

***THE MEDIATING ROLE OF HR CAPABILITY IN THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN HR RESEARCH UTILIZATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL
PERFORMANCE***

**PERAN MEDIASI KEMAMPUAN SDM DALAM HUBUNGAN ANTARA
PEMANFAATAN RISET SDM DAN KINERJA ORGANISASI**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how HR research utilization affects organizational performance and tests whether HR capability mediates this relationship in an emerging economy context. Using a quantitative, cross sectional survey, data were collected from 220 HR professionals and senior managers involved in strategic HR decision making across organizations in Indonesia. The hypothesized model was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling to estimate direct and indirect effects. Findings show that HR research utilization positively and significantly strengthens HR capability, and HR capability, in turn, positively influences organizational performance. The direct effect of HR research utilization on organizational performance is present but relatively weak. Mediation results confirm that HR capability significantly transmits the effect of research utilization to performance outcomes. Practically, the study suggests that organizations should not depend only on accessing or using HR research to improve results. Instead, they should invest in building HR capability, including analytical, professional, and strategic competencies, to translate research based knowledge into effective practices and measurable performance gains. The study advances evidence based HRM by showing that the research practice gap is primarily a capability development challenge rather than a knowledge access problem in emerging economy settings.

Keywords: HR research utilization; Evidence-based human resource management; HR capability; Organizational performance; Organizational effectiveness; Strategic human resource management.

ABSTRAK

Studi ini meneliti bagaimana pemanfaatan riset SDM memengaruhi kinerja organisasi dan menguji apakah kapabilitas SDM memediasi hubungan ini dalam konteks ekonomi berkembang. Dengan menggunakan survei kuantitatif lintas sektoral, data dikumpulkan dari 220 profesional SDM dan manajer senior yang terlibat dalam pengambilan keputusan SDM strategis di berbagai organisasi di Indonesia. Model yang dihipotesiskan dianalisis menggunakan Pemodelan Persamaan Struktural Kuadrat Terkecil Parsial (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling) untuk memperkirakan efek langsung dan tidak langsung. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pemanfaatan riset SDM secara positif dan signifikan memperkuat kapabilitas SDM, dan kapabilitas SDM, pada gilirannya, secara positif memengaruhi kinerja organisasi. Efek langsung pemanfaatan riset SDM terhadap kinerja organisasi ada tetapi relatif lemah. Hasil mediasi menegaskan bahwa kapabilitas SDM secara signifikan mentransmisikan efek pemanfaatan riset ke hasil kinerja. Secara praktis, studi ini menyarankan agar organisasi tidak hanya bergantung pada akses atau penggunaan riset SDM untuk meningkatkan hasil. Sebaliknya, mereka harus berinvestasi dalam membangun kapabilitas SDM, termasuk kompetensi analitis, profesional, dan strategis, untuk menerjemahkan pengetahuan berbasis riset ke dalam praktik yang efektif dan peningkatan kinerja yang terukur. Studi ini memajukan manajemen sumber daya manusia berbasis bukti dengan menunjukkan bahwa kesenjangan praktik penelitian terutama merupakan tantangan pengembangan kemampuan daripada masalah akses pengetahuan di lingkungan ekonomi berkembang.

Kata kunci: Pemanfaatan penelitian SDM; Manajemen sumber daya manusia berbasis bukti; Kemampuan SDM; Kinerja organisasi; Efektivitas organisasi; Manajemen sumber daya manusia strategis

INTRODUCTION

The field of Human Resource Management has experienced substantial growth over the past decades, reflected in the expanding volume of empirical research, theoretical advancements, and methodological innovations. Despite this progress, concerns persist regarding the limited influence of HRM research on managerial decision-making and organizational practice. This disconnect between academic knowledge and practical application has been widely acknowledged across management disciplines, raising questions about the extent to which HRM research contributes to tangible organizational outcomes, particularly in dynamic and competitive environments. In emerging economies such as Indonesia, this issue becomes increasingly salient as organizations continue to reposition the HR function from an administrative role toward a more strategic contributor to organizational performance (Bondarouk *et al.*, 2016; Gunawan *et al.*, 2025).

