RESEARCH ARTICLE

DOES HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES AFFECT PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT? AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN PALESTINE TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between human resource management practices on perceived organizational support in telecommunication firms in Palestine. A literature review covered the relationship between human resource management practices have a good impact on perceived organizational support. The author used a quantitative method in this study. Were the questionnaires distributed to individuals working in a virtual environment. The questionnaire required the respondents to answer all questions. The result indicates that there is a relationship between human resource management practices on perceived organizational support in telecommunication firms in Palestine. The result indicates that independent variables have a positive significant relationship on perceived organizational support in Palestine telecommunication firms. This study contributes to between human resource management practices and perceived organizational support studies field by investigating the effect of between human resource management practices on perceived organizational support in the different industry. Future research should extend this study and explore whether these findings are globalized.

INTRODUCTION

Human resource management becomes a significant aspect for an organization's prosperity. Because it is the human who built up and develops the organization, to effectively and efficiently achieve its objectives (Yaseen, 2013). Today human acknowledged as the most valuable asset for an organization so they should be properly administered (Kabene *et al*, 2006). Although every organization has its own implicit/explicit human resource management (HRM) system. Human resource management can contribute significantly to the company's effectiveness and its ability to achieve competitive advantage (Collings and Mellahi, 2009). An effective HRM practices influence worker behavior to encourage lower turnover, increase productivity, and positively affect the firm's financial performance (Sun, Aryee and Law, 2007; Yukl, 2008;

Wheeler, Harris and Harvey, 2010; Becker and Huselid, 1998; Combs, Liu, Hall, and Ketchen, 2006). Although most of this research examines data from Western countries, similar results have been found in developing country; HRM practices positively influence financial and operational performance, as well as employee relations (Van De Voorde, aauwe, and Van Veldhoven, 2012; Wright, Gardner, Moynihan, and Allen, 2005; Ngo, Lau, and Foley, 2008). However, understanding how these HRM practices affect organizational performance is a pressing theoretical challenge to strategic HRM management (Guest, 2011; Katou and Budhwar, 2010). Basically, a company without the human element is a group of inanimate objects that cannot be productive itself; unless there are human elements to lead the processes and to lead the other elements of the company, to occur the regulatory changes and the necessary changes in order to raise the efficiency and performance (Al-Hawary *et al.*, 2011). Managers who recognize how the company's HRM architecture affects firm performance are better informed of how to structure HRM practices to generate and sustain returns (Becker and Huselid,

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2006). HRM used is to ensure that an organization is able to achieve success through its people (Armstrong and Taylor 2014). A universal theme in Human resource management literature has been the take-up of 'new style' HRM practices designed to achieve high levels of employee performance, flexibility, and commitment (Janssens and Steyaert, 2009; Macky and Boxall, 2007). This means that contemporary HR practices have a much more direct relationship to organizational policy-making and performance issues than was the case with traditional approaches to personnel management (Boxall and Macky, 2009; Beardwell and Claydon, 2007). Most of the previous research has been considered the relationship between HRM with satisfaction, organization performance, employee turnover (Tooksoon, 2011; Sun, Aryee and Law, 2007; Paré, and Tremblay, 2007). Few researchers studied the influence of HRM practices on POS with different filed industry, and the studies either used HRM practices as a whole to study the influence of human resource practices on POS or used only some of HRM practices (promotion and training and development). The uniqueness of this research is to study the influence of each human resource practices on POS in different industry by having the different perspective of employees from developing country such as Palestine. The study tried to fill this gap as the existing studies try to find relationships between HR practices POS in developing country such as Palestine. Hence, this study contributes to the lack of study on the relationships of HR practices and perceived organizational support especially in Palestine, which is a well-known developing country. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between human resource practices such as "*employee training, employee compensation, employee safety, and employee performance appraisal*" on perceived organizational support in telecommunication organizations in Palestine. Selected based on HR expert, and academics to fit into Palestinian telecommunication environment.

