-worth and self-esteem are likely to boost self-enhancement, thereby increasing the FLM's role identity. In other words, their perceptions of being valued and recognized by their immediate superiors will heighten their self-enhancement and leave them more likely to identify their HR role. In contrast, FLMs who perceive a low level of MHRO tend to have an impression that they are not valued or trusted to take on HR duties. Thus, FLMs' identification with the HR role will dwindle (Zhao et al., 2019). Thus, this thesis hypothesizes as follow:

H1a: Immediate superiors' HR orientation is positively related to FLM's HR role identity.

Immediate Superior's Bottom-Line Mentality

As opposed to HR orientation, immediate superiors' HR involvement may be dysfunctional on occasion. When FLMs observe that their immediate superiors prioritize a unidimensional focus on bottom-line outcomes rather than HRM, their perception of immediate superiors' BLM may emerge (Eissa et al., 2019). Although studying supervisor BLM has become increasingly popular in the organizational behavior domain over the past decade, it remains unclear how supervisors' BLM works in the process of FLMs' HR implementation. As suggested by social information processing theory, FLMs will adapt their perceptions and interpretations of the HR implementation environment constructed by their immediate superiors. In response, FLMs may exhibit commensurate HR role identity and adjust the way they function (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Thus, the unexposed relationship between immediate superiors' BLM and FLMs' HR role identity becomes pressing.

According to Greenbaum et al. (2012), immediate superiors' BLM in this research refers to their "one-dimensional thinking that revolves around securing bottom-line outcomes to the neglect of competing priorities" (p. 344). In the eyes of FLMs, immediate superiors who hold a BLM are likely to deliver the implicit information to them that the organization cares merely about the bottom-line outcomes and task performance instead of other organizational interests such as HRM and employee well-being (Mawritz et al., 2017). Indeed, the current discussion of BLM is contradictive. Many scholars have concurred its *dark* impacts on organizational functioning (e.g., Bonner et al., 2017; Greenbaum et al., 2012; Mawritz et al., 2017), while others have recently called for a balanced view and discovered its *bright effect* on employee task performance and unethical pro-organizational behavior (e.g., Babalola et al., 2021). However, this research suggests that even though this newly developed concept has received increasing research attention, it still deserves further application in the FLM scholarship. Indeed, pioneering studies on supervisor BLM has largely emphasized its impact on employee work behaviors such as social undermining (Greenbaum et al., 2012) and unethical pro-organizational behavior (Babalola et al., 2021). However, they have neglected the examination of its influences on lower-level managers' (i.e., FLMs') sense-making mechanism regarding their managerial responsibility.

As per social information processing theory, FLMs pursue and operate cues from social context to construe reality and develop their opinions, attitudes, and intentions (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Given that immediate superior is one of the most significant social others with the closest contact with FLMs in the daily work (Lau & Liden, 2008), immediate superiors' attitudes and beliefs toward different organizational priorities will signal the desired norms and behaviors within the organization. As a result, FLMs will perceive applicable HR role expectations when enacting HR practices within workgroups. Moreover, FLMs' perception of their immediate superiors' BLM

indicates resource scarcity in the HR implementation process, meaning that FLMs are not provided with enough support and daily instruction to meet their HR role expectations. From the role identity standpoint, assuming a particular role means striving to meet the expectations of that given role (Callero, 1985). Thus, immediate superiors' HR involvement can exert a bearing on how FLMs view themselves (Bonner et al., 2017). Immediate superiors with high level of BLM transmit their thinking to FLMs that HRM is not valued within the organization. As a result, FLMs may not view themselves as someone who has HR responsibilities. Hence, this thesis proposes the following hypothesis:

H1b: Immediate superiors' bottom-line mentality is negatively related to FLM's HR role identity.

3.2. Peer FLMs' HR Involvement

To state the rather obvious, peers or coworkers working in the same division with FLMs can be considered another important HR actor involved in HR implementation processes (Op de Beeck et al., 2018; Zhou & George, 2001). As per the social influence perspective, behaviors of peers indicate workplace norms and perceptions of adequate behavior (Kankanhalli et al., 2005; Quigley et al., 2007). Individuals' behaviors are influenced by others' actions, since they want to follow behaviors that are considered as favorable, based on the actions of others in their work environment (Boh & Wong, 2015). Even though previous studies have mentioned that peers' support helps FLMs achieve effective HR implementation (e.g., Op de Beeck et al., 2017, 2018), their propositions are oversimplified because the mechanism by which peers affect FLMs' HR enactment has not been established. This thesis aims to fill this gap by proposing that, within the same work unit or division, peers' HR involvement influences FLMs' HR role identity by communicating and being a referent for the actions of other FLMs (Amabile et al., 1996; Farmer

et al., 2003; Madjar et al., 2002; Zhou & George, 2001). Given that FLMs interact with peers on a daily basis, they are likely to form shared patterns of understanding and norms of behavior, thereby allowing the opportunity for a shared climate to grow (Anderson & West, 1998). With the shared perception of HR implementation that exists between groups, FLMs attach their self-concept regarding the HR role and adjust their self-expectations about the level of HR behavior they ought to achieve at work (Carmeli & Schaubroeck, 2007).

In examining peers' HR involvement in affecting FLMs' HR role identity, two aspects of consideration may shed some light on this important question. First, previous research suggests that individuals' role identity is enhanced by coworkers' expectations because they provided focal employees with role-related encouragement, support, open communication, and informational feedback (Farmer et al., 2003). Based on normative reference group theory (Kelley, 1952; Merton & Merton, 1968), normative expectations drive individuals' motivations toward creativity (e.g., Carmeli & Schaubroeck, 2007; Farmer et al., 2003) and innovation (e.g., Jaussi & Dionne, 2003; Scott & Bruce, 1994; Shin & Zhou, 2003). Here, this research applies this stance to FLMs' HR implementation context and establishes that peer FLMs would provide normative expectations or references for HR practice enactment, influencing focal FLMs' perceptions of the HR role. Second, it is possible that not every peer FLM can enact their HR duties in a desired way. Peers may be perceived to respond to the HR responsibility indicating their beliefs that the HR strategies lack integrity, as well as their likelihood to disparaging and critical HR implementation behaviors that are aligned with these beliefs (Dean et al., 1998; Naus et al., 2007). In this light, FLMs view their peers as holding the cynicism about HR, and then their HR role identity may decrease. Therefore, this research includes both peers' HR implementation and their cynicism about HR as distinct patterns of HR involvement to articulate both sides of peers' HR involvement.

Peer FLMs' HR Implementation

According to Zhou and George (2001), peers provide FLMs with assistance through sharing knowledge and expertise or offering encouragement and support; however, more importantly, this research proposes that peer FLMs may be a reference point through which an FLM determines the level of commitment to the HR duty. Consequently, peer support promotes FLMs' effective HR implementation. However, the existing literature on first-line management omits attention to investigating how peers' implementation influences FLMs' perception and the identification of their HR role. This thesis conceives that peer FLMs' HR implementation, being perceived as a general HR implementation environment by focal FLMs, influences FLMs' HR role identity. This is consistent with research evidence on role identity, arguing that peers are another social context factor that is likely to form individuals' role identity (e.g., Farmer et al., 2003). Namely, peer FLMs shape an FLM's perception of the extent to which other FLMs allocate their time and effort to HR activities (Carmeli & Schaubroeck, 2007). According to peer support theory, people offer and receive help based on shared understanding, respect, and mutual empowerment between them and peers in similar situations (Repper et al., 2013). Recent studies also suggest that peers influence one's work behavior through open communication and informational feedback (Amabile et al., 1996; Madjar et al., 2002; Zhou & George, 2001). Without support from peers on the key issues, FLMs may suffer from decision paralysis, missed opportunities, or implementation failures (Enns & McFarlin, 2003).

Central to role-sending and receiving theories is the lateral social influence on an individual's role perception (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008; Katz & Kahn, 1978). Considering that routine interactions can shape a sense of identity among people (Oyserman & Packer, 1996), peers are potentially a salient referent for the HR role expectations that inform FLMs' sense of HR role

identity (Farmer et al., 2003; Mirabeau & Maguire, 2014; Riley & Burke, 1995). Because peers are regarded as role senders (Van Sell et al., 1981) and members of a given FLM's role set (Katz & Kahn, 1978), they may influence FLMs' perceptions of the HR role by diminishing the uncertainty experienced about behavioral expectations (Bales, 1950), the pressures associated with conflicting tasks (Kahn et al., 1964), and role overload due to their abilities, time, and organizational constraints (Rizzo et al., 1970). Thus, peers' HR implementation may enhance FLMs' identification with the HR role because they provide information on how to internalize or externalize the main components of the HR job, thereby increasing FLMs' self-attachment and deepening their commitment to the HR role (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). From the role identity point of view, it is known that FLMs share the understanding of the meanings of HR implementation behavior. These shared meanings help define or identify themselves through coordinated interaction (Riley & Burke, 1995). This interaction simultaneously accomplishes the HR goals among different groups and maintains the FLMs' HR identity. Furthermore, individuals develop coworker identification based on the degree to which they define themselves for a particular role relationship with other people in the workplace (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). In the organizational context, coworker identification can result in role-focused normative expectations of behaviors when considering their peers to help them fulfill the task and psychosocial needs (Sluss & Ashforth, 2008). If FLMs experience a more robust environment for HR implementation, the self-concept about the HR role increases by the characteristics of the situation so that the HR role requirements and their HR role enactment will be consistent. As a result, FLMs perceiving that their peers expect them to enforce HR practices may be likely to define themselves as HR implementers, and their HR role identity will be enhanced (Farmer et al., 2003). For these reasons, this thesis suggests the following hypothesis:

H2a: Peer FLMs' HR implementation is positively related to FLMs' HR role identity.

Peer FLMs' Cynicism about HR

While some FLMs are committed to implementing HR practices within their workgroups as intended, others may not. Despite the understanding that peer FLMs provide FLMs with HR-related assistance over the phase of HR practices enactment, it is not inconvincible that peers may also hold negative attitudes toward their HR duties. Indeed, the unwillingness or resistance of FLMs to implement HR practices has long been recognized since the emergence of HR devolution (e.g., Harris et al., 2002; Nehles et al., 2006). Previous scholarship has mostly ascribed these impediments to contextual factors such as the lack of desire, capacity, and organizational support available to FLMs (e.g., McGovern et al., 1997; Renwick, 2000; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003), while overlooked FLMs' cynical attitude toward their HR role. This research acknowledges that FLMs have their own expectations of their HR job, they will continue performing well and accept the HR responsibilities as long as they are satisfied (Acaray & Yildirim, 2017; Nelson & Quick, 2001). When FLMs perceive that the HR system is short of integrity, benevolence, motives, and reasons for change, they will have cynical attitudes (Qian & Daniels, 2008) and they are likely to demonstrate poor HR implementation performance (Acaray & Yildirim, 2017). For this reason, this research introduces FLMs' cynicism about HR into the FLM's HR implementation literature with the aim of a balanced view on how FLMs may think of their HR responsibilities devolved to them. Here, peer FLMs' cynicism about HR pertains to peer FLMs' general disbelief of the organization's stated or implied motives for HR practices (Stanley et al., 2005).

From the social interaction perspective (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994), FLMs within the same divisions develop shared job attitudes (Gutek & Winter, 1992; Judge & Hulin, 1993; Watson & Slack, 1993) and collective sensemaking about the implementation of HR practices (Nishii &

Wright, 2007). Therefore, these negative beliefs about the HRM held by a cynical peer affect the assessment FLMs make about the HRM intentions (Brandes & Das, 2006; Hewett et al., 2019). Drawing on the role identity perspective, meeting job requirements is fundamental for individuals to claim an identity regarding the particular role (Welbourne et al., 1998). Peer is a key source of FLMs' self-concept through reflexivity, or seeing themselves through normative expectations (Farmer et al., 2003). Peers' negative beliefs about the intentions of HR practices will send information to FLMs indicating the doubt about integrity, motives, and reasons for introducing particular HR practices within their workgroups (Brown & Cregan, 2008). As a consequence, FLMs who perceive their peers to be cynical about HR will evaluate HR practices as lack of motives or being incompetent to achieve the HR goals (Wanous et al., 2000), and they will respond negatively to meet their HR role expectations. For these reasons, this thesis hypothesizes as follow:

H2b: Peer FLMs' cynicism about HR is negatively related to FLMs' HR role identity.

3.3. The Moderating Effects of Workplace Status

It is now well established that FLMs' HR role identity might be enhanced or diminished by their perceptions of immediate superiors' and peers' HR involvement. However, an important question that remains is whether the relationships between different types of HR involvement and FLMs' HR role identity could be impacted by immediate superiors' or peers' distinct workplace status. Answering this question requires identifying the conditions under which the abovementioned HR involvements are more or less likely to be validated through the relational natures of immediate superiors and peers in social exchange relationships (Lawler & Thye, 1999; Rhee & Choi, 2017). Despite their formal HR involvement, research has suggested that supervisors' and peers' status in the workplace may vary noticeably, for example, because of differences in pertinent tasks, competence, work experience, and/or team or organizational tenure (Djurdjevic et

29

al., 2017; Sauer, 2011). For this reason, the current research isolates workplace status as a critical boundary condition. It proposes that the relationships between immediate superiors' and/or peers' HR involvement and FLMs' HR role identity are stronger for immediate superiors and/or peers with high than low workplace status within their organization.

To begin with, immediate superiors' or peers' workplace status in this research is defined as their relative standing in an organization, reflected in the respect, prestige, and prominence perceived by FLMs (Djurdjevic et al., 2017). Generally, high workplace status demonstrates a favorable organizational identity, reflecting the recognition for individuals' ability and the expectations for their behavior (Lount et al., 2019). Furthermore, workplace status can strengthen how people view others' ability which further affects their own internal belief systems (Yang et al., 2021). Workplace status is also attributed to someone who can reinforce team performance by dedicating his/her own work-relevant resources to others (Anderson & Kennedy, 2012). In the HRM scholarship, it has been suggested that individuals who enjoy greater status have access to HR practices that spur on learning and development opportunities (Lepak & Snell, 2002). However, there is limited research on the important role the workplace status plays in the FLMs' HR implementation context. According to the symbolic interactionist perspective, individuals make sense of whom they are in the process of interacting with others (Djurdjevic et al., 2017). Thus, workplace status especially fits in this research context since it affects social exchanges by affirming FLMs' trust and comfort in establishing social relationships in their favor based on the distinct resources immediate superiors or peers have (Lawler & Thye, 1999; Rhee & Choi, 2017).

First, this thesis anticipates that immediate superiors' workplace status intensifies the positive effect of their HR orientation on FLMs' HR role identity. Since immediate superiors who possess high status may be perceived to have more privileges, their attitudes may be felt more

strongly among FLMs. As maintained by Aquino and colleagues (2004), individuals with higher status are provided with resources to maintain their status such as challenging tasks, access to achievements (e.g., pay and promotion opportunities), social recognition, and highly regarded job titles (Potipiroon & Ford, 2019). Immediate superiors with greater workplace status are viewed to possess more expected ability and prominence in the organization. Directly applying key tenets of social learning theory, this thesis argues that an immediate superior's high status in the organization is likely to lead FLMs to deduce that his or her behaviors have been previously successful and rewarded, consequently elevating the *following desirability* related to such actions (Afota et al., 2019; see also Weiss, 1977). As explained previously, immediate superiors' HR orientation associates with FLMs' perceptions that their superior encourages and corroborates their HR implementation. On this regard, a high-status immediate superior can easily facilitate the development of formal plans and procedures and emphasize the importance of carrying out HR duties for the workgroup's HR goal accomplishment (c.f., Judge et al., 2004), which finally enhances FLMs' HR role identity because immediate superiors with higher workplace status hold more trust among FLMs.

