



**The Influence of Employees' Perceptions Towards High
Performance Work System on Task Performance: An
Exploration of The Role of Fairness**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

**“...Say: ‘Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition’”.
(Qur’an, 39:9)**

DECLARATION

The thesis is submitted to Nottingham Trent University (NTU) for the degree of Doctor Philosophy. “This work is the intellectual property of the author” and I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of NTU, its original except where indicated by specific reference in text. I further declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in support of another degree or qualification of this or any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas. Any re-use of the information contained within this document should be fully referenced, quoting the author, title, university, degree level and pagination. I give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

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DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to:

The soul of my dad Mohamed (may Allah have mercy on him).

My beloved wife Nabila for here love, support and incredible patience.

My sons Alhareth and Ahmed who have given me the hope and the smile in all stages of this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Conducting a PhD is a long, demanding, and rewarding venture. In doing this voyage one looks to propel our knowledge and comprehension of this world. I have been honoured with having probably the most supportive individuals to help me in this journey. Right off the bat, I might want to thank my director of studies, Dr. Konstantina Kougiannou and my second supervisor, Dr. Ani Raiden for being supportive and personable team, who I could always depend on in looking for advises and reflections especially during my very stressful periods.

The thanks reach out to every one of my friends in Libya and at the Nottingham Trent University for the support and giving me nice memorable times during my research years.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the effect of employees' perceptions towards high performance work system (HPWS) on the perceived task performance. It also investigates the role of justice in this effect. In doing so, it responds to recent calls (e.g. Budhwar et al., 2018; Nishii et al., 2008; Sanders et al., 2014; Wright and Nishii, 2013; Bowen and Ostroff 2004) to explore the mechanism of the effect of HR systems on performance through employees' perceptions. This aspect of the "HRM black box" has not been completely uncovered yet. In particular, this side of the black box has been poorly understood in the contexts of the Middle East and North Africa due to dearth of research in this arena.

To the researcher best of knowledge, this study is the first research to explore the adoption and the effect of HPWS on task performance in an oil company in Libya using the process approach. Therefore, it contributes to the knowledge in respect of the mechanism by which HPWS effects performance and the extent of the adoption of this system in a case study in this country.

In this thesis, a subjective relative ontology, and, interpretive epistemology with a qualitative deductive and inductive approaches case study research design were adopted deploying two data sources (semi-structured interviews and documents analysis). The data were collected from 16 front-line employees, three main HR key persons in the organisation, three supervisors and 17 formal documents from Waha Oil Company in Libya to obtain full understanding of the research themes. The collected data has been deductively and inductively analysed using the thematic analysis to obtain a holistic picture about the themes.

The findings of this study indicated to relatively high adoption of the system in the case study. However, there has been governmental intervention in certain practices, which has made the bundling process and the implementation of the HPWS practices are not as they should. The findings drawn from the front-line participants and their self-evaluation task performance indicated also to important relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance. This effect is mainly sourced from training satisfaction and motivation from the participation. Nevertheless, several factors such as the content of the HPWS practices was found effective in addition to the employees' perceptions towards these practices. Justice perceptions were found significantly affecting this relationship. Moreover, Certain socio-cultural factors such as social relationships and power distance have been

emerged negatively affecting the relationship. The social reciprocities were significantly high in the research context and play another important role in information sharing.

One of the biggest contribution of this study is the additional insight about the mechanism by which HPWS can influence employees' performance (*the how question*) as it explains the important moderating role of justice and the effect of certain socio-cultural factors in this mechanism. This research also gives more insight to the applicability of the process approach in studying one of the most important aspects of the HRM black box. Another contribution is in the level of analysis in this research, as it bridged employees and organisational points of view, whereby the link between the intended and the actual practices was given more insight using the psychological process by which employees understand the intention of the management in deploying the practices.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction to the topic

Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to all activities, policies and practices related with managing individuals in organisation (Marchington et al., 2016; Boxall and Purcell, 2008). Watson (2010: 919) defined HRM as “HRM is the managerial utilisation of efforts, knowledge, capabilities and committed behaviours which people contribute to an authoritatively co-ordinated human enterprise as part of an employment exchange (or more temporary contractual arrangement) to carry out work tasks in a way which enables the enterprise to continue into the future”. Whereas, in the strategic definition HRM means accomplishing the best outcomes from the highest performance by employing better design to a combination of practices, that directed to the enhancement of organisational effectiveness (Alvesson, 2009). Researchers in HRM field (e.g. Alfes et al., 2013; Sanders et al., 2014; Guest, 2017) have put in great efforts to find out why and how firms are looking to achieve most of their goals through HR practices. Therefore, considerable number of HRM researchers (e.g. Boon et al., 2011; Combs, et al., 2006) have studied the relationship between HRM practices and performance. They have found positive signs of linkage between HRM practices and different organisational performance such as: skills, abilities and knowledge (e.g. Combs, et al., 2006), service quality (e.g. Chuang and Liao, 2010), enhance the financial performance (e.g. Huselid, 1995), increased productivity (e.g. MacDuffie, 1995), higher commitment (e.g. Gong, et al., 2009) and better safety performance (e.g. Zacharias’s, et al., 2005) and many other organisational outcomes.

However, it has been argued that several organisational outcomes such as financial sales, production and organisational effectiveness are too distal from the influence of the HR practices’ effect and some other employees’ outcomes at individuals’ level can be more reliable (Paauwe, 2004; Purcell and Kinnie, 2007). In this, there have been increased calls from number of scholars (e.g. Alfes et al., 2013; Boon et al., 2011; Dyer and Reeves, 1995; Paauwe, 2009; Gerhart, 2005; Guest, 1997; Sanders et al., 2014; Wright and Boswell, 2002; Wright and Haggerty, 2005) to conduct more empirical research on the mechanism of the HRM practices’ influence through more proximal outcomes. Accordingly, this reflects a shortage in the exploration to the relationship between these practices and employees’

outcomes, which has led to gap in our understanding of how HR practices are linked to performance. This is because the mechanism through which these practices influence performance which has been debated and the findings in this body of research have been inconsistent. The mechanism of this relationship is called the “black box”. Black box refers to the missing link or mysterious mechanisms by which HRM practices affect performance. Scholars (e.g. Bowen and Ostroff 2004; Snap and Redman, 2010; Wright and Nishii, 2013) have identified specific areas that need more research in this arena. First, it is suggested that organisational outcomes are too distal to evaluate the effects of HR practices on performance. Therefore, the employees’ level outcomes could be more sensible to study the intervention of HRM in micro level, as they are proximal indicators (Bowen and Ostroff 2004, Paauwe 2009, Guest 1997). Second, researchers have argued that capturing data and policies on a firm’s strategy is not sufficient to understand employees’ beliefs and experience about HRM activities. Thus, the impacts of HR practices on employees’ outcomes can be explored only through employees’ perception (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Conway and Monks, 2008; Snap and Redman, 2010; Khilji and Wang, 2006; Nishii et al., 2008). This is because there has been another gap between the organisation’s intended HR practices, actual practices and perceived practices due to the lack of focus on employees’ perspectives towards HR practices (Sanders et al., 2014; Wright and Nishii, 2013; Huselid and Becker, 2011). Thus, it is important to explore this relationship through employees’ perception and find out any possible paths to the effects of these perspectives on performance. In response to the scholars’ calls, the current research explored the effect of one of the HRM systems on task performance by deploying employees’ perceptions to accomplish its aims.

In related vein, specialists in this domain (e.g. Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Dyer and Reeves, 1995; Wright et al., 2001; Delery and Doty, 1996; Combs et al., 2006), have claimed that organisations can enhance organisational effectiveness by using performance oriented human resource practices. These practices are called high performance work system practices (HPWS practices). Further, when these practices are synergic, interdependent and deployed to enhance performance (performance orientated), they form high performance work system (HPWS). The advocates of this system claim that it can assist to produce positive and beneficial impacts across organisations regardless of any characteristics such as sectoral and organisational features (Demery and Doty, 1996; Huselid and Becker, 2011). However, others argued that the impact of HPWS may not be replicated from one sector to another because of the differences in HRM strategies and organisational structures (Ortiz

and Fernandez, 2005. Baarspul and Wilder, 2011). For example, according to Stanton and Manning (2013) even within the public sector there are differences. One more issue, a question raised by Hofstede (1980), about whether the findings of the studies about the relationship between HRM system and performance can be generalised on different organisational contexts. Hofstede adds that contexts differ according to the cultural effect. For example, the effectiveness of these systems has been poorly understood in the collective culture in the Middle East (Delbridge et al., 2011; Iles et al., 2012, Budhwar and Debrah, 2013). In their important work, Sanders et al., (2014) have called for more HR studies that considering the formal and informal contextual, institutional and cultural considerations (Budhwar et al., 2018). Budhwar et al., (2018) and his colleagues have also called for more research on the HRM systems nature and effect on performance in the Middle East and North Africa. Moreover, the findings of Iles et al (2012) study, proved that in the public-sector organisations in Middle East, human resource management still not considered as significant contributor in achieving the organisational objectives, besides, the HRM policies are more influenced by several cultural factors such as kinship, Wasta and power distance. The prevalence of the mentioned cultural factors such as Wasta can negatively affect the organisational justice' perceptions. Therefore, when studying the mechanism of the HPWS effect on performance in these contexts, perception of fairness could play an important role. This research explored the role perception of fairness in the relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance in one of the biggest Libyan oil public companies.

In sum, this research explored one of the important aspects of the HRM black box in different context using the process approach (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004) that asserts on the importance of employees' perceptions towards the HPWS practices. Further, it applied the perceived task performance as one of the employees' behavioural outcomes as performance indicator. In addition, the study explores the role of fairness perception in this relationship. The research sought to obtain in depth understanding to employees' perceptions by adopting qualitative approach with two sources of data; semi structured interview method and document analysis to shed lights on the formal aspects of the studied practices.

1.2.Rationales for Research in Libya:

Understanding the HRM context in general has become necessary to complement the exploration research of any HRM policies or practices and their effects on performance. For example, Guest (1990) mentioned that researchers in Europe have attributed failures in the

investigations of HRM domain because they were based on the US values rather on local rooted contextual considerations. Similarly, studies in this domain have focused on exploring the HRM in the Middle Eastern countries and ignoring North African nations (e.g. Libya, Tunisia and Algeria). Several scholars, (e.g. Harvey, 2002; Alder and Gunderson, 2007) have opposed the idea of the transferability of HRM across countries. Pawan et al (2017) highlighted that each of these countries has its own cultural and contextual complexity. Moreover, Arab management in the oil exporters' countries in particular is facing increasing challenges due to the falling prices of oil and the new markets they have entered in petrochemicals industries (Elgamal, 2000). In Libya, there was serious implications of the previous regime on the HRM, this is because of previous governor's (Qadhafi) way of controlling the country, which based on the intensive security and unplanned actions (El-Anis and Hamed, 2013). These activities have touched every side of Libyan people live. For example, despite the Libyan high oil exportation and small population, Libya was rated as high unemployment in the year 2000 with 30%. In more relation to HRM, the ex-regime proposed a new management system that encourages employees to form what Qadhafi called self-management committees and workers in the private enterprises to become in partnership with the owners, who became employees in their own organisations (Youssef, 2006).

According to this new so called "workers' revolution" employees in every private organisation in the country formed committees and owned those institutions and share the revenues among them. In addition, in the year 1981 the regime introduced the law number 15 of 1981, which in the country was frozen with the minimal increase. These ad-hoc actions resulted in several negative consequences to the management of human resources as the organisational structures in most of the private and public organisations were negatively affected. Further, there has been a problem with the performance quality comparing to the high education level of the Libyan employees (Porter and Yergin, 2006). Budhwar and Mellahi (2016) stated, that there has been a skills gap in the public sector. Furthermore, this resulted in a lot of frustration among the public employees due to the frozen salary increase. (Otman and Karlberg, 2007). According to Zahari and Shurbagi (2012), the legacy of the previous regime in Libya are challenging, especially in terms of creating new work environment and rebuilding the management structure. However, organisations in the country have been slow in establishing the changes after the radical political changes in Libya, thus the issue of poor employees' performance and its link to the HR practices has been not yet resolved and needs proper explorations (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2016). Further,

the new forms of the HRM systems such as HPWS has not been explored in Libya yet and scholars (e.g. Rhodes et al., 2008; Budhwar and Sparrow, 2002; Budhwar et al., 2018) have also called for further research on the HPWS in non-western countries. In light of these rationales, exploring the uptake and the effect of the HPWS can expand our knowledge about the nature and the effect of this universalist concept in new uncovered context.

1.3. Research Motivation:

There are several motivations that induced the researcher to conduct this work. These inducements can be categorised into academic and personal. First, academic motivators, the lack of understanding of the mechanism by which the HPWS practices can affect performance and the calls for more studies to uncover the HRM black box is one of the main academic factors that has encouraged the researcher to undertake this study, so, he can contribute to the knowledge in this arena. Another academic factor is the dearth of research that exploring this aspect of HRM in Libya. Hence, conducting this kind of work can add to the academic knowledge about the contextual deference in studying the relationship between HPWS and performance. Moreover, it can uncover the extent of this system adoption in Waha Oil Company, which is one of the biggest oil companies in Libya (see section 1.9.5.1). In doing so, this research can add to the existing knowledge about what called “best practices”. The term best practices refers to certain practices that can help organisations to achieve their goals regardless any contextual or cultural considerations. One more academic motivation is that after what so called the “Arabic spring”, there has been better opportunity to explore certain critical HRM themes such as the effect of justice. This is because, the political changes, which has taken place in Libya has removed the obstacles that were preventing employees to discussed about the topics (Abobaker and Elbarouni, 2018). Second, the personal factors, the researcher has conducted the master’s degree in Libya about the relationship between employees’ attitudes towards training and their readiness to face crises. This study was mainly about employees’ perceptions about the effect of one of the HPWS practices, which is relevant to the current research theme. The main finding of that study was intriguing. This is because even though employees have not obtained adequate training to face any potential crises, they were found with positive attitudes towards facing crises. The study was conducted in 2010, in the year 2011, the civil war started in Libya and the medical (the research population) staff in the Libyan hospitals showed an astonishing performance in facing that crises, which meant that they were motivated by their own

attitudes. This has made the researcher strongly interested in understanding employees' perceptions' effect on performance. Another personal motivator is the long experience that the researcher has spent in dealing with employees in the HR departments in his work. Conducting this study could enhance the researcher's understanding about the ways to improve subordinates' performance in the organisation which he works for. The next section summarises the aims of this research.

