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A Study On The Role Of Human Resource Management In Influencing Organizational Performance - A Case Study Of Manufacturing Industry In Wuxi City, China

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between the impact of human resource management (HRM) on organizational performance. This study is based on the operational HRM and performance linkage model. This study adopts positivist epistemology and quantitative research methods. Using simple random sampling method, through questionnaire survey and data analysis of employees in 10 private manufacturing companies in Wuxi, it was found that strategic human resources, employee retention, employee performance appraisal, and human resource development have a significant impact and significant positive correlation on organizational performance. The findings provide a theoretical basis and practical guidance for enterprises to optimize their human resource management and organizational performance strategies.

Keywords : strategic human resources, human resource development, employee retention, employee performance appraisal,Organizational performance

1 INTRODUCTION

In the context of the continuous development of modern society, scientific and effective human resource management is an important basis to promote organization direction, based on the progress of human resource management in the status of enterprises (AlHamad et al, 2022). In the formation of human resources management team, managers must be rich in professional knowledge, excellent professional ability and professional quality. Human resource management to professional development is an inevitable trend and modern human resource management is constantly breaking the traditional management system (Omar, et al., 2023).

With the increasing economic strength of small and medium-sized enterprises, the awareness of talent is also increasing (Tajpour,et al., 2023). The view that human resources are the first resource has been recognized by more and more enterprises (Vu et al., 2023). Some enterprises have improved the salary, management ability and service level of the talent team to a certain extent while some have also begun to pay attention to the long-term training and training of talents (Al Awadhi & Muslim, 2023), such as "expert building" and "master building", which fully show that the introduction and gathering of talents have begun to strengthen.

However, a lot of researchers and HR professional has realized the importance of talent management for the modern organizations rather than relying on the foreign expatriates to manage their human capital effectively for sustaining effectively as well as competing globally (Thite, Rammal & Ferreira, 2023; Al Suwaidi et al., 2019).

Human Resource management is defined as a planned model for the deployment and operation of human resources to allow a company to achieve its goals (Jackson, Schuler & Jiang, 2014). What can be established in this definition is that the ultimate goal of human resource management is to increase authoritative execution (e.g. Achieve company goals), but that is what the organizational performance is defined. Quite a number of studies have attempted to test the proposition of human resource management, and usually the final criterion is how human resource management contributes to the financial performance of the firm (Dyer & Reeves, 1995, in press). HRM is often measured by the integration of the HR role in the management process, the development of HR performs to line managers and the influence of these practices on firm performance (Omar et al, 2023).

Organizational performance management is regarded as the most effective management tool in the hands of business management decision makers (Dwivedi et al, 2021). Organizational performance is challenging because they have a variety of different criteria, including sustainability, profitability, pleasing the team, and willingness to respond to changing circumstances. However, to the extent that organizational performance can be calculated using financial metrics, it is often considered to be conceptualized on paper rather than in practice. As far as the results obtained are concerned, in many other terms, it is a mixture of product-type stakeholders and non-output measures (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021).

Organizational performance should not be evaluated solely by "human effectiveness", but should be comprehensively considered from four aspects (Brahmasari & Husda, 2024): the realization degree and performance of strategic goals, the ability of the organization to respond to external market changes with agility, the efficiency of the acquisition and use of organizational resources, and the stimulation and sustainability of organizational energy from a systematic perspective of organizational development (Jiang, Sun & Zhao, 2023). In the current industry penetration of digital and artificial intelligence and other technical means, HR needs to pay close attention to the development trend of digital intelligence technology and its impact on business and organization performance.

Due to the existence of the performance evaluation and avoid affecting the performance, organization members often escape from the important tasks and put their main energy on simple, repetitive and easy to make achievements, while some complex but important and core work is often shelved, which seriously affects the improvement of organizational efficiency (Bans-Akutey, 2023). Besides, the labor market and organizational environment around the world are undergoing significant changes. As voluntary turnover rates have started to climb, so have employers' concerns about employee retention, especially for top performers (Susanto & Rony, 2023).