Scope of the research area

Paltel group is a proud group of integrated companies specialized in the provision of telecommunications services in the realm of mobile, fixed line and data technologies to a growing base of Palestinian customers in the West Bank and Gaza. The Group provides connectivity to millions of Palestinians connecting them with their beloved homeland, in addition to servicing all foreign guests that visit, stay and work in Palestine. Paltel Group has set very ambitious goals from the outset; where we intend to keep on leading the evolving ICT sector, to continue building the sector and elevating it to a significant level on the national economic agenda while positioning Palestine prominently on the global digital map. Paltel Group investments are not limited to the Palestinian market since the Group wisely invests in regional markets where the group holds 25% of Vtel holdings and Vtel MEA shares, which was registered at the Dubai International Financial Center (DIFC), which is one of the most reputable financial centers in the region. Vtel registration is considered an important achievement of the company's goals towards growth and expansion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceived Organizational Support

POS is a key concept of organizational support theory (Eisenberger *et al*., 1986; Eisenberger *et al*., 1997; Rhoades

and Eisenberger, 2002), which posits that "employees obviously believe that the organization has a generally positive or negative orientation toward them that encompasses both appreciation of their contributions and concern for their welfare." (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades, 2002). Also key to organizational support theory is the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), which, usefully to the employee-employer link, suggests that employees who receive favorable treatment from the employee organization, such as higher levels of POS, would feel an obligation that they should care about the organization's benefits and contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. Perceived organizational support serves as a vital source of socio-emotional in the types of respect, concerned including direct combination & benefits such as income and medical benefits (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Further, this support helps to meet the employee's need for approval, esteem, and affiliation. It also provides an indication that increased effort that will be noted and rewarded (Eisenberger *et al*., 1986). In turn, employees, therefore, take an active interest in the regard in which they are held by the organizations. As Eisenberger and colleagues' determining effort on a perceived organizational support (Eisenberger *et al*., 1986), in this paper on POS, perceived organizational support, is defined as employees' awareness about the degree to which the organization cares about their well being and values their contribution. POS represents an indispensable part of the social exchange relationship between employees and the employer because it implies what the organization has done for them, at least in the employees' belief. As indicated by scholars, perceived organizational support is viewed by employees' tendency to give the organization human-like individuality (Eisenberger *et al*., 1986). Also, it is noted that supervisors have a main influence relating to perceived organizational theory; because supervisors act as organizational agents, the employee's receipt of favorable treatment from a supervisor should contribute as well to perceived organizational support (Eisenberger *et al*., 2002).

Human Resource Practices

In organizations, human resource management (HRM) practices function as a mediator between HRM strategies and HRM outcomes. Sheppeck and Militello (2000) divide HRM strategy into four groups: employment skill and work policies, supportive environment, performance measurement and reinforcement, and market organization. Therefore, human resource management alludes to the policies and practices involved in carrying out the 'human resource(HR)' portions of a management point including human resource planning, job analysis, recruitment and selection, orientation, compensation, performance appraisal, training and development, and labor relations (Khan, 2010). HRM is composed of the practices, and structure that affect employees' behavior, attitude, and performance (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright, 2007). There are four top models of HRM such as the Fombrun, Tichy, and Devana Model of HRM, the Harvard Model of HRM, the Guest Model of HRM, and the Warwick Model of HRM (Bratton and Gold, 2003). Out of these models, Guest Model of HRM is considered to be much better than other models (Aswathappa, 2008). (Yeganeh and Su, 2008)They study selected the HR practices such as training and development, recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, compensation, and industrial relations which were incorporated into the Guest Model, and the society of human

resource management, USA. The overall purpose of HRM is to ensure that an organization is able to achieve success through its people (Armstrong, 2009; Storey, 1992). A universal theme in HRM literature has been the take-up of 'new style' HRM practices designed to complete a high level of employee performance, flexibility, and commitment (Bach and Sisson, 2000). This means that contemporary HR practices have a much more direct relationship to organizational policy-making and performance issues than was the case with traditional approaches to personnel management (Bach and Sisson, 2000).

Human Resource Practices and Perceived Organizational Support

In the human resource management literature, researchers argue that the implementation of progressive HR practices that affect employee skills, employee motivation, and structure of work can create strategic advantage for the organization (Arthur, 1994; Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Delery and Doty, 1996; Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Snell and Dean, 1992). However, although researchers have noted the strategic value of HR in successfully cultivating organizational culture and social relationships that cannot be readily replicated (Becker and Gerhart, 1996), the role of social relationships is yet to be explicitly investigated in the HR literature (Uhl-Bien, Graen, and Scandura, 2000). As Uhl-Bien *et al*. (2000) suggested, an important question to be addressed in the organizational behavior and HR literature is the location of a specific set of HR practices that can promote relationship building. To address this question, one potentially helpful approach is to establish the linkage between the implementation of effective HR practices and the development of positive employee employer relationships. In other words, examining the role of HR practices in fostering higher levels of POS can meet the need for a more relationship-based approach in the HR literature. POS is believed to be an exchange between organization and employees (Ahmed *et al*., 2013). One function of POS is that aid will be available from the organization when employees need to perform their job effectively and deal with stressful situations (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