1.4. Research Aims:

There are four aims of this research.

1. To explore the uptake of HPWS in the Libyan oil firm.
2. To find out how HPWS practices are perceived by employees.
3. To assess the relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance.
4. To explore the role of perception of fairness in the relationship between HPWS practices and employees' task performance.

1.5. Main Research Questions:

1. To what extent the HPWS is adopted in the Libyan oil firm?
2. How employees in Libyan firm perceive the HPWS practices?
3. How employees' perceptions towards HPWS influence their task performance?
4. How do perceptions of fairness affect the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS and task performance?

1.6. Ethical Considerations:

This study is being conducted within the regulations of the Research Ethics Code of the Nottingham Trent University. An approval from the College Research Ethics (CREC) has been obtained. This study has been undertaken by adopting clear ethical procedures. In this, the researcher has contacted the National Oil Corporation (NOC), which regulate the oil industry in Libya and obtained consent from the relevant department to conduct this research on one of its companies. Then potential participants were contacted via emails with the research information sheets that outline the purpose of the study and adequate information about the interviews such as time, content and other required information.

Another Email letters were sent to some interviewees with the consent form to sign them, while for some others verbal recorded consents were obtained before starting the interviews.

All the participants' information was kept secured in separate files till this research is completed, only the anonymous files will be kept, and all other identifiable documents will be destroyed.

1.7. Research Methodology:

To achieve the main aims and answer the questions of this research, a subjective relative ontology, and, interpretive epistemology with a qualitative case study research design were adopted in this research. It used the semi-structured interviews and document analysis as data sources to obtain in-depth and rich understanding to the research phenomenon. In this, 22 interviews were conducted via telephone, whereby 16 front-line employees were recruited to explore their perceptions towards the HPWS practice, justice and the uptake of the system in the case study. Three supervisors were also interviewed to answer questions about the synergy of the practices and justice. Three HR key persons were also recruited to explore the top management objectives and messages they intend to convey through the HPWS practices. The data analysis was conducted by employing the thematic data analysis approach, where by NVivo 11.3 qualitative data analysis software was used to aid the management of the collected data.

1.8. Thesis Structure:

This thesis is structured in seven chapters as follow:

Chapter One: Introduction:

This chapter incorporates the main principles of the study and prefaces the topic for the readers such as an introduction to the topic, thesis structure. Also, it lists the research aims, questions and motivations. In this part, the Libyan context will be described to provide general background about Libya as it will describe the economy, the geography, population and culture. This chapter also includes information about the characteristic of HRM in Libya, about the oil sector and Waha Oil Company (the case study)

Chapter Two:: High Performance Work Sector (HPWS):

The Third chapter will explore the pertaining of the literature with regards to the HPWS, in this part, the concept of HPWS will be introduced, deliberated and arguments about its relations to task performance in the previous research will be discussed.

Chapter Three: Justice:

Chapter Four will introduce the justice concept, the development of its dimensions and the link with task performance in the literature will be argued and discussed.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology and Research Methods:

In chapter Five the methodological choices including the research paradigm, research design, approach and method will be discussed and justified. It will also illustrate the method of the data analysis that adopted in this study.

Chapter Five: Finding of Data Analysis:

A presentation of the data analysis and the finding in this research will be provided in this chapter, where by the emerged themes, quote from participants answers and parts from the documents analysis are provided. In this chapter, the research questions were answered according to the analysis of the data. A summary of the finding is provided at the end of this chapter.

Chapter Six: Discussion:

The findings of this research will be discussed in this chapter and all the chapters in this research will be linked.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendation:

Chapter Eight will incorporate an overarching summary of all chapters. It will round up the thesis and conclude the key findings of the study. In will also incorporate the contribution of this research, limitation that faced the study and recommendation for further research were illustrated.

1.9. The Libyan context:

It was discussed in the section (1.1) that there is dearth of research on the HRM black box in the Middle East and North Africa. This includes studies that explore the concept of HPWS as universalist aspect in this arena. According to Pawan et al (2017) the context of Middle East and North Africa is unique and interesting in studying HRM. Moreover, even in the Middle East, each country has its own cultural complexity, which can influence the HRM context (Pawan et al., 2017). This research is exploring the effect of employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices on task performance with the integration of fairness perception in Waha Oil Company in Libya. In addition, one of the research aims is to explore the extent of the HPWS concept adoption in this company, which has not been explored previously. To the researcher best of knowledge, the uptake and the effect of HPWS has not been explored in Libya. Moreover, Mohamed et al (2015) concluded, that the oil companies in Libya have distinct HRM features, which worth more investigation. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the background of this context and research participants. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the Libyan cultural context and sectoral characteristics of the case study.

1.9.1. Over view of Libya:

Libya is an Arabic African country that located in the north of the African continent. It is on 1,757,000 Km², the desert covers about 1,100,000 Km². Libya has about 1,200 Km coast line on the southern coast of the Mediterranean Sea (The world fact Book, 2018). This country is bordered to the east by Egypt and from the south by Sudan, Niger, Chad, Mali, and from the west by Tunisia and Algeria. Libya was founded in 1952 after long periods of foreign dominance. It was occupied by Osman from 1551 to about 360 years, Italians for about 34 years and by British and French from 1942 to 1951. The French occupied the southern part from 1945 to 1952 while the British controlled the eastern part from 1942 to 1951. (Karlberg, 2007). The population is about 6M, this number was only 1,435,596 in 1955 (The world fact book, 2018). The rapid increase in the population of Libya has been associated with the oil discovery in 1955 (Waniss and Karlberg, 2007). Demographically, Libya has a promising age structure as about 40 % of the population are less than 25 years old. Ethnically, 97% are Sunni Muslims, Speaking the Arabic language as first language.

Further, because of the language used and the dominance of the Islamic culture and the social norms, Libya is considered as one of the Arabic world countries (Moran et al., 2011).

Since the discovery of oil in Libya, several sectors such as the industrial, agricultural and educational sectors have seen important developments. As a result, to prosperity that has been taken place from 1970s to 1990s, the government established certain socio-economic strategies to partially introducing certain private economic activities in the country. The government took the responsibility in managing and controlling both public and private sectors (Thorne, 2010). Notwithstanding these economic actions, the country has remained the least diverse economy in Middle East and North Africa with a heavily rely on the petroleum production (low diversification economy). For example, According to Bohmer (2008) that the agriculture sector in Libya is limited and not effective. The previous government undertook a huge nationalisation campaign in the 80s. This resulted in hugeness in the public sector with substantial employment in this sector (Waniss and Karlberg 2007). Moreover, Porter (2007) mentioned that this country has suffered issues in the decision making in addition to the oil dependent economy. Further, it was reported that the previous government has restricted the information sharing and focused in providing the public services in the cities, therefore people in villages had to make significant move towards the cities. The African Press Organisation (2010) revealed, that one notable advantage of closed economy in Libya is that it has not been affected by the financial global crises which happened that time as the local financial system was not tied to any of foreign stock markets (Waniss and Karlberg, 2007). The changes made by the previous regime has been perceived as Lego game (installation and disassembly), since it caused them feeling instability, lack of trust in the government and fearful of expropriation. Consequently, reduced interest in investing money in the private sector as investors sought that it is not safe environment to invest in (Luxford, 2005).

In the 2000s the Libyan government begun to realise these obstacles and introduced an initiative to partially divers the economy and move forward the market-based economy. This plan was mainly to enhance the public-sector performance. Therefore, new regulations for privatisation were established whereby attracted benefits were added to the existed policies (The African Press Organisation, 2010).

However, due to some security and historical back grounds, the main vital industries such as food productions, transportations and telecommunication remained closed to the foreign

investors (Bohmer, 2008). The policy of inviting abroad investors gave its fruits since the GDP reached 521,333 m in 2005 and economy growth was significantly raised. None the less, Libya remained one of the lowest in the economic freedom rate (Ripard, 2010).

The 1400 foreign companies that were working in Libya faced a lot of corruption, which constrained the maximum utilisation of these investments for the national company (Waniss and Karlberg, 2007). The most important aspect in this is that the public sector remained encumbered with high employment while the unemployment rate was 25% as the highest in the surrounding area. Waniss and Karlberg (2007) revealed that it is expected that the unemployment rate will become worst in the few coming years. Concerning transparency and information sharing, this country has been considered as one of the highest corrupted nations. In this, Libya was ranked 171 out of 180 countries, which means it is ranked the tenth from the bottom (Corruption Perception index 2017).

In 2011, Arab spring, demonstration against the regime took place. These nonviolent protests turned into armed clashes. The country collapsed in a civil war between Qaddafi forces and the revolutionaries. According to Anderson (2011) due to unsuccessful decades of dictatorship, scarcity of everything, lack of trust between people and the regime and even between people, each other and the failure in bringing prosperity for the Libyans. Libyan people have had to refuge in the consolation of tribes and kinship networks to provide them with safety and access to public services. The Libyan society has been cracked and the public organisations have been divided based on kinship and other social considerations. The fracture included the army and the petroleum organisations. Hence, social role in the country has been reinforced and the civil governmental role has been stepped back. Thereby the reconstructing of the public administration and rebuilding the democratic political activities is being more difficult. Libya will have to establish rebuilding the social structure and the security, so it can overcome the current situation (Anderson, 2011; El-anis and Hamed, 2013).

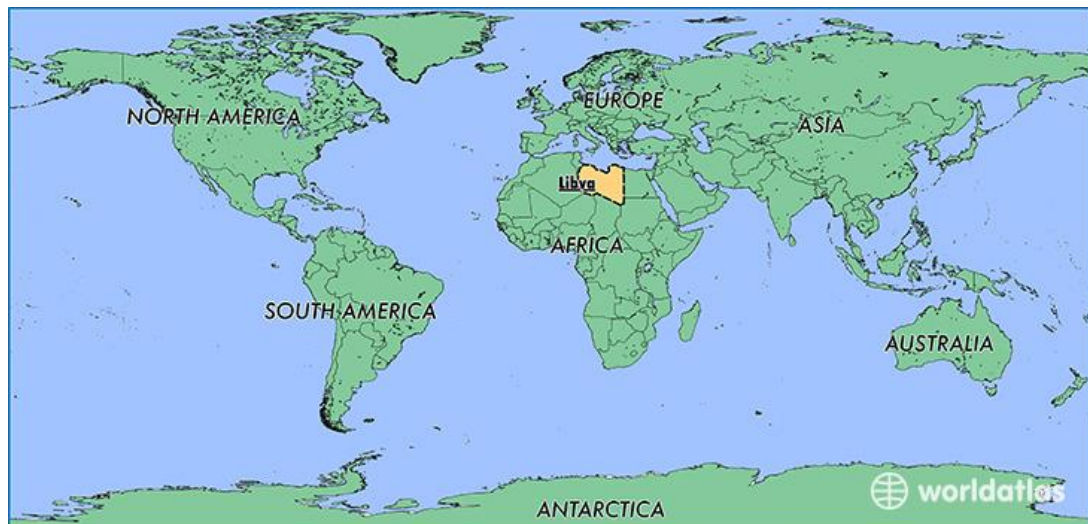


Figure 1. Libyan Map (worldatlas.com)

1.9.2. Libyan Culture:

Hofstede and Bond (1988, p. 6) define culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one category of people from those of another”. In common with other Arabic Islamic countries, Libya has certain similar cultural features. This section highlights these distinctive aspects in the Libyan culture that reported in Hofstede and were part of the research motivations to conduct this research in the Libyan context. There are six cultural dimensions: the power distance, individualism vs collectivism, masculinity vs femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation vs short term orientation and indulgence vs restraint. First the power distance, this dimension is described as the level of the acceptance of power distribution by the less powered individuals in institutions (Hofstede, 2001). In this, the country is described as clearly hierarchical society because it has scored 80 out of 100, in the Hofstede 6-dimensions model cultural power distance scale. In the Libyan organisations, this dimension is reflecting a deep-rooted inequalities and centralisation. Subordinates usually told what they must do, and the ideal superior is good autocrat. The other different dimension is the individualism, which defined as the extent of looking after more people that his/ her immediate family. Libya is reported as high collective country where there is a long-term commitment to the community or the group the individual belongs to and strong relationships is fostered. Further, in the organisations, the relationship between employers and employees can be seen as family link in the normal terms. These two cultural aspects are claimed to be effective on the HPWS implementation. Concerning collectivism, employees in the low collective culture are expected to have more autonomy,

which is one of the HPWS characteristics. While in the more collective countries employees usually tend to prefer team work. With respect to power distance, in the less power distance countries better organisational communication, participation and trust (Lertxundi and Landeta, 2011). To conclude, taking in consideration that HPWS was developed in the USA and most of the research about this aspect were conducted in European contexts (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Shih et al., 2006), which are far different from the Libyan culture. Hofstede (2001) mentioned that culture is meaningless without comparison, figure (2) therefore, show the differences between Libya and USA, where the concept where developed and UK as an example for the European countries. Moreover, in response to the researchers calls for more research on the use and nature of this system in the middle East and North Africa (e.g. Budhwar et al., 2018), the present research explores the uptake and the effect of the HPWS in one of the Libyan oil companies.

