

Employee Attitudes as a Mediator between Hrm and Organizational Performance

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Abstract

Attitude is a power that controls human behaviour. When employee Attitude is positive, it can give impact positive to organization performance. A proper human resource management (HRM) managed by organization, the employee attitude will be affected. HRM practices influence employee attitude positively and there is a mediating role of employee attitude between training and development dimension of HRM practices and organizational performance. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore employee attitude as a mediator between HRM and organizational performance. A sample of this study was 219 respondents from employee construction in Libya. The data was analyzed using structural equation modelling (SEM) approach. This study showed that employee attitudes is a full mediator between relationship HRM and organizational performance. Therefore, HRM practices influence employee attitude and its give impact to organizational performance for more effective and efficient in achieving organization goal.

Key words: employee attitude, human resource management, organizational performance, attitude, practice

INTRODUCTION

The practice of human resource management (HRM) is vital to assess to determine the companies succeed or fail or varying the performance levels. It seems that organisations that use proper HRM techniques do have higher levels of performance (Yeung & Berman, 2012). As such, HR process provides the employees with a system that guides them in making the correct decision not only in regards to what they have to do rather also provide them with the appropriate way for doing it (Raj & Kothai, 2014).

This is due to the fact that if the attitude towards the organization is not positive, the outcome cannot be positive (Lambooijet al., 2006; Lecky, 1999; Mullins, 2005). Which means that negative attitude of the employees will impact firms' performance (Fehr & Kirchsteiger, 1994). Moreover, a properly managed human resource can be an essential tool that affects employee's behaviour (Srikarsem & Ussahawanitchakit, 2009). The right HRM strategy of the organization ensures that employees know what kind of behaviours are expected out of them (Delaney & Huselid, 1996). Therefore, there is a need for proper HRM policies through which moulding individual expectations will be easier that ultimately help employees to adapt their behaviour (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Lambooijet al., 2006). In literature review, there is a lack of studies to look into the employee attitudes as a mediator between HRM and organizational performance, particularly in Libya. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to examine employee attitudes as a mediator between HRM and organizational performance from the employee's construction in Libya.

1. Literature review:

2.1. Human resource management (hrm):

Human resource management (HRM) has evolved to be the most strategic and significant part of organisations. It primarily consists of managerial operations such as payroll, hiring and firing. Hence, HRM basically manages employees' legal compliance and satisfaction (Noe et al., 2010). As defined by Boxall and Purcell (2008), HRM refers to "all those activities that are related with people management in firms". According to Schulte et al. (2009), "HRM involves different types of management activities, instead of a single management activity". Moreover, as defined by Noe et al. (2010), HRM is "a policy, philosophy, practice or system that has the potential to impact the attitudes, performance, and behaviour of employees."

In recent times, the HR department has been involved in the important decision-making processes of firms so that the firm can achieve value maximisation through people related cost cut (Hassan, 2007). As explained by Boxall and Purcell (2008), HR practitioners are increasingly establishing and demonstrating the value and significance of the HR's role by showing how the HRM influences the overall performance of a particular firm (Boxall& Purcell, 2008). On the basis of the study carried out by Huselid (2011), HRM has a considerable effect on a firm's performance. Moreover, empirical evidences from previous studies reveal that there is a significant influence of HRM on the performance of an organisation (Combs et al., 2006; Boxall, Purcell & Wright, 2007; Gerhart, 2007; Boxall&Macky, 2009; Paauwe, 2009; Wood, 2009). As explained by Ramlall (2003), numerous large-scale studies establish that HRM is an essential component in the financial performance of an organisation. Hence, it is extremely necessary for HRs and other decision-makers to acknowledge the utmost importance and critical role of efficient HR activities in building value for the organisation".

Study conducted by Grifa (2006) pointed out that Libyan construction industry operates under traditional procurement system where verbal communications are widely used instead of written ones. Thus, it faces many difficulties for the foreign as well as the local companies to operate in Libya under this circumstance (Shibani, Ganjian&Soetanto, 2010). These regulations and the current working environments have also created obstacles for the growth of this industry. However, due to the increased pressures from globalization; Libyan organisations also started realizing the importance of HRM. However, Hokoma et al. (2010) and Ngab (2007) pointed out that the current practice of HRM in Libya is not up to the standard of developed country. As Libya is currently undergoing reformation process, they need proper implementation of HRM practices in order to cope with the modern world. Hokoma (2010) also pointed out that for proper implementation of HRM for Libyan construction industry sector needs to confirm the proper practices and support from the top management towards implementation. Therefore, in order to preserve harmony, it has become very important for Libyan construction firms to craft refined HRM strategies and also policies so that they can successfully manage the workforce of their organisations (Abu Bakar&Commer, 2011).

