INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND INNOVATIVE STUDIES
IJSRIS journal
ISSN: 2820-7157
Advancing Knowledge, Inspiring Innovation
www.ijsrisjournal.com
INDEXED JOURNAL
PEER REVIEWED Rigorous & Transparent
DOI: CROSSREF Member
OPEN ACCESS For Global Visibility
BI-MONTHLY Timely Publication
WIDE READERSHIP High Impact & Visibility
AUTHOR FRIENDLY Fast | Supportive | Reliable
RECEIVED 17 September
ACCEPTED 09 October
PUBLISHED 1 November 2026
September 2026
Volume 5
Number 6
Pages from 500 to 511

Motivational HR Practices, Affective Commitment, and Innovative Work Behavior: An Exploratory Study Among Pharmaceutical Managers in Morocco

OUASSAL LAILA

Professor at Polydisciplinary Faculty of Safi, Cadi Ayyad University, Innovation, Responsibility and Sustainable Development Research Laboratory (INREDD), Morocco, Laila.ouassal@gmail.com.

LICENSE
This article is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/
Crossref doi
PREFIX : 10.63883
IJSRIS JOURNAL
OPEN ACCESS
This is an open access article distributed under the terms of open access.

ABSTRACT

The pharmaceutical sector, one of the most dynamic worldwide, faces a growing need for innovation and the retention of its managers, within a Moroccan context marked by high international mobility for these profiles. This study explores how motivational HR practices influence the affective commitment and innovative work behavior of pharmaceutical managers in Morocco. An exploratory qualitative approach was adopted, utilizing 20 semi-structured interviews conducted with pharmaceutical managers (13 women, 7 men, average age 37). The findings highlight seven key structuring HR practices performance appraisal, training, recognition, compensation, work-life balance, participation, and autonomy alongside a plurality of representations of affective commitment and four dimensions of innovative behavior (idea exploration, generation, promotion, and implementation). The study proposes a social exchange model linking these three concepts and provides HR practitioners with concrete avenues to enhance engagement and innovation among pharmaceutical managers.

Key words: Motivational HR practices, affective commitment, innovative work behavior, pharmaceutical managers,

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's business climate is characterized by uncertainty and complexity, which has prompted many organizations, in the wake of the health crisis, to refocus their efforts on expansion and sustainability (Combes & George, 2016). In this context, innovation is regularly presented as one of the primary levers of performance and sustainable competitive advantage, provided that companies effectively leverage the talents and expertise of their employees (Ajzen, Rondeaux, Pichault & Taskin, 2016; Winand et al., 2013). Human resource management (HRM) scholars have thus increasingly examined the role of HR practices in employee innovative performance, as such innovative behavior strongly depends on individual qualifications (Lau & Ngo, 2004; Haneda & Ito, 2018). This body of literature establishes a fairly robust link between human capital, human resource management, and innovation performance (Jiménez-Jiménez & Sanz-Valle, 2005), thereby justifying a closer examination of the contribution of specific HR practices to innovative work behavior, particularly within the context of a developing country such as Morocco.

This study thus aims to explore the HR practices adopted by pharmaceutical companies as well as how managers within the sector perceive them in terms of commitment and behavior (Diaz-Fernandez, Bornay-Barrachina & Lopez-Cabrales, 2015). Drawing on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), employees can be viewed as perceiving HR practices as signals sent by the organization (Curado, 2018): when they believe the organization provides them with value, they feel obligated to reciprocate through constructive actions, such as helping it achieve its objectives. Specifically, employees who perceive themselves as fairly compensated, who benefit from training opportunities, and who experience genuine information sharing with management are more likely to adopt innovative work behaviors in return (Cano & Cano, 2006).

While prior research has demonstrated a positive relationship between motivational HR practices and innovative work behavior, how these practices operate in concrete terms—and the underlying mechanism linking them within pharmaceutical companies—remains poorly understood. This warrants a more detailed investigation in this specific field, especially given that the pharmaceutical sector ranks among the fastest-growing industries globally (Ouzougzou, 2024). Accordingly, this article seeks to address three research questions: What motivational HR practices are identified in the literature and adopted by pharmaceutical companies? How are affective commitment and innovative work behavior perceived and defined by pharmaceutical managers? What specific innovative behaviors do they adopt in practice?

To address these questions, we first present a literature review on motivational HR practices, affective commitment, and innovative work behavior, before mobilizing social exchange theory as our theoretical framework. We then outline our qualitative methodological approach, conducted among 20 pharmaceutical managers in Morocco, before discussing our findings and concluding with the research contributions, limitations, and future avenues.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: MOTIVATIONAL HR PRACTICES, AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT, AND INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOR

2.1 Motivational HR Practices

Motivation can be defined as the extent to which an employee desires and chooses to perform certain actions; it can be either extrinsic or intrinsic (Handayani, 2025). Extrinsic factors, such as bonuses, are generally associated with a short-term benefit logic, whereas intrinsic factors refer to the individual's own interests and convictions—for instance, the satisfaction derived from pleasant work. Intrinsic motivation is often associated with lasting commitment, although the absence of extrinsic factors can, according to some authors, eventually erode it; similarly, an employee who feels insufficiently competent when faced with a difficult task may see their motivation decline (Baakir & Elliqua, 2025; Latreille, 2025).