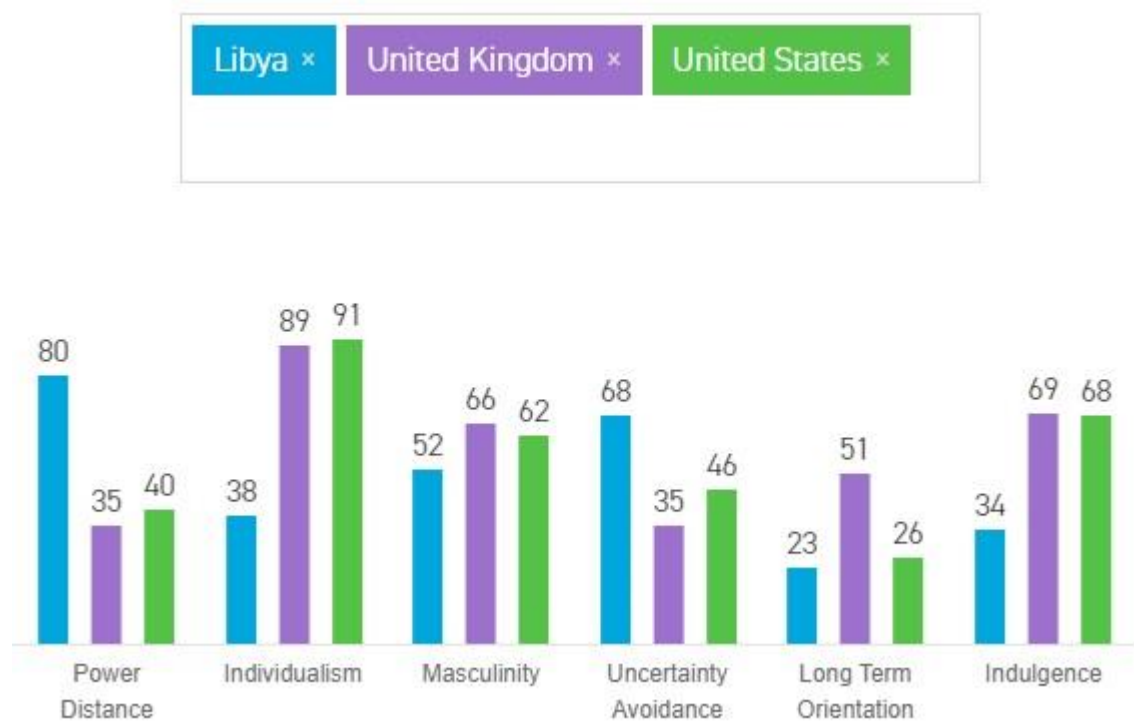


Figure (2). Cultural differences between Libya and USA and UK

<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries/>

This figure shows an example of the differences in the cultural dimensions between Libya and USA, where the HPWS was developed and UK as an example of the European culture,

where most of the HPWS research were conducted. It shows the significant dissimilarity in the power distance, individualism and indulgence dimensions. In this example, it can be noticed that the big differences are mainly in the power distance and the individualism. It also indicated to the similarity in between the UK and USA in most of the cultural dimensions. For example, in power distance, UK has 35 and USA 40, whereas Libya has 80 points.

1.9.3. Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices in Libya and Culture Effect:

HRM practice in Libya are usually the same that used in the western countries. These are selection and recruitment, performance appraisal, rewards, training and development and other common used practices such as compensation and job description. Selection in the Libyan public organisations refers to the procedures to offer a job for an individual who legally passed all the legal requirements (Almhdie and Nyambegera, 2004). This practice in Libya is mostly based on the personal relationships such as kinship and other social elements (Almhdie and Nyambegera, 2004). The Libyan institutions recruit both domestic and international employees. The responsibility for this practice implementation is usually on the HR departments in the Libyan public organisations. However, the government usually has substantial intervention in this practice such as recruitment as the NOC assigns employees to its companies. Performance appraisal in the Libyan organisations is usually starts with a form that prepared in consultation with the employees. However, according to Muna (1980), even though the form is prepared in consultation with the employee, it is the top management who make the decision and joint decision-making is very rare in the Arab management. This form includes the criteria by which the concerned employees will be evaluated. It should be completed at least once a year. Supervisors are responsible for completing this process and should insure that subordinates are acknowledged with this procedure. The HR director approves this form and can amend it. This practice aims to identify employees' weakness and strength areas thus identify training requirements to enhance the performance.

In terms of rewards, this practice includes promotion, pay for better performance or free transportation for high management levels persons such as executives and directors (Aгнаia, 1996). These extra advantages given to top management is reported as de motivational factor for the young employees (Aгнаia, 1996). Concerning training and developing practices, the

main objective of deploying these practices is enhancing the domestic employees level and achieve what called “Libyanisation” level. Libya has paid more attention to train the Libyan employees in the public sector and established several training centres across the country. For example, the engineering college in the year 1961, the university of Tripoli (ex Al-Fateh) university in 1970, Bright star university in 1980 and numerous similar institutes has been built. In most of the big public organisations, the responsibility of the training is for a training department, whereas in the smaller institutes the HR departments takes the responsibility.

1.9.4. The Effect of Libyan Culture on Human Resource Management Practices:

Several studies, have investigated the effect of culture on HRM practices, the majority of these studies (e.g. Ngo et al., 1998; Aycan et al., 2001; Nyambegera et al., 2000; Pudelko, 2006; Budhwar and Khatri, 2001) have indicated that culture can significantly affect the effectiveness of the practices implementation. In the Arab countries including Libya, the HRM practices are heavily affected by social relationships, religion and other cultural dimensions such as collectivism and power distance as these traditions are deeply rooted and reached the organisational workplaces (Almhdie and Nyambegera, 2004). According to Pawan et al (2017), HRM practices in the North Africa including Libya must be in line with the culture. The Model of Cultural Fit (MCF) that was introduced by Kanungo and Jaeger (1990) for example, asserts that both socio-cultural and organisational environment form the organisational culture. Moreover, managers in these contexts implement the practices based on their perceptions (Aycan et al., 2007). Hence, institutes are managed by fulfilling these obligations rather than meeting their needs (Hayajenh et al., 1994). In this vein, family ties and personal connections are prioritised to the academic qualifications in promotion and recruitment practices, as another instance, the power distance dimension has affected the employees’ participation as the decision-making is usually in the hands of the top management. More specifically, the selection practice in Libya is based on the personal connection and getting people from the tribe or the close social groups (Almhdie and Nyambegera, 2004). Moreover, selection is also affected by the high masculinity, as women are not preferred to select in the public sector (Wright 1982; Iles et al., 2012).

Practice are also influenced by the collectivism nature of the Libyan culture and people in the higher management level tend to offer help for those who are from the same social group

(Iles et al., 2012). Managers in Libya are aware about these social factors, so they usually consult the boss and other colleagues about the potential candidate in terms of selection, promotion or/and rewards. In another vein, in this collective society, supervisors usually treat subordinates in what called parent way. Consequently, employees reciprocate with loyalty and support to the supervisors. The power distance factor also has affected the participation practice as it limits the decision-making process with the top management. The power distance has made the participation in the Libyan organisation characterised by centralisation with and less participation opportunities are given to employees (Aagnaia, 1996). In performance appraisal, the collectivism affects the appraisal process as the colleagues' appraisal is not common in Libya because people do not prefer to report negatively about their peers. Training is also one of the practices that is affected by the cultural dimensions, the social connection usually plays a role in prioritising training candidates and the preferred courses as usually overseas training are perceived as valuable opportunity that should not be missed.

1.9.5. Oil Sector in Libya:

The oil had been discovered in the late 1950's. Ten years later, 15 oil firms were set up in the country to start investigating and extracting oil. In 1970 the National Oil Corporation (NOC) has been established to regulate the oil industry, the objectives of NOC are; setting development plans for the sector, supporting the economy, and exploiting and investing in the petroleum reserves. NOC carried out these objectives through its own companies or by participating with others. The Libyan oil sector regulator fully owns 15 companies, shares exploration and productions with 23 international companies such as Total E&P Company, British Petroleum Exploration Libya Limited Company, and own four training centres and institutes (www.NOC.ly). As a result of the continues attention given to the oil exploring and extracting, in 2012 Libya was considered the highest per capita gross domestic product in the continent of Africa as it reached \$ 16502, with annual growth of 7.99% from 2000 to 2012 (Abuhadra and Ajaali, 2014; EIA,2014). Libya is considered as one of the vital countries in the organisation of the petroleum countries (OPEC) (EIA's OPEC Revenue Fact, 2014). Further, the country holds the largest reserve in Africa and one of the highest in the world. Even though, the local economy in Libya is heavily depends on oil and gas production as it represents about 94 % of the GDP, this sector employing only 2% of the

local workforce comparing with the health and education sectors which employ 51%. From 1.486 million employees working in the Libyan public sector, only about 45947 work for the petroleum industry (NOC human resource annual report 2013). According to the same report, during the 2013 there were 6762 new Libyan employees, while 1565 left the sector due to various reasons. The oil exportation was about \$4 billion per month in 2013 (EIA's OPEC Revenue Fact, 2014), the figure below shows the oil export increase.

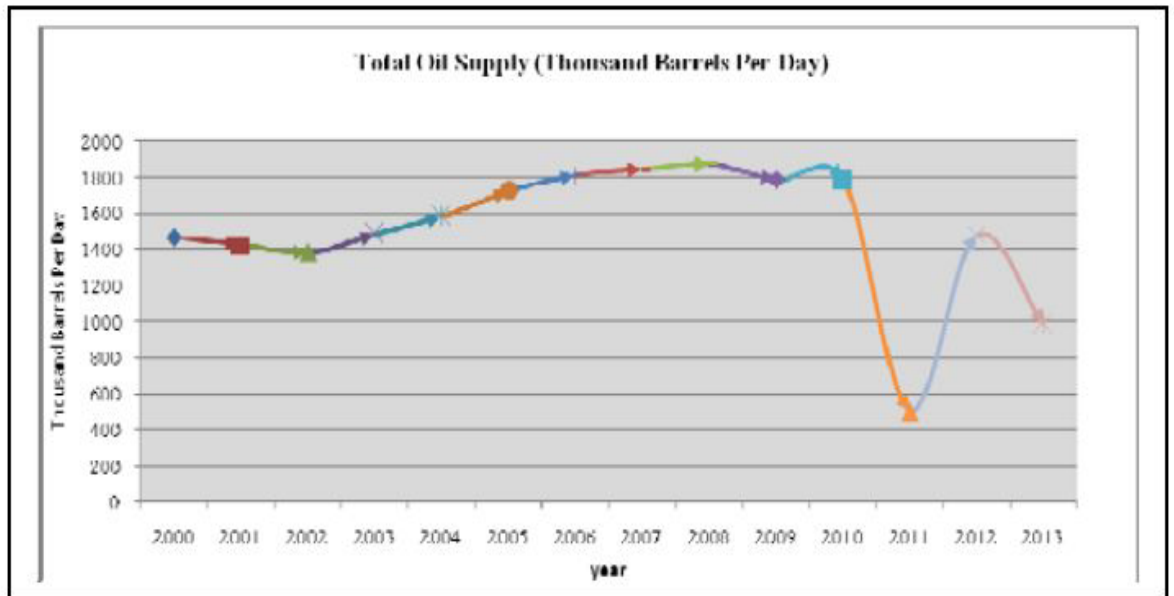


Figure (3), total oil exportation. data source EIA, 2014

1.9.5.1. Main Companies in the Sector:

The NOC managed the oil extraction and exploration by number of companies. The largest firms in this sector are Waha Oil Company, The Arabian Golf Oil Company and Sirt Oil Company. Table 1 page 24 below shown a brief about these companies. The research is conducted in Waha Oil Company as a case study. The next section presents more information about the selected case study (Waha Oil Company).

1.9.5.2. Waha Oil Company:

This company is one of the prominent institutions in the Libyan oil sector. it is publicly owned company (Mohamed et al., 2015). Waha was established in 1955, it was founded under the name of (Oizys Oil Company of Libya) as an operating company for three American companies (ConocoPhillips, Marathon and Amerada) to carry out exploration,

production and export of oil and gas in Libya. Waha obtained the first concession contract on 12 December 1955, for a period of fifty years. In 1973, the group of the (OISES) signed a partnership agreement with the Libyan state, whereby the National Oil Corporation owns 51% of the assets of the company. Shell has refused to accept the agreement. Therefore, the decision made to nationalize its full share in the company (OISES) in 1974, and thus the percentage of participation between the National Oil Corporation and the company was follows:

National Oil Corporation 59,1667%

Continental Co. 16,3333%

Libyan Marathon Oil Company 16,333%

Libyan oil company Amirada 8,1667%

The company continued its operations in the areas of concession contracts granted until 30/6/1986, when the United States of America under the Reagan administration imposed an economic blockade on Libya oil and gas sector, which has led to the withdrawal of all American companies and employees, as well as individuals. The General People's Committee (the Council of Ministers) issued Resolution No. (350) for the year 1986 establishing Al Waha Oil Company as an operating company that owned by the National Oil Corporation to replace the Libyan Oil Company in its relationship. 3200 employees are working for Waha in the headquarter which located in the capital city Tripoli and in the oil fields around the country. Waha produces more than 350 thousand barrels per day. This production is from 1000 oil wells located mainly in Site basin (Akeel and Wynn, 2015). In 2011, oil production was significantly affected due to the civil war in the country (see appendix 4 for details), thereby sever damages occurred in the infrastructure. The ports were out of order and force-majeure was announced by NOC. The annual income of Waha in 2013 was only about \$ 550 (Akeel and Wynn, 2015). Though several maintenances have been done, these circumstances have been affecting the production.

