



**Exploring High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) In The Libyan
Telecommunication Sector**

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ABSTRACT

This study explores work practices (HPWS) in the Libyan telecommunications sector. HPWS are a set of distinct but interrelated human resources management practices combined in a consistent bundle and used to increase employee commitment and motivation, and thereby enhance organizational performance.

The study asked questions about the nature and content of HPWS, why organizations adopt them, and what is the impact of HPWS on employees' attitude and organizational performance, from both employers and employee's perspectives. It also examined the way in which specific socio-cultural factors may affect the adoption of those practices in Libya, with particular reference to trans-cultural differences.

Existing literature about HPWS shows that most previous studies were conducted in the manufacturing sector in developed countries, Anglo-Saxon countries such as the USA, UK, Australia and Canada are the primary sources from which the empirical evidence for HPWS stems.

Little is known about HPWS in developing countries in general, and in the Libyan context in particular, where the context is substantially different from western countries. As the aspects of each country vary, this may limit or enhance HPWS in their effectiveness. Different cultural or institutional influences may shape the nature of the employment relationship within an organization. The present study aims to contribute to knowledge by studying the HPWS in the setting of a developing country, Libya, where specific socio-economic and cultural factors may affect the implementation of HPWS, and in an under-researched sector, the services sector, and by considering both employees and employer's perspectives. The study adopted a qualitative approach; case study research design was used to conduct the research. Data was gathered from 37 respondents in two main companies in the telecommunications sector. The final results show that both managers and employees are satisfied with the implementation of HPWS system because it enhances their productivity and their organizations' market positions as well. But there are various contextual characteristics, like political interference which negatively impact the HPWS implementation in the Libyan telecommunication sector.

According to those results of the study, several recommendations for telecommunication

industry like shifting the power and control of telecommunication sector from the ministry to heads of departments, and enhancing the internal feedback process, were suggested to help the sector and the two case companies in particular maximise their benefits from applying HPWS.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study aims to explore high performance work systems (HPWS) in the Libyan telecommunications sector. HPWS are a set of distinct but interrelated human resources management practices combined in a consistent bundle and used to increase employee commitment and motivation, and thereby enhance organizational performance (Jiang, Lepak et al. 2012, Heffernan and Dundon 2016). Existing literature about HPWS shows that most previous studies were conducted in developed countries (Boxall and Macky 2009), and in the private and the manufacturing sector in particular (Fu, Flood et al. 2017), and mainly concentrated on employers perspective only (Liao, Toya et al. 2009).

Little is known about HPWS in the public services organizations in general and in the Libyan context in particular, which reveals a significant knowledge gap regarding the implementation of HPWS in this context.

The present study aims to contribute to knowledge by studying the HPWS in the setting of a developing country where specific socio-economic and cultural factors may affect the implementation of HPWS, and in an under-researched sector, the public services sector, by considering both employees and employer's perspectives.

This study aims to extend HPWS research by answering questions about how are HPWS applied in the Libyan telecommunications sector, and how they are perceived by employers and employees?

The study adopted a qualitative approach. Case study research design was used to conduct the research. Data about how HPWS implemented and perceived in the Libyan telecommunications context was obtained from two leading companies in the sector by conducting semi-structured interviews to explore both employers and employee's perspectives.

1.2 The Research Aim, Objectives and Questions

1.2.1 The Research Aim

The review of the literature shows that studies of HPWS have mainly focused on western countries and the private and manufacturing sector and have neglected different socio-economic and cultural contexts as well as employee perspectives. Accordingly, the aim of this research, therefore, will be to explore HPWS in: a non-western context, which has particular socio-economic and cultural factors that might affect the implementation of HPWS in the Libyan public services sector, where the nature of this sector might influence the process of implementing and interpreting HPWS (Farnham 2010), and to take account of both the employers and employees perspectives about HPWS implementation. In order to achieve this overall aim, the following objectives have been formulated.

1.2.2 The Research Objectives

- To review the relevant literature on HPWS, and their use in different contexts, including the various socio-cultural, political and economic factors that may impact HPWS implementation and outcomes.
- To explore the existence and nature of prevailing HPWS in two Libyan telecommunications organisations, including the organization's rationale and expectations for these systems, through the collection of primary and secondary data.
- To explore the present degree of adoption of HPWS, and identify the key factors and challenges affecting their implementation in the Libyan context.
- To explore the way in which specific socio-cultural factors, may affect the adoption of HPWS in Libya with particular reference to trans-cultural differences.
- To compare employers and employee's perceptions of the HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector.

1.2.3 The Research Questions

This study is designed to answer the following question:

How are High Performance Work Systems applied in the Libyan telecommunications sector, and how are they perceived by employers and employees?

The following sub-questions have been designed in order to answer the main question:

- What is the nature and content of HPWS in two Libyan telecommunication organizations?
- Why organisations adopt HPWS in the Libyan Telecommunication Sector?
- How the implementation of HPWS impacts employee and organizations from both managers and employee's perspectives?
- How the Libyan context affect the implementation of HPWS?
- What are the key challenges and difficulties impeding the implementation of HPWS within the Libyan context?

1.3 Research Methodology

As the research is committed to understanding high performance work systems in their historical, socio-economic and political contexts, and understanding employers and employees perspectives, the approach is qualitative, as relates to the interpretivist tradition which aims to produce an understanding of the social context of the phenomenon and the way whereby the phenomenon influences and is influenced by the social context (Klein and Myers 1999).

The qualitative approach was adopted as this enables the researcher to explain the “why” and “how” of the case under consideration. Furthermore, Bryman and Bell (2015) note that qualitative methods provide rich information when researching an area that has not been investigated previously, as it is the case of the present study (to the best of researcher knowledge, no study has been conducted in Libya about HPWS).

1.3.1 Research Strategy

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of the different perceptions of the employers and employees, in respect of HPWS, the case study is a fruitful strategy (Bryman and Bell 2015). Furthermore, Yin (2013) stated that when the choice is available in research, the multiple-case designs (strategy) is preferred over single-case designs and that even a ‘two-case’ design is an improvement over the single-case designs, given the possibility of the more powerful analytic conclusion. Similarly, Remenyi and Williams (1998) suggest that sufficient evidence cannot be found from one case study alone. Therefore, to achieve the research objectives and to get a more complete understanding of HPWS in Libya’s telecommunications sector, and in order to guarantee the best sources of data relevant to this research, two cases have been chosen.

1.3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Within the two organisations, semi-structured interviews were carried out with a cross-section of employees and managers in different departments. The selecting criteria for interviews participants was the information that they are likely to provide. Therefore the researcher employed purposive sampling, with participants approached who can help in answering the research questions of the study (Schindler and Cooper 2005, Bryman and Bell 2015).

The semi-structured interview method is a valuable data gathering technique as it enables the researcher to ask explicit questions about what the chosen interviewees think, do, and feel (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2012, Sekaran and Bougie 2013).

1.3.3 Research Population and Sampling

The study population is the telecommunications sector in Libya, which is considered as one of the leading sectors in the Libyan economy. Telecommunications have emerged as a key driver of economic and social development globally, and particularly in developing countries like Libya, it is extremely important to develop the telecommunication sector, in order improve the capabilities of the local organisations and the society in general (Twati 2014). Modern telecommunications systems are an essential element for the country, to enable it to adopt and use technology, and cope with the significant technological development the rest of the world witnessed recently.

HPWS play a significant role in the telecommunication sector. One major success factor in the services sector, in general, is the knowledge embedded in their employees (Von Nordenflycht 2010). The telecommunications sector is known for its dependency on intellectual and human capital as distinctive key assets, where the capabilities of qualified people are drivers in accelerating the expansion and sustainability of the businesses (Guislain and Qiang 2006).

Since the launch of the telecommunications sector in Libya, it was entirely state-owned, and foreign firms were excluded from participating in the market directly (Otman and Karlberg 2007), since 2011 private sector was allowed to participate effectively in the Libyan telecommunications sector, while some international companies like Vodafone, Ericsson, Alcatel Lucent, Motorola, ZTE and Huawei were allowed to work as sub-contractors with Libyan companies.

Two cases in the Libyan context have been chosen, based upon their size, their type, their existing internal culture and their structure. The two companies that have agreed to participate are Libyana and Libya Telecom & Technology (LTT). Libyana mobile company was established in 2004 specialising as a prepaid mobile phone operator. The company achieved quick success, taking the number of its subscribers to more than 6.2 million. It is about 116% of the population, making it the main mobile telephone provider in the country (Libyana 2020). Established in 1997 as a semi-private company before it became fully government owned, Libya Telecom & Technology (LTT) was Libya's largest and main internet service provider (ISP), offering both dial-up and broadband internet to customers around the country (LTT 2020).

1.4 Expected Contribution

Budhwar and Debrah (2013) argue that researching and highlighting how human resources are managed and confirm what main factors influence human resources management in developing countries is a priority for researchers in this field. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to the human resources management literature by raising such awareness in the context of Libya, through identifying how HPWS are planned and implemented in a developing country, and how far this differs from the western contexts. Additionally, the HPWS research to date has tended to focus on the manufacturing sector rather than the services sector, and on the private sector rather than the public sector. This research is expected to contribute to the current literature by studying HPWS in the public telecommunications sector. Furthermore, the current research targets to investigate both employers and employee's perspectives about implementing HPWS, and their benefits for individuals and organisations, while most of the previous studies relied mainly on employers' perspective only.

On policy/practice-based level, the results of this study are expected to be useful to both the Libyan government, and the managers of the telecommunication companies about human resources reality, and suggested developing plans for the human resources management processes and practices. Libyan policymakers and the managers of the companies can also benefit from knowing more about the process of HPWS and their expected benefits to their businesses.

1.5 Expected Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis will be presented in seven chapters, including the current chapter. The first chapter (Introduction) includes a background to the research together with the principal aim and objectives, research questions, motivations, outlines to methodology, and the suggested thesis's structure. The second chapter is the literature review chapter it reviews related work in the HPWS literature to formulate a theoretical perspective, and reveals a gap in the literature which highlights the significance of focusing on the public sector employees in HPWS research. The relevant literature related to the research context is also presented in this chapter; in order to explore the significant characteristics of the Libyan telecommunications sector, to be used in identifying research gaps. The third chapter presents the initiative theoretical framework of the research. Then the fourth chapter focuses on the research methodology used by this research, including research philosophy, research approach, research strategy, sampling, techniques of data collection, and a justification for their use. The chapter pays attention to how the study is conducted in the field, and how the data were analysed; moreover, participant's selection, the process of data generation and data analysis. Ethical issues concerning involvement with human subjects and trustworthiness of the study will also be presented. The fifth chapter will present the main findings of the empirical investigation concerning the research questions; and then discusses the key research findings of the empirical study and compares these results with the relevant literature. Chapter six is going to synthesize the overall research findings in the form of a research framework. Ending with chapter seven, which will present the study's fundamental contributions to theory, and practice, and concluding with its recommendations, limitations and evaluation together with the proposals for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEMS (HPWS)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related to High performance work systems (HPWS), and the importance of context when studying them and it is structured as follows. It starts by outlining the origins of HPWS research from earlier management writings, by explaining how Human Resource Management (HRM) replaced personnel management and how HRM research has progressed to more participative and strategic organizational approach to introduce the concept of HPWS. The chapter then defines high performance work systems and its various components and how they are essential for any organization, outlines the main theoretical debates within the literature, which include the concept of bundles in HPWS, the relationship between HPWS and performance, the contingency and universalistic perspectives, and the negative sides of HPWS. The importance of studying employees perspective is then illustrated by explaining how this research will differentiate from its antecedents by focusing on the neglected employee's perception in an under-researched context. The other part of the chapter reviews the presents background information on the importance of understanding context in the HPWS studies. It also outlines the foundations for studying the macro context; it is argued in this part that the unique characteristics of the Libyan telecommunications sector as the research context may potentially be the principal contribution of this study in two ways. Firstly, as the context in Libya, as a developing Arab country, is substantially different from the prior studied western countries, and therefore requires further coverage (Clinton and Guest 2013). Secondly, studies on HPWS fail to focus on the application of HPWS within the public service context (Saridakis, Lai et al. 2017). Most of the existing research on HPWS has predominantly focused on private manufacturing firms, and their conclusions may not be applicable to the service sector, especially those sectors with higher technology levels like the telecommunications sector, because of the differences in the market orientation, organizational targets, and the nature of work across these sectors (Boxall and Purcell 2015).

2.2 The Emergence of Human Resources Management

As a replacement for personnel management, the concept of HRM emerged during the early 1970s. Personnel management was a routine activity to hire new employees and to maintain personal records. Organizations did not consider it as strategic management of the business (Kaufman 2015, Marchington 2015). HRM would view people as an important source or asset to be used for the benefit of organizations, employees and society (Armstrong and Taylor 2020).

Developments such as the industrial revolution, and the principles of scientific management, have influenced the development of personnel management. However, traditional personnel management was challenged by the rapid technological advances, globalization, and changing customers' demands. Firms could not compete in this environment without pursuing a variety of competitive strategies, and use a new approach to transform its resources and create value (Jackson, Chuang et al. 2006, Paauwe and Boon 2018), this made businesses place greater emphasis on the management of their human resources to improve the quality of their products and services.

In the 1980s, the terms 'personnel management' and 'personnel administration' have been virtually replaced by the term HRM, especially when a human resource management syllabus was introduced into MBA program at Harvard Business School. The syllabus considered the growing importance of HRM as a source of competitive advantage, urged by environmental pressures and difficulties in managing the work-force (Lundy 1994, Jackson, Schuler et al. 2014).

Generally, academics increased their interest in further exploring the field of HRM in the 1980s, with the term HRM usually used to describe a range of activities used in workplaces to manage the people working there. These activities like recruitment, training management, compensations and benefits systems, performance management, staff communications and participation ...etc. (Storey 2007). There was no agreement among scholars in defining HRM. Therefore the definitions varied from general to more particular definitions. It was defined as the process, procedures, and policies related to the management of people in organisations (Gilley, Eggland et al. 2002). Dessler, Sutherland et al. (2005) also defined HRM as the practices and policies involved in carrying out the people or human resource aspects of a management position, including recruiting, screening, training, rewarding and appraising.

Storey (2014) offered a more explicit definition, which specifies human resources management as a distinctive approach to employment management, which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed and capable workforce, using an integrated array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques.

HRM research has progressed to more participative and strategic organisational processes, instead of being the old style of work that was known with the firm supervision on employees, hierarchical managerial structures, and pre-determined specialization in tasks. This led to new approaches bringing together people, work and information to produce high quality goods and services (Edwards and Wright 2001, Dell’Arling, Ghinetti et al. 2003, Crawshaw, Budhwar et al. 2017, Rees and Smith 2017, Berman, Bowman et al. 2019). This created a growing acceptance of HRM as a main competitive advantage resource for any organization, where it offers the difference changing mechanism through the inimitable and valuable characteristics of the well-selected and trained workforce (Shaw, Park et al. 2013, Rees and Smith 2017).

Consequently, this stream led the research to specific work practices that produce these results, known as High Performance Work Systems (HPWS), as an approach to use the embedded potentials of the human capital in every organization. Organizations benefited from these HPWS in terms of low conflict, low turnover, and greater output (Murphy, Torres et al. 2018).

Beer, Spector et al. (1984) suggested the ‘Harvard’ analytical framework including five components of HRM policy choices: stakeholder interests; long-term consequences; situational factors, human resources policies, and human resources outcomes. The authors showed that both situational factors, and stakeholder interests serve as restraints on HRM policies and could also be affected by such policies as well. HRM policy choices affect results and also the long-term consequences. On the other hand, the model developed by Fombrun, Tichy et al. (1984) does not focus on employee interests. Their suggested model concentrates on the alignment of firm strategy with HRM practices for good employee performance, they treated employees as materialistic resources, and that they should be treated like any other business resource. This model is also known as the 'matching model' or 'best-fit' approach to HRM. It limits the role of HR to a reactive, organizational function and under-emphasizes the importance of societal and other external factors. (Kaufman 2015)

Following the increased changes in the markets like the demand for an educated workforce, requiring customized high quality products, collective bargaining norms, and labour costs

caused more pressure on these systems. Acknowledgement of the problems linked with prior systems led firms to practice with commitment system. This system marks a transformation in societal values distant from traditional systems. Commitment system strives to support mutuality of interests among employees and employers by developing their relationship through enhancing the importance of employees interests (Beer and Spector 1985).

2.3 The Importance of Human Resource Management in the Workplace

It has always been a vital concern for managers to run their organizations in an effective and efficient manner. Common to any effort to achieve such objectives are three elements: goals, material resources, and people (Griffin, Neal et al. 2007). Organizations use all forms of assets, including financial, human, and firm attributes to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness. Among all assets, people are considered the most valuable resource and the key to accomplishing desired firm performance ((Armstrong and Taylor 2020) Pfeffer, 1994; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Boxall, Purcell et al. (2007) suggested three major sub-domains of HRM:

- **Micro:** It involves the major functions of human resources practices and policies. It is generally concerned with the management of individuals, including areas such as selection, recruitment, performance appraisal, compensation management, and training and development.
- **Strategic:** It is concerned with the process of fit between different human resources management functions, broader context, and other organizational activities. The major focus of strategic human resources management is on the overall human resources strategies adopted by organizations, and the measurement of their impact on the overall performance.
- **International:** It is concerned with human resource management processes in international organizations.

The importance of human resources was the main target of several studies (Gould-Williams 2003, Noe, Hollenbeck et al. 2015). The devolution of the concept of personnel management with its traditional managerial style has also elevated the important role of human resources. Additionally, the emergence of new market necessities has further heightened the importance of HRM. Becker and Huselid (1998) stressed that for many organizations, the focus has now been shifted on the development of highly skilled and motivated human resources that can provide the required flexibility and speed of demanding markets.

Organizations are striving for getting more competitive opportunities for growth. In such a competitive business environment, having efficient employees with up to date skills and the latest knowledge is considered to be an integral source of competence (Ashkenas, Ulrich et al. 2015). Due to its intangible characteristics of the human element with more significance for human skills, attitudes, and organizational knowledge, now HRM is considered as an important source of coping and surviving within this dynamic environment (Storey 2014, Armstrong 2016, Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016).

2.4 High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) Meaning and Components

The topic of High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) is one of the most active areas in management research today, and much attention on HPWS has been attracted from academics and practitioners, as a tool to enhance the organisational performance, and employees productivity (Combs, Liu et al. 2006, Fu, Flood et al. 2015, Jewell, Jewell et al. 2020).

There were studies that formed the seminal work on HPWS research around the mid-1990s (see for example (Arthur 1994, Pfeffer 1994, Huselid 1995, MacDuffie 1995). HPWS research is thought to have gained mainstream prominence after these studies were published. According to these researchers, HPWS were introduced initially to promote organizational performance through employee skills development, and the positive involvement in workplace activities (Youndt, Snell et al. 1996, Heffernan and Dundon 2016, Jewell et al. 2020).

HPWS refers to the HRM approaches that originally emerged in the USA in the early 1980s (Appelbaum, Bailey et al. 2000). Strategic human resource management (SHRM) researchers have adopted a package or bundle perspective, where a set of human resources management practices is superior to any single practice in influencing firm performance (Gooderham, Parry et al. 2008, Stavrou and Brewster 2009). HPWS include practices such as: internal merit-based promotions; rigorous selection procedures; grievance procedures; cross-functional and cross-trained teams; high levels of training; participatory mechanisms; information sharing; group-based rewards; and skill-based pay. Similarly, seven key dimensions of HPWS were identified by Pfeffer (1998): selective hiring of new personnel; security of employment; autonomous teams; the decentralization of decision-making; a comparatively high level of compensation that is contingent on organisational performance; reduced status distinctions and barriers; extensive training; and an organisation's extensive internal sharing of performance and

financial data. Within HPWS, the qualities of self-control and self-management are seen in workers to a larger extent (Tomer 2001).

Overall, the HPWS is conceptualised as constituting a set of distinct yet interrelated human resources management practices that collectively develop, retain, select, and motivate the workforce (Guthrie 2001, Becker and Huselid 2006, Murphy, Torres et al. 2018). Within this model, workers with superior skill-sets tend to incorporate their competence to activities related to their work activities. Work-related activities (i.e., the actual behaviours/output of an employee) result in achieving intermediate indicators of organisational performance that are superior, which subsequently sustains the firm's competitive advantage (Way 2002). These systems denote labour management approaches that are characterised by work types that are participative, the enhancement of skill-sets, and mechanisms of employee motivation (Huselid 1995). Broadly, HPWS can be described as a combination of work structures, processes, and innovative human resource management practices that - when combined or bundled together in a certain way – creates a mutually reinforcing effect that produces synergistic benefits (Huselid 1995).

One common approach to understanding this phenomenon is that HPWS are systems made of managerial practices that further empower employees, and that enhance the skill-sets and incentives that motivate and enable employees to take advantage of this higher level of empowerment within the organisation (Boxall 2012). HPWS is designed to enhance the skills, attitudes, and competence of employees (Neal, West et al. 2005). These systems are implemented to facilitate employee motivation and learning, as well as encouraging a developed understanding of which behaviours and competencies are expected by their organisation (Bowen and Ostroff 2004). Under HPWS, the alignment with the organisation's strategies as well as the internal consistency of the different functions in the firm are emphasised. Just as with other strategic management systems of human resources, the 'synergistic' 'integrative' effect of human resource functions are highly prioritised by HPWS (Wright and Boswell 2002), and also connects human resource management to business strategies within the organisation and its contextual environment (Wright and McMahan 2011).

The precise definition of HPWS is subject to continuous debate. For instance, Boxall and Macky (2009) defined them as a work practices system for workers within an organization that results in better individual and organizational performance. Similarly, Posthuma, Campion et al. (2013) defined HPWS as the harmonized work bundles, i.e. bundles of practices that work

together to create synergistic effects, in which certain practices reinforce one another to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Patel and Conklin (2012) defined HPWS as a set of managerial practices that have a positive impact on employees' motivation, attitude, and performance. One common approach to understand this phenomenon is that HPWS are systems made of managerial practices that further empower employees, and enhance the skill-sets and incentives that motivate and enable employees to take advantage of this higher level of empowerment within the organisation (Boxall 2012). HPWS are conceptualised as constituting a set of distinct yet interrelated human resources management practices that collectively develop, retain, select, and motivate the workforce (Guthrie 2001, Becker and Huselid 2006). Within this, workers with superior skill-sets tend to apply their competence to activities related to their work, and this result in achieving the firm's competitive advantage (Way 2002).

The HPWS encompasses two kinds of practices, high commitment and high involvement practices. High commitment practices include: applying sophisticated selection procedures; training staff and developing their human relations and knowledge skills; enhancing work-life balance and contingent pay systems, such as profit sharing and job security. High involvement practices include designing work in particular ways, including: developing work-teams; job enrichment; job rotation; problem-solving groups; and team briefings (Becker and Huselid 1998). High commitment and high involvement practices include activities that can enhance employee knowledge; abilities and skills; and motivation, this may also be a useful tool of retention for competent employees, while also advocating for the removal of the organisation's lower performers. However, in spite of these existing approaches, considerable debate remains as to the specific practices that constitute HPWS (Thompson 2011).

2.5 Factors Constituting HPWS

The aim of this section is to identify some of the key practices used to define what constitutes a high performance work system; there still exists little consistency across studies in the elements of HPWS. While the aims of HPWS and the relationship between HPWS and performance is well presented in the literature, the related factors that constitute HPWS is far from clear (Guest, Conway et al. 2004, Paauwe, Wright et al. 2013). Little or no agreement exists among researchers in this field about what practices could be comprised in HPWS. In one study Legge (2001) presented that of 15 high-performance practices recognised in the UK WERS 98 study, just seven are used in American studies. In another study, Pfeffer (1998)

concentrated on the importance of job security, while the job security practice was not considered in other studies, such as (Delaney and Huselid 1996, Patterson, West et al. 1997).

The absence of agreement between researchers is problematic; causing no clear criteria as to why specific practices should be or are involved. According to Ashton and Sung (2002) inconsistencies within the factors constituting HPWS exist in different contexts, For instance, in the US the labour markets are highly developed, it is normal to find internal promotion systems in many organizations, where some studies conducted the US include factors like the existence of a system of internal promotion to be one of the main factors constituting HPWS. Similarly, Cappelli (1996) argues about how the uncertainties regarding the including of contingent pay as one of the factors constituting HPWS. Related ambiguities found when raising queries about job flexibility, and what does it mean and include exactly? (Paauwe and Boselie 2005). Both Paauwe and Boselie (2005) and Guest (2001) argues that the absence of consensus about what exact practices constitute the notion of HPWS is shaped because many studies do not include a clear theoretical framework to clarify how and why the conceptualisation of their chosen practices was selected in the first place. These two studies contended that there were some good examples in the literature, like studies conducted by Bailey, Berg et al. (2001), and Arthur (1994) to be good models of how to choose the items constituting HRM systems. In a different study conducted by Wall and Wood (2005) they showed how to configure the right bundle of practices by conducting a critical assessment of earlier studies and stressed the importance of recognising that diversity in HRM dimensions would happen, according to different contextual factors. In the previous study the researchers recognise areas where commonality occurs, they contended that the commonly used human resources practices are: empowerment, participation, sophisticated selection, appraisal, training, communication, performance-related pay/promotion, teamwork, employment security, and harmonisation. Another major study conducted by Guest (2001) decided to use a larger set of practices, including practices that are not commonly used in previous research like family-friendly practices.

However, there are a number of practices that do seem common across studies; these practices are mainly evolving from Pfeffer study (Pfeffer 1994). There is a large volume of published studies which have included practices from Pfeffer's seven influential human resources practices list (Pfeffer 1998), in their examination of the influence of HPWS on firm performance. An example of this is the studies carried out by Camps and Luna-Arocas (2009);

Ahmad and Schroeder (2003); Zacharatos, Barling et al. (2005); Bamberger and Meshoulam (2000); McClean and Collins (2011). These practices have received greater attention in the HPWS literature. This includes practices that can improve the skills, knowledge, and abilities of employees, enhance their motivation, and can be helpful in the retention of competent employees while advocating poor performers to leave the organization. Pfeffer suggested seven components to represent most of the systems producing profits through human resources, and they are as follows (Pfeffer 1998).

2.5.1 Employment Security.

This component has been defined by Pfeffer (1998) as the process of providing employees with a commitment assures that they will not be laid off, even in tough financial situations. Without this vital component, it would be hard to successfully implement a high involvement work system (Pfeffer and Veiga 1999). This assertion is built on the belief that organizations which apply the concept of employment security are committed to their people (Liu, Guthrie et al. 2009). Based on the notion of reciprocity, this commitment should be returned in kind with greater job performance and loyalty (Appelbaum, Bailey et al. 2000).

In addition, organizations that do not promise employment security but attempt to invest in employee training, empowerment, and employee development, will help out the competition by providing them with well-trained team players who know how to work autonomously (Pfeffer 1998). These are the very employees they can least afford to lose. Locke, Kochan et al. (1995) expressed that when employees fear that companies plan to increase performance might risk their job existence, all the planned management practices may not work probably on employees because of this fear. Employment security has been often used as a measure or model component in various studies in the field of high performance work systems like (Delery and Doty 1996, Ichniowski, Shaw et al. 1997, Wood 1999, Zacharatos, Barling et al. 2005).

Perceiving employees as people to be invested in rather than as costs to be controlled would suggest that an organization's best strategy is to carefully select and retain employees instead of throwing them in the arms of the competition. This suggests another benefit of employment security. Organizations will quickly learn to be careful in their recruitment and selection of employees who best fit the organizational culture as a means of avoiding unnecessary layoffs at the first sign of economic hardship (Pfeffer and Veiga 1999).

A number of studies have shown the positive impact of perceived employment security. For example, Gaertner and Nollen (1992) reported a negative relationship between executives' turnover intentions and perceptions of employment security. In addition, they also found that participants with high job satisfaction and a sense of integration into a management team were less likely to report a desire to leave the organization. The level of employment security has also been shown to have positive effects on the level of workplace safety measured by the rate of accidents and days off work due to injuries (Grunberg, Moore et al. 1996, Zacharatos, Barling et al. 2005). In their study about banks and financial performance (Delery and Doty 1996) found a positive relationship between the level of the bank officers employment security and the bank's financial performance. In a different study, Probst and Brubaker (2001) showed that when employees were more insecure about their jobs, safety compliance decreased. Further, these job insecure employees also suffered a greater number of accidents and injuries as compared to job secured employees.

Organizations serious about providing employment security to their members will need to ensure that they recruit and select the right people to avoid costly layoffs in the future. To do this, organizations must be clear on what skills and attributes are most critical to enhancing their competitive advantage (Pfeffer 1998). It is imperative that organizations aim their efforts at selecting largely on soft skills that are difficult to change through training (i.e., attitudes to teamwork, communication skills, and personal interests) rather than hard skills that can be acquired (Barling and Zacharatos 1999). This approach is especially crucial in the rapidly growing service-providing sectors in which employee attitudes and interpersonal skills will affect customer satisfaction and loyalty, as it is the front-line employees that determine customers' perceptions of the organization. After all, to the customer, the employee is the face of the organization (Korczyński 2002, von Nordenflycht, Malhotra et al. 2015).

2.5.2 Selective Hiring

As mentioned, organizations serious about providing employment security to their members will need to ensure that they recruit and select the right people to avoid costly layoffs in the future. To do this, organizations must be clear on what skills and attributes are most critical to enhancing their competitive advantage (Schermerhorn, Davidson et al. 2014). A number of authors (Pfeffer and Veiga 1999, Nickson, Warhurst et al. 2012, Deepa and Seth 2013) have concluded that it is imperative that organizations aim their efforts at selecting largely on soft skills that are difficult to change through training (i.e., attitudes to teamwork, communication

skills, and personal interests) rather than hard skills that can be acquired. This approach is especially important in the rapidly growing service-providing sectors in which employee attitudes and interpersonal skills will affect customer satisfaction and loyalty, as it is the front-line employees that determine customers' perceptions of the organization. After all, to the customer, the employee is the face of the organization (Korczynski 2002, von Nordenflycht, Malhotra et al. 2015).

Kracher and Wells (1998) support this view by arguing that organizations can select managers with a caring attitude, which tends to underlie organizational citizenship behaviours. This attitude is necessary for selecting front-line service providers. Another benefit of rigorous recruitment and selection is that prospective employees are more likely to receive a realistic job preview, which has been shown to be positively related to a number of employee attitudes like employee commitment and the level of job satisfaction (Wade, Osgood et al. 2008, Training 2012, O'Meara and Petzall 2013)

2.5.3 Extensive Training.

In an increasingly global economy, generating new ideas and finding innovative solutions to old problems are some of the critical components in achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Pfeffer and Veiga 1999). Extensive training enhance employees' abilities to identify and resolve problems and to ensure quality products and service (Pfeffer 1994). Training, therefore, is a critical component to enhance employees' anticipation of, and appropriate responses to, environmental challenges. It also allows them to exploit possibilities rather than constantly reacting to unforeseen crises (Bansal, Mendelson et al. 2001).

Similarly, Zahra, Iram et al. (2014) found that taking required training courses was positively associated with overall job satisfaction and organizational commitment. They reported that employees given strong recruitment and socialization practices upon entry into the organization have higher levels of commitment to the organization (Zahra, Iram et al. 2014). Investing in training does have intangible benefits such as improved attitudes and increased skills that may indirectly account for organizational health and profitability. Training also provides organizational members with the values and culture cherished by the organization. It also sends them a message that the company is committed to their career development (Kozlowski and Salas 2009).

2.5.4 Teams and Decentralized Decision-Making.

Organizations are increasingly using self-managed teams, and a growing body of research confirms their effectiveness (Arnold, Turner et al. 2007). Pfeffer (1998) also notes that teams reduce the need for supervisory control of work, as team members will be less inclined to disappoint fellow members than their own supervisor. For example, as each team member depends on the others to achieve the team and organizational goals, there is a lot of peer pressure against being absent. A team culture also increases each individual's sense of commitment, involvement, and level of responsibility for the success of the team project or organizational goal.

Zacharatos, Barling et al. (2005) argued for an important additional benefit; they asserted that the enhanced sense of commitment, responsibility, and closer communications inherent in well functioning teams should manifest itself in the form of fewer safety related mishaps and incidents. Another reason for this anticipated outcome is due to team members monitoring each member's work-related behaviours.

Further, teams allow for the removal of hierarchical layers and tasks that were previously done by specialists, saving the organization a great deal of money and other resources that could be spent elsewhere (Pfeffer 1998). This elimination of layers ties into a reduction in status differences. This reduction does not contradict employment security as those people that are no longer supervising individual members can be relocated and retrained to do other essential tasks. Not only will these people be better used within a team, but levels of resentment and lack of trust will also be reduced substantially. This will be achieved by allowing organizational members to govern more of their own behaviours and make key decisions based on proximal information rather than by distant others within traditionally layered organizations (Arnold, Turner et al. 2007). It is the front-line employees that are closest to work and have a greater understanding of what processes should be followed. Therefore, decentralizing the organization and allowing members to pool ideas in a team-based design, can allow for greater commitment and better decision quality. Thus, having team-based organizations sends a clear and empowering message to employees about their competence and abilities (Pfeffer 1998).

2.5.5 Comparatively High Compensation Partially Contingent on Organizational Performance.

Attracting and retaining highly skilled employees is a comprehensive process, requires several procedures including paying higher and better compensations to staff compared with industry levels, this act indicates how organizations value their employees, this message of appreciating is consistent with the overall philosophy espoused by high performance organizations that people are an organization's number one resource (Pfeffer 1998, Luna-Arocas and Camps 2007).

Senior managers of more traditional organizations may scoff at paying people higher than industry average wages because of the higher labour costs inherent in this approach. Research suggests that this attitude is mistaken. A number of studies have demonstrated that the higher labour costs inherent in this system are more than made up for by higher levels of loyalty and productivity (Wood, Van Veldhoven et al. 2012). In addition to a competitive base salary, pay contingent on gains in productivity (i.e., gainsharing) and/or profitability (e.g., bonuses) presents additional incentive to motivate employees to further levels of commitment and performance (Pfeffer and Veiga 1999).

As with a number of the other practices, however, the inclusion of pay for performance schemes has not been universally applied to every model of HPWS (Arthur, Herdman et al. 2016). One reason perhaps for its exclusion in some models is that pay-for-performance has been seen by some as an extrinsic and control type of motivation strategy (Cerasoli, Nicklin et al. 2014). Pay-for-performance schemes need to be correctly designed so as to enhance team performance as all. Thus profit sharing plans are more beneficial when used in conjunction with gain sharing plans. The reason for this argument is that employees often have no direct control over organizational outcomes (i.e., profitability, share prices) due to outside influences (e.g., recession) and not rewarding them when profits are low may result in a lower commitment. With gain sharing, employees are still being rewarded for improvements in productivity (i.e., effectiveness and efficiency) even though the organization may have little or no profit taking. Nonetheless, this incentive may actually help employees pull the organization out of its slump (Conroy and Gupta 2016).

2.5.6 Reduced Status Distinctions.

Consistent with a team-based approach and tapping the ideas and energy of people throughout the company, organizations with high performance work systems approach work to reduce the status distinctions between their employees to prevent them feeling less valued compared to their peers (Pfeffer 1998). Distinguishing people based on status is counter to having a team-based organization. Why would employees openly share ideas and put extra effort into achieving the company's objectives if their colleagues are perceived to be worth more to the organization. Distinguishing people based on status might increase competition, but it reduces levels of trust, openness, and creativity, these are outcomes that are antithetical to team accomplishment (Pfeffer and Veiga 1999).

Organizations could reduce the status distinction between their employees in two ways, either by reducing the degree of compensation inequity between managerial levels, and with encouraging and clearly introducing a culture of fairness, openness, and equity (Pfeffer and Veiga 1999). Bloom (1999) supports this suggestion in his research in which he found that baseball players on teams with greater variations in their pay dispersions had lower levels of individual performance (e.g., adjusted batting runs, fielding runs, pitching runs) and organizational level performance (e.g., on-field performance and financial performance). It would be very hard, for an organization to have all the elements of a high performance work system without ensuring limits on status distinctions. Put employees will accept some kind of status distinction as long as, this was based on open and clear policies, and these advantages are used across different departments and managerial levels, and not only to specific employees without a clear clarification (Pfeffer 1998).

2.5.7 Sharing Information.

Organizations have to share their information on their strategies, expenses, and financial performance openly with their members, this will consequently build trust between them and their workers, having no secrets will result in creating a healthy transparent environment (Pfeffer and Veiga 1999).

Creating a high trust organization requires a complete transparency, including sharing information about individual salaries, this will reduce the risk of favouring certain employees with higher bonuses and salaries, and will ensure fair, equitable and non-discriminatory pay, as well as fostering transparency, communication and better the employee's understanding of

their compensation (Dessler 1999). Transparency in the workflow, and sharing data and information, will make everyone aware of any potential issues with the business and will clarify how customer value is enhanced and delivered through service or product creating cycle. Implicitly, having the appropriate information to make the right decisions suggests that employees should have less role ambiguity, and as a result, lower stress and greater productivity (Beehr 2014).

Given the benefits of information sharing, some organisations insist on not doing so, Pfeffer (1998) argues that information is power. Having valuable information that no one or few others possess represents a commodity on which others depend. Sharing this resource diffuses that power. A less cynical explanation for not sharing information internally, is the widespread fear of it leaking out to competitors.

2.6 HPWS Bundles

While there is no agreement between researchers about what constitutes the right mix of high performance work practices, most of them agree that these practices work much better when they operate as a system or bundled together (Heffernan, Flood et al. 2011). The concept of bundles is built on the argument that even if single human resource practice may deliver value to the organization individually, it will deliver greater value when it is bundled with other HRM practises (Purcell 1999, Delery and Gupta 2016). According to Bello-Pintado (2015) the bundles' concept build on that efficiency is best functioned by the systematic interactions between the HRM practices. Similarly, (Delery and Gupta 2016) added that practices could generate competitive advantage when combined together, rather in isolation.

The relationship between bundled HRM practices and the positive organizational outcome is supported by several researchers (MacDuffie 1995, Tamkin 2004, Gooderham, Parry et al. 2008, Tadić and Pivac 2014). Other researchers who conducted meta-analysis research in the field found similar results of the effect of bundled human resources practices on the organizational outcome. For instance, Subramony (2009) found that HPWS bundles had stronger relationships with organizational outcomes compared to constituent individual human resource management practices. Another meta-analysis of more than 90 studies conducted by (Combs, Liu et al. 2006), found similar results, supporting how human resources practices have a greater effect when they are bundled together.

Reviewing the literature, we can find two approaches in classifying the HRM practices, namely

the isolationist approach, and the integrationist or the system approach.

Starting with the more traditional isolationist perspective. Unlike the system perspective of HPWS, the isolationist perspective emphasizes the necessity for examining the independent effects of any individual practices on the organizational outcome (Kepes, Delery et al. 2008, Chadwick 2010, Jiang, Lepak et al. 2012). According to this perspective, the unique independent characteristics of any individual practice may not be understood, when these practices used together as a bundle. (Takeuchi, Chen et al. 2009). The isolationist approach of HPWS was criticized by several authors like (Huselid 1995, Bauer 2004, Bello-Pintado 2015) based on the claims that HRM practices are rarely used in isolation. Therefore failure to examine all of the practices that are in place may not result in capturing the real effect of these practices on organisational performance (MacDuffie 1995, Becker and Huselid 1998, Beltrán-Martín and Roca-Puig 2013).

The opposite approach is called the integrationist or the system approach of HPWS. This approach advocates the idea of gaining more organizational gains through employing synergetic bundles of HRM practices, and these organizational gains can not be achieved by applying and measuring practices individually (Chadwick and Dabu 2009, Jackson, Schuler et al. 2014).

However, the former argument formulates the key opinion underlying the system approach of HPWS, and was supported in the literature by key authors like (Arthur 1994, Huselid 1995, MacDuffie 1995, Delery 1998). The system approach of HPWS suggests that HRM practices are mutually supportive of one another. Therefore, they should be utilized in combination, to yield valuable combined effects (Youndt, Snell et al. 1996, Boxall and Purcell 2015, Delery and Gupta 2016). Although some studies have reported organizational benefits that are linked with particular practices, the prevailing viewpoint in HRM research is that a systems perspective is more relevant.

Despite the progress in HPWS research from a managerial perspective, several HRM researchers called for considering the employees' perceptions as well to understand the effect of HR practices on both employees and organizational performance (Paauwe, Wright et al. 2013, Jiang, Hu et al. 2017).

2.7 The Importance of Studying Employee's Perceptions

According to Bowen and Ostroff (2004, p 206), “all HRM practices communicate messages constantly and in unintended ways, and messages can be understood idiosyncratically, whereby two employees interpret the same practices differently”. Similarly, Nishii and Wright (2008) adopted an approach to identify the job level, group level, and individual level factors which might create the gaps between actual and intended practices, and those perceived by employees. Nishii and Wright (2008) framework focus on individual variances like demographic characteristics that influence how employees seek and process information to form their human resources perceptions. The gap exists in the perceiving stage where each employee perceives, and interpret those practices subjectively, according to what he thinks the actual implemented practices. This interpretation, consequently, reform employee's reactions and perceptions. It is likely that managers have a misunderstanding of HRM practices and do not fully convey the correct perceptions to employees. Employees usually do not have the same perceptions of HPWS as employers do (Aryee, Walumbwa et al. 2012, Den Hartog, Boon et al. 2013). It is still likely that there is a gap between employers and employees regarding perceptions, depending on how managers implement HRM practices and convey information in front of employees (Liao, Toya et al. 2009).

The inconsistency in employee perceptions of HRM systems can be clarified from different approaches. For example, Bowen and Ostroff (2004) focused on the features of HRM systems that define to what extent employees have a consensus and consistent understanding of them. As previous studies suggested, what management is intended to propose is not necessarily related to what employees actually experience (Liao, Toya et al. 2009, Piening, Baluch et al. 2014, Veenendaal and Bondarouk 2015).

Within this debate, another issue needs to be discussed – the significance of identifying the difference between policy and practice (Gerhart 2008). Other authors like Huselid and Becker (2000) contended that the actual implemented HRM practices are the one that should be measured, rather than the adopted HRM policies (that were not necessarily implemented). The same authors, Huselid and Becker (2000), further explained how HRM policies only symbolise the organization intention. Whereas practice, on the other hand, represents the actual implemented programs, processes and techniques of HRM.

Employees perceptions about human resources practices are affected by managers actions because employees react only to the implemented practices rather than the planned policies, and managers play a significant role in implementing those practices. (Piening, Baluch et al. 2014, Veenendaal and Bondarouk 2015) argue that the way managers apply their HRM responsibilities like selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and work involvement is a major factor in forming employees perceptions about human resources practices.

Therefore, studying employees perspective to study the phenomenon of HPWS represent the logical approach, because they are more attached to the actual practices rather than the policies and plans of the policy makers in the organizations (Gerhart 2008).

2.8 HPWS and Performance

A central tenet of HPWS research is studying the impact of HRM practices on organisational performance. In spite of the little agreement as to what constitutes a HPWS, the systematic reviews of human resources management studies suggest that human resources management practices are consistently linked with performance (Boselie 2014). In this field, two main research themes related to the direct and indirect effects have emerged. In the first theme, scholars argue that HRM practices have a direct effect on various measures of organisational performance (Snape and Redman 2010, Jiang, Lepak et al. 2012, Darwish 2013). For instance, HPWS was found to positively relate to organizational outcomes in generalized firms, and particularly in the manufacturing sector, in terms of outcomes like organisational commitment (Zacharatos, Barling et al. 2005), employees turnover (Richard and Johnson 2001), organization productivity (Guthrie 2001) flexibility, and efficiency (Evans and Davis 2005), and financial performance (Huselid 1995, Guthrie 2001).

Previous studies have argued that technologies and innovative work processes can do little to improve firms' performance unless the firm adopts appropriate HRM system (Appelbaum, Bailey et al. 2000, Guest, Michie et al. 2003, Combs, Liu et al. 2006, Kehoe and Wright 2013). These studies have used different sets of HRM practices in analyzing the effects of practices on both individual and organizational level performance outcomes (Paauwe 2009).

A large number of researchers who have backed their choice of practices on the list of human resources practices proposed by Pfeffer (1998) found significant effects of these practices on performance in various settings (Ahmad and Schroeder 2003). Findings from these studies

provided considerable evidence that certain human resources management practices have a consistent positive relationship with individual and organizational level performance (Albrecht, Bakker et al. 2015, Saridakis, Lai et al. 2017).

The ability to assess such relationships has increased, as a result of developments in statistical techniques, so researchers have been able to achieve more reliable conclusions about performance effects. Furthermore, the emergence and keen focus on the strategic human resource management literature has stimulated more research in exploring the relationship between practices and firm performance at the organizational level (Albrecht, Bakker et al. 2015). Overall, the HRM literature carries a consistent message that HRM practices positively influence organizational performance (Guest, Paauwe et al. 2012). There have been a large number of studies which reported a direct relationship between practices and firm performance (Combs, Liu et al. 2006, Subramony 2009).