At present, enterprises lack a comprehensive talent management strategy, and there is no clear distinction between human resources, human resource management and human resource development (Kravariti et al, 2023). That is to say, most companies are applying some components of talent management, but not all of them together in an integrated way. A number of deficiencies were also found in the areas of "total talent acquisition", "staff development", "performance management", "governance" and "succession planning". As most organizations still lack a comprehensive talent management strategy, there is a need for a better understanding of the term to meet the needs of the contemporary knowledge-driven workplace " (Cillo et al, 2023; Dirani et al., 2020).

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between human resource management and organizational performance in the manufacturing industry in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China.

1.2 ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE (OP)

Performance as a concept originated in the mid-19th century to define the outcome of sporting competitions. However, from then until now, the concept has evolved into different interpretations. In the eyes of Didier (2002), "Performance is the achievement of goals given to you in the integration of corporate orientations and the result must be compared to the set goal. In addition, organizational success actually refers how company or organization is doing in terms of current business market. However, having an efficient performance, the organization can be successful for profit making. In fact, the human management process is vital for an organization and employee motivation also can be generated because of right selection of human resource (Iqbal et al., 2013). For the high and expected success, as it is told earlier, human resource is the root of everything. For manufacturing industry, yet this is not a sufficient circumstance for effective performance. This system by the managers and employees is a most vital concern with any organizational performance management system (Mohamad & Lo, 2019).

According to the definitions of Poister et al (2014), performance is closely related to efficiency and effectiveness. The former represents the ratio of the results obtained to the expected results, while the latter measures the results of the resources invested. These resources can be time, energy, etc. Performance is defined as the output directed by an individual who has been assigned a specific task over a period of time and has set a set of circumstances during the review period (Mathieu et al, 2000).

The concept of organizational performance can be explained simply as the cumulative output of all the activities performed by the organization. It also requires the accumulation of multidimensional structures that are influenced by various organizational strategies and activities. Superior performance depends on the quality of the "fit" between an organization's strategic orientation and the resources it has (Masa 'deh et al., 2016). Organizational performance is regarded as the ability of an organization to acquire and process various organizational resources in order to achieve its goals and objectives (Smriti & Das, 2018).

However, A growing body of empirical studies has revealed that the adoption of internal practices positively affects employee attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Barnard, 2018; Flynn, 2015). According to Wilson (1994), studies in the field of organizational behaviour have interchangeable labeled and referred to the practice of internal process in many different terms including employee involvement practices or employee commitment practices. Studies have found that when organizations empower, recognize, reward, train and create an open communication between employees and employers, this reflects a planned attempt on the part of employers to overcome workplace isolation, disarray, disloyalty, and inter-group conflict (Ali & Ahmed, 2019; Baughman et al, 2003). Danish & Usman (2020), along with many other researchers, argue that internal process is a prerequisite for service quality. In a recent research study by Ali & Ahmed (2019), the authors examined the relationship between internal process and organizational attachment. Support was found to show that internal process positively influenced identification, effort, and retention as facets of organizational commitment.

Concentrating towards the success and the whole process of performance management, manufacturing industry can claim that, organizational success is all about perfection, growth, harmonization, improvement in terms of technology, competitive advantage to articulate perceive value for the customer along with economic value creation (Leopold & Harris, 2019). However, the extent of success is apparently very broad for the industry standpoint that is the reason for an enterprise to observed performance management system (Cokins, 2019). Manufacturing industry views success as an effective management and solid understanding of the recital sphere of influence relative to other companies, which may explain as comprehending the responsibilities and of their job description with the organisation (Robert, 2003).

The organisation's abilities to form a centre of consideration, growth and progress, attracting and developing are a vital part for any organisation. Therefore, it is crucially important and comprehend that for the success of any organisation focusing on human resource management is essential (Leopold & Harris, 2019; Longenecker & Fink, 2020).Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of this study, which includes four main dimensions such as organizational performance affecting talent management.