In human resource management, motivational practices aim to help employees achieve their goals and meet high productivity expectations through measures such as performance appraisal, combined with financial or non-financial rewards. According to our analysis, performance appraisal and extrinsic incentives are the most frequently cited—with merit pay being widespread at both the individual and collective levels. Several forms of non-financial motivation also emerge: workplace recognition, promotions, social activities, and work-life balance. Conversely, practices directly targeting intrinsic motivation remain rarer, limited to a few examples related to performance motivation, personal or collective fulfillment, entrepreneurial spirit, and a collaborative climate.

2.2 Affective Commitment

Early research on organizational commitment primarily conceptualized it as a form of cohesion or emotional attachment to the organization, characterized by a sense of belonging (Solahudin, Fatimah & Sulistiowati, 2024). Patrick and Sonia (2012) describe it as a devotion to social interactions that absorbs an individual's emotional resources, whereas Dávila and García (2012) view it rather as an attitude linking the individual's identity to that of the organization.

Since the 1970s, several theories have decomposed commitment into three components of seemingly equal importance—affective, continuance, and normative—yet it is the attitudinal and affective dimensions that have, in practice, occupied a central place in most approaches.

Furthermore, empirical studies confirm that affective commitment is more closely linked to changes in work behavior than other dimensions, which justifies focusing on it in particular here (Solahudin, Fatimah & Sulistiowati, 2024). However, the field remains marked by a lack of consistent compelling evidence, even as practitioners increasingly rely on organizational commitment measures to attract, retain, and develop their qualified employees. It is precisely this still vague and fragmented area that the present study seeks to shed light on.

2.3 Innovative Work Behavior

The ability to innovate continuously is nowadays considered essential for organizations, and over the past two decades, innovation has generated growing interest in academic research, whether at the enterprise, team, network, or individual level (Offiong & Szopik-Depczyńska, 2024). It is this latter level—individual innovation within organizations—that we examine here, as individual actions are decisive for continuous innovation and improvement, both in academic literature and in related fields such as quality management or entrepreneurship (Srirahayu, Ekowati & Sridadi, 2023)

Literature traditionally distinguishes creativity—idea exploration and generation—from innovation proper—idea promotion and implementation—even though some authors prefer to integrate these four dimensions into a single indicator of innovative work behavior (Srirahayu et al., 2023). Long focused solely on the generation of creative ideas, recent research calls for paying more scientific attention to their effective implementation (AlEssa & Durugbo, 2022), with innovative work behavior now perceived as a set of behaviors related to the generation, support, and implementation of ideas (Farrukh, Meng, Raza & Wu, 2023). Abun et al. (2023) thus define it as an actor's action seeking to intentionally introduce new and relevant ideas, projects, processes, or functions into their work, team, or organization.

This behavior is distinct from creativity, understood as the simple generation of new and relevant ideas (Erhan, Uzunbacak & Aydin, 2022), in that it includes their concrete implementation: it is more practice-oriented and aims at tangible results. Nevertheless, creativity remains an essential dimension, particularly at the beginning of the innovation cycle, when problems or performance gaps are identified and initial ideas emerge (Vuong, Tushar & Hossain, 2023). In this article, we focus on innovative work behaviors as a whole, from the initiation to the implementation of ideas (Ali, Li & Qiu, 2022). Several studies have sought to formalize these stages: Islam et al. (2024), drawing on Ali et al. (2022), thus distinguish idea generation, coalition building, and implementation—with idea generation itself encompassing two distinct cognitive skills: exploration and generation proper.

3. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK: OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

Social exchange theory constitutes a major paradigm for explaining behaviors within organizations; its origins date back at least to the 1920s (Ahmad, Nawaz & Ishaq et al., 2023). Despite the diversity of conceptions stemming from it, researchers agree in viewing it as a sequence of interdependent interactions, conditioned by the behavior of others, and leading to reciprocal obligations (Zhang, Takahashi & Rezwan, 2025; Xuecheng, Iqbal & Saina, 2022). These interdependent exchanges can, under certain conditions only, give rise to high-performing partnerships: a central postulate of the theory is that exchange relations progressively evolve toward trust, honesty, and mutual respect, provided that the parties adhere to specific exchange "rules"—a normative description of the relationship established between, or adopted by, the parties to an exchange partnership (Kilroy, Dundon & al., 2023). While most management research focuses primarily on reciprocal expectations, social exchange theory actually highlights other equally structuring exchange principles.

3.1 Motivational HR Practices, Affective Commitment, and Innovative Work Behavior: Contribution of Social Exchange Theory

Applied to our research focus, social exchange theory suggests that motivational HR practices function as positive signals sent to employees, designed to stimulate their desire to excel in their work (Boselie, 2010). Perceived as beneficial, these practices consequently generate a moral obligation of reciprocity, which translates into behaviors more favorable to the organization (Blau, 1964): employees progressively develop an overall view regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about them (Morales-Sánchez & Pasamar, 2020).