In terms of the context, a considerable number of studies have shown a positive association between HPWS and firm performance in the manufacturing sector. In contrast to the manufacturing sector, a limited number of studies have tested the impact of HRM systems on performance in service firms (Kiessling and Harvey 2005, Walsh, Sturman et al. 2010). HPWS in service organizations has started to receive greater attention for the reasons that the work environment is not similar, and therefore requires a different HRM approach (Boxall 2012, Boselie 2014).

In recent years, researchers have tended to focus on several other issues in HPWS. One of the major issues is related to investigating the process through which human resources management practices affect organizational performance; often referred to as the “black box” in the literature (Cafferkey and Dundon 2015).

The relationship between HRM practices and organizational performance has been investigated from various perspectives rooted in organizational psychology, industrial relations, sociology and economics. The relationship between human resources and organizational performance can be traced back to Adam Smith’s consideration for not only quantitative labour inputs but also for competencies such as skills, expertise, and understanding of how to work in an organization. Over recent decades, human capital, the resource based view (RBV) of the firm, and the ‘Ability, Motivation and Opportunity’ (AMO) framework provided a foundation for

theoretically understanding the relationship between HRM and organizational performance (Hartog and Van den Brink 2007).

The resource based view suggests that the growing acknowledgement of firms' internal resources as a source of competitive advantage gave legitimacy to the assertion that employees are critically important to organizational success (Hartog and Van den Brink 2007). Firms build up their competitive advantage through acquiring, developing and effectively utilizing their resources (including employees) to achieve desired results (Barney and Clark 2007).

The AMO framework suggests that firms can achieve various types of benefits when they support a human resource management system in which workers have appropriate levels of abilities and skills, adequate incentives for motivation, and sufficient opportunities for participation in decisions. Together, these approaches provide the base for studies which examine the relationship between HRM and performance.

Several studies have suggested that HRM practices affect organizational performance (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Gelade and Ivery, 2003) by increase employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) which results in higher job satisfaction, greater productivity, reduced turnover, and improved decision making, which ultimately assist in enhanced organizational performance (Purcell and Kinnie 2007, Lopez-Cabrales, Pérez-Luño et al. 2009, Boon, Den Hartog et al. 2011). In order to better utilize the employee's abilities, skills and knowledge and potential in an effective manner, employees need to be motivated to exert more effort in the performance of their jobs. HRM practices are considered to provide a stimulus to support motivation (Delery and Shaw 2001). A considerable number of HRM studies propose that systems designed to improve employees' skills, motivation, and performance are related to higher productivity (Datta, Guthrie et al. 2005), lower employee turnover, and improved organizational performance (Huselid 1995).

This perspective is based on the fact that better organizational performance is accomplished when people strive themselves on behalf of the firm. It suggests that HRM systems meet employee needs and therefore, employees develop positive attitudes and behaviours that lead to improved performance (Sun, Aryee et al. 2007). Proponents of the 'soft' HRM view also consider the accomplishment of employee needs as an end in itself, and refer to autonomous, flexible, and empowering high performance work systems that generally rely on employees' discretionary effort and self-regulated behaviour (MacDuffie 1995). In general, the empirical

evidence recommends that organizational incentives such as positive and favourable actions conducted at employees constitute conditions for employees to exchange in positive ways.

The processes through which HRM systems influence organizational performance are said to be through the impact on (a) enhancing employees' skills, knowledge, and abilities, (b) motivating employees to exert their effort, and (c) providing them opportunities to perform their work (Combs, Liu et al. 2006). For example, HRM practices relating to the staffing function, such as recruitment and selection, bring knowledge, skills and abilities into organizations. The employee's abilities, skills and knowledge are further enhanced through human resources practices such as extensive training, performance based compensation (Hoque 1999). Practices such as flexibility in job schedules, job security, procedures for addressing employees' grievances, and contingent compensation can also increase employees' commitment and thus enhance motivation (Youndt, Snell et al. 1996).

Several researchers, however, have argued that the highly motivated employees will not use their talent efficiently without an appropriate organizational structure which offers them the scope and the opportunities to introduce their talent and contribute in the performance and success of their organizations (Huselid, 1995; Combs *et al.*, 2006). The needed scope and opportunities to utilize their discretionary talent and time can be strengthened by practices such as employee participation schemes, sharing information, self-managed work teams, and employee security (Pfeffer, 1998).

The effects of the HRM system on performance is also promoted by the influence on the firm's internal social structure (Evans and Davis, 2005). For instance, practices such as flexible work designs and working in decentralized self-managed teams connect employees with each other, thereby promoting information sharing and the proper utilization of resources. Additionally, practices such as selection, compensation, and training develop norms of reciprocity by helping select and retain competent people. The development of such reciprocity norms increases cooperation in complex situations and results in establishing organizational flexibility (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). Similarly, practices like extensive training, information sharing, and selective recruitment build shared perceptions among employees regarding other employees, tasks, and about their organization of being promoting fair and sophisticated working environment (Cannon and Salas, 2001).

Several studies have focused on the role of HRM systems in affecting the attitude and

behaviour of employees. For instance, Wright, McMahan et al. (1994) considered HRM systems as the process through which employee attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours are framed. In another study, Ostroff and Bowen (2000) viewed HRM practices as critical elements in encouraging employees to behave in manners beneficial to organizational goals. In addition, it is also suggested that investment in employee development is considered to promote greater responsibility by employees towards their organizations and therefore enhance employees' motivation to exert more effort to facilitate organizational effectiveness (Crawshaw, Budhwar et al. 2017).

The notion of HPWS is that organizational performance is influenced by the way people are managed. In support of this argument, researchers have suggested that certain sets of HRM practices which have been established to enhance employee autonomy, commitment, and employee effectiveness to generate greater involvement levels, and to deliver better chances for workers to develop skills, will consequentially result in improved performance (Boselie 2014). A large body of research recommends utilizing a HPWS aimed at building up employees' competencies and motivation (Liao, Toya et al. 2009).

While many studies have reported that HPWS are positively associated with performance outcomes, at the same time, however, researchers have identified several issues about some aspects of HPWS and performance outcomes. These emerging issues are briefly outlined in the following section.

2.9 Emerging Issues in HPWS-Performance Research

Previous studies have mainly focused on exploring the direct relationship and reported considerable evidence of a direct relationship between HPWS and organizational performance (Becker and Gerhart 1996, Boselie 2014, Boxall and Purcell 2015). Nevertheless, the mechanism through which these practices impact the performance has been narrowly researched (Boxall 2012, Jiang and Liu 2015). Similarly, Delery (1998) clarified that establishing that HRM practices are linked with firm effectiveness is an important first step, but, there is little understanding of the mechanisms through such practices influence the effectiveness and little understanding of such systems and practices from employee perspective or non-Western perspective.

2.9.1 Little Focus on Employee Perspective:

Several researchers have raised concerns in relation to some aspects of HPWS. Previous studies have mainly concentrated on the managerial aspects of HPWS, rather than the employees' experiences about HPWS in the workplace (Aryee, Walumbwa et al. 2012). Macro-level approach, by concentrating on organizational level outcomes, was mainly adopted by HPWS research, employee perspective was nearly neglected in this research (Liao, Toya et al. 2009). For this, previous researchers have mostly relied on a single source of information such as senior human resource manager or director. Reliance on single respondent information may not reflect the opinion of all employees (Chang 2005, Liao, Toya et al. 2009). Employees and employers may not share the same perceptions about human resources practices. Various scholars have also suggested that considering both managers' and employees' perceptions about HRM practices will result in better understanding of the relationship between HPWS and performance (Guest 2017, Chen, Kim et al. 2018).

Since the behaviour of employees varies by context, therefore it is vital to consider the collective attitude of employees' that link the process of human resources management practices and firm performance (Bowen and Ostroff 2004).

2.9.2 HPWS--Performance in Developing Countries

Previous studies did not take into account the differences in institutional settings and context of the country. Most of the studies were conducted in western developed countries (Boxall and Macky 2009, Brewster, Mayrhofer et al. 2015). In contrast to developed countries, there is a dearth of research on HPWS and performance in other countries, especially in developing countries. HRM practices implemented in one country may not be necessarily yielding the same results in other countries, due to the significant impact of culture and variation in an industry context, organizational settings and institutional characteristics (Harzing and Pinnington 2015, Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016). Therefore, the arguments about the appropriateness of such models for countries other than the U.S. and UK are one of the major concerns in the field of HRM and performance. Therefore, there is a growing need to conduct similar research regarding the HPWS implementation and effects in countries other than U.S. and UK (Lawler, Chen et al. 2011, Newman, Thanacoody et al. 2011).

2.9.3 Industry Context:

One critical aspect of HPWS and performance relationship is to identify contexts where the effect of such systems on performance varies. Industry context is one of the major and potential moderators (Boselie 2014, Kew and Stredwick 2016). The understanding of the impact of HPWS on firm performance is largely based upon empirical studies primarily conducted in the manufacturing sector (Liao, Toya et al. 2009). There are several reasons for the research emphasis on studies in the services sector such as complex nature of the job, greater use of technology, more reliance on an HRM system to deliver knowledge, and co-production of services by workers and customers (Combs, Liu et al. 2006). Thus the services sector presents a unique context to study the impact of high performance practices on performance outcomes (Fu, Flood et al. 2017, Murphy, Torres et al. 2018).

The summary of these emerging issues in the field of human resources management, and performance, and with the analysis of previous research that identified several methodological shortcomings, associated with the measurement of human resources management practices and firm performance. These shortcoming illustrated in that previous studies have generally relied on single-source of data for the measurement of human resources management practices (Wall and Wood 2005). In many cases, information about human resources management practices had been gathered from a top level managerial position holder such as CEO, director, and senior human resources manager. Reliance on a single source for the measurement of human resources management practices and performance often lack reliability and validity (Nagaraj and Kamalanabhan 2006).

Several researchers have raised similar concerns and criticized previous studies for reliance on the reports of directors or human resources managers about the use of high performance practices, while completely ignoring the employee's perceptions (Liao, Toya et al. 2009, Paauwe, Wright et al. 2013, Jiang, Hu et al. 2017). Therefore, in order to overcome these weaknesses, scholars (Cardon and Stevens 2004, Zhu 2004)) have highlighted the need to bring modifications in research designs and suggested that more conceptual and empirical studies are required to understand and analyze the link between HPWS and performance in a clearer way.

2.10 Universalistic and Contingency Perspectives of HPWS

Within HRM literature, there have been numerous discussions on the universal applicability of

HPWS. While some researchers contended that HPWS are universally applicable to all kinds of organizations, other scholars suggested that HPWS, to be effective, must be tailored to fit organizational characteristics and the external environment (Kaufman 2015, Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016). This argument has evolved, to discuss further the importance of the HPWS–organizational fit, provoking two key views within the literature: the contingency and the universalistic approaches.

2.10.1 The Universalistic Perspective

The universalistic perspective of HRM, also known as the best practice approach, this perspective claims that there is a set of best high performance practices that can be used in any business and lead to positive outcomes for all types of firms regardless of any contextual factors (Pfeffer 1994, Huselid 1995, Tzafrir 2006). The universalistic perspective is based on the assumption that all firms will perform better if they detect and adopt best practice in the way they manage their employees (Boselie 2014). This concept is supported by Huselid (1995) when he suggested that ‘all else being equal, the use of high performance work practices and good internal fit should lead to positive outcomes for all types of firms.’ Similarly, Osterman (1994) argued that a number of HRM practices, such as job rotation, teams, and total quality management, will result in productivity gains for all American organizations, but what about other organizations? Other researchers like Delery and Doty (1996) concluded that not all HRM practices would have a universalistic success, but only some practices like employment security, profit sharing, and results oriented appraisals.

Although a universal or best-practice approach has been widely used in the organizational performance effects research, when compared to the other perspectives, the best practice perspective is characterized by a lack of concrete theoretical foundations. It emphasises empirical studies of the HPWS and performance relationship, and how this result in higher levels of statistical significance, but, on the other hand, it lacks the consideration of critical variables, and relationships (Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernandez et al. 2005). Another criticism for the Universalistic Perspective is failing to consider the context and powerful and highly significant changes in work in which these practices are used, besides ignoring employees’ interests (Boselie 2014).

2.10.2 The Contingency Perspective

The second perspective is the contingency perspective, also known as best fit perspective,

introduces a different assumption than the universalistic perspective and proposes that successful HRM practices have to be consistent with other characteristics of organizations. Specifically, in the field of studying the HPWS and performance, the contingency approach suggests that the dependent and the independent variable will no longer be stable, and they will differ according to other variables which are the contingency variables (Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernandez et al. 2005). The best fit notion attempts to fit HRM to a number of contingencies like national business systems, business strategy, and competitive circumstances (Youndt, Snell et al. 1996). The contingency perspective expands the concept of HRM to suggest an explanation for how HPWS help in the achievement of business goals. This perspective argues how the context of organizations affects HRM practices and strategy, and determines what practices are used and how they are implemented. It offers a more socio-cultural understanding of businesses as an open system. Therefore it generates an overall understanding of what is contextually unique and why (Boselie 2014, Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016).

2.11 The Negative Sides of HPWS

While many studies focus on benefits of HPWS for organizations, the outcome of HPWS for employees and organizations is not always positive. Several negative impacts like stress, anxiety, longer working hours can create a win-lose relationship between employees and employers (Cafferkey and Dundon 2015, Ashkanasy, Bennett et al. 2016, De Silva and Chandrika 2017). There are two perspectives about the impacts of HPWS on employee well-being (Sparham and Sung 2007; Boselie, Brewster and Paauwe 2009). The first perspective tends to overlook or downplay the contradictory interests of employees and management. This perspective believes that employees interests are aligned with their manager's interests.

On the other hand, the opposite perspective, suggested that applying HPWS may result in a negative influence on employee well-being (Ramsay, Scholarios and Harley 2000; Godard 2001, 2004; Green 2006). This perspective recognises the conflict of interest between employees and management. This approach does not support that management interests are always aligned with employee well-being and emphasise (Ramsay, Scholarios et al. 2000, Ashkanasy, Bennett et al. 2016).

Researchers who support this perspective believe that there is a possible contrary effect on employees when applying HPWS. Applying those practices add more workloads and greater

responsibility on employees, workers are required to sustain an excessively fast pace of work, higher levels of anxiety and stress than do those in traditionally organised jobs (Appelbaum, Bailey et al. 2000, Ramsay, Scholarios et al. 2000). These negative implications can be clarified by the fact that organizational outcome might seem more important to organizations than employee wellbeing (Ashkanasy, Bennett et al. 2016, Guest 2017). Organizations dealing with a single side of HPWS by just targeting business-oriented performance, no matter the cost paid by employees, will consequently lead to these kinds of negative sides. In this case, high pressure supervision style adopted in some cases, can be perceived as abusive by employees (Ashkanasy, Bennett et al. 2016). According to (Godard 2004) “proponents not only overestimate the positive effects of high levels of adoption of these practices but also underestimate the costs—costs that are often not reflected in the performance measures used by researchers”. This organizational emphasis on the achievement of business oriented targets will eventually obscure the importance of employee well-being (Peccei 2004).

In general, HPWS could have a negative impact on employees in two ways either by increasing job intensification or creating job stressing conditions

2.11.1 Increasing Job Intensification

High performance work system objective is empowering employees to make more and better decisions, and to improve the information and knowledge they need to achieve this, and ultimately reward these employees for this (Macky and Boxall 2008). However, in some cases asking employees to improve their performance by applying tougher work conditions involving faster work paces heavier workloads, and tighter deadlines , and this leads to job intensification (Gospel 2003). When organisation focus on a single side of the notion of HPWS, and concentrate only on the expected gains of applying those practices, regardless what employees might feel or react about them, and here it could be argued that a greater intensification of work could initially lead to greater organizational gains as a result of a greater effort in the short term. But, this could produce ultimately higher levels of physical pain, exhaustion, and tension, and this will result in reducing employees’ satisfaction and motivation (Godard 2004)

2.11.2 Increasing Stressful Working Conditions

According to world health organisation (WHO), stressful work conditions can be defined as “the occupational stress often stems from unexpected responsibilities and pressures that do not align with a person's knowledge, skills, or expectations, inhibiting one's ability to cope.

Occupational stress can increase when workers do not feel supported by supervisors or colleagues, or feel as if they have little control over work processes” (WHO 2018). Applying HPWS in any organisation usually result in higher performance and financial gains, but if it was not carefully applied, can also produce also negative outcomes in terms of work-life imbalance, fatigue and job stress (Macky and Boxall 2008). Several researchers contended that heavier job demands, may ultimately lead to undesired results like mental strain, job dissatisfaction, and cardiovascular disease (Berg, Kalleberg et al. 2003).

Overall, considering the employee’s health and well-being is an important issue that organizations should realize. Applying a mutual gains perspective, balancing between organizational targets and protecting employee well-being, is the best way for organizations. Applying empowering and rewarding HPWS will guide employees to work smarter not harder and will result eventually to mutual advantages for both employers and employees.

2.12 HPWS in context

Understanding the context within which organisations are operating is vital for all operations, including those related to HRM (Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016). Several researchers have demonstrated how the context of organizations affects HRM practices and strategy and determines what practices are used and how they are implemented (Boselie, Paauwe et al. 2001, Murphy and Southey 2003, Bowen and Ostroff 2004, Boxall, Purcell et al. 2007, Clinton and Guest 2013, Gooderham, Mayrhofer et al. 2019). In another study, Stening and Ngan (1997) highlighted that in most cases, there are considerable differences between countries in their attitudes and perspective towards HRM activities.

Furthermore, the HRM literature focuses on how the context in which firms operate has a great impact on choosing and implementing human resources practices to succeed in the business environment (Marler 2012, Askenazy and Forth 2016). Several researchers (Fabling and Grimes 2010, Budhwar and Debrah 2013, Boxall and Purcell 2015, Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016) emphasised the importance of understanding the impact of the internal and external contextual factors on the planning and implementation of HPWS. The next review clarifies the importance of both factors:

2.13 The Impact of External Factors on HPWS

Applying HPWS within organisations, industries, and nations is distinguished by the contextual environment characteristics such as political bodies (employment councils), social institutions (such as education and training centres), and all other similar economic and government institutions (Kew and Stredwick 2016, Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016). Such characteristics emphasise the extent to which local external institutions can have an impact on HR specialists forming HPWS (Kew and Stredwick 2016, Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016). According to Lertxundi and Landeta (2011), these contextual implications indicate the necessity of appropriate environmental factors for organizations to understand their planned HPWS strategy in the process of implementation (Brewster, Mayrhofer et al. 2015, Al Ariss and Sidani 2016, Gooderham, Mayrhofer et al. 2019).

This review of the external factors affecting HPWS will focus on the socio-cultural factors, especially, culture due to the nature of the study context; the following gives details of those factors. The main categories of the external contexts that affect the human resources management can be divided into:

2.13.1 Political Context:

The political environment has a direct impact on every organization performance, including the HR functions. Any new political changes might result in a new climate and labour legislation (O'Toole Jr and Meier 2014). According to Ferris and Judge (1991), there are various forms of risk associated with the political environment in any country or region, so decision makers in public or private sectors have to plan responses. For example, there may be political pressures arising from organised pressure groups, political lobbying using suitable practices, policies, and strategies (Farnham 2010).

Moreover, some organizations who work in ideological environments give importance to political backgrounds and approaches to their employees (Genc 2014), and therefore firms should pay special attention to the political environment, and they should be prepared for any expected international or local political change. For instance, what happened in the UK recently regarding leaving the EU is a clear example of how might the political change lead to many changes in the countries businesses and business management.

2.13.2 Economic Context:

The economic environment within which HRM operates has a significant influence on it; all businesses rely on stable economic environment for all the required inputs to run the business, and to sell the finished goods and services produced by the business. (Babatunde and Adebisi 2012) suggested that several economic factors, such as economic growth, or interest rates, may have major impacts on how businesses operate and make decisions.

The strategy and practices that an organisation adopts are influenced by the various market trends, which differ based on the industry. Organisations that operate within a highly competitive environment, will be forced to improve their HRM strategies accordingly (Kew and Stredwick 2016). Similarly, Som (2008) highlighted that economic restructuring also has a profound impact on the effective management of organizations and performance. These economic factors have a significant impact on labour demand and supply, and therefore firms have to adjust their HRM policies and practices accordingly (Farnham 2010).

2.13.3 Legal Context:

The field of HRM is significantly influenced by the legal context (Armstrong and Taylor 2014). Public and private organizations have to comply with different laws and legislation related to HRM activities, such as equal employment opportunities, labour relations, and compensation and benefits (Pynes 2008). In addition, according to (Jackson and Schuler 1995) almost all aspects of HRM are affected by the legal and regulatory environment, especially in case of employing expatriates where the visa regulations might influence recruitment decisions.

Other studies have also shown that organizations are paying more attention to accountability requirements, legal risk management, to avoid any legal conflict with the local governments or even with their own employees (Akingbola 2012). These legal implications may affect the role and size of firms' HR department, where this department role can be fulfilled by either professionals that work on a strategic level, or it can be acting on only an administrative level, (Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016). Therefore HR departments have to meet these legal obligations and keep monitoring and evaluating any expected change in laws that might affect their performance.

2.13.4 Socio-Cultural Context:

This context represents the specific cultural and social customs of any society, and it varies significantly from one to another. Cultural and social values such as time orientation, degree of materialism, informality, and individualism play a significant role in forming and affecting different HRM practices (Jackson, Schuler et al. 2014). Furthermore, Hofstede (2003) when he collected and analysed data from several countries, concluded that national culture had a major impact on employees' work-related attitudes. Culture explained more of the differences than did age, sex, profession or position in the organization (Hofstede 2003). Therefore these socio-cultural variables have both strategic and HRM implications for organisations, and understanding this fact will help organizations survive and compete in the modern competitive markets.

2.13.4.1 Impact of Culture on HPWS:

Culture can be defined as a set of shared values, identities, beliefs and motives as well as a shared meaning of a certain event which gets passed on through the generations (House, Hanges et al. 2004).

Culture characteristics are treated by researchers as one of the most significant factors that play a role in influencing the extent to which, and way in which, HR practices are adopted (Jackson 2002, Browaeys and Price 2008). In any country, sector or society, the workers' skills and motivation will influence policies and practices, yet the cultural context will add another dimension to this (Xian, Atkinson et al. 2017). Ignoring the link that lies between HRM practices and the context can lead businesses to fail in achieving their organizational targets (Brewster, Wood et al. 2008, Rabl, Jayasinghe et al. 2014). Newman and Nollen (1996) suggested that when there is a harmony between management practices and national culture, a positive outcome arises. The same authors, however, argue that not all HR practices achieve the same success in all countries, especially those practices related to employee participation or contingent rewards (Newman and Nollen 1996).

Accordingly, the literature has generally presented indications that show a strong relationship between cultural characteristics and the success of HPWS implementation process (Edwards and Wright 2001, Jackson 2002, Aycan 2005, Brewster, Wood et al. 2008, Lertxundi and Landeta 2011, Sparrow, Brewster et al. 2016).

Taking Hofstede's model for cultural dimensions(Hofstede 2003), based on that using this model can be very helpful to understand the differences between countries cultures and the possibility of offering a practical framework to study HPWS in the least studied regions like Libya. According to Hofstede, the cultural variable can be divided into four dimensions individualism-collectivism, masculinity and femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and power-distance.

The following describes Hofstede's four dimensions in brief:

Individualism-collectivism: according to (Hofstede 2003), this looks at the extent to which an individual is independent and able to take care of themselves and their family. This represents the emotional tendency of integrating within a group, such as a tribe or family. For instance, Arab countries are more collectivistic than western countries, which are more individualist as characterised by Hofstede. Countries that are considered as individualistic tend to display higher performance and competitiveness amongst people and organisations. However, countries that are more collectivist represent we before I concept, where individuals expect their relatives, friends, or members of any particular group to look after them in exchange for undoubted loyalty.

Power-distance: This is a measure of the extent to which unequal power distribution is accepted within different societies. The distribution of power across an organisational structure, as well as the delegation of authority, is also represented. The style of leadership is characterised as either more democratic or more autocratic. The communication within an organisation is set by the power-distance, which can be either bottom-up, top-down, or mutual. With low power style like in democratic management, the communication is easier between different organizational hierarchies. With such a power-distance, there is greater employee participation when making decisions. In contrast, in high power distance style, as in autocratic management, the communication is top to bottom (Hofstede 2003).

- **Masculinity-femininity:** This represents the values when determining success and achievement, high assertiveness vs cooperation when setting goals. The value of independence and behavioural patterns of achievement are defined by the masculinity stereotype. On the other hand, the femininity stereotype is represented by behavioural patterns which encourage modesty in performance, and value caring and sympathy (Hofstede 2003).

- **Uncertainty/ avoidance:** Hofstede (2003) explained that the uncertainty avoidance dimension measures the extent of adventure, and the degree of risk taking within any studied society. Routines, procedures and rituals, would be adopted by countries that have a high uncertainty avoidance.

The behaviour of people in their work and social life is represented by the societal values which are generally described to be one of the cultural functions. This also represents the anxieties, attitudes and ambitions which give insights to firms to plan ahead their goals and operational methods (Warner 2014). Hofstede's dimensions have, therefore commonly been used by researchers to examine society's nature when introducing managerial practices and techniques (Taras, Kirkman et al. 2010). On the other hand, in cross-cultural studies, researchers usually use these cultural factors to determine the institutional factors affecting the researched business (Minkov and Hofstede 2011). The culture value dimension is therefore employed by researchers to study the external environment instead of studying the culture generally as on segment (Furrer, Liu et al. 2000).

Several researchers showed how HRM practices and policies are culturally bound, and how culture is a critical factor in the success of any introduced human resources practices to different societies (Tayeb 2004, Kramar and Syed 2012, Afiouni, Ruël et al. 2014, Barmeyer and Franklin 2016). Gerhart (2008) explained how the social culture guide and control the management philosophy, and shape the values and assumptions of the organization's decision makers, and this translates these embedded values and believes into decisions, including those related to HR policies and practices. This effect of culture dimensions appears obviously, in societies with strong cultures like those in the Arab world (Afiouni, Ruël et al. 2014). These characteristics would have a major impact on all HRM activities like recruitment, training and rewards, due to the significant role of culture in this region. (Budhwar, Mellahi et al. 2010, Shaw 2015)

2.14 The Impact of Internal Factors on HPWS

Several internal institutional conditions can impact the level of HPWS application such as the knowledge of actors within the organisation, the philosophy of top management, technology system as well as organisational maturity, strategy, structure and systems (Armstrong and Taylor 2014). Based on an abstract of 104 articles, Paauwe and Boselie (2005) suggested that some high performance practices are considered universally successful such as reward systems,

employee involvement and employee development programmes. Developing and adopting such practices in a successful manner depends on the inner context of any organisation. Therefore this should be considered at any stage of planning, implementing, or reviewing these practices (Paauwe and Boselie 2005).

Employee differentiation is one of the main internal factors that might affect the implementation process of HPWS in any organization, where employees can be categorized into groups depending on several dimensions such as: position and job classification, educational level and contract recruitment type.

Because of this large variation in labour force composition, it is less likely that the planning, implementations, and perceptions about HRM practices will differ across a workforce (Combs, Liu et al. 2006).

Consequently, designing HPWS differs in terms of implementation of each HRM activity for specific groups of employees (Lepak and Snell 2002) and means that organisations set the HPWS according to needs, where for instance the bonuses for front office employees can differ from those working in the back office.

Another factor which might have an effect on the process of HPWS implementation is the type of sector firms operate in. For instance, the services sector is characterised by creativity and higher levels of autonomy than manufacturing, which force such organisations to adopt a more decentralised structure (Preuss 2003). While within the manufacturing sector, the normal practice is to stick to established rules and practices which results in organisations adopting firmly defined job profiles and a solid hierarchy structure (Hancké, Rhodes et al. 2007).

There are other internal factors, that might affect the implementation process of HPWS like firm strategy; size; and financial situation (Galende and de la Fuente 2003). This review concentrates on specific factors because they are more culturally bound, as they are likely to play a significant role in HRM activities in the studied context. These factors will include the conflict of interest and managers role.

2.14.1 Managers Role:

One of the most influential internal pressures that any business might face is managers' norms, where the design and use of management systems are influenced by the experience of

managers(Hussain and Hoque 2002). The success of any HRM practices can be assessed in two ways; the first one is the extent to which practices can motivate employees, and enhance skills and abilities; the second is the ability of these practices to enhance the skills of employees to a level that can allow for competition (Sheehan, De Cieri et al. 2014). Here the managers play the role of proactive partners with the senior/executive management, by having their voice heard and working as a bridge between employees and senior managerial levels (Paauwe and Boselie 2005, Sheehan, De Cieri et al. 2014).

Among all different managers in any organization, HR managers are considered as the main actors in delivering HPWS within their organizations (Becker and Huselid 2006). Purcell and Hutchinson (2007) emphasise the importance of HR managers role in using and implementing HPWS, which can have a significant influence on the satisfaction of employees and their commitment. The authors further examine the actual actions of managers in terms of delivering the formal requirements of any HRM policies; their study illustrates the duty aspects of managers as being: the leadership manner, management of people and HRM practices application (Purcell and Hutchinson 2007).

Employees need to be managed effectively by managers through coaching and opportunities for learning. Managing employees includes the implementation of HPWS that help improves skills and behaviour, encourage participation as well as bring about a sense of responsibility (Katzenbach and Smith 2015). This has a positive impact on employee cognition and behaviour, leading to employees being satisfied with their work organizations as a whole (Armstrong and Taylor 2014, Sheehan, De Cieri et al. 2014).

2.14.2 Conflict of interest:

The execution of HPWS is impacted by the conflict between the interests of management and the employees. Within the literature, there are different opinions among researchers when it comes to conflict of interest between organisations and individuals (Paauwe 2009). Psychologists disagree with the economic mainstream, which focuses mainly of the financial outcome, by stating that in applying HRM practices managers should emphasise the relevancy to workers, and not just the outcomes expected (Boxall, Purcell et al. 2007). Boselie (2009) calls for a balanced approach which defends both the human side and the organisational interests, thus creating a balance which mediates the link between any planned HRM practices with the required performance. Paauwe (2004) also calls on HR managers to take an ethical

role when responding to market demands. The interests of both the organisation and the employees can be satisfied through a balanced approach that provides flexible workplace practices (Guest 2017).

Appelbaum, Bailey et al. (2000) claimed that there was a more efficient performance of employees when HRM practices enhanced 'abilities', 'motivation' and 'opportunities' and thus proposed an AMO model (discussed previously). Many organizations have, therefore focused on HRM practices that improve the motivation, abilities, and opportunities for employees within the workplace (Katou, Budhwar et al. 2010). HR managers can improve the performance of employees as well as their motivation through training and development programmes as well as incentive systems. The AMO model duplicates the activities of HPWS in that it enhances employee participation in the job and team autonomy as well as decision making and decentralisation which actually improves the social legitimacy and psychological contract at the workplace (Boxall and Purcell 2015).

The way in which policies and models are used by senior management to shape organisational culture is well recognised (Munir, Perera et al. 2011). Furthermore, senior management can influence how organisations use HPWS. The corporate culture has an impact on the behaviour and beliefs of individuals, and having an environment where HPWS are accepted depends on the ability to create certain standards of behaviour in organizations (Bowen and Ostroff 2004).

2.15 The Need for Sector-Specific Research on HPWS

Two different opinions exist on the level of generalisation of HPWS across organisational settings exist. The first opinion assumes that due to differences in organisational structures and strategies, the outcomes of HRM systems may differ considerably (Datta, Guthrie et al. 2005, Boxall and Macky 2009). HPWS in public sector organisations, for example, may differ significantly from those taken on board in private sector organisations. The managerial processes within private sector organisations are directed towards gaining profits for shareholders as such organisations are predominantly profit driven, making human resources management strategies more geared towards economic competition (Budhwar and Boyne 2004). On the other hand, public sector organisations are usually managed by the government and funded through public finances. The HRM strategies within these organisations have a tendency apply centralized managerial systems with employing bureaucratic procedures and policies (Gould-Williams 2004).

However, from a different point of view, other researchers like (Pfeffer 1994, Delery and Doty 1996, Vanhala and Stavrou 2013), assume that regardless the organization's size, culture and the sector they operate in, they can achieve their targeted organizational performance, by implementing best practice HRM policies. They argue that applying such practices organizations enhance employees' levels of motivation and commitment as well as shape their attitudes. Consequently, this can lead to a greater commitment towards hard work that fulfils organizational growth, irrespective of the institutional factors surrounding them (Delery and Doty 1996). However, most of the studies that supported the best practice approach were conducted in the manufacturing sector, and their conclusions may not be applicable to the service sector because of the differences in the market orientation, organizational targets, and the nature of work across these sectors (Preuss 2003, Combs, Liu et al. 2006), as discussed below.

2.16 Human Resource Management in the Services Settings

The services sector, especially those sectors with higher technology levels like the telecommunications sector, provides a unique context when studying HRM systems (Korczynski 2002). The service sector is distinguished from the manufacturing sector in the nature of what they produce. While the manufacturing sector products are tangible and clear, and its products usually are not delivered to the final consumers directly. The service sectors supply intangible services that might be delivered in the presence of customers, where the production and the service processes in many cases take place at the same time (von Nordenflycht, Malhotra et al. 2015). This production and delivering cycle makes workers in the manufacturing sector easier to be controlled and managed, and this makes productivity evaluation much easier, unlike the services sector, where the customer satisfaction at the time of service delivering point plays a major role in measuring the service productivity (Korczynski 2002).

The potential for HRM practices to have a significant effect on firm performance is supported by a growing body of research. Ample studies have been conducted on the relationship between HRM practices and organizational performance (Takeuchi, Chen et al. 2009, Raineri 2017, Saridakis, Lai et al. 2017). Many of the studies documenting the effect of HPWS argue that such practices effectively manage a source of competitive advantage by increasing employee productivity and competencies and improving attitudes and commitment. In addition, most studies in this research arena have focused on linking HPWS with firm financial outcomes,

productivity, turnover, product or service quality and cost control (Huselid 1995, MacDuffie 1995, Messersmith and Guthrie 2010). However, fewer studies adopted a narrower focus on outcomes specific to a particular industry (Boxall 2012). Moreover, even given a specific industry focus, most HRM research has been conducted in manufacturing rather than service firm settings (Kiessling and Harvey 2005, Walsh, Sturman et al. 2010).

With far fewer studies in service settings, one meta-analysis showed a differential effect of the high performance work systems on performance in manufacturing versus service industries (Combs, Liu et al. 2006). However, there is some evidence in specific settings that suggests HPWS can enhance performance. For example, Scotti, Harmon et al. (2007) found that HPWS in 113 Veterans Health Administration care centres were positively associated with employees' ability to deliver high-quality customer service. Furthermore, in a study conducted in US call centres, Batt and Colvin (2011) argued and found support for the association of high involvement work systems with higher sales growth and lower quit rates. To address the "black box" problem about explaining how HRM practices increase performance, Sun, Aryee et al. (2007) studied Chinese hotels and found that the HPWS effect on employee turnover and productivity was mediated by service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviour.

In comparison to manufacturing industries, service industries face the difficulty of maintaining technical competitive advantage as used technologies are relatively simpler, more visible and imitable (Song, Di Benedetto et al. 1999). In addition, service industries require higher degrees of customer-firm interaction during service production (Skaggs and Youndt 2004). According to the customer contact model (Chase and Tansik 1983), the frequency of contact between service firm employees and customers can be a source of inefficiency. Because of the high contact nature of service employee jobs, HRM practices can be more salient, emphasizing their role in not only enhancing employee skills and knowledge, but also motivating employees to ensure better customer outcomes.

More research is needed to improve our understanding of how HRM systems play a role in enhancing service firm performance, given the constantly changing service environment and the increasing levels of uncertainty during service production and delivery (von Nordenflycht, Malhotra et al. 2015). Service sector firms received little focus from studies despite the key and increasing importance of service sector; the need to focus on a *specific* service context is the critical issue here, because service firms create and deliver services to individuals, or to businesses. The sector creates and delivers services that could directly impact clients'

operations and productivity. Employees in service sector firms maintain direct interaction with customers. Thus their behaviour towards customers plays a critical role in shaping the perception about the quality and value of goods and services (Chuang, Chen et al. 2013).

It would add to our current understanding to study how specific service providers manage their HRM practices and what strategic routes they choose in order to help their clients meet business goals (Boselie 2014). After all, it is difficult to negate the vital role of the service sector in terms of occupation of the labour force. Evidence demonstrates that service sector employs more people than other industries. In contrast to 23.5% share of manufacturing industries and 31.5% of the agriculture sector, the service sector accounts for 45% of labour occupation worldwide, and in Libya specifically, the service sector employs more than 52% of the country labour force (CIA 2020).

The uniqueness of the service sector is well represented in the telecommunications sector, where one major success factor is the knowledge embedded in its employees (Von Nordenflycht 2010). The telecom sector is an industry known for its dependency on intellectual and human capital as distinctive key assets, where the capabilities of qualified people are solid drivers in accelerating the expansion and sustainability of the businesses Guislain and Qiang (2006)

Telecommunication has emerged as a key driver of economic and social development in an increasingly knowledge intensive global scenario, particularly in developing countries like Libya, where it is extremely important to improve the capabilities of the local organisation and the society in general (Twati 2014). Modern telecommunications systems are an essential element for the country, to enable it to adopt and use technology, and cope with the significant technological development the rest of the world witnessed recently (Germano 2017). Since the launch of the telecommunications sector in Libya, it has been entirely state-owned, market liberalisation was non-existent and foreign firms were excluded from participating in the market.

Given the importance of the services context in general and the unique characteristics of the Libyan telecommunications sector in particular, it is essential to investigate how these factors may affect the planning and implementation of HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector.

2.17 Human Resources Management in Libya and the Arab World

There are more than 20 Arab countries with a combined population of more than 300 million people, with 60% of them younger than 30 years (UNDP 2016). This creates a real opportunity and challenge at the same time for these countries, to utilise these precious resources (Messen and Benhamida 2013). These Arab countries have a similar cultural and religious background in most cases, and this lead to similar managerial characterises affected by the local political, economic and socio-cultural environment. However, these characteristics are now seen as old fashioned and are not serving their countries and organizations (Afiouni, Ruël et al. 2014).

Management studies about the Arab world indicated the significance of the political and socio-cultural impact on HRM, and the influence of religion, government intervention and tribalism on decisions (Shaw 2015). In addition, contextual factors such as culture and political environment play a key role in the Arab world as several studies revealed (Budhwar, Mellahi et al. 2010, Afiouni, Ruël et al. 2014, Shaw 2015). Other studies conducted in the Arab world found similar findings, that management attitude, business culture, and beliefs play a role in the way organizations are performing. Other writers (Nyambegera 2006, Al-Hamadi, Budhwar et al. 2007) showed how political circumstances and government ideologies influence the organizational culture in the Arab region.

In developing countries, HRM practices are at a foundational stage, with several factors shaping the perception and attitude of people towards the philosophy of HRM, among these factors is the socio-political factor, the religion and family (Budhwar and Mellahi 2016).

Human resource management in most Arab countries is very basic; in fact, it is more simple personnel administration than the modern HRM (Murphy 2002). In the Arab world, HRM activities focus on basic duties like attendance control, keeping personal files, and payroll management in a bureaucratic paper-based process. Selection and promotion procedures which are based solely on efficiency (Budhwar and Mellahi 2016).

Tayeb (2000) argues that HRM in such cases is no more than ‘old’ personnel management with a heavy local colour. According to Iles, Almhedie et al. (2012), HRM regulations and policies in these countries can be described as institutionally deficient in terms of:

- The lack of fair human resources practices that give emphasis to merit and competence.

- The absence of the planning and data, and the heavy presence of nepotism and corruption in decision making.
- The absence of an overall institutional framework that states and enforces principles of integrity in processes and procedures, encourages management professionalism and develops ethical principles and codes to create the required standards to run the business.
- Favouritism in training nominations and training contracts (nepotism and corruption) with training companies, and this leads to failing all the development plans and targets.
- The non-appearance of adequate hiring processes, where these processes mainly subjected to favouritism and discrimination.
- The absence of equality in benefits and compensation strategy where all employees in an organization treated fairly, compensation systems should not conflict with the existing legislation in the areas of equal pay, labour standards and relations.
- Promotions and career advancement may be based on personal or political criteria, where in most cases, promotion is based on unwritten roles; this leads to a destructive impact on the entire organization.

Abed and Davoodi (2003) highlighted that there are several political and economic factors that play a significant role in preventing and slowing the region's economic development, such as the public sector domination, the dependence on oil revenues, unstable and corrupt political systems, inefficient financial markets, and a culture that fails to support entrepreneurship and innovation.

HRM in the Arab region faces specific challenges (Iles, Almhedie et al. 2012) such as the need to:

- Create a strong human resources knowledge and culture, by investing in the training and education system and increase the students' number attaining HRM training courses or higher education. The success of any development plans depends on the availability of highly trained HRM specialists.
- Shift the philosophy from the basic role of personnel administration, that does not go beyond the administration of employees' files and simple paperwork services, to become a strategic partner to the business, seeking to achieve a competitive advantage,

and apply the new aspects and horizons of HRM activities applied in developed countries.

- Review and renew HRM legislation, taking into consideration the new demands of the global and local business environment.
- Restructure the labour market, through investing in creating new local labour forces rather than depending on exported labour (expatriates) and encouraging locals to start working in the private sector rather than depending on the government jobs because of the job security they enjoy there.
- Invest in creating equality culture in organizations, and build the atmosphere where all HRM activities, starting from hiring people to nominating trainees and compensations and benefits, are based only on performance and merit, rather than family relations or political affiliation.

Despite failing in achieving the desired socio-economic development (Ali 1998), most Arab countries have witnessed major developments recently, i.e. privatisation and organizational restructuring, which make these countries in desperate need to adopt modern and rationalised HRM systems. Due to the vital role HRM plays in economic development in societies (Zidan 2001), this kind of restructuring and development will definitely have a major impact on the HRM function in the region in general. Similar to other regions of the world, these countries plan to improve and develop their HRM systems, especially the oil producing countries where the plan is to stop depending on oil revenues, and start investing in people, and start to initiate new plans and projects in different sectors like information and communication technologies and other services and manufacturing activities, where this will create the demand for skilled local employees that can steer the development process, and enable these countries to stop depending completely on foreign workers to get the job done (Budhwar and Mellahi 2016).

Furthermore, a lot of these countries started realizing the importance of enhancing their economic and managerial systems to fit into the new global economy, and therefore they started working on this regard (Yousef 2004). Today's global markets draw a different perspective for HRM processes, where it requires talented workers that can fit with the technological-oriented environment, and this urges Arab public and private institutions in the Arab region, to start restructuring their processes to utilize the wealth-creating potential of people (Bontis 2004).

HRM practises in the region need to have an urgent development plan. The younger generation, especially those with foreign education background, may lead this development by

implementing the best practices that been tested and tried in the global market, while also considering the uniqueness of the region. Through limiting the impact of political intervention and modernizing the labour laws, great results can be achieved for businesses and people in the region.

2.17.1 The Significance of Cultural Context in the Arab World

In Arab countries, cultural and religious factors are believed to have a great influence on shaping HRM (Branine and Pollard 2010). Various researchers have highlighted that Arabic countries have different values and attitudes compared with developed countries (Abed and Davoodi 2003, Al-Hamadi, Budhwar et al. 2007, Afiouni, Ruël et al. 2014, Harbi, Thursfield et al. 2016). According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2003), Arab countries are described as high power distance countries where there are expectations and acceptance of unequal distribution of power. These countries always have a high record of uncertainty avoidance, which means how societies react to ambiguity and uncertainty and how individuals react in unstructured situations. Furthermore, Arab countries according to this are collectivistic countries where individuals have a strong commitment to their families and tribes (Hofstede 2003),

According to Ismail (2010), the family is the core social and economic unit in the Arab countries. A hierarchical and masculine structure represents most families in the region, where the father controls the family and offers support and protection. Understanding the composition and phenomena of Arabic families is essential in understanding organizational behaviour in the workplace. Power in organizations is centralized and rarely delegated, which represents the reflection of paternalistic patterns in the decision-making process. Bosses tend to be like fathers, trying to care for and protect their subordinates; meanwhile they hold all the authority, do not allow opposition, and expect full obedience from subordinates. All this leads to an authoritarian style of management. Managers usually focus on maintaining social relationships rather than efficiency or procedures to achieve their tasks and goals (Budhwar and Mellahi 2016).

This autocratic and collectivist stream influence the management philosophy towards HRM policies and practices. Consequently, the employee's perceptions towards these practices would be impacted as well by these significant cultural factors. All this would differentiate the context of such countries from the previously studied western context (Gerhart 2008).

The influence of culture in developing countries and Arab countries, in particular, may impact the assumptions about HRM. People in western culture have a different conception than the people in eastern culture, and this creates a real challenge in adopting western HRM tools as a package, without considering these differences. Therefore applying the best fit concept might work better than applying the best practices of western societies without considering the impact of local culture (Tayeb 2000).

