

**Enhancing Organizational Outcomes through HRD and Talent
Management: The Mediating Role of the AMO in Private Higher
Education Institutions in China**

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis was conducted in full compliance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). Except where proper acknowledgment is given, this work is solely the effort of the author. This thesis has not been accepted for the award of any other degree and is not being **concurrently** submitted for any other academic qualification.

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Enhancing Organizational Outcomes through HRD and Talent Management: The Mediating Role of the AMO in Private Higher Education Institutions in China

ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of Human Resource Development (HRD) and Talent Management (TM) practices on organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions (PHLIs) in China, with the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model serving as a mediating framework. Although HRD and TM are widely recognized as strategic drivers of organizational effectiveness, empirical evidence integrating these practices through the AMO model within the context of Chinese PHLIs remains limited. This study addresses this gap by developing and empirically testing a comprehensive framework linking HRD, TM, AMO, and organizational outcomes. A quantitative research design was employed, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to academic and administrative staff in selected private higher learning institutions in China. A total of 393 valid responses were analyzed using statistical techniques including reliability analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and mediation analysis. The findings indicate that both HRD and TM practices have a significant positive influence on organizational outcomes, including productivity, performance, and employee retention. Additionally, HRD and TM practices were found to positively affect the dimensions of ability, motivation, and opportunity. The results further demonstrate that the AMO model partially mediates the relationships between HRD and organizational outcomes, as well as between TM and organizational outcomes. These findings confirm the critical role of AMO as a mechanism through which HR practices translate into improved institutional performance. This study contributes to the human resource management and higher education literature by validating the AMO model within the context of private higher learning institutions in China. The findings offer practical insights for institutional leaders and policymakers in designing integrated HRD and TM strategies that enhance employee capability, motivation, and engagement to achieve sustainable organizational success.

Keywords: Human Resource Development, Talent Management, AMO Model, Organizational Outcomes, Private Higher Learning Institutions, China

Meningkatkan Hasil Organisasi melalui Pembangunan Sumber Manusia dan Pengurusan Bakat: Peranan Model AMO sebagai perantara dalam Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Swasta di China

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneliti pengaruh amalan Pembangunan Sumber Manusia (HRD) dan Pengurusan Bakat (TM) terhadap hasil organisasi dalam institusi pengajian tinggi swasta (IPTS) di China, dengan menggunakan model Kepercayaan-Motivasi-Peluang (AMO) sebagai kerangka perantara. Walaupun HRD dan TM secara meluas diiktiraf sebagai pemacu strategik keberkesanan organisasi, bukti empirikal yang menggabungkan kedua-dua amalan ini melalui model AMO dalam konteks IPTS di China masih terhad. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengisi jurang tersebut dengan membangunkan dan menguji secara empirikal satu kerangka komprehensif yang menghubungkan HRD, TM, AMO dan hasil organisasi. Reka bentuk penyelidikan kuantitatif telah digunakan, dan data dikumpul melalui soal selidik berstruktur yang diedarkan kepada kakitangan akademik dan pentadbiran di beberapa IPTS terpilih di China. Sebanyak 393 respons yang sah telah dianalisis menggunakan teknik statistik termasuk analisis kebolehpercayaan, analisis faktor eksploratori, dan analisis perantara. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua amalan HRD dan TM mempunyai pengaruh positif yang signifikan terhadap hasil organisasi, termasuk produktiviti, prestasi dan pengekalan pekerja. Selain itu, amalan HRD dan TM juga didapati memberi kesan positif ke atas dimensi kepercayaan, motivasi dan peluang. Hasil analisis turut menunjukkan bahawa model AMO memainkan peranan sebagai perantara separa dalam hubungan antara HRD dan hasil organisasi serta antara TM dan hasil organisasi. Penemuan ini mengesahkan peranan penting model AMO sebagai mekanisme yang membolehkan amalan pengurusan sumber manusia diterjemahkan kepada peningkatan prestasi institusi. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada literatur pengurusan sumber manusia dan pendidikan tinggi dengan mengesahkan kebolehlaksanaan model AMO dalam konteks IPTS di China. Penemuan ini memberikan panduan praktikal kepada pihak pengurusan institusi dan pembuat dasar dalam merangka strategi HRD dan TM yang bersepadu bagi meningkatkan kepercayaan, motivasi dan penglibatan pekerja ke arah kejayaan organisasi yang mampan.