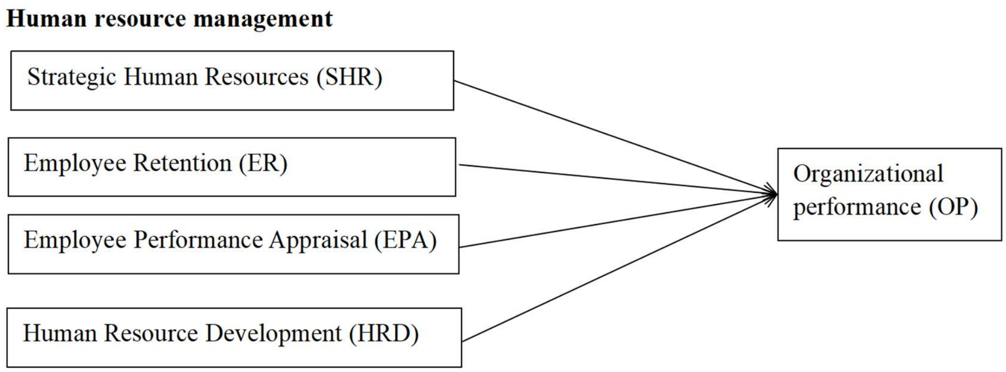

Figure 1: Organizational performance strategies for human resource management

1.3 THE "BLACK BOX" THEORY OF ORGANIZATION

Savaneviciene & Stankeviciute (2020) came up with the concept of the "black box" theory (Figure 2.2). According to the researchers, identifying the definite mechanisms is crucial to understand the mediating role of the unknown elements that exists between HRM practices and organizational performance.

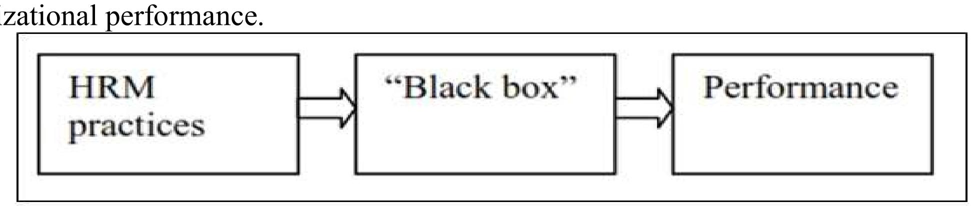

Figure 2: The "Black Box" Theory
Source: Savaneviciene & Stankeviciute (2020)

According to Purcell et al. (2003), a "black box" refers to the unclear process that often occurs when an input is transformed into a useful output. In explaining the processes and mechanisms by which human resource management performance affects operations, "Black boxes" are also described as "gaps" (Lytras et al, 2008), "largely unexplained aspects" (Edgar & Geare, 2009), or "remaining gaps" (Harney & Jordan, 2008).

Fleetwood & Hesketh (2008) stated in their study that, in a "black box", inputs were transformed into outputs with no explanation of what happened in between. For this reason, Becker & Huselid (2006) also argued that complexity and nuance highlighted the need to consider more deeply the relationships and exacted mechanisms that formed the link between human resource management and performance.

Many other researchers also stated that human resource practice is transformed into a successful mechanism of competition. Due to the lack of understanding of mediating variables and their impact on the human resource management-performance link, the existing gaps in explaining this link are referred to as "black boxes" (Boselie et al, 2005). The effort to open the "black box" is related to Wright & Gardner's (2003) question of how many boxes should be considered when studying the link between human resource management and performance (Paauwe & Boselie, 2005). There is no consensus on the answer to the former question. However, some conceptual models (Becker, 2009; Guest et al.,2021; Purcell et al, 2003; Wright & Nishii, 2006) showed that the causal relationship between human resource practices and firm performance exists in the scientific literature. The main purpose of these models is to reveal the logic of the human resource management-performance link to their effects.

1.4 THE OPERATIONAL HRM-PERFORMANCE LINKAGE MODEL

Katou (2008) noted that an organization's set of HRM policies are very effective in determining the success of the organization (figure 2.3). If the HRM policies are aligned with business strategies, organizations will be able to gain and retain competitive advantage which will ultimately enhance organizational success.