Company	Year of establishment	Head quarter	Employees	Main oil fields	Load ports	Production: b/d
Waha Oil CO	1956	Tripoli	3200	Waha, Samah, Dhahra and Galo	Sidra	300K/d
AGOCO	1979	Benghazi	2400	Sarir and Messla	Albrega	350K/d
Sirte Oil Co	1981	Brega	6652	Zelten, Marada	Albrega	100K/d

Table 1. Main Companies in Libyan oil Sector (Data Source EIA, 2014)

Table(1) incorporates the biggest three oil companies in Libya. Waha is among these companies, which shows the significance of the research population. Here, it can be seen that Waha is the oldest as it was established in 1956, while the other three giant companies were established after. It also has more fields than the others and comes next in employment as it employs 3200 employees.

1.9.5.3. Human Resource Management in Oil Sectors:

There are several reasons for focusing on HRM in oil public sector. Firstly, the lack of attention paid to public oil sector in HRM literature as scholarly research usually give only overlook to the unique characteristics of this sector. Secondly, the significance of the oil sectors outcomes especially in the developing countries, where public sector is dominant and most of these countries heavily rely on oil industry. For example, Middle East and Arab countries are among the highest reliance states on petroleum revenues in the world, Libya comes second in the world in its reliance on oil production. Thirdly, there is an increased pressure on oil companies to operate efficiently in this vital sector (Ahdr, 2003). Fourthly, there are evidence from empirical research reveal that countries which relies on oil production might experience low employees' productivity, (Sachs and Warner, 2001, Gylfason et al., 1999), low employee satisfaction and high turnover rates (Bindra and Lahmar, 2008), high and positive relation found between the HRM practices and organisational and employees' performance in this sector (e.g. Atteya, 2012; Izadi, 2013). Fifthly, given the instability of the oil prices there is pressure on managing human resources to ensure the maximum utilisation of these resources, and to minimise the economic downturns especially during crises. Finally, given the significance of the oil sector, the integration between HRM and its context has become essentially for more accumulation in the field of HRM research,

these intriguing findings are big inducement for conducting more in-depth research to find out how can HPWS linked to employees' performance.

In Libya, though the academic research is rare in the field of the HRM, the information mentioned before about the low employment and low performance have raised several questions about HRM strategies, policies and practices in the Libyan oil firms. According to Almhdie, and Nyambegera (2004) and Nyambegera (2006), who have explored the demographic and cultural factors that could affect the HR policies and practices at the planning and implementation levels in Libyan petroleum companies, HRM practices in Libya are in their formative phase. Moreover, similarly to most Arab Middle East countries, the oil sector in Libya is characterised by high government intervention, reliance on the personal contact and dominance of socio-cultural factors rather than objective criteria in most of HRM policies and practices (Iles et al., 2012). This research explores the relationship between the HPWS and employees' performance in one of the biggest companies in the Libyan oil sector.

Chapter 2: High Performance Work System (HPWS)

2.1. Introduction:

This chapter introduces the concept of the High-Performance Work System (HPWS) and reviews the literature on its effect and nature. The chapter is structured as follows: the next section shed lights on the appearance of this Universalist system. The definition of the concept is incorporated in the third section. The fourth part is devoted to discuss the use of the HPWS in the public sector as this research is conducted in one of the public companies. The theoretical underpinning to study the effect of this concept is illustrated in the fifth section. The sixth part discuss the debates and arguments about the link between HPWS and organisational performance and employees' task performance. The process approach that adopted to study the effect of the HPWS as discussed in the seventh section. The eight section is about the effect of the cultural context on the concept. The ninth part incorporates the role of the line managers in implementing the HPWS. The final section reviews the qualitative research on HPWS.

2.2.The Appearance of High Performance Work Systems:

In order to understand the concept of HPWS, it is plausible to trace how this concept emerged. Nevertheless, attention to this area has been paid a long time ago (Cappelli and Neumark, 2001), considerable number of the HPWS research indicate that they have developed their main ideas about this aspect only recently, particularly the terms of the linkage between management and performance. For the reason that HPWS is much about performance, it is necessary to trace how the concern about designing the work and organisational structure in a way that can achieve effectiveness, efficiency and performance have been developed.

In the early twentieth century, the welling for achieving efficiency and enhancing performance was the forehead of the industrial and social engineers' concerns. Thinking

about methods to get a direct control over work power was the most visible managerial aspects in that period. This resulted in declining efforts exerted by employees as they learned to negotiate their efforts with their employers. Consequently, new incentive payment systems and work processes were experimented by employers to enhance performance and efficiency (Friedman, 1977). Principles of Taylor were the strike example of this new way of production and work processes, which was known as scientific management. Mass production, routinised jobs and bureaucratic styles, with high power distance between workers and management were the most visible aspects of this management style, particularly in the industrial sector. This style was criticised for neglecting certain important aspects such as training and the psychology of individuals. This style also failed to reduce costs and wastes. Consequently, there was a necessity to think about alternative way that can avoid scientific management's shortages and consider individuals as the main assets of organisations. This is what was known as human relation school. To achieve effectiveness of workers, human relations specialists' main approaches were by focusing on employees' needs and improve their work environment. For example, one of the fundamental theories in the management history in this regard is the Maslow's (1954) theory of hierarchy of needs and self-actualisation, this theory was considered as a direct opposition to the scientific management which neglected human basic needs and regarded employees as machines. It was a transformation movement to alter the organisations' management into an interconnected, collective management through employing the group work power and providing employees with motives. However, this school was criticised for its focus on the social side, yet less attention to power sharing. Further, it was also described as a form of benevolent paternalism. Because of these critics and others, some related work (e.g. Blauner, 1964) emerged and focused on subjective issues such as loyalty, commitment, job anatomy and employment relationship. These organisational aspects emphasised the need for more attention to enhancement Quality of Working Life (QWL). This was the subsequent development towards the emergence of HPWS.

The concept quality of working life emerged because of employees dissatisfactory about their work structure. In that time, some important work such as Blauner (1964) and Beyenon (1973) suggested more motivations, job enrichment and certain decision-making participations were provided for employees. Each one of these work activities were purposely provided in order to enhance performance. Therefore, the link between management and performance retained one of the main focus of the QWL. However, some doubters claimed that QWL writers drew on principles that were imbedded in the human

relation school such as Maslo's theory. For example, the only possible addition in QWL was that employees should have the opportunity to exercise self-control; this assumption was predicated on the Maslo's self-actualisation ideals (Watson, 1995). Debaters stressed that it is actually through these principles employers and managers can enhance performance. It was obvious that the arguments about workers needs and rights was central. According to Wilkinson (1998), this was expanded subsequently to become a movement that called for wider set of reform in work practices such as profit sharing and quality circles.

This subsequently resulted in the emergence of alternative new production paradigms and human resource practices. Other new concepts such as training, employee involvement and empowerment emerged, which are now considered as key success factors in improving performance and were important start for the human resource management (HRM) frame. In its broadest meaning, HRM refers to activities that deal with managing employment relations. (Grant and Shields, 2002). In early of 1980's US academic writers identified two types of HRM: soft HRM and hard HRM. As in the previous debate between the antecedents (e.g. scientific management and human relation), each HRM style has different line. There was debate about these kinds of HRM. However, for example, Legge (2005) mentioned, neither soft and hard model seem to present a new insight to the domain, because it is easy to see the remains of the scientific management in the hard model and finger prints of human relations in the soft style. Furthermore, this classification could not be seen as precise one, this is because there could be hard outcomes of soft model and soft outcomes from the hard model. As a result, other new labels started to emerge in the field of HRM: high involvement management, high commitment management, best fit and best practices. For the purpose of simplification, these concepts are categorised as high-performance work systems and have given the rubric HPWS. To understand the individual's management-performance debate, this concept needs to be substantially scrutinised.

2.3. High Performance Work System Definition:

There has been need for consensus about what HPWS represent subjectively and in terms of the content. Strategic HRM is claimed to be focusing on understanding the impact of HRM practices on organisational outcomes in wide manner. Performance enhancing HR practices that being embraced by strategic HRM principles is called HPWS (Huselid, 1995). Though there is no agreement about the definition of HPWS, there are certain shared ideas among the existing approaches in this regard. For example, Beker and Huselid (1998) stated that,

organisations that adopt (a) competitive recruiting and selecting systems (b) effective rewards systems (c) developing and training that aligns with business objectives, are more likely to enhance their performance. Moreover, most authors on this issue highlighted some commonly shared and repeated practices: training, appraisal, teamwork, empowerment and pay related to performance. According to Appelbaum and Batt (1994), elements of high performance work systems can be categorised into four dimensions; HRM practices, management methods, industrial relations and work organisation. In terms of HRM practices, these writers included compensations according to performance, employment security and cross training. Management methods comprise the extent of participation in enhancing quality. Industrial relations concentrate on whether there is a harmony between the interests of employees and management. Work organisation embraces vertical collaboration and autonomous work groups.

All these individual practices are synergistic and reinforced bundle of HR practices that can help workers to be committed and to facilitate their involvement, consequently improving the outcomes of organisational performance. The term HPWS has been used to embrace several terms such as high commitment management (HCM) that termed by Walton (1985) and what called by Guthrie et al (2002) as high involvement work system (HIVWS) or management. Wood (1999) claimed that these terms and others such as high investment management and fixable work practices and production systems and even the broadest label people management refers to the organisational structure that applied to be the best for contemporary competitive conditions. However, some researchers have not specified any of the labels mentioned above when they studied HRM practices- performance relation (e.g. Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). In addition, according to Legge (2005), the terms HCM and HPWSs are being used synonymously. Conversely, some writers assert that there is a significant distinction between them however. For example, in its path to achieve high productivity, HCM focuses on job design, employee development and job security, whereas, HPWS perceived as being focus on practices that can assist in controlling employees' behaviours like intensive pay, job security and reward management. Furthermore, these authors prefer to use the term HCM doubting this interchangeability and claiming that in the lack of empirical examinations for the actual linkage between HPWSs and economic performance, this concept can be misleading (Pil and MacDuffie, 1996).

Another way and purposes for utilising the HPWSs have begun to take place in the area of HRM research in an effort that take focus away from merely commitment, besides, these efforts tried to encompass other factors such as performance management, skill formation

and pay satisfaction. Guthrie (2001), explained this new approach claiming that some key practices should be implied in work systems to be perceived as high performance supportive system. These practices are strict selection, ability enhancing training systems, motivation focus practices such as clear career ladder and self-bonuses, practices that can help to provide participation opportunities for the employees to participate such as self-managing teams (Appelbaum et al., 2000). Further, best HRM practices' concept advocates (e.g. Pfeffer, 1998) included some other practices. These practices were selective hiring, compensation on performance, team working and extensive training. Huselid (1995 p.635) included "comprehensive recruitment and selection procedures, incentive compensation and performance management systems, extensive employment involvement and training". Osterman (1994), add the flexible work arrangement. Collectively, it can be mentioned that HPWSs are systems which can improve knowledge, skills and, abilities of a firm's current and potential employees, increase their motivation, reduce shirking and enhance retention of quality employees while encouraging nonperformers to leave the firm" (Combs et al 2006).

In light of the above arguments, it can be concluded that though there has been no agreement about the definition and the structure of the HPWS among the specialists in this field, there has been commonality about specific elements in the both the definition and the dimensions. First in terms of the HPWS definition. The authors in this aspect (e.g. Beker and Huselid, 1998; Appelbaum and Batt, 1994) shared the concept of the synergy and bundling of the practices that can form the elements mentioned above such as industrial relation, management method and work organisation. Second concerning the HPWS dimension, there were common used practices among the specialists such as (training, selection, employment security, participation, job description, rewards, performance appraisal and internal mobility). Moreover, according to these authors, these practices should be designed to enhance employees' skills, provide motivation, and give opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. This research therefore, defines HPWS as a bundle of interdependent HR practices that work systematically to enhance employees' performance. Hence, the elements of this system will be operationalised in three elements: bundle of practices, synergy between these practices and the performance orientation of them. These two elements (interdependency and performance orientation of the practices) and the presence of the commonly used HPWS practices will be the applied as the indicators of the uptake of this system in the case study of this research.

2.4.High Performance Work Systems in Public Sector:

In recent years, institutes in both private and public sectors have experienced several challenges due the rapid and unexpected political, economic and technical changes. For the public sector, these changes have put more pressures on governments to enhance their organisations' performance. One way to improve performance is through more investment in the human resources, which in turn lead to more focus on human resource management (Ponak and Thompson, 1995). According to resource-based theory, workers can become a significant competitive advantage for the organisations when they are treated as the firm's main asset, which can utilise other resources such as machines (Maital, 1994; World public sector report, 2005). Furthermore, the world public sector report (2005) which has been published by the United Nations, has recommended that HRM in public sector organisations, especially in the developing countries should adopt a holistic approach that covers all its activities to conduct HRM reform in order to achieve the required effectiveness. The term high performance work organisation points to a wide-ranged set of human resource practices that can help to make firms to be more competitive, flexible and able to face the challenges that resulted from the rabid changes in the external environments (Godard et al., 2000). In the last decade, High-performance work systems have attracted more attention as solutions for certain issues regarding performance and competitiveness (Macky and Boxall, 2007; Kroon, et al., 2009), yet most of the studies exploring the role of HPWSs were conducted either private sector firms or in the western public-sector contexts. The findings of these studies have provided substantial evidence about the positive relation between the adoption of HPWSs and better performance.