2.17.2 Libya the Research Setting

Libya is a developing Arab country located in a strategic geographical location within the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). The country possesses a Mediterranean coastline of 1,770 km, and an area of 1.759 million square kilometres, making it the world's 17 largest countries (CIA 2020). Furthermore, it is considered to be the vital link between Europe and Africa and between the eastern and western countries of the Arab world. Libya has six neighbouring countries. It is bordered to the east by Egypt; Tunisia and Algeria to the west and north-west; to the south-east by Sudan, the South by Chad and Niger, and in the north by the Mediterranean Sea where the country's main cities are located, as also is the majority of its total population. The capital of the country is Tripoli, and Arabic is the official language. However, English and Italian are used widely, particularly in business. The country population is estimated to be 6,890,535, and most of the Libyan nation is composed of younger people: 48% of the population are less than 24 years old (CIA 2020). This younger generation creates their own HR related challenges, and they have their own workplace expectations. Therefore organizations are likely to have to apply sophisticated HRM systems to attract them (Asghar 2014).

Libya has great economic, social, and political development potential. The country enjoys several key strengths, including its attractive location, a strategic role with its neighbours, oil and gas reserves, and its accumulated capital reserves (Porter 2007). However, Libya's economy has been overly-dependent on hydrocarbon production, with the gas, oil and related sectors representing 96% of budget revenues, 95% of exports and 65% of GDP (OECD 2016).

As a result, this has rendered the economy highly vulnerable to fluctuations in oil prices and has distorted the labour market. The country faces significant challenges in offering work to its citizens. Among such challenges are high rates of unemployment, especially with the younger generations estimated at above 30% (International labour Organisation 2012). This high rate

may affect the labour market and consequently affect the HRM policies and practices in the country, especially those related to recruitment and selection. In addition, the private sector is still underdeveloped, and although the oil industry generates high revenues for the economy, many problems are still present in the country's economic activities. HRM in Libya will, therefore, have to deal with these challenges. Added to this is the fact that Libyan society, as with Arab countries in general, is known to maintain the tradition of extended family (Almhdie and Nyambegera 2004).

Hofstede and Hofstede (2001) note that Arab countries are collectivistic countries, where individuals have a strong commitment to their families and tribes. This leads people to have a strong commitment to serve and favour their family, clan or village members rather than meeting their organizational targets (Alwerthan, Swanson et al. 2017, Brahms and Schmitt 2017). This phenomenon is known as Wasta - "Wasta is an Arabic word, means the use of social connections to obtain benefits that otherwise would not be provided" (Mohamed and Hamdy 2008,p2). Where a high level of 'wasta' exist, this may influence how HRM practices are implemented and their impact on employees and organizations. Researchers have called for paying special attention to the phenomenon of wasta to broadly understand HRM reality in the region (Hutchings and Weir 2006, Mohamed and Hamdy 2008, Barnett, Yandle et al. 2013).

Summary

This chapter reviewed the major themes relating to HPWS. The chapter targeted to understand the phenomenon of HPWS through its historical and contextual dimensions, by exploring the different views which have emerged among scholars in the field. This critical review was conducted to highlight the key areas that need additional investigation. From this premise, it is proposed that understanding both the context and human players,' employers and employees, will result in a better understanding of the HPWS phenomenon.

The arguments of this chapter also showed that existing research on HPWS is principally limited in relation to the context in two ways. The first constraint is that current studies are mainly rooted in the western context (Gurbuz and Mert 2011). To date, HRM practices, in general, have been studied most significantly within the western context (Boxall & Macky, 2009). Anglo-Saxon countries such as the USA, UK, Australia and Canada are the primary sources from which the empirical evidence for HPWS stems (Guerrero and Barraud-Didier 2004, Combs, Liu et al. 2006). Many of these studies in western countries have examined the

notion of HPWS in terms of its nature and its relationship with organisational performance and outcome (MacDuffie 1995, Huselid and Becker 1996, Chuang and Liao 2010). This indicates the gap in the HPWS literature relating to non-western contexts (Brewster, 2006). This is significant as the context in Libya as a developing country is substantially different from western countries, and therefore require further coverage (Verma, Kochan & Lansbury, 1995; Warner, 2000; Budhwar & Debrah, 2001).

Several researchers have called for studying the phenomenon of HPWS in different contexts, in order to confirm whether HPWS in their diffusion are mostly similar or dissimilar when comparing across varying institutional environments (Lawler, Chen et al. 2011, Newman, Thanacoody et al. 2011). As the aspects of each country vary, this may limit or enhance HPWS in their effectiveness. Different cultural or institutional influences may shape the nature of the employment relationship within an organisation (Hartog and Verburg 2004, Boxall and Macky 2014). Therefore, choosing Libya, as the research setting will enable contribution to the HPWS literature by providing non-western empirical evidence.

The second constraint is that studies on HPWS fail to focus on the application of HPWS within the public services context. Most of the existing research on HPWS has predominantly focused on private manufacturing firms (Sun, Aryee et al. 2007, McClean and Collins 2011, Lin and Liu 2016). It has been suggested by scholars that the economic sector in which the organisation resides may influence the implementation of innovative HRM practices and their outcomes (Edwards and Wright 2001, Boxall and Macky 2014). Further research in this area has been demanded in terms of the sector-specific implications of adopting HPWS (Baarspul and Wilderom 2012, Guest and Bos-Nehles 2013). Services firms are by nature different from many manufacturing firms, in that they are highly dependent on employees, in terms of employees' intellectual assets. Given this aspect, HRM and employees in the services sector are arguably the most valuable resources for such firms (Von Nordenflycht 2007). Service sector firms are characterised by intense knowledge dependence. Within this type of organisations, expert knowledge is directly converted into client solutions. As such, services firms represent an important context to explore the effects of HPWS (McClean and Collins 2011). Furthermore, McIver, Lengnick-Hall et al. (2013) have called for a better understanding of the strategic role of HRM in knowledge-intensive settings. Studying HPWS in a service sector will help ascertain if the implementation and results of HPWS might differ from sector to sector (Clinton and Guest 2013, Lin and Liu 2016).

In addition to these two limitations regarding context, and studies mainly focussing on western countries and the manufacturing sector, most of the previous studies looking at HPWS have also relied only on the employer's perspective (Liao, Toya et al. 2009, Atkinson, Lucas et al. 2011).

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Within the Human resource management field, Several scholars have adopted a variety of theories to study and explore the phenomena of HPWS. For instance human capital and social exchange used by (Chang & Chen, 2011); the resource-based view of the firm as suggested by (Huselid, 1995; Lepak & Snell, 1999); and social exchange theory in the work of (Takeuchi et al., 2007); as well as the knowledge-creation theory used by (Klaas et al., 2012). Most of the previous theories were used to focus on the relationship between HPWS and performance by trying to discover the black box explaining how do HPWS really enhance the performance of organisations and employees which is not the target of this research. They also ignored the effect of contextual factors on implementing HPWS, as well as not exploring the employer-employee relations and contrasting the workers vs management perspectives, which are the main objectives of this study.

The current study framework is based on Institutional theory and AMO theory. Institutional theory has proved to be a popular and powerful tool of explanation to analyse the organisational behaviour and change in the implementation of HPWS in the form of three major pressures on public organisations to implement HPWS in the organisation. The use of institutional theory helped the research explore the institutional factors affecting the implementation process of HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector by shedding light on the various political and cultural factors intervening in such a process. From this perspective, the organisational action patterns are influenced by institutional forces such as political, social and cultural norms and scripts.

The perception of employees concerning HPWS is likely to be predictive of their behavioural outcomes than the use of HPWS (Mostafa, et al. 2014). This can be understood by taking into account the AMO theory. Boselie, et al. (2005) observed that HPWS and its different types, are found on AMO theory. The models which are expected to influence the results through AMO – variables are based on the underpinning principles of alignment: employee and management interests must be aligned (Boxall, et al. 2008) therefore, this theory would be helpful to understand the difference between management and employees point of views on HPWS in selected organisations in Libya therefore, AMO theory is being selected for the final theoretical framework of this research. AMO represents three variables: ability, motivation, and opportunity to perform; these dimensions need to be positively influenced to draw better performance from workers (Boxall, et al. 2008). Therefore, these three factors would be helpful to understand the management and employees point of views, and also would help to align the

management and employees toward successful implementation of the HPWS in the selected public organisations in Libya.

3.2 High Performance Work Systems and Employees' Performance

HRM may be defined as a set of activities which are focused on organizational performance (Boxall & Purcell, 2008). Steijn (2004) found out that HR practices significantly influence the job satisfaction of employees working in the public sector while the public sector employees perception and attitude develop on the base of political leadership and management of the public organization. This is because the employees perceive management as part of government forces, who implement the political orders in the organization, which is the major difference between public and private organization employees attitude and perception toward management decision (Johnson, Smith et al. 2000, Zheng, Chen et al. 2013). However, as indicated earlier, it is imperative to investigate the usage of HPWS in the public sector as there is still a dearth of literature in this regard and because most of the literature ignoring the political forces affecting the implementation of the HPWS in public organizations (Brinck, Otten et al. 2019). Therefore, the major focus of this research is the exploration of the root causes of the conditions affecting employees and management attitude and perception towards HPWS in public sector organizations in Libya.

The HPWS exists objectively, but employees must perceive it and interpret subjectively because the implementation is done by the institutional and political forces to improve the public organizational performance (Fu, Bosak et al. 2019). The impact of actual HPWS is not found in the objective practices per se but instead in the perceptions that employees possess about them (Zheng, Chen et al. 2013). However, the focus of the existing research has primarily been on usage of HPWS as reported by managers and employees, because many authors highlighted that management of public organizations is directly influenced by the political forces which create resistance in the form of employees behaviour toward the HPWS (Shijaku, Larraza-Kintana et al. 2015, Iy, Abdul-Majid et al. 2017, Min, Zhu et al. 2018). The idea that the perception of employees concerning HPWS is likely an antecedent of employees' reactions has attracted little subjective and theoretical attention in SHRM literature (Mielke, De Geest et al. 2019) because subjective enquiry of HPWS in the public sector is purely embedded with local cultural, social and political values (Fu, Ma et al. 2015, Kellner, Townsend et al. 2017, Huang, Fan et al. 2018). Different theorists suggested that there could be a gap between what is said

by managers about HPWS and what is actually perceived by individual employees, because firstly, the managers are directly influenced by the political forces. Many scholars believe that public sector organizational decisions are directly influenced by the political leadership, so there is need to explore why public organization adopt new system in the organization and which kind of the political and institutional forces push organizations to adopt new performance system (Bishop 2014, Vermeeren 2017, Ohemeng, Asiedu et al. 2018, Pereira, Fontinha et al. 2018).

Secondly, employees perception is developed on the base of organizational culture, motivation (Ko and Smith-Walter 2013, Spekle and Verbeeten 2014), opportunity of learning/ skill development (Mostafa, et al., 2015; Mostafa, 2016) and abilities of the employees to adopt new HPWS (Ko and Smith-Walter 2013, Plimmer, Bryson et al. 2017)

Therefore, the major concentration of the theoretical framework would consider the employee's context and institutional forces affecting organizations, as shown in the figure below.

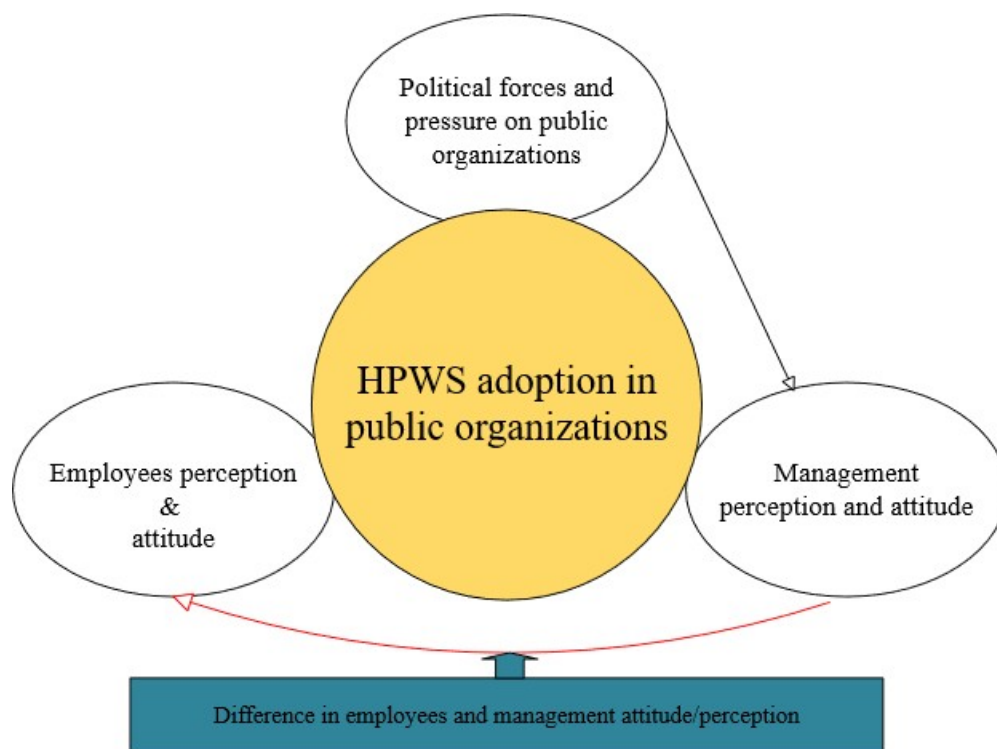


Figure 34-1 Differences in employees and management perceptions

As the above figure, developed on the base of numerous arguments (Bishop 2014, Mostafa 2017, Renmans, Holvoet et al. 2017, Vermeeren 2017, Ohemeng, Asiedu et al. 2018, Pereira,

Fontinha et al. 2018) shows, employees perception and attitude are major factors in the implementation of the HPWS. Employees perception and attitudes towards policies and practices in HPWS are also affected, as has been discussed, by employees' ability, motivation and opportunities. Therefore, the AMO theory has importance for this research and understanding how their attitudes and perceptions are shaped. AMO represents three variables: ability, motivation, and opportunity to perform. These dimensions need to be positively influenced to draw better performance from workers (Boxall, et al. 2008). 'Ability' dimension of the theory implies that employees must be able to perform their tasks. The extent whereby an individual is able to perform his job largely depends on the individual's intelligence, life, and education as well as his experience level (Boxall, et al. 2008) therefore, the management should improve the required level of employees ability and opportunities to successfully implement the HPWS in the organization (Schay and Fisher 2013).

3.3 The AMO (Ability, Motivation, Opportunity) Concept

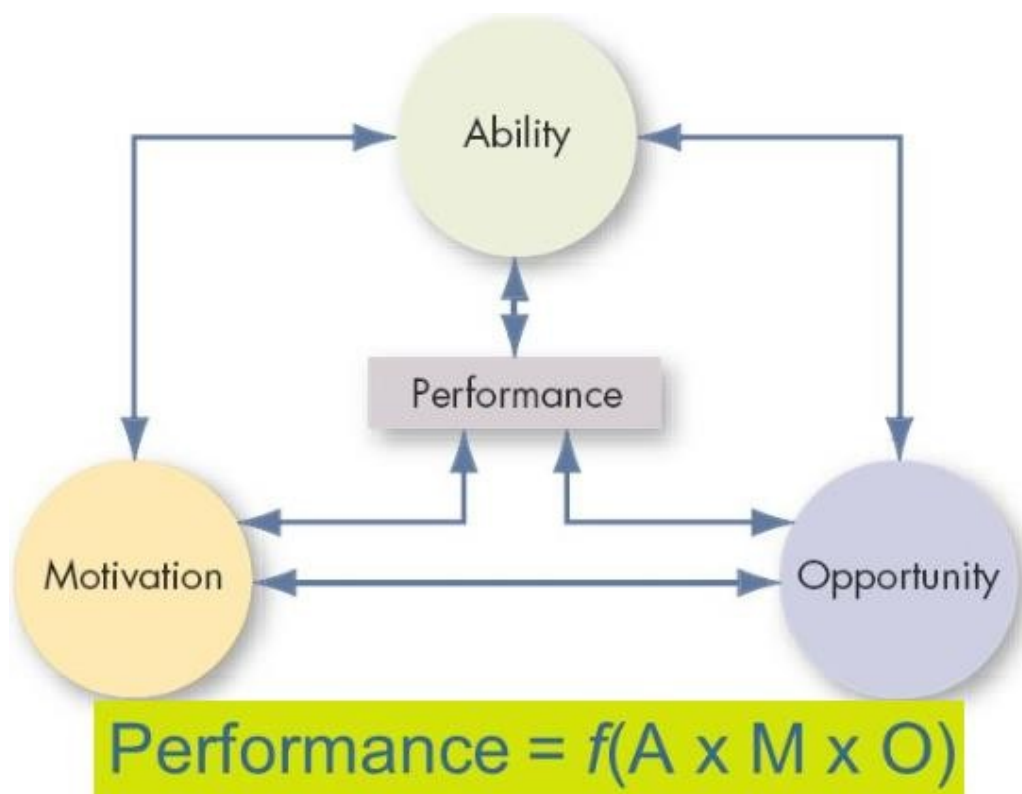


Figure 3-2: The AMO-performance link. adopted from (Blumerg, and Pringle, 1982)

The job of HR department in an organization is selecting and recruiting individuals who possess the right set of skills and abilities for the job, but the HR department is also responsible

for the continues skills development that increases the ability of the employees, opportunity to use skills and they also have adopted right motivation tools to achieve the required performance level of the employees (Heinrich, & Marschke, 2010; Carter, et al., 2013; Bullock, et al., 2015). Boxall et al. (2008) observed that a significant role is offered by the quality and quantity of inducements to attract the right workforce. Moreover, the proactive and creative nature of recruitment is also attracting towards assuming the job. Boxall et al., (2008) also argued that good recruitment is particularly of significance in organizations where a high level of specialization or discretion is required to perform the tasks due to complexity of the tasks, such as the telecoms sector. When the right workforce is employed their abilities are further enhanced by providing them with the right set of training and development that would help to get the required level of performance (Van Rinsum, & Verbeeten, 2012).

The capable workforce needs motivation through incentives scheme for participating in the activities of the organization and using their abilities for the benefit of the organization (Georgantzis, et al., 2017). While, Lin, & Kellough, (2019) argue employees ability is major factors that could be improved through skills development program, to develop their intrinsic motivation. Moreover, Maran et al., (2018) indicated that if the employees don't have the required skills, then the incentives cannot work alone to motivate the employees. The incentives are required for motivating the workforce so that they can perform their tasks adequately if they already have required resource, tools and ability to perform (Qi, & Wang, 2018).

It is argued that three types of motivation can achieve this: intrinsic rewards, extrinsic rewards, and mutual trust (Vogel, & Hattke, 2018). It is suggested that extrinsic rewards are of significance to all the employees, and the firm can enhance its efficiency by making such rewards contingent with particular outcomes (Boxall, et al. 2008). Intrinsic rewards are also of paramount significance such as challenging work, autonomy, and interesting nature of tasks. These are crucial for long term motivation of the workforce (Battaglia, et al., 2015). Finally, the environment of trust in the organization significantly influence the motivation of the workforce, since it is believed that when the workforce is sure that the organization trusts them, and the organization takes such steps that workforce trusts it, then they perform their duties diligently. Therefore, there is also a need to build trust among management and employees (Nuti, et al., 2013) that will be discussed later in this chapter.

The intrinsic workplace attributes, extrinsic workplace attributes, work relations with

managers, and work relations with colleagues at the workplace are all significantly associated with job satisfaction (Almklov, & Antonsen, 2014). Moreover, it was also found out that intrinsic workplace attributes caused a bigger influence on workplace relationship with management and job satisfaction (Srimai, 2015).

Findings in the public sector suggest intrinsic rewards have a big impact. For example, the research conducted by Uneke, et al., (2013) found out that intrinsic rewards were significantly related with a better relationship at the workplace and increased the motivation of the workforce employed in the public sector. Purohit, et al., (2016) investigated the antecedents of organizational commitment among employees of the public sector and found out that interesting work, autonomy, and support of colleagues were significant antecedent of affective commitment. Moreover, Tonelli, et al., (2017) also found there is a positive relationship between affective commitment and job satisfaction. Studies also show a significant effect was caused by the perceived style of political leadership and HRM policy (Aucoin, 2012), but HRM policies are directly influenced by political decision for public sector organization (Teeroovengadum, et al., 2019).

The organizational motivation approaches have a significant and positive impact on the organizational commitment among the workers (Rijswijk, & Brazendale, 2017). Studies show the organizational commitment is enhanced when workers are provided with training opportunities (Kuipers, & Giurge, 2017). Training opportunities also found to have significantly influenced job satisfaction (Benjamin, et al., 2018). Moreover, Benjamin et al., (2018) also found out that the relationship of employees with superiors was a significant and powerful predictor of organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Moreover, Sutheewasinnon, et al., (2016) also found out that the teamwork negatively influenced the intention to quit, i.e. workers working as part of a team were less likely to quit compared to the ones who were not working as part of the team.

Recent research by Zheng, et al., (2019) concluded that there is the positive impact of high commitment HRM practices across both private and public sector organizations and that training programs and team working have a significant notable impact on the behaviour of the workers. Moreover, Bode, et al., (2017) observed that the impact of HRM practices in both instances is stronger than the impact caused by extrinsic HRM practices. Ma, et al., (2018) observed that the workplace relationship with the management of the organization had a direct

and significant impact on organizational commitment and job satisfaction of the workforce of the organization.

The last aspect of AMO theory provides that the motivated and capable workforce is able to perform different tasks (Bos et al., 2013) but the ability of the employees is also linked with the opportunity to learn new skills and learning in the organization (Muduli, et al., 2016). In order to draw better performance from workforce it is imperative that they are given the opportunity to solve issues, responsibility to perform certain tasks, and authority to do the tasks entrusted with them and to arrive at certain decisions which are directly link supervision, management and leadership approach in organization (Boselie, 2010). Employees need to be able to collect information and process it on their own, which is the opportunity to use own skills and knowledge, so that they can amicably solve the problems and take concrete decisions (Nguyen, et al., 2015). When employees are afforded greater autonomy in performing their tasks, they are able to make decisions which enhance their efficiency as they learn from their experience that motivate them through intrinsic means of motivation (Yoong, et al., 2010). Moreover, it involves employees using resources from outside their area of work, due to the interest they develop, because of independence given to them (Addamo, et al., 2017). Therefore, it has been established from the discussion that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are the major approach to motivate the employees.

In summary, Van Waeyenberg, & Decramer, (2018) indicated that intrinsic motivation factors, which included learning opportunity, skill development opportunity and opportunity to use skills and intrinsic rewards (Escribá et al, 2017) highlight the importance of opportunity factor in the AMO theory. When enforcing HPWS, increasing the interesting nature of tasks and make the tasks more challenging can generate intrinsic motivation among the workers. Additionally, autonomy, competence, skills development and leaning work environment improve the employee's ability (Amo-Adjei, et al., 2014; Alfes, et al., (2017). As discussed, many authors indicated that intrinsic and extrinsic factors required together to improve the employee's performance. Therefore, the following figure has been developed to show the relation of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors with AMO theory. The figure shows that ability improvement through intrinsic meaning and opportunities in the workplace with financial rewards motivate the employees to perform.

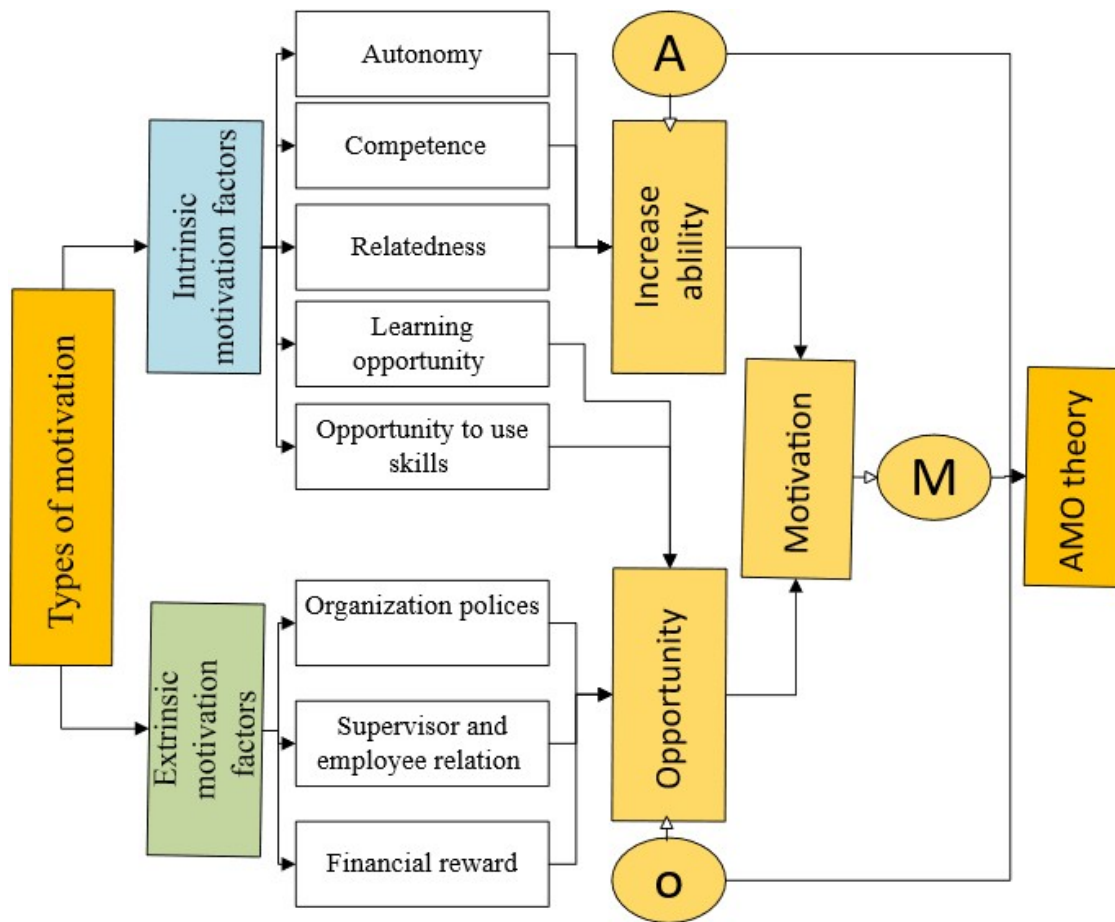


Figure 3-3 Intrinsic motivation extrinsic motivation in the context of AMO theory

On the basis of AMO theory underlying HPWS, particular practices of HR known as High Performance Work Practices (HPWPs) are focused towards developing the abilities and skills of the workers, increasing their motivation to enable them to take decisions independently, and providing them with the opportunities so that they can realize their knowledge and skills (Englert, & Helmig, 2018). Although there does not exist any consensus among researchers and practitioners about the exact set of HR practices that should be included in HPWS (Boxall, et al. 2008), it is believed that a system of practices influences the ability, motivation, and opportunity to perform. This is significant for bringing improvement to the performance of the workforce (Almutawa, et al., 2016). As Åström, et al., (2018) indicated that motivation practices of the management create employees perception and attitude towards management in the implementation of the HPWS, there is need to understand the employees' attitude which developed through employees satisfaction and employee commitment with the organization (Runhaar, 2017).

Fu, Bosak et al. (2019) observe that HR practices send out signals to the workforce about the values of the organization and utilizing HPWS sends out messages to workers that the organization cares for them.

3.4 Development of Employees Attitudes (Job Satisfaction and Commitment)

Job satisfaction may be defined as a positive state of mind among workers which results from the appraisal of one's job (Yoong, et al., 2010). Being satisfied with the job is significant for both the workers and the organization as it increases the output of workers and thus the overall efficiency of the organization is increased at the same time. It also creates trust among employees and management, which is essential for the successful implementation of HPWS in the organization (Boselie, 2010).

Moreover, Ohemeng et al., (2018) indicated fair rewards system being the employee's commitment that facilitates the successful implementation of HPWS in the organization. Because there is some political involvement in developing countries that can create resistance against the HPWS, there is need to understand the institutional forces that force the implementation of the HPWS (Pereira, et al., 2019).

When an organization is perceived by its workforce through HRM system as caring for the best interests of the workers then it generates affective commitment among workers towards the organization and is also helpful in achieving job satisfaction among the workers (Ko and Smith-Walter 2013)

Affective commitment may be regarded as the emotional attachment of the workforce about their identification with the brand/organization they are working for (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Boselie (2010) observed that affective commitment is also regarded as commitment with the organization to continue working for it by the workforce. It is a desirable outcome for any organization related to its HR practices. Appelbaum (et al. 2000) observed that a committed workforce is likely to place extra effort to achieve the goals of the organization.

Workers-centric and worker-empowering practices (Zhang, et al., 2013) and opportunistic and beneficial for the organization employees are more likely to exhibit their loyalty and enthusiasm with the organization (Min, et al., 2018). Moreover, Mielke, et al., 2019 observed that when employees perceive that they are being valued by the organization, then they perform better in order to stick with the organization. Ismail, et al., (2017) observed that the degree

whereby organizations are perceived as caring and valuing towards the wellbeing of its workforce generate positive perception among their workers and as such increase's affective commitment and job satisfaction (Fu, et al., 2015).

HPWS have been found to have significantly influenced the perception of workers that employees are being cared for by their establishment. This, in turn, results in employees being satisfied with the job and feel committed towards the organization (Kellner, et al., 2017) HPWS enhanced the relationship between perceived organization commitment and perceived organizational support, and also between perceived trust and perceived organizational support (Mostafa, 2016). This increased the significance of HR practices in influencing the behaviour of the employees (Mostafa, et al., 2015). The trust of employees in management was also found to be significantly related to HPWS and attitudes of employees, but the trust employees is based on organizational culture and reward management of employees to get required performance (Nadeem, et al., 2019).

Huang et al., (2014) observed that trust in management is the result of the confidence workers have in the organization and its leaders due to goals of the organization and the belief that the actions of the organization are beneficial for the workers. Messersmith, et al., (2011) observed that the trust in management near workers partially contribute towards the relationship between the affective commitment of workers and HPWS. Plimmer, et al., (2017) observed that the significant and positive correlation between perception of workers about the support and commitment of the organization was partial because of employees' trust in management.

On the basis of the aforementioned research, it may be argued that HPWS can have a significant positive impact on job satisfaction and affective commitment of workforce due to positive perception it creates in the workforce about the organization's intentions (Spekle and Verbeeten 2014) but this is not guaranteed. Management needs to offer the opportunity of learning and new skills that would improve their ability to perform, and there is need to adopt effective motivation approach, so the overall discussion of employees perception and attitude is aligned with AMO theory.

The above discussion raises questions as to whether all of this is possible in the public sector. Limited work has been conducted in the public sector, for instance. Leggat, et al., (2011) investigated the impact of HPWS on organizational citizenship behaviour and affective commitment in the context of a Dutch hospital. Leggat, et al., (2011) tested the hypothesis that high score of perceived HPWS increases the AMO among workers which positively influence

the organizational citizenship behaviour and affective commitment while the motivation approach is not only in hand of the management because these learning opportunities, organizational policies and financial rewards are in the hand of government; therefore, the implementation of the AMO of employees is quite different in the public sector (Basu, et al., 2012). The HPWS which increased motivation on the basis of the wage scale, pay for performance and fairness of pay and institutionalization of pay systems speaks volume about lack of significant relationship between HPWS and motivation (Fan, et al., 2014). Because of the countries have legislation which includes the right to minimum salary and the collective bargaining agreement at sector level has resulted in institutional mechanisms which influence the HRM and particularly the HR practices related to payment (West, & Blackman, 2015). This leads towards limited flexibility concerning salary issues in the public sector, and it could also provide an explanation about the lack of significant impact of HPWS on motivation and attitudes of employees (Mostafa 2017). There are many authors who highlighted that the trust of management and employees is crucial in the public sector because the management under the control of the political structure of the country, which means they have limited power. Bishop, (2014) argued that trust is a significant intervening variable which mediates the relationship between the HR practices of the organization and the individual outcomes such as organizational commitment, but there is some lack of trust between employees and management of public organization because the management is directly under the political forces that create more pressure on employees to meet the performance requirement rather than to provide the sufficient resources (Pereira, et al., 2018). Moreover, Ohemeng, et al., (2018) note that the bundle of HR practices significantly and positively influenced the system trust, i.e. the trust between the organization and its workforce as well as interpersonal trust which represents the relationship among employees. Moreover, the bundle of HR practices significantly and positively influenced organizational commitment (Sheehan, et al., 2016), job satisfaction (Henttonen, et al., 2016), and organizational performance (Belle, et al., 2018). System trust is also found to have a significant and positive predictive impact on the job satisfaction (Ogbonnaya, et al., 2017), organizational commitment (Sayinzoga, & Bijlmakers, 2016), and organizational performance (Turner, & Cross, 2018).

Because there are some time gaps between what the political leadership expects in terms of performance and in providing resources to the public organization this creates a negative impact between employees and management of organization (Chimhutu, et al., 2015). The intrinsic work aspects are significant determinants of job satisfaction among workers of the

public sector while training and skills development opportunities are based on the government policies (Laaser, 2016) and budget which contradiction in employees attitude why management pushing the HPWS while they don't have enough resources and budget (Mylona, & Mihail, 2019). Mostafa (2017) indicated that employees and management alignment is bit complex in developing countries because the management decisions are directly influenced by the political power of the country which creates a contradiction between management and employees' attitude HPWS. It is then expected in turn that all organizations benefit from practices and political policies which are helpful for them to align their interest with the interest of their workforce (Renmans, et al., 2017).

The extent of trust which the workers have on the organization is a significant variable in explaining how the HR practices influence job satisfaction and commitment (Paina, et al., 2014). When particular political pressure is all taken into account related to the attitude of the workforce in public sector Toor, & Ogunlana, (2010) found out that satisfaction with the responsibility worker is entrusted with casts a significant influence on job satisfaction. Two other elements which significantly influence job satisfaction include the satisfaction with career support and satisfaction with organizational climate (García et al., 2019).

Trust is therefore seen as a potential hurdle in the public sector, and political influence creates hurdles in the implementation of the HPWS in public organizations (Iy, Abdul-Majid et al. 2017, Brinck, Otten et al. 2019, Fu, Bosak et al. 2019, Mielke, De Geest et al. 2019). Koning, & Heinrich, (2013) believe that there is a need to understand the political forces because public sector organizational decisions are directly influenced by the political leadership so Koning, & Heinrich, (2013) indicated that it is required to explore why public organization adopt new systems in the organization and which kind of the political and institutional forces push to adopt new performance system in the organization (Vermeeren, 2017; Bishop, 2014; Pereira, et al., 2018; Ohemeng, et al., 2018). Therefore, now the discussion is going to explore institutional forces affecting adopting HPWS in public organizations.

3.5 Institutional Theory

Institutions, according to Scott (1995) represent the social, cultural and political structures which have gained a high degree of resilience. Institutions include such things as the economy, government, family (ref). The institutional theory refers to the deeper and resilient aspect of social structure. It takes into account the process whereby structures, including the rules,

schemes, routines, and norms are established as authoritative guidelines for social behaviour (Phiri, & Guven-Uslu, 2018). It inquiries into the creation of these elements of HPWS and that how they are adopted and adapted to over a period of time and how they could also fall into disuse and decline. It is also important to point out that there does not exist any universal definition of the institution, because each public institute is based on the local social and political culture of the country (Coule, & Patmore, 2013). Campbell, (2007) indicated that public organization are made up of normative, cultural-cognitive, and regulative elements which together with associated resources and activities provide meaning and stability to social life (Dellmuth, et al., 2016). There are various types of carriers transmitted by institutions/public organizations including relational systems, symbolic systems, artefacts, and routines that create resistance or facilitate the HPWS in the organization (Min, et al., 2018). There are different levels at which institutions are operating from the local level to the international level. By definition, institutions represent a stable, structured approach towards a particular cause (Mielke, et al., 2019). There is, therefore, a need to understand the local social, cultural and political structure of Libya to understand the potential implementation issues of HPWS in its public organizations.

Institutional theorists believe that the environment can strongly influence the structural development of the institution, often more profoundly than the pressures of the market (Pahnke, et al., 2015) while, Filatotchev et al., (2018) indicated that external environment force organizations to develop a new structure or implement a new system, but the internal environment of the organization may facilitate or resist the new system (Bruton, et al., 2015). Innovative structures which enhance the technical efficiency in early-adopting organizations are legitimized in the environment (Volberda, et al., 2012). Ultimately such innovations reach such level of legitimacy where other organizations failing to adopt them is taken as negligence or irrationality. At such a point the existing and new organization will utilize the structural form that has legitimacy, even when the efficiency is not generated by the form, which creates internal conflict between management and employees for the implementation of that new structure or system in the organization (Teelken, 2008).

It is argued by Luo & Chung, (2013) that often such institutional myths are accepted only in a ceremonious manner to maintain the legitimacy of the institutional environment in the organization. Organizations utilize the vocabularies of structure which are already found in their environments such as prevalent procedures, job titles, and organizational roles (Mair, et al.,

2015) while the difference in these titles creates perceptions about the new system in the organization (Dellmuth, et al., 2015). The prominent display and adoption of such institutionally acceptable trappings of legitimacy are helpful in preserving the aura of organizational actions taken in good faith (Modell, 2012). Legitimacy in the institutional environment ensures the survival of the organizations. However, such formal structures of legitimacy can minimize the efficiency and affect the competitive position of the organizations in the technical environment (Lall, 2017). Therefore, the organizations try to implement some innovative system to successfully compete in a competitive environment (Sayed, et al, 2017). In order to minimize this negative impact, organizations usually decouple the technical core from legitimizing structures that might create resistance at a lower level of the organization because the management is part of development legitimacy of the organization but can be perceived as pressure by the employees (Brignall, & Modell, 2000).

Centralized organizations organizational structure minimize the evaluation and neglect the implementation of program for maintaining internal and external confidence in formal structures while reducing the impact of their efficiency (Amaeshi, et al., 2016) that create the internal collective social resistance of employees against the new system in the organization (West and Blackman 2015, Mostafa 2017, Renmans, Holvoet et al. 2017). On the other hand, management has legitimate power, so they may try to implement such things as the HPWS which may encounter difficulties at middle levels with low outcomes (Vermeeren, 2017; Bishop, 2014; Pereira, et al., 2018).

Aguilera et al, (2013) concluded that the net impact of institutional pressures is increasing homogeneity of organizational structures and systems in organizations (Afonso, & Jalles, 2016). According to institutional theorists, firms utilize existing structures in their environment due to three pressures: coercive, mimetic, and normative. Coercive pressure represents pressures from the legal mandate, mimetic pressures represent copying of successful structures of other organizations, in the hope that they would work in the organization at hand, and normative pressure represents the pressure of homogeneity arising from similar approaches and attitudes of professional associations and groups who are brought into the firms by virtue of hiring practices (He, et al., 216). Therefore, many authors recommended that there is needed to explore the context of coercive, mimetic, and normative pressures to implement new systems in the organization, because these three pressures create an internal conflict of management and employees to implement a new system in the organization (Goddard, et al., 2016; Li, et al.,

2018; Chen, & Roberts, 2010; Javanparast, et al., 2018). Therefore, the institutional theory has importance for this research because the major focus of this research is to explore the difference in management and employee attitude and perception about the implementation of HPWS in the organization. As explained by Cuervo-Cazurra, Ciravegna et al. (2018) institutional pressures are based on the local social, cultural and political structure of the country. Therefore, the institutional theory would be useful to explore the way in which specific socio-cultural factors may affect the adoption of HPWS in Libya, with particular reference to transcultural differences. Therefore, now the discussion is going to discuss institutional theory in details which include the following types of pressures.

Institutional theory the types of pressure

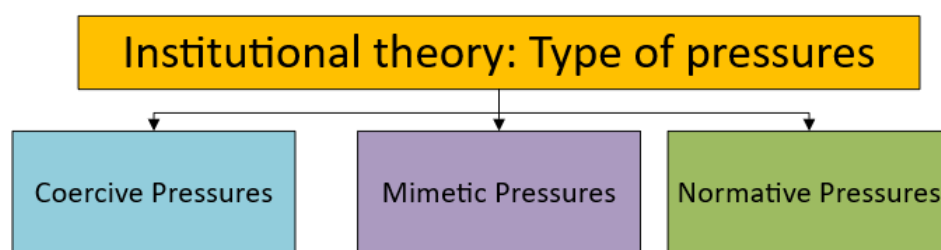


Figure 3-4: Institutional theory: Types of pressures

3.5.1 Coercive Pressures

Coercive isomorphism results from the experience of institutional pressure on the organization from another organization on which they are depending (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Such coercive pressures are evident when organizations with less power are forced by the organizations with greater power to act in compliance with certain behaviour and actions for receiving legitimacy and its following benefits (Mondejar, & Zhao, 2013). For example, suppose the ministry of any country put pressure to implement HPWS in a public organization to improve the organization performance (Phiri, & Guven-Uslu, 2018). Moreover, Fuenfschilling, et al., (2014) defined compliance with coercive pressures as an obedience to incorporate norms, values, or institutional requirements. The advantages for organizations which act in compliance with such regulations are increased resources, credit facility, and accreditation, but it can create resistance between management and employees (Ashworth, et al., 2007). Coercive pressures are usually found in institutionalized environments where professional bodies, governments, and credential associations set particular standards and rules with which organizations must comply to be considered eligible for benefits (Weerakkody et

al., 2016). Coercive pressures may occasionally be present as a consequence of government mandate which organizations are required to follow (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). While coercive measures are generally discussed with reference to governments, they may be applied by an organization on other organizations if such an organization has the authority to put such sanctions in place, e.g. supranational institutions (Meyer, & Hammerschmid, 2006). Therefore, coercive pressures generally result from power relations which arise in different types, formal or informal, direct or indirect, and from a variety of entities (Singla, & Singh, 2018). Besides governmental coercive pressures, less formal coercive pressures may also be applied, such as ethical considerations and cultural expectations (Goddard, et al., 2017). Skelcher, & Smith, (2015) observed that a common feature of coercive pressure is where pressure applied by one organization by constantly observing and supervising the other organization, to force the latter to comply with the requirements or standards.

Non-profit organizations are identified as exhibiting greater susceptibility to coercive pressures than other types of organizational structures, due to high dependency of the public organizations on government for resources (Meehan, et al., 2016). DiMaggio & Powell (1983) identified that public or non-profit organizations are usually characterized by being dependent on the support from government and as a result operate in an environment which is politically controlled (Alsharari, 2018). Therefore, the government may put pressure to implement the HPWS in an organization to improve the overall organizational performance (Ma, et al., 2018). In order to receive the resources needed for survival, such organizations are likely to conform to the coercive pressures from governmental agencies. So management may try forcefully to implement the HPWS in the organization, but such implementation of HPWS may be resisted by employees (Gramani, 2014).

Public organizations are also like non-profit organizations as they depend on the government to survive. Researchers pointed out that the relationship between government and public organizations is a challenging one, due to understanding concerning public governance (Mamavi, et al., 2015). Moreover, Nakamura, et al., (2010) argued that public organizations are impacted by the coercive pressure of government at national and provincial as well as local level. Public organizations are not just seeking financial support in ensuring compliance with such pressures. They also seek indirect support such as in the shape of discounted use of council or government-owned facilities and tax advantages (Wong, et al., 2018). In addition to governmental pressure, coercive isomorphism regarding major performance is usually the result of regulations and jurisdiction exerted on the organizing committee (Rana, Hoque et al.

2019).

3.5.2 Mimetic Pressures

Mimetic pressure represents the pressure to mimic another organization when one organization believes that the other is performing well in the market that creates pressure to implement the same system in the organization (Nakamura, et al., 2010; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). DiMaggio & Powell (1983) determined that mimetic isomorphism is a result of unclear organizational objectives and uncertain environments, which also creates a lack of trust between management and employees. When organizations face instances where there is a lack of clarity about the perceived correct course, then they may mimic action of organizations which they regard as legitimate (Mizruchi & Fein, 1999). In that case, the employees will create resistance against the HPWS in the organization because they are not well aware of the major objectives of the HPWS in the organization (Huang, et al., 2018; Kellner, et al., 2018). The organization which is copied may be unaware of others copying, but it can be taken as a source of actions which the copying organization believes it should imitate (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The benefit for the organization in mimicking the other organization(s) is that it bears low expense on human capital (Fossetol, et al., 2015; Yang, 2015) but there would high cost change management to reduce the employees' resistance against the HPWS (Huang, et al., 2018).

Decisions derived from mimetic pressures are found on the basis of seeking a viable solution. Uncertainty is regarded as a chief force which encourages organizations for mimicking other organizations who have a similar environment. In instances where new technologies are poorly understood, goals are ambiguous, and advancements are not identified beforehand, the organizations may find forced to mimic other organizations when faced with novel situations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Organizations are also likely to model themselves on the pattern of other organizations which they regard as legitimate and successful in the market compared to themselves (Gramani, 2014). Leiter (2005) also pointed out that those organizations which face uncertain situations are likely to copy the other organizations in terms of structure, environment, actions, and behaviour (Mamavi, et al., 2015). However, ambiguous situation in the organization may mean management lose the trust of staff (Neves et al, 217).