2.3. Organizational Performance:

Organisational performance basically can be defined as how a company or an organisation is performing with respect to the current business market. An organisation with efficient performance can be considered as successful for profit-making. An important part of the human management process of any organisation includes selection of suitable human resources and keeping the employees motivated. Human resource management is the base of an elevated performance for any business. In the construction industry, there is adequate scope for improving organisational performance through efficient people management. The development of an efficient system for the managers and employees is a major challenge with any organisational performance management system (Mohamad& Lo, 2009).

Focusing on performance and the entire performance management process, it is possible for the construction industry to claim that organisational performance involves perfection, harmonisation, growth, technological improvement, competitive advantage for articulating the perceived value for the customer, and economic value creation (Leopold & Harris, 2009). However, from an industry standpoint, the scope of performance is apparently extremely broad. This is why an enterprise should implement a performance management system (Cokins, 2009). The construction industry considers performance as an effective management system that involves a concrete comprehension of the recital sphere of influence in terms of other companies, which entails gaining an understanding of the responsibilities and the job descriptions within the organisation (Robert, 2003).

The abilities of an organisation to create a centre of consideration, promote growth and progress, attract clients, and develop the organisation are all important. It is therefore very important to understand that in order for any organisation to succeed, it should also focus on human resource management (Leopold & Harris, 2009; Longenecker& Fink, 2011; 2012).

2.4 Employee attitude as a Mediator:

One can consider employee attitude as a social-exchange relationship (Homans, 1961; Tsui et al., 1997). This is a vital consideration for an organisation to understand the attitude of their employees. This is because the outcome cannot be positive if there is no positive attitude towards the organisation (Lambooi et al., 2006; Lecky, 1999; Mullins, 2005). This means that the employees' negative attitude will affect the performance of the firms (Fehr & Kirchsteiger, 1994). Thus, organisations must provide career opportunities to employees so that they can increase their loyalty towards the organisation (Adams, 1965; Fehr & Kirchsteiger, 1994).

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) have stated that attitude is a power that can control the behaviour of humans. This offers the right direction towards helping an individual function correctly. Therefore, it is necessary for employees to have a good attitude so that they can achieve their goals and the target of the organisation. HR has a vital role in this process since they are the management personnel who manage employees in every facet of their career (Lambert, Lynne & Barton, 2001; Zheng&Lamond, 2009). They maintain records for each individual and motivate them so that they could meet the objectives of the organisation.

In the context of the Libyan industry, the social relationships among the colleagues are determined as a major attitudinal force for workers (Elsayah et al., 2013; Grifa, 2006; Hokoma, 2010). However, in order to promote a healthy attitude among employees, industries need to properly implement human resources and increase job satisfaction. Several literature works on employee attitude have already afforded mentoring relationship with a special focus (Noypayak&Speece, 1998; Leopold & Harris, 2009). Therefore, monitoring, mentoring, and offering continuous support constitute the main issues for the enhancement of the industry's performance and efficient utilisation of resources.

Katou and Budhwar (2010) discovered a significant and positive mediating role in terms of employee attitude between organisational performance and HRM practices. According to Hemdi (2009), HRM practices positively affect employee attitude. Furthermore, Hemdi(2009) stated that there is a mediating role of employee attitude between training and the HRM practices' development dimension and organisational performance.

2.4. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development:

The basic research model in this study is exhibited in Figure 1.

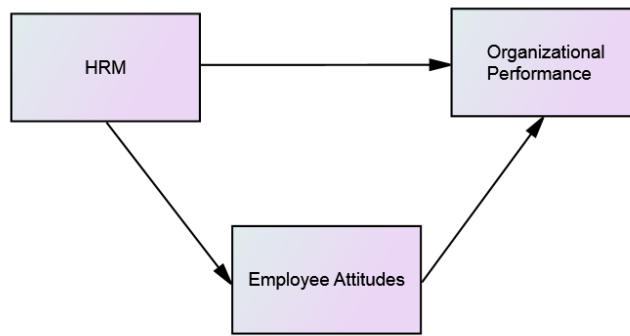


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework.