Conversely, social learning theory recommends that the absence of prestige and respect that goes along with low workplace status signals to FLMs that their immediate superiors' behaviors are not expected with little reward and benefits to the organization and are less helpful to create a conducive environment for HR implementation, such that a low-status immediate superior is less suitable as a HRM role model (Afota et al., 2019; Weiss, 1977). On this regard, this research argues that HR orientation emanating from an immediate superior with lower workplace status has little bearing for FLMs' HR role identity. Such supervisory effort is unexpected, then, to manifest representative for the HRM-related behaviors that provide strong

31

instructive value and that are desired to be successful in the organization (Weiss, 1977). Accordingly, rather than attaching their immediate superiors' HR orientation as HR role expectations, FLMs may turn to other benchmarks for their HR implementation (Briker et al., 2021). If so, immediate superiors' workplace status exerts little impacts on the relationship between their HR orientation and FLMs' HR role identity.

In the same vein, this research expects the negative relationship between immediate superiors' BLM and FLMs' HR role identity to be pronounced for high-status superiors. Although this research has established that perceptions of immediate superiors' BLM will reduce FLMs' HR role identity due to the lack of attention paid to HRM, it does not expect this to be true of all superiors. That said, the current study predicts immediate superiors with greater workplace status to overtly affect the way FLMs respond to their superiors' BLM and to develop their HR role identity. FLMs will make sense of high-status immediate superiors' BLM as the intent of organizational strategies as well as HRM goals. Hence, those superiors high in workplace status will convey information to FLMs that the organization cares merely about costs and productivity (i.e., BLM) but neglects employee development (Mawritz et al., 2017). As such, high-status immediate superiors may expedite FLMs' sense making process in which the HR job is meaningless, and this strengthens the negative effect of superiors' BLM on FLMs' HR role identity. By contrast, immediate superiors with low workplace status are perceived by FLMs to provide no valuable information to the team performance, and they are less likely to be their role model. In other words, even though FLMs perceive that their immediate superior holds BLM and is reluctant to favor their HR practice enactment, they will not regard this low-status immediate superior as a representative of the organization since he/she is not socially respected. As a result, FLMs may not choose to imitate their superiors' BLM behaviors, such that the negative effect of superiors'

BLM on FLMs' HR role identity will be weakened. Altogether, this thesis proposes the following hypotheses:

H1c: Immediate superiors' workplace status moderates the effect of their HR orientation (H1a) on FLMs' HR role identity such that the effect is stronger among that with higher status than among that with lower status.

H1d: Immediate superiors' workplace status moderates the effect of their BLM (H1b) on FLMs' HR role identity such that the effect is stronger among that with higher status than among that with lower status.

Similarly, this research expects that the effects of peers' HR involvement on FLMs' HR role identity will be strengthened when FLMs view their peers as having greater workplace status. Compared with immediate superiors' social status within an organization, peers' workplace status has received less to no research attention to date. This thesis calls for research focus on peers' workplace status in examining the influence of social others (i.e., peers' HR involvement) on FLMs' HR role perception. The newly devolved HR tasks may involve challenging, interesting, and varying assignments that require higher levels of work interdependency between FLMs and peers (Schieman, 2006). Peers with higher workplace status are generally endowed with more trust and enjoy more job autonomy and non-routine tasks than those with lower workplace status. Accordingly, the potential for high-status peer involvement to affect FLMs' commitment and identification with the HR role may be particularly great.

On the one hand, this research proposes that peers' high workplace status may enhance the positive relationship between their HR implementation behavior and FLMs' HR role identity. Social learning theory suggests (Bandura, 1977) that, to reduce uncertainty, FLMs who are assigned with HR responsibilities tend to look for high-status peers as a possible reference and to

emulate their behaviors to behave in ways that are developmental and beneficial (Briker et al., 2021). Peers' high workplace status will indicate that their HR implementation behaviors have been expected in achieving their teams' HR goals, therefore promoting the appeal of emulating those behaviors by FLMs (Afota et al., 2019; Briker et al., 2021). Thus, the extent to which a high-status peer exhibits HR implementation would convey defined "standards of conduct" (Bandura, 1977, p. 42) in terms of HRM, explicating whether FLMs' HR enactment is in demand, normative, and instrumental in achieving the HR goals in the team (Briker et al., 2021). In consequence, the potential for high-status peers' HR implementation to impact the motivation and HR role identity of FLMs may be especially stronger (Basford & Offermann, 2012). Moreover, social comparison theory notes that because peers are at the same hierarchy level with FLMs, they are able to directly influence FLMs' HR-related behaviors through sharing their personal experiences and expertise (Op de Beeck et al., 2018). As a result, if the peer FLM is perceived as having high workplace status and as socially accepted, they will convince FLMs that they have the same HR role responsibilities, and they are expected to promote HR enactment. On the contrary, peers with lower workplace status may inform FLMs that peers' HR implementation behavior is rarely encouraged and trusted. Such behaviors are, therefore, unlikely to appear representative for the types of actions that provide strong normative value and that are required to be successful in carrying out HR duties (Weiss, 1977). This study establishes that low workplace status of peers will mitigate the influences of their HR implementation on FLMs' HR role identity.

On the other, this study anticipates that due to peers' cynical attitude toward HRM, their workplace status may also have an overt effect on FLMs' perception of their HR work. Peers' cynicism about HR communicates to FLMs that the organization's HR strategies lack rationales or motivations, thus adding little to no value to the organizational effectiveness (Stanley et al.,

2005). Given that peers create normative climate for HR implementation within the division, FLMs and peers are likely to share the same perceptions of the HR policies (Nishii & Wright, 2007; Watson & Slack, 1993). Consequently, high-status peers may make such shared perceptions stronger because they generally hold more trust in the workplace and their behaviors may be regarded as more convincible. On the contrary, because of low-status peers' precarious standing in the organization, it is unlikely that these peer FLMs will forcefully define their teams' goals or direct followers' task execution (Briker et al., 2021). In this case, even though peers are cynical about HRM and might be reluctant to execute HR duties, they are possibly to be observed as lacking HR-related competence or expertise. Therefore, rather than imitating their peers' attitudes and behaviors in the HR implementation, FLMs may consider their cynical attitude as less helpful and will give up from attaching those peers' expectations as their self-concept. Overall, this study suggests that lower peer workplace status may weaken the negative relationship between a peer's cynicism about HR and FLMs' HR role identity. Hence, this thesis develops the hypotheses below:

H2c: Peer FLMs' workplace status moderates the effect of their HR implementation (H2a) on FLMs' HR role identity such that the effect is stronger among that with higher status than among that with lower status.

H2d: Peer FLMs' workplace status moderates the effect of their cynicism about HR (H2b) on FLMs' HR role identity such that the effect is stronger among that with higher status than among that with lower status.

Outcomes of FLMs' HR Role Identity

3.4. FLMs' HR Implementation Behaviors

Having discussed immediate superiors and peers as significant social others who can influence FLMs' HR role identity, this research continues to pay attention to the outcomes of FLMs' HR role identity by suggesting three different behavioral patterns of implementing HR practices. Before specifying distinct HR implementation patterns, this thesis acknowledges that FLMs' resistance to implement HR practices exceeds the scope of this research. The first reason is that, even though it is widely recognized that FLMs may restrain the implementation of a certain HR practices, they are still in a lower-level of managerial position to carry out rules and procedures enforced by a higher authority such as the HR department (Pak et al., 2016). For this reason, FLMs are left with no more choices but to enact the HR practices. Thus, resistance to HR implementation becomes unrealistic, or at least, infrequent. Second, this research is designed to explore how FLMs' HR role identity prompts distinct behavioral patterns and how these patterns differentially influence HRM-induced team outcomes. In this sense, FLMs' resistance makes no sense to propose pertinent hypotheses. Besides, this research proposes that the extent of FLMs' involvement depends on their attributions of the nature of particular HR practices. For instance, recruitment and compensation strategies often have to be compatible with the organizational principles so that FLMs' discretions on such practices may be limited. However, performance evaluations and participatory practices are often adjustable based on the specific situations, indicating more autonomy given to FLMs (Scott et al., 2009). However, this thesis posits that FLMs take conscious control over appropriate behaviors in their HR implementation processes (Caza, 2011).

To begin with, FLMs' HR implementation of adopted HR practices in this research refers to an FLM's means of delivering HR messages, following prescribed HR procedures, and espoused features of adopted HR practices in the workgroup (Pak & Kim, 2018). This thesis predicts that

FLMs may make sense of espoused HR tasks subject to their workgroups before making decision on how they would carry them out. Such cognitive evaluations could considerably influence the *modus operandi* of adopted HR systems (Kurdi-Nakra et al., 2022; López-Cotarelo, 2018). Extant literature has provided theoretical rationales for this assumption. On the one hand, FLMs may evaluate the compatibility between HR practices and HR system process. If the HR practices are observed as a working system which is *'interrelated and internally consistent'*, such HR practices are unique and synergistic (MacDuffie, 1995, p. 198). Therefore, espoused HR practices are viewed to be aligned with the workgroup's ongoing needs and work processes. FLMs' understanding of the salience of the HR role guides their motivational significance (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989; Pak et al., 2016) because fulfilling the espoused HR role expectations is believed to improve performance of their workgroups (Triandis, 1980). According to Bowen and Ostroff (2004), desired behaviors can be encouraged when individuals assume that the environment is beneficial for their goal achievement. On this premise, FLMs may not give credit to the HR practices which are perceived to be useless to their group outcomes (Guest & Bos-Nehles, 2013). On the other hand, FLMs may evaluate whether the attributes of HR practices match their own values and beliefs. Given that people are generally attracted by the events and interests which are aligned with their value set, while showing resistance to what is not (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). In this case, FLMs are more likely to approach the behavioral patterns according to their values, and thus deciding to execute the HR tasks in a more compatible manner.

This thesis argues that FLMs may choose to enact adopted HR practices, following the stipulated rules and procedures when they attribute that the intentions of such HR practices match their values and the work systems. This particular pattern of HR implementation behavior is defined as strict implementation. In contrast with HR involvement which lacks directional

37

properties, strict implementation particularly explains the enactment behavior that is aligned with what is written in instruction manuals (c.f., Pak & Kim, 2018). However, it is possible that FLMs may perceive incompatibility between the enforced HR practices and the situations in their workgroups. In such cases, they may decide to adapt such HR practices to achieve HR goals. As per the theory of cognitive dissonance, individuals experience psychological tensions when faced with contradictory information about their beliefs, values, and events in their surroundings. In mitigating these psychological tensions, people are likely to either make changes to their cognition or approach the environment they are more comfortable with (Festinger, 1957; Festinger, 1962). As mentioned earlier, FLMs who choose to strictly implement the HR practices will reduce the cognitive stress because they are able to change their cognitions and accept the situations. Otherwise, FLMs may justify their cognition by adjusting their behaviors according to the situations or their existing beliefs. In such cases, FLMs may take the former behavioral pattern as externally *adaptive implementation* (i.e., FLMs' adaptation of HR practices to suit the local task environment) and the latter *internally adaptive implementation* (i.e., FLMs' adaptation of HR practices to meet their own interests).

Despite the above conceptualization of different HR implementation patterns of FLMs, the important legacy in the current literature is how each of these behaviors of HR implementation patterns can be induced by FLMs' HR role identity. To address this concern, this research proposes that FLMs' HR role identity causes different FLMs' HR implementation patterns depending on the extent to which FLMs adapt their HR implementation behaviors to distinct situations. The central argument here is that the salience of identity affects FLMs' self-cognition to behave in a way that matches the HR role expectation (Chen & Tang, 2018). The self-concept embedded in the HR role is essentially an interpretive process concerning the meanings that HR implementation

behaviors have for FLMs (Scott, 2013; Wells, 1978). FLMs' role identity can motivate their HR role behavior because the enactment of the HR role fulfills a crucial expectation of self-verification and allows relevant others to identify and categorize a given FLM. These expectations and beliefs shape a set of standards that guide FLMs' behaviors to enact espoused HR practices (Burke, 1991). Suppose FLMs discern a context as unacceptable to enforce HR practices, in that case, they will form the opinion that HR implementation could expose them to feedback indicating that "who they are is not relevant or valued" (Farmer et al., 2003, p. 621). Conversely, FLMs with low HR role identity have no self-confidence in implementing HR practices, so they are less concerned about whether their organizations respect HR implementation. That is, when FLMs perceive the HR role identity as salient to them, they will develop commitment and embrace related behaviors to reflect role support and strengthen role identity in a feedback loop process (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Otherwise, FLMs may avoid engaging in HR practice enactment if they predict a negative response to their HR enactment (Farmer et al., 2003).

Because the salience of role identity is viewed as a predictor of behavior (Callero, 1985; Stryker & Burke, 2000), central FLMs' HR role identity indicates that their behavior is aligned with that of HR identity (Charng et al., 1988; Stryker, 1980). Furthermore, since FLMs with strong HR role identity are likely to personalize contextual feedback about the meaningfulness of the HR duty, they are susceptible to the perceived reception of their HR implementation responsibility. The deduced uncertainty entails the potential loss of tangible rewards and a sense of identity. From the sense-making point of view, FLMs' decision to engage in HR responsibilities is preceded by their interpretations of a reasonable response regarding such HR implementation (Drazin et al., 1999). For example, FLMs with higher role identity may choose to fully engage, using all of their HR-related abilities to enforce HR practices strictly without consideration of particular work

environment (i.e., strict implementation). Otherwise, they may predict alternative behaviors such as adapting their HR implementation to external work environment (i.e., externally adaptive implementation) or to their personal values and work styles (i.e., internally adaptive implementation). In each way, FLMs are able to internalize their self-concept to the deductive responses. Therefore, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

H3: FLM's HR role identity is positively related to their strict implementation, externally adaptive implementation, and internally adaptive implementation of espoused HR practices.

3.5. The Moderating Effects of Goal Orientations

For a more extensive understanding of the relationships between FLMs' HR role identity and their HR implementation behavioral patterns, this research proposes FLMs' goal orientations as boundary conditions which help articulate *when and in what situations* FLMs will behave in particular ways. This seems an unexplored but critical area of inquiry because even though FLMs in the same work unit are assigned the same HR role, they may be different in their intrinsic motivational processes, and thus, they may take on distinct responses across contexts (Button et al., 1996; Murayama & Elliot, 2009; Kim et al., 2018; Payne et al., 2007). Thus, drawing on the goal orientation perspective will add to our knowledge in that FLMs' propensity to develop or validate their HR-related ability in achieving the HR role. In general, goal orientations deliberate on individuals' desire in achievement situations that influence their behaviors and responses (Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Moon et al., 2012; VandeWalle, 1997; VandeWalle et al., 2001). It is believed to launch a perceptual-cognitive mechanism, or awareness of self-development, which conditions how people understand, react, and proceed toward achievement situations (Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004; Song et al., 2015; Van Yperen, 2003).

Initially, goal orientation consists of two main facets: learning orientation and performance orientation (Dweck, 1986), reflecting whether individuals' goal is to improve or to validate their ability, respectively (Shatz, 2015). With the development of goal orientation theory, researchers have made more specific classifications of the two main aspects (Payne et al., 2007). For example, theorists divided performance orientation into two subdimensions including performance-prove goal orientation (i.e., individuals' desire to show their abilities and to prove that they are more competent than others) and performance-avoid goal orientation (i.e., individuals' preference to avoid demonstrating their shortcomings and incompetence), and thus proposing a three-factor framework of goal orientation (e.g., Elliot & Church, 1997; VandeWalle, 1997). After that, scholars such as Elliot and McGregor (2001) further developed this conceptualization as a four-factor framework by specifying learning goal orientation to include learning approach goal orientation (i.e., individuals' desire to learn as much as they can to improve their competence and to overcome challenges) as the opposite to the learning avoidance goal orientation (i.e., individuals' desire to avoid doing worse than they have done before or failing to learn) (Wolters, 2004).