Even though the literature about the public administration sheds light about the importance of HPWSs as an approach to enhance performance, the understanding of HPWSs in public sector is still limited (White and Bryson, 2018), because public organisations, in middle East in particular, are under less pressure to enhance performance (Kalleberg et al., 2006). The discussion about the reasons behind that can be summarised in two features. First, public organisations are less interested to produce surpluses, as they usually do not distribute revenues (Weisbrod, 1998). Second, the competitive environment in the public sector is relatively lower than other sectors. However, other factors can put different kinds of pressure

on the public-sector organisations to enhance performance by adopting HPWSs. First, the perspective that public organisations are performing at lower levels. It is widely perceived that government's institutions do not offer the required quality of services and seldom reach the targeted production levels. To the extent that this was one of the main reasons to the emergence of the "New public Management" In 1990s to strengthen performance in public firms. Second, it is necessary for governments to rescue their organisations from the privatisation streams phenomenon worldwide (Dastan, 2011). In implementing HPWS in the public sector there are two elements which can lead to different kinds of practices and can deeply influence the environment of high performance; namely, performance management and employee involvement (Stanton and Manning, 2013). For example, in public sector, there is more focus on monitoring approach in managing employee performance, which has led to more pressure on the workers and hence on their intention to leave (Morris et al., 2011).

Regarding the factors that moderate the impacts of HPWS practices in public sector on performance, there are three features: the context of the public policy in which HPWS practices are operated and extent to which the HPWS practices are customised to local conditions and the external conditions that can affect the HPWS practices (Stanton and Manning, 2013). Because of this variety of factors that can affect the HPWSs outcomes, researchers in the HRM field have risen debate about what are the outcomes of HPWS practices that can be generalised a cross organisational and sectoral settings. Some authors have argued that if a set of "best practices" are adopted, then the implications of any HRM system can be generalised (Delery and Doty, 1996; Vanhala and Stavrou, 2013). Furthermore, some have asserted that "managing is managing" irrespective of any sectoral differences and all governmental firms should be developed to become more similar to businesses (Mintzberg, and Bourgault, 2000). The claims for adopting so called best practices is derived from the premises of "universalists", this principle asserts that there is combination of unique practices which can assist to produce positive and beneficial impacts among organisations regardless of any characteristics such as sectoral and organisational features (Demery and Doty, 1996).

However, others argued that the impact of HPWS practices might not be replicated from one sector to another because of the differences in HRM strategies and organisational structures (Ortiz and Fernandez, 2005; Baarspul and Wilder 2011). According to Stanton and Manning (2013) even within the public sector, there are differences. For example, based on the findings of survey conducted by Kullberg et al (2006) on the public-sector establishments in

the USA, the surveyed organisations seem to use different HPWS practices depending on the nature of environment and work they perform. In the recent years, researchers have adopted a more international perspective in exploring the effect of HRM practices on organisational performance, due to the emergence of different new organisations such as multinational companies and other international agencies which increasingly influencing the global economy (Budhwar et al., 2013). However, this focus is more likely to be fixed to the industrialized societies in Europe and North America (Almond, 2011; Jackson, 2009). For instance, Burke et al (2013) claimed that there are certain fundamental differences in managing people approaches in public sector in various countries. Moreover, Budhwar and Deborah (cited in Budhwar et al., 2013: p37) asserted that “very little work on HRM research in developing countries has been done” and the lack of such studies is more apparent in the public sector.

One more issue, a question raised by Hofstede, (1980), about whether the findings of such studies can be generalised on the collective culture of the east. For example, the findings of Iles et al (2012) study prove that in the public-sector organisations in Middle East, human resource management still not considered as significant contributor in achieving the organisational objectives and the HRM policies are more influenced by religion and strong culture. This relatively recent findings, contrast the findings of similar research conducted in the western organisations. Consequently, calls for more research in HRM in developing countries. In response to this debate the current research explores the relationship between collections of HRM practices specifically HPWS practices and performance in Libyan oil public sectors company. The focus on this industry in Libya is for several reasons. First, the economic importance of this sector in this country as it provides about 95% of the GDP; small shift in this business has significant impacts. Second, lack of research conducted to explore the effect of HRM activities on performance in Libyan petroleum industry. Third, the Libyan oil sector represent two sectoral features; oil industry and public production sector (Almhdie et al., 2006). Thus, it can add to the literature about the sectoral and industrial dereferences.

Libya is one of the growing importance country in the Middle East since the sanctions from UN were lifted. However, this country is relatively neglected in HRM discussions (Iles et al., 2012). Even though the public sector is dominant, HRM policies and practices in Libya usually differ according to the origin and ownership. For instance, in the firms that owned by the government, there are more restriction in the employment and more social cohesiveness than in private sector organisations (Elmahdawi, 1995). Almhdie et al (2006)

who have explored HRM policy and practices in the Libyan oil public companies said, strategic human resource management is not practiced in the government owned oil firms. For example, there was no clear human resource development strategy, which related to overall company's strategy. Furthermore, resource appraisal and planning were more common HR activities than reward and motivation and there were a widespread of dissatisfaction toward training. Similar to other developing countries, finance and markets practices in oil public organisations in Libya are likely to be in their formative phase and obviously influenced by socio-cultural and political factors such as religion, family and tribe. Moreover, Government has an important role in several HRM activities such as recruitment to control the unemployment rate in the country (Almhdie et al., 2006). These factors play significant role in shaping the workers' perceptions and attitudes toward HR practices and even can affect the implementation of certain practices. For example, in the selection process the focus is on getting individuals from the social roots rather than objective criteria. It is still obscure why there are a lack of focus on possible important moderators in the HRM practices-performance linkage such as justice and trust when studying this theme in such context. This research therefore explores the role of justice in this aspect of the black box in Libya.

2.5. High Performance Work System Theoretical Underpinning:

In the implementing stage, all relative HRM actors are required to interact and collaborate to implement the practices in the desirable effective way (Kuvaas et al., 2014; Makhecha et al., 2018). These interactions yield reciprocities among the parties (Blau, 1964). Employees are in the heart of these exchanges as they are in social relationships with the organisation, which is significantly effective in shaping their perceptions and they reciprocate accordingly (Alfes et al., 2013). The core function of HPWS is the work organisation, which can enhance employees' ability and aspiration to perform. Accordingly, scholars have presented important theoretical suggestion to how HPWSs intervene in this process. Appelbaum et al (2001) proposed that allowing front line employees to participate in the process of decision making is the core of any HPWS and worker in these systems have more opportunities to communicate with managers, colleagues and experts about issues that matter their work. Further, they have an adequate degree of autonomy over how their roles and how their tasks should be undertaken. Besides, work practices in HPWS endorse front line employees to gain more knowledge about their tasks. Advocates of HPWSs main argument is that these

systems increase workers' autonomy that allow them to exert creativity, initiative and knowledge. In turn, this yields better organisational performance. Boxall and Purcell (2003) have discussed the common suggested linkage in the research of HPWSs, this discussion includes the work of Appelbaum et al (2001) and predicated on the ability, motivation and opportunity theory 'AMO'. It shows performance as dependent variables in the ability, motivation and opportunity. This impeded that workers will perform better when:

- They are capable to do (they are able to do their tasks because they have adequate skills and knowledge);
- They are motivated to do (employees are ready to do the task because they are incentivised);
- They are provided with adequate support and their voice is heard and considered.

Though the suggested framework of Boxall and Purcell clearly included the most common used theoretical elements of the HPWS-performance linkage, significant critiques were pointed to it. First, it ignored the bundling structure of the system as it showed single HPWS practice effect. Second, there was no mentioning to the employer-employee relations and exchange, which imbeds the organisation climate. Bowen and Ostroff (2004) for example, asserted that the organisational climate aspect when investigating HPWS-performance linkage.

Another suggested theoretical underpinning of HPWSs is the social exchange that these system aid in the organisational setting (Takeuchi et al., 2007). Increasingly, interpersonal social exchange is getting more importance in organisational context. Social exchange theory presented by (Blau, 1964) suggests a comprehensive framework for the social relationships' quality in organisations. This model provides an explanation for the quality of the relationships at the organisational and employees' levels. It also provides another way to understand employees behaviours (Settoon et al 1996). Further, according to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), social exchange framework includes a series of interactive, contingent on the actions and reactions of the other partner in relationship and creates obligations to these actions. Sahlins (1972) mentioned, continues reciprocity process is the main characteristics of the social relationship exchange. These reciprocity norms take different forms: negative, balanced and generalised norms. Parties in organisations perceive these norms in different ways predicating on the extent of their concerns about; equality of exchange, the main purpose or interest' focus (whether the focus is on self or mutual interest) and the immediacy of the reciprocation. Relationships that can be described as high-quality

relations, are these in which the concern about the equality is low, the concern about the immediacy is also low, and the reciprocities are on mutual interests. These relationships can be described as generalised. HPWSs employ many practices that can create generalised norms of reciprocity. For example, the use of selective staffing in HPWSs gives the organisation an adequate information about the applicant' compatibility to the job criteria including social integration skills and ability to develop quality relationships (Treadway et al., 2004). This can increase the likelihood that selected employees can be integrated in the social network in a high-quality relationship. Another example, HPWSs training programs follow the selection process, which focus on both interpersonal and technical skills can lead to gain reliable behaviour with more trust because workers' behaviours will be predictable (Uhl-Bien et al., 2000). This can also lead to higher quality of relationships as trust, which is mainly based on expectations. Expected and reliable manners are function in employee' competence to perform tasks.

High Performance Work System and Performance:

For about two decades, human resource management specialists have made significant efforts to explain the effect of HRM on individuals and organisational performance and to unlock the so-called "black box" (Guest 2011; Paauwe 2009). Although some researchers claim that there is a direct link between HRM practices and performance (e.g. Schuler, Jackson, 1987), others (e.g. Bowen and Ostroff 2004; Snap and Redman, 2010; Wright and Nishii, 2013) assert that the relationship is indirect and has intermediate variables. In regard to the indirect relationship, there are three proposed models through which HRM practices can influence performance. First, Guest (1997) model, which argued that at individual level, employees' performance, depends on the extent of their possession of the needed skills, ability, motivation and their understanding of their roles. Second, Becker et al (1997) model; this model suggests a mechanism that starts from business strategies which shape HR system design, the design of HR system determine the HR practices to be applied, these practices impact individuals' skills, motivation and work design, employees' productivity and behaviours, this chain will in turn impact organisational performance. Third, Purcell et al (2003) suggested another framework based on the assumption that all workers have the capacity to involve, and line managers' way of behaving towards employees mediates the impact of HR practices on performance.

This framework also emphasises that employees should be motivated, possess the necessary skills and given the opportunity to participate. Finally, the model suggested by Wright and

Nishii (2006), this framework focuses on the employees' perception of HR practices; it claims that employees will react according to their perceptions towards HR practices, which consequently influence the performance of the organisation. This research adopts Wright and Nishii's framework, which relay on employees' perceptions to explore the impact of HRM practices on performance. Moreover, some researchers have focused on the impact of single practices such as selection, training, pay for performance and performance appraisal, others concentrated on HR systems such as HPWS (e.g. Huselid and Becker, 1996) or HCM (e.g. Walton, 1985) or HR bundles (e.g. Pfeffer, 1994). For the reason that HPWS has been used as synonymously with other terms such as HCM and high involvement management (HIM), and for the purpose of exploring the uptake and effect of this universal concept in different country, this research adopts the term HPWS. In relation to HPWS-performance link, significant empirical efforts have been conducted toward understanding the effect of these systems on both organisational and employees' outcomes. Guest (1979) proposed the term 'outcome', this scholar says that this term can represent wider array of dependent variables than the term performance. Outcomes have been divided into three types; financial outcomes, organisational outcomes, HR related outcomes (Dyer and Reeves, 1995). The financial outcomes include indicators such as sales and profits. Organisational outcomes can embrace indicators such as productivity and quality. HR related outcomes could comprise employee attitudinal and behavioural outcomes such as satisfaction and commitment.

The next section presents the debate in the literature about the effect of HPWSs on both organisational and employees outcomes.

2.5.1. High Performance Work System and Organisational Outcomes:

Several researchers have studied the relation between HPWS and performance at organisational level. Some of them have studied this relation at plant level such as Youndt et al (1996), others at corporate level (e.g. Roger and wright, 1998) and at business unit level like (wright and Grander, 2003). These studies varied in terms of terminology, performance indicator applied and country in which these studies were conducted. Rondeau and Wager (2001), have examined the impact of bundle of about 24 HR practices, they regarded them as high performance human resource management on a collection of organisational outcomes, this research was conducted in Canada and found a positive relation between high performance human resource management and favourable organisation outcomes. Even though this quantitative cross-sectional study has evidenced the positive effect of HPWS

systems on performance, it relies only on CEOs as 283 CEOs or site administrators were recruited however. The intensive reliance on managers has been criticised because managers are usually subjective judges (Guest 2001). Combs et al have conducted a meta-analysis study included 92 studies to estimate the impact of HPWS practices on organisational performance. This widely cited study has concluded that: (1) the effect of HPWS practices systems is higher than individual practices (2) these practices are more impactful on manufacturing sectors than service sector (3) the effect is larger when adopting operational measures such as productivity than financial measures. These intriguing findings have made important contribution to HPWSs research and highlighted the role of high performance systems in creating so called high performance work places, which can compete, in business market.