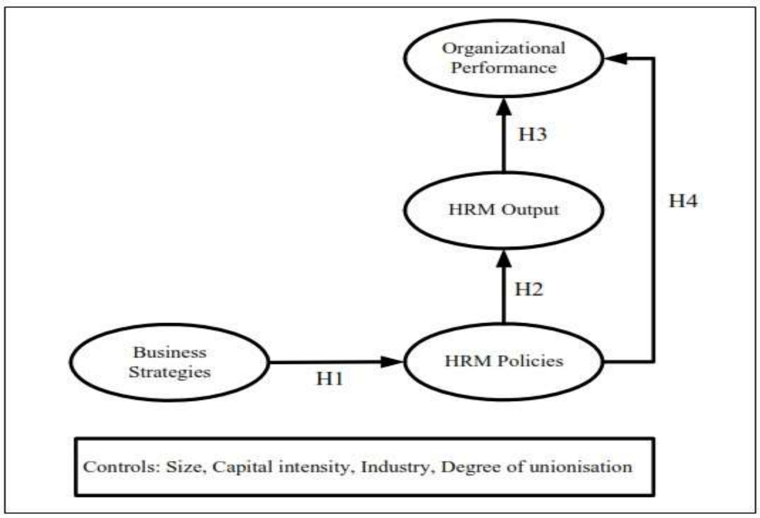

Figure 3: The Operational HRM-Performance Linkage Model
Source: Katou (2008)

According to Katou (2008), identifying the definite mechanisms is crucial to understand the relationship between HRM practices and organizational success. Vermeeren et al. (2019) have pointed out that business strategies are defined in line with the organizational goals and objectives. Therefore, HRM policies need to be modified or adjusted to the target set by the organization. However, HRM policies and organizational success sometimes controlled by different factors such as size, capital intensity, industry and degree of unionization. Here, size is about how large the organization is. Definitely, larger organization will have bigger variation in the output compare to smaller organization. This is because, large organization may be more likely than small ones to have well-developed HRM policies. The size variable is referred as the number of total employees in the organization so that few large firms would not affect the results disproportionately. Besides, capital intensity, industry and degree of unionization also influence the values and development of the organization. Hence, these elements can be considered as the control variables that will help to better understanding the linkage between HRM policies and organizational success (Katou, 2008).

2 RESEARCH METHODS

This study belongs to the positivist paradigm (Trochim, 2001) because it works with the external social reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1991) to identify the relationship between HRM and organizational performance by identifying talent management in the Chinese manufacturing industry in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China.The population for this study consisted of top 10 private manufacturing companies in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China.Based on the Zhongshang Industrial Research Institute (2024), there are nearly 100,000 workers in these 10 top industries in Wuxi Jiangsu, China. Therefore, the study population is this study is 100,000.All the workers in the top 10 private manufacturing industries were the subjects of this study. The workers represent the study sample as unit of the research.

The minimum sample size for this cross-sectional survey was 518 employees of the top ten private manufacturing firms in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China. Respondents were systematically selected from the designated firms through random sampling and data were collected from these identified firms using letters of introduction from supervisors. The purpose of the researcher was communicated to the respondents. The study utilized the literature review to create areas that represent important elements of the research topic in order to ask questions in an organized manner.

Questionnaire survey is adopted as the survey strategy in this study, because questionnaire survey is an effective tool to obtain participant information in social science research. Social characteristics, present and past behavior, standards of behavior or attitude and their beliefs, and reasons for taking action against the subject of the survey (Bulmer, 2004). A self-administered questionnaire was developed basing on the literature review. However, few items were also be adapted from the existing scales on HRM, Organizational performance and talent management. After adapting, all the items were modified according to the study requirements to make those fit for China context.

Table 1: Sections in Questionnaire

Section	Description	No. of items
1	Demographic	5 questions
2	Strategic Human Resource	7 questions
	Employee Retention	7 questions
	Employee Assessment	5 questions
	Human Resource Development	6 questions
	Organizational Performance	6 questions

3 RESULTS

3.1 Frequency analysis

There were 518 participants in this study. Table 2 shows the work experience of the top ten manufacturing respondents in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China. Employees with 11-20 years of work experience ranked first, followed by 6-10 years, more than 20 years, 3-5 years, and 1-2 years. As discussed in Table 1, it is not difficult to find employees with 11-20 years of work experience answering the questionnaire. Normally, respondents aged between 30-40 years should have at least 10 years of work experience. This is consistent with the results of the times.

Table 2: Work Experience of Respondents

Work Experience	Percentage	Frequency
1-2 years	9.8%	51
3-5 years	12.4%	64
6-10 years	28.7%	149
11-20 years	36.1%	187
more than 20 years	13%	67
Total	100%	518

From table 3, the educational background of the respondents are shown as follows. The respondents who are High School Graduate rank the first, taking up 30.6%, follow by diploma, middle school graduate, Technical Secondary Education, bachelor and master. It can be seen that almost 90% of the general respondents' education background is under bachelor.