A growing body of literature has conceptualized this persistent research–practice divide as the “valley of death”, referring to the failure of research-based knowledge to be effectively translated into actionable organizational practices. Within HRM, this gap is often manifested in the continued reliance on intuition, tradition, or benchmarking rather than systematic use of scientific evidence in HR-related decision-making. Although the evidence-based management movement advocates for the integration of the best available research evidence into managerial practice, empirical investigations that explain how HR research utilization leads to improved organizational performance remain limited. This gap is particularly pronounced in emerging economies, where organizational constraints and underdeveloped HR

capabilities may inhibit the effective application of research-based insights (Arora and Mittal, 2024; Guo *et al.*, 2017).

To address this issue, the present study draws on multiple complementary theoretical perspectives, including evidence-based management, the resource-based view, and the ability–motivation–opportunity framework. From an evidence-based management perspective, HR research utilization is viewed as a mechanism through which organizations enhance the quality of HR decision-making by systematically incorporating scientific knowledge. The resource-based view further emphasizes HR capability as a strategic organizational resource that enables firms to transform knowledge inputs into value-creating HR practices. In parallel, the ability-motivation-opportunity framework provides a micro-foundation by explaining how HR capability facilitates the design and implementation of HR systems that enhance employee contributions to organizational performance (Kaur and Malik, 2025; Salvador-Gómez *et al.*, 2023).

Based on these theoretical foundations, this study seeks to empirically examine the role of HR capability in explaining the relationship between HR research utilization and organizational performance. Specifically, the study addresses four research questions: whether HR research utilization influences HR capability, whether HR capability affects organizational performance, whether HR research utilization has a direct effect on organizational performance, and whether HR capability mediates the relationship between HR research utilization and organizational performance. By answering these questions, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms

through which research-based HR knowledge contributes to organizational outcomes in an emerging economy context.

The contribution of this study lies in its effort to empirically unpack the mechanisms that bridge the gap between HR research and practice. Unlike prior studies that predominantly adopt a normative or conceptual stance toward evidence-based HRM, this study offers empirical evidence on how HR capability functions as a critical internal mechanism that translates research utilization into performance outcomes. Furthermore, by focusing on organizations across multiple sectors in Indonesia, this study extends the evidence-based HRM literature to an underexplored context, thereby enriching current understanding of how HR research utilization and HR capability jointly contribute to organizational performance in emerging economies (Nga and Tam, 2025; Singh *et al.*, 2025).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in three complementary perspectives that explain the relationship between knowledge utilization, organizational capability, and performance, namely evidence-based management, the resource-based view, and the ability-motivation-opportunity framework. Evidence-based management emphasizes the systematic use of the best available scientific evidence to inform managerial decision-making, thereby improving the quality and effectiveness of organizational practices. Within the HRM domain, HR research utilization reflects the extent to which HR-related decisions and policies are informed by empirical research rather than intuition or tradition (Negt and Haunschild, 2025; Stacho *et al.*,

2024). Complementing this view, the resource-based perspective conceptualizes HR capability as a strategic organizational resource that enables firms to leverage knowledge inputs and convert them into value-creating HR practices (Collins, 2021; Weller, 2018). The ability-motivation-opportunity framework further provides a micro-level explanation by highlighting how HR systems designed and implemented by capable HR functions enhance employee contributions to organizational performance (Beltrán-Martín and Bou-Llusar, 2018).

Prior empirical studies have increasingly examined the role of evidence-based approaches and analytical practices in HRM. Research has shown that organizations that utilize HR-related data and research evidence tend to demonstrate higher-quality HR decisions and more consistent alignment between HR practices and organizational goals (Martinson and De Leon, 2018; Milhem, 2025). Other studies indicate that evidence-based HR practices are positively associated with organizational effectiveness and performance outcomes, particularly when supported by adequate analytical infrastructure and managerial competence (Alkhamis, 2024; Van Beurden *et al.*, 2025).

Despite these advances, the literature also reveals persistent inconsistencies regarding the direct impact of evidence-based HR practices on organizational performance. Several studies report weak or non-significant direct relationships, suggesting that the mere availability or use of research evidence does not automatically translate into performance improvements (Ahmeti, 2023; Suhail *et al.*, 2025). This inconsistency points to a critical research gap concerning the mechanisms through which HR research

utilization influences organizational outcomes. Limited empirical attention has been given to the internal organizational capabilities required to effectively interpret, adapt, and implement research-based knowledge within HR systems.