As previously suggested, there are various components of goal orientation and also controversies regarding which combinations (two-, three-, four-factor model) are more theoretically precise and rational (Payne et al., 2007; Schmidt & Ford, 2003). Amongst the diverse classifications of goal orientation, this research focuses on two of them – learning goal orientation and performance avoidance goal orientation – to examine the typical and moderating influences of goal orientations in FLMs' HR role identity and HR implementation behavior links based on the following considerations. First, learning goal orientation and performance avoidance goal orientation might be more suitable for the research which intends to investigate the contrasting interactional impacts (Moon et al., 2012). For example, Schmidt and Ford (2003) have found that

41

both learning goal orientation and performance avoidance goal orientation had significant moderating effects to enhance individuals' metacognitive actions in the learning context, but performance prove goal orientation failed to exert any influence in such relationship. Second, learning avoidance goal orientations "entail striving to avoid losing one's skills and abilities (or having their development stagnate), forgetting what one has learned, misunderstanding material, or leaving a task incomplete or unmastered" (Elliot, 1999, p. 181). Individuals tend to track the learning avoidance goal orientation when they feel that their skills and abilities get declining. Indeed, although learning avoidance goal orientation has been conceptualized, it has not been sufficiently supported by empirical evidence (Wang & Takeuchi, 2007). Third, prior studies demonstrated that the definition of performance prove goal orientation is relatively open to debate concerning a commonly agreed conceptualization of it (Ford et al., 1998; Schmidt & Ford, 2003). Based on these reasons, this research focuses more on learning and performance avoidance goal orientation.

Notably, this thesis proposes learning goal orientation and performance avoidance goal orientation as moderators in the relationships between FLMs' HR role identity and their externally adaptive and strict implementation, respectively. Before establishing their particular moderating effects, it is necessary to conceptually distinguish them from each other. The reason why individuals are different in their learning goal orientation and performance avoidance goal orientation can be explained by the theory of intelligence (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). According to this theory, people who are oriented by the learning goals regard their abilities or intelligence as manageable and can be improved if they put effort into them. Moreover, learning-oriented individuals have a strong belief that making effort is an essential means for achievement and development, and thus evaluating the challenging situation as an opportunity for improvement

42

(Dweck & Leggett, 1988). On the contrary, individuals with performance avoidance goal orientation have an entity theory of intelligence and view ability as set and deep-rooted which is difficult to improve. In addition, people who are performance avoidance-oriented are likely to escape from challenging tasks, since they believe that making efforts into mastering the challenges are futile (VandeWalle, 2003).

Learning Goal Orientation

This thesis proposes that FLMs' learning goal orientation should enhance the positive relationships between their HR role identity and externally adaptive HR implementation behaviors. FLMs with a strong learning goal orientation are more prone to engage in challenging HRM tasks by adapting to specific HR and team context, such that they refine their own beliefs and behaviors to be more competent and to meet the given HR role expectations (Baum et al., 2011; DeShon & Gillespie, 2005; Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Learning goal orientation also elevates FLMs' flexibility, with regard to which innovative solutions should be carried out to particular HR implementation problems, even though those solutions may lead to risks or upheaval of the current situation (Button et al., 1996; De Clercq et al., 2017). Additionally, FLMs with a strong learning goal orientation are inclined to pay attention to complex, challenging work context (Ames & Archer, 1988), and often view conflicting viewpoints as an opportunity for innovation and development (VandeWalle et al., 1999).

When faced with challenging tasks, learning-oriented FLMs take adaptive and mastery-aimed reactions that encourage perseverance when faced with difficulties, stimulate the generation of new ideas and innovation, and promote continuous or success in performance (Elliott & Dweck, 1988). Also, they will take advantage of mistakes or failure as self-reflection and opportunities for improving and, in response, often make more effort toward developing their abilities and achieving

their goals (Ames, 1984; Nicholls, 1976, 1984). These individuals relate success and failure more to learning, not performance in itself. Thus, these FLMs will not only attach the HR role expectations to their self-concept but also may consider it desirable to apply their leaning efforts to HR implementation situations. On the contrary, FLMs with lower levels of learning goal orientation are more likely to feel too stressed to overcome difficulties (e.g., role conflicts), encounter performance worsening, and avoid learning or mastery in challenge situations (Button et al., 1996; DeRue & Wellman, 2009). That is, these FLMs tend to avert their self-image by demonstrating maladaptive behavioral reactions. Hence, this thesis hypothesizes as follows:

H4a: The FLM's learning goal orientation moderates the relationship between FLMs' HR role identity and their externally adaptive implementation such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels of learning goal orientation.

Performance Avoidance Goal Orientation

On the other, this thesis anticipates that FLMs' reactions to the HR role may be motivated by their preferences in avoiding the exposure of poor performance, namely, performance avoidance goal orientation. In this case, FLMs may strive to enact or adopt the HR practices strictly following the rules and procedures. They may put less effort into learning about different HR-related skills, since they tend to avoid making mistakes and have a low intrinsic motivation to develop their competence (VandeWalle, 2003). Performance avoidance goal orientation reflects individuals' desire to keep away from disclosing one's low ability or receiving negative judgment from others (Vandewalle, 1997). As Elliot and Church (1997) noted, individuals tend to possess the performance avoidance goal orientation when they are afraid of failure. Prior studies have suggested the effect of performance avoidance goal orientation on individuals' passive reactions to work (Vandewalle, 1997) and unwillingness to share knowledge (Choi et al., 2018). For instance,

Payne et al.'s (2007) meta-analysis and discloses that performance avoidance goal orientation has a negative effect on the need for achievement, extraversion, and agreeableness. Additionally, as suggested by the entity theory of intelligence (Button et al., 1996; Dweck & Leggett, 1988), people who hold a performance avoidance goal orientation tend to make less effort based on the judgment that their ability is hard to be improved by efforts (Button et al., 1996; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Moon et al., 2012).

Consistent with the social information processing theory, FLMs high in performance avoidance goal orientation tend to adopt shallow information-processing strategies (Elliot et al., 1999; Elliot & McGregor, 2001). For example, individual-level goal orientation research has recommended that individuals with higher level of performance avoidance goal orientation are more likely to make stereotype-based judgments and may be less likely to engage in in-depth information processing approaches (Pieterse et al., 2013). Given that performance avoidance orientated FLMs are more cautious about failures, autonomous implementation behaviors of espoused HR practices are viewed dangerous and then induce feelings of threat. Hence, strict implementation thus become more subjectively meaningful and salient to them. Faced with the newly assigned HR responsibilities, FLMs with high performance avoidance goal orientation may find these HR duties risky due to their fear of exposing low HR-related abilities and skills. As a result, they would conduct their HR duties rigorously following the rules and procedures, rather than making *extra* efforts into the adjustment of a variety of external situations (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot & McGregor, 1999; LePine, 2005; Pieterse et al., 2013). Thus, this thesis proposes the following hypothesis:

H4b: The FLM's performance avoidance goal orientation moderates the relationship between FLMs' HR role identity and their strict implementation such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels of performance avoidance goal orientation.

3.6. FLMs' HR Implementation and Intra-team Acceptance

With the employee attitudes and behaviors being increasingly linked with organizational performance in the SHRM research, scholars have recently delved into the role employees' collective responses to implemented HR practices play in exploring the effectiveness of these HR practices (e.g., Nishii et al., 2008; Stirpe et al., 2015). Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) offers a theoretical explanation for why employees react to management activities. Central to the HRM research is the recognition that HR practices elevate organizational performance by encouraging employee attitudes and behaviors (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Gardner et al., 2011; Stirpe et al., 2015). Therefore, employee reactions and, more importantly, their acceptance of adopted HR practices is critical to the effectiveness of such practices, as it becomes unlikely for employees to behave as expected if they view the HR practice unfavorably (Chaiken et al., 1996; McGuire, 1972; Nishii et al., 2008). Although the previous section has suggested the importance of FLMs' HR implementation in the workplace, and such implementation behaviors take multiple forms, there is little strong evidence articulating the relationships between FLMs' HR implementation behaviors and employees' acceptance of these practices. To address this issue, this thesis proposes intra-team acceptance (hereafter ITA) as the outcome of multiple patterns of FLMs' HR implementation. ITA refers to the extent to which team members agree on the adopted HR strategies within the workgroup (Pak, 2016). The rationale here is that low level of ITA may increase the cost in HRM because it hinders desired employee attitudes and makes greater feelings of stress (Bacon & Blyton, 2005; Stirpe et al., 2015).

In essence, HRM goals may be achieved through strong HRM processes (i.e., an organizational climate) indicating what is expected from employees (Gilbert et al., 2015; Guzzo & Noonan, 1994). That is, both the management and employees have to agree on the espoused HR practices so as to generate positive exchange relationships (Guest & Conway, 2000; Pak & Kim, 2018; Sonnenberg, 2006). Generally, HR policies to be applied within workgroups are introduced at the beginning of employment (Pak & Kim, 2018). In the process of getting familiar with their jobs, FLMs act as *interpreters* of HR practices which influence employees' responses by indicating how the practices can improve their job experience and bring about individual benefits (McDermott et al., 2013; Rousseau, 1990; Shore & Tetrick, 1994; Stirpe et al., 2015). As Lambert (2011) mentioned, individual attitudes relate not to what is committed per se, but to what is delivered in effect. As a result, the extent to which FLMs recognize a visible HR role may have a meaningful influence on the level of perceived discrepancy (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Den Hartog et al., 2004). Considering that strict implementation reflects in FLMs' reactions that rigorously follow the developed principles embedded in adopted HR practices, the gap will be reduced (Pak et al., 2016). As a result, subordinate employees tend to agree on the implementation of HR practices. Given that team members are likely to develop a shared perception of the HR environment and then influence one another in terms of work-related attitudes and behaviors (Weick, 1995), such acceptance might emerge as a group-level phenomenon. Hence, this thesis proposes the following hypothesis:

H5a: Strict implementation is positively related to intra-team acceptance.

In addition, this thesis puts forward that FLMs may also conduct their HR jobs depending on their managerial discretion in order for the enactment of HR practices to suit better the particular situation of their workgroups (Burgelman, 1991; Caza, 2011). As per the theory of strategic choice

47

(Child, 1972), managers have the right to make decisions based on the external environment which serve their own ends and dynamically influence the development of the organization. Therefore, FLMs are likely to use some level of freedom in deciding the methods used to deliver and achieve HR goals, the pacing and scheduling of task accomplishment, and how HR policies are collaborated with team members (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Whitaker & Dahling, 2013). Previously on the discussion of job autonomy has demonstrated that the pressure of "real-time" decision making can be relieved if FLMs are given enough freedom and flexibility in the workplace (Budhwar, 2000; Whitaker & Dahling, 2013). For instance, in order to complete a provisional and challenging group HR assignment, FLMs could organize additional training sessions as the supplement to the learning programs in policy. Likewise, in a sales department, FLMs could adjust the performance evaluation strategies by increasing the prescribed number of sales representatives when they choose to motivate and reward more high-performers. When FLMs take adaptive actions in accordance with the situations, they make a certain adjustment on the HR content and process (Kehoe & Han, 2020). Although on the surface it seems to broaden the gap between intended and actual HR practices, this, in fact, signals improved employee perceptions of HRM-work compatibility which may lead to a more positive evaluation of HR attributes (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989; Liu et al., 2013). Thus, employees who frequently observe their FLMs' adaption of HR practices to the environment and their work requirements are likely to accept, to a greater degree, the enactment of HR practices in question. In line with the aforementioned reasoning, this thesis presents the hypothesis below:

H5b: Externally adaptive implementation is positively related to intra-team acceptance.

However, rather than externally adaptive implementation behaviors, employees may observe their FLMs enacting HR practices according to their personal characteristics and benefits, which

is conceptualized as the internally adaptive implementation. In reality, in addition to knowledge, skills, abilities, and other traits (KAOs), FLMs also differ in their personal values and beliefs which may also wield multifaceted impacts on their involvement in the HR process (Kehoe & Han, 2020). In this sense, internally adaptive implementation seems to arouse relatively more variance in the patterns of behaviors unanchored from designed strategies. A theoretical perspective that supports this assumption is the agency theory (Daily et al., 2003), which emphasizes the potential interference between the organization's goals and FLMs' private interests (Bottom et al., 2006; Kiser, 1999). As suggested by Shleifer and Vishny (1997), managers may make management choices serving their personal benefits rather than performance considerations, resulting in the damage to the organization's long-term objectives (Bos-Nehles et al., 2013). For example, one type of such personal benefits relates to the HR implementation is FLMs' priorities in selecting and promoting their own social networks, which was recommended to hurt the quality of staffing and employees' perceptions of justice (Bandiera et al., 2009). Also, employees' autonomy on their jobs could be reduced if FLMs choose to do so, and thus resulting in less intrinsic motivation of employees.

Moreover, FLMs who enact espoused HR practices in a way that focuses more on their personal values may distract resources and information available from achieving performance outcomes to individual benefits (Caza, 2011). In this way, undisciplined variability in both the HR process and the HR content will be enlarged, which in turn destructs the effects of intended HR practices on expected performance outcomes (Kehoe & Han, 2020). In such circumstances, the gap between intended and actual HR strategies may be made broader (Pak et al., 2016). Given that employees' psychological contract is often affected by inducements as promised (Lambert, 2011; McDermott et al., 2013), the reduction of employees' satisfaction with the adopted HR practices

may prevent employees from giving support for the way in which HR practices are implemented by their FLMs. As a consequence, group members are not convinced by FLMs' manners in implementing HR practices, and then the ITA level decreases. For these reasons, this thesis proposes the following hypothesis:

H5c: Internally adaptive implementation is negatively related to intra-team acceptance.

3.7. Attainment of FLMs' Workplace Status

This thesis further posits that ITA of the HR implementation within workgroups will help FLMs attain their workplace status. Previous efforts made to investigate outcomes of FLMs' HR implementation are primarily on either employee performance (Chang et al., 2020; Pak & Kim, 2018) or organizational performance (Khilji & Wang, 2006; Mat et al., 2015; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007), while neglecting possible individual accomplishments of FLMs. Considering that attaining status is a relevant and important indicator of the social worth that others award to an individual (Blader & Yu, 2017; Chen et al., 2012), this research focuses on workplace status as a dependent variable to expand the current research attention from team-related outcomes of effective HR enactment (i.e., ITA) to individual-related accomplishments that indicate FLMs' achievement in the HR role. Workplace status, as a fundamental human motive, has been previously linked with massive rewards, including affirmative social attention, increased rights and benefits, more influence and controls over group decisions and processes, and myriad access to meager resources (Anderson et al., 2015; Berger et al., 1972; Henrich & GilWhite, 2001). As previously defined, ITA reflects the extent to which FLMs' HR implementation are valued and agreed among team members. As such, it is reasonable to relate employees' acceptance of enforced HR practices with their opinions on whether their FLM possesses workplace status.

Given that HR practices are primarily executed in workgroups under the administration of

FLMs (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Wright & Nishii, 2013), the way in which espoused HR practices are enacted may affect employees' holistic view of whether their FLMs' HR efforts contribute to group-level HR goals. This is also aligned with the argument of social attribution theory (e.g., Heider, 1958), indicating that employees react attitudinally to HR activities depending on how they attribute the manager's motives to implementing actual HR practices (Nishii et al., 2008). FLMs rise in status primarily by enhancing their value in the eyes of fellow group members. Namely, employees observe FLMs' HR implementation behaviors and evaluate the extent to which their FLMs signal task competence, generosity, and commitment to the group (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009).

In essence, status has three main components. First, it reflects respect and admiration. Reflected in this research context, FLMs who are highly regarded and esteemed by team members may possess high status (Barkow, 1975; Blau, 1964; Henrich & Gil-White, 2001; Leary et al., 2014). Second, it comprises voluntary deference, which means that employees voluntarily adhere to their FLMs' wishes, desires, and advice whom they grant higher status to (Kemper, 1990; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Third, status indicates perceived instrumental social value. That is, employees tend to give high status to FLMs who will assist them to achieve their goals and will offer help or learning models (Leary et al., 2014). According to Anderson et al. (2015), individuals will provide greater status to someone who is perceived to have two kinds of particular personal characteristics. On the one hand, high-status people should have competences that are central to their own primary tasks and challenges (Driskell & Mullen, 1990; Ridgeway, 1987). On the other hand, high-status people should have the willingness to apply their competences for the favor of others (Griskevicius et al., 2009; Ridgeway, 1982; Wilier, 2009). That said, because FLMs who decide to strictly implement HR practices inform employees that they are competent to achieve

the HR goals by minimizing the gap between intended and actual HR practices, employees tend to endow affirmation and perceived workplace status to FLMs. Also, when employees observe externally adaptive HR implementation, their FLMs are viewed to care both the group functioning and employee benefits. In this case, FLMs' workplace status may develop. On the other, employees who witness internally adaptive HR implementation may perceive that their FLMs are short of either a communal orientation or the willingness to make compromise between the situation and group needs. As a result, they may not view their FLMs as high in workplace status.