Kata Kunci: Pembangunan Sumber Manusia, Pengurusan Bakat, Model AMO, Hasil Organisasi, Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Swasta, China.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF APPENDICES	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	13
1.1 Introduction	13
1.2 Background of Study	13
1.3 Problem Statement	16
1.4 Research Questions	18
1.5 Research Objectives	19
1.6 Contribution	20
1.6.1 Theoretical Contribution	20
1.6.2 Practical Significance	21
1.6.3 Methodological Contribution	21
1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study	22
1.8 Operational Definition of Key Terms	23
1.8.1 Human Resource Development	23
1.8.2 Talent Management	23
1.8.3 Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO)	23
1.8.4 Organizational Outcomes	24
1.8.5 Private Higher Learning Institutions	24
1.9 Organization of the Thesis	24
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	26
2.1 Chapter Introduction	26
2.2 Theoretical Foundations	27
2.3 Human Resource Development (HRD) Practices	29
2.3.1 Training Development	30
2.3.2 Career Development	30
2.3.3 Performance Management	31
2.4 Talent Management (TM) Practices	31
2.4.1 Talent Acquisition	32
2.4.2 Career Advancement and Succession Planning	33
2.4.3 Incentives and Recognition	33

2.5	Ability, Motivation, and Opportunity	34
2.5.1	Ability	34
2.5.2	Motivation	34
2.5.3	Opportunity	35
2.5.4	AMO as a Mediator	35
2.6	Organizational Outcomes	36
2.6.1	Productivity	36
2.6.2	Organizational Performance	37
2.6.3	Employee Retention	37
2.7	AMO Framework and Its Influence on Organizational Outcomes	38
2.8	Linking HRD and TM Practices to Organizational Outcomes	38
2.9	The Chinese Higher Education Context	38
2.10	Empirical Gaps in Literature	39
2.11	Hypotheses Development	40
2.11.1	HRD Practices and Organizational Outcomes	40
2.11.2	TM Practices and Organizational Outcomes	40
2.11.3	HRD Practices and the AMO Model	41
2.11.4	TM Practices and the AMO Model	42
2.11.5	AMO and Organizational Outcomes	43
2.11.6	HRD Practices, the AMO Model, and Organizational Outcomes	44
2.11.7	TM Practices, the AMO Model, and Organizational Outcomes	45
2.12	Research Framework	45
2.13	Chapter Summary	46
CHAPTER 3: Research Methodology		48
3.1	Chapter Introduction	48
3.2	Research Design	48
3.3	Population and Sampling	50
3.3.1	Population	50
3.3.2	Research Sampling	51
3.4	Research Instrument	53
3.4.1	Operationalization of Variables	55
3.5	Validity and Reliability of the Instrument	56
3.5.1	Content and Construct Validity	56
3.5.2	Pilot Study	57
3.5.3	Reliability Testing	58
3.6	Data Collection Procedure	58
3.7	Data Analysis Techniques	60
3.8	Ethical Considerations	61
3.9	Chapter Summary	62
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS		63
4.1	Introduction	63

4.2	Data Screening and Assumption Tests	63
4.2.1	Missing Data Analysis	63
4.2.2	Outlier Detection	64
4.2.3	Normality Test	65
4.3	Descriptive Statistics and Participant Demographics	68
4.4	Descriptive Analysis for Key Variables	69
4.5	Reliability and Validity	70
4.6	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	73
4.7	Hypothesis Testing and Discussion	73
4.7.1	H1: HRD Practices → Organizational Outcomes	73
4.7.2	H2: TM Practices → Organizational Outcomes	76
4.7.3	H3: AMO → Organizational Outcomes	79
4.7.4	H4: HRD Practices → AMO	81
4.7.5	H5: TM Practices → AMO	82
4.8	Mediation Analysis: AMO as Mediator	84
4.8.1	H6: AMO Mediate HRD practices & Organizational Outcomes	84
4.8.2	H7: AMO Mediate TM Practices & Organizational Outcomes	86
4.9	Hypotheses Summary	87
4.10	Chapter Summary	89
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS		89
5.1	Introduction	89
5.2	Summary of Key Findings	90
5.3	Contribution of the Study	91
5.3.1	Theoretical Contribution	91
5.3.2	Practical Contribution	92
5.4	Limitation of Study	93
5.5	Recommendations for Future Research	94
5.6	Conclusion	95
REFERENCES		97
APPENDICES		116