Due to the uncertainty which can engulf the non-profit organizations, such organizations can be vulnerable to mimetic pressure. It is not uncommon for the mimicking organization to actually realize that the actions it mimicked were part of the solutions for a problem which the

mimicking organization did not even face (Dwicaksono, & Fox, 2018). Frey, et al., (2013) observed that efficiency and goal attainment are sometimes of reduced significance when the actions of other organizations are being mimicked, but it can be of great importance to do something or being identified with other organizations which are successful. On the basis of this argument, it can be stated that organizations mimic other organizations for enhancing their own reputation and prestige (Myhre, et al., 2013), but the intensity and nature of the mimetic force are based on the local culture, organizational culture and political structure of the country that create the mimetic pressures on the organization to implement new structures, systems and practices in the public organization (Lewandowski 2019).

As indicated earlier, organizations tend to mimic those organizations which they believe are more successful in the market (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Vanacker, et al. (2017) indicate the most of the public organizations are mimetic because they tried to implement the successful system from the private organizations because the success of the same sector organization creates mimic pressure on the organization to copy the same system in their organization (Alvesson, & Spicer, 2019). As many authors highlighted that HPWS is best practice in private manufacturing the organization nowadays many public services sector organizations are trying to copy the same system in their organization (Rana, et al., 2019; Wu, et al, 2014; Nitzl, et al., 2019; Leoveanu, 2016). By copying the structure and actions of such successful organizations, mimicking organizations tend to increase their legitimacy (Campbell, 2006). By increasing their legitimacy, organizations may resultantly increase their access to resources. Resources is of crucial significance for non-profit organizations and public organization to successfully implement HPWS (Goh, 2012; Fareed, et al., 2016).

Since organizations commence operations in a new direction, they often come across uncertainty (Suddaby, 2010). Therefore, they are inclined towards looking at other organizations who have had a similar situation so that their actions can be mimicked (Gao et al., 2019; Li et al, 2017). They then mimic such actions so that they can model their actions on the basis of the actions of those organizations (Taylor, 2009). The extent of diversification in an organization may take place in one business division, or it may also encapsulate the entire organization (Webb, et al., 2011).

It has also been argued by the authors that presence of mimetic pressures is connected with those organizations which maintain close relationships with other organizations that are successful in the same field (Flickinger, & Zschoche, 2018; Modell, et al., 2017). It is believed

that mimetic pressure can accompany social networks which result from formal and informal actions between organizations which are in the same industry (Liu, et al., 2013). Thus, organizations which have a close and direct association with another organization is likely to appear isomorphic overtime. The presumption in this regard is that actors first exchange information with one another and then persuade each other to try the behaviour or style (Gehring, T., & Faude, 2014). Moreover, organizations are likely to mimic those organizations which they trust and are familiar with, but these organizations need to understand the social, culture and political structure to implement the system in the organization since it is not enough to have same services or structure to import the new system in the organization (Klingbeil, et al., 2019). Organizations which maintain a close relationship with another organization in the same field have greater exposure to new structures, innovations, and activities and also learning which is considered to be appropriate by the shared stakeholders of both organizations (Daddi, et al., 2016).

Therefore, it can be summarised that mimetic pressures help to understand why an organization try to import the same system other organization uses in its organization? So, to understand the implementation of HPWS in public telecommunication organizations in Libya it is necessary to know what are the social, cultural and political pressures to import existing system and is there internal resistance against this system.

3.5.3 Normative Pressures

Normative pressure is another pressure identified by DiMaggio & Powell (1983), which is found as a result of professionalism in certain fields. DiMaggio & Powell (1983) highlighted professionalism as generally acceptable norms considered so by the members of a particular occupation to collectively define the way which they regard is appropriate to act. It is based on the theory that individuals with specific profession highlight cultural behaviours and norms which are aligned with their occupation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Accordingly, those who belong to a particular vocation are likely to exhibit homogenous characteristics and traits to appear legitimate (Meyer, & Hammerschmid, 2006).

Normative pressure is passed through the appropriate norms which are enacted by an organization as well as by virtue of the association of an individual with a professional network (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Such standard of appropriate behaviour is communicated to the ones in a particular profession by virtue of their involvement with professional training and

institutions, seminars, workshops, and through trade magazines (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989). Such normative pressures are significant for developing organizational norms among managers and employees of the particular profession that create differences in their perception that based on their homogenous characteristics and traits in the organization (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Therefore, this kind of pressure and whether employees are homogenous in their perceptions need to be explored in this research, because a major objective of this research is exploring the difference in management and employees perceptions about HPWS.

Within sociology point of views, there is vast research on professional groups as a social network that either create pressures to implement to a system or to resistance the HPWS (Buick, et al., 2015). This setting for analysis is compelling because of the fact that professionals usually work autonomously and are insulated often from coercive controls (Fareed, et al., 2016)). However, theorists widely argue that professional networks provide the means whereby information is filtered throughout the professional community, and that community try to defend their objective because of homogenous traits in the organization (Macfarlane, et al., 2013). This may create a difference between management and employees perception and attitude towards HPWS (Fareed, et al., 2016; Goh, 2012). DiMaggio & Powell (1983) argue in relation to this theory that professional networks, in addition to filtering the information, are also the engine of institutional behaviours and norms among the professional community. Professional communities collectively determine a set of cognitive frameworks and practices whereby organizational routines are shaped (Beer, & Micheli, 2017). Moreover, Neves et al., (2017) recommend that individuals in uncertain and ambiguous situations are inclined to look towards their professional network and develop a closer network among its members for gaining clues about the best course of action. Therefore, while professionals may tend to have certain personal and professional characteristics distinct from each other, they generally work in line with the manner considered acceptable by their vocation to achieve the organizational performance (de la et al., 2006). However, the selection of HPWS is in the hands of the senior management, and that may create a difference between management and employees perceptions and response (Gramani, 2014).

The operational effect of normative pressure on an organization has the potential to draw several benefits. The past experience and credentials of the ones in an organization have a huge impact on giving badge of legitimacy to the organization (Rowe, & Guthrie, 2010). The characteristics and qualifications of individuals in an organization can also have a significant effect on bringing the organization closer to conformity with the organizations in the field

(Bruton, et al., 2010). The operations of the organization can be influenced through the past experience of the employees and training/development structures (Feeney, & Rainey, 2010). Normative pressure can also substantially influence the structure and operations of the organization. Conformity to such pressure can result in the change in an organization's structure to bring itself in line with the relevant expectations (Rigg, & O'Mahony, 2013).

While the personality traits of professionals in a particular sector may be different from one organization to another, they nevertheless have similar professional characteristics (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). So, that may create a major difference to implement HPWS in public services organization because the hiring, firing, training and development is quite different in the public sector compared to the private sector that creates a difference in the same level or trait of professional of organizations (Belle, et al., 2017). This, in turn, creates a pool of same professionals who occupy and interchange similar professional roles in different organizations in the same field (de Grosbois, 2016) that would be helpful to understand the difference in the attitude of same pool management versus employees toward the implementation of the HPWS in public services organization in Libya. As such individuals move from one organization to another, they bring with themselves norms and strategies which they transfer to the new organizational system (Sutheewasinnon, et al., 2016). Such a transfer of norms and knowledge has the potential of overriding different control and tradition and also brings the organization closer to isomorphic with the ones in the field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Saldanha, et al., (2015) observed that experienced individuals are a source of transferring knowledge between organizations but there is very much chance in public organization because there very stick law of hiring and firing employees in the organization create a very isolated situation to transfer knowledge from the same sector organization (Honig, & Karlsson, 2004). Normative pressures arise when a similar professional resource-poor is drawn by the organization in terms of consultancy, conference, and university graduates (Scott, 2008). Moreover, Dull, (2006) identified that normative mechanisms, in relation to hosting major public organization activities, also contribute towards knowledge and skills transfer due to sharing of norms and practices by sporting professionals. Nevertheless, theorists have argued that there is also a risk in utilizing similar resource pool of professionals. This transfer of individuals from one organization to another can hinder the recruitment of fresh minds thereby hindering the change and as such affect the growth and evolution of the organization (Phelps, 2006), while the recruitment in the public sector organisation is based on the political structure and intention which is also based on the overall country economic situation (Mays, et al., 2006).

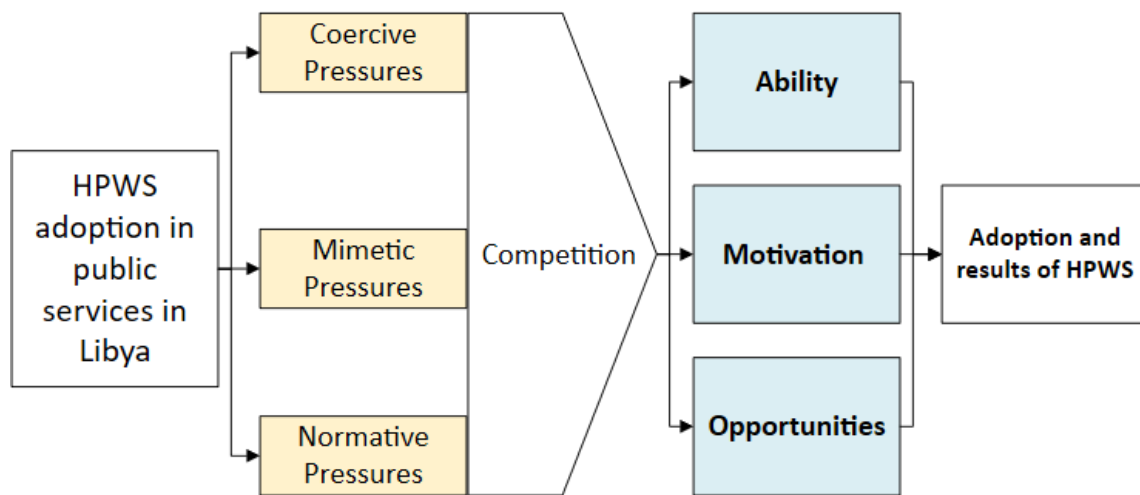


Figure 3-5: Theoretical framework for the study

The above theoretical framework is based on Institutional theory and AMO theory. Institutional theory has proved to be a popular and powerful tool of explanation to analyse the organizational behaviour and change in the implementation of HPWS in the form of three major pressures on public organizations to implement HPWS in the organization. Although it has been discussed above that this institutional approach stresses the idea that the role of individuals dominates the organizations, but the formative role of institutions is emphasized by the rational actors, their interests, personal preferences, and new institutionalism of HPWS. The core point is that organizational actors usually pursue their interests within certain institutional bindings. According to institutional theory, organizations here are regarded as embedded deeply in social environments suggesting that organizational structures and procedures are usually reflections of environmental expectations. The institutional theory, therefore, assumes that organizations strive to gain legitimacy by trying to react to the demands of their institutional environment (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). From this perspective, the organizational action patterns are influenced by institutional forces such as political, social and cultural norms and scripts. These can be explored d, which is the major objective of this research to examine the way in which specific socio-cultural factors may affect the adoption of HPWS in Libya, with particular reference to trans-cultural differences.

Additionally, DiMaggio & Powell (1983) highlighted professionalism as generally acceptable norms considered so by the members of a particular occupation to collectively define the way which they regard is appropriate to act. It is based on the theory that individuals with specific profession highlight cultural behaviours and norms which are aligned with their occupation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Therefore, understanding the coercive pressures would be helpful

to understand the management point of views and employees point of views, on the base of their professional similarity traits, which is another objective of this research to compare employers and employee's perceptions of the HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector. Additionally, Uncertainty is regarded as a chief force which encourages organizations for mimicking other organizations who have a similar environment. In instances where new technologies are poorly understood, goals are ambiguous, and advancements are not identified beforehand, the organizations may be forced to mimic other organizations when faced with uncertain situations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Organizations are also likely to model themselves on the pattern of other organizations which they regard as legitimate and successful in the market compared to themselves (Gramani, 2014). Therefore, the memetic pressure would allow understating including the organization's rationale and expectations from HPWS which is another objective of this research, therefore, on the base of the effectiveness of the institutional theory for public sector this theory is being used for this research.

3.5.4 Institutional isomorphism

When taking into account the organizational adaptation in institutional theory, it is imperative to refer to the seminal approach of institutional isomorphism as proposed by DiMaggio & Powell (1983). They developed the explanation for organizational implementation of new systems on the basis of the convergence and homogenization concept in the context of institutional pressures. Hence institutional isomorphism may be regarded as a theoretical approach which is helpful in describing how the systems of an organization are generally alike (Nakamura, et al., 2019). DiMaggio & Powell (1983) concluded that organization change is not inspired by competition or the need to be efficient; instead, it is inspired three main mechanisms leading towards institutional convergence such as by coercive, mimetic, and normative isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

DiMaggio & Powell (1983) believed that coercive isomorphism arises from external expectations concerning the cultural and legal environment of the organization, including also its political influence. Whenever laws concerning the regulation of procedures and structures of the organization are passed, they also give rise to pressure and expectations to which organization has to respond and comply with. Mimetic isomorphism arises from the ambiguity and uncertainty of the organization. Organizations are constantly encountering techniques and problems about solving the problems they frequently encounter (Jun, & Weare, 2011).

Therefore, it is a reasonable strategy to survey the way whereby similar organizations solve problems and then mimic their structures or steps. This is exactly what organizations do as part of their problem-solving step(s) in the implementation of HPWS. Normative isomorphism arises from the values of professionals of a particular industry and is found in the legitimate professional standard practices, thereby giving rise to normative pressure. Normative isomorphism is predominantly related to the members of the organization, their professional or educational or professional background and their interest to promote professional norms in the implementation of HPWS in Libya. The expansion and growth of networks as providers of new models, ideas, and narratives are of paramount importance in such a context; therefore, this theory is being used as part of the theoretical framework

Isomorphism process in HPWS adoption can be associated with perceived effectiveness and impact of performance management of public services organization in Libya. Therefore, it has been highlighted by many authors that isomorphic conformity increases the symbolic performance, yet it is negatively related to substantive performance. Hence in certain situations, coercive isomorphism can lead towards formal compliance but may not result in the actual implementation of HPWS in public services in Libya. By meeting external requirements, organizations possess different strategies which range from the real implementation of HPWS to creating rational myths. The latter is prominently relevant in terms of complexity, ambiguity, and insecurity. Therefore, if HPWS is being introduced due to external pressure and for achieving legitimacy, one can presuppose a less effective HPWS in Libya. Consequently, it can further be assumed that in such organizations, HPWS can be confronted with implementation problems. As opposed to mimic and coercive isomorphism, the normative one is related to conviction and change of actor's mindset for the implementation of the HPWS in the public services sector in Libya. Thus, positive results may be induced to propose a better implementation roadmap of HPWS in public services organization in Libya. But this theory is limited to the understanding of the pressures for the implementations of the HPWS while this theory could not explore what is required for the employees' side for successful implementation of the HPWS in public sectors organization, therefore, AMO theory is also being used for the theoretical framework of this research.

The perception of employees concerning HPWS is likely to be predictive of their behavioural outcomes than the use of HPWS (Mostafa, et al., (2014). This can be understood by taking into account the AMO. Boselie (et al. 2005) observed that HPWS and its different types, e.g. High Involvement Work Systems are found on AMO theory. The models which are expected to

influence the results through AMO – variables are based on the underpinning principles of alignment: employee and management interests must be aligned (Boxall, et al. 2008) therefore, this theory would be helpful to understand the difference between management and employees point of views on HPWS in selected organizations in Libya therefore, AMO theory is being selected for the final theoretical framework of this research. As Alsharari, & Abougamos, (2017) it is then expected in turn that all organizations benefit from practices and policies which are helpful for them to align their interest with the interest of their workforce. As the above figure showed that AMO represents three variables: ability, motivation, and opportunity to perform, these dimensions need be positively influenced to draw better performance from workers (Boxall, et al. 2008). Therefore, these three factors would be helpful to understand the management and employees point of views in the context of these three factors so the understanding of these factors would help to align the management and employees toward successful implementation of the HPWS in selected public organizations in Libya. Having presented theoretical framework for the study, the next chapter moves on to consider the research design

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Conducting research is a complex task which requires a systematic approach to its all stages, several authors described research as investigating an issue systematically (Blumberg, Cooper et al. 2014, Sekaran and Bougie 2016, Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019). Accordingly, in this research, every effort would be made to make sure it follows a consistent and organized way to deal with researching the issue investigated, by choosing the most suitable research choices.

4.2 Research philosophy

Saunders, Lewis et al. (2019) defined research philosophy as the term that relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge in relation to research. Research philosophies are very useful for any research because, they guide researchers take the right decision about the research design, as well as helping them to perceive and deliver designs that may be new to their past experience (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe et al. 2015). Three main philosophies exist, and research design can be derived from them, they are interpretivism, positivism, and combining of both of them (Saunders and Lewis 2012). Positivism emphasises that the social world exists externally, and acceptable knowledge as being discernible only from observable data, instead of being induced subjectively (Saunders and Lewis 2012, Easterby-Smith, Thorpe et al. 2015). In positivist philosophy, the principle of natural science is reflected whereby the researcher is working with observable social reality so as to draw law-like conclusions from the research (Jackson 2016). It is based on the assumption that social reality is objective and singular (Collis & Hussey, 2009). The research process, under positivism, involves deductive process so as to subject the theories to testing for validity (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The critics of positivism have highlighted the need for an alternate approach which does not involve objectivity as they believe that the social world is not something which can be measured. Instead, they argue, the social world need to be thoroughly understood instead of being observed objectively. As such, qualitative approaches are argued to be better suited for exploring HPWS in different social contexts which provides hermeneutic and detailed information, namely information related to the way different agents understand and interpret different issues (Batt, 2002).

According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe et al. (2015) interpretivism emphasises that reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined. Collis and Hussey (2013) added that interpretivism depends on a principle that social reality is formed by perceptions, and therefore it is very subjective. Interpretivism research philosophy involves the interpretation of different

elements of the study by the researcher. As such, this philosophical approach integrates human interest in the study. Accordingly, the assumption taken by interpretivist researchers is that reality can be accessed through social constructions such as consciousness, language, instruments, and shared meanings (Walliman, 2018). Interpretivist researchers believe that reality is constructed by the people who are engulfed by that reality. Furthermore, interpretivist studies are focused mainly on constructing meanings (Saunders, et al., 2019). Interpretivists believe that the context in which research is conducted must be understood and as such, it is critical for interpreting the data collected (Quinlan, et al., 2019). McNeill, et al., (2005) observed that interpretivism usually seeks the understanding of a particular context.

There are some disadvantages related to interpretivism include the subjective nature of the approach and the room it has for bias on part of the researcher as well. The primary data which is generated in interpretivist researches may not be generalized as the data is impacted heavily by personal values and viewpoints. Therefore, representativeness and reliability of data is undermined to a particular extent (Andrew, & Halcomb, 2009). However, interpretivism is helpful in conduct cross-cultural studies such as in different organizations, ethical issues, leadership, and elements affecting the leadership in organizations, etc. With the help of interpretivist research such issues can be explored in depth. Primary data that is being generated through interpretivism is still valid as the data is obtained from those who are directly impacted by the reality that is being studied in the research (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019).

In positivist research, researchers are more likely to be unbiased and independent. On the other hand, Interpretivism, demands the researcher's engagement as it requires the interpreting of the data (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe et al. 2015). In exploratory research, where the target is generating a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigating, the interpretivism serves the research better, whereas in studying causal relationship positivism is the best choice. Interpretivist philosophy helps researchers to be capable of analysing complex situations with small samples, contrary the positivist philosophy requires a large sample size and the use of statistical probability techniques to achieve generalisation.

This research adopts an interpretivist philosophy, for several reasons. First of all the theoretical focus of the research is exploring and enhancing the existing HPWS theory, by studying this phenomenon in a new context, therefore using interpretivism is the best choice for this research (Ferreira, Neira et al. 2012). Also, as this research object to investigate both the perceptions of employers and employees, and explore how they think and feel about HPWS,

interpretivism offers the right tool to explore these perceptions deeply (Hesketh and Fleetwood 2006) deeply, by giving a voice to those people who are influenced by the studied phenomena (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019).

At last, different human resources management scholars (Legge 2001, Evans and Davis 2005, Macky and Boxall 2007) called for using interpretivism, despite that the positivist philosophy has overwhelmed human resources management research targeting to set up a cause and effect relationship in HPWS and performance relationship, adopting positivist philosophy failed in clarifying the complicated processes that link human resources management with organisational performance, some researchers, on the other hand, pointed out some limitations of the positivist philosophy because of the failure to consider the social reality of human behaviour subjectivity (Macky and Boxall 2007, Fu, Flood et al. 2017). Therefore using the interpretivist philosophy will allow this research explore various points of view, and discover the outcome of any social construction of a certain context, as well as revealing the motives, behind implementing HPWS in the studied context (Legge 2001, Evans and Davis 2005, Macky and Boxall 2007).

4.3 Research Approach

The research approach represents the direction to conduct research (Bryman and Bell 2015). Generally, two distinct themes of research approaches exist in, qualitative and quantitative research, quantitative research depends on objectivity and has a tendency to be conclusive, while qualitative research has a tendency to be more exploratory (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019). Even though it is hard to analyse Qualitative data (Punch 2013), it is appropriate for this kind of research, where the essence of the study is interpreting the complex perceptions of people, since data obtained in qualitative research is quite laborious and supply rich information for the respondent and the researcher (Kothari 2004). Several researchers called for adopting qualitative research to further investigate the phenomenon of HPWS by gaining in-depth information that can't be captured by quantitative research (Hesketh and Fleetwood 2006, Young, Bartram et al. 2010, Corbin, Strauss et al. 2014).

In qualitative research, researchers are the key aspect of research, by adding value through collecting and interpreting data, and this may lead to personal bias (Creswell and Miller 2000). The researcher will make every effort to overcome this issue, by keeping his personal bias aside and interpreting data scientifically and neutrally, and making sure that the research outcome created with accuracy and validity through following a rigorous case study protocol as

explained in later sections (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019).

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches have their strengths and weaknesses, the nature of the research justifies the use of any of them. For this study, the qualitative approach is suitable because this research studies employers and employees' perceptions, this kind of research is exploratory in nature, and can be best conducted with qualitative research, which is a valuable tool that can be utilized to generate knowledge about HPWS in their social reality context (Creswell and Poth 2018). Consequently, this study implements the qualitative approach initially to try to fill the literature gap about HPWS (Boxall and Macky 2009, Atkinson and Hall 2011, Fu, Flood et al. 2017). Moreover, this also will furnish an in-depth understanding of the interviewee's views about the study subject by capturing participants' actual expressions, feelings and words. Additionally, it generates a better understanding of HPWS in its social reality context.

4.4 Research Strategy:

There are five different research strategies in social science namely: experiments; surveys; histories; archival analysis; and lastly case study, choosing the ideal research strategy depends on the research nature (Yin 2018). This study applies case study strategy because it provides deep, rich and experiential information (Bryman and Bell 2015), case study is a valuable strategy when using the 'how' and 'why' questions, it has the ability to describe the real-life contexts (Rowley 2002). Case study strategy allows the researcher to study the phenomenon in its real life context and to gain deep and holistic understanding and exploration of people's perceptions of the HPWS, in order to understand how HPWS are implemented and overcome the lack of understanding in the Libyan context. Furthermore, when the choice is available in research, the multiple-case designs is favoured over single-case designs, and that even conducting two-case design is an improvement over the single-case designs, given the possibility of direct replication, and the more powerful analytic conclusion (Baxter and Jack 2008). Similarly, Remenyi and Williams (1998) suggest that enough evidence may not be found from one case study alone. Therefore, to accomplish the research objectives and to get a more complete understanding of HPWS in Libya's telecommunications sector, as well as guarantying the ideal sources of data relevant to this research, two cases have been chosen (discussed below). Even the context of two cases is likely to differ, as is the case with the chosen companies (the first one is a mobile company, and the other is internet services providers) (Rowley 2002, Yin 2018). This may enable the researcher to capture any differences

or similarities concerning HPWS in both of them.

4.4.1 The Case Study Companies

The study population is the telecommunications sector in Libya, which is considered as one of the leading sectors of the Libyan economy. Telecommunications have emerged as a key driver of economic and social development globally, and particularly in developing countries like Libya, it is essential to develop the telecommunication sector, in order improve the capabilities of the local organisations and the society in general (Twati 2014). Modern telecommunications systems are an essential element for the country, to enable it to adopt and use technology, and cope with the significant technological development the rest of the world witnessed recently. HPWS play a significant role in the telecommunication sector. One major success factor in the services sector, in general, is the knowledge embedded in their employees (Von Nordenflycht 2010, Khan, Rao-Nicholson et al. 2019). The telecommunications sector is known for its dependency on intellectual and human capital as distinctive key assets, where the capabilities of qualified people are drivers in accelerating the expansion and sustainability of the businesses (Guislain and Qiang 2006).

At the beginning of launching the telecommunications sector in Libya, it was entirely state-owned, and foreign firms were excluded from participating in the market directly (Otman and Karlberg 2007). However recently the private sector companies start to play a significant role in the Libyan telecommunications sector. International companies like Vodafone; Ericsson; Alcatel Lucent; Motorola; ZTE; and Huawei were allowed to work as sub-contractors with Libyan companies, they were not allowed to deal directly with Libyan costumers, or to have control over and telecommunication facilities in the country.

Two cases in the Libyan context have been chosen, based upon their size, their type, their existing internal culture and their structure. The two companies that have agreed to participate are Libyana and Libya Telecom & Technology (LTT). Libyana mobile company was established in 2004, the company employ around 1200 employees and do not have any activities outside the country. It is specialised as a prepaid mobile phone operator. The company achieved quick success, taking the number of its subscribers to more than 6.200.000. It is about 116% of the population, making it the maim mobile telephone provider in the country (website 2020). Established in 1997, Libya Telecom & Technology (LTT) was Libya's largest and main internet service provider (ISP), the company employ around 1000 employees and do

not have any activities outside the country. It offers both dial-up and broadband internet to customers around the country (website 2020).

Both selected companies are from public sector organizations of telecommunication sector from Libya. Both of these selected organizations are government owned, tall hierarchal structure, centralization, high organizational politics, more power and control, a high number of employees, almost the same mission and vision statements. The existing literature on public sector organizations in Libya has indicated that majority of organizations have high control and influence, authoritative management style, nepotism, cynicism, and more political involvement which significantly influence the new changes as well as routine organizational tasks (Ghashat 2012, Elferjani 2015, Handley and Angst 2015). The selected organizations have adopted HPWS practices at initial level; therefore, the researcher has targeted both organizations for this study. Due to the same organizations characteristics, the current study has treated both organizations at one place in the data analysis section rather than analysing the data separately.

Previous researchers also mentioned that it is more purposeful and fruitful to analyse qualitative data separately where the sector, organization size, structure, culture, growth rate, and profitability are different for selected companies (Muqadas et al., 2017). The employees (i.e. Managers and Staff) of these two organizations are selected almost in equal numbers for semi-structured interviews. The participants have been selected from both of these companies because it offers more unique and fruitful experiences across the departments as the level knowledge, qualification, experience, and designation are different therefore their shared experiences may not be the same for their organization.

4.5 Time Horizons:

According to Saunders, Lewis et al. (2019), there are two types of the time horizon for conducting any research, longitudinal horizon in which studies involve the study of a variable or group of subjects overtaken over a period of time. Whereas the other type is the cross-sectional, in which studies take place at a single point in time.

This study, adopts cross-sectional design as the chosen time horizon, because the study aimed at understanding the perceptions of both employers and employees about HPWS at the time of conducting the study, and it does not aim to examine the situation before and after applying these practices (Collis and Hussey 2013).

4.6 Data Collection

The data collection process was conducted over the period of three months from July 2017 to October 2017, when the researcher visited Libya starting with making initial visits to the both case companies to build a good relationship with them through introducing the research idea and explaining how both companies might benefit from this study results.

4.6.1 Access and Acceptance

Access to the studied case companies is a vital step that needs to be undertaken in the initial stages of the study. Access and acceptance include the researcher gaining access to the studied cases and succeeding in making the researched organisations understand and accept undertaking the research being conducted and allowing access to the required information.

For the purpose of easing this mission, the researcher asked for an official correspondent from the University of Salford to both companies explaining the research and giving the required information about the researcher. Both companies issued an authorization letter to ease the access of the researcher, and managers and employees in both companies offered their support through all the research stages.

4.6.2 Informed consent

The informed consent was received from the research participants confirming that they had been informed clearly about the nature and steps of the research. The researcher explained thoroughly the research idea and practical steps as well as the required data for all the research participants, and the interviewees approved that and accepted participating in the research

4.6.3 Confidentiality

The researcher made it clear to the interviewees, either employees or managers, that any data submitted or shared by them would be used only in the context of the thesis and academic studies. This step helped further gaining the participants' trust, as well as encouraging them to speak honestly and openly. The researcher assured to the interviewees that their names would remain anonymous, the gathered information will not affect their status by any means, and that the research does not aim to judge them in any means.

4.6.4 Interviews

Interviews are valuable data gathering method; in which the interviewer asks questions about what interviewees think, do, and feel (Rubin and Rubin 2012, Sekaran and Bougie 2016). Utilizing interviews as a data collection method should help researchers in collecting valid and dependable data (Collis and Hussey 2013, Bryman and Bell 2015). Interviews could be structured, unstructured, or semi-structured, in an unstructured interview, the research questions would not be prepared beforehand, rather evolve during the interview course, while in a structured interview the interviewer usually uses some predetermined questions to be asked. Finally, the semi-structured interviews are non-standardized interviews, where the researcher usually has a number of questions and themes to be enclosed (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe et al. 2015).

Yin (2018) suggest that semi-structured interviews are the most important data collecting method in case study research. The susceptibility of inducing bias by participants through choosing easily answered questionnaire items or by researchers through avoiding some important items that could not be explained in the questionnaire makes using questionnaires not suitable for adequately collecting data on HPWS (Legge 2001). By contrast, semi-structured interviews can deliver an in-depth understanding of the research context; as well as provide the clarification of applicable and thrilling issues raised through the interviews; besides permitting interviewers to clarify their questions if respondents do not understand them (King and Horrocks 2010). Moreover, this kind of interview enables the interviewer to review and dive further into given information and, modify questions as required (Kvale and Brinkmann 2008).

4.6.4.1 Design of the Interviews

With reference to the design of the interview, the interview schedules were attached with a covering invitation letter includes a short explanation of the significance of the respondent's contribution, consent form, and participants' information sheet. Before conducting interviews, the researcher followed several procedures. The initial interview guidelines, questions, and procedures were discussed with the supervisor and some colleagues PhD students to improve the validity of the interview questions and to consider their suggestions before finalising the interview questions (Gillham 2005). The design of interview questions was based on the research questions and objectives and were divided into separate sections for both employees

as well as managers.

The existing literature of HPWS helped the researcher to design separately the interview questions so that the study can gather the point of view of lower level employees as well as of those whose responsibility is to ensure the effectiveness of these HPWS practices. The purpose of selecting both the internal stakeholders separately because their designation, education, experience, power, and authority are different; therefore, they may not perceive and experience these HPWS practices the same for everyone. Based on these justifications, the study has aimed to treat and compare the interviews of staff and managers separately so that it can offer rich insights and based on these insights; the study has offered implications and recommendations for improvement purpose.

The interview questions then were translated into Arabic, by two expert translators based on the original English version of the questions, according to back translate technique (Cha, Kim et al. 2007). The advantage of conducting interviews in Arabic, besides that most of interviewees do not speak English at all and this was the only choice to conduct interviews with them. Using the Arabic language helped to capture underlying meanings from the participants that could not be captured if interviews were in English. According to Brinkmann (2013), every language constitutes reality in its own. Thus using Arabic to communicate with interviewees helped to understand their reality and experience.

4.6.4.2 Selection of the Interviewees

In qualitative research, selecting interviews participants is not similar to the random sampling used in quantitatively based studies. Even if the random sampling offers the possibility for results generalizing of the population, random sampling could not be the best choice to recognise the critical matters related to the research problem in qualitative data, (Marshall 1996, Flick 2014). random sampling is not the best option in qualitative studies because of the level of knowledge required from the research participants. Who are not equally good at understanding, and interpreting phenomena. Therefore, random sampling could result in choosing the wrong participants to answer the research questions. When collecting data from interviews in qualitative studies, the focus should be on selecting the participants who are well-informed as well as having different points of views that when combining these views together the result will be a balanced perspective (Rubin and Rubin 2012).

Therefore, judgement sampling, also known as purposeful sampling, was used. In qualitative

research, snowball or chain referral sampling is an extensively used method. The snowball method allows for examining matters of a sensitive nature through referrals made by people who are able to identify suggested participants who possess some characteristics that may help carry the research on (Robinson 2014). Using this technique allows the research to investigate a broad range of options to select candidates for the interview, then to choose special individuals who have specific experience useful for the study (Creswell and Poth 2018).

For the sample size, the number of required is the one that adequately answers the research question (Creswell and Poth 2018). The suitable sample size depends on the purpose of the study, the complexity, and the range and distribution of experiences or views of interest (Francis, Johnston et al. 2010, King and Horrocks 2010). However, as the study progresses, the researcher must maintain flexibility as achieving the adequate sample size takes place only when data saturation occurs. According to Francis, Johnston et al. (2010), data saturation occurs when new categories, themes or explanations stop emerging; the authors proposed stopping criteria as the point of data saturation when three interviews conducted with no new themes emerging. Mason (2010) stated that “some PhD researchers do understand the concept of saturation, but they find it easier to submit theses based on larger samples than what is needed just to be on the safe side, and therefore feel more confident when it comes to their examination”. Stopping criterion is tested after each successive interview until there are three consecutive interviews without additional material. Accordingly, a total of 37 participants were ready to conduct the interviews. The researcher has several times visited the offices of both organizations for taking the time of interviews. Some staff members happily shared their data in initials visits while some of them, especially managers, are too busy in their personal and professional responsibilities. Some participants were ready for audio recorded interview session while others have refused for it. The participants' characteristics are illustrated in the following table.

Table 4-1: Interviews participants Characteristics

NO	Age	Gender	Education	Experience	Designation	Company
1	18-25	F	Bachelors in business	2	HR employee	A
2		M	Bachelors in IT	1	IT employee	A
3		M	Bachelors in business	3	HR employee	B
4		F	Bachelors in business	3	Marketing Employee	B
5		F	Bachelors in telecom.	3	CRM employee	B
6		M	Bachelors in business	2	HR manager	A
7		M	diploma in business	5	HR employee	A

8		M	Bachelors in telecom.	2	Marketing manager	B
9	26-35	M	Bachelors in business	4	Finance employee	B
10		M	High diploma in IT	10	IT manager	A
11		M	Bachelors in business	6	Marketing employee	A
12		F	Bachelors in business	9	Marketing manager	B
13		M	Bachelors in telecom	3	IT employee	B
14		M	Bachelors in education	5	HR employee	A
15		F	Bachelors in business	11	HR manager	A
16		F	Bachelors in business	12	Finance manager	A
17		M	Bachelors in IT	7	Marketing employee	B
18		M	Diploma in business	7	Finance employee	B
19		F	Bachelors in IT	10	CRM manager	B
20		M	Bachelors in business	9	HR manager	B
21		M	Bachelors in telecom.	8	Technical manager	A
22		M	Bachelors in telecom	10	Marketing manager	B
23		F	Bachelors in education	10	HR employee	A
24		F	Bachelor in IT	12	IT employee	A
25	36-45	M	Masters in business	14	HR manager	B
26		F	Diploma in business	8	HR employee	A
27		F	Bachelors in IT	11	IT manager	B
28		M	Masters in business	12	CRM manager	B
29		M	Diploma in business	10	Marketing employee	A
30		M	Masters in telecom	11	Marketing manager	A
31		M	Bachelors in languages	12	HR employee	A
32		F	Bachelors in IT	2	IT manager	B
33		M	Bachelors in business	9	HR manager	A
34	46-55	M	Masters in business	14	Finance manager	A
35		M	Bachlors in telecom.	15	HR manager	A
36		M	Diploma in business	12	Finance employee	A
37		M	High diploma in telecom.	17	Technical manager	B

4.6.4.3 Administration of the Interviews

Before conducting the interviews, both organizations were contacted and asked to issue their official written agreement to conduct the research; this helped in developing trust with interviewees in both organizations. After determining the target interviewees, they were contacted either by telephone or personally to agree in the appropriate time for conducting the interviews. Then interviews were conducted according to the following procedures:

The interviewee's research documents (invitation letter, the consent form, and the participants' information sheet) were given to them were, to read and sign their approval for participating in the research. The researcher started each interview by introducing himself, and showing his appreciation for offering this chance to conduct the interview. Interviews started with warming up question, such as questions on HPWS in general, to encourage interviewees and guide them

easily to the rest of the questions. Interview questions were open-ended style questions, i.e. how /why /what / to what extent, to draw as much data as possible about HPWS in the Libyan telecom sector. In the last part of every interview, interviewees were asked whether they had any questions or wished to add any comments. Each interview was completed by thanking the interviewees for giving their effort, time, and assistance.

The above procedures aimed at increasing credibility (Rubin and Rubin 2012). The process of conducting the semi-structured interviews was undertaken using the Arabic language, conducting interviews in Arabic allowed for capturing underlying meanings from the interviewees that could not be captured if interviews had been in English. Communicating with interviewees in Arabic helped to understand their experiences and reality (Kvale and Brinkmann 2008).

Recording was used, whenever accepted by interviewees. This helped the interviewer to pay full attention to listening to the interviewee and probing depth. On the other hand, for those who refused to be recorded, the researcher transcribed interviews contents immediately after conducting them.

4.6.5 Document Review

To build a rigours case study, archival records are often used in case study research. According to Gibson and Brown (2009). Researchers can benefit from historical as well as present data as a supplementary source of evidence which could help in studying the researched phenomenon. Researched documents usually provides quantitative and qualitative data, and might be in the form of annual reports; company website; minutes of meetings; future plans; letters and memoranda; attendance registers, policies and procedures; recruitment advertisements; agendas, and manuals; books and brochures.... etc. (Bowen 2009, Creswell and Poth 2018)

Document analysis can be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher; they are not difficult to find, and they are cost efficient at the same time (Bowen 2009, Creswell and Poth 2018). This technique is used as a means of triangulation, reviewing the studied companies documents were utilized in crafting the interview questions and will be used as for clarifying the research findings (Bowen 2009, Goodwin 2012, Flick 2014).

The study has reviewed a number of documents of both telecommunication sector organizations from their official websites as well as collected few documents manually from the offices. These documents are given in the below table.

Table 4-2: Reviewed documents

Table: Analysed documents
HR policy
Organisation chart
Company mission and vision statements
Financial strategy
Programme of company training courses
Annual and quarterly reports
Code of conduct
Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) reports and standards
Minutes of meetings relating to HR

These documents have been reviewed to determine what are similarities and dissimilarities in both public sector organizations and what type of efforts they have made with the purpose to get desired outcomes from HPWS practices. These documents helped to determine the overall understanding with respect to how many staff members and managers are working and what are their job description in their departments. The minutes of HR meetings have provided the clue about what type of challenges they have been faced and what directions have been given by employers with respect to employee training, skills development, collaboration, and implement HPWS practices successfully. It is also found with the help of these documents that how much staff members and managers are involved in taking major decisions with respect to workplace changes. Moreover, the structural and cultural local contexts are understood with the help of these documents.

These documents also provided the clue that there are significant improvements that have been done with respect to employee performance, organizational performance, and customer satisfaction after the implementation of new technology adoption and HPWS practices in the organizations. After reviewing these documents, the researcher has found the leadership intentions, organizational support, employee involvement in the decision, job descriptions, structure of the organizations, size of organization, assets and profitability of the organizations, and other organizational characteristics. Based on valuable information, the questions of interviews have been designed so that it can provide valuable insights in the local context of Libya.

4.7 Validity and trustworthiness of the research

Validity means that the conducted Research represents the features of the studied phenomenon accurately, this can be achieved by following rigorous process which characterises the credibility, plausibility, and trustworthiness of the research through using theories, research

design, and data generation and analysis (Anderson 2017). Several scholars (Guba and Lincoln 1994, Anderson 2017, Welch and Piekkari 2017) suggested research trustworthiness criteria, which were followed in this research in order to improve and enhance research quality for trustworthiness as follows.

4.7.1 Credibility

Research credibility represents the internal validity of the research, applying those measures to enhance how consistent are the findings of the research with reality. The research credibility can be achieved through strategies like triangulation, prolonged engagement, member checking and peer scrutiny of the research.

4.7.1.1 Peer debriefing

Another way to demonstrate rigour is peer debriefing where researchers discuss their work with fair-minded peers and benefit from their valuable advice, through all the stages of this study, the researcher consulted peer PhD colleagues, and their valuable feedback was valuable and assisted the researcher to enhance the research design and arguments.

4.7.1.2 Prolonged engagement

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994) Prolonged engagement means spending sufficient time achieving certain purposes, learning the culture, testing of misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or of the respondents, and building trust. During conducting this study, the researcher established trust with the research participants through interaction as well as through persistence. During conducting this case study, the interactions with employers and employees provided the researcher with a full understanding of the issues being explored in order to present them coherently and clearly.

4.7.1.3 Triangulation

Triangulation is the usage of different data sources as a strategy to enhance the research credibility. This research used interviews as well as documents analysis to generate data. Using multiple data sources enabled the researcher to minimise the potential misrepresentation caused by depending on one source only, and enhanced credibility through triangulation. Using more

than one method for generating data helped the researcher to build confidence in the study findings, and to explore the topic from different angles, and therefore to get a fuller picture of the investigated phenomenon.

4.7.1.4 Member-checking

Member checking is one of the techniques used for enhancing the credibility of the research findings. Copy of the transcribed interviews were returned to participants to check for accuracy; this step was followed to ensure validation of data, by giving the interviewees the opportunity to correct any wrong interpretation; the interviewees also had an opportunity to provide any additional information. Following this process assisted the researcher to strengthen the quality of the data analysis.

4.7.2 Reflexivity

Reflexivity means the investigation of the researcher's own beliefs, judgments and practices while conducting the research process and how may these judgments have influenced the research (Finlay and Gough 2008). Therefore, it calls researchers to be self-reflective and to consider how they affect what they interpret or observe. In this vein, the researcher aimed to be explicit, self-reflective and to be always aware of his role as researcher, as well as being rigorous and conscientious about the ways in which the data generation was performed. According to (Finlay and Gough 2008) engaging in a reflexive activity openly and directly could turn the potential problem of subjectivity into an opportunity.

4.7.3 Transferability

According to (Anderson 2017) Statistical generalizability is not usually the target of conducting qualitative research, but it targets to guarantee the qualities of thick description that present findings with categories which are properly defined and supported by sufficient data. Transferability here could be reached by the presentation of rich, direct quotations or the authors' own words, that convey a sense of the participants real contribution and using this as the basis for careful interpretation of the generated data. Accordingly, the researcher provided sufficient and solid description of the research sample, the research context; and the data generation methods, in order to allow other researchers to assess whether this case study might be similar to or applied to another case.

4.8 Ethical Consideration

University procedures for gaining ethical approval to conduct the research have been followed. The researcher already submitted the ethical approval application specifying the aim and objectives of the research and the technique methods of study, attached with all the requested documents, i.e. the invitation letter, the participants' information sheet, and the consent form, and the ethical committee issued their approval accordingly. All the research participants were informed about the nature and the aims of study at the beginning of the data collection process. They were informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time and that their identities would be anonymized. They were also informed that the research data would be securely saved according to the University guidance. The two targeted organizations were contacted, and they offer their full support for the research, and both issued an official letter to the researcher for access and cooperation matters.

4.9 Data analysis

Data analysis can be defined as a systematic approach used by researchers to organise, manage and give meaning to their research data (Vaismoradi, Turunen et al. 2013, Silverman 2016). Data analysis is also defined by Marshall and Rossman (2014) as the process of structuring, ordering, and interpreting the mass of the research collected data. Therefore data analysis is not a self-contained phase in its own right; it involves identifying common patterns within the data and critically investigating them in order to achieve research aims and objectives (Miles, Huberman et al. 2014). It is a comprehensive process because it requires the researcher to go back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, searching for the codes, testing or refining existing ones (Merriam and Tisdell 2015).

Data analysis in its qualitative research may entail statistical procedures. The analysis processes usually become iterative because data is collected and analysed almost concurrently. What researchers perform is analysing observation sequences and patterns through the entire data gathering phase (Savenye and Robinson 2005) (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2015). It entails diving deep into data to comprehend before translating and interpreting (Hennink et al., 2011). The analysing of qualitative data is considered as a very critical stage of the research process due to the nature of the data. (Miles, Huberman et al. 2014, Creswell and Poth 2018).

4.9.1 Data Analysis Techniques:

Data analysis, in general, does not have a standardised approach, where different techniques

exist in this respect, although an analytical strategy is commonly used (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2019). Taylor and Bogdan (1984) identified that researchers could develop their own choices of qualitative data analysing. (Gray, 2009; Myers, 2009; Maylor and Blackmon, 2005) note several techniques, which can be used in data interpreting and drawing findings; these techniques include thematic analysis, narrative analysis, conversational analysis, hermeneutics, semiotics analysis and grounded theory. The choice of the techniques depends on how the researcher wants to answer the research questions (Myers, 2009)

4.9.1.1 Analyzing Qualitative Data – The Options

Data analysis can be achieved both in the quantitative and qualitative aspects (Flick 2018). Analysing qualitative data quantitatively implies that the researcher will look for the frequency of repetition of a particular theme or crucial points and keywords. The quantitative analysis ignores, however, the context in which the keyword/theme occurs, while analysing qualitative data qualitatively preserves the context (Silverman 2016). According to Bell, Bryman et al. (2018), qualitative data related to subjectivity and interpretation. As reported by (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p.1278) *qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely for the purpose of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings.*

Analysing data qualitatively implicates interpreting the keyword/theme in its original communicated context, so as to draw a holistic picture of the phenomenon, which can be drawn by researchers who normally conclude and interpret the meaning of all transcribed data in order to give meaning to the themes. On the contrary, quantitative data is about objectivity and quantification of a specific fact/s. Whereas qualitative is subject specific, quantitative focus on quantifying and objectifying specific facts.