This study positions itself as a response to this gap by explicitly examining HR capability as a mediating mechanism that links HR research utilization to organizational performance. While previous research has acknowledged the importance of HR roles and competencies, empirical models that integrate HR research utilization, HR capability, and organizational performance within a single explanatory framework remain scarce (Alafeefi and Ebrahim, 2025). By focusing on HR capability as a central construct, this study moves beyond direct-effect models and offers a more nuanced understanding of how research-based HR knowledge is transformed into performance-enhancing practices.

In terms of methodological trends, prior studies in this area have predominantly relied on cross-sectional survey designs and quantitative analytical techniques, with an increasing adoption of structural equation modeling to capture complex relationships among latent constructs. PLS-SEM has been widely recommended for predictive and exploratory research in HRM, particularly when examining mediation effects and models involving multiple constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2021). However, most existing studies have been conducted in developed economies, leaving emerging economy contexts underrepresented in the empirical evidence base.

Synthesizing these theoretical and empirical insights, this study develops a conceptual framework that integrates evidence-based management, the

resource-based view, and the ability–motivation–opportunity framework to explain how HR research utilization contributes to organizational performance through HR capability. This synthesis provides a coherent theoretical basis for the proposed hypotheses and establishes a clear linkage between prior literature and the methodological approach adopted in the subsequent section. By doing so, the study offers a theoretically grounded and empirically testable model that advances understanding of the research–practice relationship in HRM, particularly within emerging economies.

Hypothesis Development

HR Research Utilization and HR Capability

Evidence-based management emphasizes that organizational decisions are more likely to be effective when they are informed by systematically evaluated scientific evidence rather than intuition or past experience (Rousseau, 2012). In the HRM context, HR research utilization reflects the extent to which HR professionals actively access, interpret, and apply academic research findings when designing HR policies and practices. However, the effective use of research evidence requires more than access to information, as it depends on the capability of the HR function to translate abstract knowledge into actionable organizational practices.

From a resource-based view perspective, HR capability represents a valuable and strategic organizational resource that enables firms to absorb and deploy knowledge in ways that support organizational objectives (Sanders *et al.*, 2022). Organizations that actively utilize HR research are more likely to invest in developing analytical, professional, and strategic competencies within their HR function, as research-informed decision-

making demands higher levels of expertise and interpretive skill. Prior studies suggest that exposure to research-based knowledge enhances HR professionals' ability to critically evaluate practices and design more effective HR systems (Rajni, 2021). Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: HR research utilization has a positive effect on HR capability.

HR Capability and Organizational Performance

The relationship between HR capability and organizational performance has been widely examined in the HRM literature. According to the ability-motivation-opportunity framework, HR systems designed and implemented by capable HR functions enhance employee abilities, motivation, and opportunities to contribute, which in turn leads to improved organizational outcomes (Kaufman, 2020). HR capability encompasses the skills, knowledge, and strategic orientation of the HR function, which collectively shape the quality of HR practices and their alignment with organizational goals.

Empirical research indicates that organizations with stronger HR capabilities tend to exhibit higher levels of organizational effectiveness, operational efficiency, and overall performance (Alqudah *et al.*, 2022; Chuang *et al.*, 2015). Capable HR functions are better positioned to design integrated HR systems, support line managers, and align HR initiatives with strategic priorities, thereby contributing to performance improvement. Accordingly, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: HR capability has a positive effect on organizational performance.

HR Research Utilization and Organizational Performance

Evidence-based management literature suggests that the use of scientific evidence in managerial decision-making can improve organizational outcomes by reducing reliance on ineffective practices and enhancing decision quality (Briner *et al.*, 2022). In the HRM domain, HR research utilization is expected to contribute to organizational performance by informing the adoption of HR practices that are empirically linked to positive outcomes.

However, prior empirical findings regarding the direct effect of HR research utilization on performance remain mixed. While some studies report positive associations, others suggest that the impact may be limited when research evidence is not effectively embedded within organizational processes (Van Der Toegt and Rasmussen, 2017). Despite these inconsistencies, the theoretical expectation remains that greater utilization of HR research should, at least to some extent, be associated with improved organizational performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: HR research utilization has a positive effect on organizational performance.