Some authors go further by arguing that social support resources—organizational support, management practices—play a direct role in promoting employee innovation by

providing an environment conducive to the adoption of innovative behaviors (Agarwal, 2014). However, this effect remains conditional: HR perceptions trigger individualized work behaviors only if employees deem organizational policies appropriate and feel that the company genuinely cares about their well-being (Anderson, Potočnik & Zhou, 2014). Liang, Liu, and Wu (2008) thus propose interpreting the link between competencies and individualized behaviors as a social exchange mechanism: training is perceived therein as a personalized commitment by the organization toward the employee, an commitment that the latter feels obligated to honor through positive non-contractual behaviors—including innovative behaviors. It is precisely this reasoning that Janssen (2000) mobilizes to justify the link between motivation, affective commitment, and innovative work behavior.

4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Following a literature analysis, we noted a lack of consensus regarding the specific practices to include in motivational HR practices (Kroon et al., 2013). Furthermore, to our knowledge, no study has explored the perception of affective commitment and innovative work behavior among pharmaceutical managers within the Moroccan context. Therefore, we believe that an exploratory study is the most appropriate approach to address our research problem. To achieve our objectives, a qualitative approach is the most relevant; it will allow us to deepen our understanding of the concepts examined within the studied companies. Indeed, qualitative research provides powerful insight and clarification centered on processes anchored in the local context (Miles and Huberman, 2003). In this regard, a multiple-case study is relevant for investigating a particular phenomenon within its real-world environment (Yin, 2003). Our exploratory study focuses on pharmaceutical managers, which is justified for several reasons. Firstly, this socio-professional segment allows us to highlight the various motivational HR practices implemented by pharmaceutical companies. Secondly, the emigration of pharmaceutical managers and high international demand for this segment compel pharmaceutical companies to adopt HR measures to retain them.

Thirdly, rapid technological evolution requires companies to have creative human resources to satisfy customers and keep pace with the sustained development of research and development.

4.1 Determination and Justification of Sample Size Selection

The development of the interview guide as well as the constitution of the sample were rigorously designed in alignment with the central objective of this research, namely exploring the motivational HR practices influencing affective commitment and innovative work behaviors among pharmaceutical managers in Morocco.

This approach ensured a rich, diverse, and in-depth data collection. The choice of sample size relies on several considerations, notably the exploratory nature of the study, the targeted objectives, and the available resources (Patton, 1990). In qualitative research, sample size is generally guided by the principle of theoretical saturation. In this regard, Nair and Riege (1995) argue that in marketing, saturation can be achieved after only six interviews, whereas Dick (1990) recommends a sample representing 1% of the target population (up to 200 people), while advocating a minimum of 12 participants. Woodward (1997), for his part, notes a convergence of results starting from five interviews.

Within the scope of our study, we interviewed a sample of 20 pharmaceutical managers of varied ages and socio-professional categories, working in large companies, as the latter are likely to adopt HR practices. These knowledge workers were selected through convenience sampling for practical accessibility reasons. Our sample comprises 13 women and 7 men, with a mean age of 37 years, an average experience of 10 years, and an average tenure of 4.5 years. The selection criteria adopted were as follows: holding a managerial position within a large pharmaceutical company operating in Morocco, having a minimum tenure of two years in the current position, and agreeing to participate in a recorded interview. The collected data were subjected to thematic analysis assisted by NVivo software (version 14), structured around the three axes of the interview guide (HR practices, affective commitment, innovative work behavior). Each axis was broken down into coding nodes and sub-nodes, enabling the extraction of categories and sub-categories presented in the following section, as well as coding frequency indicators per node and per respondent.

4.2 Presentation of the Results of the Exploratory Qualitative Study

4.2.1 Characteristics of the Exploratory Qualitative Study Sample

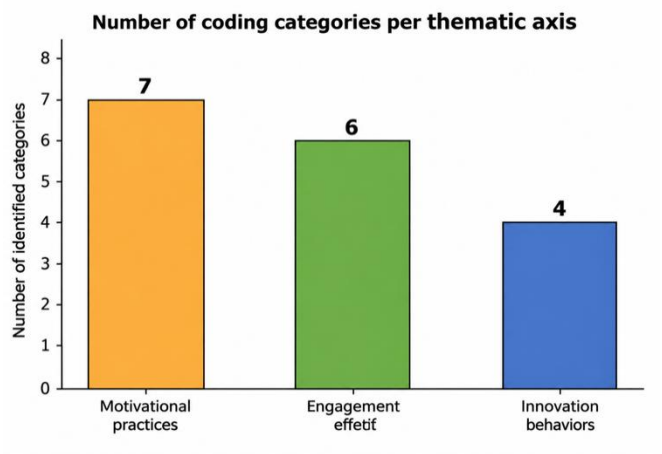


Figure 1: Number of coding categories identified by thematic axis (7 HR practices, 6 affective commitment categories, 4 innovative work behavior dimensions).