Qualitative data analysis was considered useful because of the high number of respondents in this study, in many occasions, a large number of interviewees would have expressed the same thing in a different way, and therefore analysing their responses quantitatively would not reveal the true nature of their actual responses (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2015). This in-depth analysis was essential, as noted by (Jatowt, 2013). who commented that the strength of this method in case studies revolves around the strength of the exploration of the phenomenon based on the interpretation of the data.

The present study has used manual thematic analysis method with the purpose to determine

main themes, codes, meanings, and keywords as per the shared experiences of selected respondents as well as the researcher personal experience using manual thematic analysis method. During translation, the researcher already identified codes and keywords which are repeatedly used by the participants throughout their interviews.

Although the researcher tried to draw similar meanings as per the experiences of respondents, but during translation, it is not possible to draw similar meanings. During translation and interpretation of these interviews, the researcher is more involved because the researcher designed questions, targeted respondents, write and record the discussion, and translated into English. Therefore, instead of using the NVivo, it is more suitable to using manual thematic analysis and researcher determined similar meanings and their interpretation during the translation. The researcher tried to draw exact meanings, interpretation of these concepts, correlation between ideas and connections, elaboration of key concepts rather than just focusing on the objectivity of data.

4.9.1.1.1 Thematic Analysis

One of the main techniques used in analysing qualitative data is thematic analysis. It refers to the method used for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. Furthermore, it helps to elaborate and organizes a set of data in an optimal format (Braun, Clarke et al. 2019). It is designed to reveal all the concepts in a theme of particular research through understanding people's experience of reality, and therefore gain an understanding of the phenomenon under study (Jatowt, 2013).

To interpret content, one must have a broader and firm grasp of the theme they are analysing (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2015). The focus of thematic analysis is on interpreting the meaning of the content of text data related to particular context to explain its relation to prior theories and to understand complex phenomena of dyadic relationships (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

In addition, Jatowt (2013) postulates that thematic analysis is concerned about how qualitative data is encoded. In this sense, prior research, theories or data help in the generation of themes as it is considered the most common technique for analysing research data that is qualitative in nature. According to Saldaña (2016), this is attributed to the fact that the technique concentrates on the examination as well as the recording of various patterns/themes that exist within data. In recap, thematic analysis is geared towards the search for patterns or themes that emerge as

being important to describe the studied context and becoming the new categories for the analysis process (Cohen et al., 2011; Ryan and Bernard, 2000).

It is worth noting that this particular study relied on qualitative thematic analysis as it was considered as the most suitable for this type of study. Using this approach helps researchers understand and interpret the meaning of responses of the selected participants in accordance with their respective behaviours and beliefs in order to deeply understand the studied phenomenon.

Payne and Payne (2004) stresses that the qualitative content analysis method efficiency is not measured by only how the respondents provide meanings but instead based on how the researcher can employ systematic approaches to validate meanings of various data provided by the participants and from there conveying this written content to pre-determined categories guiding researchers interpret and draw conclusion/s.

By following the thematic analysis technique, this helps the researcher to explore factors that have a relationship with the successful implementation of HPWS practices within the organizations under study. Additionally, thematic analysis was adopted because of its suitability to a wide range of research interests and theoretical perspectives (King 2004, Braun, Clarke et al. 2019).

Researchers who lack familiarity with the use of qualitative techniques are more likely to find the use of thematic analysis a lot easier and quicker to grasp. Considering that there are fewer procedure and prescriptions involved, but at the same time, it forces researchers to adopt a well-structured approach to their data analysis, highlighting existing similarities and differences that are used to develop in-depth insight regarding a particular research topic. (King 2004, Braun, Clarke et al. 2019).

4.9.1.1.2 Why is Thematic Analysis Useful?

Firstly, thematic analysis is considered to offer flexibility with regards to sample size, research questions, collection of data as well as techniques of achieving meanings in data. In this case, thematic analysis can be applied by researchers to recognise patterns existing in different types of data in association with the respondents/ perception, experiences, practices and behaviours assisting the researcher in understanding what respondents feel and think (Jatowt, 2013).

Moreover, thematic analysis is also employed by researchers to analyse inductive as well as

deductive driven data with the intention of capturing the underlying data meanings. In this case, deductive analysis is associated with the use of an existing theory/framework, while inductive analysis is concerned with the formation of theory/framework extracted from data. Thus, qualitative content analysis entails the representation of quotations whereby the themes/keywords occur and then providing the themes/keywords where the most appropriate presentation is based on the selection of the quote that reflects the theme/keyword and subsequently synthesising it to the key themes. (Silverman 2016). (Kuckartz, 2014).

4.9.1.1.3 Thematic Analysis Phases

According to (Braun, Clarke et al. 2019) thematic analysis is achieved by following six phases coding process to facilitate developed and meaningful patterns. The researcher ensured to work with the first four phases interchangeably going back and forth with reference to the research objectives and questions. This played an imperative role in selecting the themes and subsequently identifying the codes. The following part reflects six phases for conducting a thematic analysis.

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data: by engaging in transcribing the relevant data, re-reading the data as well as jotting down main points writing down initial ideas
2. Generating initial codes: Coding significant parts of the data in a structured way, as well as ordering data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes: after generating the initial codes, the step now is Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes: confirming whether the themes are functioning based on the coded data, to generate a thematic map in terms of analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes: the fifth phase is to generate clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report: this stage involves the final analysis and write-up of the report.

Familiarizing yourself with the Data: The first stage of data analysis began with the transcription of the interviews. It started directly after carrying out the first interview. Since I transcribed all interviews myself, this assisted me in gaining a thorough grasp of my data. Transcribing the interviews (37) was time-consuming, but this allowed me to become more immersed in the data. Listening to the interviews mentally transported me back to the situations where these interviews were conducted. This reminded me of the context of the interviewees and all the events. Listening, reading and re-reading the transcripts repeatedly familiarized me

with the data. I also started writing general notes and comments about initial thoughts and interesting issues that were emerging from the data on the margins. All these strategies assisted me in selecting the themes, codes and sub-codes later on.

Generating Initial Codes: Codes refer to —the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63). They usually are attached to chunks of words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting. They can take the form of a straightforward category label or a more complex one, for example, a metaphor (Boyatzis, 1998 ; Mile & Huberman, 1994). What is important in assigning a code to a segment of raw data is that this segment should be meaningful in relation to the phenomenon under study.

Thus, in this way, the researcher never loses sight of the data or moves the analysis too far away from the focus of the research. Usually, qualitative researchers chunk their research data based on whether it characterises distinctive, meaningful pieces which cover an issue of interest to the (Nowell, Norris et al. 2017). The process of assigning the codes to the raw data needs to be meaningful in relation to the studied phenomenon. Therefore the researcher generated the codes following reviewing the data many times in an organised iterative process, through defining, describing and rewriting to make sure that they are related and appropriate for example :

Data extract	Coded for
<i>The performance of the public sector organization is used as a performance indicator for the government. Therefore, the current Libyan government is more focused to maintain a transparent and accountable HR system in public sector organizations. Due to political pressure, we adopted HPWS in our organization</i>	Reasons behind the implementation of HPWS
<i>There is a need to create trust among employees and management because at the moment management is just using their</i>	Key Organizational Factors and Challenges Affecting the Implementation of HPWS

<i>power to implement the system which is totally wrong</i>	
<i>Due to the nature of HPWS, I assume that the cultural factors have a major effect on them because of the collectivist nature of society.</i>	Key Challenges of Social and Cultural Factors in Implementation of HPWS

Following this data reduction process is significant for this stage of data analysis (Namey, Guest et al. 2008). In this stage, the researcher went through the interview transcripts, several times in order to assign codes to the chunks of data which is related to the topics investigated in the study. Following this process, the researcher moved to combining codes which expressed the same idea to transfer them to categories for coding tables.

Searching for Themes: After generating the codes in the previous step, this stage includes reading and rereading those codes. By researcher engagement in the data, it would be easier to identify significant recurring broader patterns or themes rather than codes. This can be achieved by sorting the different codes into potential themes and collating all the relevant coded extracts within the identified themes. Then the researcher could start analysing emerged codes and consider how different codes may combine to form an overarching theme (Clarke and Braun 2014, Nowell, Norris et al. 2017). Through applying this process, similar codes are grouped in categories where themes or concepts might be derived and discussed according to the research objectives and questions. For illustrating the idea the first theme, for example, presented the reasons behind implementing HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector the theme was decided following the previous process and according to the study questions and objectives in this part Interviewees revealed different internal and external pressures on companies to adopt HPWS. The research participants explained different reasons and advantages underlying the HPWS adoption. They provided insight into how the top management is involved actively in highlighting the opportunities which would arise with the adoption of HPWS as it can improve the overall performance of the workforce. Four major motivator and forces to adopt HPWS in public telecommunication organization in Libya emerged through the search for themes process. transparency and organizational capability improvement are the internal motivators or factors to adopt the HPWS in the organization while nature of telecommunication industry and political pressure are external factors or forces to

implement the HPWS in public telecommunication organizations. Interviewees stressed how the adoption of HPWS would improve their performance and the performance of their organisations as well. Participants also pointed out that it is not possible for telecommunication companies to survive without improving their performance because now the customers are getting more power; therefore, the telecommunication organizations should be more proactive to successfully compete in the market, therefore this put pressure on the government and telecommunication companies to adopt HPWS. It was also indicated by the participants that due the highly competitive nature of the telecommunication industry there is a need for competent employees, accuracy in rewarding, high employee and customer satisfaction together which is why the HPWS were adopted in the Libyan telecommunication sector. Therefore the first theme evolved to represent the above mentioned internal and the external factors behind the implementation of HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector.

Themes Reviewing: The next step after themes developing is refining and evaluating the developed codes and sub-codes and exploring them through the data. According to Braun, Clarke et al. (2019), two main principles should be taken into consideration during this reviewing stage. Starting with, reviewing the extracts of coded data under each theme to evaluate their coherence and ensure that they formed a meaningful unit of analysis, adding some and excluding others. Then ending with going back and reading the complete data set to evaluate if the chosen themes captured the contours of the data.

Generally, a comprehensive process was adopted in this stage following a systematic review of the themes identified in the previous step, to make sure the emerged themes make an accurate representation of the data. In this step, the researcher kept asking questions like :

- Are my themes make a good representation of the subthemes, and the subthemes make a good representation of the codes?
- Are the developed themes too difficult to be understood or, conversely, are they so specific that it cannot be linked more broadly with data?
- Do they cohere together meaningfully?
- Are there clear and identifiable distinctions between themes?

Asking these questions allow the researcher to assess the refinement of the identified themes. At the end of this stage, the researcher had a sense of how the themes fitted together and the story they told about the data. This is evident in the next chapter.

Defining and Naming Themes:

The last step of data analysis aims to —define and further refine the themes, this step requires to conduct and write a detailed analysis of each theme identifying the ‘essence’ of each theme and constructing a concise, punchy and informative name for each theme. The researcher in this stage worked on what aspects of data each theme would capture, through going back and reread and reorganise the coded data into a logical and representing story according to the research questions and objectives and making sure that the themes names are concise, covering, and giving a sense to readers of what every theme is about (Clarke and Braun 2014).

This stage involves formulating precisely what was meant by every theme and how it is going to help in understanding the data. Themes naming was a systematic process as a result of the previous steps and in accordance with the research objectives and questions. Following this process resulted in producing 4 main themes, the first theme was called Reasons of HPWS adoption in Libyan organizations, this theme covered the various internal and external reasons of HPWS adoption in the telecommunications companies in Libya. The second theme was named the present degree of HPWS adoption and it covered the current implemented practices by Uncovering the role of current HPWS practices and their influence to improve employee as well as organizational performance in the case companies. The third theme was labelled as the Key organizational factors affecting the HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector, this theme illustrated the various organisational challenges facing the implementation of HPWS in the Libyan context. Finally, the last theme was named The main social and cultural factors for HPWS implementation in the Libyan telecommunications sector, covering various factors such as the collective culture of the Libyan society and the effect of the instability and security situation in the country on HPWS.

Conclusion

This chapter has explained the applied research methodology in this study, by highlighting the rationality of using the chosen research techniques.

The study applied a qualitative case study approach to address the questions and objectives of the research. Adapting an exploratory case study was very useful in this research to explore the under-investigated topic of HPWS implementation in the Libyan public services sector, given the lack of empirical research in the area. The research philosophy and approach were discussed as well as the data collection techniques, like interviews and documents analysis with the sampling strategy, was highlighted, another part, explained how the research worked on achieving the validity and the trustworthiness. Finally, the chosen technique for data analysis

used in the research was explained in detail. Having described the research methods used for this study, the next chapter will present the study findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS, ANALYSIS, AND FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This study collected data from employees and managers from different departments in two public sector telecommunications companies in Libya. The data collection was guided by the research objectives and questions discussed previously, with the data collected using semi-structured interviews and then analysed thematically. The study has used thematic analysis with the purpose to create themes, codes, and keywords. Thematic analysis is one of the most popular in qualitative studies because it supports to extract different meanings, contexts, suggestions, and differences among opinions (Braun, & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi, et al., 2016). These common meanings and contexts are helpful to identify the main theme, its code and keywords (Boyatzis, 1998; Guest, et al., 2011). After the identification of themes, subthemes, and keywords researcher reconfirmed the social meanings, cultural and social values, and local context (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun, & Clarke, 2006). All public telecommunications companies in Libya are owned by the ministry of telecommunications, and all their main policies and strategic decisions are issued by the ministry, this is including the HR policy therefore both studied companies use the exact policy which cover all HR means including recruitment, training, compensations, performance managementetc.

Both selected organizations are government owned, tall hierarchal structure, centralization, high organizational politics, more power and control, a high number of employees, and almost the same mission and vision statements. Due to same organizations characteristics, and the similar views in the tow case companies current study has treated the both organizations at one place in data analysis section rather than analysing the data separately. This chapter presents themes that emerged in relation to the research objectives and questions set out at the start of the study as follows.

5.2 Reasons of HPWS Adoption in the Two Case Companies

Interviewees revealed different internal and external pressures on companies to adopt HPWS. These include external political pressure, from Ministry in Libya, partly associated with social change, and industry related pressures, with the need to stay competitive in order to survive, which required investment in technology and employee skills. Internal pressures also come from employees who are looking for enhancing their personal capabilities as well as the organizational capabilities in general.

Table 5-1: Reasons of HPWS adoption in the Libyan telecommunications sector

Theme	Codes	Keywords
Reasons of HPWS adoption in Libyan organizations: Uncovering the various reasons of HPWS adoption in the telecom. companies in Libya.	1. Employees capabilities	Interactive communication Trust level Work engagement Build unique skills Equal opportunities Justice practices Fair appraisal Equal personal development Individual performance High level of commitment Divide workload equally More learning opportunities
	2. Organizational capabilities	Teamwork HR openness Infrastructure innovativeness System activeness HR system accuracy Efficient recruitment Enhance satisfaction and commitment Competent workforce Performance and productivity Innovation Organizational performance Growth and profitability Effective rewarding system Responsive HR system
	3. Political pressure	Labour market High number of jobs Skilled labour and profitability Government performance Public sector as a performance indicator Transparency and accountability Bureaucratic solution
	4. Nature of industry	Competition Nature of services Social media use Competent people Customer expectation Employees turnover

There is limited literature which has highlighted what the benefits of HPWS adoption in service organizations of a developing country like Libya are. Therefore, the current study has aimed to offer the adoption benefits of HPWS practices in the local context in Libya. The level of

knowledge, information sharing, qualification, experience, expertise, commitment, and satisfaction may vary between person to person, culture to culture, group to group, and private to public sector companies. The present study has highlighted the adoption benefits for employees as well as the managers of different departments in the telecommunication sector in Libya. These factors can be understood as enablers, motivational causes, or rationale to adopt HPWS practices in Libyan organizations.

5.2.1 Employees Capabilities

Employees views

Employee from customer relationship department has shared:

“The implementation of various HPWS practices, improve the interactive communication and levels of trust between employees and managers. The current HPWS practices have increased employee work engagement in our department. Now the majority of employees are more satisfied because work is more fairly divided among everyone, and there is a systematic mechanism to evaluate the employee performance”.

Employee of finance department discussed as:

“HPWS practices create high motivation to learn unique skills. These unique skills are helpful to enhance career development opportunities, but the organization is not giving sufficient skills development opportunities to all employees. Now the HPWS is offering opportunities to improve the service quality for every customer while not ignoring the real producers of the services who are the workers who stand behind every achievement of our company”.

HR employee has shared information:

“HPWS practices are helpful to achieve high employee skills and capabilities; trust in the system, more ideas generation and innovation. Now employees are working in teams; therefore, interactive communication and learning opportunities have been increased due to these HPWS practices. We have complete online recruitment and HR system in which record of every individual is available, and we try to ensure that we recruit only those employees who have high qualification, experiences, skills, and motivation”.

Finance employee indicated the major reason behind the implementation of HPWS

“Development of teamworking is facilitated by the HPWS which ties mainly via the usage of flexible work & teams which are self-managed. More often, the rotation of people to job tasks is involved in flexible work which needs various skillsets & different connections. Teams that are self- managed gives employees the power of making decisions conventionally kept for supervisors, but teamworking is not fully supported by required resources and skills. Flexibility in work and self- managed groups gives an environment which is less constraining creating chances for one person and teams to create connections of bridging weak ties on the workplace but still we have centralized power system which is not aligned with HPWS”.

HR employee has stated:

“HPWS practices increased employee motivation to work hard and learn new ideas that are mutually beneficial for employees as well as organizations, but there is a lack of opportunities to learn these skills in our organization. After HPWS practices, our top management and HR managers more focused to conduct workshops, seminars, and meeting with the purpose to revise, improve, or bring new changes in working procedures to successfully compete in the market”.

HR employee has shared information:

“Due to HPWS implementation in our company, the online recruitment and selection criteria is very fair for everyone as compared to the past. Due to trust in the system, employee’s belief that they are evaluated based on fair justice practices. They believe that they are getting distributive, informational, and procedural justice from their employers. I am happy from the implementation of these practices because they provide me with more opportunity to learn and improve my skills. Now I am more motivated to complete my routine tasks. I strongly believe that the implementation of HPWS brings more fair performance appraisal, career development as well as promotion opportunities for all employees”.

Managers views:

HR manager explained the communication and collaboration reason of HPWS adoption

“As the HPWS promote self-managed teams which lessen or exchanges the conventional control of hierarchy. Bridging ties enable the information flow between the co-dependent people & departments and reducing the much expensive & slower info flows up & down. The

current centralized organization power and control system is against the HPWS which why we could not create a proper self-managed and autonomous team culture in our organization”.

Marketing manager explained the advantages and reasons of adoption of HPWS in organizations as

“HPWS is an effective system for HRM planning, selective recruitment, rewards, decentralization and participation, and outcomes of HRM like motivation, satisfaction and commitment. Such outcomes of HRM lead to positive outcomes of performance like customer satisfaction, productivity, profit and quality. The implementation of such practices helps organizations manage employee’s behaviour with the customers because attitudes and behaviour of employees are the fundamental performance indicators in our organization we always say happy costumers means everyone in the company is a winner”.

HR manager shared knowledge:

“Until now, we adopted most of the HPWS practices on the individual as well as organisational level. These high-performance practices have improved employee skills and capabilities, high level of employee performance, more ideas generation and innovation”.

Marketing manager has shared his experience:

“It is not easy to satisfy the customers in a sector where the expectations are higher than usual. These high-performance practices have increased our chances to work efficiently and effectively. Now employees are forced to achieve the personal target because they cannot get promotions until they satisfy customers, and achieve the customer loyalty objective; therefore, it is easier for the management to reward the right employees. Still, there is much resistance of some employees against this system, but we are working on their engagement and making them accept and understand such changes”.

Customers relations manager has stated:

“There was an industry pressure to adopt HPWS system so that the chances for equal personal development, fair appraisal system, and individual performance that was the major objective to adopt HPWS in the organization. The reason to adopt HPWS is to divide workload equally to deliver the quality services to our customers”.

Marketing manager has shared his experience:

“I am working for more than 15 years in this organization, and I also have 5-year experience in private organizations. I have seen the period before and after implementation of HPWS practices. I believe still we are not in the race of competition to improve the services up to private sector level therefore, we have to work hard to fully implement the HPWS in our public sector. Anyhow the HR management now is much better, with results such as equal work overload as well as financial and non-financial rewards are linked strongly with individual performance, but there is still lack of understanding of the reasons behind the implementation of the HPWS”.

Technical manager indicated that:

“Applying such practices help enhance transparency and reward justice. We still need to work the managers softs skills, due to the lack of such skills top management could not divide workload equally which putting more pressure on some manages while other managers are taking advantages of fewer workloads. Therefore, there is a need to offer equal level responsibilities to win the maximum results of implementing such practices”.

Findings revealed that the existing HPWS practices enhance motivation, improve personal performance, trust between employer and employees, increase career development opportunities, develop human capital, link reward and performance, enhance training opportunities, promote interactive communication, and build unique skills in employees. While due to the lack of coordination among employees and management, HPWS are not fully implemented in the organizations.

Majority of employees have stated that it is impossible to survive in telecommunication companies without improving HPWS practices, but there is need to connect the fair rewards system with customer satisfaction and loyalty which can improve the organizational competitiveness. Therefore, the major reason to adopt HPWS system was to improve the level of skills, innovation, trust in the system, and service quality which are important predictors of positive organizational performance. The adoption of HPWS practices can create transparency in the HR system that could improve the overall organizational transparency of fair performance-based rewards system. Another reason for adopting those practices is recruiting and retaining the right people in the organization. Employees' skills and service quality must be improved continuously for engaging maximum customers that were another purpose to

adopt HPWS. Before HPWS adoption, they argued that competent employees have more work overload and no additional reward for that work overload, but now through HPWS there is opportunity to identify and analyse individual, and functional efforts to improve the organizational performance which gives opportunities to manage overall organizational performance through HPWS successfully. Furthermore, before the implementation of HPWS some of the underperformed employees those were disengaged from work were also getting the same reward. Some of the senior employees have shared how these HPWS practices have promoted workload equality, justice practices, and commitment.

Other participants have revealed that there are other reasons behind implementing those practices like offering high customer services, customer satisfaction, customer commitment, and customer loyalty. Due to the lack of trust in the traditional system, employees work engagement and motivational level to learn unique skills increased now. Furthermore, trust in the system has created the belief that employees have equal opportunities for career growth and development. Most of the respondents agreed that HPWS have made telecommunication sector organizations more transparent, profitable and accountable that was formerly uncommon, especially in public organizations. After the adoption of HPWS practices, the telecommunication companies enhanced their competitive advantages.

Managers have shared how HPWS adoption can increase the benefits for the telecommunication sector. Some employees have told that they are working for many years with traditional HR practices; therefore, it was not easy to adopt HPWS at the initial stage. These HPWS practices are supportive of bringing technological changes which ultimately enhanced organizational survival, competitive advantages, profitability, performance, and growth in the service sector; these were the major motivators behind the adoption of HPWS. It was found that there was industry pressure to adopt HPWS system because there are more opportunities to higher, trained and retain employees by enhancing fair appraisal system, divide work equally, equal personal development, individual performance, more learning opportunities and high level of commitment for work engagement. Managers have shared that the adoption of HPWS practices have created more accountability and transparency for everyone therefore, individual and organisational effectiveness has been increased, which was a major reason for the adoption of HPWS. The managers have revealed how the HPWS encouraged competent employees to achieve sales targets and enhance service quality through investing in their human capital and developing a knowledge-sharing culture in their

organisations.

Findings reveal that there are more meetings, interactive communication for work, and chances to learn from the experiences of others due to these HPWS practices. There was lack of trust between management and employees in traditional HRM while, HPWS trustworthy, so the employees are getting informational, procedural, and distributive justice compared to the past while it was also found that there is still lack of trust behind the implementation of HPWS among management and employees. Therefore, now employees are more engaged with work and their level of commitment is increased compared to the past. The management participants have revealed transparent, profitable, and accountable environment was the major objective to adopt HPWS practices, they believe that due to HPWS, both telecommunication organizations can get competitive advantages among all public sector organizations which is why HPWS is being implemented in these two public services organizations.

5.2.2 Organizational Capabilities

Employees view:

Employee from technical department explained:

“Self-managed teams need individuals to pursue connections with others having required info resources and HPWS facilitate the ties system within the organization. For example, teams which have an authority of work & production schedule might require to create links with those people who have info related to the orders of customers, inventory data, demand forecasts & quality assurance data, to manage their own processes of work effectively. When HPWS are applied correctly, system activeness, team working, and communications would be in the best position, and therefore workflow and team working spirit will result in the best organisational performance results”.

Employee from technical department has shared:

“A cycle of positive feedback indicates that HPWS impact on the performance is maintainable as performance growth from HPWS is fortified via continuous participation of employee, fulfilment & commitments, we have to enhance our feedback cycle, which we could create a strong connection and trust level between management and employees to achieve the required HPWS in our organization”.

Employee from marketing department has shared

“In our organization, where multiple practices of HPWS are implemented, it is expected to motivated employees so that the employees can make some extra efforts voluntarily. HPWS is taken by the employees as a managerial tool which can control them as a mode of improving the performance of organizations, which will result in company growth and profitability”.

Employee from IT department stated:

“HPWS are needed to shift our managerial system from traditional to modern. Therefore, the HPWS design is believed to aim for customised policies, and not for best practices, that combine the organisational needs with the core competencies. HR professionals are needed to move beyond the departmental boundaries, to work closely with other departments insure system activeness through HPWS”.

Employees from finance department has shared his knowledge:

“Unfortunately, I have seen the time when we have a majority of those employees who were not very skilled, hardworking, and familiar with technology use. Therefore, the finance department had wasted the resources in a paper-based environment which was not supported by the HPWS. Now things are drastically changed because the HR department is continuously recruiting and developing employees through the HPWS. These competent people are improving work processes and saving the organizational resources that would lead to a high performance organizational objective of HPWS”.

HR employee has argued about the current HPWS practices:

“The purpose of adopting HPWS was to create HR openness to collaborate the overall organizational performance in one direction as well as system activeness in our public sector organization. I would like to suggest to management to offer a more competitive performance rewards system through HPWS that would increase the organizational competitiveness”.

Managers views:

HR manager described the adoption reason of HPWS:

“Practices of HPWS indirectly impacts on the performance of organizations. For instance, selective hiring establishes a more talented work environment with the inclusion of skilled

workers with effective recruitment practice which create equal opportunities and build unique skills assets for the organizations”.

Finance manager explained the strategic objective of the HPWS

“Bridging links was a strategic purpose of the implementation of the HPWS in public sector in Libya because the bridging links that are formed from the teams that are self-managed & flexible job tasks mostly improve the efficiency, infrastructure innovativeness, and system activeness of the organization. Bridging links become the channels for flowing & exchanging of information through the HPWS, which increase the overall HR system accuracy and collaboration within the organization”.

IT manager described the role of HPWS to achieve competitive advantage as

“HPWS could support the building of an active employee force in order to create a competitive advantage. Particularly in the area of IT response in telecommunication, responsiveness is found to be essential for delivering services and products faster in comparison to the competition as nowadays customer required quick response to solve their issue, but responsiveness is based on an active IT system of telecommunication system”.

HR manager explained the responsiveness of HPWS as

“In the creative process through HPWS, the significance of slowing down is equal to that of speeding up, offering space and social time for collaboration and exchange system of telecommunication organisation. Currently, HR managers don’t have access to a greater number of tools for creating a working environment that creates a balance between slowness and velocity, and the part played by them is of mastering the business clock which is we fail to create a more creative organizational workplace”.

Marketing manager has highlighted:

“Our customers expect high standard services which were not offered unless we adopt HPWS because we cannot connect customer complaint, satisfaction, dissatisfaction and responsiveness with rewards system without HPWS. These HPWS practices work as the road map that clarifies the relationship between our company, customer, and employees which increase the organizational competitiveness in the market. I can confidently say that our department, as well as the overall organizational environment, improved after HPWS practices

but still we could not achieve more competitive customer services objective which was a major objective of the adoption of the HPWS in the public sector. The purpose of adopting HPWS was to enhance growth and profitability rates of our organization by offering more competitive services in the market”.

HR manager shared knowledge about current HPWS practices in his telecommunication company:

“The nature of the telecom sector is unpredictable, and there is an intensive response required by the customers. Therefore, this sector pushes us to update, develop, and adopt new practices on a daily basis to cope with market requirements. As in telecommunication customer required a very quick solution of their problems and the private telecommunication companies are very effective to solve customer issues; therefore, we also feel pressure to solve issues as required by the customers. Therefore, we intended to adopt HPWS in our organization, but still, we are facing a lack of fully technologic support to analyse the individual performance in relation to customer satisfaction and loyalty”.

A manager from customer relationship department has highlighted the current HPWS practices:

“I think applying HPWS is a win-win deal for company stakeholders. HPWS practices created more chances to encourage and promote those employees who are more competent, skilful, knowledgeable and committed to delivering excellence to their valuable customers. Now the HRM infrastructure is developed; therefore, our organization is continually improving our employees’ skills for getting a higher performance and other organizational outcomes (i.e. productivity, effectiveness, and profitability). Our customer satisfaction, sales, and profits improved now we feel we are in a better position in the market”.

Telecommunication sector is one of the sectors which can survive by producing a greater number of customers, customers engagement, high service quality, and high customer loyalty. Findings revealed that the HPWS practices are being implemented to increase organizational capabilities by promoting competent workforce, efficient rewarding system, new ideas generation, HR system openness, knowledge sharing, innovation, and service excellence but organizations could not achieve all of these objectives. Some of the employees agreed that these practices have proved beneficial for managers, employees, organizations, and customers, while others complain that HPWS is not fully collaborative with the other organizational functions. The management also highlighted that all function of the organization must create

suggestions regarding how they can further improve HPWS, openness to adopt new technology and other work-related changes, uniqueness in services, and more transparency in service sector organizations. Managers have shared that they have seen the time when employees are not very confident to use advanced technologies and more relied on traditional working practices. However, HPWS practices have provided the competent workforce who are easy to use new technologies and developing knowledge sharing in service sector organizations but still, there are more efforts needed to improve organizational capability. The adoption of HPWS system has promoted teamwork, HR openness, infrastructure innovativeness, and competent workforce. Employees believe that HPWS can create efficient recruitment, effective, rewarding system, responsiveness HR system and system activeness but still, there is need to employee's collaboration and need to improve overall IT collaboration system in organizations. The adoption of HPWS can be proved helpful to build a competent workforce and infrastructure innovativeness. The IT-based infrastructure innovativeness can enhance new idea generation and innovation in these organizations if management provides the required inputs of HPWS.

Some managers shared that HPWS has recruited and promoted those employees who have increased the number of customers, customer loyalty, service quality, and customer commitment but other managers claimed that there still lack strategic alignment and collaboration of overall organization. Therefore, there are improvements in organizational productivity, growth, and profitability compared to the past but still, there is need to invest on HPWS. HR managers have revealed that current HPWS practices have created more confidence among employees to continuously develop their skills, but employees believe that there is a lack of opportunities for skills development. It means HPWS has the ability to manage and promote employee's skill, but management don't have soft skills to manage employees.

Some HR managers have revealed that now HR system is more capable of recruiting and promoting those employees who are competent, focused, motivated, and able to satisfy customers. While the finance department manager has shared how the employees were incompetent to adopt technologies for creating financial reports before adopting those practices. However, now HPWS practices promoting those employees who are easier to work with the latest accounting software's which can manage maximum financial records in a limited time. Overall, management and employees have minimum contradictions in their views on the implementation objectives of HPWS.

5.2.3 Political pressure

Employees views:

HR employee has stated:

“There is always political pressure on the Libyan government to create more jobs in telecommunication sector organizations. The HPWS can support this objective by recruiting high skilled workers that can improve organizational performance of telecommunication organizations. The telecommunication sector growth can create more chances for skills development and number of more jobs which ultimately connected with government performance. The growth and profitability of the telecommunication sector are used as a performance indicator for government performance”.

HR employee has shared information about political pressure to adopt HPWS practices:

“The voters and supporters of the Libyan government always measure government performance with the help of how much new jobs are created in public sector organizations. The adoption of HPWS has created a bureaucratic solution for recruiting skilled workers and maintain the transparency and accountability of the HR system. The recruitment of skilled worker improved the organizational performance, which is ultimately connected with the Libyan government performance”.

Employee from IT department has discussed:

“Even our HR manager is giving some favour to those employees who have contacts in the government ministry. I think the national culture and our social acceptance for this waste and nepotism are making things worse because it negatively influences the transparency and accountability of HPWS. Now government and HR department are working together to take those steps that can improve growth and profitability so that they can create more jobs in the telecommunication sector”.

Employee from marketing department has shared:

“Now, the public is more closely involved to see whether the public sector organizations. HR system is transparent and accountable or not. Now the transparency, accountability, and growth of the public sector are used as a performance indicator for the government. Therefore,

the government created more pressure to adopt HPWS, which can ensure transparency and high level of performance”.

Managers views:

A manager from finance department has shared his knowledge:

“I believe, telecommunication companies must be free from political involvement like private sector organizations in the telecommunication sector. The political involvement is reason to create organizational politics which is negatively influence the performance standards. If we work without any influence, then we can take a more bold decision and maintain a high level of transparency and accountability in the HR system. The current Libyan government is fairer and more transparent, and they are creating pressure to create open and transparent HR system which can offer more jobs based on qualification and skills; therefore, many public sector organizations have adopted HPWS”.

HR manager has argued about the political influence and current HPWS practices:

“The performance of the public sector organization is used as a performance indicator for the government. Therefore, the current Libyan government is more focused to maintain a transparent and accountable HR system in public sector organizations. Due to political pressure, we adopted HPWS in our organization, but there are few employees who create hurdles because they have power, status, politician support, and references in the ministry”.

A manager from customer relationship department has highlighted:

“The transparency and accountability in the public sector are parts of the Libyan political party’s election manifesto. Libyan government promised with supporters to provide more jobs and enhance the quality of the service of every public sector organizations. Due to this social and political pressure on telecommunication sector, our organizations have adopted HPWS. HPWS is helpful to increase growth and profitability in the telecommunication sector, which ultimately creates room to bring more jobs in Libya. Now, most of our employees are competent and able to provide service excellence”.

Findings revealed that there is a political pressure to adopt HPWS in the telecommunication sector organizations. Respondents agreed that the performance of public sector organizations is used as a performance indicator for the Libyan government performance. The government

aims to increase public sector growth as well as introduce a transparent and accountable HR system that can create more jobs based on meritocracy. Therefore, the current Libyan government has created more political pressure to adopt HPWS because it can increase growth, profitability, transparency, accountability, and a greater number of jobs in telecommunication and other public sectors. Many respondents have revealed that the growth and profitability of the telecommunication sector are used as a performance indicator for government performance. The Libyan government believes that the adoption of HPWS has created a solution for recruiting skilled workers and maintain transparency and accountability during new recruitments. On the other hand, some respondents believe that the telecommunication sector must be free from political pressure because some workers have political references which they negatively used for their personal interests. These political references are negatively influencing the transparency and accountability of the HR system as well as telecommunication sector growth. Due to unfair political involvement, these organizations are unable to take timely and bold decisions which can improve further growth and profitability through fair justice practices in the workplace.

5.2.4 Nature of Telecommunications Industry

Employees views:

IT staff member explained :

“Due to the higher level of cooperation, creativity, flexibility and knowledge demands encountered by the telecommunication organisations to successful compete in industries that have higher technological intensity, whereby the strategic relevance of employees is typically lower in our organization so we should strategic align our employee capabilities with required skills to introduce more creative and competitive environment through HPWS. Hence, the HPWS becomes more relevant to our organization in terms of industries with high technological intensity”.

IT staff member explained the role of HR to adopt the HPWS

“ Improvements in organisational performance through HPWS should be expected when HR policies implemented approach the standard of HPWS in organisations that, by means of advanced production technology in the telecommunication industry, is already operating in an industry with high technological intensity, therefore, our organization must invest in a more

technological solution for collaboration, teamwork, managing employees behaviour, customer and employees feedback system in the organization which was the major objective of the implementation of HPWS”.

HR employee has stated :

“Due to the nature of our sector, HPWS are more effective when there’s an increase in the technological intensity of the telecommunication industry. But HR policies need to be matched with the employee uniqueness and value through using the performance-based rewarding and rewarding accuracy features of the HPWS. With the increase in the uniqueness and value of the employees, their strategic value for the organisation would also be increased and the HR policies should be move form employees performance monitoring advantages of HPWS to employees development and competence improvement that would increase the overall organizational competitive capability”.

Marketing staff explained the role of technology advancement as

“HPWS, as we understand, is a bundle or a set of HRM practices associated to training, compensation, selection, information sharing and performance management designed for attracting, retaining and motivating workers but to achieve these objectives our organisation should consider the social media pressure at workplace and social media power of consumer which is giving more empowerment to employees and customers, and they will through it put more pressure on the decision-makers to adopt the newly innovative managerial practices”.

Employee from IT department has discussed:

“The level of competition in the telecommunication industry has increased the pressure to adopt HPWS practices and best technology systems. Many skilled and competent workers moved to private telecommunication organizations because they are offering more financial and non- financial benefits. The turnover of employees and competition has created more pressure to adopt HPWS practices in public sector organizations”.

HR employee has stated:

“The nature of telecommunication services required high performance from staff and managers. The skilled and competent workers are more effectively meeting the expectations of both managers and customers. The intense competition between competitors has created

intensive pressure to adopt HPWS practices and the latest technology. The HPWS practices can improve the performance standards and recruitment process which is essential to improve the growth and profitability of our organization”.

Managers views:

HR manager has explained:

“Coping with a fast-changing environment in the telecommunication sector, the designs of present workplace have become revolutionized because of the changing nature of employee profiles and work, the effect of technology, and the necessity of flexibility and efficiency of organisations, therefore, we have to customise our HPWS to make compatible with employees social media profile that would help up to recruit and retain the best talent, therefore, is more investment required to improve the capability of HPWS”.

A manager from customer relationship department has highlighted the nature of the industry and its impact to adopt HPWS practices:

“The use of social media has created intensive pressure for the telecommunication sector to adopt those HR practices which can improve overall organizational performance. Customers are more involved to share their complaints with other customers through social networking technologies. The recommendation, review, and suggestion of customer have created intensive pressure on public telecommunication sector organizations to adopt those practices which can improve the performance standards. Therefore, our organizations have adopted HPWS practices because it is helpful to select, train, retain, and improve the skills of those employees who are more competent and able to satisfy customers”.

Marketing manager has highlighted:

“I am always supportive of advancing the HPWS practices so that we can bring and promote competent employees who can enhance service quality, a greater number of customers, and customers satisfaction. Currently, most experienced or old workers are not very comfortable to adopt new technology, online performance appraisal system, and more training and learning activities compare to young employees”.

HR manager has shared his views:

“Many of our customers left our services because our complaint handling rate, response to customers, and customer satisfaction was very low compared to private sector organizations. One of the reasons is our HR system is unable to retain, promote, and reward fairly in the workplace as private sector organizations did in the telecommunication sector. It has created more pressure on us to bring HR system which can recruit, promote, retain, train only those employees who can work in a competitive business environment”.

A marketing manager explained:

“The intention behind our management desire to apply HPWS is the need to sustain and compete in today’s intensive market. HRM plays a crucial part to attract, select, train, motivate and empower employees in a secure environment, which encourages collaboration, creativity and learning; therefore, the HRM should play a vital role in sectors known by strong competition like the telecommunications industry”.

The nature of the industry has created intensive pressure on public telecommunication organizations to adopt HR system which can reduce the employee turnover and promote those employees who are competent and able to meet the expectations of top management and customers. Respondents have told that many competent employees have left public sector organizations because private telecommunication organizations are offering higher financial and non-financial rewards as well as career development opportunities to those employees. The rotation of employees from the public to private telecommunication organizations have created more profitability, growth, customer satisfaction in private organizations. It created intense pressure on public organizations to adopt HR system, which can offer an effective appraisal system, rewarding accuracy, and performance-based rewarding in the workplace.

The adoption of HPWS system can only retain competent employees by promoting performance-based rewarding. Due to intensive competition, public organizations have adopted HPWS practices because they can recruit, retain, promote competent employees who can meet the expectations of customers. Managers have highlighted that many of their customers have left their services because of the complaints handling procedures, response to customers queries and customer satisfaction was low compared to the private sector. Furthermore, the use of social media has created more reviews, recommendations, and suggestions for the prospective customer; therefore it became mandatory to bring fair HR practices which can create competition to effectively perform in the workplace. Therefore, the

adoption of HPWS practices now improved organizational performance, customer expectation, and customer satisfaction rates in public sector organizations.

5.2.5 Summary for the Reasons behind the Implementation of HPWS in the Libyan Telecommunications Sector

Literature has shown the significance of adopting HPWS, particularly for organizations operating in the private sector. However, still, there is a dearth of literature on what are the benefits and enablers of adopting them in the public services sector. Many developing countries have a national culture which is based on particular features such as uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and individualism/collectivism which can influence the implementation and interpretation of these practices (Gittell, et al., 2010; Jensen, et al., 2013; Weller, et al., 2019; Shin, & Konrad, 2017; Messersmith, et al., 2011). Such cultural factors can highlight whether the organizational practices involve authoritative or any other type of leadership, whether the involvement of employees in the decision making is appreciated, whether there is a low level of future planning, etc (Shin, & Konrad, 2017). Moreover, the level of information sharing (Messersmith, et al., 2011), knowledge (Shih, et al., 2013), experience (Chiang, et al., 2015), qualification, commitment (Tang, et al., 2017), expertise, and satisfaction may also differ from person to person (Tang, et al., 2017), group to group (Pak, & Kim, 2018), culture to culture (Aryee, et al., 2012) and from one type of organization to another type of organization (Rabl, et al., 2014). The current study has divided the adoption benefits for the organization, employees, and in the context of competitiveness of the organization that would increase the competitive capability of the organization. In the first theme, it has been tried to identify the reasons and motivation behind the implementation of the HPWS in the Libyan public telecommunications sector. The following figure is developed on the base of the first theme results that show the reasons for the HPWS adoption in the selected organization.

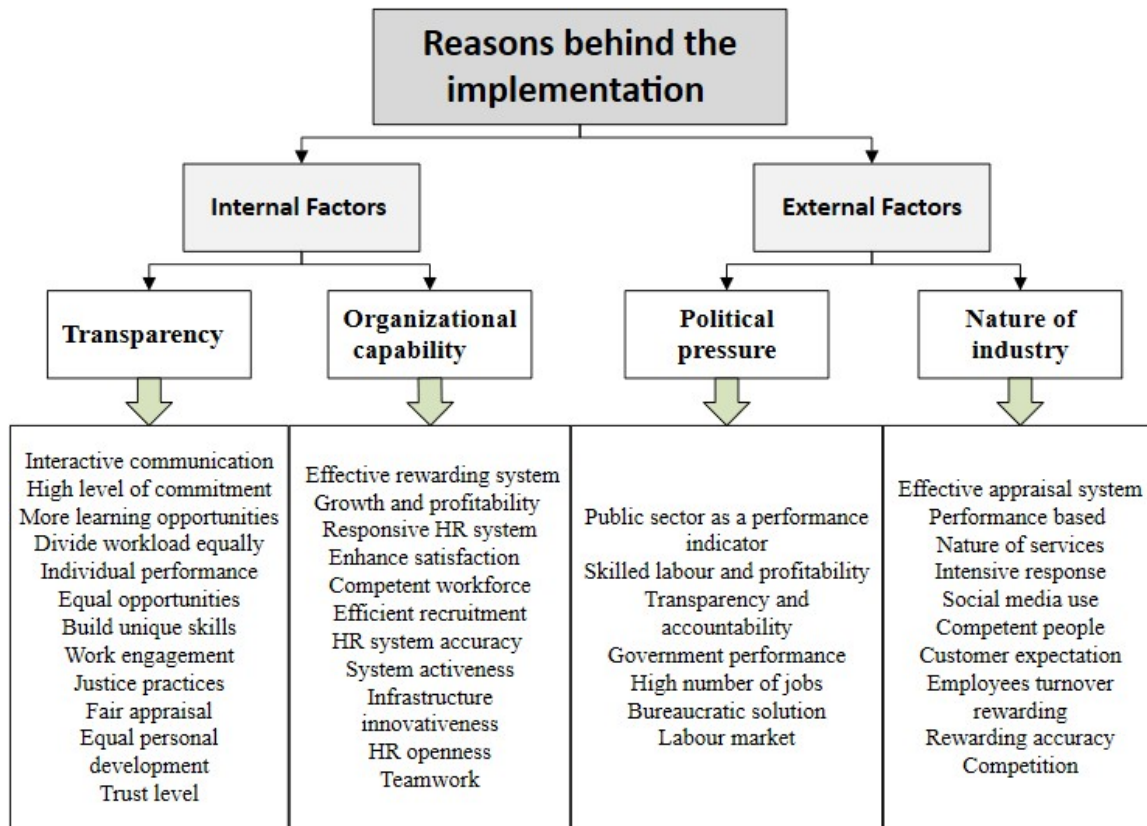


Figure 5-1: Reasons behind HPWS implementation

As it has been discussed in the first theme how participants explained different reasons and advantages underlying the HPWS adoption. They provided insight into how the top management is involved actively in highlighting the opportunities which would arise with the adoption of HPWS as it can improve the overall performance of the workforce. There are four major motivator and forces to adopt HPWS in public telecommunication organization in Libya. As shown in the above figure, transparency and organizational capability improvement are the internal motivators or factors to adopt the HPWS in the organization while nature of telecommunication industry and political pressure are external factors or forces to implement the HPWS in public telecommunication organizations.