Status can also explain the process of social exchange (Anderson et al., 2015). In this sense, quality of the exchange relationships indicates the importance of attaining status as a social exchange process. Studies on the status attainment contend that people high in status within a workgroup receive a great deal of attention because their opinions and behaviors are more influential (Anderson et al., 2001). Also, as suggested by functionalist theories, workplace status relates to the group's collective judgements (Berger et al., 1972). Individuals who possess high levels of competence and commitment to the group functioning may be valued as having greater workplace status. Over the phase of HR implementation, FLMs possess instrumental social value and status within workgroups when they are commonly respected and accepted in terms of their HR enactment by demonstrating their expertise and competence. In exchange for the FLMs' support or cares, team members will confer status to their FLMs by showing respect and acceptance (Anderson et al., 2015). Within a workgroup, FLMs who have mastery over their HR tasks receive higher status since they demonstrate HR-related competence and leadership (Berger et al., 1972; Lord et al., 1986). Consequently, group members develop an implicit consensus in terms of whether FLMs are effective HR implementers and allocate status based on the extent to which FLMs are respected and accepted. In sum, this thesis proposes the following hypothesis:

H6a: Intra-team acceptance mediates the positive relationship between FLMs' strict implementation their workplace status.

H6b: Intra-team acceptance mediates the positive relationship between FLMs' externally adaptive implementation and their workplace status.

H6c: Intra-team acceptance mediates the negative relationship between FLMs' internally adaptive implementation and their workplace status.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODS

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

To test the research model, data was collected from 9 Chinese companies through online surveys. Before distributing the surveys, I contacted a senior manager of each target company to discuss the purpose of the study and survey items upon request. As such, all the survey items have been adjusted to the specific organizational structure and managerial hierarchy. The surveys were originally designed in English and then translated into Chinese. Back-translation was also conducted to make sure that the ensuing version was the same as the original one. This process is in accordance with the procedures suggested by Brislin (1990) as per survey translations across different languages. In the cover page, participants were informed of the research purpose and the anonymity of their responses. In addition, responses were identified and matched based on the teams of participants. Data was collected from multiple sources in two waves to minimize the common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

During the first wave of data collection, FLMs were asked to answer questions related to their perceptions of HR involvement of immediate superiors and the other peer FLMs. FLMs also

filled the self-report surveys regarding their HR role identity. The second wave of data collection was conducted with a 4-week time lag. During this period, both FLMs and their team members were asked to complete surveys. Specifically, FLMs gave responses to goal orientation preferences, while team members answered questions about their FLMs' HR implementation and workplace status. In time 2, control variables such as FLMs' HR-related AMO, core self-evaluation were rated by FLMs' self-reports. Both FLMs and team members also provided their demographic information such as age, gender, level of education, tenure, and business functions. FLM respondents were 51.4% male and 48.6% female with an average age of 39.51 (SD = 7.33). An average organizational tenure was 3.67 (SD = 1.48) years. An average tenure as a leader was 5.35 (SD = 1.90). 51.4% of FLMs held either a university or a graduate degree. Team member respondents were 51.7% male and 48.3% female. An average organizational tenure was 3.45 years (SD = 1.45). An average tenure working with their current FLMs was 2.64 years (SD = 1.27). 59.5% of the employees held a bachelor's degree and above. As for job group composition of the final sample, research & development (R&D) was 14.7%, sales and marketing was 13.7%, management and administration was 5.0%, production and manufacturing technique was 36.7%, service was 16.4%, finance and investment was 5.8%, and others was 7.7%. Group size on average was 5.11.

Measures

Immediate superior's HR orientation (Time 1). I drew on the five-item measure designed for top management's HR orientation suggested by Pak (2016). Wordings of the original items were modified according to the context of this research. FLMs gave answers to all the survey questions. Sample items include: "My immediate superior has clearly indicated his/her commitment to HRM"; "My immediate superior has championed HRM within the division"; and

"My immediate superior has a strong will ensuring the implementation of espoused HR practices". Cronbach's α of the scale was .92. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Immediate superior's bottom-line mentality (Time 1). I applied the self-rating scale developed by Greenbaum et al. (2012), which is originally designed for supervisors to evaluate their own BLM. I adjusted the wordings to reflect FLMs' assessment of their immediate superiors' BLM. Sample items include: "My immediate superior is solely concerned with meeting the bottom-line"; "My immediate superior only cares about the business"; and "My immediate superior treats the bottom line as more important than anything else". Cronbach's α of the scale was .92. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Peer FLMs' HR implementation (Time 1). I utilized the five-item scale for team manager's implementation of espoused HR practices develop by Pak and Kim (2018). Wordings of the items were adjusted to fit the context of this research. FLMs were asked to give self-ratings about their own implementation of HR practices within workgroups. Sample items include: "Many times, my peers are enthusiastic advocates of the HR policies of our organization"; "My peers clearly communicate HR-related initiatives or changes in my team"; and "My peers implement HR practices, strictly following HR processes". Cronbach's α of the scale was .92. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Peer FLMs' cynicism about HR (Time 1). I referred to the widely consulted five-item scale for management cynicism developed by Stanley et al. (2005). To reduce the survey burden, I deleted one from the original five items and reworded them to fit the context of this research. FLMs were asked to evaluate their own cynical attitudes toward the HRM. Sample items include: "My peers believe that the HR policy is not up-front about the reasons for doing it"; "My peers believe that there are ulterior motives for the HR policy"; and "My peers think that the HR policy

would misrepresents its intentions to gain acceptance for a decision it wanted to make". Cronbach's α of the scale was .86. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

FLM's HR role identity (Time 1). Given that there is no previous measure for HR role identity in the existing literature. I developed four items for FLMs' self-reports based on Farmer et al.'s (2003) measure for creative role identity. Survey items were reworded to reflect HRM phenomenon and the specific context of this research. Sample items include: "I often think about ways to develop and motivate my team members"; "I have a clear self-view as a FLM whose primary role is to effectively develop and motivate people in my team"; and "To be a good people manager is an important part of my identity". Cronbach's α of the scale was .85. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Multiple forms of HR implementation (Time 2). No instrument has been established in previous research to examine this phenomenon of interest. In this thesis, each of the constructs were measured by a 4-item scale based on independent interviews with different FLMs so that it ensures accurate and original explanations of their own experiences as the HR implementers and specific behavioral patterns. After that, I extracted themes from interviews and adapted them as survey items (Pak & Kim, 2018; Sung & Choi, 2014). Sample items include: "My FLM implements HR practices, strictly following corporate HR processes and guidelines" (for strict implementation); "My FLM flexibly applies rules and procedures of espoused HR practices according to differing circumstances" (for externally adaptive implementation); and "Many times, HR-related decisions are subjectively made according to my FLM's own personal work style and value" (for internally adaptive implementation). Cronbach's α of the scales were: strict implementation (α = .85), externally adaptive implementation (α = .84), and internally adaptive implementation (α = .87). A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Learning goal orientation (Time 2). A four-item scale developed by VandeWalle (1997) was employed. Survey items were modified to fit the particular research context. FLMs were asked to provide self-report responses regarding their desire to develop themselves. Sample items include: "I am willing to select a challenging work assignment that I can learn a lot from"; "I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge"; and "For me, development of my work ability is important enough to take risks". Cronbach's α of the scale was .90. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Performance avoidance goal orientation (Time 2). I utilized a four-item scale developed by VandeWalle (1997). One out of the five original items were deleted to reduce the participants' survey burden. Wordings of the questions were also adjusted so as to fit this research context. Responses were collected from FLMs' self-assessment of their propensity to avoid disproving their ability and receiving negative judgments. Sample items include: "I would avoid taking on a new task if there was a chance that I would appear rather incompetent to others"; "Avoiding a show of low ability is more important to me than learning a new skill"; and "I'm concerned about taking on a task at work if my performance would reveal that I had low ability". Cronbach's α of the scale was .84. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Intra-team acceptance (Time 2). A four-item measure for ITA is developed according to Pak (2016) and Powell and Dent-Micallef (1997). Individual employees' responses were aggregated to the team level. Sample items include: "There is consensus on the enforcement of espoused HR practice in my team", "We have little conflict between our FLM and team members concerning the implementation of espoused HR practices", and "Our team members have a shared agreement with one another on how HR practices are implemented". Cronbach's α of the scale was .88. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Workplace status (both Time 1 and Time 2). Given that this research simultaneously examines workplace status of FLMs, as well as their immediate superiors and peers. These constructs are designed to share the same instrument. I referred to a four-item measurement for workplace status developed by Djurdjevic et al. (2017). In particular, workplace status of immediate superiors and peers were measured by FLM-reported responses at time 1, while the focal FLM's workplace status was assessed by their team members at time 2. To reduce the participants' workload, I deleted one from the original five items and reworded them to fit the context of this research. Team members' responses for their FLMs' workplace status were aggregated to the team level. Sample items include: "My FLM has a great deal of prestige in my organization"; "My immediate superior possesses high status in my organization" (for immediate superior's workplace status); "In general, peer FLMs in my division occupy respected positions in my organization" (for peer FLMs' workplace status); and "My FLM possesses a high level of prominence in my organization" (for focal FLM's workplace status). Cronbach's α of the scales were .85, .80, .85, respectively. A full list of survey items is presented in Table 12.

Control variables (Time 2). Some theoretically relevant variables were controlled. First, I controlled for FLMs' perceptions of AMO and their core self-evaluation (CSE). In the FLM research, extensive empirical evidence suggests that FLMs' AMO affects their effective HR implementation (e.g., Gilbert et al., 2015; Van Waeyenberg & Decramer, 2018), and CSE is found to influence their self-identity and overall appraisal of worthiness, effectiveness, and capability (e.g., Wang et al., 2021). In this research, AMO was measured by a combined 9-item scales for occupational self-efficacy (e.g., "I can remain calm when facing difficulties in my HR job because I can rely on my abilities", Schyns & von Collani, 2002), situational motivation (e.g., "I execute HR tasks because it is something that I have to do", Guay et al., 2000), and role overload (e.g., "I

need more hours in the day to do all the things which are expected of me", Reilly, 1982).; the CSE was measured with another 9-item scale suggested by Judge et al. (2003) (e.g., "I am confident I get the success I deserve in life"; "I rarely feel depressed"; and "When I try, I generally succeed"). Second, group size was included because it may impact diverse team processes (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003) and the amount of information and support provided by the firm (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Division size and industry were also considered as controls since they might influence organization's decisions of HR practices (Han et al., 2018). Finally, I controlled for FLMs' tenure. I also included FLMs tenure as a leader and employee tenure with the team, measured as the number of years working as a leader (for FLMs) or the number of years working with their FLMs (for employees). The reason is that team experience may relate to perceptions of behavioral standards, which in turn may influence individual performance (Kim et al., 2018). Moreover, employees with the longer team tenure may find it easier to develop high-quality relationships with their FLMs and discern accepted as team members (e.g., Farh et al., 2010; Heilman et al., 1988; Mullen & Copper, 1994).

Data Aggregation

Data collected from individual employees were aggregated to the team level (i.e., FLMs' multiple HR implementation behaviors, ITA, FLMs' workplace status). To test this model, it was necessary to analyze the appropriateness of aggregation statistics. Specifically, r_{wg} values were calculated to justify interrater agreement (James et al., 1984, 1993) and reliabilities of score within group were assessed using intraclass correlations (ICCs) (Bliese, 2000). r_{wg} is a measure presenting the level of agreement among raters within a group or unit (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). For FLMs' strict, externally adaptive, and internally adaptive implementation behaviors, the median r_{wg} scores were .83, .70, and .83, respectively. For ITA and FLMs' workplace status, the median r_{wg} scores

59

were .73 and .76, respectively. They were all higher than the cutoff value of .70 and could warrantee the data aggregation (George, 1990; James, 1982). $ICC(1)$ is an indicator of the extent to which the variance in individual responses can be explained at the group level (Bliese, 2000; Castro, 2002). For FLMs' strict, externally adaptive, and internally adaptive implementation behaviors, the $ICC(1)$ scores were .18, .26, and .21, respectively. For ITA and FLMs' workplace status, the $ICC(1)$ scores were .20 and .22, respectively. All of them exceeded the acceptable cutoff values of .05 (Bliese, 2000). Accordingly, there is an empirical justification for the data aggregation to the team level.

Analytical Strategy

A number of analytic strategies were applied to test the hypotheses. The collected data from the online surveys were analyzed through the SPSS statistical packaged software (V.28). I initially standardized those variables involved in moderation before creating the interaction terms. The hypothesized interactive effects were tested using ordinary least squared (OLS) regression analyses because all variables in this research model stayed at the team level. I further used the Sobel test (Sobel, 1982; Preacher & Hayes, 2004) to examine the statistical significance of ITA's indirect effects. The test in this process was based on the regression coefficients for the paths between three patterns in implementing HR practices within workgroups and their workplace status, along with their respective standard errors.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 1 presents means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations among all study variables. As predicted, key study variables were correlated. To be specific, FLMs' HR role identity is significantly associated with their perceptions of MHRO ($r = .34$, $p < .001$), BLM ($r = -.35$, $p < .001$), and workplace status ($r = .29$, $p < .01$), as well as their perceptions of peer FLMs' HR implementation ($r = .43$, $p < .001$) and workplace status ($r = .24$, $p < .05$). The negative correlation between FLM's HR role identity and their perception of peers' cynicism about HR ($r = -.14$) was not significant. Moreover, FLMs' multiple HR implementation behavioral patterns were also significantly associated with their HR role identity, with the statistic values of .26, .26, and .26, respectively ($p < .01$). For ITA, its correlations with FLMs' externally adaptive implementation ($r = .34$) and their internally adaptive implementation ($r = -.37$) were both significant at $p < .001$, while the correlation between ITA and FLMs' strict implementation ($r = .14$) was not significant. Also, FLM's workplace status was proved to be significantly correlated with ITA ($r = .37$, $p < .001$).

Validity of Study Variables

To ensure the discriminant and convergent validities among multi-dimensional constructs, I first conducted a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs). CFA provides several indices that allow comparing the model fit of the hypothesized factor structure with that of alternative ones (Hair et al., 2009). The results of the CFAs are shown in Table 3. For FLM-rated measures, results revealed a better fit for the hypothesized four-factor model (i.e., all variables as distinct constructs) compared to the other three alternative models. Results indicated $\chi^2 = 197.82$, $df = 129$, $\chi^2/df = 1.53$, incremental fit index (IFI) = .95, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = .94, comparative fit index (CFI) = .95, root mean square residual (RMR) = .07. For employee-rated measures, results justified a better fit for the hypothesized five-factor model (i.e., all variables are considered separate

constructs) compared to the other four alternative models. Results indicated $\chi^2 = 164.64$, $df = 160$, $\chi^2/df = 1.03$, IFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00, CFI = 1.00, RMR = .03. In terms of the cutoff values, statistic results of χ^2/df are acceptable when they are lower than 3, and IFI, TLI, and CFI are acceptable when they are above .90 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Hall et al., 1999; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2005). RMR is acceptable at values less than .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Given the increased values of χ^2 and RMR, and decreased values of CFI, IFI, and TLI, it was established that the hypothesized four-factor and five-factor models provided the best fit to the data. Therefore, discriminant validities of variables were justified.

In terms of convergent validity, this research calculated factor loadings for all survey items. The results are shown in Table 12. It is demonstrated that factor loadings of all items included to measure study variables were above the cutoff value of .50 (Hair et al., 2009). In addition, this research checked the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) for each variable. The results are also reported in Table 12. It is presented that AVEs for all study variables exceeded the cutoff value of .50. Also, CRs for all study variables are acceptable at values higher than .70 (Nunnally, 1978). Hence, convergent validities of all constructs are justified.