Twenty semi-structured face-to-face interviews, lasting an average of 50 minutes, were conducted at company headquarters with pharmaceutical managers. The semi-structured interview guide used covered a wide range of topics and favored open-ended questions to encourage participant spontaneity. The first theme addressed concerned HR practices likely to motivate them, develop their skills, and provide them with participation opportunities, as well as general questions to identify HR practices not documented in the literature. Regarding employee engagement, the questions asked allowed us to identify the pharmaceutical managers' perceptions of engagement and analyze their affective commitment toward the organization. The final theme aimed to identify pharmaceutical managers' perceptions of the concept of innovative work behavior and to discover the various innovative behaviors they adopted. A pilot interview was conducted to validate the interview guide; this interview was not subjected to coding or interpretation. Starting from the seventeenth interview, we noted that the information gathered was redundant and that subsequent interviews merely confirmed information already revealed. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in full.

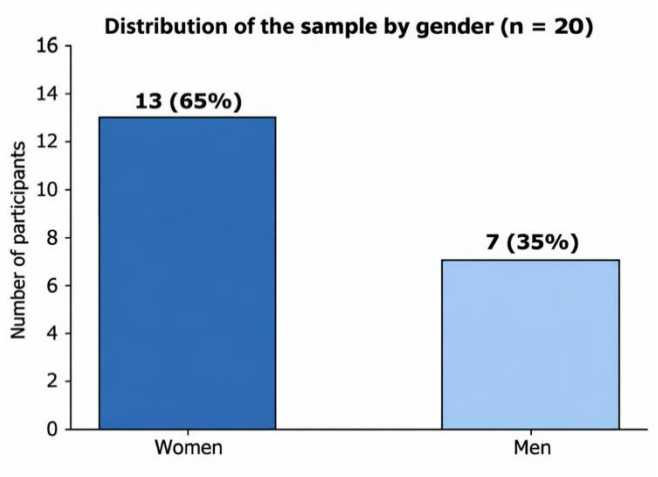


Figure 2: Sample distribution by gender (13 women, 7 men, n = 20)

The figure illustrates a qualitative sample composed of twenty pharmaceutical managers, characterized by a distinct female predominance, comprising thirteen women (65%) compared to seven men (35%). This distribution reflects the progressive and pronounced feminization of managerial, technical, and senior executive roles within the Moroccan pharmaceutical sector—particularly in industrial production, pharmaceutical marketing, and research and development. Consequently, this configuration provides the study with an empirical grounding that accurately reflects field realities, wherein female managers now occupy a central position in both the deployment of human resource management practices and the dynamics of innovative work behaviors.

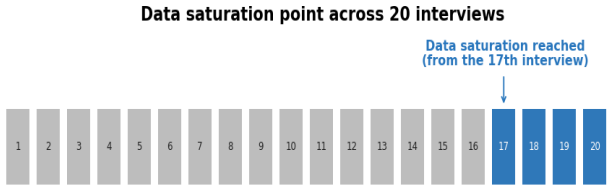


Figure 3: Data saturation point reached at the seventeenth interview out of twenty.

This figure visually illustrates the attainment of the theoretical and empirical saturation threshold, a fundamental principle of exploratory qualitative research. Interview analysis indicates that starting from the seventeenth interview, the collected data began to exhibit significant redundancy, with subsequent interviews (from the eighteenth to the twentieth) yielding no new conceptual categories or nuances. Consequently, the decision to conclude data collection at twenty interviews—while confirming saturation as early as the seventeenth—ensures the robustness, reliability, and internal validity of the qualitative data processed via NVivo 14. This confirms that

the sample size was fully sufficient to map all dimensions of the study.

5. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF THE EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE STUDY



Figure 4: Word cloud of the most frequent terms.

The thematic analysis of the interviews highlights seven motivational HR practices implemented by the studied pharmaceutical companies: performance appraisal, training, recognition at work, compensation, work-life balance, participation, and autonomy. The table below provides a summary.

Methodological note: in the following tables, qualitative recurrence is expressed according to a four-level ordinal scale, which is more precise than initial vague terms: quasi-unanimous (mentioned by almost all respondents, or by all represented companies), majority (more than half of the respondents), shared (several respondents, without constituting a majority), and minority (a few respondents only). This scale reformulates the qualifiers already present in the corpus ("most", "some", "all companies", etc.) in a homogeneous manner; it does not replace an exact count and would benefit from being verified, table by table, based on NVivo coding frequencies per node and per respondent.