Workplace bullying may very well be an example of such stressful situations (Keashly, 2001). In an attempt to understand the role of POS on workplace bullying, Djurkovic *et al*. (2008) conducted a study on 335 school teachers to examine how POS might influence the victims' intention to leave the organization. Results showed that POS moderated the relationship between workplace bullying and intention to leave (Djurkovic *et al*.). More specifically, there was a non-significant relationship between workplace bullying and intention to leave among employees who perceived their organization to be supportive. Using the tenants of social exchange theory, human resource practices would signal to employees that the organization is committed to them, which would be reciprocated by employees through positive attitudes and high commitment work behaviors. In particular, it has been posited that human resources practices lead to a higher level of perceived organizational support (POS) on the part of the employee, which positively impacts organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Allen *et al*., 2003). Allen *et al*. (2003) found that perceptions of supportive human resource practices influenced POS which in turn led to higher levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction and lower

levels of withdrawal behaviors such as turnover. It has been argued that human resource practices are inextricably linked to employees' perceptions of organizational support and that the two processes strongly influence an employee's commitment to an organization. According to Arthur (1994) 'high commitment' human resource activities increase organizational effectiveness by engendering conditions where employees feel more involved in the achievement of the organization's objectives and are therefore more likely to work harder to help the company meet those objectives.

From the literature above, the hypothesis developed for this study following:

There is a significant relationship between human resource practices (HRP) and Perceived Organizational Support.

Research Framework

Based on the literature review, there are two main variables in this study. The dependent variable is perceived organizational support and the independent variables are human resource practices as discussed above. The relationships of the variables are depicted in Figure 1.
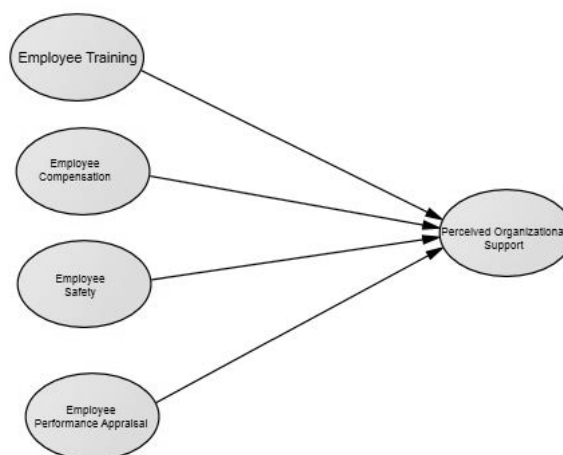

Figure 1. Research Framework

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Procedures

This is a quantitative study whereby data is collected in a cross-sectional manner using questionnaires. The questionnaire contained three sections, which are HR practices, perceived organizational support and background of the respondents. In total, 200 questionnaires were distributed to the employees participated via the internal mail system by the HR manager among telecommunication organizations in Palestine used sample randomly. These questionnaires were paper and pencil based. Participation was entirely voluntary and the participants were given the company time to complete the questionnaires. The completed questionnaires were forwarded to the HR manager via the internal mail system to maintain anonymity. One of the researchers collected the completed questionnaires a month after distribution. In total, 178 questionnaires received, the data were input into SPSS windows version 20.00 software program. 152 questionnaire used after clear the data missing.

The study is basically an exploratory study. Exploratory studies are a valuable means of finding out 'what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light' (Robson and McCartan, 2016). It can be linked to the activities of the traveler or explorer (Adams and Schvaneveldt, 1991). Its great advantage is that it is flexible and adaptable to change (Naipul, 1989).

Variables Measurement

***Demographic scales*/** Participants were asked to answer 7-questions developed for this study include name of the organization, gender, age, marital status, education level, monthly income, and year of experience.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS)*:* "beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being" (Eisenberger *et al*., 1986). POS was measured by using a 13-item scale developed by Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, and Lynch (1997). Sample items include "My organization really cares about my well-being," "My organization strongly considers my goals and values," and "Help is available from my organization when I have a problem." Cronbach's coefficient alpha was .91. The variable were prepared based on Five-point Likert scale with responses ranging used in the questionnaire from 1 = "Strongly Disagree", 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Neutral", 4 = "Agree", 5 ="strongly agree".