However, Wright et al (2001) have already debated the validity of corporate level analysis giving a logical reason that organisations adopt different business strategies cross businesses. Further, most studies embraced in this meta-analysis were conducted in western context, which rise an argument about whether these results can be generalised to include other contexts such as Africa and Middle East. Findings of Combs' study has not given adequate explanation about why HPWS is more impactful when adopting productivity as performance indicator. Furthermore, there were a neglecting of employees' relationships and how can this effect performance. Collectively, while the direction of the literature is toward supporting the positive effect of HPWSs on organisational outcomes, a debate stream emerged against these advocates. Opponents predicated on the idea of "rhetoric versus reality", claimed that HPWSs that have been found to enhance organisation's competitive advantage are doing so at the expenses of employees. They add that these systems are exhausting to employees as they put overload and pressure on them (Gould-Williams, 2009; Kroon et al., 2009; Ramsay et al., 2000). Moreover, HPWSs have received another criticism about the highly management centred and the narrow economic perspective. According to Boselie et al (2005), HPWSs privilege goals of management over the individuals 'goals and needs. Boxall and Macky (2007) have asserted this standpoint and mentioned that HPWSs have narrowed their focus on economic aspect, while less attention has been paid to the effect of these systems on employees (Kroon et al 2009). Therefore, there is a necessity to deeply explore the impact of these systems on employees and how they perceive them. Moreover, it can be noticed that the effect of HPWSs in contexts other than western has been neglected. This research aims to contribute filling these gaps by exploring employees' perceptions towards

these systems in Libya. Table (2) presents summary of the reviewed studies in the area of HPWS, the table also summarises other important aspects of these studies such as methods applied, contextual aspects such as sectors and countries and the main out comes of these reviewed studies. This table underlines the focus on the quantitative methods in these researches and emphasises that most of these studies were conducted in USA or/and European countries.

Author	Method	industry	Performance indicator	Country	Findings
Arthur (1994)	Quantitative	steel	Labour efficiency/ Employee retention	USA	Positive/ significant
MacDuffie (1995)	Quantitative	assembly plants	productivity	USA	Positive/ Significant
Ichniowski, Shaw et al (1997)	Quantitative	steel	Productivity	Not mentioned	Positive/ Significant
Delaney and Huselid (1996)	Relied on National organisation survey	Profit and non-profit	Organisational and market performance perception	USA	Positive/ Significant
Huselid (1995)	Quantitative . HPWS and individual practices	Not mentioned	Productivity and employees' retention	USA	Positive/ Significant
Delery and Doty (1996)	Quantitative	Banking	financial	USA	Positive/ Significant
Guthrie (2001)	Quantitative	Multi industries	Productivity and employees' retention	New Zealand	Positive/ Significant.

Batt (2002)	Quantitative	Telecom	Sales/ employee quit	USA	Positive/ Significant. Quit Significant decrease
Thompson (2002)	Quantitative	aerospace	Productivity and innovation	UK	Positive/ Significant
Guest et al (2001)	Quantitative	Multi industry	Turnover, productivity and psychological contract	UK	Positive/ Significant. Not Significant productivity
Richard and Johnson (2004)	Quantitative	Banking	Profits, market, sales and innovation	USA	Positive/ Significant
Flood et al (2005)	Quantitative	Business firms	Productivity, retention, sales and innovation	Ireland	Positive/ Significant
Combs et al (2006)	Meta- analysis	92 studies	NA	NA	More impactful if: Manufacture industry, operational level. Systems
Heffernan et al (2009)	Quantitative	Multi industry	Organisational and employee performance. innovation	Ireland	Positive/ Significant
Bjorkman and Xiucheng (2002)	Quantitative		Subjective P measure	China	Positive/ Significant
Michie and Sheehan (2005)	Quantitative	Manufactu ring and	Sales, productivity	UK	Positive/ Significant

		service firms	and profitability		
Ngo et al (2008)	Quantitative	Manufacturing	Financial, organisational performance. Operational performance. Employee relation climate	China	Positive and Significant. Not Significant for operational performance and employee relation climate
Den et al (2004)	Quantitative	Different	Firm performance, turnover, absenteeism and economic outcome	Netherlands	Not Significant unless for manager Netherlands and economic outcome
Guerrero and Baraud-Didier (2004)	mixed	Multi industry	Employee productivity and attendance. Financial and profitability	France	Significant for productivity and attendance. Not for others
Fey et al (2000)	Quantitative	Foreign companies	Firm performance and HR outcomes	Russia	Important increase
De-Saa and Garcia (2002)	Quan	Banking	Profitability	Spain	Significant

Biorkman and Xiucheng (2002)	Quantitative	Manufacturing	Firm performance (subjective)	China	Important
Gooderham et al (2008)	CRANET survey 1999	Mixed	Firm performance	16 EU countries	Significant but not when considering collaborative HRM model
Chan et al (2008)	Quan	Multi industry	Perceived OP. Perceived Market P	Hong Kong	Not important
Subramony et al (2006)	Longitudinal Quantitative	Large public	Financial performance. Productivity. Customer satisfaction	US	Important
Katou an budwar (2007)	Quantitative	Manufacturing	firm performance (effectiveness and efficiency)	Greece	Significant especially for recruitment, training and incentive.
Wei and Lau 2010	Quantitative	Mixed	Innovation and the role adaptive capability	China	Positive result and mediation role of institutional environment
Leggat et al (2011)	Quantitative	Health care	Perceived quality of patient care	Australia	Relationship found, there is no aspect of HPWS in the sector.
Legget and Balding (2013)	qualitative	Health care	Organisation competitive	Australia	Four organisationa

					1 factors found
Mariappanadar and Kamar (2014)	Quantitative	public	organisational profitability	five Asia Pacific countries	Positive relations found
Shin and Korona (2017)	Quantitative longitudinal	NA	productivity	Canada	Positive relations found

Table 2. Summary of reviewed studies on HPWS and organisational performance
Updated from, Flood and Liu, (2010)

2.5.2. High Performance Work System and Employees' Outcomes:

With few exceptions, as mentioned above the effect of HPWS at micro level has been neglected as the most focus in the literature was on the macro level and less attention has been paid to the role of employee in this debate. According to Jiang et al (2012), the effect of HPWS on organisational performance goes through individual employees. Furthermore, Lepak et al (2006) highlighted that the neglecting of employees' actual experience towards HPWS can flaw the previous work about people management and its relation to performance. Though certain researchers have included employees' outcomes in their research (e.g. Appelbaum et al., 2000), who concluded that HPWS impact five significant employees and firm outcomes: employees' commitment, trust in others, job stress, satisfaction and intrinsic rewards. These studies were predicated on the idea of mutual gain by assuming that things that are good for company are good for workers. This assumption can be noticed in different HPWS research embracing range of industries (e.g. Huselid, 1995; Delaney and Huselid, 1996). According to Delaney and Godard (2001) who has questioned this assumption, it is for the employers' favour to create decent jobs. They argued that nevertheless, it is costly for the employer to create better jobs; costs will be compensated subsequently due to the benefits gained from employees. Further, Godard and Delaney (2000) argue that this also can affect the employment relationship whereby the interest of employees and employer interests could conflict. Interestingly, Keegan and Boselie (2006) suggested that many academic research findings support mutual sharing 'win-win'

assumption. It can be argued that this claim was based on studies that applied quantitative approach and conducted in USA. Wright and Boswell (2002) for instance, have asserted that it is important to consider workers' perception towards HR practices in the organisation. However, the approach that was asked the managers to clarify, how they support employee alignment strategy. Arguably, by doing so, they have regarded employees as objects that can be easily modified to allow the strategies of businesses to be converted into managerial, institutional goals and strategies, without actually asking workers how they perceive these issues and what they think or acknowledging that employees are significant and active agents rather than tools of HPWSs.

Due to the intensive attention paid to the impact of HRM on organisational performance in 1990's, there have been dearth of research which seek to explore the effect of HRM on employees' outcomes (Bacon, 2003), and more specifically research that aim to understand employees' perception towards HPWS. According to Purcell (1999) this could be because of the dominant research method especially in USA which have heavily relied on surveys, Purcell described this stream of research as highly reliable yet doubtfully valid. Godard and Delaney (2000) add that this also has resulted in neglecting the exploration of the impact of new working practices on workers. Practically, this has resulted in lack of connection between what firms and managers intend and implement as formal practices and employees' actual experience about these practices (Liao et al., 2009). The study of Liao et al (2009) have found that the use of performance feedback methods of problem solving, and information sharing have helped employees gaining new skills. Further, HPWS has a positive relationship with employees' job satisfaction (Patterson et al., 1997). In this, many studies (e.g. Heffernan and Dundon, 2016; Santos and Stuart, 2003; Combs et al., 2006; Gallie, and White, 1993; Schmidt, 2007; Blum and Kaplan, 2000; Bulut and Culha, 2010) found that the HPWS practices such as training and rewards can enhance employees work satisfaction. More specifically, satisfaction in work and supervisor is one of the suggested mechanisms of the effect of the HPWS practices on employees' task performance. For example, Edwards et al (2008) found a significant relationship between Satisfaction and task performance. Ashton and Sung (2002) have found that HPWS increases organisational commitment. Appelbaum et al (2000) have reported that HPWS practices enhance the value of job autonomy. These are merely examples for the positive relation found between HPWS and employees attitudinal and behaviour outcomes.

These empirical research and not few others however, have received a serious criticism about their theoretical bases and methodologies applied and they should be a subject of more scrutiny (Fleet and Hesketh, 2010). First, Ramsey et al (2000) have stated that there could be contradictory impact of HPWS as they increase control, which might be from the increasing attention paid from organisations to controlling employees' behaviours. Second, HPWS heavily focuses on the intrinsic rewards, which can lead to more stress for the workers, so they can meet these rewards' requirements. Employees are also required to keep the pace of the work fast because of the workload, which can be another source for more work stress (Appelbaum, 2002; Parker and Slaughter, 1988), (for review see Van De Voorde et al., 2012). For example, the study of Jensen et al (2013) have examined the effect of utilising HPWS on job overload and anxiety and found that when employees are not given an adequate degree of job control, they are more likely to be more anxious and feel the role overload. Though Jensen and his colleagues' study has also been conducted in western context, it gives a support for the need for deep exploration of employees' perception towards HPWS however. According to Ramsay (2000), there is a necessity to study the consequences of control and performance orientation of HPWS before they rise a wave of conflict and dissatisfaction among workers. Therefore, several authors such as (Ehrnrooth and Bjorkman, 2012; Jiang et al., 2012; Takeuchi et al., 2007) have called for more exploration on the influence of HPWS. Kroon et al (2009 ;512) stated

“Although employees may value the incentives offered to them through HPWSs, the message that the system signals to the employees is one of increasingly higher performance, and that it is the company which ultimately benefits from the employees' extra effort (Legge, 1995)”.

In this, there are two theoretical approaches in studying HRM practices- performance linkage. Bowen and Ostroff (2004) argued that it is not only the content of HR practices systems, which can affect employee performance, it is the messages that management convey to employees through these practices and how employees perceive these messages however. These two approaches are called content and process approaches (see section 2.6 for more details). The researcher believes that applying a hybrid approach of inductive approach to Bowen and Ostroff's framework and a deductive and inductive approaches can help gaining holistic and clear image about employees' experiences of HPWS. Further, this can bring more insight for the advantages and drawbacks of implementing these systems and its effect on performance.

HPWS Advocates and opponents			
Organisational outcomes		Employee outcomes	
Advocates	Opponents(critics)	Advocates	Opponents(critics)
➤ Arthur (1992)	➤ Purcell (1999)	➤ Appelbaum (2002)	➤ Legge (1995 and 2005)
➤ Guest and Hoque (1994)	➤ Wood (1999)	➤ Purcell et al. (2003)	➤ Delbridge and Lowe (1997)
➤ Pfeffer (1994)	➤ Guest (1999)	➤ Guest (1999)	➤ Milkman (1997)
➤ Huselid (1995)	➤	➤ Vandenburg et al. (1999)	➤ Willmott (1997)
➤ MacDuffie (1995)		➤ Snape and Redman (2010)	➤ Marchington and Grugulis, (2000)
➤ Becker and Gerhart (1996)		➤ Gittel et al.(2010)	➤ Ramsey et al. (2000)
➤ Ichniowski et al.(1997)		➤ Takeuchi et al. (2007)	➤ . Kroon et al (2009)
➤ Patterson et al (1997)			➤ Wood and de Menezes (2011)

Table 3. Advocates and opponents of HPWS and performance level

Table (3) shows the ongoing debate between the advocators and opponents of the HPWS in the two levels(employees and organisational). This debate can also indicate to the need to more exploration in this area to obtain comprehensive understanding to the effect of this concept on the performance.

2.5.3. High Performance Work System and Task Performance:

This section discusses the concept of task performance and its link with job performance and sheds lights on task performance theoretical and imperial grounds. It illustrates the different between job performance and task performance, reviews the literature that explored the link between HPWS practice and task performance.

2.5.3.1.Task Performance and Job Performance:

Job performance comprises of different sets of acts and activities which contribute to the organisation success in various manners (Campbell, 1990; McCloy et al., 1994; Viswesvaran and Ones, 2000). While certain researchers have considered job performance as un dimensional (e.g. Viswesvaran et al., 2005), others (e.g. Campell et al., 1993; Motowidlo et al., 1997) argued that it is multidimensional structure. Based on the Motowidleo et al (1997) classification, this behavioural outcome can be divided into task performance and contextual performance, while the latter includes activities which are not listed in the job description, the former embrace tasks that included in the job description. Both task and contextual performance have been considered as main contributors to the overall organisational effectiveness (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997; Conway, 1999). Task performance is defined as “the effectiveness with which job incumbents perform activities that contribute to the organization’s technical core”, (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997:99). Borman and Motowidlo have also termed task performance as “In role performance” and claimed that it indicates to how well workers perform the duties that job necessitates. According to Borman and Schmit (1999) task performance consists of behaviours in different maintaining and transformation activities in an organisation. For example, sales, production, inventory, delivering services or managing employees. These activities differ from one job to another depending on the job’s nature, Organisation’s objectives or other factors related to the job. For instance, there are several tasks for the employees undertaking technical jobs in a project such as transformation of raw materials into products, and different task behaviours for the project managers in the same organisation. The current research therefore defines task performance as all in-role activities that required from the employee and included in the job description

Job performance has been frequently included as an individuals’ outcomes in theories that addressing other concepts. However, few scholars have provided a developed theory which concentrated specifically on task performance (Watt, 2007). Generally, theories about job

performance proposed that performance is function of employees' ability to perform and willingness to act (Watt, 2007). According to Vroom (1964) work performance is determined by ability and motivation at individual's level. Subsequently, this suggestion was expanded by Blumberg and Pringle (1982) who have proposed four dimensions interacted in work performance; capacity, which contains variables such as ability, knowledge, skills and level of education. Willingness variables such as motivation, attitudes and feeling of equity. Opportunity to perform, which can include variables such as resources required for tasks (e.g. tools, and equipment), working conditions and leadership. Motowidlo et al (1997) argued that task performance is influenced by ability variables through task's habits, knowledge and skills and the impact of personality on task performance is mediated by task habits. Social exchange theory suggest that task performance is a reciprocities process between the employer and employees. In this, employees reciprocate to how much they perceive that the organisation care about their welfare and value the contribution they add to the work. The theory suggests that employees would adhere better task performance when they feel supported and valued (Masterson et al., 2000). The final theoretical suggestion claimed by Bandura (1997) when he stated that choices of individuals' actions and performance are based on their self-efficacy beliefs.