To meet the research objectives and based on the conceptual framework presented above, four hypotheses are constructed as follows:

- H1: HRM is positively related to Employee Attitudes
- H2: Employee Attitudes is positively related to Organizational Performance
- H3: HRM is positively related to Organizational Performance
- H4: There is a mediating relationship through Employee Attitudes between HRM and Organizational Performance

Research Methodology:

A total of 632 construction companies in Libya are listed by the Libyan government (Gherbalet al., 2012; Shibani et al., 2010; Zhang & Wei, 2012). Hence, the population for this study will be these 632 construction companies listed by the Libyan government (Gherbalet al. (2012). The unit of analysis is based on organisation. However, data will be collected from the employees working in these 632 construction companies. Beside, classification of construction industry workforce can be divided in different categories. First category consists of employees who are experienced and working for minimum ten years and a capital of at least 10,000,000 million dinars and less projects carried out for 100,000,000 million dinars value. Second category consists of middle managers who are experienced more than five years and less than ten years and a capital of at least 5,000,000 million dinars and less projects carried out by about 50,000,000 million dinars value. The third category consists of people whose experience must be not less than three years and a capital of at least 5,000,000 million dinars and less projects carried out for 25,000,000 million dinars value. Finally, last category consists of people whose experience must be no more than three years and take projects that are worth no more than 1000000 million dinars. The reference is based on the categorization made by the Libyan General People's Committee in 2010 (Eltaief, 2011).

Table 3.1: Classification of Construction Industry Workforce in Libya by Libyan General People's Committee.

Classification Of Libyan Construction Industries	A	B	C	D
Years Of Experience	≥ 10 years	≥ 5 years	≥ 3 years	≤ one years
Equity Capital	≥ 10000000 LYD	≥ 5000000 LYD	≥ 5000000 LYD	≤ 5000000 LYD
The Value Of Completed Projects	≥ 100000000 LYD	≥50000000 LYD	≥25000000 LYD	≤ 1000000 LYD

Krejcie and Morgan (1970) further gave a general idea or basic rule of thumb on how to determine the sample size. Taking this rule of thumb into consideration and keeping in mind the total population, minimum sample size for this study will be between 219 employees working at various construction companies operating in Libya. The random sampling technique was used for this study from the different companies randomly. Prior to that, the respondents will be asked their willingness to participate in this survey and only those who voluntarily agreed will be given the questionnaire.

4. Findings and Discussion:

4.1. Demographic Profiles:

The samples comprised of 219 employees. 61.2 percent (N = 134) of the employees were working in commercial, and 38.8 percent (N = 85) were working in housing. In terms of classification of organization (total capital), 52.5 percent (N = 115) were in category A (more than 10 million dinner), 40.2 percent (N = 88) were in category B (between 5 and 10 million dinner), 5.5 percent (N = 12) were in category C (between 1 and 5 million dinner) and 1.8 percent (N=4) were in category D (less than 1 million dinner). In term of nationality, 54.3 percent (N = 119) of the employees were local, while the 45.7 percent (N = 100) were foreigner. Majority 64.4 percent (N=141) were degree holder, 26.5 percent (N=58) were Master degree, 6.4 percent (N=14) were Diploma and 2.7 percent (N=6) were PhD. Regarding the job position, 56.5 percent (N = 124) of the employee work as civil engineer, 20.1 percent (N = 44) have work as mechanical engineer, 13.2 percent (N=29) work as architect, 5.9 percent (N=13) work as quality controller and 4.1 percent (N=9) work as site manager. The demographic data of employees revealed that majority of them monthly income (in Dinar) 3,001 – 5,000 (29.2 percent), 3,000 and below (28.8 percent), 5,001 – 10,000 (27.9 percent) and 10,001 and above (14.2 percent). Majority 45.7 percent (N=100) of the employee had working experience in 6-10 years, 34.2 percent (N=75) had working

experience 16 years and above, 10.5 percent (N=23) had working experience 11-15 years and 9.6 percent (N=21) had working experience 5 years and below. In term of organization type, 94.1 percent (N=206) working in private organization and 5.9 percent (N=13) working in government employee.

4.3. Assessing Mediating Relationship:

The researcher has tested the direct effect of Human Resource Management (HRMT) and Organizational Performance (OrgP) and employee attitude (EAT) as a mediating as shown in figure 1

The first path coefficient HRMT → EAT (employee attitude) as shown in Table 1.3 proved acceptable result that can be judged via Critical Ratio (C.R.) and significance level (P). As C.R. is greater than 1.96 and P is significant, thus, it can be shown that the regression weight for HRM in the prediction of employee attitude which is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). Besides, the second path coefficient EAT (employee attitude) → OrgP (organizational performance) also confirms an adequate result that can be determined using Critical Ratio (C.R.) and significance level (P). Since the .C.R. is greater than 1.96 and P are significant, as a result, it can be indicated that the regression weight for employee attitude in the prediction of organizational performance is considerably different from zero at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). Hence, there is a true mediating relationship exists between HRM and organizational performance when employee attitude is treated as a mediator.