Human Resource Practices (HRP): From the literature 50 different HR practices were summarized. They were classified into four domains: *"Employee Training, Employee Compensation, Employee Safety and Employee Performance Appraisal"*. Classification of an HR practice to one of the four domains was partially based on theory, and partially on perceptions by HR managers and HR consultants. The questions adapted from previous studies (Chen and Huang, 2009; Sun, and Law, 2007; Kuvaas, 2008; Kehoe and Wright, 2013; Dessler, 2009; Khan, 2010; Jiang, Lepak, Han, Hong, Kim and Winkler, 2012).

HRP variables *"Employee Training, Employee Compensation, Employee Safety and Employee Performance Appraisal"* were prepared based on Five-point Likert scale with responses ranging used in the questionnaire from 1 = "Strongly Disagree", 2 = "Disagree", 3 = "Neutral", 4 = "Agree", 5 ="strongly agree".

RESULT AND FINDINGS

Table I the result from the respondent profile. It was observed that the majority of the sample are male (87.3%), between 34-44 years old (35.5%), married (82.2%), bachelor degree graduated (57.2%), salary between 7007 - 1000 USD (37.5%) and year of experience between 5-10 years (38.1%) that were indicated in the questionnaires. Table II shows the means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and correlation coefficients of the variables. The mean scores indicate an average level of utilization of various HR practices. As shown in Table II, the HR practices are correlated with perceived organizational support. The Cronbach's alpha values for four main variables are higher than 0.7, which shows that the data are reliable. However, as this is an exploratory research, the lower limit of Cronbach's alpha can be decreased to 0.6. Thus, the Cronbach's alpha for the POS (0.62) is acceptable.

Table 1. Summary of Respondent Profile (N=152)

		N	Percent (%)
Name of Organization:			
1. Gender	Male	119	78.3 %
	Female	33	21.7 %
	Total	152	
2. Age	23 - 33 years	39	25.8 %
	34 - 44 years	54	35.5 %
	45 -55 years	46	30.2 %
	More than 55 years	13	8.5 %
	Total	152	
3. Marital Status	Single	20	13.1 %
	Married	125	82.2 %
	Divorced	2	1.3 %
	Widowed	5	3.2 %
	Total	152	
4. Education level	Diploma	3	1.9 %
	Degree	87	57.2 %
	Masters	49	32.2 %
	PhD	13	8.5 %
	Total	152	
5. Monthly Income	Below 700 USD	18	11.8 %
	701 - 1000 USD	57	37.5 %
	1001 - 1300 USD	43	28.2 %
	More than 1300 USD	34	22.3 %
	Total	152	
6. Year of Experience	Less than 5 year	19	12.5 %
	5 - 10 years	58	38.1 %
	11 to 15 years	57	37.5 %
	More than 16 years	18	11.8 %
	Total	152	

Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviations and Correlation

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	S.D	1	2	3	4	5
1. POS	0.819	. 0.5461	1				
2. EPA	0.813	. 0.4190	598**	1			
3. ES	0.793	. 0.4379	.519**	.386**	1		
4. EC	0.862	. 0.4431	.540**	.460**	.455**	1	
4. ET	0.857	. 0.4176	.456**	609**	.308*	.143	1

significance tests: *p ≤ .05; **p ≤ .01; ***p ≤ .001.
"ET= Employee Training, EC= Employee Compensation, ES= Employee Safety, EPA= Employee Performance Appraisal and POS= Perceived Organizational Support"

Table 3. Results of Regression Analysis

Predictors	Perceived organizational support Standard coefficient beta	*t* value
ET	0.357	*3.968*
EC	0.266	*2.818*
ES	0.249	*2.020*
EPA	0.260	*2.409*
*R*2		.858
Adjusted *R*2		.847
F-value		28.27

Notes: aDependent variable: Perceived Organizational Support, bPredictors: "ET= Employee Training, EC= Employee Compensation, ES= Employee Safety and EPA= Employee Performance Appraisal.