Table 1: Summary of motivational HR practices identified in the interviews

HR Practice	Synthetic Illustration from Interviews	Qualitative Recurrence (as expressed in the corpus)
Performance appraisal	Individual and collective evaluations, ranging from monthly to annual frequency, perceived as a factor for career progression.	Majority (more than half of the respondents)
Training	Continuous training (online/in-person), partnerships with specialized organizations	Quasi-unanimous (all represented companies)
Recognition at work	Perceived as rare and difficult to obtain in the Moroccan context	Quasi-unanimous (difficulty widely shared by respondents)
Compensation	Deemed fair and attractive, based on qualifications, performance, and job technicality	Shared (mentioned by several respondents, without being general)
Work-life balance	Little or no guarantee; workload spilling over into private life	Majority (more than half of the respondents)
Participation	Intranets, internal surveys, sharing information on vision and objectives	Shared (mentioned by several respondents)
Autonomy	Restricted by regulatory requirements (human health, WHO standards)	Shared (mentioned by several respondents)

Pharmaceutical companies strive to motivate their employees through numerous initiatives. Many qualified workers indicate that they are regularly evaluated based on key performance indicators (KPIs), while others mention discussions with their hierarchy. Some report multiple annual performance evaluations based on relevant criteria. Here are some testimonials: "For me, performance evaluation is a motivating factor. It pushes me to progress and to identify my strengths and weaknesses, which allows me to improve my skills and enrich my qualifications." "In reality, there is both individual and collective team performance evaluation. Moreover, we are not evaluated at the end of the year; we are evaluated monthly, quarterly, semiannually, annually, and at the end of each project." Employee training is essential to the development of their skills and qualifications. All companies organize training sessions—online or in-person, individual or collective—and forge partnerships with top training

organizations to enhance their employees' skills. An enterprise's competitiveness relies heavily on the competence of its human capital; this is why pharmaceutical companies invest massively in training their employees. Pharmaceutical managers are true technophiles and must benefit from continuous training to master the latest technologies and meet customer expectations. Finally, companies offer training to retain their employees, motivate them, encourage them to be creative and innovative at work, and foster internal mobility. Regarding workplace recognition, the respondents indicated that it is very difficult to obtain recognition from colleagues and hierarchical superiors, notably in Moroccan companies. Here are some testimonials: "I strive to do my best at work, but I do not expect my efforts to be recognized by my superiors or my colleagues. The Moroccan context does not encourage workplace recognition." "I have ten years of experience, and throughout my career, I have never received a compliment from my superiors or my colleagues. That is why I focus on my work and my professional development." "In reality, in our profession, it is difficult to obtain recognition from others. Competition is fierce among colleagues, which explains why it is difficult to obtain recognition from colleagues and superiors." "I think managers are not aware of the positive impact of workplace recognition on the work climate."

Furthermore, pharmaceutical managers indicated that human resource remuneration practices are determined by various criteria, notably qualifications, individual and collective performance, mastery of new technologies, professional experience, interpersonal skills, the level of responsibility, and the complexity and technicality of the occupied position. Here are some testimonials: "I find the remuneration within the company fair and attractive; our company truly appreciates the objectives we achieve." "Among the aspects that convince me to stay in the company is my high salary. Compared to my previous experiences, I do not think I will find another job with such a high salary." "Working in a multinational guarantees a high salary and exceptional financial and non-financial benefits. I deserve my salary because I am a graduate of a top engineering school and I have solid experience in my field." Regarding work-life balance, most participants indicate that no measure or program is implemented within their organization to guarantee it. Many of them declare being forced to take their laptop home to finish their tasks. They work weekends and holidays. One of the participants testifies: "Our company constantly tries to communicate about this topic in the media and on social networks, but in reality, nothing concrete is done. The workload is enormous." "I always have to bring my laptop home. I keep working until midnight. It's exhausting, but it's necessary. We must achieve our objectives." "What I hate the most about my work is the absence of private life; I work incessantly, even on holidays and weekends, and I am constantly stressed." Regarding human resource participation, software companies [Note: translated directly from the text] have intranets where employees can exchange ideas and suggestions on projects. They regularly conduct surveys to gather the opinions of their collaborators. These companies constantly provide useful information to all their employees, explaining their vision and objectives so that everyone can work toward the same goal. To guarantee a clear roadmap and orient team work toward a single common objective, effective internal communication is essential. Pharmaceutical companies are aware that participation is a key factor in employee fulfillment and an important lever for them, because a satisfied employee will be more engaged and productive.

Regarding autonomy, the specificities of work in the pharmaceutical sector make the implementation of this human resource management practice extremely difficult, particularly when human health is concerned. Consequently, pharmaceutical managers tend to comply very rigorously with World Health Organization requirements, which restricts their autonomy. Regarding the second axis of our study, organizational commitment is perceived and associated with numerous aspects mentioned by pharmaceutical managers. Some associate it with a sense of belonging, the development of a personal attachment to the company (which can fluctuate depending on career stages), taking initiative (detecting opportunities, proposing creative solutions, spontaneous problem solving, dynamism, and sharing the company's values and objectives). Others associate it with punctuality, compliance with meeting deadlines and project delivery schedules. Other pharmaceutical managers associate this concept with proposing solutions to problems, collective and individual agreement on rules, processes, and regulations adopted by the company, and we cite testimonials such as "finding solutions to all problems encountered and being dynamic at work." "Someone who is emotionally attached to the company, loves working there, and shares the same values and vision as the company." "Being punctual, disciplined, and proud to belong to the company, sharing the same values and principles as the company, overcoming all obstacles and sharing the same objectives as the company." After analyzing the responses of pharmaceutical managers concerning their perception of affective commitment, most of them indicated being happy and satisfied within their company. Others even declared being proud to work there. The majority of them maintain a strong emotional bond with the company, identify with its values, and are intrinsically motivated to actively contribute to its development. Employees feel that their individual objectives and priorities align with the company's vision and that they feel fully integrated within it. They are