Hypotheses Tests

Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d suggested a positive relationship between perceptions of MHRO and FLM's HR role identity, and a negative relationship between immediate superiors' BLM and FLM's HR role identity, along with the moderating effects of immediate superior's workplace status which can strengthen both relationships. Table 4 illustrates the regression results of moderating effect. It revealed that FLM-perceived MHRO was positively related to FLMs' HR role identity ($\beta = .31$, $p < .001$). also, FLM-perceived immediate superior's BLM was negatively related to FLMs' HR role identity ($\beta = -.38$, $p < .001$). Also, the results suggested that interactions

between FLMs' perceptions of immediate superior's HR involvement (i.e., HRO and BLM) and immediate superior's workplace status had significantly positive effects on FLM's HR role identity, with the $\beta = .29$ ($p < .001$) and $.24$ ($p < .01$), respectively. In addition, the interaction plot presented in Figure 1 further proved hypothesis 1c; the relationship between immediate superiors' HRO and focal FLM's HR role identity was stronger when immediate superior's workplace status is higher than lower. However, the pattern of this interaction presented in Figure 2 was not consistent with hypothesis 1d. It indicated that even though immediate superior's workplace status was low, FLMs' HR role identity still increased along with the growth of BLM. If so, the moderating effect of workplace status could not be warranted. In this case, hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c were supported.

Hypotheses 2a, 2b, 2c, and 2d predicted both positive and negative relationships between FLM-perceived peer HR involvement (i.e., HR implementation and cynicism about HR) and focal FLM's HR role identity, as well as the interaction effects of peers' workplace status in strengthening these relationships. In support of the hypothesized main effects (i.e., H2a and H2b), the results in Table 5 revealed a positive and significant effect of peers' HR implementation on FLM's HR role identity ($\beta = .43$, $p < .001$). It is also clear that peers' cynicism about HR had a negative and significant effect on focal FLM's HR role identity ($\beta = -.23$, $p < .01$). Moreover, the results also showed a statistically significant interaction effects of peers' workplace status in both the positive ($\beta = .15$, $p < .10$) and negative ($\beta = .25$, $p < .01$) relationships. In addition, the interaction plot in Figure 3 further supported hypothesis 2c, with the indication that the relationship between peers' HR implementation and focal FLM's HR role identity was stronger at higher level of peers' workplace status. However, the pattern of the interactions were not fully consistent with hypothesis 2d. As presented in Figure 4, when peers had low workplace status, FLMs' HR role

identity also increased along with the increment of BLM. In this case, the moderating effects might not be ensured. Therefore, hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c were empirically supported.

Hypothesis 3 proposed positive relationships between FLM's HR role identity and their multiple HR implementation behavioral patterns. In support of these hypotheses, the results shown in Table 6, Table 7, and Table 8 reported significantly positive effects of FLM's HR role identity on each of the implementation behaviors. In particular, the effect of FLM's HR role identity on their strict implementation was .26 ($p < .05$); the effect of FLM's HR role identity on their externally adaptive implementation was .27 ($p < .01$); and then the effect of FLM's HR role identity on their internally adaptive implementation was .10 ($p < .05$). That is, hypothesis 3 is empirically supported.

Hypothesis 4a and 4b predicted the moderating effects of learning goal orientation and performance avoidance goal orientation in the relationships between FLM's HR role identity and externally adaptive implementation and strict implementation, respectively. Results were presented in Table 6 and Table 7. As previously suggested, the results (see Table 7) reported a positive and significant interaction effect of FLM's learning goal orientation that strengthens the positive relationship between their HR role identity and externally adaptive implementation ($\beta = .18, p < .05$); the positive effect of FLM's HR role identity on externally adaptive implementation is stronger at a higher level of learning goal orientation (also see Figure 5). However, Table 6 indicated that the moderating effect of performance avoidance goal orientation on the relationship between FLM's HR role identity and strict implementation was not significant. Thus, the results gave empirical support to hypothesis 4a but hypothesis 4b could not be supported.

Hypothesis 5a, 5b, and 5c suggested that FLM's multiple forms of HR implementation behaviors have either positive or negative effects on ITA. Table 9 presents the regression results.

In consistent with the prediction, results showed that FLMs' externally adaptive implementation had a positive and significant effect on ITA (β = .20, p < .10), and FLM's internally adaptive implementation had a negative and significant effect on ITA (β = −.30, p < .01). However, it failed to establish any significant effect of strict implementation on ITA. In this case, hypothesis 5b and 5c were empirically supported.

Finally, hypothesis 6a, 6b, and 6c emphasized the mediating role of ITA in the relationships between different FLMs' HR implementation behaviors and their workplace status. Table 10 shows the regression results of the relationship between ITA and FLM's workplace status, and results of the indirect effects are shown in Table 11. By conducting Sobel test, the mediating effects of ITA in the relationships between externally and internally adaptive implementation behaviors and FLM's workplace status were supported. The results in Table 11 demonstrated a significant indirect effect for ITA in the relationships between FLMs' externally adaptive (effect estimate = .08, $S.E.$ = .05, p < .10) and internally adaptive implementation behaviors (effect estimate = −.13, $S.E.$ = .05, p < .05). However, given the non-significant relationship between strict implementation and ITA (as presented in Table 9), ITA did not exert any mediating effect in such relationship. Therefore, hypothesis 6b and 6c were supported.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings

Table 13 provides a summary of hypothesis tests. In the current study, the key issues in the FLM literature about examining FLMs' self-view to their HR role, as well as antecedents and

outcomes of such HR role identity are examined. The results confirmed that there is general support for the proposed framework of FLMs' HR role identity and HR implementation. Notably, it relates to a recently developed conceptual model (Kou et al., 2022) which includes multi-level HR actors' involvement in shaping FLMs' HR role identity. However, the current research considers feasibility of conducting empirical analyses. So, it pays particular attention to the team-level HR involvement since immediate superiors and peers are the ones who have the closest contacts with FLMs in terms of their daily HR duties. As predicted, empirical results give evidence to the propositions that immediate superiors' HR involvement has both positive and negative effects on FLMs' HR role identity. To be specific, MHRO promotes FLMs' HR role identity, while their BLM hampers the development of FLMs' HR role identity. Also, results supported the hypothesized interaction effect of immediate superiors' workplace status, with the positive effect of MHRO on FLMs' HR role identity being strengthened at higher levels of immediate superiors' workplace status. In terms of peer FLMs' HR involvement, research findings here validated the hypotheses that peers' HR implementation will have a positive effect on FLMs' HR role identity, while their cynicism about HR will negatively influence FLMs' identification with the HR role. In a similar vein with immediate superiors' workplace status, peer FLMs' workplace status were found to strengthen the positive relationship between their HR implementation and focal FLM's HR role identity. Such findings are consistent with the social information processing theory, indicating that supervisors and coworkers are both important social others who can influence individuals' work-related attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Chen et al., 2013; Lin et al., 2022). Yet, this research also found that immediate superiors' and peers' workplace status did not moderate the negative effects of their HR involvement and FLMs' HR role identity. This is possible because FLMs, at the beginning of the HR devolution, may hold lower levels of commitment and self-

views to the HR role. If so, negative effects of social others' HR involvement will be more easily to be rationalized as the mentality of "*it is not my job*", regardless of how much immediate superiors or peers are socially valued. In particular, the negative effect of immediate superiors' BLM on FLMs' HR role identity may not be influenced by superiors' workplace status because FLMs' perceptions of a dysfunctional HR climate has been already formed through observing their superiors' BLM. In this vein, FLMs will attribute the intent of the HR policies to have little to no value to be implemented. Once the perception is formulated, FLMs are likely to step off from the HR role, ignoring whether their superiors have a high or low workplace status. Also, peers' cynicism about HR negatively influence FLMs' HR role identity when FLMs share the same doubt about the organization's HR policies. In this sense, despite whether peers are perceived as possessing greater or less workplace status, FLMs still ascribe that their HR job is not beneficial.

Second, as an extended attempt from Kou et al.'s (2022) conceptual framework which considers FLMs' HR implementation behavior as the outcome of FLMs' HR role identity in general, this thesis further characterized multiple forms of FLMs' HR implementation behaviors as different responses to their HR role identity. Results show that FLMs with enhanced HR role identity may make choices among strict implementation, externally adaptive implementation, and internally adaptive implementation. Not surprisingly, these findings are found to be aligned with the theory of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957, 1962). Moreover, the relationships between FLMs' HR role identity and different patterns of HR implementation behaviors are proved to be conditional on FLMs' personal motivational processes (i.e., goal orientations). Grounded on the theory of intelligence (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), the proposed interaction effect of learning goal orientation in the relationship between FLMs' HR role identity and their externally adaptive implementation was supported by the results. Although performance avoidance goal orientation

was found not to influence the relationship between FLMs' HR role identity and strict implementation, it is theoretically reasonable since FLMs who implement HR practices by strictly following the job instructions tend to avoid making changes in different situations. Prior research has shown that performance avoidance goal orientation relates to individuals' disinclination to seek feedback from others (Payne et al., 2007). As such, this motivational process of making less efforts into learning or managing the challenges may insert little significance on their behaviors observed by employees. In essence, FLMs' strict implementation of espoused HR practices might be observed by employees as less motivated to learn and to optimize HRM. On this regard, FLMs' motivation process (i.e., performance avoidance goal orientation) – be it at a higher or a lower level – would not make any observable difference in the eyes of employees in terms of FLMs' HR implementation behaviors.

Finally, this thesis emphasized the indirect effects of multiple HR implementation behavioral patterns on FLMs' workplace status through ITA of FLMs' HR implementation. Results provided support to the hypothesized mediating effect of ITA in the relationships between FLMs' HR role identity and their externally adaptive implementation and internally adaptive implementation. However, as opposed to the hypotheses, FLMs' strict implementation was found not to exert a significant influence on the ITA. Accordingly, ITA did not mediate the relationship between strict implementation and FLMs' workplace status. It may be that strict implementation implies FLMs' indifferency about either the particular work conditions or the employees' personal interests, thereby reducing employees' satisfaction of the HR enactment. In many cases, employees are made known HR policies through induction programs at the beginning of their employment (Pak & Kim, 2018). Following that, employees form expectations of their work environment (McDermott et al., 2013; Rousseau, 1990; Shore & Tetrick, 1994). As Nishii and Paluch (2018)

noted, FLMs should have the ability to participate in true dialogue over the course of executing HR policies. As per the attribution theory, such ability affects employees' perceptions about the relative costs and benefits associated with particular HR implementation as well as employees' affirmation of focal FLMs' HR goal achievement (Katou et al., 2021). Therefore, strict implementation is less helpful for employees to evaluate their FLMs' HR-related motivations and to develop feedback about whether or not they accept the HR implementation and endow their FLMs with workplace status.

Theoretical Implications

This study makes theoretical contributions to the research identified at the intersection between role identity and line management in several ways. First, it advances theory development in the FLMs' HR implementation domain. In proposing the current framework, it goes beyond the widely consulted theories such as the AMO approach (e.g., Bos-Nehles et al., 2013; Boxall & Purcell, 2003) on examining FLMs' effective HR implementation. Instead, it suggests role identity theory as a more explicit stance to articulate FLMs' sense-making process toward their devolved HR duties. Role identity theory explains how an individual's commitment to a particular role fosters his or her follow-up role behaviors (Chen & Tang, 2018). Drawing upon this theory, this paper develops the notion of FLM's HR role identity. It argues that the extent to which FLMs internalize the significance of the HR role determines whether they can behave as expected. In so doing, this paper joins the previous research on applying role identity theory to the HR context to enrich the literature with a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Second, the extant literature on role identity largely lacks the exploration of contextual antecedents to it. Combining research on role identity and HR devolution, the current study benefits the research on FLMs' HR implementation with the conceptualization of HR involvement

69

of immediate superiors and peer FLMs as predictors of FLMs' HR role identity. Indeed, empirical studies have demonstrated that HR-related support from HR professionals enhances FLMs' perceptions of their HR responsibilities (e.g., Gilbert et al., 2015; Op de Beeck et al., 2016; Perry & Kulik, 2008). This research extends this understanding and considers the dynamic nature of the HR implementation process. It proposes that not only the HR department and top managers, but also immediate superiors, peer FLMs, are involved in the process of FLMs' HR implementation. Moreover, grounded in the social support and perspective, propositions in this thesis attempt to reveal the processes in which the immediate superior's and peers' HR involvement motivates or diminishes FLMs' HR role identity. More specifically, it suggests that both MHRO and peers' HR implementation will engender FLMs' HR role identity, while immediate superiors' BLM and peers' cynicism about HR can hinder FLMs' HR role identity. By doing so, this research also contributes to the FLM research and the increasing literature on supervisor BLM and organization cynicism. Social information processing theory indicates that supervisors and colleagues are important social others influencing individuals' work attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Chen et al., 2013). Remarkably, one of the core arguments in the social context perspective is that perceptions of the work environment influence employee attitudes, with particular attention paid to job satisfaction, which then lead to a set of employee behaviors including attachment and both task and contextual performance (Ferris et al., 1998). With the examination of both positive and negative effects of the HR involvement of immediate superiors and peers on FLMs' HR role identity, this research also contributes to the development of the social context theory by incorporating the role identity as a supplement to employee attitudes.

Third, it is widely acknowledged in the HRM research that FLMs' HR involvement is important to transfer designed HR strategies in the workgroup (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Pak &

Kim, 2018; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007). Even though prior studies on this field have made extensive efforts on the sources and consequences of FLMs' effective implementation (e.g., DeWettinck & Vroonen, 2017; Op de Beeck et al., 2017; Sikora & Ferris, 2014), the current discourse of single-dimensional and oversimplified conceptualization of FLMs' HR implementation behavior has limited our understanding of *how and how much* FLMs are involved in the HR implementation. Therefore, this thesis aims to draw a more detailed distinction among FLMs' strict implementation, externally adaptive implementation, and internally adaptive implementation. In this way, this paper joins the current discussion on the variability of FLMs' HR involvement in both the HR process (i.e., the extent of involvement) and the HR content (i.e., the adaptation of rules and procedures) of espoused HR practices (Kehoe & Han, 2020). As mentioned earlier, the empirical results suggested that FLMs' externally adaptive implementation works better with the workgroup's HR functioning, while internally adaptive implementation may be detrimental to FLMs' effective implementation. This detailed conceptualization of HR implementation behavior reasonably reflects on the real phenomena (Pak et al., 2016) and, thus, holds much theoretical implication (c.f., Kehoe & Han, 2020).

Finally, unlike most previous research that focuses on positive relationships between role identity and consequent role behaviors (e.g., Farmer et al., 2003), this research founds that role identity may be a double-edged sword. In particular, results of this research show that even though FLMs' internally adaptive implementation of espoused HR practices is initially characterized as having a negative effect on team functioning (i.e., ITA), this kind of HR implementation behavior is still motivated by greater HR role identity. These findings necessitate a more sophisticated and balanced viewpoint in both conceptualizing role identity and applying social exchange perspectives. Regardless of the recognition of acting as the HR implementer within workgroups,

71

FLMs who approach HR implementation based on their own style and preferences signal messages to employees that their FLMs are poor exchange partners as they are self-centered (Farasat et al., 2022). Such perceptions may go against employees' perceived organizational support or perceived supervisor support and damage their ITA. In addition, results of this study also illustrate that FLMs' strict implementation of HR practices is not associated with ITA. This also provides compelling support for the social exchange perspective, with the premise that something given engenders an obligation (Wayne et al., 1997). Because the process of reciprocity between employees and FLMs are not static but fluid, employees may be satisfied only when the exchange relationship is balanced and may respond as required in return (Kilroy et al., 2022).

Practical Implications

This research also provides critical practical implications for managers in organizations that participate in HR implementation processes. First, it underscores the importance of FLMs' HR role identity in conducting HR tasks. Extant research has provided practical guidance for organizations to promote employees' role identity through organizational support (e.g., Sluss et al., 2008), while it specifies such support as a multilevel phenomenon that requires organizational members across all organizational levels to cooperate with FLMs for HR goal achievement. The findings of the current research highlight one promising way in which promotion, or leader development programs, can be advanced. In particular, leader development programs may be more effective when they target developing FLMs' HR role identity, because this embedded sense-making process can then support more readily observable HRM behaviors and abilities (Day et al., 2009; Lord & Hall, 2005). Therefore, this paper suggests that organizations and their managers constantly search for levers to increase FLMs' level of attachment and commitment to the HR job. Furthermore, given that FLMs' HR role identity and subsequent HR implementation behaviors

predict employees' satisfaction or agreement on such HR implementation, HR role identity could potentially be assessed and applied as the basis for managerial selection or promotion so as to ensure effective team functioning.