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3- 1: Krejcie and Morgan Sampling Size	53
Table 3-2: Questionnaire Composition	55
Table 3-3: Operationalization of Variables	55
Table 3-4: Modified Items	57
Table 3-5: Data Collection Timeline	59
Table 3-6: Data Analysis Techniques	61
Table 4- 1: Residuals Statistics	65
Table 4-2: Normality Test	66
Table 4-3: Demographic Profile of Respondents	68
Table 4-4: Descriptive Statistics of Variables	70
Table 4-5: Rule of Thumb of Cronbach's Alpha	70
Table 4-6: Reliability of Variables	72
Table 4-7: Level of Acceptance of the KMO Value	72
Table 4-8: Validity of Variables	72
Table 4-9: Pearson correlation coefficient	73
Table 4-10: Model Summary of HRDP & OO	74
Table 4-11: Regression analysis of HRDP on OO	74
Table 4-12: Regression Results of HRDP Dimensions on OO	74
Table 4-13: Model Summary of TMP & OO	76
Table 4-14: Regression analysis of TMP on OO	77
Table 4-15: Regression Results of HRDP Dimensions on OO	77
Table 4-16: Model Summary of AMO & OO	79
Table 4-17: Regression analysis of AMO on OO	79
Table 4-18: Regression Results of HRDP Dimensions on OO	79
Table 4-19: Model Summary of HRDP & AMO	81
Table 4-20: Regression analysis of HRDP on AMO	81

Table 4-21: Model Summary of TMP & AMO	83
Table 4-22: Regression analysis of TMP on AMO	83
Table 4-23: Mediating Role of AMO in HRDP and OO	84
Table 4-24: Mediating Role of AMO in TMP and OO	86
Table 4-25: Hypotheses Summary	88

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Research Framework.....	46
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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire Development	116
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PHLIs	Private Higher Learning Institution
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRDP	Human Resource Development Practices
HRM	Human Resource Management
TM	Talent Management
TMP	Talent Management Practices
AMO	Ability-Motivation-Opportunity
OO	Organizational Outcomes
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study explores how human resource strategies contribute to organizational effectiveness in private higher education institutions, with a specific focus on the mediating roles of ability, motivation, and opportunity (AMO). Centered on in-service teachers in Jinan, Shandong Province, the research examines how targeted human resource practices can address talent-related challenges and enhance institutional performance. Chapter one begins by outlining the current landscape of private higher education in China, highlighting increasing demands for quality instruction and the strategic importance of workforce development. It then introduces the central research problem, clarifies the general and specific objectives, and presents key research questions through the lens of the AMO. Additionally, this chapter discusses the academic and practical significance of the study. It fills a gap in empirical research on human resource and talent strategies within China's private education sector, while offering insights that can guide institutional leaders and policymakers in strengthening teacher engagement and organizational capacity. The chapter concludes with definitions of key terms and an overview of the study structure, laying the groundwork for the chapters that follow.

1.2 Background of Study

Human resource development (HRD) practices refer to organizational strategies and initiatives designed to enhance the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of employees, fostering continuous learning, development, and overall performance improvement within the workplace (Poell et al., 2024). This includes methods such as training, performance evaluation, and career development. HRD practices aims to create a learning organization

that encourages employees to continuously improve their abilities, adapt to changes, and increase productivity (Dahiya et al., 2023). The importance of HRD practice is reflected in its ability to improve employee performance and productivity, attract and retain talent, help organizations maintain competitiveness and achieve long-term success (Keltu, 2024). HRD practices encompasses initiatives aimed at improving employee competencies, knowledge, and skills through structured activities such as training, professional development, and organizational learning (Zalukhu et al., 2025). These activities are essential for equipping employees with the capabilities necessary to navigate complex educational environments effectively. Recent studies published in leading journals have increasingly emphasized HRD practices significantly improve employee job performance by building skills, knowledge, and sustained engagement (Havierniková et al., 2025; Luo et al., 2024).

Talent Management (TM) focuses on attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining key talent to achieve strategic objectives, while HRD enhances employees' skills, engagement, and performance (Kravariti et al., 2023; Zada et al., 2024). Together, HRD and TM significantly impact organizational outcomes by improving productivity, retention, and employee motivation, particularly in private higher learning institutions (Akbar et al., 2025; Graham et al., 2024). The Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) framework explains that optimal performance arises when employees have the necessary abilities, motivation, and opportunities to apply their skills (Zahoor et al., 2024), providing a theoretical basis for how HRD and TM practices can strategically enhance institutional performance and achieve sustainable success (Naqshbandi et al., 2024).