Furthermore, the third path coefficient (HRMT → OrgP) indicated acceptable result that can be proved using Critical Ration (C.R.) and significance level (P) values. In this circumstance, the C.R. value is lower than 1.96 and P is not significant Therefore, there is no direct relationship between HRM and organizational performance, which is a sign of full mediating relationship while there is a factual intervening relationship exists between HRM and organizational performance when employee attitude plays a mediating role.

4.4 Hypotheses Testing:

However, total four hypotheses, including mediating relationship, have been answered by goodness-of-fit indices, showing the HRM influence employee attitude and employee attitude influence organizational performance. Moreover, Table 1.4 summarizes the findings on the hypotheses in this research framework.

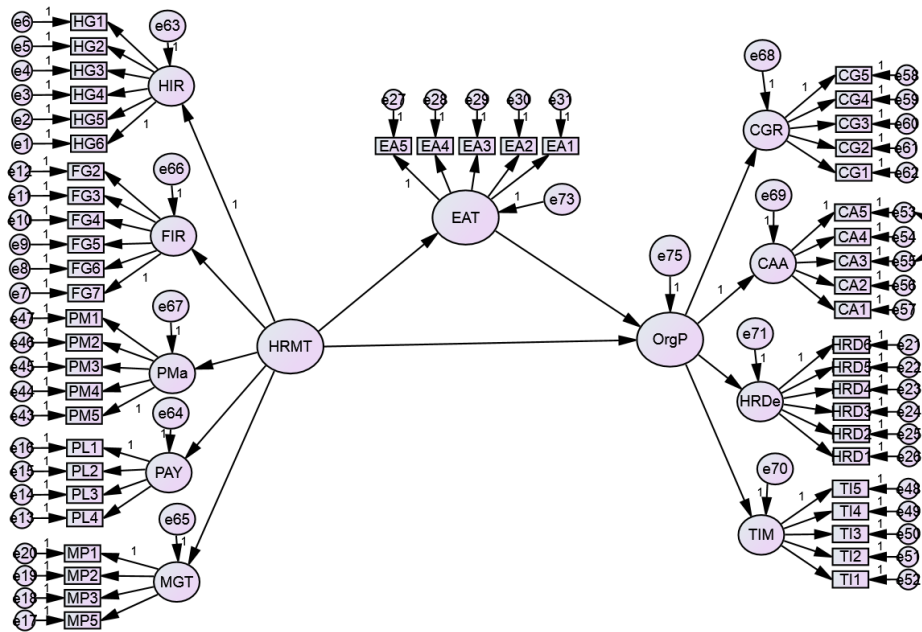


Fig. 1: The output showing Regression Weights between construct.

Table 1.3: The Path Regression Coefficient and its significance.

Variable		Variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
EAT	<---	HRMT	0.449	0.141	3.192	0.001	Significant
OrgP	<---	EAT	0.759	0.167	4.555	***	Significant
OrgP	<---	HRMT	0.079	0.077	1.208	0.304	Not Significant

The findings suggested that employee attitude is a significant and full mediator to the relationships between HRM and organizational performance. Therefore, employee attitude is critical in boosting the effect of HRM with organizational performance.

Table 1.4: Summary of Hypotheses Testing.

H (x)	Hypotheses	Finding
H1	HRM is positively related to Employee Attitudes	Supported
H2	Employee Attitudes is positively related to Organizational Performance	Supported
H3	HRM is positively related to Organizational Performance	Not Supported
H4	There is a mediating relationship through Employee Attitudes between HRM and Organizational Performance	Supported

Conclusion:

This study is an attempt to assess the employee attitude as mediator between HRM and organizational performance in employee Construction Company in Libya. Prior to conducting Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), the reliability analysis is checked via Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the three extracted factors for the purpose of ensuring the internal consistency. Next, the mediating relationship is performed using SEM to indicate the appropriateness of the measurement instruments. The results indicated that HRM is positively related to the employee attitude and directly related to the organizational performance. Apart from this, the employee attitude is found assertively allied to the organizational performance while employee attitude plays the mediating roles in the HRM towards organizational performance in Libya. The current study adds value to the current level of knowledge in the existing literature.

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