Second, it suggests that practicing managers should be sensitive to the impact that different organizational members may have on FLMs' formulation of a sense of identity. Additionally, the communication of a positive HR implementation environment should be the norm. That is, they are supposed to develop a favorable environment for FLMs to enact HR practices. For example, HR processes built by senior HR teams may benefit from a clear institutional description of the HR role toward FLMs through a mutual understanding of what can be expected from HR. Immediate superiors' direct assistance and peers' influence, on the other hand, could be enhanced through the establishment of open communication to overcome barriers and minimize conflicts and good practices and targeted network activities such as sharing experiences and motivating each other. This gives guidance for different managerial agents on creating the proper organizational environment to shape FLMs' internalization of the HR role expectations and motivating FLMs to attach these self-interests of role requirements to take on HRM responsibilities.

Third, considering that FLMs' HR role identity can be context-induced, organizations have to be aware that both FLMs and employees may imitate their supervisors' work attitudes (e.g., BLM). Even though this may seem to have advantages in terms of achieving maximum profits, it will also be dysfunctional (Greenbaum et al., 2012). In particular, this paper suggests that companies should identify, promote, and reward people in managerial positions who consider service, morality, ethics, and harmony as much as they consider in pursuing productivity and business competence (Kalyar et al., 2020; Valentine et al. 2014). Furthermore, companies should find a way for minimizing BLM among managers by setting goals and performance evaluation

strategies that imply the company's long-term survival and success (Farasat et al., 2022), such that it is beneficial for the company to inform FLMs about appropriate behavior norms that are necessary to achieve not only business profits but also HR goals (Mesdaghinia et al., 2019). In the similar vein, given that cynical perceptions about HR may spread among FLMs, companies should take actions to manage this threat. For example, senior managers (e.g., the HR professionals) can clearly communicate the HR strategies and procedures to ensure FLMs to have appropriate understanding of the intention of the enforced HR practices. In doing so, FLMs will sense that decision-making is in their control and may not perceive the HR responsibility as a menace to their self-interests (O'Brien et al., 2004).

Finally, given the crucial role FLMs play in communicating HR messages and enforcing HR practices within workgroups, organizations should be aware of authorizing FLMs to take various context-specific actions which fit the best their local work environment. Faced with the competitive business environment, corporate managers are often under the pressure of making changes in their policies and strategies. In this case, HR practices could be developed at the top management level which are aligned with the overall visions of the organization, while FLMs should be enabled to make discretionary decisions on how to carry out such HR duties to assure the acceptance of employees and the achievement of HR goals.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

As with any empirical study, this study is not without limitations. First, this research acknowledges a potential limitation of not conducting structural equation modelling (SEM). Indeed, SEM is widely used in the research of organizational science, and this approach is found effective in examining research models systematically. However, the main purpose of this research is to reveal the specific mechanisms in the process of developing FLMs' HR role identity and their

HR implementation behaviors, particularly the moderating effects of individual workplace status and goal orientations. According to Gefen et al. (2000), compared with SEM, regression suits better for paths analysis and may avoid problems such as multicollinearity (Busemeyer & Jones 1983). Even so, SEM was still conducted, and the results have shown general consistency with this research findings.

Second, the current research also recognizes the methodological limitation on the causal inference. Even though the data was collected using a time-lagging method, it is possible that the research analysis could be influenced by external factors during the data collection or during the time lag period. Due to the complexity of the research model, this thesis proposes that there might be other considerations on the research design. For example, by adopting the quasi-experimental method, samples of this study are not selected randomly which may mitigate the unexpected influence of external factors (e.g., Waldman et al., 2013). Otherwise, it could also benefit from gathering data from multiple waves (i.e., Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3). The current research design was limited by accessibility of field samples and time-frame set. Therefore, it allows a more ideal type of research design in the future attempt.

Third, due to the limitation of the data, all study variables were operationalized at the team level. Even though this research offers primary evidence that FLMs' perceptions of HR involvement of their immediate superiors and peers may encourage or impair their HR role identity. It did not, however, examine organization-level or division-level antecedents which may also have an effect. As suggested by Kou et al. (2022), HR involvement by the other HR actors can be analyzed as a multi-level phenomenon. Therefore, this paper encourages future works exploring division- or organization-level factors and conducting cross-level analyses based on this line of theorization.

The fourth possible limitation is that all participants in this study were from Chinese companies, which may raise concerns about the generalizability of the findings due to the fact that Chinese people are likely to behave in high conformity with social others' expectations (Yang, 1981). Even though both self-views and others' views should be influential in almost any cultural context, the relative intensity of their effects on HR role identity may be contingent on whether FLMs work in an independent or a collective culture (Farmer et al., 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Additionally, given that many of the hypotheses are grounded in the social exchange theory, this paper realizes that the Chinese culture, which is collectivistic in essence, may also affect exchange relationships between superiors and subordinates. That said, such exchanges may in turn influence the degree to which reciprocity is valued (Gouldner, 1960). For instance, employees from collectivist cultures seem to share communal goals within workgroups (Bochner, 1994; Triandis et al., 1988), and they regard superiors' attitudes and workplace status as more reliable. Thus, they may sense an obligation toward the bottom line emphasized by their high-BLM immediate superiors compared with employees in individualistic cultures such as the U.S. (Babalola et al., 2021). If so, evaluations of superiors' behaviors and performance may be elevated (Shen et al., 2011). The consideration of cultures is also consistent with the social context perspective, indicating that culture or external environment acts as an important antecedent to effective HR systems (Ferris et al., 1998). To this end, this paper encourages future endeavors on considering the possibility of cultural influences.

Fifth, the current research model focuses on the antecedents of FLMs' HR role identity and suggests direct effects of FLMs' HR role identity on their HR implementation behaviors. The assumption is that FLMs initially possess a weaker understanding of HR duties. External stimulations could have a significant effect on HR role identity. This also implies that immediate

76

superiors and peer FLMs are independent of each other to play an equal role in influencing FLMs' HR role identity. However, it did not place substantial emphasis on the possible negative side of FLMs' HR role identity. For instance, if FLMs themselves hold a higher level of HR role identity after HR devolution, extra involvement of others might mitigate their self-verification, thereby hindering the probability of desired HR implementation behaviors and performance (Farmer et al., 2003).

Sixth, even though the current research highlighted the magnitude of FLMs' HR role identity in the relationship between HR actors' involvement and their behavior to enact HR practices, it is realistic to assume a direct effect of HR involvement on FLMs' HR implementation behaviors regardless of FLMs' identification with the HR role. This assumption could be supported by the existing research findings (e.g., Torrington & Hall, 1996; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003). For example, Sikora and Ferris (2014) found that the quality of social interactions between HR managers and FLMs is positively related to FLMs' HR implementation. Considering this research context, when the immediate superior/peer and FLM relationship is strong and positive, FLMs are likely to have more trust in the HR function and place more value on the former's directions. As a result, they will work actively with them to perform their HR duties more fully (Sikora & Ferris, 2014). In contrast, negative HR involvement or poor relationships with immediate superiors or peers hamper FLMs' HR implementation efforts. Hence, this paper suggests further research seeking a more comprehensive framework including not only indirect but also direct effects of HR involvement on FLMs' HR enactment behaviors.

Seventh, this thesis highlights the importance of the workplace status as a boundary condition which strengthens the influences of immediate superiors' and peers' HR involvement and FLMs' HR role identity. Although this is a compelling pursuit, there is still a room for future

investigations on other potential moderators to explain these relationships. For example, in the attempt to explain the role leaders' ethical behavior plays in influencing subordinates' attitudes and behaviors, research has shown the moderating effect of leaders' role model influence at the unit level (e.g., Ogunfowora, 2014). More specifically, Ogunfowora (2014) conceptualized leader role modeling strength as a unit-level construct that explains within-team agreement concerning unit members' perceptions of their leader as a role model of ethical work behaviors. Moreover, Brown and Trevino (2006) suggested that individuals' in-work behaviors could be influenced by various role models because it enables them to offset the unfavorable effects from other role models (Ogunfowora, 2014). In this line of reasoning, it is reasonable to anticipate that there should be interactive effects between immediate superiors' (or peer FLMs') HR involvement and their role model influence that enhance FLMs' HR role identity.

Similarly, this thesis predicts that, in addition to workplace status, immediate superiors' and peers' workplace reputation may also influence the effects of their HR involvement on FLMs' HR role identity. According to Ferris and colleagues (2003), personal reputation represents a "complex combination of salient personal characteristics and accomplishments, demonstrated behavior, and intended images presented over some period of time" (p. 213). In a study of Hochwarter et al. (2007), personal reputation was found to play a critical role in the relationship between political behavior and uncertainty, exhaustion, and performance. In particular, workplace reputation reflects the immediate superior's or peer FLM's ability to *get things done* (Stouten et al., 2010). Thus, it is possible that immediate superiors or peers who are viewed as having a high workplace reputation may be more legitimate, capable (Gioia & Sims, 1983), and responsible (Neves & Story, 2015; Ostrom, 2003). In the sense, this research suggests future attempts that examine the interactive effects of the HR actors' involvement and their workplace reputation on

influencing FLMs' HR role identity. This is of benefit to the scholarship and practice because personal reputation is deemed as a significant signaling function which conveys information about one's intentions behind behaviors (Posner, 1997), and consequently, impacts performance (Hochwarter, 2007).

Finally, this study further assumes that, in addition to ITA, FLMs' HR role identity contributes to HR implementation effectiveness within workgroups. This relationship might be either direct or indirect. In other words, it could be mediated or moderated by FLMs' actual behaviors to enforce HR practices. Theorists on role identity warn that a role identity leads to role-consistent performance only when the demands of a context are consistent with the behavior of that identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). That said, when consistency occurs, support from the HR actors yields self-verification and validates the HR identity, thereby contributing to HR effectiveness. When context-specific demands are inconsistent with a higher HR role identity and identity-consistent enactment is not verified, HR role identity will suffer, and the FLM will feel distressed about the HR role (Burke, 1991). Moreover, group HR practices enforcement may be influenced by the extent to which FLMs are required to engage in HR responsibilities or how the organization's HR function itself is developed. Although this is beyond the scope of the study, it encourages future research efforts to be made regarding a more complex but profound framework to discover other possible outcomes of FLMs' HR role identity.

TABLE 1. Definitions of Study Constructs

Constructs	Definitions
Immediate Superior's HR Orientation	Immediate superior's public approval and authorization of HR implementation in the division to set priorities and allocate resources in the context of daily HR routines.
Immediate Superior's Bottom-Line Mentatlity	Immediate superiors' one-dimensional thinking that revolves around securing bottom-line outcomes to the neglect of competing priorities.
Immediate Superior's Workplace Status	Immediate superiors' relative standing in an organization, reflected in the respect, prestige, and prominence perceived by other organizational members.
Peer FLM's HR Implementation	An FLM's perception of the extent to which they allocate their time and effort to HR activities.
Peer FLM's Cynicism about HR	An FLM's general disbelief of the organization's stated or implied motives for HR practices.
Peer FLM's Workplace Status	Peer FLMs' relative standing in an organization, reflected in the respect, prestige, and prominence perceived by other organizational members.
FLM's HR Role Identity	An FLM's internalization of meanings associated with HR duties entrusted by the organization.
Strict Implementation	FLMs' enactment behaviors that are aligned with what is written in instruction manuals.
Externally Adaptive Implementation	FLMs' enactment behaviors that adapt some contents of espoused HR practices to fit the local contexts.
Internally Adaptive Implementation	FLMs' enactment behaviors that adapt some contents of espoused HR practices to fit their personal values.
Learning Goal Orientation	FLMs' desire to improve their capabilities and master challenging situations by learning new skills or knowledge.
Performance Avoidance Goal Orientation	FLMs' desire to keep away from disclosing one's low ability or receiving negative judgment from others.
Intra-team Acceptance	The extent to which team members agree on the adopted HR strategies within the workgroup.

| FLM's Workplace Status | FLMs' relative standing in an organization, reflected in the respect, prestige, and prominence perceived by other organizational members. |

TABLE 2. Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Cronbach's Alphas of Study

Variables

able	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	3.55	0.85	-																	
	3.91	0.82	.35***	-																
b	4.93	0.98	−.06	−.06	-															
	3.67	1.48	−.03	−.20	−.17	-														
FLM[a]	5.35	1.90	.08	−.16	−.16	.78***	-													
	3.85	1.04	−.05	−.27	−.03	.28**	.27**	(.92)												
	3.62	1.01	.17	.18	.20*	.16	.25*	−.03	(.92)											
	3.61	0.99	−.04	−.02	.04	.23*	.20*	.03	.19*	(.85)										
	3.79	0.97	.03	−.17	−.06	.06	.10	.54***	.06	.16	(.92)									
	3.64	0.84	.06	.01	−.03	.22*	.26**	.16	.30**	.20*	.04	(.86)								
	3.74	0.88	.04	.07	−.01	.19	.14	.20*	.16	.49***	.08	.12	(.80)							
	3.56	1.05	−.20	−.20	−.07	.18	.04	.34***	−.35***	.29**	.43***	−.14	.24*	(.85)						
	3.88	0.97	.17	.14	−.05	−.02	.00	−.03	−.02	−.07	−.05	−.16	.00	.04	(.90)					
	3.66	0.91	.25*	.28**	−.10	.06	−.02	−.09	.03	.26**	.07	−.04	.16	.09	.15	(.84)				
	3.67	0.40	−.01	.04	−.14	.13	.14	.25**	−.13	−.05	.18	.10	.07	.26**	.16	.03	(.85)			
	3.88	0.45	−.10	−.08	−.03	.03	.01	.06	-.09	.08	−.06	−.09	.12	.26**	.48***	.07	.21*	(.84)		
	1.97	0.42	−.14	−.10	.12	−.07	−.11	−.08	−.21*	.23*	.17	−.17	−.02	.26**	−.27	−.05	−.30	−.45***	(.87)	
	3.62	0.46	.00	−.06	.04	.20*	.13	.11	.27**	.05	−.09	−.04	.19	.09	.16	.08	.14	.34***	−.37***	(.8
	3.75	0.42	−.05	−.03	−.21	.01	.14	.05	−.07	−.02	−.08	−.03	.14	.20*	.38***	.04	.32***	.60***	−.41***	.37

Note. *N* = 105. [a] Rated by focal FLMs. [b] Rated by employees. Data collected from employees are aggregated to the team level. Cronbach's alpha values of study variables are in parentheses along the diagonal.

AMO = ability-motivation-opportunity. CSE = core self-evaluation. MHRO = immediate superior's HR orientation. MBLM = immediate superior's bottom-line mentality. Msta = immediate superior's workplace status. PHRI = peer FLM's HR implementation. Pcyn = peer FLM's cynicism about HR. Psta = peer FLM's workplace status. RI = FLM's HR role identity. LGO = learning goal orientation. PAGO = performance avoidance goal orientation. SImp = strict implementation. EApt = externally adaptive implementation. IApt = internally adaptive implementation. ITA = intra-team acceptance. Fsta = FLM's workplace status.
* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.

TABLE 3. Results for Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Factor Structure	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	IFI	TLI	CFI
FLM-rated measures						
HRO+PHRI+BLM+Pcyn	197.82	129	1.53	.95	.94	.95
HRO+PHRI+BLM, Pcyn	211.32	132	1.60	.94	.93	.94
HRO, PHRI, BLM+Pcyn	235.82	134	1.76	.93	.91	.93
HRO, PHRI, BLM, Pcyn	246.40	135	1.83	.92	.91	.92
Employee-rated measures						
SImp+EApt+IApt+ITA+ Fsta	164.64	160	1.03	1.00	1.00	1.00
SImp+EApt+IApt,+ITA, Fsta	449.68	164	2.74	.94	.94	.94
SImp+Eapt+IApt, ITA, Fsta	566.66	167	3.39	.92	.91	.92
SImp+EApt, IApt, ITA, Fsta	687.31	169	4.07	.90	.89	.90
SImp, EApt, IApt, ITA, Fsta	709.28	170	4.17	.89	.88	.89

Note. FLN-rated measures ($N = 105$). Employee-rated measures ($N = 518$).

df degrees of freedom, *IFI* incremental fit index, *TLI* Tucker-Lewis index, *CFI* comparative fit index, *RMR* root mean square residual.