In the context of private higher learning institutions (PHLIs), HRD practices such as structured training, mentoring, and leadership development enhance employees' knowledge and skills. These initiatives directly improve the ability component of the AMO model (Naqshbandi et al., 2024). Meanwhile, TM practices contribute primarily to motivation, through mechanisms like performance-based rewards, career development pathways, and recognition systems that encourage engagement and retention (Naqshbandi et al., 2024; Urme, 2023). The opportunity dimension is equally critical. Providing employees with meaningful roles in decision-making, innovation, and institutional development enables them to fully utilize their abilities. In PHLIs, this may involve involving academic staff in curriculum design or strategic planning, thus fostering shared governance and organizational commitment (Sharma & Kohli, 2024).

By applying the AMO theory, this study examines how the integration of HRD and TM practices can address specific challenges in China's private higher education sector.

These challenges include talent shortages, high staff turnover, and limited access to public funding, which pressure institutions to optimize human resources through strategic management (Zhang et al., 2022; Jung et al., 2021). Understanding the role of ability, motivation, and opportunity in this context allows institutions to better align their HR strategies with organizational goals and improve performance outcomes sustainably.

However, within the broader context of the global knowledge economy, organizations, especially those operating in service-oriented industries, are under growing pressure to align the development of human capital with their strategic objectives. This challenge is particularly prominent in the higher education sector, where institutions are expected to uphold academic excellence, maintain financial stability, and strengthen institutional reputation simultaneously. In the context of PHLIs, HRD practices and TM practices are instrumental in achieving strategic objectives such as academic excellence, student satisfaction, and operational efficiency (Abdullah et al., 2025; Kamble, 2023). Institutions that prioritize continuous professional development for faculty and staff foster an adaptable and innovative organizational culture (Kezar et al., 2025), which is essential for addressing the dynamic needs of students and stakeholders in a competitive educational landscape (Karim et al., 2024).

In China, the higher education system has undergone substantial reform and expansion, with PHLIs playing an increasingly important role in absorbing demand and diversifying educational offerings. However, PHLIs face a unique set of challenges: they often operate under limited public funding, rely heavily on tuition fees, and compete for both faculty and students in a rapidly shifting educational landscape (Chen et al., 2025; Guleva, 2025). Within such a competitive and market-oriented environment, the strategic application of HRD and TM practices becomes even more essential. The expansion of private education in China has amplified the demand for qualified professionals, intensifying competition among PHLIs to attract and retain talent (Liang, 2024; Wang, 2024). Addressing these challenges requires the implementation of innovative HRD practices and TM practices tailored to the unique requirements of the sector, such as managing high employee turnover rates, resource constraints, and the need for continuous innovation to meet evolving stakeholder expectations.

In recent years, private higher learning institutions in Jinan, Shandong Province, have faced growing challenges related to organizational sustainability, including declining staff retention, uneven employee performance, and stagnating productivity (Gang, 2022; Zhao et al., 2023a). As the demand for high-quality higher education intensifies in China's eastern provinces, Jinan has emerged as a competitive educational hub. However, many

private institutions struggle to attract, develop, and retain qualified academic and administrative personnel, largely due to underdeveloped human resource practices (Zhao & Li, 2021). According to Wang (2024), talent management in universities in Jinan faces significant challenges. A key issue lies in the disconnect between academic research and the practical implementation of professional teacher training. Additionally, there is a misalignment between the prevailing concepts of discipline development and the evolving demands of the times, resulting in a weak teaching faculty and an underdeveloped practice-oriented education system (Zhao et al., 2023b).

These private universities and colleges in Jinan often lack systematic HRD practice and talent management practice. As a result, employee motivation and institutional performance are negatively affected, which in turn undermines educational quality and organizational competitiveness. Furthermore, although the AMO is well established in theory, its application has not been sufficiently explored within the context of Chinese private higher education. Therefore, this study aims to address a critical gap by evaluating how HRD and TM practices affect organizational outcomes (productivity, performance, and retention), and whether these relationships are mediated by the dimensions of the AMO model.