Table 3: Educational Background of Respondents

Educational Background	Percentage	Frequency
Middle School Graduate	21.3%	110
High School Graduate	30.6%	159
Technical Secondary Education	14.5%	75
Diploma	22.5%	117
Bachelor	10.1%	52
Master	1%	5
Total	100%	518

3.2 Path analysis

According to Hair et al. (2010), if three to four of the above goodness-of-fit indices are within the specified thresholds, then the structural model meets the requirements and further analyses can be conducted to test. The last part is to confirm the proposed relationship based on the research hypotheses. The CR and p-values estimated using standardized regression were used to test the direct correlation of the variables in this study. Table 4 presents the regression weights and normalized regression weights (β) in the final structural model.

After the structural equation model was established, the model fit was calculated to produce estimates of the detection path values, standardized path coefficients, standard error equivalents, T-values and significance P-values. In general, when the T-value exceeds 1.96 and the P-value is lower than 0.05, it can be considered that the path coefficients have successfully passed the significance test within the 95% confidence interval, thus confirming the validity of the corresponding path hypotheses in the prespecified model; on the contrary, the hypotheses are considered invalid.

The impact relationship between Strategic Human Resources and organizational performance was examined based on the CR and p-value of the regression estimates to determine whether on-the-job training has a positive impact on trainee performance. The results show that the standardized estimate is 0.131, CR=2.130, and p-value is 0.033, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the conclusion of the study that there is an impact between strategic human resources and organizational performance in the manufacturing industry in the city of Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China, is supported.

The CR and P values were estimated by regression analysis, and the results showed that employee retention has a significant effect on organizational performance. The standardized estimate has a coefficient of 0.140 and a critical ratio (CR) of 2.557, which is statistically significant at the 0.011 level of significance (less than 0.05). Therefore, the findings of the study that there is an effect between employee retention and organizational performance in the manufacturing industry in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China are supported.

By estimating the CR and P values through regression analysis, the results of the study show that employee performance appraisal has a significant effect on organizational performance. The standardized estimate has a coefficient of 0.283 and a critical ratio (CR) of 4.223, which is statistically significant at the 0.001 level of significance. Therefore, the findings of the study that there is an impact between employee performance appraisal and organizational performance in the manufacturing industry in Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China are supported.

By estimating the CR and P values through regression analysis, the results of the study indicate that human resource development has a significant effect on organizational performance. The standardized estimated coefficient is 0.184 and the critical ratio (CR) is 2.568, which indicates that it is statistically significant at the significance level of 0.01, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the conclusion of the study that there is an effect between human resource development and organizational performance in the manufacturing industry of Wuxi City, Jiangsu Province is supported.

Table 4: **Direct Relationship of Structural Equation Path Test** Results Performance Appraisal, HRD-Human Resource Development, OP-Organizational Performance

Variables	Estimate	β	S.E	T	P
SHR→OP	0.131	0.112	0.062	2.13	0.033
ER→OP	0.14	0.111	0.055	2.557	0.011
EPA→OP	0.283	0.212	0.067	4.223	***
HRD→OP	0.184	0.156	0.071	2.568	0.01

Note: SHRM-Strategic Human Resource Management, ER-Employee Retention, EPA-Employee Performance Appraisal, HRD-Human Resource Development, OP-Organizational performance

3.3 Correlation analysis

The Pearson correlation coefficient is a statistical measure of the linear correlation between two variables, which is obtained by covariance normalization and ranges from -1 to 1（Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient，2008）. The Pearson correlation coefficient is a standardized measure, which means that it does not depend on the unit or dimension of the data, allowing correlations between different data sets to be compared. Although the Pearson correlation coefficient does not prove causation, it can be used as a starting point to explore a possible causal relationship between two variables（Schober et al.，2018）.