enthusiastic about realizing their full potential, feel attached to their work environment, and appreciate its culture. Finally, they are motivated to invest themselves and stay. Many of them have been offered interesting professional opportunities but preferred to remain in their company. Many declared: "I am very happy to work for my company, even proud." "I have received several interesting offers abroad or in Morocco, but I could not leave my company."

Table 2: Coding categories of pharmaceutical managers' affective commitment

Coding Category	Synthetic Illustration from Interviews	Qualitative Recurrence (as expressed in the corpus)
Sense of belonging and personal attachment	Emotional attachment to the company, fluctuating according to career stages; "He is someone who is emotionally attached to the company, loves working there, and shares the same values and vision as the company"	Minority (a few respondents)
Value sharing and adherence to the vision	Identification with the company's values and objectives	Majority (more than half of the respondents)
Taking initiative and dynamism	Detection of opportunities, proposition of creative solutions, spontaneous problem solving; "finding solutions to all problems encountered and being dynamic at work"	Minority (a few respondents)
Punctuality and discipline	Compliance with meeting deadlines and project delivery schedules; "Being punctual, disciplined, and proud to belong to the company, sharing the same values and principles as the company, overcoming all obstacles and sharing the same objectives as the company"	
Pride and satisfaction	Happiness and pride in belonging to the company, despite external offers received; "I am very happy to work for my company, even proud"; "I have received several interesting offers abroad or in Morocco, but I could not leave my company"	Majority (more than half of the respondents)
Agreement on rules and processes	Collective and individual agreement on rules, processes, and regulations adopted by the company.	Minority (a few respondents)

Similarly, the innovative behaviors described by the pharmaceutical managers were coded according to the four dimensions of the De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) model, which was adopted as an analytical framework for our qualitative material. The following table presents its structure.

Table 3: Dimensions of innovative work behaviors according to the model of De Jong and Den Hartog (2010)

Dimension (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010)	**Synthetic Illustration from Interviews**	**Qualitative Recurrence (as expressed in the corpus)**
Idea exploration	Constant search for improvement opportunities, acquisition of knowledge from various sources	Shared (mentioned by several respondents)
Idea generation	Development of new applications, imagination, and	Shared (mentioned by

	continuous refinement of ideas	several respondents)
Idea promotion	Convincing presentations to peers and superiors, sharing on internal platforms	Shared (mentioned by several respondents)
Idea implementation	Full or partial application depending on budget and security level, consensus-seeking	Shared (mentioned by several respondents)

6. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Our study aimed to understand how pharmaceutical managers perceive organizational commitment. They associate it with the ability to overcome obstacles, a sense of belonging, adherence to company objectives, but also, more prosaically, with punctuality and discipline. This diversity of terms suggests that the interviewed managers have a fairly clear idea of what organizational commitment entails and its importance for company performance. More specifically regarding affective commitment, the managers predominantly describe themselves as proud, satisfied, and enthusiastic about being part of their company—several of them having received offers from other employers without wanting to leave. This perception aligns with the definition by Cohen (2003), for whom affective commitment translates into the willingness to see the company achieve its strategic objectives, coupled with a sense of pride and belonging.

Regarding innovative work behaviors, pharmaceutical managers associate them first and foremost with discovering new ideas and opportunities—not only to meet the needs of their own division, but more broadly for the company. They seek to establish a collaborative work environment where ideas can be shared and discussed as soon as they emerge, and they ensure that their authors receive fair recognition. This perception aligns with the definition adopted in this study, according to which innovative work behavior aims to introduce new and useful ideas, processes, or procedures—the pharmaceutical sector naturally encouraging its managers to explore new avenues and solve complex technical problems.

Concerning the first dimension of innovative behavior, idea exploration, pharmaceutical managers are constantly searching for improvement opportunities: they seek knowledge from various sources, experiment with different approaches, and adapt to evolving customer expectations—all elements that make it a crucial step in their innovation process. Idea generation, the second dimension, translates into a constant effort to develop new applications offering greater security to clients: managers endlessly imagine, develop, verify, and refine their ideas to ensure their relevance.

Next comes idea promotion: the HR policies of pharmaceutical companies foster peer-to-peer exchanges and encourage managers to back up their opinions with convincing arguments, notably during presentations to their colleagues and superiors. Moreover, most companies have internal platforms where original ideas can be published, shared, and commented on. Finally, idea implementation depends on several criteria—budget, security level, consensus among team members and relevant experts—and some ideas end up being discarded when they pose a risk to security systems or require too large an investment.