1.3 Problem Statement

Organizational outcomes in this study refer to measurable results that reflect the effectiveness of an institution's human resource strategies, including employee productivity, performance, and retention, which are considered key indicators of institutional success (Becker & Gerhart, 1996). In China, the higher education system has undergone substantial reform and expansion, with PHLIs playing an increasingly important role in meeting rising educational demand and diversifying program offerings. Despite this growth, PHLIs face a unique set of challenges: they often operate under limited public funding, rely heavily on tuition fees, and compete intensively for both faculty and students in a rapidly evolving educational landscape (Chen et al., 2025; Guleva, 2025).

These pressures have heightened the need for effective HRD and TM practices, which are essential for attracting, developing, and retaining qualified personnel (Liang, 2024; Wang, 2024). Addressing sector-specific challenges, such as high turnover, uneven performance, underdeveloped teaching faculty, resource constraints, and the need for

continuous innovation, requires strategically integrated HRD and TM practices tailored to the unique context of private higher education institutions.

In recent years, PHLIs in Jinan, Shandong Province, have faced growing organizational challenges, including declining staff retention, uneven employee performance, and stagnating productivity (Gang, 2022; Zhao et al., 2023a). Many institutions struggle to attract, develop, and retain qualified academic and administrative staff due to underdeveloped HR practices (Zhao & Li, 2021). Further, talent management faces obstacles such as a disconnect between academic research and practical teacher training, and misalignment between traditional discipline development and evolving market demands, resulting in weak teaching faculty and underdeveloped practice-oriented education systems (Wang, 2024; Zhao et al., 2023b).

Although HRD and TM practices are widely recognized as vital for institutional success, they are often implemented in isolation, without a coordinated strategic framework (Yin & Gordon, 2021; Mei & Symaco, 2022; Musakuro, 2022). Consequently, it remains unclear how integrated HRD and TM strategies can be effectively applied to improve employee performance, retention, and overall organizational outcomes in Chinese PHLIs. This gap highlights the need for research that links HR practices with tangible performance indicators relevant to higher education institutions, such as teaching quality, research productivity, student satisfaction, and institutional reputation.

While private universities face a range of operational challenges, understanding how organizational outcomes are affected requires further consideration of strategic HRD and TM practices, as well as the mediating influence of the AMO framework.

For empirical gap, although prior studies have examined HRD and TM across various sectors, limited empirical research has explored their combined influence on organizational outcomes within Chinese PHLIs. Most research focuses either on public universities or on general HR practices in business organizations, neglecting the distinctive operational, cultural, and financial contexts of private educational institutions in China (Chun & Evans, 2023; Sahibzada et al., 2022; Yin & Gordon, 2021). Furthermore, while studies have analyzed the impact of HRD or TM individually, there is a lack of empirical evidence on how these practices function synergistically in driving employee engagement, retention, and institutional effectiveness in environments characterized by limited resources (Alhajaj & Ahmad, 2024).

For theoretical gap, there is insufficient application of integrative frameworks such as the AMO model to explain how HRD and TM practices influence performance in

educational settings. While the AMO theory has been effectively used in corporate HRM research to explain performance outcomes (Mbukanma & Strydom, 2022; Khalil et al., 2022; Ali et al., 2022), its potential in educational institutions, particularly in PHLIs, remains underexplored. Studies that do apply AMO in education often examine narrow constructs such as talent management and organizational commitment (Alfaouri et al., 2021; Shoaib et al., 2021), rather than integrating HRD and TM within this framework to capture a comprehensive view of employee outcomes such as motivation, capability development, and applied engagement.

In practice gap, Chinese PHLIs must operate under unique constraints including limited government funding, competitive talent markets, and increasing quality demands. These factors require a more strategic and resource-efficient approach to HRM (Zhang, 2024; Chun & Evans, 2023). However, there is little practical guidance on how HRD and TM practices should be tailored to these settings. Institutions often struggle to balance immediate staffing needs with long-term capability building due to a lack of integrated HR strategies (Yin & Gordon, 2021; Judijanto et al., 2023). Without clearly defined pathways for professional growth, incentives for performance, or institutionalized mechanisms to provide employees with meaningful opportunities, these practices fall short in producing sustainable organizational outcomes (Rosyafah & Pudjowati, 2024).

This study addresses these gaps by examining how HRD and TM practices, when integrated within the AMO, impact organizational outcomes in Chinese PHLIs. By focusing on the mediating roles of ability, motivation, and opportunity, it contributes to a deeper theoretical understanding of strategic HRM while offering actionable insights for improving performance and retention in private higher education. The research responds to a timely and context-specific need, aiming to guide institutional leaders in adopting more coherent and evidence-based HR practices that align with both employee development and organizational sustainability.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is guided by research questions which are formulated based on the gap highlighted in the problem statement and the corresponding aim of the study:

- RQ 1: Do Human Resource Development (HRD) practices influence organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China?
- RQ 2: Do Talent Management (TM) practices influence organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China?