2.5.3.2. Empirical Studies on HPWS and Task Performance:

Several studies, (e.g. Viswesvaran et al., 2005; Atteya, 2012; Muchal, 2014) has explored the link between employees' outcomes and job performance with various mechanism. Only few of them (e.g Alfes et al., 2013; Locke and Latham 1990; judge et al., 2001) fostered task performance as independent variables and explored its effect on other organisational outcomes, others considered task performance as dependent and examined the effect of other HR activities on this kind of job performance. Brown et al (2009) have studied the effect of using HPWS practices in enhancing employee performance in the Canadian tourism sector. The aim of this study was to provide recommendations for the tourism sector. Although there were no clear justifications for adopting task performance in service sector, one of their recommendation was to concentrate on both individuals' task performance and encourage to exhibit more effective organisational citizenship behaviour. Another study conducted by Muchhal (2014) which examined the relationship between HR practices and job performance, the findings of Muchhal's study reveals that there is significant relation between certain HPWS practices (performance appraisal, promotion and compensation) and

task performance, this research were undertaken in the Indian power and steel companies and investigated only three practices without reasoning the exclusion of other practices such as training. Further, the respondents were tech qualified workers and applied self-reported task performance. Some researchers have suggested different mechanisms to explore the linkage between HPWS practices and Task performance. For example, Seidu (2012) has tested the relationship between HPWS practices and organisational and individuals' performance through different levels and multi-source data collection in two Ghanaian bank branches. Concerning the individuals 'performance level, Seidu has found that experienced HPWS practices' effect on task performance is mediated by perceived organisational support and psychological empowerment. In addition, this study found that the organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) mediates the impacts of psychological empowerment and perceived organisational support on task performance and service quality.

Another research conducted by De Gieter and Hofmans (2015), has tested the impacts of reward satisfaction on employees' turnover and task performance. In this study, the researchers assumed that there are differences between employees' rewards satisfaction and its effects on their behaviour and attitudes through the organisational levels. Despite the confirmation of this assumption, this research has relied on the supervisors' rated task performance data, which neglects the employees' perceptions and raise questions about the subjectivity of the managers. Similarly, Alfes et al (2012) used supervisor's rated task performance to test the impact of HPWS on employees' performance and turnover. This research found significant relationship between HPWS practices in the organisation such as performance related pay, training, comprehensive selection procedure and task performance. Alfes et al (2012) used managers rating to measure employees' task-performance. This relationship is found moderated by trust in employer. However, managers' evaluation was argued by several scholars in this arena, specialist (e.g. Guest, 2017; Guest, 2001; Boxall and Macky, 2014) these scholars argued that managers are subjective judges and they usually don't care about employees' reactions. In a different vein, Atteya (2012) has tested the impact of HRM practices including certain HPWS practice in the joint venture Egyptian petroleum companies and job performance. In here study, Atteya has collected data from number of supervisors in this sector and found indirect relationship between HR practices and job performance. In particular, this study has emphasised that the fair and objective HRM practices lead to higher job performance and perceived justice correlates indirectly with supervisors' loyalty, satisfaction and consequently performance. Despite the reliance

on supervisor evaluation, this study has recommended to conduct further research on the effect of nepotism and injustice on employee task performance. This findings and recommendations coincide closely with the prior claims of several researchers (e.g. Iles et al., 2012; Budhwar and Debrah, 2013; Pawan and Debrah, 2001) about the infiltration of social phenomena such as Wasta and nepotism in the Arab public sector which could bring negative impacts on employee performance. Moreover, it sheds lights on the significance of fairness in the HR practices-performance linkage.

In light of this literature review, it can be summarised that though there were more focus in the literature on job performance than task performance, in addition, even studies which adopted task performance, used managers points of views and neglected employee' perspectives to measure this performance indicator. This approach has been criticised due to the subjectivity of the managers by several scholars in the domain (e.g. Guest, 2017; Guest, 2001; Boxall and Macky, 2014). Besides, when studying the task performance link in the Middle East and North Africa, the fairness of the HPWS practices should be taken in account as it was found influential in the HPWS-performance link.

The current research suggests that in the Libyan public organisational context, there could be an important relationship between HPWS practices and task performance. However, the mechanism of this relationship may differ, as it has been reported that this sector is influenced by subjective socio-cultural factors such as nepotism and favouritism, which can adversely affect the feeling of fairness and consequently impact employees' performance. Accordingly, these factors could have negative effect on the fairness of these practice implementation. Further, any lack of feeling of justice can impact trust between parties, accordingly this relation could be moderated by trust. In other words, for the reason that the infiltration of "Wasta" and other social criteria in most Arab public organisations (Iles et al 2012), according to the social exchange theory employees would not exert better performance unless they are treated fairly by their supervisor, and they can trust supervisor, organisation and colleagues as they may reciprocate the unfair treatment in poor performance. Therefore, drawing on pure employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices, this study explores how can employees' perceptions affect task performance and find out the role of the perceived fairness in this relationship.

Moreover, due to the criticism in the literature to the managers' judgment on employees' performance (e.g. gust, 2017) and to maintain consistent approach in obtaining data from the

main pure recipients of the implemented HPWS practice, this research will adopt employees' self-evaluation task performance. The self-reported performance has not been widely used in the literature in this area as most of the past research adopted either supervisor evaluation or/ and other measurements of performance such as productivity extracted from the official documents. Not so many studies adopted the self-evaluation task performance. For example, Chen and Kao (2012) have used this approach to explore employees learning motivation on task performance. Another example, Fritz and Sonnentag (2006), have also adopted what they called self-reported task performance in investigating the relationship between recovery well-being and performance.

To the researcher best of knowledge, self-evaluated task performance has not been adopted in exploring the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices and performance, particularly in the Libyan public context. Thus, this can help in expanding knowledge in the performance measures in the area of HPWS practice and performance relationship. Noteworthy, some indicators about task performance are considered from the employees answers such as time of progress, helping colleagues, heavy work, passing information or/ and assisting supervisor (Williams et al., 1991).

2.6.Process Approach:

As discussed before, the mechanism through which HRM practices and activities can affect organisational or individual performance has not been adequately explained (Buller and McEvoy, 2012). There have been two important approaches in exploring this linkage; the best practices approach adopted by Pfeffer (1994) arguing that HRM context and practices has independent effect on performance and the best fit view that fostered by Schuler and Jackson (1987), this approach asserts that the HR practices should be aligned with the context in order to positively affect performance. In both views there were some researchers who focused on the influence of single practices such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and so on, while others have concentrated on systems like HPWS (e.g. Huselid, 1995) and high commitment practices (e.g. Walton, 1985). However, the leading trend in studying HR-performance link have recently moved from focusing on single practices to HR systems. For example, in meta-analysis conducted by Gould-Williams (2004), they found that the effect of high commitment systems is greater than individual practices. Combs et al (2006) made another example, as they came with the same conclusion, in their meta-analysis about HPWS.

There are two interconnected features of HRM systems: content and process. The content of HRM means, “The individual practices and policies intended to achieve a particular objective” (Bowen and Ostroff 2004, :206). According to Katou et al (2014) the practices and policies that embraced by the HR system comprise the HRM content. These practices should be mainly determined by the organisational objectives and values such as effectiveness, competitiveness, quality or efficiency. Further, these practices should be planned in a manner that direct individuals to meet these objectives. For instance, to accomplish the effectiveness goal, HR practices should be designed in specific strategic attention, such as innovation or quality. Despite certain models providing the suitable HR practices for different strategies, it is more likely that there is no set of effective practices for specific strategic goals, besides, different sets of practice could be equally impactful (Delery and Doty, 1996; wall and Wood, 2005). Thus, researchers have started to think about other factors that might integrate with the effect of the content of HRM practices on performance, rather than focusing on the virtues or vices associated with this approach (Sanders et al., 2014).

This has shifted the scholars’ attention from focusing on what in the HRM to how its practices are communicated to workers. This view is known as process approach. Sanders and her colleagues (2014) have called for more research on the both content and process approach to uncover this side of this aspect of the HRM black box.

Process approach refers to “the way HR policies and practices are communicated to the employees” (Li et al., 2011: p 1826), and it emphasises on psychological process through which individuals understand HRM activities. Among the leading scholars who shifted the attention to the process approach were Bowen and Ostroff (2004). These scholars have drawn on the attribution theory of Kelley (1967) and applied it to the HRM field. Kelley’s framework explains the key factors that help messages to be received and understood uniformly among workers. Thus, the main point of process approach is that employee should interpret and understand what expected from them through messages conveyed by HRM, to respond accordingly (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Employees should perceive these signals in a uniform way as being distinctive, consistent and consensual. Thereby, understanding the desired behaviours that management rewards and supports. Firstly, Distinctiveness of HRM means that the impact of the HRM practices is observable. This characteristic has five dimensions (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004); visibility (practices can be readily observed),

understand ability (can be comprehended), legitimacy of authority (message sent from top management is credible) and relevance (relevance to a profound goal).

Secondly, HRM should be consistent, consistency refers to focusing on creating an effect over time regardless the way of interactions with the event (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Consistent HRM messages signal stability and compatibility of practices. As a result, it can increase the likelihood that the preferred employees' behaviours can be displayed. There are two features of consistency that ensure consistence linkage among individuals, context and time. One is, instrumentality (clear cause effect relationship with performance), perception has significant role in instrumentality as it highlights how employees expect the consequences of certain behaviours. Other features for consistency is validity, HRM practices should be consistent about their content' meaning and what they actually do. Thirdly, the messages sent by HRM through its practices should be consensual, consensus means that there should be agreement among workers about what is intended by the HRM system. There are two factors that can help to make HRM practices' consensus; agreement among key decision makers in the organisation and the fairness of these practices. In terms of agreement between the decision makers, the agreement among messages senders in the top management about the system can encourage employees to form a consensual interpretation about the system. The reason behind that is it enhances the distinctiveness and facilitates sending unambiguous messages.

In respect to fairness of HRM system, this dimension emphasises whether HRM activities adhere to the values of organisational justice' dimensions; namely distributive, procedural interactional and informational. Several researchers have asserted that perception of HRM fairness can influence employees' attitudes and behaviours. Further, they argued that a positive relationship is exist between this this perception and the acceptability of employees to the HRM activities (Waldman and Bowen, 1998). This means that individuals' feeling of fairness can determine the extent of their contribution and utilization of HR practices. According to Greenberg and Colquitt (2013), the impact of fair processes is the most robust and repeatedly observed in the literature of organisational justice. It has been studied in different contexts by applying various research methods, and inconsistent effects have been reported (e.g. Lind and Van den Bos, 2002; Greenberg 2000). Different mechanism for the fairness' impact on organisational and individual performance was suggested and examined. For example, Poon (2012) found that the impact of fairness on employees' turnover is mediated by commitment; another example is the study of Aryee et al (2002), which found

that dimensions of justice affect individual outcomes through trust. More recently, Ouyang et al (2015) found that satisfaction mediates the relationship between justice and job insecurity (see perception of fairness section).

Several researchers have tested this theoretical framework. For example, Nishii et al (2008) have examined this approach and found that employees attribute the same HR practice in different way, this attribution are found differently associated with satisfaction and commitment. Another example, Li et al (2011) have carried out research in Netherland and China to test Bowen and Ostroff model. Their findings show that, in Netherlands, consistency was more influential on employees' outcomes, while in China consensus was more significant. The importance of these studies is that they have shed lights on the significance of the cultural differences; the cultural impact was also highlighted by Sanders et al (2014) as recommendation for further research. In this regard, to the researcher's knowledge, this approach has not been used in the Middle Eastern public-sector organisations yet, the only exception is the study of Al Damoe (2014) which conducted in Libya and focused on the mediation role of organisational climate in general.

Al Damoe's study has not focused on the process model in particular. Further, it concluded that more research utilising qualitative approach is needed to deeply understand how the organisational climate can affect performance. The primary contribution of this research is that it uses this approach to explore uncovered aspect of the black box in a collective cultural context that differs from the previous research, with more focus on the consensus dimension, which embraces the perception of fairness by applying qualitative method.

2.6.1. The use of employees' perceptions towards HPWS

Perceptions is defined as "identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the presented information, or the environment" (Schater, 2011). The term perception is originated from the Latin word perceptio which means organisation. Van den Berg, and Wilderom (2004) say that employees perceptions about the daily organisational practices are part of the intangible attributes, which is crucial to its performance. Moreover, Further to the argument about the content and process approach and the importance of employees' experiences and perspectives towards the implementation of the HR practices and systems, researchers (e.g. Dewettinck and Van Dijk, 2013 ; Mishra and Farooqi 2013) have called for more exhaustive research on the effectiveness of organisational management systems from employees perspectives. They asserted that these systems are likely to fail if employees do not comprehend their credibility. Especially,

performance systems including HPWS have been poorly defined. This has made researchers in this field at standstill point because of the lack of measurements tools to measure these systems (Anderson et al., 2014). For example, while some (Haines and St-Onge 2012) focused the effectiveness of the system by measuring the desirable outcomes, others such as Dewettinck (2008) applied the motivational effect of performance. To do this, research often predicated on questionnaires that deductively searching for certain aspects that concerns their research. Despite the success they achieved in this field, these approaches has limited the exploration of employee' perspectives in specific areas and have not allowed for wider understanding of the employees thought towards the elements of the HPWS.