The Mediating Role of HR Capability

Integrating the evidence-based management perspective with the resource-based view suggests that HR research utilization may not directly translate into performance outcomes without the presence of adequate organizational capabilities. HR capability serves as an internal mechanism that enables organizations to interpret, adapt, and implement research-based knowledge in ways that are aligned with organizational context and

strategy. In this sense, HR capability functions as a critical conduit through which HR research utilization influences organizational performance.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of organizational capabilities in mediating the relationship between knowledge inputs and performance outcomes, yet empirical examinations of this mechanism within the HRM context remain limited (Budhwar *et al.*, 2023). By positioning HR capability as a mediating variable, this study seeks to explain how HR research utilization is transformed into performance-enhancing HR practices. Based on this integrative reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: HR capability mediates the relationship between HR research utilization and organizational performance.

Conceptual Framework

This figure illustrates the conceptual framework examining the relationship between HR research utilization and organizational performance, with HR capability positioned as a mediating mechanism. The model proposes that HR research utilization positively influences HR

capability (H1) and organizational performance (H3), while HR capability positively affects organizational performance (H2). In addition, HR capability mediates the relationship between HR research utilization and organizational performance (H4), highlighting its role as a translation mechanism that enables research-based HR knowledge to be converted into performance outcomes.

The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in evidence-based management, the resource-based view, and the ability-motivation-opportunity framework. The model proposes that HR research utilization serves as an input that enhances HR capability, which in turn functions as a critical organizational mechanism for translating research-based knowledge into improved organizational performance. HR capability is therefore positioned as a mediator that explains how and why HR research utilization contributes to performance outcomes, rather than assuming a purely direct effect. This framework reflects the study’s focus on clarifying the mechanism through which the research-practice gap in HRM can be reduced.

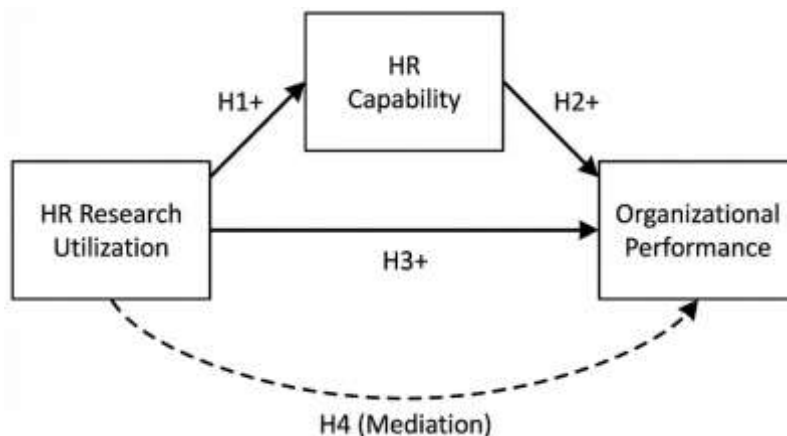


Fig 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design aimed at examining the causal relationships among HR research utilization, HR capability, and organizational performance. A quantitative design was selected because it is appropriate for testing theoretically grounded hypotheses and assessing both direct and indirect effects among latent constructs within a predictive framework. The study employs a cross-sectional survey design, in which data were collected at a single point in time to capture respondents' perceptions regarding the utilization of HR research, the capability of the HR function, and organizational performance.

The data used in this study consist primarily of primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. The respondents were key informants who hold strategic roles in HR-related decision-making, including HR managers, HR business partners, and senior managers involved in the formulation and implementation of HR policies. This selection was intended to ensure that the data accurately reflect organizational practices related to research utilization and HR capability. In addition to primary data, secondary data in the form of organizational reports, HR policy documents, and relevant academic publications were consulted to support the contextualization of the findings.

The population of this study comprises organizations operating in Indonesia that have a formal and structured HR function. The sample was determined using a purposive sampling technique based on predefined inclusion criteria. Respondents were required to have a minimum of two years of experience in a managerial or strategic HR role, to be directly involved in HR policy formulation or implementation,

and to possess sufficient understanding of research-informed decision-making in HR. A total of 220 valid responses were obtained, which meets the recommended sample size for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling, particularly for models involving mediation and multiple latent constructs.

Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire distributed electronically. The measurement items for each construct were adapted from established scales in the HRM and management literature and operationalized using a Likert-type scale. Prior to the main data collection, the questionnaire was reviewed to ensure clarity, relevance, and content validity. All responses were treated as confidential, and participation was voluntary to minimize response bias.

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with the assistance of appropriate statistical software. The analysis followed a two-stage procedure. First, the measurement model was evaluated to assess the reliability and validity of the constructs. Convergent validity was examined using indicator loadings and average variance extracted values, while internal consistency reliability was assessed using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. Discriminant validity was evaluated using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio. Second, the structural model was assessed to examine the hypothesized relationships among constructs by estimating path coefficients and their statistical significance through a bootstrapping procedure. The predictive power of the model was evaluated using coefficients of determination, effect size measures, and predictive relevance indicators. This analytical approach enables a comprehensive assessment of both the measurement properties and the

explanatory capability of the proposed research model.

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

Respondent characteristics are presented to provide an overview of the

demographic and professional profiles of the study participants. This information reflects the diversity of respondents involved in strategic human resource decision-making across various organizational sectors.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	112	50.9
	Female	108	49.1
Age (years)	24–34	96	43.6
	35–44	105	47.7
	45–54	19	8.6
Education level	Diploma (D3)	14	6.4
	Bachelor’s degree	123	55.9
	Master’s degree	81	36.8
	Doctoral degree	2	0.9
Position	HR Business Partner	105	47.7
	HR Manager	70	31.8
	Senior Manager	45	20.5
Work experience (years)	2–5	54	24.5
	6–15	121	55.0
	16–25	45	20.5
Organizational sector	Services and Professional	46	20.9
	Manufacturing	42	19.1
	Technology	31	14.1
	Healthcare	28	12.7
	Finance and Banking	24	10.9
	Government and State-Owned Enterprises	19	8.6
	Retail	17	7.7

Education 13 5.9

Descriptive Statistics of the Constructs

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the general tendencies of respondents’ perceptions regarding the main constructs examined in this study, namely HR Research Utilization, HR

Capability, and Organizational Performance. The mean values and standard deviations indicate the variability of respondents’ responses for each construct.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Constructs

Construct	Mean	SD
HR Research Utilization (HRRU)	3.036	0.932
HR Capability (HRC)	2.981	0.929
Organizational Performance (OP)	2.970	0.906

Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement model was evaluated to assess the validity and reliability of the latent constructs measured using reflective indicators. The assessment included convergent validity, internal reliability, and discriminant validity.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was evaluated using outer loading values and Average Variance Extracted. All indicators across constructs exhibited outer loading values above the threshold of 0.70, indicating that the indicators adequately represent their respective latent constructs.

Table 3. Indicator Outer Loadings

Indicator	Construct	Loading
HRRU1	HRRU	0.785
HRRU2	HRRU	0.794
HRRU3	HRRU	0.769
HRRU4	HRRU	0.791
HRRU5	HRRU	0.806
HRRU6	HRRU	0.789
HRRU7	HRRU	0.754
HRRU8	HRRU	0.846
HRRU9	HRRU	0.844
HRC1	HRC	0.806
HRC2	HRC	0.794
HRC3	HRC	0.748
HRC4	HRC	0.831
HRC5	HRC	0.779
HRC6	HRC	0.794
HRC7	HRC	0.763
HRC8	HRC	0.826
HRC9	HRC	0.811
OP1	OP	0.788
OP2	OP	0.742
OP3	OP	0.810
OP4	OP	0.805
OP5	OP	0.763
OP6	OP	0.812

OP7	OP	0.794
OP8	OP	0.775
OP9	OP	0.785

The Average Variance Extracted values for all constructs exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.50, indicating that each construct explains more than half of the variance of its indicators.

Internal reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha. All constructs demonstrated Composite Reliability values above 0.90 and Cronbach’s Alpha values above 0.90, indicating very strong internal consistency.

Internal Reliability

Table 4. Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	AVE	CR	Cronbach’s Alpha
HR Research Utilization (HRRU)	0.646	0.943	0.931
HR Capability (HRC)	0.623	0.937	0.924
Organizational Performance (OP)	0.618	0.936	0.923

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio. All HTMT values were below the

threshold of 0.85, indicating adequate discriminant validity among the constructs.