CONCLUSION

Motivational HR practices are expected to have a positive impact on organizational performance. After exploring several research papers, we found that most studies on motivational HR practices are conducted in the IT sector and that there is no universal definition of these practices. Consequently, there is no consensus on the specific practices to include within motivational HR practices. The practices studied vary from one research to another (Kroon et al., 2013), which is why we focused this study on identifying the different motivational HR practices adopted by pharmaceutical companies. The second objective is to provide a clear explanation of affective commitment and innovative behaviors in the professional context through a qualitative study conducted within pharmaceutical companies.

Our approach relied primarily on semi-structured interviews, which allowed us to build a corpus rich in information and insights. The main results obtained reveal the existence of seven motivational HR practices identified in the literature and adopted by companies: performance appraisal, training, recognition at work, compensation, work-life balance, participation, and autonomy. Furthermore, the 20 interviewed individuals define affective commitment and innovative behaviors through diversified terminology. Our goal was also to determine the most significant dimensions of innovative behavior among pharmaceutical managers using the model of De Jong et al. (2010), namely: idea exploration, idea

generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation. On the theoretical level, we developed an extended social exchange model, designed to understand the relationship between motivational HR practices and innovative behavior through the mediating effect of affective commitment.

One of the main theoretical implications of our research is to develop a model of motivational HR practices existing in the literature review and to identify the practices adopted by pharmaceutical companies. HR managers must ensure the effective implementation of motivational HR practices. Several employees mentioned the existence of certain motivational HR practices only on the company's website. The perception of HR practices is a crucial element for their acceptance by employees. In order to facilitate the implementation and application of practices perceived and accepted by employees, pharmaceutical companies should create a work climate fostering workplace recognition, by encouraging all employees to show consideration toward their colleagues. Companies should also take more measures to guarantee a work-life balance for employees. Furthermore, it would be important to grant them appropriate autonomy in their activities and to encourage them to organize meetings to exchange ideas and identify, analyze, and solve work-related problems. Despite its importance and methodological rigor, this research presents certain limitations. Firstly, our study focused on affective commitment; future studies could therefore explore other components of commitment, such as normative commitment. Secondly, innovative behavior was used as a performance indicator in this study.

There are also other important role-related behaviors, such as mutual assistance, since pharmaceutical managers often work in teams on projects. Thirdly, our study focused on large enterprises, which is why future research could focus more on SMEs. Finally, other researchers could analyze, using a quantitative methodology, the moderating effect of affective commitment on the relationship between motivational HR practices and innovative work behaviors.

REFERENCES

A. Agarwal, U. (2014). Linking justice, trust and innovative work behaviour to work engagement. Personnel review, 43(1), 41-73.

Abun, D., Ruadap-Macaspac, L. G., Valdez, E. B., & Fredolin, J. P. (2023). The effect of innovative work environment on the innovative work behavior of employees. International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science, 12(3), 140-158.

Ahmad, R., Nawaz, M. R., Ishaq, M. I., Khan, M. M., & Ashraf, H. A. (2023). Social exchange theory: Systematic review and future directions. Frontiers in psychology, 13, 1015921.

Ajzen, M., Rondeaux, G., Pichault, F., & Taskin, L. (2016). Performance et innovation en PME: une relation à questionner 1. Revue internationale PME, 29(2), 65-94.

AlEssa, H. S., & Durugbo, C. M. (2022). Systematic review of innovative work behavior concepts and contributions. Management Review Quarterly, 72(4), 1171-1208.

Ali, H., Li, M., & Qiu, X. (2022). Employee engagement and innovative work behavior among Chinese millennials: mediating and moderating role of work-life balance and psychological empowerment. Frontiers in psychology, 13, 942580.

Anderson, N., Potočnik, K., & Zhou, J. (2014). Innovation and creativity in organizations: A state-of-the-science review, prospective commentary, and guiding framework. Journal of management, 40(5), 1297-1333.

BAAKIR, H., & ELLIOUA, H. (2025). High-performance work practices: Key development factors and analysis of different practices in the literature. International Journal of Accounting Finance Auditing Management and Economics, 6(10), 205-227.

Blau, P. M. (1964). Justice in social exchange. Sociological inquiry, 34(2).

Boselie, P. (2010). High performance work practices in the health care sector: a Dutch case study. International journal of manpower, 31(1), 42-58.

Cano, C. P., & Cano, P. Q. (2006). Human resources management and its impact on innovation performance in companies. International Journal of Technology Management, 35(1-4), 11-28.

Combes, M., & George, S. (2016). Le Climat des affaires!. In Crime climatique stop! (pp. 145-156). Le Seuil.

Curado, C. (2018). Human resource management contribution to innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises: A mixed methods approach. Creativity and Innovation Management, 27(1), 79-90.

Dávila, M. C., & García, G. J. (2012). Organizational identification and commitment: correlates of sense of

belonging and affective commitment. The Spanish journal of psychology, 15(1), 244-255.