HRO = immediate superior's HR orientation. PHRI = peer FLMs' HR implementation. BLM = immediate superior's bottom-line mentality. Pcyn = peer FLMs' cynicism about HR. SImp = strict implementation. EApt = externally adaptive implementation. IApt = internally adaptive implementation. ITA = intra-team acceptance. Fsta = FLM's workplace status.

TABLE 4. Moderation Effects of Immediate Superior Workplace Status

Variable[a]	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Tenure	0.37^{*}	0.30^{*}	.23	.21
Tenure as FLM	$-.24$	$-.17$	$-.16$	$-.12$
Team size	$-.10$	$-.05$	$-.06$	$-.10$
AMO	$-.13$	$-.11$	$-.09$	$-.09$
CSE	$-.12$	.00	.00	.01
MHRO		$.28^{**}$	$.29^{**}$	$.31^{***}$
MBLM		$-.31^{**}$	$-.37^{***}$	$-.38^{***}$
Msta			$.34^{***}$	$.33^{***}$
MHRO x Msta				$.29^{***}$
MBLM x Msta				$.24^{**}$
F	2.83^{*}	5.38^{***}	7.54^{***}	9.54^{***}
R^2	.13	.28	.39	.50
ΔR^2	$.13^{*}$	$.15^{***}$	$.11^{***}$	$.12^{***}$

Note. $N = 105$. Entries are standardized regression coefficients.
[a] Variables are standardized.
AMO = ability-motivation-opportunity. CSE = core self-evaluation.
MHRO = immediate superior's HR orientation. MBLM = immediate
superior's bottom-line mentality. Msta = immediate superior's workplace
status.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 5. Moderation Effects of Peer FLM Workplace Status

Variable[a]	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Tenure	.37[*]	.35[*]	.30[*]	.31[*]
Tenure as FLM	−.24	−.23	−.21	−.17
Team size	−.10	−.09	−.08	−.06
AMO	−.13	−.16	−.16	−.17
CSE	−.12	−.04	−.07	−.07
PHRI		.41[***]	.39[***]	.43[***]
Pcyn		−.18[*]	−.20[*]	−.23[**]
Psta			.21[*]	.20[*]
PHRI x Psta				.15[†]
Pcyn x Psta				.25[**]
F	2.83[*]	6.19[***]	6.51[***]	7.60[***]
R^2	.13	.31	.35	.45
ΔR^2	.13[*]	.18[***]	.04[*]	.10[**]

Note. $N = 105$. Entries are standardized regression coefficients.
[a] Variables are standardized.
AMO = ability-motivation-opportunity. CSE = core self-evaluation. PHRI = peer FLM's HR implementation. Pcyn = peer FLM's cynicism about HR. Psta = peer FLM's workplace status.
[†] $p < .10$; [*] $p < .05$; [**] $p < .01$; [***] $p < .001$.

TABLE 6. Moderation Effect of Performance Avoidance Goal Orientation

Variable[a]	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Tenure	.13	.03	.04	.05
Tenure as FLM	.05	.12	.11	.10
Team size	−.05	−.03	−.03	−.04
AMO	−.04	−.01	.00	−.01
CSE	.08	.11	.12	.12
RI		.26*	.27*	.28**
PAGO			−.03	−.02
RI x PAGO				.12
F	.76	1.76	1.50	1.49
R^2	.04	.10	.10	.11
ΔR^2	.04	.06*	.00	.01

Note. $N = 105$. Entries are standardized regression coefficients.
[a] Variables are standardized.
AMO = ability-motivation-opportunity. CSE = core self-evaluation. RI = role identity. PAGO = performance avoidance goal orientation.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

TABLE 7. Moderation Effect of Learning Goal Orientation

Variable[a]	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Tenure	−.01	−.11	−.02	.03
Tenure as FLM	.02	.08	−.03	−.05
Team size	.04	.06	.06	.06
AMO	−.09	−.05	−.11	−.10
CSE	−.05	−.01	−.07	−.07
RI		$.27^{**}$	$.22^{*}$	$.22^{*}$
LGO			$.50^{***}$	$.50^{***}$
RI x LGO				$.18^{*}$
F	.29	1.42	6.35^{***}	6.30^{***}
R^2	.01	.08	.31	.34
ΔR^2	.01	$.07^{*}$	$.23^{***}$	$.03^{*}$

Note. $N = 105$. Entries are standardized regression coefficients.
[a] Variables are standardized.
AMO = ability-motivation-opportunity. CSE = core self-evaluation. RI = role identity. LGO = learning goal orientation.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 8. Results for Regression Analysis: FLM's HR Role Identity and Internally

Adaptive Implementation

Variable[a]	Model 1	Model 2
Tenure	.11	.02
Tenure as FLM	-.20	-.14
Team size	.04	.07
AMO	-.09	-.05
CSE	-.08	-.05
RI		.26[*]
F	.90	1.83
R^2	.04	.10
ΔR^2	.04	.06[*]

Note. $N = 105$. Entries are standardized regression coefficients.
[a] Variables are standardized.
AMO = ability-motivation-opportunity. CSE = core self-evaluation. RI =
FLM's HR role identity.
[*] $p < .05$.

88

TABLE 9. Results for Regression Analyses: FLM's Multiple Implementation Behaviors

and Intra-team Acceptance

Outcome: Intra-team acceptance	Step 1					Step 2				
	b	Std. Error	Beta	t	R^2	b	Std. Error	Beta	t	R^2
(Constant)	3.18	.40		7.93	.06	3.14	.80		3.91	.24
Tenure	.10	.05	.33	2.07[*]		.11	.05	.37	2.49[*]	
Tenure as FLM	−.03	.04	−.13	−.83		−.05	.04	−.20	−1.33	
Team size	.05	.05	.10	1.02		.05	.04	.11	1.17	
AMO	.02	.06	.03	.29		.01	.05	.02	.23	
CSE	−.01	.06	-.02	−.21		−.02	.06	−.04	−.37	
SImp						−.02	.11	−.01	−.13	
EApt						.21	.11	.20	1.96[†]	
IApt						−.32	.12	−.30	−2.81[**]	

Note. AMO = ability-motivation-opportunity. CSE = core self-evaluation. SImp = strict implementation. EApt = externally adaptive implementation. IApt = internally adaptive implementation.
[†] $p < .10$; [*] $p < .05$; [**] $p < .01$.

TABLE 10. Results for Regression Analyses: Intra-team Acceptance and FLM's

Workplace Status

Outcome: FLM's workplace status	Step 1					Step 2				
	b	Std. Error	Beta	t	R^2	b	Std. Error	Beta	t	R^2
(Constant)	4.25	.36		11.74	.07	3.02	.42		7.18	.24
Tenure	−.07	.04	−.23	−1.47		−.10	.04	−.37	−2.54[*]	
Tenure as FLM	.06	.04	.28	1.76[†]		.07	.03	.33	2.32[*]	
Team size	−.08	.04	−.20	−2.00[*]		−.10	.04	−.24	−2.67[**]	
AMO	−.04	.05	−.08	−.77		−.05	.05	−.09	−.98	
CSE	−.01	.05	−.02	−.18		−.01	.05	−.01	−.10	
ITA						.39	.08	.43	4.71[***]	

Note. AMO = ability-motivation-opportunity. CSE = core self-evaluation. ITA = intra-team acceptance.

[†] $p < .10$; [*] $p < .05$; [**] $p < .01$; [***] $p < .001$.

TABLE 11. Sobel Tests for Indirect Effects of Intra-team Acceptance

Model	Effect estimate	z-value	S. E.	*p*-value
EApt --> ITA --> Fsta	.08	1.78	.05	.08[†]
IApt --> ITA --> Fsta	−.13	−2.38	.05	.02[*]

Note. SImp = strict implementation. EApt = externally adaptive implementation. IApt = internally adaptive implementation. ITA = intra-team acceptance. Fsta = FLM's workplace status.

[†] $p < .10$; [*] $p < .05$.

TABLE 12. Validity and Reliability of Study Variables

Survey Items	Factor Loadings
Immediate Superior's HR Orientation	
1. My immediate supervisor has clearly indicated his/her commitment to HRM.	.91
2. My immediate supervisor has championed HRM within the division.	.87
3. My immediate supervisor has a strong will ensuring the implementation of espoused HR practices.	.88
4. My immediate supervisor has much interest in managing how espoused HR practices are being implemented in teams.	.91
5. My immediate supervisor communicates HR strategies and relevant initiatives, providing resources necessary to ensure an effective implementation of espoused HR practices.	.80
Immediate Superior's Bottom-Line Mentality	
1. My immediate supervisor is solely concerned with meeting the bottom-line.	.91
2. My immediate supervisor only cares about the business.	.88
3. My immediate supervisor treats the bottom line as more important than anything else.	.91
4. My immediate supervisor cares more about profits than employee well-being.	.88
Immediate Superior's Workplace Status	
1. My immediate supervisor has a great deal of prestige in my organization.	.83
2. My immediate supervisor possesses high status in my organization.	.87
3. My immediate supervisor occupies a respected position in my organization.	.89
4. My immediate supervisor possesses a high level of prominence in my organization.	.75
Peer FLM's HR Implementation	
1. Many times, my peers are enthusiastic advocates of the HR policies of our organization.	.90
2. My peers clearly communicate HR-related initiatives or changes in my team.	.88
3. My peers implement HR practices, strictly following HR processes.	.87
4. My peers put a strong emphasis on my team members' participating in HR programs (e.g., training, culture-building activities), even when they are busy working.	.89
5. My peers emphasize following HR procedures.	.85
Peer FLM's Cynicism about HR	
1. My peers believe that the HR policy is not up-front about the reasons for doing it.	.77
2. My peers believe that there are ulterior motives for the HR policy.	.87
3. My peers think that the HR policy would misrepresents its intentions to gain acceptance for a decision it wanted to make.	.85
4. My peers think that the HR policy is not honest about its objectives.	.87
Peer FLM Workplace Status	

1. In general, peer FLMs in my division have a great deal of prestige in my organization. .87
2. In general, peer FLMs in my division possess high status in my organization. .81
3. In general, peer FLMs in my division occupy respected positions in my organization. .84
4. In general, peer FLMs in my division possess a high level of prominence in my organization. .63

FLM HR Role Identity

1. I often think about ways to develop and motivate my team members. .84
2. I have a clear self-view as a FLM whose primary role is to effectively develop and motivate people in my team. .89
3. To be a good people manager is an important part of my identity. .84
4. I believe that nurturing team members' productivity and engagement is my responsibility. .68
5. As a FLM, my core role is to provide my team members with necessary support so that they can perform better in their jobs. .69

Learning Goal Orientation

1. I am willing to select a challenging work assignment that I can learn a lot from. .87
2. I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge. .88
3. For me, development of my work ability is important enough to take risks. .89
4. I prefer to work in situations that require a high level of ability and talent. .86

Performance Avoidance Goal Orientation

1. I would avoid taking on a new task if there was a chance that I would appear rather incompetent to others. .80
2. Avoiding a show of low ability is more important to me than learning a new skill. .81
3. I'm concerned about taking on a task at work if my performance would reveal that I had low ability. .85
4. I prefer to avoid situations at work where I might perform poorly. .81

Strict Implementation
1. My FLM implements HR practices, strictly following corporate HR processes and guidelines. .83
2. My FLM emphasizes following HR rules and procedures and give my team members a clear guidance over the course of HR implementation. .84
3. My FLM straightforwardly follows the guidance of our company in implementing HR practices. .83
4. My FLM tries to adhere to the implementation manual of HR practices. .83

Externally Adaptive Implementation
1. My FLM implements espoused HR practices in a way that fits in well with our task environment. .84
2. My FLM flexibly applies rules and procedures of espoused HR practices according to differing circumstances. .82

3. My FLM tries to flexibly enact adopted HR practices according to a changing task environment of our team. .81

4. My FLM puts effort into changing and applying rules and procedures of espoused HR practices according to our team context. .82

Internally Adaptive Implementation

1. My FLM makes HR-related decisions according to my personal work style. .86
2. My FLM implements adopted HR practices in a way that aligns with my personal value. .85
3. My FLM enacts espoused HR practices based upon my subjective criteria. .83

4. Many times, HR-related decisions are subjectively made according to my FLM's own personal work style and value. .86

Intra-team Acceptance

1. There is consensus on the enforcement of espoused HR practice in my team. .85

2. We have little conflict between our FLM and team members concerning the implementation of espoused HR practices. .88

3. Our team members have a shared agreement with one another on how HR practices are implemented. .86

4. We do not experience conflict over the implementation phase of espoused HR practices. .86

FLM Workplace Status

1. My FLM has a great deal of prestige in my organization. .83
2. My FLM possesses high status in my organization. .82
3. My FLM occupies a respected position in my organization. .83
4. My FLM possesses a high level of prominence in my organization. .83

TABLE 13. Summary of Hypotheses

H1a:	Immediate supervisor's HR orientation (HRO) is positively related to FLM's HR role identity.	Supported
H1b:	Immediate supervisor's bottom-line mentality (BLM) is negatively related to FLM's HR role identity.	Supported
H2a:	Peer FLMs' HR implementation (HRI) is positively related to FLMs' HR role identity.	Supported
H2b:	Peer FLMs' cynicism about HR is negatively related to FLMs' HR role identity.	Supported
H1c:	Immediate superiors' workplace status moderates the effect of their HR orientation (H1a) on FLMs' HR role identity such that the effect is stronger among that with higher status than among that with lower status.	Supported
H1d:	Immediate superiors' workplace status moderates the effect of their BLM (H1b) on FLMs' HR role identity such that the effect is stronger among that with higher status than among that with lower status.	Not Supported
H2c:	Peer FLMs' workplace status moderates the effect of their HR implementation (H2a) on FLMs' HR role identity such that the effect is stronger among that with higher status than among that with lower status.	Supported
H2d	Peer FLMs' workplace status moderates the effect of their cynicism about HR (H2b) on FLMs' HR role identity such that the effect is stronger among that with higher status than among that with lower status.	Not Supported
H3:	FLM's HR role identity is positively related to their strict implementation, externally adaptive implementation, and internally adaptive implementation of espoused HR practices.	Supported
H4a:	FLM's learning goal orientation moderates the relationship between FLMs' HR role identity and their externally adaptive implementation such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels of learning goal orientation.	Supported
H4b:	FLM's performance avoidance goal orientation moderates the relationship between FLMs' HR role identity and their strict implementation, such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels of performance avoid orientation.	Not Supported
H5a:	Strict implementation is positively related to intra-team HRM acceptance (ITA).	Not Supported

H5b:	Externally adaptive implementation is positively related to intra-team HRM acceptance (ITA).	Supported
H5c:	Internally adaptive implementation is negatively related to intra-team HRM acceptance (ITA).	Supported
H6a:	Intra-team acceptance (ITA) mediates the positive relationship between FLMs' strict implementation of espoused HR practices and their workplace status.	Not Supported
H6b:	Intra-team acceptance (ITA) mediates the positive relationship between FLMs' externally adaptive implementation of espoused HR practices and their workplace status.	Supported
H6c:	Intra-team acceptance (ITA) mediates the negative relationship between FLMs' internally adaptive implementation of espoused HR practices and their workplace status.	Supported