Table 5. HTMT Values among Constructs

	HRRU	HRC	OP
HRRU	1.000	0.562	0.424
HRC	0.562	1.000	0.575
OP	0.424	0.575	1.000

Structural Model Evaluation

The structural model was evaluated to test the causal relationships among latent constructs in accordance with the proposed hypotheses. The analysis was conducted using a bootstrapping procedure with 2,000 resamples and a 95 percent confidence interval.

Direct Hypothesis Testing

The estimated path coefficients indicate that all direct relationships in the structural model are statistically significant.

Table 6. Results of Direct Hypothesis Testing

Path	β	t	p	CI 2.5%	CI 97.5%
HRRU → HRC (H1)	0.529	11.697	<0.001	0.442	0.617
HRC → OP (H2)	0.454	6.773	<0.001	0.321	0.584
HRRU → OP (H3)	0.159	2.381	0.017	0.033	0.297

Coefficient of Determination and Effect Size. The coefficient of determination values

indicate the proportion of variance in the endogenous constructs explained by the exogenous constructs in the model.

Table 7. R Squared Values of Endogenous Constructs

Construct (Endogen)	R ²
HR Capability (HRC)	0.279
Organizational Performance (OP)	0.308

Effect size values were calculated to assess the relative contribution of each structural path.

Table 8. Effect Size Values

Path	f ²	Kategori
HRRU → HRC	0.388	Menengah–besar
HRC → OP	0.209	Menengah
HRRU → OP	0.025	Kecil

Predictive Relevance

Predictive relevance was evaluated using Q squared values obtained through a cross-validated prediction procedure.

Table 9. Predictive Relevance Values

Construct (Endogen)	Q ²
HR Capability (HRC)	0.250
Organizational Performance (OP)	0.292

Mediation Effect Testing

The mediation analysis was conducted to examine the role of HR Capability in mediating the relationship between HR Research Utilization and

Organizational Performance. The analysis was performed using bootstrapping to assess the indirect effect.

Table 10. Mediation Test Results (Indirect Effect)

Mediation path	Indirect Effect	t	p	CI 2.5%	CI 97.5%
HRRU → HRC → OP	0.240	5.549	<0.001	0.165	0.331

Model Fit and Common Method Bias

Model fit was assessed using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual, while potential common

method bias was evaluated using full collinearity variance inflation factor values.

Table 11. Model Fit and Common Method Bias Indicators

Indeks	Construct / Value
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SRMR (Model Fit)	0.050
VIF HR Research Utilization	1.424
VIF HR Capability	1.686
VIF Organizational Performance	1.445

DISCUSSION

This study set out to explain how HR research utilization contributes to organizational performance and to clarify the role of HR capability as a mediating mechanism within this relationship. The results demonstrate three key findings. First, HR research utilization has a strong and positive effect on HR capability. Second, HR capability exerts a substantial positive effect on organizational performance. Third, while HR research utilization also shows a direct relationship with organizational performance, this effect is relatively weak compared to its indirect effect through HR capability. Taken together, these findings provide a clear empirical answer to the research questions and indicate that the performance impact of HR research utilization is realized primarily through the development of internal HR capability rather than through direct application.

Interpreted through the lens of evidence-based management, these findings suggest that the persistent research-practice gap in HRM is not simply a problem of limited access to scientific evidence or low willingness to use research. Instead, the results indicate that organizations require sufficient HR capability to interpret, contextualize, and operationalize research-based knowledge before such knowledge can influence performance outcomes. Evidence-based management emphasizes informed decision-making grounded in scientific evidence, yet the present findings demonstrate that research utilization without adequate

capability development yields only limited performance gains. This highlights HR capability as a critical translation mechanism that converts research inputs into actionable HR practices.

From a resource-based view perspective, HR capability emerges as a strategic organizational resource that enables firms to transform intangible knowledge into value-creating practices. The strong mediating effect observed in this study indicates that HR capability functions as an internal bottleneck that determines whether HR research utilization can generate competitive advantage. Organizations that actively engage with HR research but lack the necessary analytical, professional, and strategic competencies within the HR function are unlikely to realize substantial performance benefits. In this sense, HR capability represents not merely a complementary factor, but a necessary condition for closing the gap between HR research and organizational outcomes.