According to Table 5, ER and OP all show significant correlation, the correlation coefficient value is 0.336, and the correlation coefficient value is greater than 0, which means that there is a positive correlation between ER and OP.EA and OP all show significance, the correlation coefficient value is 0.469, and the correlation coefficient value is greater than 0, which means that there is a positive correlation between EA and OP. SHR and OP showed significance and the correlation coefficient value was 0.454 and the correlation coefficient value was greater than 0, which means that there is a positive relationship between SHR and OP.HRD and OP showed significance and the correlation coefficient value was 0.477 and the correlation coefficient value was greater than 0, which means that there is a positive relationship between HRD and OP.

Table 5: Correlation analysis of variables

Variables	*r*	*p*
SHR→OP	0.454	0.000**

ER→OP	0.336	0.000**
EPA→OP	0.469	0.000**
HRD→OP	0.477	0.000**

5 DISCUSSION

This study identified the relationship between human resources and organizational performance. The results of the study showed that there is a significant correlation between strategic human resources and organizational performance. Structural model analysis showed that strategic human resources had a significant positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta=0.131$, $p=0.033<0.05$) and that there was a significant positive correlation ($r=0.454$, $p=0.000$). Confirming previous studies (Luu, 2020; Gupta et al, 2020; Hamilton & Sodeman's, 2020; Stahl et al, 2020; Sabuhari et al, 2020; Obeidat et al, 2020; Doz, 2020).

Another interesting finding is that the structural model analysis of this study shows that employee retention has a significant contribution to organizational performance ($\beta= 0.140$, $p=0.011<0.05$), as well as a significant positive correlation ($r=0.336$, $p=0.000$), corroborating the findings of previous studies (Rakhra, 2018; Muyela and Kamaara , 2021; Ghani et al. 2022; Nguyen's, 2020; Kurdi & Alshurideh's, 2020). In addition, the results of this study are also consistent with the findings of Hussein, Taher, and Hameed (2021) and Khan (2020), who all found an impact of retention on organizational performance. This is consistent with the respondents' agreement that employee retention strategies such as employee career development, supervisor support, work environment, and rewards are key factors for organizational success.

The results of structural model analysis in this study showed that employee performance appraisal has a significant effect on organizational performance ($\beta=0.283$, $p=0.000<0.05$) and there is also a significant positive correlation between the two ($r=0.469$, $p=0.000$). This finding is consistent with previous studies that employee performance appraisal will have an effective impact on organizational performance (Damarasri & Ahman, 2020; Davidescu et al, 2020). However, there are some researchers who have reported opposite results.Murphy (2020) proposed an approach to performance management that does not rely on periodic performance appraisals and that employee performance appraisals do not have a particularly strong effect on organizational performance.The findings of Haryadi (2022) and Narayanamurthy & Tortorella (2021) also indicate that employee performance appraisal has limited effect on organizational performance.

The last finding is about the relationship between HRD and organizational performance. Structural model analysis showed that HRD significantly contributes to organizational performance ($\beta=0.184$, $p=0.010<0.05$) and that there is a significant positive correlation between the two ($r=0.477$, $p=0.000$). This also corroborates the findings of previous studies.The findings of researchers such as Dirani et al (2020), Da Silva et al (2020), and Köchling & Wehner's (2020) indicate that HRD has a significant positive effect on organizational performance. This provides important theoretical and practical implications for researchers and practitioners to promote organizational performance improvement and development.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the manufacturing firms to focus on performance, by enhancing and maximizing the speed of achievement with strategic human resource methods, the employee retention policies, the feedback from the organization to improve their capacities, the development and training programs for staff at all administrative levels. The need to integrate these roles and functions into effective and clear management decisions derives from the basic elements of human resource management and is supported by the organizational managers.

The findings of the study revealed that the strength of employee retention on organizational performance is the highest in order among all the variables studied, followed by strategic human resource, talent management, human resource development, and employee performance appraisal. The strength of the order of variables might be re-examined by the future researchers, including adding more variables from cultural, organizational and environmental dimensions to the model in view of the 60. 736% of variance reported in the study.

As with other empirical studies, the present research also has some limitations. The limitations associated with this current study include the possible response biases from the use of the survey questionnaire method. Using Mix - method facilitates to overcome limitations of this method may avoid this problems.

In addition, the current study only used the general employees as respondents due to the superior managers' biases on defending the rights of their organizations. The result may have different outcome if the data had been obtained from the senior managers, for instance on items relating to strategies human resource and human resource development.

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