Employees are aware of the improvements which evolved with the adoption of HPWS that would improve their performance and also increase the career development opportunities for the employees, but they argued that HPWS is not being adopted as it should be. Further, it has also been explored that implementing such practices would also link performance and reward, promote interactive communication, build skills among workers, and develop human capital.

Participants pointed out that it is not possible for telecommunication companies to survive

without improving their performance because now the customers are getting more power; therefore, the telecommunication organizations should be more proactive to successfully compete in the market, therefore this put pressure on the telecommunication companies to adopt HPWS. However, It has also indicated by the participants that due the highly competitive nature of the telecommunication industry there is a need for competent employees, accuracy in rewarding, high employee and customer satisfaction together which is why the HPWS were adopted in the Libyan telecommunication sector.

While it has been identified there was political pressure to improve the public telecommunication performance because the first reason was behind this that the political leaders take public organization performance as an indicator of the political performance. There is another reason for political pressure because they want to offer more competitive telecommunication services to the public as well.

Both employees and managers believe that providing support to HPWS implementation can enhance the skills level, service quality, and innovation which are significant predictors of the positive performance of the organization but most of the participants believe that HPWS is not fully implemented and accepted at every level of the organisation. Undoubtedly, the management of people and work, i.e. HRM is an integral element in organisations and is also responsible for organisational performance quality (Jyoti, & Rani, 2019). However, there are other things associated with HRM as well, that should be considered. Recently, a lot of debate revolves around the HPWS contributions to the performance of organisations. Researchers claim that there is a lack of understanding of the HPWS among employees and management that would slow down the implementation process within organisations (Úbeda-García et al., 2018; Han, et al., 2019; Lv, & Xu, 2018; Tsao, et al., 2016). It also mentioned by the management and employees that overall HPWS could increase the organizational performance if HPWS implemented successfully.

During the discussion, it has been identified how the adoption of HPWS can enhance the advantages of the telecommunication sector. Some employees informed that they were working for many years involving traditional HR practices; therefore, it was not easy for them to adopt HPWS right away. However, they did agree that they realized that the competitive advantages, the survival of the organization, performance, profitability, and growth are strongly related to the implementation of HPWS. Other participants informed that such changes were vital to increasing the survival probability, job security, and financial and non-financial benefits which

is related to the employee motivation towards the new HPWS.

Overall employees and management are happy to adopt HPWS system because it can foster innovation, teamwork, promote knowledge sharing culture, bring effectiveness and efficiency, increase the quality of service, enhance growth, enhance the profitability of the organization and ensure the accountability and transparency. But both employees and management arguing about the required resource and skills to successfully adopt the HPWS to achieve required objectives. They also believe that HPWS are useful for achieving the vision of the telecommunication sector, but it could implement successfully, which is strongly believed to provide customer satisfaction, unique customer services, and customer loyalty. However, they also highlighted that the implementation process is not effective as it would be, and there is also a lack of skills in different departments to get the required advantage from applying these practices. Baik, et al., (2019) indicated that public sector organizations are not competitive in nature which is why they are less investing in their organizational ability, and they offer fewer opportunities for management to develop innovation in the organization.

Findings revealed that the existing HPWS practices enhanced motivation, improve personal performance, trust between employer and employees, increase career development opportunities, develop human capital, link reward and performance, enhance training opportunities, promote interactive communication, and build unique skills in employees. While due to the lack of coordination of among employees and management, additionally due to the lack of management skills, the system is not fully implemented in the organization. It was also identified that transparency was one of the major internal motivators to implement the HPWS in the organization. So, the managers and employees highlighted different objectives and motivators of HPWS, as shown in the figure above. But, it has also been highlighted by managers that there lacks skills of management, issues of collective cultural and lack of resource, therefore, the organization could not achieve the transparency object of HPWS while employees highlighted that organization could not achieve HPWS objective because of lack of skills, extra manager pressure and lack of opportunities in the organizations. Majority of employees have stated that it is impossible to survive in telecommunication companies without improving HPWS practices, but there is need to connect the fair rewards system with relation customer satisfaction and loyalty which can improve transparency in the organization. As it has been found in this section that transparency, organizational capability, political pressure and nature of the industry were major forces to implement the HPWS in public

telecommunication organization in Libya but there is also need to identify if these organization could not achieve their expected objective then what the current state of HPWS in the organization. Therefore, the next section is going to discuss the exiting nature of the HPWS in selected public telecommunications organizations in Libya.

5.3 The Present Degree of Adoption of HPWS

Table 5-2: Current implemented HPWS

Theme	Sub-themes	Keywords
Current practices of HPWS: Uncovering the role of current HPWS practices and their influence to improve employee as well as organizational performance in Libyan telecom. sector organizations.	Recruitment	Online recruitment Government pressure Person fits the role Interviewing committees Customer requirement
	Reward system	Estimation of bonus Logical reward system Job remuneration Money attachment Quantitative reward Career progression Employee leave Provision of bonuses Performance comparison Employee satisfaction Job security Fair reward Dissatisfaction with salary
	performance management	Direct communication Qualitative process Individual nature Proper training Training & development, payroll, performance Appraisal, and recruitment & selection Accumulated performance Team performance Empowerment of employees Financial compensation Low Employee motivated

	Training and development	Low skills development Best talent Money in training Process of performance Operational goals Lack of T&D Knowledge and skills Poor performance appraisal Managerial skills Employee skills growth
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The study has highlighted employees and managers views about current HPWS practices which are routinely followed in both telecommunication organizations in Libya. For example, it was revealed that HPWS adoption could increase fairness in candidate selection and recruitment procedures, more training and skills development, fairer performance appraisal procedures and improve in organizational growth. It is very important to highlight which practices of HPWS system are adopted and implemented in telecommunication sector organizations in Libya. In this theme, the researcher tried to explore the present degree of adoption of HPWS in the Libyan context.

5.3.1 Recruitment

HR manager stated:

“When we brought the online application, selection, and recruitment procedures it has changed our working environment because we have more choices to recruit those team members who have a high level of soft and hard skills. All the managers of the different departments are very happy because they found dedicated and motivated staff who can achieve the set targets. These HR practices improved transparency and accountability for everyone”.

Marketing manager explained:

“Not only the HR department decides about recruitment decisions in many cases the final word goes to the technical managers who know exactly the required job skills, so they know exactly what they are looking for, but all this happen with the coordination with the HR department ”.

Another marketing manager has highlighted:

It is HR manager responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of HPWS practices across all departments in the organization. Due to these practices, I found a very competent marketing team because the selection, recruitment, is very systematic and fair for everyone.

HR manager has shared that:

“ We have two recruitment paths internal and external, the first one when we recruit people from within the company this usually happens between technical and commercial departments because the employees in those departments come from the same background, the other one we follow is the normal procedures as other companies do when they recruit new personnel. Therefore we record of every individual who is available, and we try to ensure that we recruit only those employees who have high qualification, experiences, skills, and motivation ”.

Technical manager indicated that:

“Because of the demand for the services our management just hire the people, but they don’t hire the right people to fulfil the customer requirement. I believe that the management is directly influenced by the political leaders, so they use their power to respond to new recruitments”.

Customers relations manager has stated:

“We recognise that recruitment is our most important duty, our human resources create our competitive advantage if we fail to attract the right candidate all our activities including technical support and customer satisfaction will fail as well. But because emotions’ provide the bedrock of our culture. Our communication involves emotional attachment. Therefore, HR is trying its best to promote objective practices especially when it is dealing with recruitment matters. This is one of the significant challenges faced by the HR”.

IT department Manager indicated:

“There is excessive psychological pressure on all levels of workers due to hardcore objectivity in telecommunication sector. Actually, our organization should invest in technology and skill development with purpose to enhance competition in the organization. The management getting much pressure from the political leaders and they are hiring more employees to create a greater number of jobs which is political objective but it’s not our organizational objectives”.

HR manager stated:

“The HR department follows a clear recruitment procedures flow chart, and everyone knows exactly about their role in the process, when hiring or promoting people, I am responsible for

following the specific rules and regulations that are particularly set for these processes. For example, from regulatory conditions perspective, there are some jobs within the organization for which whenever I have to hire the candidate, I have to get approval from ministry to do it. In case if the ministry rejected the candidate, he/she will not be hired, and I will find someone else. I consider this as major constraints in the area of recruitment and may raise the conflicts between us and the managers of some divisions”.

Most of the interviewees showed positive perspectives regarding the recruitment process in their organisations; they indicated that applying online recruitment system helped them attract a lot of the best candidates in the labour market, According to an HR manager, departments managers are included in interview committee with the purpose to understand the nature of job, candidate competencies, and either the person fits the role or not especially for their departments. Furthermore, it is found that political leadership is involved to increase pressure on public telecommunication organizations to produce more jobs. Therefore, the creation of more jobs has become a political objective rather than an HRM management objective. According to another interviewee, although the company has hired the people to fulfil the demand for services, these new employees are unable to fulfil the customer requirements. It has found that management is strongly influenced by political leadership as they have the power to influence the fair recruitment process.

Analysis of the point of views on the current practice of the HPWS indicated the impact of institutional factors over the perceptions of implementing selection and recruitment practices in the telecommunication organizations in Libya. While recruiting and selecting the individuals, HR managers focus on those individuals who fit best to corporate strategy while organizational objectives are not well communicated among lower-level employees. In addition to these functions, HR managers predict the future demand for human capital and ensure the availability of sufficient skilled HR for the accomplishment of future targets. HRM functions can be successfully implemented if HR managers are well aware of both current as well as predicted future strategy, but it has been highlighted by the management that cooperates level strategies are directly affected by the political leadership. It has also been identified that the HRM manager don't do a collaboration with the relevant department to ask them required skills and they don't fully involve the relevant department in the recruitment and selection process of the employees. The participation of HR managers in making corporate strategy is very limited because most the strategic decisions are in the hand of ministry. This, in turn, influences their

power in that particular area to manage the top to down operational activities as it is directed by the political leadership. Moreover, this can also be seen in the selection and recruitment process.

HR managers play a major role in selecting and recruiting the employees because of having the ability to assess the individuals with respect to their soft skills, but it has highlighted by the employees that their manager doesn't have required soft skills to create strong collaboration among employees and management. So, contrary to employees, HR managers have a wider view of the workforce of an organization rather than just having a narrow divisional view about the organization's workforce as in the case of employees. The environment in which the telecommunication sector is operating is very dynamic and competitive in nature. Thus, be proactive regarding technological and resources uncertainties is very important for firms. Flexible and adaptable workforce has the ability to prepare the firms for future to fulfil customer and political leadership demand in the form the organizational performance. Thus, the public telecommunication organisations should focus on recruiting and selecting the individuals with soft skills rather than looking for individuals with just common IT skills or marketing skills as it focusses only on competencies with respect to the current role. That is why HR managers' need participation in the selection and recruitment of candidates is very critical with the relevant department.

In the telecommunication sector, long term recruitment and selection approach might be very useful as roles may significantly vary with the passage of time and focusing on both skills as well as capabilities is quite wise. Currently, the telecommunication sector is operating in a very technological dynamic business environment, which requires the employees to learn new IT and customer services skills. Moreover, developing capable human capital will be very useful for telecommunication companies in the long-term. But this requires heavy investment in the development and training of employees because the current skills of their workforce may be quite low than what the jobs require.

Based on study findings, it is clear that if relevant functional and marketing managers make less participation in the recruitment and selection process than main soft aspects may be overlooked, such as corporate citizenship behaviour. Resultantly, overlooking this key aspect may lead to excessively focusing over technical skills rather than soft skills of employees because the HR managers know much about the human resources aspect while they don't have different functional knowledge skills like IT, marketing, CRM etc. Because of the lack of

functional level collaboration, eventually, such employees would be selected who can neither fit into wider organizational culture nor leave due to some other reasons. Here the major issue is that heavy investment is required on the training and development of employees.

Additionally, if business loss talented individuals, it is considered a big loss to the entire business. Filling this hole is not possible for the line managers. Thus, HR managers, in such cases, can provide greater assistance by improving employees' organizational citizenship (preventing unsatisfied workers from leaving). Thus, making a strategic selection is very important for which equal participation of both employees and HR managers is required (McConville, 2006). There should be a direct communication between employees and HR managers regarding strategic issues because employees have an ideal position as a group, as they stand between lower and upper management and can better observe the divergence of or coming together both operational and strategic priorities (MacNeil, 2003). Likewise, HR managers are capable of delivering strategic priorities by using appropriate HR practices (Vere and Butler, 2007).

According to Mellahi and Wood (2001), the public sector remained as the main employer of the market since long. However, the public sector had to bear political pressure due to which there was a continuous rise in wages regardless of bureaucracy and high level of inefficiency in organizations of the public sector (Volberda, et al., 2012). Moreover, public sector continuously adopted protective policies and higher labour rates that strongly and negatively influenced the dynamics of the labour market (Teelken, 2008). While asking the respondents about coordination between employees and HR managers, they indicated that this coordination is very weak in because the employees mentioned that their manager don't involve them in decision making and there is not any feedback system. It is evident that collaboration and coordination between HR and lower-level employees are shaped by cultural norms because there is a centralized power system in the public telecommunication organization which restrict the two-way communication and feedback system.

5.3.2 Reward System

HR manager stated:

“There should be more clarity on the estimation of bonuses as the workers regard bonuses as a lottery – whether or not they get the bonus, but they strive to achieve it. Therefore, I believe that there should be continuity and logical reward system in the organization through HPWS at

recruitment that would attract the competent candidate, but our organization don't describe job remuneration and additionally rewards at the time of job advertisement".

Technical manager has explained:

"In my view, as a manager, the bonus is definitely the chief element in bringing about satisfaction among the workforce. If the turnover rate of employees is still higher even after the provision of bonus, then it means that the bonus is not matching the efforts they are exerting, thereby leaving them de-motivated".

Customers relations manager has stated:

"We know that our compensation system is not perfect and that is why our HR committee is working now with an external consultant to review the whole policy and suggest a fairer one to the ministry of telecommunications, employees generally tend to perform more and exert more efforts when they are given adequate rewards. Therefore, if we want to attract the right individuals in our team, we should be offering the right packages as it is offered in other sectors like oil and gas".

IT manager explained:

"Majority of the workers who left the organization did it due to dissatisfaction with salary here. This is true whether or not they admit it. The same time they are getting much pressure from the management work harder, generally speaking, We do not have clear criteria for raises or the salary cycle; in general, our rewards system is loose and open the door to personal desires and favouring specific employees".

Finance manager described his views:

"Therefore, the focus of our HRM practices is on providing financial compensation more than anything else which is wrong. This is what the telecommunication culture is, and I believe that it is same wherever we go in the world. Therefore, I believe that money is not only the motivation to get the required performance".

HR manager has stressed on the importance of estimation of bonus because it can enhance the level of motivation and performance of employees. The HR manager has argued that the telecommunication company did not provide enough details regarding the job remuneration

including estimation of bonus and other additional rewards in the job advertisement; therefore it was not attractive for competent candidates. The HR manager has stressed upon the need of logical reward system, especially for fresh candidate attraction. Another HR manager has highlighted that additional rewards can enhance the level of employee motivation in the workplace. It was found that if employees are still preferring to quit the organization after assigning the additional rewards, then it means employees efforts are undervalued, and they are demotivated. Another participant shared that, emotions are one of the main aspects which can influence the level of communication as well as emotion attachment with telecommunication organization. Although HR managers are trying to enhance objective-based practices but controlling employee emotions is not an easy task for them.

According to another manager, telecommunication services have money attachment which can increase the number of customers. Therefore, the organization should focus to include quantitative reward system because this system can promote the specific targets (i.e. selling of a high number of internet packages). According to another participant, there are various challenges about the prevision of bonuses like one of his friends has gotten slightly less compared to his colleagues, employees are always in comparison to determine either they achieve the right provision of bonuses for efforts compare to their colleagues and supervisors or not.

Most of the interviewees agreed that that employees are more motivated to perform high when the rewards are adequate. It is more attractive to offer competitive and fair reward packages as it is offered in the oil and gas sector and not only rely on job security offered in the public telecommunication sector.

The extent of HR practices utilized, and satisfaction about rewards were determined to cast the major positive impact on satisfaction with job management (Martinaityte, et al., 2019). This result shows that the employees who perceive the organization as caring or investing for them had a positive impact on the organization's management. Miao, & Cao, (2019) observed that PSM, intrinsic workplace characteristics (such as interesting nature of the task, and independence at job), extrinsic workplace characteristics (higher salary, job security, prospects of promotion), workplace relationships, relationship with management were significantly and positively associated with job satisfaction. Moreover, it was also found out that the biggest influence on job satisfaction was cast by intrinsic workplace characteristics and the second major influence was cast by work relations with management according to findings of Mostafa,

et al., (2019). Mostafa, et al., (2019) highlighted the significance of intrinsic rewards with respect to the relationship with management, and the significance of intrinsic rewards with respect to caring for employees. They investigated the antecedents of organizational commitment among the public sector employees. Rasheed, et al., (2019) found out that interesting nature of work, autonomy, and support from colleagues are significant antecedents of affective commitment. Moreover, there appeared to be a significant positive impact of HRM policy satisfaction among workers, and the perceived leadership style near workers on affective commitment. Employees should be encouraged by intrinsic, and extrinsic rewards that would be helpful to successfully implement the HPWS.

5.3.3 Performance Management

Technical manager has shared that:

“Evaluating front line employees who directly communicate with customers is a quantitative process involving the analysis on the basis of KPI. However, analysing the back offices is a qualitative process, but our system is currently adopting a single quantitative approach for management and employees Performance management in our firm needs to be more practical. I think adding more qualitative measurements, and clear key performance indicators might help”.

Marketing manager has highlighted:

“The nature of the job in the telecommunication sector is such that employees are only aware of the individual nature of their job to satisfy the customer while they are on phone, email or any other way. It is because the sector is so vast that it is not possible to know everyone’s role to fulfil customer requirements. Therefore, it is wiser if they remain committed to their role, and they are given job descriptions about their role instead of informing them about each other’s role. By this, we can reach a clear formula to measure their actual performance”.

Finance manager has presented his views:

“My performance is not just the performance of myself; instead it is an accumulated performance which involves the performance of each of my team members; therefore, I would like to recommend adopting team performance management approach rather than the current individual approach”.

HR manager argued:

“I think performance management is not utilised in our company as it should be; it is just used for paying unfair rewards while it should be used for employee’s development as well. Empowerment of employees is still perceived as a strange practise here, and the only way of overcoming it is by applying it immediately. The employees can fully understand it and perform their duties by participating in decision making that would improve their performance”.

Customer relations manager has presented his views:

“The telecommunication sector is all about money, and it builds itself on the little margins available to it to deliver network services. Thus, all performance measurement efforts should be directly attached to financial rewards. We have a lot to do to improve our performance management”.

Many respondents indicated that they do possess fine knowledge of the performance appraisal process. Managers used the performance appraisal system for evaluating the performance of the workers. This system is directly linked with the objectives set for the workers and the rewards they are provided for meeting those goals or objectives. Performance appraisal represents one of the most crucial aspects of HPWS, particularly in the context of the telecommunication system because customer services quality is directly linked with employees’ skills and knowledge to deliver services properly. Performance appraisal is needed for evaluating the performance of the workers and managers together that would provide requisite corrections, for rewarding the employees and management accordingly. The main aspect of any performance appraisal system is target setting for the overall department that would include the individual, team and management. To be fair with the workers, their targets must be set in consultation with them, and the management should be committed to providing required skills and resources to achieve assign targets.

Participants highlighted that the KPIs are indicators which foster quantitative process with the purpose to evaluate and analyse the direct communication of front-line employees who are dealing with customers. However, it is not an accurate measurement process, especially for back offices employees. Current performance measurement tools are only promoting the same level of quantitative process for frontline and back offices employees as well as for management. Another participant has argued that nature of job in telecommunication sector is to meet the customer requirements by using phone, email, or other information exchange

technologies, it is very hard to determine everyone's role as well as how to fulfil customer requirements, therefore, it is more useful to remain committed with job description to fulfil customer requirements. Participants have argued that team performance and accumulated performance are everything because they can multiply the results of efforts. Therefore, their organisations should be more focused to promote team performance because it can increase the accumulated organizational performance. At the same time, HR manager stated that it has become essential to empower their employees because it can increase accumulated results. Therefore, management has to take training on how they can empower employees and how they can involve more employees in decision making with the purpose to increase the level of performance. Interviewees highlighted the importance of financial reward and number of customers for telecommunication sector as performance indicators, but this should not be the only used factor to manage their performance and their organization should benefit from the successful systems applied in other sectors.

As a centralized system of performance appraisal was heavily debated upon by participants who argued that it was rigid and as such too inappropriate for the workers. Distribution of bonuses was at the discretion of employees and managers because there is lack of coordination between employees and HR managers on performance appraisal. However, in case of any dispute concerning performance appraisal, the authority vests with the HR manager. This again highlights centralized power and control culture concerning performance appraisal and distribution of bonuses in public telecommunication organization in Libya. It is important to point out that employee dissatisfaction may arise if the lack of clarity continues regarding estimation of bonuses. This can be understood from the fact that many of the employees who were contacted they stated that they were dissatisfied with the lack of clarity about performance evaluation and

bonus calculation. This lack of clarity not only affects employee satisfaction with job but also affects their motivation level and ultimately negatively influences their performance. It shows there is a lack of implementation of the performance appraisal system through HPWS in the selected organization.

The focus of the organizations is more on quantifiable targets and involves those who are in the performance appraisal system. Some organizations in which subjective performance is emphasized upon, they have a minimum standard of practice in place to measure the performance (Basu, et al., 2012). The result for the workforce in this regard is that their focus

is on more objective performance to gain bonuses and to achieve targets. This can at times affect the teamwork behaviour as everyone would be focused on individual performance that should be subjectively evaluated to analyse the management performance.

The nature of performance appraisal was found to be highly transactional as employees were found to be predominantly evaluated on the basis of technical performance while the management don't consider the efforts on the base of available resources and skills. This causes a lack of loyalty among the workers and his also results in overall economic loss in the form of customer dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, it is a point of concern that public telecommunication organizations are investing time, money, and effort in recruiting talent and it is important to be able to identify which worker is performing well and which worker is underperforming. This will be helpful in devising the right training and coaching programs for the workers and offering them the right set of skills developments. Performance management needs closer coordination, communication and feedback system between managers and the employees, which is required by HPWS so that they can identify the areas in which they both can improve the workforce of the organization.

5.3.4 Training and development

HR manager has explained:

“We prepare a plan for the year ahead before the current year concludes. This involves training and development plans for the workforce. It is also dependent on the key operational goals for the year ahead and the skills that are needed for achieving those goals”.

HR manager shared his views:

“We choose the best workers to attend the most important training programs on the basis of the feedback given on their performance by their immediate supervisors. There does not exist any other criteria apart from the manager's feedback and performance appraisal”.

IT manager has highlighted:

“In a lot of cases, even the excellent performers underperform. In such instances, it is important to investigate the reason underlying their poor performance instead of punishing them that would lead to the appropriate and required skills development programs in the organization”.

Technical manager explained:

“I know there is dissatisfaction among workforce concerning the process of performance appraisal as it negatively influences their opportunities for training and development. We have to develop a way of keeping employees motivated even if they are not performing well initially. At present, when they see the report of their poor performance in the organization, they plan on quitting the organization”.

Customers relations manager has stated:

“The technical department has the biggest share of training opportunities, especially when they are related to the newly contracted projects, this leads to other departments to feel the unequal and unfair treatment”.

Technical manager shared:

“Those HR professionals who are looking into the training process do not possess the knowledge about the overall functioning of the department. Training department just want to offer two training courses for every employee annually, and some employees accept any training course they are offered, even if they have already attended the same course before, training courses should be linked to real training needs, and this is a comprehensive responsibility of all departments”.

Marketing manager has shared:

“Promotion generally takes place on the basis of performance appraisal. But it was criticized due to technical errors that it did not take into account the managerial skills. However, it is still the most widely used system in the private telecommunication industry”.

HR manager has shared the views:

“We are looking to implement the skills development for skills growth of our employees. Our plan involves increasing the rate of internal recruitment so that internally experienced employees are hired more than fresh ones on whom the training cost and time to get experience may need more compared to internal recruitment”.

Technical manager indicated:

“Our training policy is not clear enough for everyone, this leads to the existence of Wasta and dealing with training as a gift, especially the external training where the travel allowances hotel accommodations and first-class reservations. Some of our staff deal with training as a chance to visit other countries as a tourist, I think the training process in the company needs to be reviewed it is time to concentrate about what training actually adds to our staff”.

Mostafa, et al., (2014) observed that training represents the systematic and formal behavioural modification through learning which takes place as a result of instruction, education, planned experience, and development. The objective in this regard should be polishing the skills, increasing the knowledge, and enhancing the abilities and other interpersonal traits of the employees of the organization. This can be achieved through both structured and approved procedures to the relevant and necessary job training (Brinck, et al., 2019). Employees’ training and development is a significant feature of the HPWS of a telecommunication organisation because telecommunication organization are facing very dynamic technological changes; therefore, the employees should be updated with new skills to successfully meet the industry requirement. In the semi-structured interviews in this research, the management claim that training and development are utilized as a feature of compensation plan with all workers undergoing particular training, whereas additional training is given to better-performing workers.

Participants shared how sometimes it has happened that excellent performers could not perform as per expectations. Therefore, it is important to investigate the causes of underperformance of their best performers rather than giving them punishment. This investigation is helpful to design the skills development program for excellent performers and ordinary employees. HR manager is more focused to engage the best talent and offer them appropriate training by investing more money because it can create the chances of success. Another HR manager has revealed that they have prepared the planning of training and development based on the operational goals of next year because training and development must be matched with the job required in future while other participants showed that they are not satisfied with current training programs because the lack of fair and practical design of the training plans and because a lot of training chances are distributed unfairly between the departments and the employees in general.

Other participants stated that HR professionals who are involved in the training process are not well aware of the overall functioning of each department. According to HR manager, they have

selected the best workers or excellent performers for training based on the feedback given by their immediate supervisors. Other than immediate supervisor feedback, they have not any specific criteria for getting training programs. According to another participant, they are focused to enhance the skills and growth of their employees who are well informed about the functioning of an organization. The investment in the skills and growth of existing employee can enhance internal recruitment because fresh recruitment requires high training cost as well as time to get experience.

Firms must continuously conduct assessments of workers' training needs to devise the most suitable training program for them. Such an assessment is helpful in identifying the skills area, which requires improvement. However, for HR managers to be able to devise a right program, they must also be in receipt of a better understanding of technical problems involved in telecommunication industry because it has been mentioned by the IT management that they are not well equipped with advanced technology and advanced skills which is why they could not deliver the required performance. This they can only clarify with closer collaboration with employees. Leggat, et al., (2011) argued that an effective training program is the one in which value is added for the organization. In instance involved telecommunication organizations, the training assessment is done by taking into account the needs of the organization, but some relevant functional managers are not involved in this process that would impact on the selection of right training programs. However, if employees' needs are not taken into account in this regard, then a comprehensive training program is not developed to fulfil the skill requirements. Unfortunately, this is happening in public telecommunication organizations because there is a centralized system in the organizations that would impact on the quality of the decision of the training and development programmes in these organizations. This can cause dissatisfaction among the workers and lack of required skills in the organizations.

5.4 Identifying the Key Organizational Factors and Challenges Affecting the Implementation of HPWS in the Libyan Context.

Table 5-3: Key organizational factors affecting the HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector

Theme	Sub-themes	Keywords
Current organizational factors affecting HPWS	Coordination and culture	Strategic alignment Centralized budget Training needs and strategy Relevant ministry Isolation Lack of empowerment Top management Ultimate decision power More socialization Less professionalism Chance of improvements Nature of communication Connections of bridging
	Organizational structure relation	Strategic force Reactive position Traditional decision making Collaborative decision-making Employee resistance Personal issues Acting as liaison Settle conflicts Technological based platform Internal communication system Knowledge sharing New practices and technologies
	Lack of evidence mapping	Forecast and prediction Lack of resource and skills Lack of supporting evidence Financial decisions approval level of performance Future recruitment Political objective Financial performance Regulatory body Empowerment of HR department Advance level of system Different rewards system

Existing literature has revealed that the private organizations have low political involvement,

power distance, nepotism, unfairness, centralization, authoritative leadership style, resistance to change, unsupportive structure and organizational culture (Aslam, et al., 2016; Aslam, et al., 2018; Chang & Chen 2011; Pruneda, 2015; Muduli, 2015). Therefore, it is easier to create a culture of knowledge sharing practices, teamwork, new idea generation, innovation, training and development, which are major processes of HPWS practices. On the other hand, public sector organizations have differences in terms of organizational factors, political involvement, socio-cultural factors. In organizational perspective, Libyan public sector organizations have a culture of top-down communication, high political involvement and influence, nepotism and cynicism, low use of technology, and lack of knowledge practices (Ali et al., 2014; Abouarghoub, et al., 2017; ALDamoe et al. 2012; Ghashat, & Cullinane, 2013). The purpose of this theme is to identify the key challenges and factors affecting the implementation of HPWS in the Libyan context.

5.4.1 Coordination and culture impact on HPWS implementation

This part is going to discuss the organizational culture impact on the interaction level of the employees and management to successfully implement the HPWS in the selected organization in Libya.

Management views

HR Manager views

“The approach in this regard is to realize the corporate strategy and then to subdivide it into tactical level goals. They are then subdivided into operational level goals. It is then the responsibility of the HR to work on such goals to create strategic alignment of the organization towards through the HPWS”.

IT manager views

“It is imperative that a cordial relationship between employees and managers is being developed with both the groups understanding the preferences and expectations of each other. When it comes to employees, the employees have the responsibility of providing them with the requisite resources, skills and supporting them for achieving their target”.

Finance Manager Views

“Years before we had a training budget, but it was given in the manner that we were given a particular budget and were told that it was the only budget we were going to get. Now our entire budget is centralized which why we cannot spend as per the requirement indeed we have to spend per government budget”.

Marketing Manager Views

“Although HR is isolated, it is also completely dependent on the relevant ministry those work under the government; therefore, the HRM their self-required empowerment to successful implement the HPWS”.

Customer relations manager views

“The decisions are taken by the top management while the position of others is to be in a position where they are just informed. However, the top management does ask senior managers to furnish feedback, but at the end of the day, the decision rests solely with top management”.

IT manager views

“Due to cultural influence, the nature of communication is more social and less professional/objective. It is difficult to convey bad performance without fearing that others might get sentimental about it. The problem, on the other hand, is that if the person is not told about the truth then how they would progress”.

Marketing manager views

“HPWS also increase the social connections with a wide range of interunit links might result in giving access to the sources of novel knowledge with the organization. Hence the bridging ties may act as a flow for the exchange of information that enhances the satisfaction of employees, commitment and competent workforce. These connections of bridging ties let knowledge to be oppressed by various persons or groups in the organization, which is required decentralized power, but we have very weak social connection of the employees and manager which is a major hurdle for HPWS”.

Employees Views

Finance employee views

“If we want to ensure good performance of HR, it is usually because of the feedback given by different businesses. Therefore, if one sits down with the head of the corporation, with the retail head, or with the head of finance, both of them would tell if we are doing a good job. Therefore, we should constantly seek feedback business and try to identify the grey areas so that we can improve accordingly”.

Technical employees views

“Due to cultural values, the objective communication is weak, which has restricted the overall communication in the organization because our organizational structure does not fully support the two-way communication”.

IT employee views

“I think improving the informal communication is imperative at both vertical and horizontal level in the organization. At present, the communication across divisions and ranks takes place on ad hoc basis, but we should work closely as there is a similarity of final objective and it is significant to realize how everyone fits in the same equation”.

Marketing employee views

“There is a need to create trust among employees and management because at the moment management is just using their power to implement the system which is totally wrong. So building trust will give access to information in actual required to introduce more innovative and committed work environment. There are very few bridging ties advantages had been established an increase of product innovations and letting these organizations adapt to the changes of the market more effectively, and these ties are created at employees and management level separately”.

As HR manager has argued that HR could not recognize as a strategic force; therefore, it has negatively influence on employee and organizational performance. IT manager has revealed that although they are trying to adopt reactive position IT infrastructure is not fully developed and supportive, and it is unable to transform from traditional decision making to collaborative decision-making style. While marketing manager also stressed to increase employee participation by adopting a collaborative decision-making style because it is the only way to reduce employees resistance. IT manager has revealed that it is the responsibility of HRM

department to enhance the role of team empowerment by ensuring that there are not personal issues involved and they can discuss the positive and negative factors freely with the purpose to achieve individual as well as organizational targets.

According to HR, although they are acting as a liaison between employee and top management, it is not an easy task to settle their conflicts. Although HR department is trying to create planning with respect to facilitate employees to discuss issues related to top management, they have not a technological-based platform to facilitate two-way communication with top management and employees. IT manager has shared that although HR manager is trying to foster IT smooth communication but still, they do not have an internal communication system which can search, monitor, and evaluate the employees and management communication. Therefore, they are unable to give instruction, direction, and information exchange in a proactive manner. HR manager has believed that they have aligned the system with the purpose to promote strategic and interactive communication therefore knowledge sharing has increased. HR manager believed that they have created a belief that employees cannot survive if they cannot accept new practices and technologies.

5.4.2 Organizational cultural impact on the current state of the HPWS in organizations

Management views

HR manager views,

“Formulation of HR strategy, I would say that it is not yet mature and despite being a supportive factor, HR is not yet a strategic force in the organization, but it is proceeding ahead nevertheless that would have a negative impact on employee’s performance”.

IT manager views

“Our internal development is focused on changing from the position of reactive to becoming more of a proactive but our IT infrastructure is not fully supporting this system; therefore, we could not do the full transition from traditional decision marketing to the collaborative decision marking in the organization”.

Marketing manager views

“First it must be known whether there is a significant distinction between influencing the business strategy and executing strategies in the organization. Managers have to differentiate between the two that would reduce the employee resistance of employees. The employee should be involved through a collaborative decision-making system of the organization”.

IT manager views

“The responsibilities of HRM include building the cooperation inside the business for ensuring that the business works in a better way, for ensuring that the level of team is higher and that there does not exist any personal issue between inside managers so that people are able to complement each other for achieving the organization and group targets ”.

HR Manager Views

“We are the decision-making team as we give our input from the point of view of capacity and that whether it is possible to be done or not depends on the relevant department, but we have to make decisions in government direction”.

HR manager views

“It is not an easy task to liaise between employees and management. We have to ensure the association between the two goes as planned so that when management is being talked to, then those issues are highlighted which employees are facing with respect to top management and vice versa. Our job is ensuring the awareness on the part of both, but unfortunately, our organization don’t have a technological-based platform to facilitate that two-way communication system”.

IT manager views

“I believe we still need to harmonize communication through the IT system within the organization. I hope that the new HR manager is able to promote IT smooth communication within the organization and create awareness about the significance of IT communication within the organization also make evidence for the action and directions. I believe our main weakness is that we don’t have an effective internal communication system that could track, monitor and evaluate the management and employee’s communication for instruction, direction and information’s. This problem should be addressed in a proactive manner”.

HR manager views

“The HPWS practices have created align system because we are closely connected with each other. The overall interactive and strategic communication, as well as the knowledge sharing between employees, are significantly increased now. Now employees believe that they cannot survive if they cannot become more adaptable towards new changes and technologies”.

Employees Views

IT employee views

“It is not expressly considered to be HPWS, but the approach taken by our HR is the same as that of HPWS. We do not consider our managerial system as telecommunications companies should have, because our organisational structure is fully centralized, and it would not support to the two-way communication; therefore, we could get any advantages from employees in decision making”.

Finance employee views

“It is for top management to consider which strategy should be adopted. If everyone starts becoming part of it, then it would cause chaos. Managers understand the targets of the organization, and I believe this is not sufficient if they know this. It is vital for them to bring it into practice through lower-level coordination and collaboration with employees through transferring the knowledge to them rather try to implement a system through their management power”.

Finance employee views

“Relationship Managers are participating on a regular basis in meetings for liaising between employees and HR managers, but I believe the management just listen to us, but they don't take us seriously”.

Marketing employee views

“The responsibilities of the HR department are building cooperation within the business for ensuring the smooth working of the business and ensuring high coordination among teams without any recourse to personal issues, but they also use their power to sort out the issues between employees and management”.

Customer relations employee views

“We should also give rise to a performance-oriented objective culture, a culture of teamwork, succession, and motivation to successfully implement the HPWS so that the employees can involve in the development of performance objectives but at the moment we are facing of pressure from the management to get the required objective of HPWS”.

HR employee views

“There is a little contribution for HR to arrive at strategic decision making because most of the strategic decisions are in the hand of political agent, so they are forcing to implement the HPWS even they don't understand the organization down to gross root level. I realize that they are contributing towards putting in practice, but decisions of corporate strategy, particularly in the public sector is what I doubt. They should contribute in competition to improve organizational competitive power rather than to just managing human resource int the organization to improve the performance through performance rules and system”.

HR manager has argued that it is their responsibility to create strategic alignment by creating such goals which can link strategy and resources, but Finance manager has highlighted that budget is centralized therefore they are unable to align training needs, strategy, and resources as per requirements. While marketing manager has argued that HR department is working in isolation because there are many tasks which are 100-per cent under the relevant ministry, therefore, there is lack of empowerment to practice HPWS practices with the purpose to create strategic alignment. CR manager has stated that organizational decisions have been taken by top management and the involvement of senior managers is just limited to give feedback on decisions, but ultimate decision power remains with top management. IT manager revealed that culture promotes more socialization and less professionalism approach because sometimes bad performers did not inform because it can create a negative sentiment. Therefore, there are less chance of improvements if there is fear that telling about improvements can create sentimental or negative emotions. Also, it means the nature of communication remains one-sided, especially if there is fear about negative emotions. Marketing manager has stated that although HPWS practices are somewhat promoted connections of bridging and novel knowledge which is required in decentralized. But it is also known that these connections of bridging are very weak between employees and manager which has created obstacles for HPWS practices.

5.4.3 Evidence mapping ability HPWS

Management views

Marketing manager view

“There are statistics involved in the analysis and advice provided by the HR department. On this basis, they also provide futuristic predictions but their lack of resource and skills to do work as per forecast. I won’t be able to perform if such input was not available, but we don’t have enough skills and resources to meet the prediction”.

HR manager views

“We work to attract the right people but could not get the right resources because the financial resource is in ministry hand. The environment in which we are working involves numerous resources as we are based in the Libyan capital, where 90% of public institutions of the country are based, this also makes it challenging to attract such capabilities in one city”.

Finance manager views

“I am working at a position where I must always be aware of the numbers and statistics. It is important that I am constantly in receipt of the monthly reports for manpower concerning the number of persons hired, the number of persons who quit the job, and the ones that are already working but we are not getting any evidences behind these numbers. I mean we are facing lack of supporting evidence”.

HR manager views

“As this organization is expected to continue; therefore, as an HR manager, I take an active role. There are five plans through which people are hired in the telecommunication. Their number is being monitored closely, but sometimes our government announce jobs for the public in public sector organization which put extra pressure to provide jobs and improve financial performance together”.

IT manager views

“Our job is to prepare people so that they are best equipped to perform their responsibilities and are able to overcome hurdles, but our current HPWS don’t support track and evaluate the current equipment performance with the compression of the different departments”.

HR manager views

“The regulatory body under which we are executing our duties of ministry. Therefore, there are some rules and regulations which must be in mind when we are performing our HR duties”.

Marketing manager views

“Our main focus is on constantly improving. We are also significantly improving our training facilities even though we have the best training facilities in the industry, but we are still improving ourselves through the collaboration of our internal department. We are also revising our salary packages to ensure continuous motivation of our internal trainer motivation level, but we don’t have any advanced system to evaluate the effectiveness of different rewards system in different circumstances”.

Employees Views

IT employees views

“For every position, we must ensure that there exists a technical fit between the job requirement and the employee on the basis of which we take the decision of selection”.

HR employees views

“Our organization is just filling the vacancy to give job opportunities to the public, but at the same time, they put pressure to achieve performance through the HPWS even some of the employees don’t have required skills to performance through HPWS. There should be an evidence-based system to analyse the organizational performance on the base the number of employees and historical employment history”.

Marketing employees views

“The nature of our job is such that we have to ensure that businesses successfully achieve what they entrust us with, but we don’t have any customer feedback system in relation to the CRM

department. However, our focus is only on the retail consumer rather offer telecommunication solution to the businesses because we don't have skills and knowledge to serve the business customers but our management asking the achieve targets in terms of the financial returns from the customer rather than to achieve individual targets for retaining business customers".

Marketing employee views

"Generally speaking, all programs and policies of HR are shared with senior management of the organization only. It is then up to them that they share these with others around them and exchange opinions, advice, and devise programs and policies accordingly but there is not any evidence when, where and with whom ideas are being shared what their inputs was".

Marketing manager has revealed that there is statistic, advice, and analysis are given by HR department with the purpose to create forecast and prediction for the future. Although these future forecast and prediction are very important for the marketing department, they do not have skills and resources that are helpful to produce positive results from these predictions. HR manager has revealed that they are working to attract people as per job description and fits within the role, but they have not enough financial resources. Therefore, their recruitment is limited due to financial decisions approval in the hand of the relevant ministry. Financial manager has pointed out the deficiency which limited/decreased the level of performance. For example, it has found that finance manager did not have supporting evidence such as numbers and statistics about new recruitment, future recruitment, number of employees who have left the organization, and number of employees who are currently working in the organization.

HR manager has shared although they have created various plans with respect to recruitment in telecommunication organization, but sometimes Libyan government announced jobs in all public sector organizations which is a fully political objective and put extra pressure on HR system to offer more jobs as well as improve efficiency and financial performance. HR manager has revealed that although they are responsible for recruiting people, they are bounded of the regulatory body which determined rules and regulations. Therefore, these rules and regulations may negatively influence the empowerment of HR department. Marketing manager has revealed although they are trying to improve collaboration among internal departments. Furthermore, they are revising salary packages especially for internal trainer to enhance the level of motivation, but they have not advanced level of the system which can evaluate and offer comprehensive data about the usefulness of different rewards system in different

circumstances”. Due to current HPWS practices, the level of motivation and individual performance has been decreased. Majority of senior employees have revealed that before the adoption of HPWS system, they were not very motivated to improve their level of performance and skills because of bias selection and recruitment procedures, the same reward for unproductive and productive people. The current HPWS practices have improved sales growth and overall productivity compared to past. As the present degree of adoption of HPWS, and identify the key factors and challenges affecting their implementation in the Libyan context has been explored that there is lack of coordination, organizational structure and culture is not appropriate as it required to successfully adopt HPWS. It has also been identified that the current HPWS is creating required explicitly evidence to successfully achieve organizational performance.