FIGURE 1. Interactions of Immediate Superior's HR Orientation and their Workplace Status on FLM's HR Role Identity
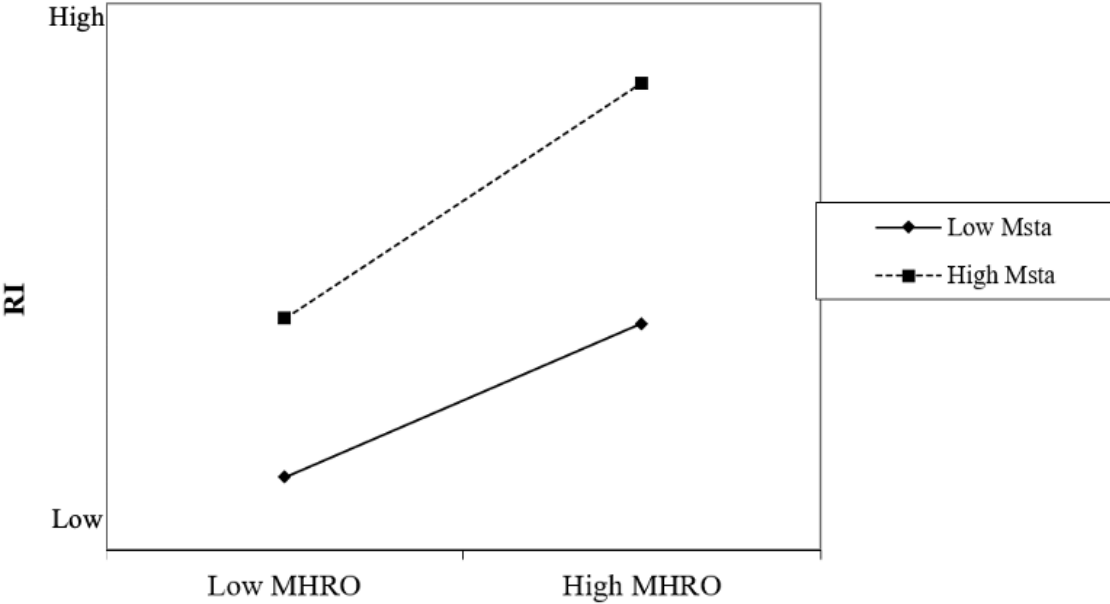
FIGURE 2. Interactions of Immediate Superior's Bottom-Line Mentality and their Workplace Status on FLM's HR Role Identity
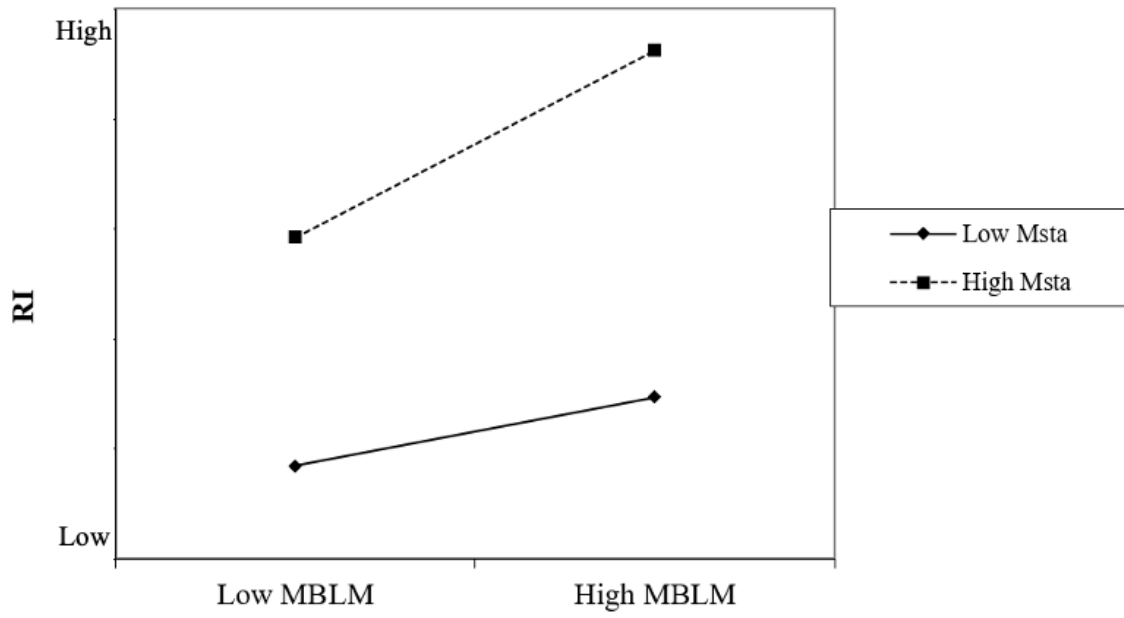
FIGURE 3. Interactions of Peer FLM's HR Implementation and their Workplace Status on FLM's HR Role Identity
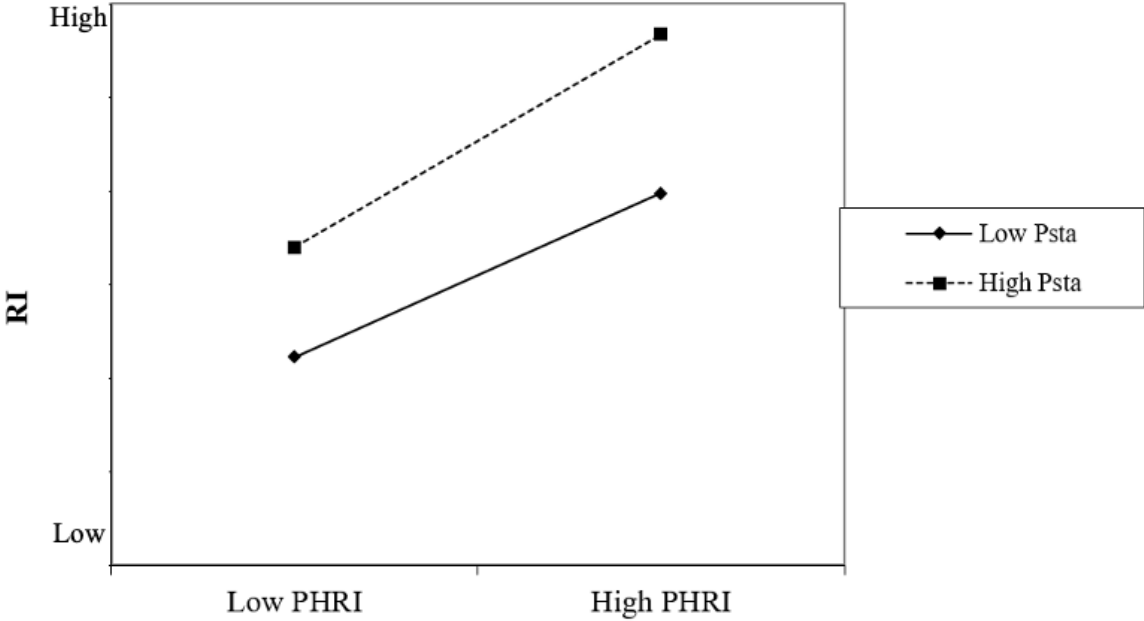
FIGURE 4. Interactions of Peer FLM's Cynicism about HR and their Workplace Status on FLM's HR Role Identity
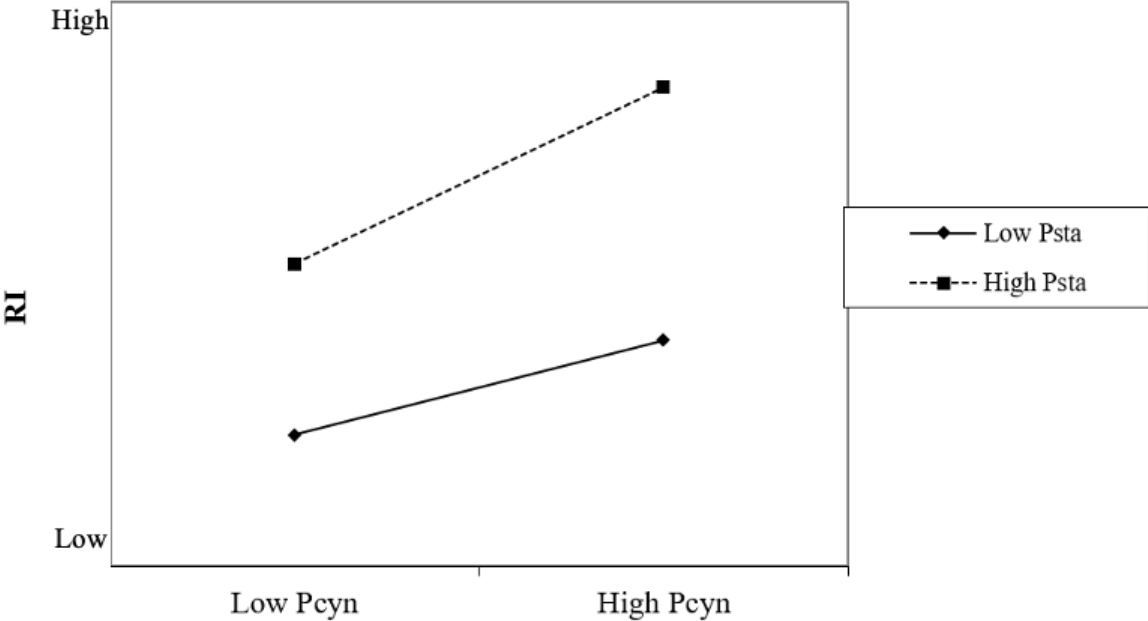
FIGURE 5. Interactions of FLM's HR Role Identity and Learning Goal Orientation on FLM's Externally Adaptive Implementation
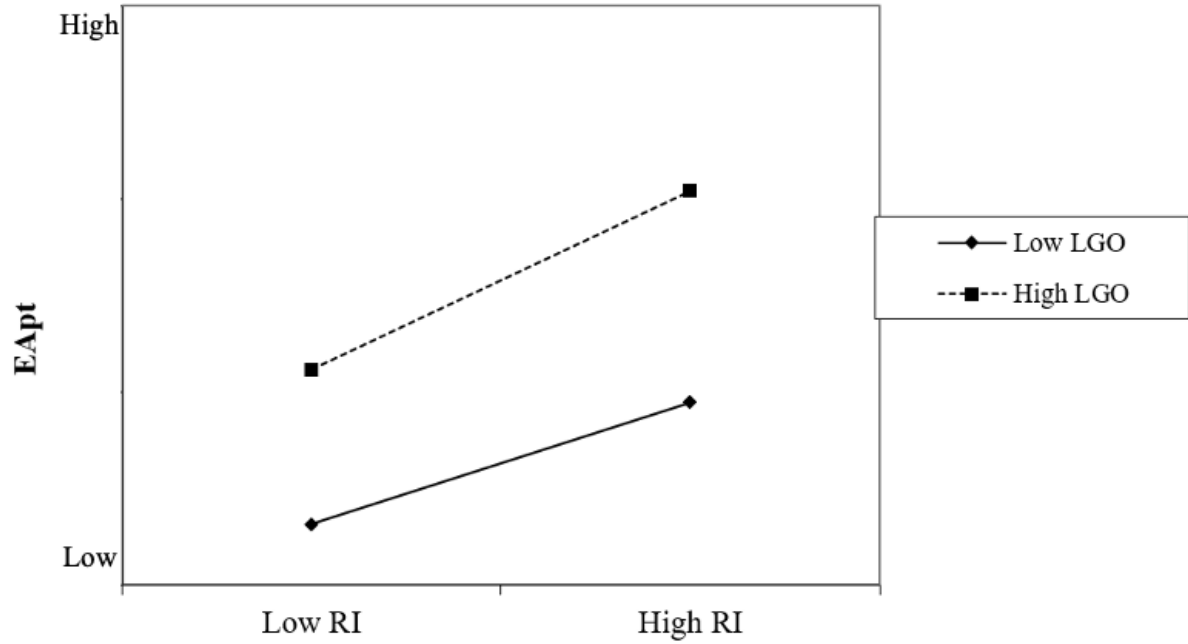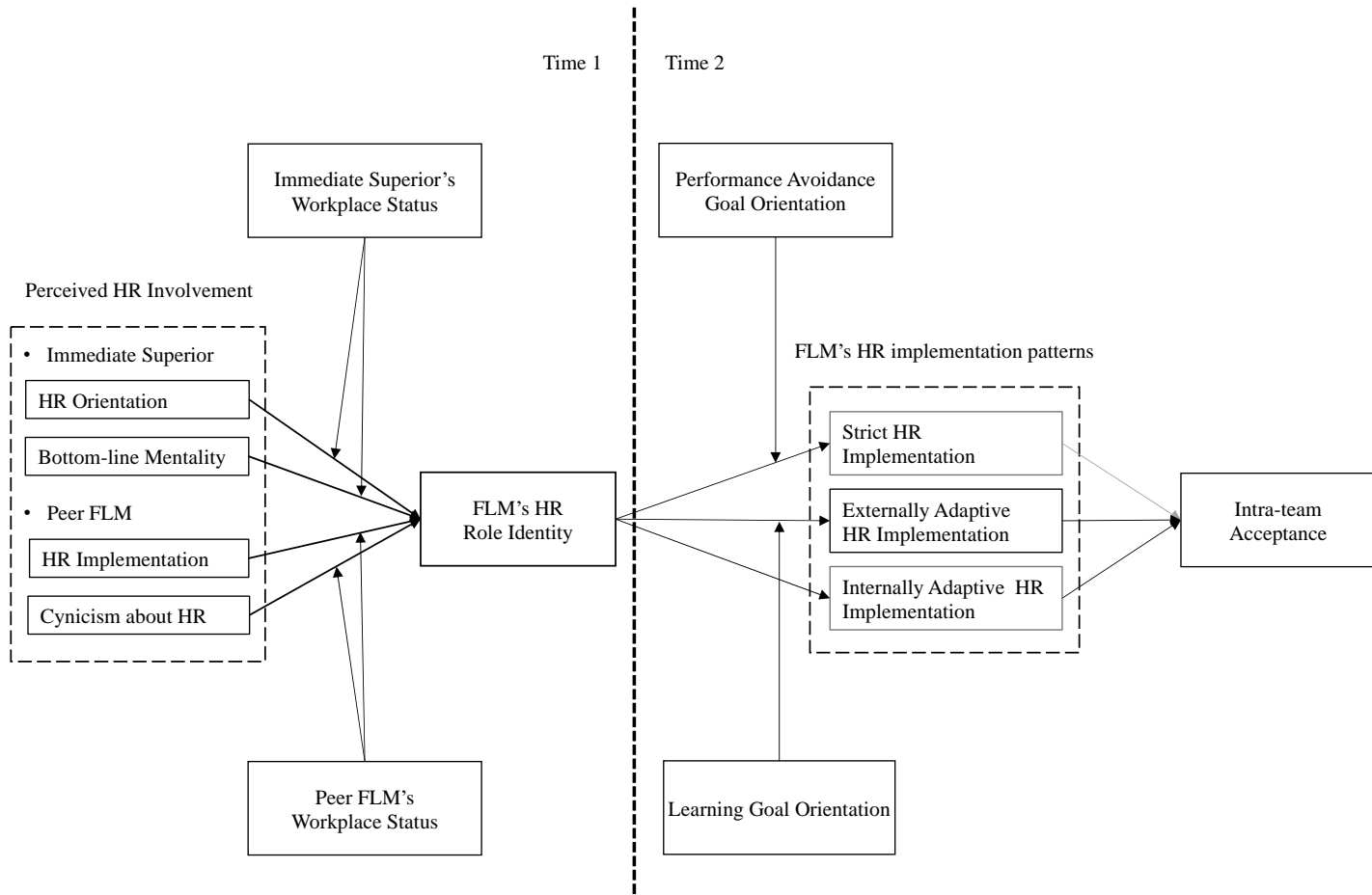

FIGURE 6. Conceptual Framework

Time 1

Time 2

Immediate Superior's
Workplace Status

Performance Avoidance
Goal Orientation

Perceived HR Involvement

- Immediate Superior

HR Orientation

Bottom-line Mentality

- Peer FLM

HR Implementation

Cynicism about HR

FLM's HR
Role Identity

FLM's HR implementation patterns

Strict HR
Implementation

Externally Adaptive
HR Implementation

Internally Adaptive HR
Implementation

Intra-team
Acceptance

Peer FLM's
Workplace Status

Learning Goal Orientation

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