- RQ 3: Do Human Resource Development (HRD) practices influence the components of the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model in private higher learning institutions in China?
- RQ 4: Do Talent Management (TM) practices influence the components of the AMO model in private higher learning institutions in China?
- RQ 5: Does the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model influence organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China?
- RQ 6: Does the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model mediate the relationship between HRD practices and organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China?
- RQ 7: Does the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model mediate the relationship between TM practices and organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China?

1.5 Research Objectives

This study aims to examine the impact of Human Resource Development (HRD) and Talent Management (TM) practices on organizational outcomes within the context of private higher learning institutions (PHLIs) in China. Guided by the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) theoretical framework, the research also seeks to explore the mediating role of the AMO model in these relationships. Specifically, the objectives of this study are:

- RO 1: To examine the influence of Human Resource Development (HRD) practices on organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China.
- RO 2: To examine the influence of Talent Management (TM) practices on organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China.
- RO 3: To investigate the influence of HRD practices on the components of the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model in private higher learning institutions in China.
- RO 4: To investigate the influence of TM practices on the components of the AMO model in private higher learning institutions in China.
- RO 5: To assess the influence of the AMO model on organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China.
- RO 6: To determine the mediating effect of the AMO model on the relationship between HRD practices and organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China.
- RO 7: To determine the mediating effect of the AMO model on the relationship between TM practices and organizational outcomes in private higher learning institutions in China.

1.6 Contribution

1.6.1 Theoretical Contribution

This study offers several significant theoretical contributions to the fields of Human Resource Development (HRD), Talent Management (TM), and the Ability, Motivation, and Opportunity (AMO) framework. The first contribution lies in the empirical examination of the direct effects of HRD and TM practices on key organizational outcomes, namely productivity, performance, and employee retention. This analysis extends existing HRD and TM theories by demonstrating their strategic value in enhancing institutional effectiveness. Notably, the study situates these findings within private higher education institutions in China, a context that has received limited attention in HR literature. As such, it broadens the understanding of how HR functions can be effectively deployed in educational settings, beyond the traditional corporate environment.

Secondly, the study enriches the AMO framework by identifying HRD and TM as critical antecedents of employee ability, motivation, and opportunity. By showing how targeted HR practices influence these internal attributes, the research moves AMO from a purely conceptual model toward a practical mechanism for explaining employee behaviour and institutional performance. This shift enhances the theoretical precision of AMO by grounding it in applied organizational processes within the education sector.

The third major contribution involves the investigation of AMO as a mediating mechanism between HRD and TM practices and organizational outcomes. Through this mediational approach, the study integrates multiple strands of HR theory into a coherent framework that explains not only whether HR interventions are effective, but also how and why they generate positive outcomes. In this way, the research positions AMO as a central explanatory construct rather than a peripheral variable, thereby enhancing its relevance and application in strategic HRM discourse.

Finally, the study responds to ongoing critiques regarding the limited contextual diversity in HR research, which has traditionally been dominated by Western settings. By conducting a theory-driven investigation in a developing country and within an educational context, the research contributes to the broader effort to validate and adapt HR-related theoretical models for more diverse institutional environments. The findings provide empirical insights that support the refinement of these models and reinforce their global applicability, particularly for higher education institutions operating under similar socio-economic conditions.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

From a practical perspective, this study provides actionable insights for institutional leaders and human resource (HR) managers in private higher learning institutions in China. In an increasingly competitive higher education landscape, private universities are under constant pressure to attract, retain, and develop high-quality faculty and staff while maintaining sustainable organizational performance (Zhang, 2024). This research identifies evidence-based HRD and TM strategies that can enhance productivity, performance, and retention through the lens of the AMO.

Specifically, the study guides HR managers in designing HRD initiatives that strengthen employee capabilities through targeted training and development programs (ability), implementing performance-based rewards and career advancement mechanisms (motivation), and fostering participatory decision-making and inclusive work environments (opportunity). These practices are expected to promote higher levels of employee engagement, satisfaction, and commitment, key drivers of institutional performance.