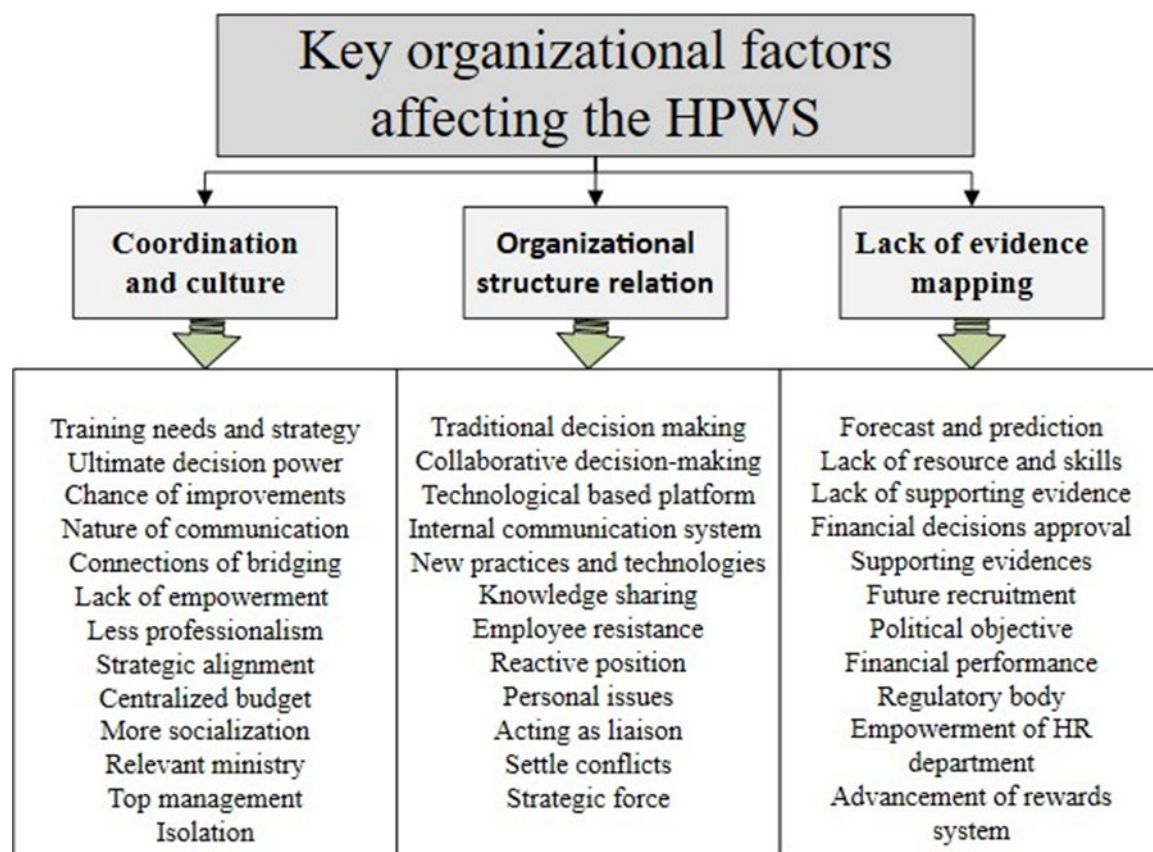


Figure 5-2: key organizational factors affecting the HPWS in the Libyan telecommunications sector

In the presence of single top-down communication (i.e. information ministry approval for budget approval, fresh recruitments, and purchase of advance level technologies), authoritative style, and centralization are the factors that negatively influence the current HPWS practices.

Therefore, these organizations are unable to get the highest positive organizational outcomes. Due to institutional pressures, the organization could utilize institutional form, i.e. it could establish such a structure which may be required by the governmental institutions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). As it has been identified that one-way communication is negative affective the recruitment rewards system, and performance appraisal system in the organization. Employees have recommended that it is more effective if HR managers are responsible for bringing any HR-related changes (i.e. fresh recruitment, more budget for training, increase in employee salaries, and more financial incentive for competent people) without the permission of government authorities.

It is also highlighted that the role of diplomats and bureaucrats that can undermine the effectiveness of HPWS practices in telecommunication companies. For instance, findings have highlighted how the involvement of government authorities are delaying decisions related to recruitment, transfer, punishment, and workplace changes. The rigid rules, regulations, policies of government authorities are delaying the decisions related to HR. Moreover, the achievement of radical change becomes complex when the embeddedness is greater in extent and intensity.

During the discussion, participants highlighted how political ambiguity and instability have brought uncertainty in Libya, which in turn leads the armed groups to go against the government. These violent conflicts resulted in damages to the ICT system, and the Libyan infrastructure in general. Libya is already a developing nation, and violent conflicts have further reduced its resources. Even when conflicts end, still Libyan government has to make great efforts to recover its public infrastructure. Moreover, employees have mentioned that a lot of them have lost not only their assets but also their families and have migrated to some other places because of less organizational, public and employment security which create weak employment relation with the organization.

A supportive political system enables the HR managers to bring about a higher level of productivity, accountability, innovation and linkage between performance and reward – which are key components (Jensen, et al., 2013). During the discussion, managers highlighted how they had enhanced employee involvement, interactive communication, improved rules and regulations, implemented fair and justice practices, increased teamwork, technology usage, developed information-sharing culture, organizational and individual support, competent employees, punishment and reward system, enhanced readiness for adoption of HPWS practices, self-efficacy, high-quality services, innovation and greater rewards for competent

and skilled employees. These managers showed unsupportive behaviour for political involvement and extra pressure to improve the required performance of public telecommunication. They suggested that only departmental heads should have all rights and powers to make all decisions, and no politicians and ministry should be allowed to interfere in decision making. It has been observed that collectivism -involvement of some employees in grouping -undermine the effectiveness of HPWS because politics lead to creating the perception that those workers who are performing just a few tasks will also get the same reward.

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) further developed the theoretical conceptualization of isomorphism through the articulation that “in addition to compete for customers and resources, organizations also compete for institutional legitimacy, economic and social fitness and political power as well. As Institutional isomorphic changes theory heavily focuses on other firms in the internal environment and organizational field or external environment, therefore provide a better understanding of politics of both organizational structure and organizational change (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

The political system should be supportive of the organizations and support the high level of transparency and accountability. Not only the managers but also the employees seem unhappy from the political system, organizational culture and national culture that support incompetent employees, promote power distance, injustice practices, more workload for competent workers, resistance towards changes and organizational politics. Employees mentioned that unproductive workers lead to generating work overload as they have strong political support and references and managers do not take strict actions against them. According to participants, political involvement should not be there within organizations, and departmental heads should have empowerment to punish unproductive products. Moreover, departmental heads should create such work environment within organizations that are supported only for those workers who are performance-oriented, skilled and competent.

Here, it is crucial to discuss how armed groups have weakened the entire political system through violent conflicts and have negatively and strongly affected the telecommunication companies in terms of their organizational factors. During violent conflicts, two governments are there that are parallel to each other. This leads to generating the confusion as which government has the right authorities to take approvals about workplace changes and financial planning. Participants reported that they found HR managers very confused while it was required to take multiple orders about their jobs under government authorities. Moreover, the

increasing incidents of attacks on government infrastructure, murders and kidnapping during the violent conflict has made Libya an unsafe place for investors to offer investments. Therefore, there need to create strong employee and management trust to face these challenges to achieve required to build long term employment to deal with the internal and external environment of the public telecommunication.

It has also found that there is lack of employees feedback and involvement to design training and job design for employees that would create negative employees training; therefore, there is need to create flexible job design for the employees that would also increase their involvement. Han, et al., (2019) flexible job design also reflects the trust of the organization on its workforce as organizations believe in it and allow it for arranging their tasks themselves. When employees are included in the decision-making process, it generates the feeling of mutual trust, i.e. between the organization and the workers. It highlights the respect that organization has for the suggestions of the workers (Lv, & Xu, 2018). This represents the trust and the appreciation which the organization has for the workers. Performance-oriented compensation signals the recognition of the organization for the contribution of the workers (Tsao, et al., 2016). Employees who feel that the organization trusts them and recognizes them, are likely to be motivated and perform better (Guidice, et al., 2016).

It has been found that there is a centralized power system and management use their legitimate power to implement the HPWS this can cause frustration among employees who are hoping to develop an open-ended and long-term relationship with the employer. On the contrary, a win-win HPWS could enable workers to perceive their employer as someone who emphasizes on social exchange aspect of the employment relationship by virtue of high-level investment in the workforce (Tang, et al., 2013). It is also found that collective-cultural factors and their influence on the implemented practices related to HPWS), those features of collective cultures have been discussed that can bring about challenges in HPWS adoption. Based on study findings, it is observed that *wasta*/favouritism has become an important component of culture and social structure. The incompetent employees always search for those individuals who have political and social power in order to get their support. Though *wasta*/favouritism is helpful for few people to secure their personal interests, but overall it negatively influences the organizational and employee performance and effectiveness. In national culture, which is characterised by power distance, the political authorities have more power and can take decisions to save their personal interests.

5.5 Key Challenges of Social and Cultural Factors in Implementation of HPWS

Table 5-4: The main social and cultural factors for HPWS implementation in the Libyan telecommunications sector

Theme	Codes	Keywords
<p>Key factors or challenges for current HPWS practices</p> <hr/> <p>Unfold the organizational, political, cultural, government, organizational, and individuals' factors that can influence the effectiveness of current HPWS practices in telecommunication companies in Libya.</p>	1) Legitimacy	<p>Top-down communication</p> <p>Authoritative</p> <p>Centralization</p> <p>Influence on decision</p> <p>Limited employee involvement</p> <p>Work overload</p> <p>Nepotism and favouritism</p> <p>Low level of teamwork</p> <p>Transparency</p> <p>Accountability</p>
	2) Diplomats and bureaucrats	<p>Rigid rules and policies</p> <p>Low meritocracy</p> <p>Violent conflicts</p> <p>Decrease investor trust</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Future planning</p> <p>More government control and involvement</p> <p>Personal interests</p> <p>Weak political system</p> <p>Unstable environment</p>
	3) Collective culture	<p>Lack of collaborative support</p> <p>Limited employee consensus</p> <p>Power distance</p> <p>Lack of future planning</p> <p>Higher resistance</p> <p>Educational activities low</p> <p>competent workforce</p> <p>Experts' position</p>

	4) Instability and security	Political instability Organizational security Employment security Infrastructure security Short term planning Political ambiguity Strategic confidence Strategic track record
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Existing literature has revealed that the private organizations have low political involvement, power distance, nepotism, unfairness, centralization, authoritative leadership style, resistance to change, unsupportive structure and organizational culture (Aslam, et al., 2016; Aslam, et al., 2018; Chang & Chen 2011; Pruneda, 2015; Muduli, 2015). Therefore, it is easier to create a culture of knowledge sharing practices, teamwork, new idea generation, innovation, training and development, which are major processes of HPWS practices. On the other hand, public sector organizations have differences in terms of organizational factors, political involvement, and socio-cultural factors. In organizational perspective, Libyan public sector organizations have a culture of top-down communication, high political involvement and influence, waste, low use of technology, and lack of knowledge practices (Ali et al., 2014; Abouarghoub, et al., 2017; ALDamoe et al. 2012; Ghashat, & Cullinane, 2013). Therefore, it is not possible that HR managers can improve HPWS practices without considering the barriers in terms of those factors.

5.5.1 Legitimacy

Employees views:

IT employee has stated:

I think government and managers should share every information with employees because it can create trust, commitment toward the employer, and a high level of support to improve the practices of HPWS in our organization. Currently, the HR manager and other managers are transferring employees without giving any specific reasons. Furthermore, we cannot register online to complain against them, therefore, they can take decisions about every employee as per their wishes. The only people who take decision are top management we simply just be informed and has no right to participate especially in key decisions.

HR employee has shared information:

Unfortunately, I am still working in an environment where some employees are very competent and bearing the work overload of those employees who have political and top management references. These types of incompetent employees are increasing work overload as well as decrease the effectiveness of current HPWS practices and influence negatively on timely decision making. Therefore, we cannot take full benefits from HPWS practices because these employees have hit the HR system by decreasing the level of transparency and accountability. They know that they have job security, fixed financial rewards, political and top management support therefore they are working with the purpose to save their personal interests. It is very important to consider these types of individual forces that can negatively influence the effectiveness of HPWS practices in our organization.

HR employee has stated:

There are many challenges which should be addressed in our organization, otherwise we cannot take full benefits from HPWS. For example, the government has specified a limited budget for employees training and development which are hindering the staff developing programs. Secondly, there is a limited linkage between reward and performance as some of the employees are taking their salaries without giving their full potential or energies. They have political references and support therefore HR authorities are unable to take decisions against them. As a result, other employees are bearing the work- overload.

HR employee has shared information:

Our managers do not involve me and other employees who are more dedicated and known as competent workers in the decisions making. They also have to eradicate the political pressure from decisions so that they can set examples by giving more rewards to those who are known as hard workers or competent employee in our organisation. It is unfair that we take more work overload because few workers are not doing what their jobs require.

Managers views:

HR manager has explained:

There are many factors in a public sector organization which can undermine the effectiveness of current HPWS practices. Many factors are influencing on current HPWS practices because

we are working under government control. For example, we are still following the top-down communication which means we cannot take substantial decisions without the permission of higher authorities. Top-down communication, authoritative style, and centralization are the factors that are delaying the timely decision making related to budget approval, new recruitments, and the purchase of advanced technologies.

HR manager has argued:

“These types of people are negatively influencing the transparency of HPWS because they have politician support and references in ministry. Libyan ministry should have to shift complete powers to departmental managers so that they can do decision without political involvement. Our organization has to recruit and retain those employees who are focused, expert, dedicated, motivated, committed, and want to create new idea generation and innovation in services.”

Marketing manager has stated:

In fact, I have read and observed that similar obstacles are very common in those developing countries who have political involvement for saving a few people interests. Because of such interference, my organization cannot increase employee support in routine work activities as well as without involving and sharing information with employees, we cannot create a culture that can generate high trust, and improve the effectiveness of current HPWS practices.

HR manager shared knowledge:

Currently, we are working in various teams which enhanced our learning abilities, new ideas creation and sharing abilities, and productivity. However, sometimes we are unable to take a good and timely decision without the approval from the ministry. I think there should not be such rigid rules because they negatively influence the decision making in our company. Furthermore, if some people are earning without doing their efforts then it creates a perception of low linkage between reward and performance and it also negatively influence the motivation of other employees. Therefore, we cannot obtain the full potential from current HPWS practices.

The first sub-theme documented those legitimacy factors that can create challenges or decrease the effectiveness of HPWS system in telecommunication companies. Organizational politics and political involvement are increased the favouritism and nepotism, assert relationship with

people having power, and maintain a certain power for self-interest. For example, participants have revealed how the involvement of government authorities are delaying the timely decision making. The rigid rules, regulations, policies of government authorities are delaying the timely decision making as well as negatively influencing the future planning of telecommunication companies. It is found that those employees who were not productive created more challenges to introduce HPWS practices. These managers had perceptions that HPWS practices may promote a working environment which is not in their control. Due to these unproductive workers, competent employees were not very motivated because there was no link between reward and performance because these incompetent employees were getting the same salary for limited or no work. They tried to create resistance in the implementation of these practices. On the other hand, the majority of managers were very determined to adopt and implement this system.

In the presence of top-down communication (i.e. information ministry approval for budget approval, fresh recruitments, and purchase of advance level technologies), authoritative style, and centralization are the factors that negatively influence the current HPWS practices, therefore, these organizations are unable to get highest positive organizational outcomes. Respondents have recommended that it would be more effective if HR managers are responsible to bring any HR-related changes (i.e. fresh recruitment, more budget for training, increase in employee salaries, and more financial incentive for competent people) without the permission of government authorities. It has been found that there are few employees who are not serving their duties and doing politics for saving their personal interests.

5.5.2 Diplomats and Bureaucrats

Employees views:

HR employee has shared information:

I think there is a limited meritocracy culture in our public sector organisations. Although some employees are hired as per high qualification, skills, and experience there are some other employees who are not enough qualified but hired due to their political reference. These types of employees are creating more issues because they are not capable to perform and ultimately negatively influencing the benefits HPWS practices. The political and security situation is not stable since 2011 and this has a direct effect on all our departments.

HR employee has discussed:

I believe... current HPWS practices not able to fully generate employee support, knowledge sharing practices, collaboration, communication, and timely decision making. In fact, we are working in a company where decisions have been taken by those political forces who are not well-aware therefore negatively influence the structure and culture of our organisation. These political involvements are mostly increasing and saving personal interests of a few corrupt leaders. For example, these forces are supportive to hire incompetent people, negatively influence the meritocracy practices, enhance negative pressure on the organizational system, and produce unnecessary resistance towards positive initiatives such as further improvements in HPWS practices. I think.... there should not be any political control and involvement otherwise we cannot perform up-to-the-mark. The decision-making power completely transferred to lower authorities so that they can take the necessary decision and eradicate politics against current HPWS practices.

Finance employee has provided the details:

I am not very motivated about my future due to few incompetent people and the negative culture to go against the decision of managers, some of the employees are working beyond the expectations whereas some are earning for nothing because they have political support and references. During the unstable work environment, we cannot produce the support of employees in the adoption of HPWS system. I think.... managers must have the power to punish these bad workers so that it can create an environment that can only support those employees who are capable, competent, and performance-oriented..

Managers views:

Assistant Marketing manager has shared knowledge:

There are conflicts in orders by multiple governments especially when we were suffering due to violent conflict. During these violent conflicts, we are taking multiple orders from multiple government bodies that created a situation of confusion for timely decision making. Furthermore, many investors have declined the offers of investment because Libya is not safe for business. During these violent conflicts, kidnapping, murders, attack on public infrastructure were very common activities. Therefore, we have suffered due to lower employee attendance, unsafe and insecure work environment, migration of employee's families to safe

places, and stressful work environment. These problems have decreased organisational performance and productivity. I think... it is more effective if decision-making power completely transferred to departmental heads.

Assistant HR manager has shared the views:

I believe..... incompetent employees are creating a negative impact on current HPWS practices and as a result there is limited transparency, accountability, reward and performance, high performance and knowledge exchanging culture. It is necessary that the government should take those steps which can strengthen the decision making and bring decentralization in my organization..

The second sub-theme highlighted the role of diplomats and bureaucrats that can undermine the effectiveness of HPWS practices in telecommunication companies. For instance, findings have highlighted how the involvement of government authorities are delaying decisions related to recruitment, transfer, punishment, and workplace changes. The rigid rules, regulations, policies of government authorities are delaying the decisions related to HR, therefore, current HR practices are not fully effective because these are based on high level of employee support, performance-oriented, knowledge sharing culture, new techniques and tricks, innovation, collaboration, communication, and timely decision making. Participants have highlighted more political involvement is influencing decision making. For example, there are some officials who are supporting, transferring, and rotating incompetent managers and staff across public sector organisations. In fact, these corrupt politicians are supporting those individuals who have not qualified, experienced, and competent to fulfil the requirements of their job duties.

These incompetent employees are creating more work overload and giving a perception for competent employees about if they work less than they are more comfortable instead of working with full capacity. Participants have suggested that there should no political involvement so that departmental heads must have the power to punish these bad workers so that it can create a work environment that can only support to those employees who are skilful, competent, and performance-oriented. It is necessary that the government should take those steps which can strengthen the decision making and bring decentralization in these organizations. The political system should support HR managers so that they can bring a high level of accountability, linkage between reward and performance, productivity, and innovation which are major elements. These managers have discussed how they can enhance interactive

communication, more employee involvement, supportive rules and procedures, fair justice practices, teamwork, support competent employees, technology use, training programs, knowledge sharing culture, employees and organizational support, reward and punishment, self-efficacy, readiness for HPWS, more reward for skilled workers, and Innovation and high service quality. They have suggested that there should not be any political involvement and power of all decisions should be given to departmental heads without the interference of ministry and politicians. They have also suggested that they need to recruit those young people who are more motivated, educated, skilled, and ready to bring and adopt those practices that can enhance the employees and organisational performance. Furthermore, managers have suggested that there must be a supportive environment for those employees who are extraordinary compared to average employees.

It is found that some of the employees are involved in grouping, collectivism, undermine the effectiveness of HPWS practices, and politics which created a perception that the same reward is also given for those employees who are doing limited work. The incompetent employees are increasing work overload, negative perception of employees, and challenges for competent employees, managers, and overall improvement in organizational performance. These factors can decrease the level of job satisfaction and commitment among those employees who have skills and want to improve their career. It is more effective if HR managers can terminate, suspend, transfer, and recruit employees without the pressure of the ministry and other politicians. Otherwise, current HPWS practices are no much effective. Ultimately, service sector organizations cannot get a good result in terms of team performance, idea generation and innovation, uniqueness in work, and superior level of human capital.

It is important to discuss here how violent conflict of armed groups weakened the political system and negatively influenced the organisational factors of telecommunication companies. There are two parallel governments during the violent conflict that increase the confusion about which are right authorities for taking approval about financial planning and workplace changes. Participants had revealed how HR managers are confused when they were taking multiple orders related to their jobs from government authorities. Some participants have shared that many investors have declined the offers of investment because Libya was unsafe due to kidnapping, murders, attack on public infrastructure during violent conflicts. These telecommunications companies could not produce maximum profits because of lower employee attendance, unsafe and insecure work environment, migration of employee's families

to safe places, and stressful work environment. These problems have decreased the organisational performance and productivity of employees. Respondents have recommended that political system must be supportive so that telecommunication companies can bring meritocracy, decentralisation, investor trust, supportive rules and procedures, more transparency and accountability, and safe and supportive work environment for competent employees.

5.5.3 Collective Culture

Employees view:

IT department employee has shared:

I believe that our country has a national and organizational culture that is giving power to a few people who used wasta, enhancing politics for personal interests, high resistance to change. Therefore, there is low social support for positive HR-related practices. Due to violent conflicts, educational institutions cannot produce talented people and brain drain was also a big issue in our country. I think we must develop a social system which must bring and promote competent employees so that these types of practices can become easier to adopt in every organisation in Libya.

Marketing employee has shared:

Our national culture, political involvement, and organisational culture should be changed in the sense of giving extra rewards for extra work, recognition and reward for those who bring new ideas, appreciation for those who shared unique knowledge, and promotion opportunities for those who have performed differently compared to the average type of employee. Top management must create an organizational culture that reward and promote those employees who are extraordinary compared to average employees.

Finance employee has provided:

Whenever you visit a public organisation in the country to finish any work you can easily spot how Wasta affects the workflow and how they have double standards to deal with people who have or have not the right connections inside. Even some employees want to prove their belonging to their families and tribes by favouring their relatives on other people. Wasta is also prominent when political people are involved to recruit those people who have their

friends, relatives, or from close social circle. Ultimately it negatively influences the merit and fairness practices in both our society and organization.

Managers view:

Customers relations manager has presented his views:

Due to the nature of HPWS, I assume that the cultural factors have a major effect on them because of the collectivist nature of society. If my organization want to improve HPWS practices, then they must address these challenges otherwise they are unable to get maximum positive organizational outcomes.

Marketing manger stated:

“Here, the CEO himself develops our culture. He identifies to his staff what they did during last year and also what they did not and why. I consider it as CEO` own strategy through which he tries to build trust amongst employees and ensure direct communication”.

Technical managers stated:

“I consider inner culture as a strong influential factor of our sector. We always concern about what are the requirements and expectations of shareholders and what vision the CEO has”.

HR manager commented:

“It is our culture that creates the need to directly contact with senior officers regarding strategies and plans. For example, before the next year starts, we have to develop our yearly operational plan. All managers sit together to see the budget as well as deliverables needed for the upcoming year. Employees, however, are generally informed later”

HR manager mentioned:

“Though in Libya, modern HR system was applied recently, however, few sectors showed more advancement than others through the implementation of talent management strategy. This is a strategy that is all about how to acquire and employee best talent, in which jobs allocate them, how to develop them, how to retain and motivate them”.

Aaaistant HR manager has highlighted:

I observed the socio-cultural system is not very supportive because we are working in a culture which is based on the phenomenon of wasta and saving personal interests. Wasta (Favouritism) has become part of the culture now. Therefore, it is not very supportive for those people who want to do everything fair and good without considering the power of those who are working to secure their personal interests. Due to some corrupt politicians, we have faced extreme violent conflicts that have brought the shortage of skilled people in the telecommunication industry. Some talented people have left their jobs and settle in other countries where they have taken more career development opportunities. I think we have to improve our socio-culture system that can enhance and support the educational system and fight back these negative forces.

Finance manager has shared:

In the public sector, it is always tough to bring a very advance level of HPWS practices especially in a culture which has features of power distance, more influence, authoritative, and political involvements. In the presence of these negative factors, we have to set examples by offering a higher reward to those who are qualified, motivated, do more work, and bring uniqueness in services. I think.... all department managers should be able to choose employees for their department instead of letting HR department alone take such choices.

Technical manager has discussed:

New HR system and advanced level technologies always require more effort, training, learning opportunities, and reward for both employees and organisation. However, in our culture and organisation, the involvement of lower-ranked employees is not as it could be, and most of the decisions, are taken by the top authorities without taking the consents of those who faced these changes.

Customer relations manager has argued:

I know that most our managers cannot transfer employees, or end their contracts, the society, in general, has very bad perceptions about ending someone's contract, where we say it is better to kill me than ending my job. Furthermore, our socio-cultural system is not supportive to promote those people who have no political support, reference, and managers support. Therefore, some of our talented experts are migrating to other countries. Generally speaking, Libyans do not like to move from one organisation to another as they try to avoid the

uncertainty that arises from job change. Our society is a parental society where we admire older people, we even agree with them when they are wrong. I believe these socio-cultural traits affect the ability of senior staff to criticize their seniors' decisions or even share their views.

The third theme (i.e. collective-cultural factors and their influence on the implemented practices related to HPWS) has explained what the unique features collective culture that can create challenges in the adoption of HPWS system. Findings reveal that *wasta* (e.g. favouritism) has become part of social structure and culture. Few employees who are incompetent loved to get the support of those who have social and political power. The *wasta* helped to secure the personal interests of few people which ultimately negative influence the employee and organizational effectiveness and performance. National culture is based on power distance that gives more power to political authorities who can take decisions for saving personal interests. Like corrupt leaders are more interested to make money from those public sector organizations. Furthermore, they are helping to recruit those people who are not suitable and competent for a specific job. It has been found that a lot of the competent employees have left their jobs because of their feeling that they were not fairly treated. Findings reveal that whenever anyone visits a public institution in the country to complete their work. Then they can see how *Wasta* influences the work process and how it has created different yardsticks to manage individuals who have not or have the associations inside. Indeed, even a few workers have shown more attention to complete the work of those who belong to their tribes and family's members. It ultimately influences the merit system in the telecommunication sector. *Wasta* is more common especially when political individuals are included to select those individuals who have their relatives, friends or from their close social circle. Eventually, it contrarily impacts the fairness practices and merit in both our organizations and society.

Employees have said that they cannot hold extra duties instead of those who are getting salaries without doing any efforts. Employees have suggested these employees are discouraging to competent workers, and that there are no justice practices and these people are playing with rules and regulation because they have social networks, political support, and no fear for punishment. those young people who are more motivated, educated, skilled, and ready to bring and adopt those practices that can enhance the employees and organizational performance at large. HR managers argued that private sector organizations are more successful because they are performance-oriented, and they have no place for those who are wasting the resources of

their organizations. Managers want to set a platform for those workers who can bring new ideas, high service quality, knowledge, uniqueness in processes, and innovation for getting competitive advantages.

Findings have revealed that although some managers and employees are happy from the implementation of HPWS. Managers are unhappy because they cannot refer to people for selection and recruitment due to the online recruitment system. Similarly, some managers have complained that they are not able to transfer their employees as per their needs because HR manager only is responsible to perform these types of tasks. On the other hand, employees have argued that are unable to offer their feedback on the performance appraisal because it can raise the level of negativity of their departmental heads. This type of factors is indicating that although the service sector organizations have adopted the HPWS practices some of the employees, managers, and culture are not very supportive to improve or adopt advanced level HPWS practices.

Both employees and managers are not happy from the national culture, political system, and organizational culture that support power distance, incompetent workers, more work overload for competent employees, injustice practices, organizational politics, and resistance towards change. Employees have shared some of the workers are unproductive and create work overload because they have political reference and high level of support. Therefore, their managers are not taking any strict action against them. Similarly, managers have shared that without firing those workers who have political references or social network support and limited intention to work for the organization, they cannot develop an environment which is full of ideas generation, innovation, excellence in service quality, and competitive advantages. Both stakeholders recommended to shift all powers from the ministry to departmental heads so that they can fire, reward, and take any decisions without the involvement of higher authorities and politicians.

More people have left their jobs when they saw murders, kidnappings and other major incidents, besides their feeling that they were not fairly treated, and others with social and political connections, were promoted and looked after. It is a time to develop a socio-cultural system which must bring and promote competent employees so that these types of practices can become easier to adopt in every high-tech organisation in Libya.

5.5.4 Instability and Security Challenges

Employees view:

HR employee has discussed:

“The political instability has increased the conflict among several armed groups which created violent conflict all over Libya. Many civilians have been killed during these attacks. Therefore, many employees and their families have migrated to safe cities because of the low level of public places and organizational security.”

Marketing employee has stated:

“During the violent conflict in Libya, many buses, schools, colleges, universities, and organizations are under attack. There was a lack of infrastructure security therefore many people have lost their lives. In this period, the absence of employees and their productivity is very limited due to the tension of their families lives and extreme level of stress. While the employer did not make any serious arrangement for security therefore many employees have remained absent due to lack of employment and infrastructure security.”

HR employee has shared information:

“The political instability and political ambiguity are one of the major causes which negatively influence the organizational growth, security, profitability, and effectiveness of organizations.” The political leadership cannot create a belief among people and many armed groups have started the fight against the previous government. As a result, the infrastructure of our company is partially damaged during violent conflict and our organizations have lost assets of millions.”

Managers view:

HR manager has shared:

“We have bear organizational loss for a long period during the violent conflict. As a result, organizational profit reduced, and it also negatively influence the financial and non-financial rewards of employees. Many of our competent employees have left their jobs in this decade.

An assistant HR manager has shared:

“The government support, political stability, and strategic confidence are important parameters for business development. But Libya business organizations have seen worst political and security conditions which reduced the organizational growth and profitability, especially in public sector organizations. Still, due to political ambiguity, there is no guarantee that this violent conflict will not occur again therefore most of the international and national investors avoid to invest their money.”

Marketing manager has stated:

“Although now the situation of organizational and employment security is much better but many of our employees and investors have lost their lives and money in previous years. The Libyan government is still not very stable and secure therefore this type of violent incidents may occur again. These incidents have decreased the value of money and increased the loan amount which also badly impacted the organizational growth of the telecommunication sector.”

The fourth theme has documented the evidence regarding how instability and security have created the challenges for organizational growth and profitability of the telecommunication sector. Even the HR systems and other practices cannot bring desired results when organizations are facing challenges of organizational, employment, and infrastructure security. Employees have shared that political instability and ambiguity have created uncertainty and many armed groups have gone against the Libyan government. These internal violent conflicts have damaged the schools, roads, universities, hospitals, electricity and ICT system. Libya is a developing country and has lost many of its resources during violent conflict. Therefore, the country is still struggling to recover the public infrastructure after violent conflicts. Employees have argued that many of their colleagues and their families have lost their assets and migrated to other places due to lack of public, employment, and organizational security. While remaining employees remained absent or worked with stress which ultimately reduced their performance and work engagement. This political instability, ambiguity, and security risks have reduced the organizational growth, profitability, and effectiveness of public telecommunication sector.

Managers have shared how political instability, political ambiguity, and short-term planning has created the issues for the telecommunication sector. They have shared that many of investors have lost the strategic confidence when the ICT infrastructure damaged during the violent conflict. Furthermore, the reduction in organizational profit also negatively influence

the employee's retention rates because a lot the employees have left their jobs due to lack of financial and non-financial benefits. The movement of human capital also reduced the organizational growth, profitability, and effectiveness of public telecommunication sector. They are also uncertain about that this violent conflict may occur again in the near future therefore most of the international and national investors avoid investing their money. It is also found that the lack of government resources, damaged infrastructure, and government borrowing for recovery reduced the value of Libyan currency which also negatively influenced the growth of business organizations.

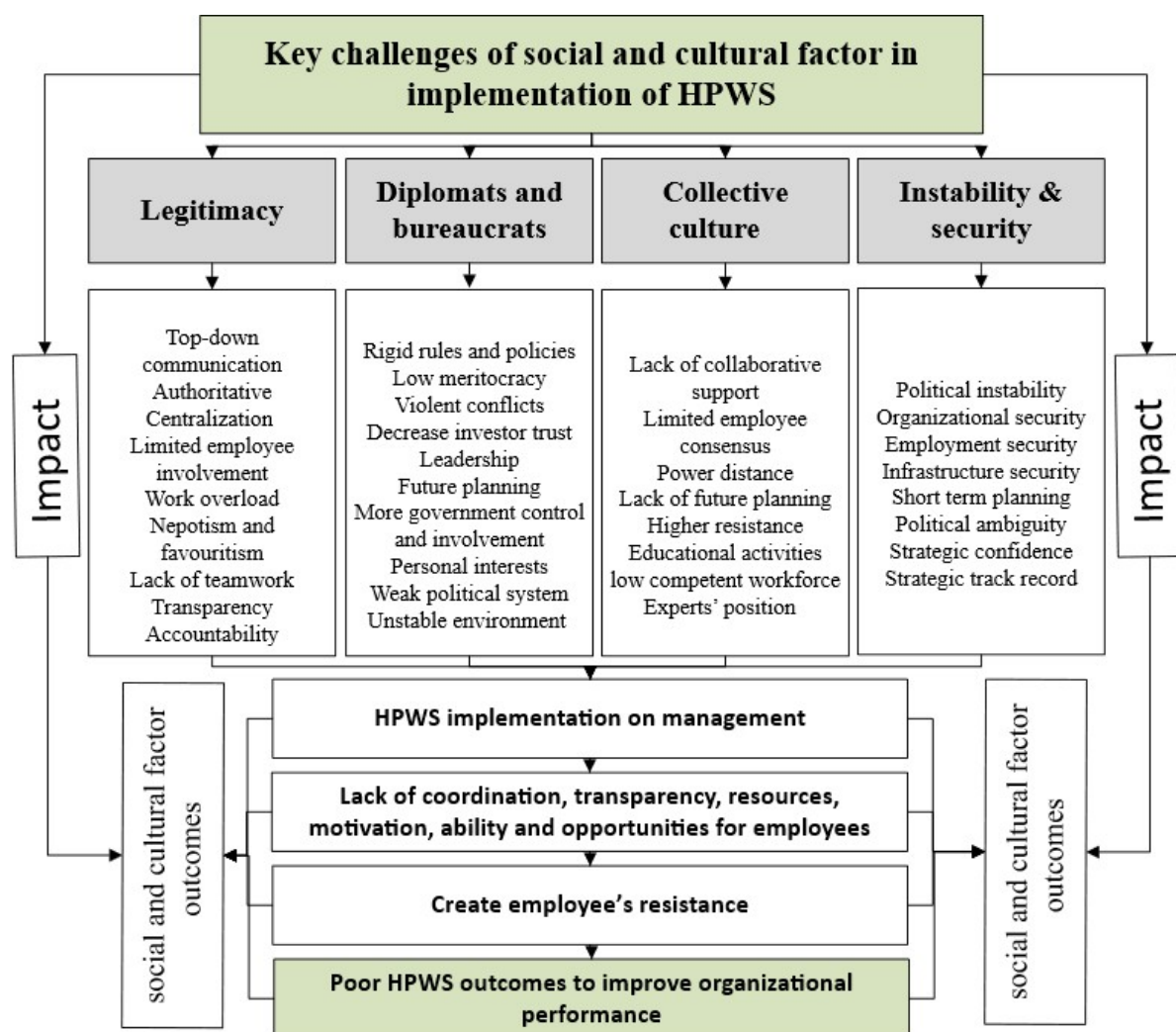


Figure 5-3: Summary for the socio-cultural factors impact on the implementation of HPWS in

It has been identified that legitimacy factors that can create challenges or decrease the effectiveness of HPWS system in telecommunication companies. Because the management use their power to forcefully implement the HPWS in the organization. Organizational politics and political involvement increase the favouritism and nepotism,

assert relationship with people having power, and maintain a certain power for self-interest. It also highlighted that there is a lack of resource and skills to support the HPWS in the organization. In order to survive, the organizations should accommodate the institutional expectations even when such expectations have not much to do with technical aspects of performance accomplishment (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Teelken, 2008; D'Aunno, et al. 1981; Volberda, et al., 2012; Scott, 1987). For example, telecommunication organizations may be organized as a partnership with the ministry of finance not because that form provides the excellent way of governing a firm but because it is the relevant way of organizing finance for business. In other words, institutional theory shows the behaviour of organizations are not merely about responding to market pressures but also to institutional pressures to successfully adopt the institutional changes to meet the competition and industrial requirements.

Summery

This chapter has presented the findings of the study, identifying the themes that emerged in relation to the research objectives. It has outlined the reasons why HPWS were adopted by the two companies, the key practices that were implemented as the HPWS, the employees and managers perceptions of how well the practices are working, the current limitations of the HPWS and the factors which were acting as barriers, limiting the full implementation and optimal outcomes. Chapter seven now discusses the research framework.

CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

6.1 Research Framework

In the previous chapter, empirical evidence related to the research questions and objectives like the reasons of HPWS implementation in the Libyan telecommunications sector, the present degree of adoption, and the contextual factors affecting the implementation process was presented. A comparison between the employers and employees was discussed in order to grab the key factors affecting the implementation process of HPWS. The key emergent factors and the discussion from the research findings were used to develop the research framework. Accordingly, the presented framework (Figure 6-1), was informed by the theoretical lenses of both the institutional theory and the AMO theory. It first focuses on understanding the role of the institutional factors, including the memetic forces, coercive forces, and the normative forces that affect the implementation of HPWS in the studied context. According to the literature explored in the previous chapters, the institutional theory factors were used to provide an additional explanation of the HPWS implementation process through a micro and macro perspective. The next part of the research framework explores the organisational factors related to the state of the workforce like the collective employees' resistance and how such factors may influence to the implementation process. Exploring the perception of employees concerning HPWS helps to clarify the reasons of the variations in perception about HR practices. The research framework represents this by taking into account the AMO theory, which is very helpful to understand the perceptions of the management and the employees on HPWS in the selected organisations. AMO represents three variables: ability, motivation, and opportunity to perform; these dimensions need to be positively influenced to draw better performance from workers. Therefore, these three factors would be helpful to understand the management and employees point of views, the understanding of these factors would also help to align the management and employees toward successful implementation of the HPWS in selected public organisations in Libya.

In conclusion, the discussion has been made on the research findings in relation to the relevant literature. Accordingly, this chapter is going to synthesize the overall research findings in the form of a research framework which was a major aim of this research.

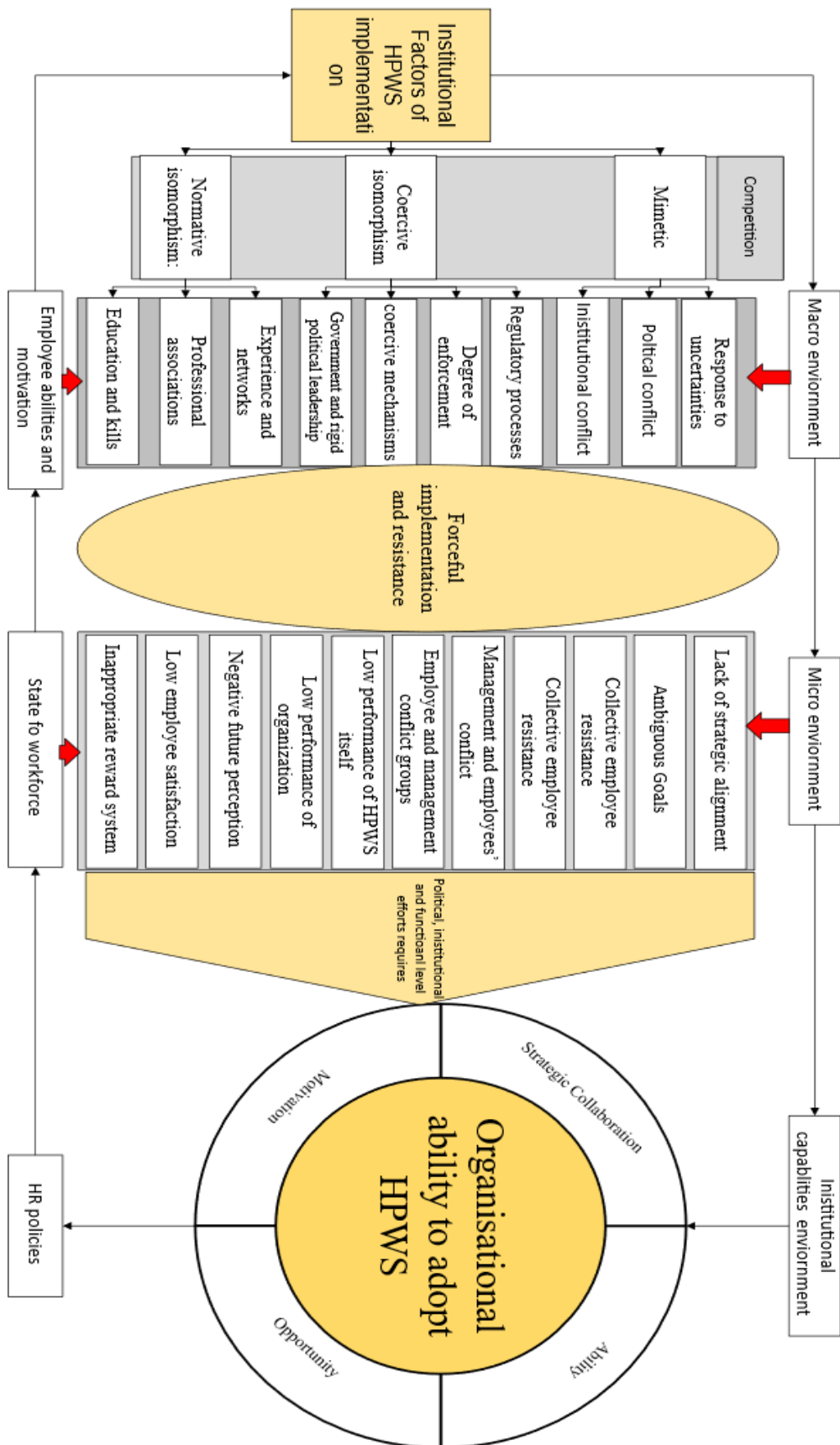


Figure 6-1: Research framework

Initially, this research explores the reasons behind the implementation of HPWS in public telecommunication organizations in Libya. It has found that political pressure was one of the major motives to improve public services organization performance. Additionally, the management also indicated that HPWS is one of the competitive requirements to deliver competitive recommendation services in marketing. At the same time, it was also found that management is facing political and bureaucratic pressure for the fast results of the HPWS in public telecommunication organisation in Libya which create isomorphism condition in the organizations. As DiMaggio and Powell (1983) further developed the theoretical conceptualization of isomorphism through the articulation that “in addition to compete for customers and resources, organizations also compete for institutional legitimacy, economic and social fitness and political power as well. As Institutional isomorphic theory heavily focuses on other firms in the internal environment and organizational field or external environment, therefore provide a better understanding of politics of both organizational structure and organizational change (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Therefore, this research is an effort to the development of the institutional HPWS framework on the base of the research findings.

According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983), isomorphic change usually occurs through three mechanisms including mimetic, normative and coercive, each of which has its own unique antecedents. Rather than considering mimetic, normative and coercive as types of isomorphism, Mizruchi and Fein (1999) recognised them as mechanism or processes for isomorphism. The concept of coercive isomorphism is basically originated from the legitimacy issue and political influence which is found that political and bureaucratic system of Libya are putting more pressure to improve the public telecommunication organization performance, therefore, the management brought the HPWS to satisfy the customer with competitive services and to satisfy political and bureaucratic system with high performance of the public services organizations which create the normative isomorphism within the organization. Normative isomorphism has an association with professionalism values which is based on the organization competitive power to successfully compete in the market at the same time to satisfy government with high organizational performance.

During the discussion participants highlighted how political ambiguity and instability have brought uncertainty in Libya which in turn leads the armed groups to go against the government. These violent conflicts resulted in damages to the ICT system, electricity, hospitals, universities, roads, and schools. Libya is already a developing nation and violent conflicts have further reduced its resources. The Libyan government has to make great efforts

to recover its public infrastructure. Similarly, mimetic isomorphism recognised as a consequence of an institutional response towards uncertainty. Regulatory agencies, requirements of financial reporting, budget cycle, and contract law system and government mandate are different examples that lead to generating coercive pressures. This would, in turn, generate organizational isomorphism. However, normative pressures primarily stem from professionalism and its values (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Therefore, the management is putting more pressure to successfully implement the HPWS in public services organizations.

The findings have highlighted how the involvement of government authorities are delaying decisions related to recruitment, transfer, punishment, and workplace changes. The rigid rules, regulations, policies of government authorities are delaying the decisions related to HR, therefore, current HR practices are not fully effective because these are based on a high level of employee support, performance-oriented, knowledge sharing culture, new techniques and tricks, innovation, collaboration, communication, and timely decision making. It has been highlighted more political involvement is influencing the decision making. For example, there are few rigid politicians who are supporting, transferring, and rotating incompetent managers and staff across public sector organizations. In fact, these rigid politicians are supporting those individuals who have not qualified, experienced, and competent to fulfil the requirements of a job. These incompetent employees are creating more work overload and giving a negative perception for competent employees. It has been suggested that there should be no political involvement so that departmental heads have powers to punish these low performers so that it can create a work environment that can only support those employees who are skilful, competent, and performance-oriented. It is necessary that the government should take those steps which can strengthen the decision making and bring decentralization in those organizations.