De Jong, J., & Den Hartog, D. (2010). Measuring innovative work behaviour. Creativity and innovation management, 19(1), 23-36.

Diaz-Fernandez, M., Bornay-Barrachina, M., & Lopez-Cabrales, A. (2015, April). Innovation and firm performance: the role of human resource management practices. In Evidence-based HRM: A global forum for empirical scholarship (Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 64-80). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Erhan, T., Uzunbacak, H. H., & Aydin, E. (2022). From conventional to digital leadership: exploring digitalization of leadership and innovative work behavior. Management Research Review, 45(11), 1524-1543.

Farrukh, M., Meng, F., Raza, A., & Wu, Y. (2023). Innovative work behaviour: the what, where, who, how and when. Personnel Review, 52(1), 74-98.

Handayani, A. J., Sugiono, E., & Efendi, S. (2025). Enhancing Employee Performance through Career Development, Training, and Human Resource Planning: The Mediating Effect of Motivation. Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Kesatuan, 13(6), 4361-4374.

Haneda, S., & Ito, K. (2018). Organizational and human resource management and innovation: which management practices are linked to product and/or process innovation?. Research Policy, 47(1), 194-208.

Islam, T., Zahra, I., Rehman, S. U., & Jamil, S. (2024). How knowledge sharing encourages innovative work behavior through occupational self-efficacy? The moderating role of entrepreneurial leadership. Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication, 73(1-2), 67-83.

Janssen, O. (2000). Job demands, perceptions of effort-reward fairness and innovative work behaviour. Journal of Occupational and organizational psychology, 73(3), 287-302.

Jiménez-Jiménez, D., & Sanz-Valle, R. (2005). Innovation and human resource management fit: an empirical study. International journal of Manpower, 26(4), 364-381.

Kilroy, J., Dundon, T., & Townsend, K. (2023). Embedding reciprocity in human resource management: A social exchange theory of the role of frontline managers. Human Resource Management Journal, 33(2), 511-531.

Kroon, B., Van De Voorde, K., & Timmers, J. (2013). High performance work practices in small firms: a resource-poverty and strategic decision-making perspective. Small Business Economics, 41(1), 71-91.

LATREILLE, E. (2025). COMPARAISON DES DÉTERMINANTS DE LA MOTIVATION INTRINSÈQUE ET DU BIEN-ÊTRE ENTRE ATHLÈTES ET NON-ATHLÈTES ÂGÉS DE 55 ANS ET PLUS.

Lau, C. M., & Ngo, H. Y. (2004). The HR system, organizational culture, and product innovation. International business review, 13(6), 685-703.

Liang, T. P., Liu, C. C., & Wu, C. H. (2008). Can social exchange theory explain individual knowledge-sharing behavior? A meta-analysis.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (2003). Analyse des données qualitatives. De Boeck Supérieur.

Morales-Sánchez, R., & Pasamar, S. (2020). How to improve organisational citizenship behaviour by combining ability, motivation and opportunity: The moderator role of perceived organisational support. Employee Relations: The International Journal, 42(2), 398-416.

Offiong, U. P., Szopik-Depczyńska, K., Cheba, K., & Ioppolo, G. (2024). FinTech as a digital innovation in microfinance companies–systematic literature review. European Journal of Innovation Management, 27(9), 562-581.

OUZOUGZOU, A. (2024). L'impact du contrôle de gestion et de la créativité sur l'industrie pharmaceutique (Doctoral dissertation, Ecole Supérieure de Gestion et d'Economie Numérique).

Patrick, H. A., & Sonia, J. (2012). Job Satisfaction and Affective Commitment. IUP Journal of Organizational Behavior, 11(1).

Solahudin, A., Fatimah, S. E., & Sulistiowati, L. H. (2024). Factors affecting affective commitment. Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology, 8(6), 3475-3483.

Srirahayu, D. P., Ekowati, D., & Sridadi, A. R. (2023). Innovative work behavior in public organizations: A systematic literature review. Heliyon, 9(2).

Vuong, B. N., Tushar, H., & Hossain, S. F. A. (2023). The effect of social support on job performance through organizational commitment and innovative work behavior:

does innovative climate matter?. Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration, 15(5), 832-854.

Winand, M., Qualizza, D., Vos, S., Scheerder, J., & Zintz, T. (2013). Fédérations sportives innovantes: attitude, perceptions et champions de l'innovation. RIMHE: Revue interdisciplinaire Management, Homme & Entreprise, 62(2), 5-20.

Xuecheng, W., Iqbal, Q., & Saina, B. (2022). Factors affecting employee's retention: Integration of situational leadership with social exchange theory. Frontiers in psychology, 13, 872105.

Yin, R. K. (2003). Designing case studies. Qualitative research methods, 5(14), 359-386.

Zhang, Z., Takahashi, Y., & Rezwan, R. B. (2025). Knowledge hiding and social exchange theory: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Frontiers in Psychology, 15, 1516815.