For institutional leaders, the findings will provide strategic direction on how to align HR investments with organizational goals, particularly in addressing persistent challenges such as high staff turnover, limited resources, and growing demands for academic excellence and operational efficiency. By offering a practical framework for integrating HRD and TM practices into institutional strategy, this research equips decision-makers with tools to build a more agile, motivated, and high-performing academic workforce. Ultimately, the study supports private universities in enhancing their organizational resilience and long-term competitiveness within China's evolving higher education sector.

1.6.3 Methodological Contribution

This study provides a notable methodological contribution by applying an integrated framework that links HRD and TM practices to organizational outcomes through the mediating role of the AMO dimensions. Unlike many prior studies that examine these constructs in isolation or focus primarily on corporate or public organizations, this research offers a comprehensive model specifically contextualized within private higher education institutions in China, an underexplored setting in existing HR research.

Methodologically, the study adopts a quantitative approach using SPSS for data analysis, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression-based mediation analysis. By using this approach, the study offers a straightforward and replicable method for testing complex relationships without relying on more advanced or

less accessible techniques such as structural equation modeling. This increases the practical utility of the findings, particularly for HR practitioners and researchers working in similar institutional contexts with limited analytical resources.

Moreover, the research contributes methodologically by collecting and analyzing primary data directly from academic and administrative staff in private Chinese universities. This allows for a rich and contextually grounded examination of how HRD and TM practices influence employee outcomes via the AMO mechanism. The use of primary data also strengthens the reliability and applicability of the findings to the specific challenges and realities faced by private higher education institutions in emerging economies.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study concentrates on PHLIs in China, with a specific focus on those located in Shandong Province, particularly within the city of Jinan. Shandong has emerged as a region where private universities have received strong policy support aimed at fostering educational innovation and regional development (Wang et al., 2022). The study targets both academic and administrative staff in these institutions, as they are directly impacted by HRD and TM practices and are central to achieving institutional performance goals. The research adopts a cross-sectional design and employs a quantitative methodology using SPSS for data analysis. Core constructs include HRD practices, TM practices, the AMO, and organizational outcomes, measured in terms of employee productivity, performance, and retention. Public universities, vocational colleges, and international branch campuses are excluded to maintain contextual consistency, as these institutions often differ in regulatory environments, funding mechanisms, and HR approaches.

Despite its focused scope, the study has several limitations. First, the sample is limited to 393 respondents from PHLIs in Jinan, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings to other regions or types of institutions in China. While this sample size is statistically sufficient for analysis within the targeted context, institutional diversity across China suggests that future studies incorporating a broader and more geographically dispersed sample could yield more representative insights. Secondly, the geographic limitation to Jinan, though it is a major political, economic, and educational hub, may not capture the full spectrum of HR practices and organizational dynamics present in other provinces with different socioeconomic conditions. Finally, the study centers on HRD and TM as the primary factors influencing organizational outcomes, potentially overlooking

other critical variables such as leadership effectiveness, organizational culture, or external policy pressures. Future research would benefit from expanding the analytical framework to include these elements to develop a more holistic understanding of organizational performance in the private higher education sector.

1.8 Operational Definition of Key Terms

1.8.1 Human Resource Development

In the context of this study, Human Resource Development refers to systematic and structured efforts aimed at enhancing employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies to achieve performance improvement at individual, team, and institutional levels. In Chinese private higher education institutions, HRD includes training programs, continuing education, pedagogical innovation, and leadership development initiatives that align with national directives (Poell et al., 2024) such as the National Medium- and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010–2020). These efforts are part of institutional responses to policy expectations for faculty quality improvement and internal capacity building.

1.8.2 Talent Management

Talent Management is defined as a strategic process of attracting, developing, retaining, and mobilizing individuals with high potential and critical capabilities to meet institutional goals (Kravariti et al., 2023). Within the context of private universities in China, TM practices are often guided by frameworks such as the China Talent Development Plan and institutional-level Personnel Appointment and Management Regulations. TM activities include high-level talent recruitment, academic leadership grooming, research performance incentives, and succession planning, all aligned with national goals for higher education modernization.

1.8.3 Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO)

The AMO framework posits that employee performance is shaped by three key elements: ability (knowledge and skills), motivation (desire and willingness to perform), and opportunity (the work environment and structural support for action) (Zahoor et al., 2024). In the Chinese higher education context, this framework is applicable in evaluating the outcomes of institutional HR practices under the performance-based management