The findings also provide important insights when viewed through the ability-motivation-opportunity framework. HR capability can be understood as an organizational-level enabler that allows research-informed HR systems to effectively enhance employee abilities, motivation, and opportunities to contribute. Without capable HR functions, research-based insights are unlikely to be embedded in coherent HR systems that shape employee behavior and performance. This perspective helps explain why the direct effect of HR research utilization

on organizational performance is comparatively weak, while the indirect pathway through HR capability is strong and significant.

In comparison with prior studies, the results align with research emphasizing the importance of HR capability and analytical competence in shaping HR effectiveness and organizational performance. At the same time, the findings extend existing literature by empirically demonstrating that HR research utilization does not guarantee improved performance outcomes. Instead, the study clarifies why previous empirical findings on the direct performance effects of evidence-based HR practices have been mixed, namely because the role of internal capability has often been overlooked. By explicitly modeling HR capability as a mediator, this study offers a more precise explanation of how and under what conditions research-based HR knowledge translates into organizational value.

This study makes several important contributions. Theoretically, it reframes evidence-based HRM from a knowledge-access problem into a capability-development problem, thereby advancing understanding of the mechanisms that bridge the research-practice divide. Empirically, it provides robust evidence from an emerging economy context, extending the generalizability of evidence-based HRM research beyond developed economies. Practically, the findings imply that organizations seeking to improve performance through evidence-based HRM should focus not only on encouraging the use of research but also on systematically investing in the development of HR capability. Such investments are essential for ensuring that research-informed HR decisions are

effectively translated into sustainable performance improvements.

Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. The cross-sectional research design limits causal inference over time, and the reliance on self-reported data may introduce perceptual bias, although diagnostic tests suggest that common method bias is unlikely to be a serious concern. In addition, the focus on organizations operating in Indonesia may constrain the generalizability of the findings to other institutional contexts. Future research could address these limitations by adopting longitudinal designs, incorporating multi-source data, and examining contextual moderators such as organizational culture or leadership support that may influence the effectiveness of HR research utilization. Such efforts would further enrich understanding of how HR capability shapes the translation of research into practice across diverse organizational settings.

From a policy perspective, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening HR capability as a foundation for effective evidence-based HRM. Policymakers and professional HR bodies may consider supporting initiatives that promote the development of analytical, strategic, and professional competencies within the HR function. Such initiatives could include competency frameworks, professional standards, or training guidelines that emphasize the effective use of research and evidence in HR decision-making. In emerging economy contexts, policy support for capability development may help organizations move beyond administrative HR roles toward more strategic and performance-oriented people management. Overall, aligning policy efforts with capability development can enhance the long-term

effectiveness of HR practices and their contribution to organizational performance.

CONCLUSION

This study empirically examined the role of HR research utilization in enhancing organizational performance through the mediating effect of HR capability within the context of an emerging economy. The findings demonstrate that HR research utilization positively influences HR capability and that HR capability, in turn, contributes positively to organizational performance. In addition, HR research utilization exhibits a direct relationship with organizational performance, although the magnitude of this effect is comparatively smaller. Most importantly, the results confirm that HR capability functions as a significant mediating mechanism, indicating that the impact of HR research utilization on organizational performance operates primarily through the strengthening of internal HR capabilities.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the evidence-based HRM literature by providing empirical support for the argument that the use of research evidence is insufficient to generate performance improvements unless it is accompanied by adequate organizational capability. By integrating evidence-based management, the resource-based view, and the ability-motivation-opportunity framework, this research advances current understanding of the mechanisms that bridge the gap between HR research and organizational practice. The study thus moves beyond normative discussions by offering a coherent and empirically tested explanation of how research-based HR knowledge is translated into organizational value.

In practical terms, the findings highlight the importance for organizations of simultaneously promoting the use of HR research and investing in the development of HR capability. Strengthening analytical, professional, and strategic competencies within the HR function appears to be a critical prerequisite for ensuring that research-informed HR decisions lead to sustainable performance outcomes. For future research, longitudinal designs and multi-level approaches are recommended to capture the dynamic interplay between HR research utilization, capability development, and organizational performance over time, as well as to explore additional contextual factors that may shape these relationships.

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