Islamic selection and recruitment sare practised at a greater extent (6.13), while Islamic reward is moderately practised (4.26), by the Islamic organizations in Malaysia. Meanwhile, the data output shows that the data distribution is normal (Hair *et al.*, 2006). Table III Results of regression analysis indicate adjusted R2 of 0.858 and a F-value 28.27 with independent variables. Adjusted R2 of 0.847 reveals that 84.7 % of total variance of employee job satisfaction is explained by pre-

specified bundles of HRM practices. The finding of regression analysis table III by SPSS V20 shows hypothesis proposed in this study research. the result indicates that the independent variables for this study are considered positively connected to POS in Palestinian firms.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between human resource practices such as "*employee training, employee compensation, employee safety, and employee performance appraisal"* on perceived organizational support in telecommunication organizations in Palestine. This study tested four hypotheses regarding human resource practices on POS in a sample of telecommunication employees in Palestine. The result demonstrated employee training has a positive significant affect on perceived organizational support (B = 0.357, t-value =3.968). Thus, Accepted. The findings of this result are match with (Allen, 2003). This mean the better training of telecommunication employees in Palestine lead to better level of perceived organizational support. The result demonstrated employee compensation has a positive significant affect on perceived organizational support (B = 0.266, t-value =2. 818). Thus, Accepted.

This mean the improved compensation of telecommunication employees in Palestine direct to enhanced level of perceived organizational support. The result demonstrated employee safety has a positive significant affect on perceived organizational support (B = 0.249, t-value =2.020). Thus, Accepted.This mean the improved safety of telecommunication employees in Palestine direct to enhanced level of perceived organizational support. The result demonstrated employee performance appraisal has a positive significant affect on perceived organizational support (B = 0.260, t-value =4.409). Thus, Accepted. This mean the improved fair performance appraisal system of telecommunication employees in Palestine direct to enhanced level of perceived organizational support. The results provided support for of the hypotheses. this study makes contributions to the literature in several ways. First the result show approve for organizational support theory "employees obviously believe that the organization has a generally positive or negative orientation toward them that encompasses both appreciation of their contributions and concern for their welfare." (Eisenberger *et al*, 2002).

Implications Of The Research

The implications for this study are significant for theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, this study furthers our understanding of how human resource practices. First and the foremost is the strengthening the view of organizational support theory of Eisenberger *et al*. (1986), which proposes that support offered by organization makes employee reciprocate positively. Furthermore, this study proves that type of organization has a significant role in explaining the HRP in Palestine content and POS. These results also strengthen the view of (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). After signifying the value of POS, this study also provides a solution for the difficulty of POS by offering possible antecedents of the construct. The results of the study report that if an organization wants to make employees feel that they are supported they should offer justice and supportive culture (support from

supervisor and coworkers) at work. These results help management, especially human resource department, who can use these results to foster employees' positive job attitudes by organizational offerings like justice and support at work.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research

like any other study, this study has several limitations should be taken into consideration. First and the foremost is the strengthening the view of organizational support theory of Eisenberger *et al*. (1986), which proposes that support offered by organization makes employee reciprocate positively. Second this study had been implemented in telecommunication organizations in Palestine, Thus the outcome of this study can't be globalized As with different analysis that uses form because the instrument to gather information there is also a tangle of social desirability some respondents could have the tendency to exaggerate or give responses deemed to be fascinating by others, However the Lack of time this time can be as limited in this study, the time was very limited to collected the data. Further, the size of the data set used also limited the analyses of the study. The sample (N=152) was made up. This small amount of employee limited the number of statistical techniques that could be used to test the data. Factor analyses could not be performed due to the small size of the sample.

Future Research is one of important direction for future research is to replicate these results with country level values for the HR dimensions. Future research also needs to examine how the HR changes in different countries based on the social. another interesting direction for future research would be to investigate achievement needs as they relate to organizational support across different cultures. This study has shown that the HR practices are an important determinant in organizational support, which are important to employees. future studies should consider the associations between HR practices and other forms of commitment (continuance and normative commitment). Some employees may feel more committed and obligated to remain in an organization that has invested in them. Further testing of this model in other industries would also be beneficial and may help ascertain to what degree various HRM practices affect POS. Since the present study only deals with telecommunication employees, the efficacy of this model can also be tested with samples in alternative employment arrangements, such as part-time, casual and contract workers. there is a number of other variables which act as an outcome of POS, those could also been investigated. Such as OCB and engagement, specifically, have not been investigated in previous meta-analysis, so these two variables are still under investigated and should be investigated thoroughly.

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