The term professionalism is an association of organization's members who want to have autonomy on work processes, also legitimatization of their own work. Professional boards networks, on job networking and specialization, professional development or training, certificates accredited by different professional bodies and formal education are various examples that lead to generating normative pressures. In addition to that, organizational isomorphism is also influenced by mimetic reinforcement through mimicking or organizational copying which is triggered by making the establishment of organizational legitimacy as a compulsory. Therefore, mimetic isomorphism has been created in public telecommunication

organization to satisfy the public as customers and to satisfy the government. According to Hanson (2001), mimetic isomorphism tends to occur when “an organization consciously models itself after another that it believes to represent a high level of success and achievement in the public eye. The competition is being considered as a very crucial factor in implementing HPWS, it has been identified that there is services competition in the market and customer got more power therefore, the public services organization are feeling pressure to deliver quality services. Renmans, et al., (2017) argues that cross-national divergence on the basis of different factor endowments of national economies. The overall argument that competition gives rise to institutional divergence is that competition pushes firms in developing specialization and creating niches for themselves and that such niches are supported by different institutional regulations (Renmans, et al., 2017). Therefore, it would be possible to say that political pressure and competition were external pressures to adopt HPWS in the organization. Additionally, Normative isomorphism has an association with the external pressure to offer HPWS as a complete solution that would put extra pressure on the employees for the successful implementation and the extra pressure is based on the local Libyan political and public organizational structure. At the same time collective organizational culture create collective resistance of employees against their system which is why the management could successful get the required performance results.

Later on, March and Olsen (1976) observed many organizations engaged in modelling or mimicking other organizations. The trend of modelling or imitating each other is high amongst organizations with respect of their structure, particularly when new technology is poorly or partially understood, when environment leads to create symbolic uncertainty or when there is ambiguity in goals (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Ashworth, et al., (2005) indicated that the most prevalent practice is, however, copying where the actors are unaware about the consequences of different systems or processes adoption (Ashworth, et al., 2005). Moreover, Selznick (1996) considered mimesis (copying) as a response towards uncertainty which is presumed to be more deeply embedded in anxiety instead of rational efforts so that reinvention of the wheel can be avoided (273). Moreover, Frumkin and Galaskiewicz (2004) argued that normative, mimetic and coercive can intermingle and overlap, though these forces are originated from totally different conditions. Therefore, they are expected to influence organizational characteristics differently (Frumkin and Galaskiewicz, 2004). Often, the coercive force has an association with the external environment (the environment surrounding organizational field), whereas normative and mimetic are associated with internal environment

and facilitate the explanation of the spread of structures and roles as well as reinforcement of values and norms of an organization.

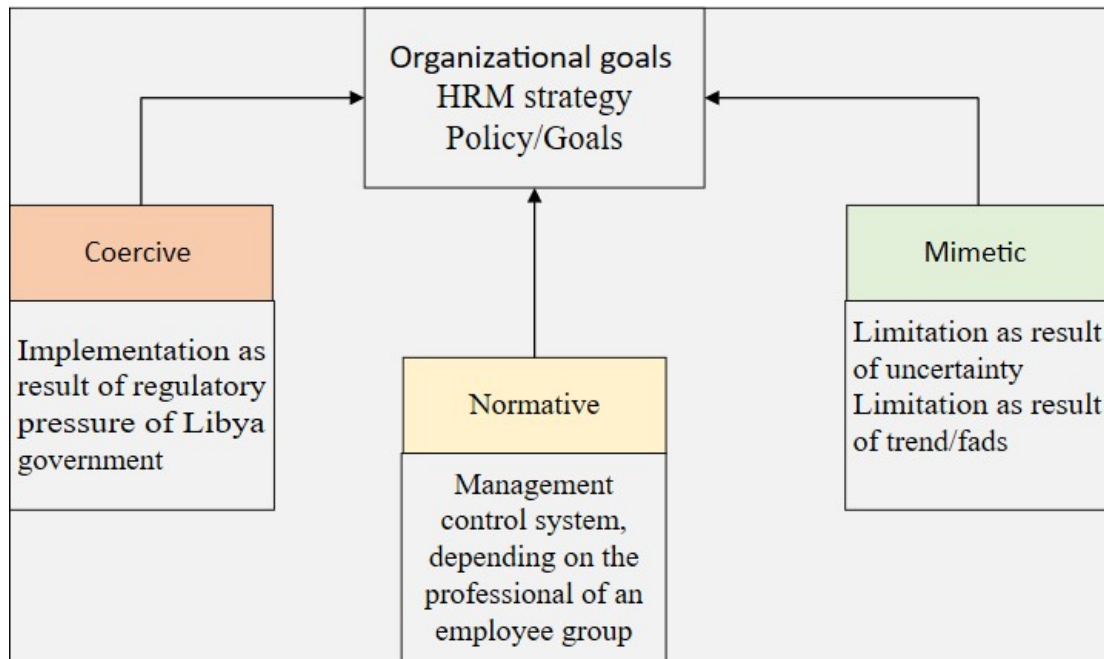


Figure 6-2: Institutional pressures on the organization

As it has been clear that there are three major institutional forces those affect the implementation of the HPWS in Libya. But there is a need to understand which forces relate to which type of the organizational characteristics of the organization that would help to deal with this isomorphism of the organizations in Libya. Ashworth, et al., (2005) empirically tested the model of DiMaggio and Powell in order to capture various aspects of the organizational change in the context of their impact on four characteristics of an organization: structure, culture, strategy and process. Ashworth, et al., (2005) observed that under the implementation of newly developed organizational policy the three mentioned isomorphic forces affected these organizational characteristics differently. Ashworth, et al., (2005) observed that the forces that influenced the organizational characteristics (both of strategy and process) most are coercive forces. Mimetic forces strongly influence process and strategy as compare to normative forces; similarly, normative forces strongly influence the organizational culture. The coercive force amongst the three mentioned isomorphic forces have strongest impact on homogeneity (isomorphic change) in organizational filed of public services organization in Libya. Through study, Rasheed, et al., (2016) observed that organizational structure and cultures were highly resistant towards three isomorphic pressures. Further, Rasheed, et al., (2016) observed that isomorphic forces more influence the public organizations as compared

to non-profit and private organizations.

In addition to that, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) discussed the homogenization process within the organizational field and defined the organizational field as such group of many organizations that collectively constitute a known area of organizational life. In fact, organizational field only exist to extent to which they can be institutionally structuralised or defined. There are four aspects that are involved in structuration; increasing interaction amongst organizations within field, emerging well-defined coalition patterns and inter-organizational domination structures, developing mutual awareness amongst participants of a group of organizations about their common involvement in an enterprise and increasing information load in field with which the organization must contend (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). After the completion of structuration within organization field, homogenization process begins. In the context of isomorphism, the homogenization process is described as a constraining procedure that enforces one unit of population to show resemblance with other units facing the same environmental conditions (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). The examples through which organizational fields can be best described include group of public telecommunication organizations in Libya. As discussed earlier that humanization process occurs when organizational field structure changes from diverse activities of a group of different organizations to legitimised, established, overriding and homogenised policy. This homogenised form of organizational field is described by Ashworth, Delbridge and Boyne (2005) as conformity which in context of compliance, is a state in which organizational moves become align with isomorphic forces within organizational field, or in context of convergence is the degree to which organizations within field start to resemble one another even more closely with passage of time (Ashworth, Delbridge and Boyne, 2005).

After the establishment of homogenised policies, these are legitimized by professional structures, associations and state and act as a model for both existing entities and new entrants within the organizational field. Selznick (1996) viewed legitimacy as a driving and sustained force which is not only a mean of inertia but also a summons for justification of specific practices and forms. Therefore, there is a need to review the internal legitimacy and power structure of the public organization in Libya that would help to reduce extra power to forceful implementation of HPWS. Verbeeten, et al., (2015) indicated that organizations often seek legitimacy because they are usually rewarded for showing consistency with legitimate practices instead of offering quality products. For example, public telecommunication organizations in Libya comply with officially endorsed standards for longer time period for the maintenance of

their legitimate officially endorsed status as a services organization rather for accomplishment of instructional ends to fulfil internal organizational requirements through providing required skills, opportunity and motivating employees toward the vision of the organization to successful response to the political and competitive pressure. The major reason for the putting legitimacy power of manager is that the centralized political structure of Libya which is why management use their power to satisfy the government.

Banfield and Key (2008) stated that whenever there is need to set SHRM either in accordance with high-performance HPWS or traditionally (inner fit for personnel management), inner context and culture should be considered on priority because they are most influential factors in this regard. Instead of following HPWS principles, SHRM will tend to focus on reducing cost if perceives workforce as an expensive asset (Brewster et al., 2010; Katou and Budhwar, 2010). The situation, however, differs when firms want to develop a strategy to achieve a competitive advantage. Position and role of HPWS in such situation become significant as now it is responsible to formulate and implement HPWS principles, develop employees' skills and enable them to involve in decision-making process (Brewster, 2006). When management shows a positive attitude towards employees (when employees are perceived as key resource of attaining sustainable competitive advantage) then SHRM tends to follow HPWS principles to manage the people (Yeung, Warner and Rowley, 2008). This is because HPWS principles elaborate on how to treat and value the people (Huang and Gamble, 2011). It has been identified that socio-cultural factors and their influence on the implemented practices related to HPWS) has explained what the unique features are of socio-cultural and educational factors in Libya can create challenges in the adoption of HPWS system. For example, national culture is based on power distance that gives more power to political authorities who can take decisions for saving personal interests. Like rigid leaders are more interested to make money from those public projects which are giving big kickbacks. Furthermore, they are helping to recruit those people who are not suitable and competent for a specific job. It has been found that a lot of competent employees have left their jobs because of political instability, low safety, and financial crises during violent conflict. Employees also suggested that even though the ones who will be terminated are their colleagues, but they are discouraging other workers from performing due to political support they have and due to lack of fear about punishment. Employees also pointed out that there are young workers who are motivated, skilled, and educated and are ready for adopting the latest practices. Therefore, AMO theory suggested that to successfully manage any change in the organization the management should improve

employee ability, motivation and also give the opportunity to use their skills through involvement in decision making. Performance management is described as the continuous process of measuring, identifying, and developing the performance of individual workers and their teams and bringing their performance in line with the objectives of the organization (Aguinis, 2013). This is more than just developing and implementing performance appraisal system (Fletcher, 2001). Performance management represents a repetitive cycle which starts with planning about the performance of the employees involving also monitoring the results of their performance (Aguinis, 2013). Employees guide this continuous process as they are able to set the goals of the employees, coach them, and provide feedback consistently (Armstrong & Taylor, 2017). It is important to integrate the HRM practices to create the synergic effect so that the strategic goals of the organization can be realized (Lepak, et al. 2006). This means that the performance of the employees should be planned, monitored, and evaluated continuously around the goals of the organization. Therefore, the focus of the performance management system should be on ensuring that employees perform in line with the goals of the organization (Fletcher & Williams, 1996; den Hartog, et al. 2004). Therefore, it would be possible to say that opportunity, skills and motivation of employees create perceptions among employees and management as shown in the figure below.

6.2 The Effect of AMO on Employees Perceptions

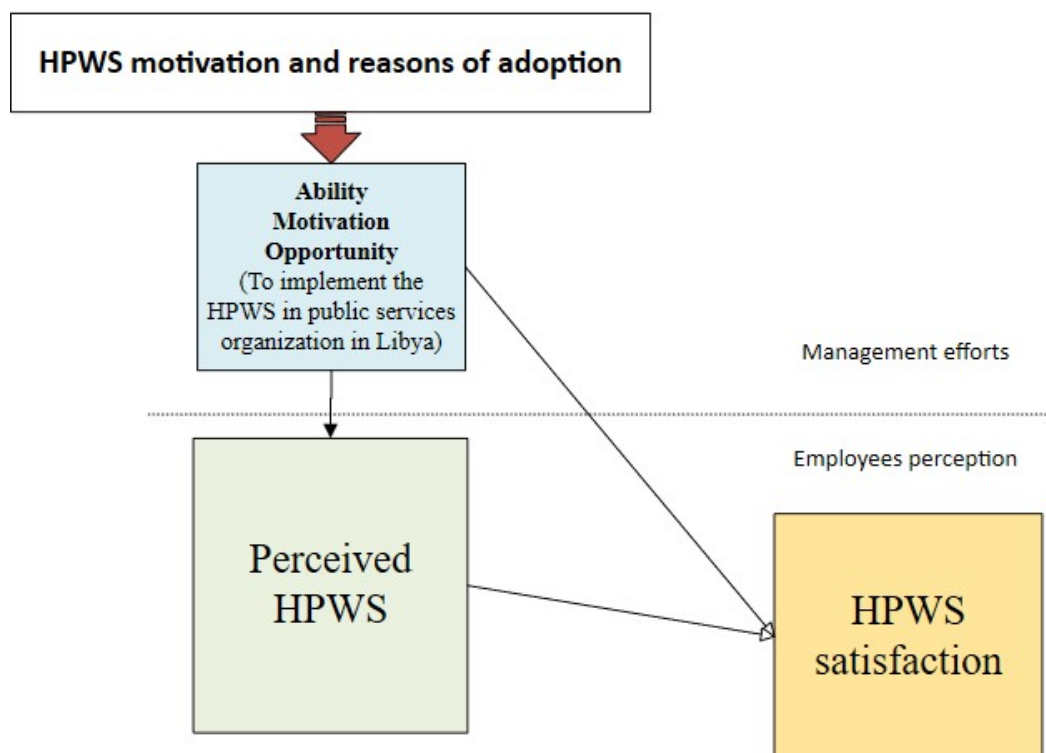


Figure 6-3: The effect of AMO on employees perceptions

6.2.1 Ability and Performance

Ability here is regarded as competencies related to HRM which are vital for successfully implementing HRM practices in the organization. Brewster & Larsen (2000) observed that it is damaging if the HR responsibilities are delegated to employees who possess little to no knowledge about managing relationships with colleagues, relevant legislations, and problem resolution mechanisms. Whittaker & Marchington (2005) and Hailey (et al. 2005) observed that the competencies and skills of employees in HRM practices are not up to the mark and that there is general lack of training in this regard which negatively influences the effectiveness of employees. There is also a general lack of specialist knowledge on part of employees concerning HRM (Lowe, 1992; Hall & Torrington, 1998). McGovern (et al. 1997) argued that employees also lack the information that is vital for executing HRM-related responsibilities. It is generally believed that training will be helpful in developing competencies to perform HRM practices. Some researchers have highlighted the need for systematic and continuous training in HRM practices (McGovern, 1999; Cunningham & Hyman, 1999). However, they also acknowledged that there is a lack of sufficient training courses for issues related to HRM (Harris, et al. 2002; Lowe, 1992; Bond & Wise, 2003). Such ability is vital to effectively execute HRM tasks. If one lacks the knowledge and skills required in this regard, then it would be impossible to bring about the desired results through HRM regardless of the level of motivation.

6.2.2 Opportunity and Performance

Even when the individuals possess skills for executing HRM practices, the organization must generate opportunities for them to utilize their skills and execute HRM-related practices (Lepak, et al. 2006). Opportunities can be represented through contextual or environmental mechanisms which bring about action (Siemsen, et al. 2008). The effect of the work environment is that of an enabler and supportive mechanism (Boxall & Purcell, 2003). The ‘opportunity’ in existing studies has been operationalized through various factors such as leadership process, person/system fit, job design, and situational constraints (Waldman, 1994). It has also been regarded as an engagement process for employees to solve problems (Purcell, et al. 2003). The study explained the perceptions and expectations of HR managers who are actively involved in the implementation of the system at the workplace. These managers discussed the way they can increase the interactive communication, increase the supportive procedures and rules, encourage involvement of the employees, enhance teamwork, promote

fair justice practices, encourage the use of technology, support competent employees, and enhance the culture of knowledge sharing, provide training programs and organization support, promote self- efficacy, introduce rewards culture, and promote readiness for HPWS. They suggested that the political involvement should be limited, and the power of all decisions should be given to the heads of the department without any interference from ministry or politicians. They also suggested that young people should be recruited who are educated, motivated, skilled, and ready for bringing and adopting the practices which can increase the performance of the workforce. There is lack of feedback and lack of two-way communication that would restrict the fair opportunity of skills development and lack of motivation of employees therefore, there is need to give opportunities for employees to participate in decision making. When it comes to employees the researchers argue that the opportunity should be realized as operational or situational constraints (Mathieu, et al. 1992; Blumberg & Pringle, 1982). Blumberg & Pringle (1982) regard opportunity as reflecting organizational policies, assistance, time availability, procedures, task preparation, and requisite services and help from others. Translating this into the arena of employees with respect to HRM, the ‘opportunity’ can be described as covering different aspects. Firstly, good support should be provided by HRM professionals to employees. Secondly, sufficient time should be given to employees to be involved in the implementation of HRM policies. Thirdly, there should be clear definition and allocation of roles so that there is no ambiguity left and the procedures and policies should, therefore, be supportive and clear.

Additionally, employees may also face competing priorities and conflicting demands between HRM and operational tasks. This can give rise to problems related to capacity (Whittaker & Marchington, 2003; Hailey, et al. 2005). The constant demand of dealing with different problems, both personnel-related and operations related, can give rise to a perception that the role of line manager is overburdened with responsibilities (McConville, 2006; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003; Harris, et al. 2002). Often the pressure associated with realizing business targets causes issues for employees to devote ample of time to consult and communicate with subordinates (McConville, 2006; Cunningham & Hyman, 1999; McGovern, et al. 1997). If there is a complaint from employees about lack of time to execute HRM responsibilities and overburdening of HRM and operational roles, then it indicates their limited opportunity to execute HRM tasks.

Therefore, both good procedures and good policies are vital to creating sufficient opportunity. It is imperative to understand the perception and needs of both stakeholders to develop healthy

discussion, support, and openness for change. In Libyan, public sector, organizations are more familiar with low involvement of workforce in decision making, much resistance by workforce towards any change, high politics in organizations, transactional or authoritative style of leadership, low level of orientation and future planning. It is therefore imperative to understand the thoughts of employees and managers about the adoption of HPWS that give opportunities for employees to use their skills. The purpose of the current research was also to understand the perception of change managers about the effective implementation of HPWS in telecommunication companies. Moreover, it is also to understand whether the perception of managers is similar to that of employees or are there any differences. Therefore, it has been identified that there is lack of ability, motivation, and opportunities for employees which create negative resistance among employees and management that restrict the successful implementation of the HPWS in public service organization of Libya.

In a nutshell, the ‘opportunity’ represents the combination of situational support from human resource professionals, clear cut rules, procedures, and policies concerning HRM roles, and the capacity of spending time on execution of HRM responsibilities efficiently. Employees who are given such opportunities for performing HRM practices are expected to be efficient to implement such practices. However, it is argued that it is not sufficient to merely possess the opportunity, it is also vital to ensure the actual performance since one may not possess the knowledge and skills to perform even when one has the opportunity.

6.2.3 Motivation and Performance

The last aspect of motivation and ability features the fact that a capable and motivated workforce ought to be urged to take an interest in decision making with the goal that they can perform better. So as to urge employees to perform better, they should be given the responsibility, authority and chance to perform better and resolve the issues by taking decisions all alone in the telecommunications sector of Libya. As indicated by senior workers, they were not as much influenced and motivated to upgrade performance and skill level as they are presently after HPWS framework reception on account of biased selection and recruitment procedures, equivalent prizes for both unproductive and productive employees and preference while assigning organizational duties in past. Collective societies tend to place more prominent emphasis on attributed status and socio-political associations as criteria for enlistment rather than individual abilities and skills. Collective societies place more focused on good relationship, seniority, loyalty, equity and cooperation along with distribution of

remunerations.

It has been argued previously that in the absence of ability and capacity, the opportunity and motivation would not bring much to the performance although the latter two are really significant for better performance. Despite the reward system which stimulates the implementation of HRM by employees, if the line management does not possess capacity and ability to implement HRM practices then such a system would frustrate them as they wouldn't be able to execute the tasks and, therefore would not be able to gain reward adding thereby into their frustration. When it comes to personal incentives, the employees still exhibit less interest in it as they are not convinced that they should be spending their time on HRM activities (Renwick, 2003; Brewster & Larsen, 2000). When the wider institutional incentives are taken into account the role of HRM is usually not included according to performance objectives of the managers and the evaluation of employees is usually done on achieving the targets related to sales or profits instead of areas about people management (McGovern, et al. 1997). The lack of these extrinsic elements can also negatively influence the motivation of employees for executing HRM activities and thus they would be likely to prioritize their operational tasks over HRM tasks (McGovern, et al. 1997; Harris, et al. 2002). Whittaker & Marchington (2003) observed that since there are other pressing priorities faced by employees compared to management of people, it is likely that they would take the issue about people management less seriously compared to service or production goals. This explains the results of poor implementation of HRM as the employees do not see the advantages of implementing HRM even when such advantages exist.

Many organizations also lack a comprehensive rewards scheme for their employees. In knowledge-driven industries the role of the employees involves clear HRM responsibilities which are also being monitored on how the staff is being appraised (Swart & Kinnie, 2003; Despres & Hiltrop, 1995). The fact that such managers are able to implement HRM activities, their motivation will enhance when they are adequately being rewarded and hence it increases the effectiveness of their implementation. Proof additionally features the negative connection among collectivism and the utility of performance and evaluation for deciding the individual necessities of training. All such values and norms rooted in collective culture oppose HPWS which begin from individualistic societies which deal individual level remunerations, individual duty regarding results, autonomy, professional success and in which people get status from achievement. The Libyan community is likewise a collective culture which upgrades the collective obstruction against the HPWS. For instance, the study indicated that

the expanded obstruction by government specialists postpone decisions, with respect to transfers, punishment, recruitment, and work environment changes. The inflexible guidelines, rules, and administrative strategies are causing a deferral in the working environment changes. The telecommunication organizations in Libya commonly have a top-down correspondence culture, high political inclusion, and nepotism. Along these lines, those components are major barriers for the usage of HPWS.

Moreover, the findings also show that the culture of the organization should encourage rewarding the workers and promote the ones who possess extraordinary talent compared to other workers. Most managers wanted to terminate the workers who took employment through political reference and were thus performing poorly and also resisted to any change. They wanted to create a platform for the ones who could create a difference by giving their efforts for providing a significant performance of the organization. Finally, participants also recommended that national culture, political system, and organizational culture must provide support to the workers who are skilful, competent, motivated, and are contributing towards the overall performance of the organization. The HPWS can only be implemented successfully when employees are highly motivated and are ready for improving their personal performance, are ready to get opportunities of career development, give their hundred per cent, are ready to learn from training opportunities, and develop their skills to create innovation.

Having discussed the research framework Chapter eight now discusses the main conclusions from the study, the contribution it makes to knowledge and the limitations of the research.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the conclusions that were reached from the study findings and how the objectives of the study were fulfilled. After this discussion the chapter then discuss the contribution and the originality of the study , and then it represents the study recommendations , ending with the limitations of the research and what future research on this topic might do.

Organisations in service sector are continuously utilizing HR-related practices so that they can enhance their informational, distributional, interactional, and procedural practices. They are also utilizing such practices so that fairness, employee work engagement, service quality, performance based reward, idea generation, knowledge exchange, and high performance standard are being promoted. This all feeds into the objective of promoting the productivity and ultimately the profit of the organization. Although such HPWS are beneficial and fruitful for service sector and for manufacturing organizations but many organizations are unable to implement, adopt, and sustain such HPWS practices. The level of qualification, knowledge exchange, expertise, cynicism, nepotism, employee commitment, organizational support, and employee satisfaction may differ from one employer to another, one organization type to another, and culture to culture. Therefore, it may be argued that each HPWS practice is not offering same support type as was offered by both developing and developed nations.

7.2 Achievement of the Research Objectives

The first objective of the current study was reviewing the literature on HPWS and its usage in different situations including different political, socio-cultural, and economic elements which may influence the outcomes and implementation of HPWS. The review found extant studies have been conducted for adopting, implementing, and sustaining HPWS practices in private sector organisations of the telecommunication sector in western countries. Such private telecommunication sector organisations operate with organisational objectives of competitive services, differentiation, new idea generation, value-added services, high-quality standards, and invention & innovation. Therefore, adopting HR-related practices as well as technology changes is easier for workers who are experienced, highly educated, skilled, trained, and target-oriented. On the other hand, the organisations in public sector in developing countries have limited resources and more accountability, inflexible wage system, high obedience for rules and laws, work overload, limited expertise, cynicism & nepotism, and political control and influence. Therefore, the efforts of the workers, organisational support, employee response, employee perception, communication & collaboration, and employee experiences vary

regarding adoption and implementation of HPWS particularly in developing countries. There is a dearth of literature on understanding the type of HPWS which is being implemented in public sector organisation in the developing countries. The literature on the benefits of adopting HPWS is limited in service organisations of developing countries such as Libya. There is also a dearth of literature on the type of HPWS which has been adopted by public sector telecommunication companies in Libya and the challenges they face in such adoption.

Thus, another objective of the study is exploring the way whereby particular socio-cultural elements influence the adoption of HPWS in Libya with reference to trans-cultural differences. It is very hard to adopt HPWS without understanding the role played by socio-cultural elements in the adoption of HPWS and the relationship of such elements with different HPWS implementation challenges. The Libyan culture is strongly associated with the organisational culture of public sector organisations. The telecommunication organizations in public sector work under the telecommunication ministry, which works and operates on the basis of top-down communication, rigid policies & rules, limited resources, centralization, authoritative style of management, tall structure, high chain of command, and administrative structure. Such features of organisational culture and structure of telecommunication ministry, directly and indirectly, influence the routine tasks of organisations, organisational decisions, culture of the organisation, its HR practices, and organisational performance particularly in Libyan public sector.

In the context of socio-cultural elements and its relation with organisational elements, it has been observed that Libya represents a culture of political involvement, power distance, low social justice level, and collectivism. These socio-cultural elements have increased the challenges to effectively implement the HPWS in the telecommunication sector. For example, rigid rules/regulations/policies, centralisation, and top-down approach to communication from telecommunication ministry have resulted in major delays in timely decision making which have negatively influenced the future HR planning of the telecommunication companies.

The HR decisions concerning the budget for training, recruiting more people, increase in salaries of employees cannot be taken without first seeking the approval of telecommunication ministry. It has, therefore negatively influenced the HPWS practices in Libyan telecommunication organisations. Although due to implementation of such selection system and online recruitment, hiring of the majority of workers takes place according to fair job criteria, still some workers were hired on political grounds and are thus not performing well. They continue to have political support due to which nepotism is taking place in the organisations. These employees are becoming a source of negative motivation among the

workers of the telecommunication companies in Libya. Due to power being concentrated at the top level of the hierarchy, the relationship with political leaders and social ties with them on the basis of kinship and friendship is causing nepotism to spread in the telecommunication organisations. Resultantly, it is affecting the overall effectiveness of HPWS practices in Libyan telecommunication companies. Moreover, it has been observed that due to political instability, violent conflicts, murders, kidnapping, and other illegal activities have also increased. As such, many workers and their families have moved out of Libya and the investment has also fallen down in the country. Therefore, the overall profitability and growth of the telecommunication sector are declined and such organisations started to spend lower budget on training and development of workers. They are then also unable to provide sufficient financial rewards to their workers.

There are various key elements and challenges which negatively impact the HPWS in the Libyan telecommunication sector. Due to control by telecommunication ministry on the entire budget of public sector telecommunication organisations, there are considerable budget constraints involved at middle management level for training and rewarding the workforce. This has negatively affected the potential to develop new competencies, career development initiatives, motivation for knowledge and ideas, and customer satisfaction as well. The control, power, and influence of politicians in the industry have affected the procedural justice in the public sector organisations. Resultantly, the HR department has also been unable to create an accountable and transparent system.

For example, it has been observed that the connection between fair reward and performance of workers is weak because there are employees who are receiving salaries based on their political influence due to which reward does not work as the means of drawing performance from them. It is also because they are not skilled enough to perform their job; therefore, rewarding them would not bring out any performance from them.

Consequently, other employees are bearing the load of work. Findings show that the working environment of telecommunication companies is not supportive as only a few workers are competent to perform their duties and as such, they are also bearing the burden of the ones who are only getting salaries because of the political influence. It has been observed that the HPWS practices are being negatively influenced by the organisational characteristics: fixed financial rewards, high job security, top management support, political support, focus on personal interests, and high organisational politics.

Another objective of the study is understanding the nature and existence of prevailing HPWS in two telecommunication organisations of Libya including also the rationale of the

organisation and expectations from these systems. It was found out that competent workers are satisfied with the implementation of HPWS system because it enhances accountability and transparency by creating fairness in dividing the workload of staff. Employees agreed that the performance of the evaluation system has improved with time as competent managers are being hired at key designations. Findings also showed that such skilled, qualified, and competent managers support the members of the staff which increase the motivation of the staff and engagement at work. Due to the addition of skilled human capital, a team culture has been fostered which has increased the skills, ideas, service quality, and knowledge for new and existing customers. However, it has also been found out that there does not exist any proper system of feedback against unnecessary transfer and there is also a lack of proper online feedback system because some managers and staff members have political support. Therefore, decisions are often taken on the grounds of nepotism.

Moreover, employees also pointed out that there must be an online feedback system which should be connected with the performance appraisal system. Therefore, employees can register their suggestions and complaints to increase the improvement and transparency in the existing performance appraisal system. Other workers suggested that decision powers about skills development and training budget must be transferred to departmental heads for taking timely decisions and maintaining the effectiveness of HPWS in both telecommunication organisations. It has also been suggested by the managers that they must further increase the involvement of employees; otherwise, it would be tough to gain full benefits of the current HPWS practices. Both the managers and the employees recommended that lower involvement of employees, communication gap, and favouritism are some of the leading elements which must be removed from the roots.

The public sector organisations are marked with limited wage rate, an overload of work, nepotism, political influence and control, the involvement of employee in culture, and are also authoritative in nature with respect to the chain of command. As a result, there can be variance with respect to elements such as experience, the response rate of employees, organizational support, and overall implementation of HPWS. There are certain decisions concerning the development of public sector organisations which keep on pending for a long time due to the need for approval from high authority. This could include even basic decisions such as training of employees, salary increase, and recruitment.

The final objective of the study is a comparison of perception among employees and managers about the HPWS in the Libyan telecommunication industry. The maximum possible benefits of HPWS cannot be realized without taking into account the perception of managers and

employees. Both the employees and managers had similar perceptions most of the times they recommended making public sector telecommunication industry free from political influence like the private sector or else it would result in negative long term effect against the growth of the telecommunication industry in the country. Further, they also pointed out that political influence has negatively influenced the recruitment, budgeting, approval, and adoption of new technology. By shifting the powers to the heads of department, such employees can be selected who are expert, focused, motivated, dedicated, and committed to the public sector telecommunication sector of Libya. Managers also suggested that national culture, political system, and organisational culture must be aligned with the purpose of creating such practices and values which can create support for high organisational performance and competent human capital.

The employees and managers also recommended shifting the power and control of telecommunication sector from ministry to heads of departments so that immediate decisions can be taken when necessary about hiring and firing of workers, rewards culture, and maintaining the effectiveness of HPWS. There is a handful number of managers who are not happy with the implementation of online recruitment and selection because it would hinder their possibility of recommending family members, competent friends, and friends of friends. Some managers complained that their involvement is low in employee transfer as per the needs of the department and targets because the HR manager is responsible for taking such decisions. On the other hand, there is negative perspective among employees regarding the current performance appraisal system as it is not aligned with the online feedback system. Nevertheless, the management and workforce is overall happy with the current HPWS system because it has at least fostered openness for change, enhanced teamwork, brought efficiency, improved innovation, and increased the effectiveness of operations. Further, it has also given rise to knowledge sharing culture within the organisation and has also improved accountability and transparency.

7.3 Contribution and Originality of the Study

The current literature on the subject has increasingly focused on adopting and implementing the HPWS practices, particularly in private sector organisations where the level of organisational politics, resistance to adopt, uncertainty, culture of knowledge hoarding, political interferences, rigid rules, and centralisation is lower compared to the organisations of public sector (Chang and Chen 2011, Muduli 2015, Pruneda 2015, Mazzei, Flynn et al. 2016, Jyoti and Rani 2017). Furthermore, majority of the existing studies on HPWS were usually

conducted in developing countries in the context of manufacturing organisations focused usually on employers' perspective (Boxall and Macky 2009, Fu, Flood et al. 2017) .

Even though various HPWS are advantageous for both the manufacturing and service sector organisations, it is essential to note that not every organisation can implement the system fully and completely. This is due to various factors which influence and affect the adoption of HPWS such as degree of qualification and expertise, nepotism, the structure of the organisation, knowledge exchange, culture, employee uncertainty, and type of the organisation. Therefore, it is to be contended that all HPWS practices cannot reap the same kind of benefits in any environment of culture. For example, it has been observed that the power, control, and effect of governmental officials on telecommunication ministry has lowered the level of procedural, interactional, and distributive justice practices. The current study has addressed such gaps and conducted the study in the context of Libyan public sector telecommunication companies. The study also discussed how political influence, national culture, governmental involvement, and collectivism has influenced the implementation of HPWS practices and undermined the effectiveness of HPWS in Libya.

The implications and findings of existing studies cannot be transferred from developed countries into developing countries. The reason behind this is the supportive nature of socio-economic and socio-political institutions of the developed countries which is not entirely so in the developing countries. Therefore, there is a higher level of employee support and socialisation for HPWS practices. There is also limited understanding about the adoption of HPWS with respect to socio-cultural and political elements which has enhanced the level of political influence and involvement, ambiguity, uncertainty, centralisation, rules and regulations, and top-down communication approach. The current study is one of the first which has particularly explored the adoption and implementation problems concerning public sector organisations in a developing country. The study also comprehensively discussed the way political involvement and national culture can influence the restructuring process during the implementation and adoption of HPWS practices in public sector organisations. The current study is unique in the sense that it discusses the perception of not just the managers or the employees but of both of them. The current study thoroughly probed into the expectations of employees and managers with regards to adoption of HPWS practices.

For example, managers are not much happy about some HPWS as it has lowered down their involvement for referring any person to the recruitment whom they believe is highly competent for the job whereas employees are not happy because their performance appraisal is not connected with online feedback system resulting thereby in lack of positive feedback being

shown on their performance report. This effort of including the perspective of both the workers and the managers has increased the originality of the study.

The other contribution of the study is about using the institutional theory with respect to adoption and implementation of HPWS in the context of Libyan telecommunication companies of the public sector. The study offered a research framework which as significantly increased the chief elements of institutional theory such as coercive isomorphism, mimetic isomorphism, and normative isomorphism using the results of the current study. The mimetic isomorphism discussed the macro-level elements such as uncertainty and ambiguity level (cultural element), institutional and political conflict. For example, the findings of the current study showed that Libyan society is collectivist in nature due to which it has high uncertainty avoidance and lower planning level about long-term orientation. Therefore, employees who have political influence and power are against implementing such practices because such practices negatively influence their personal interest. Moreover, the implementation of HPWS is reducing the extent of political involvement in recruitment and selection of workers which is why some political forces are also against the implementation of HPWS. Due to the influence of political leaders on telecommunication ministry, the Libyan telecommunication sector is marked with nepotism and is ultimately deteriorating the development of this sector.

The coercive isomorphism involved the rigid rules and regulations, high concentration of power at the top, degree of enforcement, top-down communication, governmental leadership, and degree of enforcement. These coercive forces negatively influence and impact the implementation of HPWS in Libyan telecommunication companies of the public sector. For example, it has been found out that there are rigid rules and regulations with regards to budget approval, the appointment of fresh candidate, promotion, and an increase in salaries. The power concerning these decisions is for the most part concentrated at top of the telecommunication ministry. Due to this reason, heads of department have little power to take timely decision. This results in time delay and thus negatively influences the adoption and implementation of HPWS. Libyan culture is marked with an authoritative style of leadership. These leaders are happier in issuing commands and are fond of power concentrated in their hands. Telecommunication ministry is responsible for regulating the public sector telecommunication organisations in Libya. These organisations are operating in an environment of complicated rules, rigid regulations, limited resources and budget, and top-down communication as well as a highly centralized administrative system. These attributes are negatively affecting the culture of the organisations, the recruitment in the organisations, routine tasks, organisational decisions, HR practices, and overall performance of the organisations.

The normative isomorphism involves professional associations, experience and networks, education and skills. Managers who work on key posts are highly skilled, educated, and experienced. Therefore, their support level is vital for the adoption of HPWS in the Libyan public sector telecommunication organisations. However, the employees who have a low education level, are lowly skilled and experienced, they tend to create an environment against the implementation of HPWS practices. Therefore, it is important that managers are significantly involved in the socialisation process to create a positive perception among all stakeholders for fully implementing the HPWS in Libyan public sector telecommunication organisations.

7.4 Study Recommendations

According to the results of the study, several recommendations for telecommunication industry are being presented concerning the overall functioning and governing of the industry, its management, employees, and supervisors. These recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation for policy

- The recommendations presented in the current study can be reviewed by the ministry of telecommunication and subsequently, the rules and policies can be designed by the ministry so that HPWS practices can be fully implemented and benefits can be achieved.
- It is also recommended that telecommunication industry should transfer the control and power to the heads of departments so that they can make decisions which require immediate attention such as with respect to recruitment, budgets, increase in salary, and promotion. This will also reduce political interference in decision making.
- Due to power retention at the top level, there are social ties of political leaders within the telecommunication industry due to which nepotism is thriving in the industry thereby affecting the merit-based recruitment and promotion. This has also significantly affected the effectiveness of HPWS practices in the telecommunication sector of Libya. Therefore, it is vital that political influence is eliminated from the industry for it to grow.
- The telecommunication ministry should also ensure that political pressure is not mounted on the workers and that politically recruited workers do not affect the performance of the merit-based hired workers. It is because of the lack of performance among politically recruited workers can significantly influence the performance and motivation of other workers.

- The telecommunication ministry and the political system must support meritocracy in the telecommunication companies and should encourage the development of independent rules, procedures, decentralisation, transparency, and safe working environment for the workers of telecommunication industry.
- It is also recommended that the extent of enforcement by following the rigid rules and regulations must be eliminated and upward communication must be initiated so that organisational flexibility can be created and work-related changes can be implemented.

Recommendation for top management

- It is also recommended to add a system of internal feedback because it has been observed that employees are unable to have their complaints addressed as they lack the forum on which they can place such complaints. Addressing their complaints will enhance their performance.
- The addition of feedback system will also bring other benefits such as the collection of data about complaints regarding performance evaluation, employee promotion, employee transfer, financial/non-financial rewards, and other issues of the workplace which negatively affect the HPWS practices.
- Employees also suggested that there must be a supportive environment for the workers who perform extraordinarily well compared to other employees. Further, the workers who are performing extraordinarily well should also be given more financial rewards than the workers who are not performing well.
- Both the managers and employees agreed that there is a communication gap between employer and employees, lack of employee involvement in the decision-making process, and an abundance of favouritism. This is undermining the adoption and implementation of HPWS. It is also recommended that enhanced interactive communication must be added between employer and employee so that they can report their concerns to the top level and resultantly enhance the HR-related decision-making process.

7.5 Limitations of the Study

The research discussed various useful recommendations with respect to HPWS practices in the Libyan public sector telecommunication companies. However, like other academic research, they are normally associated with some limitations. The limitations which faced this research were taken into consideration to make sure they do not affect the research findings. However,

they could be beneficial for future research in the area to work on tackling them. The limitations of the research are as follows:

- The study collected cross-sectional data, at only one point in time, and so was unable to show how the HPWS may be implemented and what effect on performance they might have over time. This was because of the nature of this research being limited in time; future studies should consider monitoring the implementation of HPWS from the start and continuing over time, to show more precise effect.
- Another limitation of this research is the fact that this research adopted a qualitative case study which was based on relatively small sample, and surveys with larger sample size which collect quantitative data may show more difference in views. However, the intention of this research was not to generalise statistically, The reason for adopting an intensive case study approach is to provide a much more detailed and explanatory sight about the phenomenon of HPWS in a new context, by exploring both the perceptions of employers and employees, and explore how they think and feel about HPWS, applying this strategy offered the right tool to explore these perceptions deeply.
- Gender representativeness is another limitation of this research. Most of research participants in the study were male, the researcher could not do much about this matter, because of the high culture of masculinity orientation in the Libyan society. However, this could not affect the results of this study, because most of the workers in the telecommunications sector are male employees.
- Finally, the current study took into account the socio-political and socio-cultural elements which are abundantly found in public sector telecommunication companies but may not be so abundant in private sector telecommunication companies. Consequently, they may not be as influential on private sector companies as they are on public sector telecommunication companies. Therefore, this represents a unique point or point of difference between the two types of organisations with respect to the adoption and implementation of HPWS. It would be interesting to contrast and compare the findings and results in different settings of sectors.

Propositions for Further Research:

Based on the results of this research, many possible future directions have been highlighted. An important result of conducting this study is a set of new questions that can propose other

ideas for more research in the area of HPWS. Therefore, this research proposes the following topics for future studies.

This research in this field can be extended either by using the same methodological approach or by adopting alternative methodological approaches, but in other Libyan firms and sectors as the results of this approach may help to see if results would vary depending on the studied sector. HPWS is quite a new concept in the Libyan context. Therefore, conducting more research on different kinds of organisations, for example, studies can explore different organization types like profits and non-profits, public and private, as well as the service and manufacturing sectors. This will be beneficial for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of HPWS and the mechanism of its effect on performance.

Due to the current situation in Libya and some other similar countries which face wars and turmoil, political instability and wars can have a significant influence on the nature of the managerial work; the research goes on to suggest that there is a need to understand the effect of such factors on the implementation of new managerial practices in similar contexts. Such an understanding will provide more contribution to the existing HPWS literature.

More research is also needed to shed light on the characteristics and influence of implementing HPWS and the role of line managers on specific performance measures like financial performance. More research is, therefore, needed from a micro-level perspective, by focusing on the internal organizational characteristics like the conflicts of interests inside organisations on the implementation of HPWS. It is also recommended for future research to investigate negative sides of implementing HPWS in societies with different socio-cultural specifications. This may allow organisations to improve their strategies' outcomes through effective implementation.

Finally, another future research preposition could be the impact of technological advancements on managerial practices in sectors that have greater use of technology, more reliance on an HRM system to deliver knowledge, and co-production of services by workers and customers like the telecommunications sector. Thus, further investigation in this area may enrich the debate in the HPWS literature.

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APPENDIXES



9.1 Interview Questions for Employers

Section (A): About the interviewee and the company

- What is your job title?
- Can you tell me about your background and your current function in the company? (length of time in company and role)
- Have you implemented High Performance Work Practices in your organisation?
- Which HPWS practices have your organisation implemented? and why?
- How do you think your top management's approach towards HPWS in your organisation?

Section (B) current HPWS practices

- Could you describe briefly how the following practices are implemented in your firm? (These practices were chosen according to interviewees answers)
 - Recruitment and selection
 - Training and development
 - Performance appraisal and evaluation
 - Rewards
- How were these practices conveyed/communicated to managers and staff?
- How do employees perceive the HPWS practices used?
- Who is responsible for implementing (HPWS) practices?
- Could you please describe how these practices were implemented in this org. and what went well/ what could have been improved?
- Does your company use different (HPWS) for different groups of employees? Why? In what ways?
- What do HPWS mean in the company?
- What do you think these practices designed to do?

- Do you have any stories about barriers to introducing and implementing these practices at your organization/ how these barriers were overcome?

Section (C) Reasons for adopting HPWS practices:

- Why do you think your company applies HPWS practices?
- What was the rationale for choosing this particular practices to be in use in your organization?
- How are HPWS practices designed?
- Who has the responsibility for designing these practices? Individual/committee (who are the members of the committee?)
- How often are your HPWS practices reviewed?

Section (D) Contextual factors:

- What are the key contextual factors that you think affect HPWS practices in the organisation?
- How do you think Libyan culture affects HPWS implementation? How?
(there was a special focus on Wasta in this question because most of the interviewees indicated the significant role Wasta plays in HPWS)
- How do you feel your practices match with those in the telecom sector (similar or different, and why?)

Section (E) The impact of HPWS practices:

- What effect have these practices had upon your organisation/firm performance? Why/why not?
- What do you think of these practices (do they motivate you, increase your commitment etc.)? If not, why?
- Generally, how do you feel about HPWS in terms of their usefulness and importance, how they could be made more effective.

Summary and Conclusion: Would you like to add anything? Is there anything that in your opinion has not been covered within the previous questions?

9.2 Interview Questions for Employees

Section (A): About the interviewee

What is your job title?

How long have you worked for the company? what is your background?

Could you please tell me a little about the nature of your job?

Section (B) current nature of HPWS practices in the company

Have you your company implemented High Performance Work Practices?

Which HPWS practices have your company implemented?

What do HPWS mean to you?

What do you think they are designed to do?

Do you have any stories about barriers to introducing and implementing these practices at your organization/ how these barriers were overcome?

Are you involved in implementing these practices with others to any extent (IF YES, in what ways? How do you feel about it)?

Section (C) Reasons for adopting HPWS practices:

Why do you think your company apply HPWS practices?

Why do you think your company applies these particular practices?

Section (D) The impact of HPWS practices:

What impact do you think the practices in use have on (a) your performance and (b) the wider company performance? Why is this?

How do you think that HPWS practices can be made more effective? (if they can) – any cultural impact etc.?

Generally, as an employee how do you feel about HPWS in terms of their usefulness and importance, and any problems in their adoption?

How fair do you feel the implementation of these practices is? (How are they judged/measured at an individual level?)

Section (E) Contextual factors:

What are the contextual factors affecting the implementation of HPWS in your company?

Do you think Libyan culture affects HPWS implementation? How?

How do you feel your practices match with those in the telecom sector (similar or different, and why?) IF they have experience of other sectors, how do they compare with that?

Summary and Conclusion:

Would you like to add anything to discuss? Is there anything that in your opinion has not been covered within previous questions?