Thus, the present research has applied a qualitative approach that uses the interviews method with inductive approach to obtain a holistic picture about employees experiences and perspectives towards the elements of the HPWS. In this, general questions about the theme will be asked to the participants to allow them expressing their general thoughts. Meanwhile, notes will be taken highlighting the meaningful words and phrases. Then, more questions will be asked accordingly to obtain deeper understanding for the participants feelings about the topic. Noteworthy, the concept of perception in this research refers to what participant think about the theme.

2.7. High Performance Work System and Culture:

As discussed above the relationship between HPWS and performance can be explained through different mechanisms. The nature of the cultural context is another important influential theme that intervened in this relationship. Budhwar and Sparrow (2002) argued that it is imperative to understand the nature of this context to study the HRM effectiveness. The universalist advocators assert that the combination of the “best practice” can have the required positive effect on the performance in all organisations, regardless of the sectoral differences, country or/and size (Pfeffer, 1998). On the other hand, the contextual effect authors argued that organisational and cultural contexts are significant impactful factors in the relationship between HRM and performance. In fact, even some authors from the best practice line (e.g. Boselie, et al., 2001) have highlighted the importance of considering the contextual factors effect. For example, Appelbaum et al (2000) mentioned that HPWS is highly affected by the environment. Further, they concluded that the organisational context can give new perspectives about the HPWS and the performance. According to Rhodes et al

(2008) the effectiveness of the universalist concept “best practice” has not been completely uncovered in none-western organisations yet. Thus, as this research is exploring this aspect in one of the none-western companies, understanding the cultural factors that may affect the HPWS-performance relationship is vital. Hofsted (1984, 2001) have divided the cultural elements into four dimensions: individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity.

Concerning individualism and collectivism, this dimension is known as the extent of the individual loyalty to the group he belongs to, the degree to which the society value the personal privacy and the degree of participation and socialisation. In HPWS practices, rewards based on performance, are more common in the high individualism societies (Gomez-Mejia, and Palich 1997). Moreover, autonomy, which is one of the HPWS characteristics, is more applied in the high individualism countries. These societies usually encourage their individuals to concentrate on gaining results than on assimilating with the other organisation members. While in the high collective culture organisations, there is more teamwork, co-operations with others. Concerning job description, Aycan (2005) claimed that this practice is prepared for individual employee in the individualistic societies. In contrast, it is prepared for work group in the collective culture organisations. Aycan (2005) add that in the collectivistic better social and interpersonal relationships can be found among employees. In addition, task performance in the individualistic organisations is being the main parameter for the promotion, while in the collectivistic societies, it is based on seniority. Hofsted ,(1991) mentioned, that the contemporary management policies and practice are mainly originated from individualistic societies, thus, their applicability in the collectivistic culture in the developing countries is not guaranteed. Eby et al (2000) explained that employees in the collective countries prefer teamwork and might favour the using the HPWS. However, employees in these cultural contexts may show reticence about other policies, practices and factors that require a level of individualism. Thus, even though the effect of this dimensions is approved, the significance of it effect is not clear yet.

In terms of the power distance dimension, this term refers to the extent of the acceptance for the power distribution by the lower levels in the organisation. This dimension is found to affect participation HPWS dimension. In this, employees in countries with high power distance, fear expressing their initiatives and ideas. This is because in these societies, the power is concentrated in the top levels, which creates a gap between the levels in the hierarchical structure of the organisation (Aycan et al., 2000). This also contradict the self-

directed team feature of the HPWS. More specifically, in the western countries, less power distance is exhibited, which provides better communication and participation in the organisations. Further, in these organisations, the relationship between the organisation levels is based more on trust with higher acceptance of the power distribution. In the high power distance countries, in contrary, employees in the lower levels have to show respect towards the top level managers and they expect this from the employees. Therefore, organisations in these cultural contexts are more likely to gain more advantages from the use of the HPWS as it can enhance (Lertxundi and Landeta, 2011). In terms of uncertainty avoidance, it refers to the extent to which individuals avoid the unknown or vague situations and their consequences. The high uncertainty usually leads the employers to grant less independency to employees and work teams (Lertxundi and Landeta, 2011). Besides less Employees in high uncertainty avoidance tend to like having clear orders and rules so they can avoid any obscurity. For example, Reddy (2011) studied the effect of the cultural factors on the HRM effectiveness in UAE and concluded that the high uncertainty avoidance imbedded strict rules and regulations. In another impact of this dimensions on the HPWS, Rogovsky (1998) found that compensation practice is less fit with high level of uncertainty avoidance.

Concerning the masculinity dimension, in the society of high masculinity there is an inclination for accomplishment, bravery, self-assuredness, and material prizes for progress. In contrary, in the femininity society the preference is for cooperation, the quality of life. In masculine culture, the focus is on the results and competitiveness. In the HPWS components, rewards for example, should be in line with the performance. Besides, the values such as competition, can contribute to better implementation of the HPWS practices such as participation (Lertxundi and Landeta, 2011). Moreover, in the masculine organisations, the deployment of HPWS can provide employees with greater opportunities for better task performance and enhancing employees' cooperation (Lertxundi and Landeta, 2011). In other words, the present research responds to the calls from several scholars (e.g. Cagliano et al., 2011; Buhwar et al., 2018) to explore the extent of the use of this universal concept in different cultural contexts. It also studies the link of the HPWS with task performance (Buhwar et al., 2018) by doing so this research can enrich the existing literature about the use and the effectiveness of the HPWS in non-western country contexts that has been debated from scholars (e.g. Rhodes et al.,2008; Budhwar and Sparrow,2002; Budhwar et al., 2018).

2.8. Supervisors' Roles:

In the Process approach that has been introduced by Bowen and Ostroff (2004) and has made the ongoing debate about integrating HRM content and process, and increasingly calls for more focus on employees' perceptions towards the implemented practices to fill the gap between the organisation intended HR practices and the actual practices (Wright and Nishii, 2013). At this level, supervisors play a significant role in shaping these perceptions (Bos-Nehles et al., 2013; Woodrow and guest, 2014). It has been noticed that there is a gap between what is formally required and what front line managers deliver (Kilroy and Dundon, 2015; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). This role has been theoretically and practically neglected (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Townsend, 2013). According to Kuvass and Dysvik (2010), there is a dearth of research on the impact of line managers on the relationship between HR practices and employees' performance. Even the studies that responded to the calls to explore the HRM black box at macro level (e.g. Bednallet al., 2014; Latorre et al., 2016; Wright and Nishii, 2013) have put great efforts to uncover the effect of employees' perceptions, not all of them have practically included supervisors however. Further Bowen and Ostroff (2004) suggest that consensus among managers (messages senders) about HR systems can lead to consensus understanding for these systems among employees. The influence of supervisors is derived from two aspects: well-designed HR practices and their leadership behaviour. In this, supervisors' behaviour can strongly influence the way they enact the HR practices, whereby they a proper organisational climate should be established (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004).

The calls to expand the research area to include line managers' effect in the relationship between HR systems and employees' performance is because there are many supervisors' types, which create various behaviour and consequently different impacts. For example, scholars have identified three main types of supervisors: employee coach, which enacts HR policies precisely based on the employees' view or situation requirements. Policy enactor, this type works on the unfiltered policies to HR enactment. The third type is called the organisational leader, this style the supervisor operates the HR policies selectively and with common approaches, choose which HR policies can be enacted and implemented. Moreover, supervisors' tasks and responsibilities vary across organisational settings and time (Dawson, 1991). In light of this discussion, this research considers the supervisors point of view about their roles in implementing HPWS and to explore the synergy of the practices. In doing this,

we can obtain a clearer image about the explanation of employees' perceptions. For instance, a supervisor could mention some difficulties in implementing a specific practice, which can explain certain employees' perceptions. In addition, this research is exploring the role of fairness, in which supervisors play an important role, especially with regards to the interpersonal and informational justice (see chapter 4 for in-depth discussion).

2.9. Qualitative Studies on High Performance Work System:

There has been dearth qualitative research on the effect of HPWS on performance. In this section, a review of literature that concern this side is discussed to highlight both theoretical and methodological insights.

Pfeffer (1994) and the study of Pfeffer and Veiga (1999) were among the earliest researchers who conducted qualitative research on HPWS. Their seminal work portrayed high performing HRM practices and found that applying Best practices can maintain the organisations' performance level. In his study, which based in USA, Pfeffer (1994) has presented thirteen HRM best practices by which they explored organisations which have achieved their desired competitive advantages. Pfeffer's frame work has changed the way management should think about employees and the relationship with workers by working with individuals not by replacing them or putting limits on their activities. By this view the perspective has been altered to see workforce as a source of strategic strength point and advantages not merely as a cost that should be reduced or avoided. The best practices that applied by Pfeffer and Veiga have been reduced to seven, yet they have been argued that success can be achieved by combining these practices. Through these case studies, they have provided evidence asserting that firm can sustain its competitive advantages in its domain by treating workers as a valuable resource. Even though, Pfeffer has highlighted that current business practices have been similar to the scientific approach, which is more likely control-oriented. However, critics mentioned that his suggestions were more prescriptive and still need to be tested over time.

Boxall and Steeveld (1999) were among the first researchers who applied the longitudinal qualitative approach when they conducted a study about the relationship between HR strategy and competitive advantage based on the resource-based view RBV framework. This research was conducted in New Zealand where it explored HPWS in three engineering

organisations; it questioned the relation between intention of applying HPWS and success. The main question was “how some firms do it better: engaging and utilizing human talents in ways that deliver more satisfying outcomes for investors, employees and society at large” (Boxall and Steeveld 1999, p: 433). Interviewees from top management were interviewed two times in the period from 1994 and 1997. This research came out with results indicate that organisations could overcome major economic issues by adopting organised, competitive, practical and HR responses. Further, the researchers have asserted that when explaining the linkage between HRM and performance it should be distinguished that there is different between organisational strategic HRM practices and other practices that might create relatively enduring shape of competitive advantages. Nonetheless, this research has suggested that service organisations can enhance industry leadership by applying superior human resource management practices. However, there were no adequate evidence that any of this research’s primary subjects could establish a significant competitive advantage.

Many studies into HPWS (e.g. Hutchinson et al., 2000; Truss, 2001) followed Boxall and Steeveld’s research. Hutchinson et al (2000) for example, undertook a research in Bristol UK focused on high commitment management, where about 4000 call centre employees were employed. Second, another study conducted by Truss (2001) which add more contribution to the debate about HPWS by providing detailed analysis on HR policies and practices in a two-year longitudinal single case-study, based on wide range of respondents whereby about 96,000 employees working for Hewlett Packard(HP) were recruited. Third, another longitudinal research using focus group method, Hutchinson et al (2000) concluded that the adoption of HCM is originated from the necessity to make the alignment between strategies and work structure in order to meet any changes in the competition, which can also lead to another alteration in costumer expectations. Moreover, the changes that could happen, involve several changes in addition to HR practices combination, such as in information technologies, some operations design, marketing strategy and work organisation. The HPWS was perceived very closely related to these changes. Truss (2001) has not tested a divided list of best practices from the literature on performance, instead, he first chose financially successful company and tested its HR policies and practices. researcher found that the measurement of the relation between HRM and performance, the individuals and organisational outcomes are so complex and sometimes contradictory.

Danford et al (2004) have interviewed 72 employees from global firm in UK to analyse the effect of HPWS and workplace partnership on skilled employees. The results show that the

working life is deteriorated and there were lack of participation in the decision making, which contradict the assumptions that such practices enhance employees' participations and empowerment. The study of Drummond and Stone (2007) concentrated on the use of HPWS and the mechanism of their effect on performance. They explored this by interviewing 60 percent of CEOs in selected firms listed on Sunday Time as "Best small companies to work for" in UK. These firms were found to be successful in sales and the growth of employment. HPWs was also found valid, yet partial. Further, the synergy of the employed bundles in these companies were seen as it has no relation with the produced outcomes as they were understandable with regards of system as whole and the actual practices that are considered in the normal situations. To conclude, there are several qualitative studies conducted in the western countries and the UK in particular. These research have indicated to various results in terms of the impact of HPWS. In this, most studies have evidenced the importance of adopting these systems on performance. However, most studies have focused on the organisational outcomes and there was insufficient research on the impact of these systems on individuals' outcomes.

In other sides of the world, qualitative HPWS studies are mostly conducted in the South American and Asian countries. Rocha (2010) has carried out a longitudinal research in Brazil. Coach's study has interviewed about 62 employees in in a period of eight years in firms that altered its work from control tailors' systems to HPWS form. The research highlighted the process related to these changes and their implications for the relation between managers and workers. The study's suggestions about the implementation of HPWS indicated that, to make success, companies need to unify and recombine various sources of expertise. Further, the findings show that the imbalances power was reduced as many organisational actors started to direct their power to more mutual dependence. In similar qualitative research, Waal and Frijns (2011), carried out a study on bank sector in Nepal in a period of two years. This longitudinal research found that nevertheless, these banks have enhanced their financial performance, the gap in perceptions between managers and employees has made the effect on the financial performance was not significantly linked to the use of HPWS. Tregaskis et al (2012) in their four years longitudinal qualitative HPWS research employed 84.000 individual working for multinational companies (MNC) worldwide. This study found that employing HPWS in change profile could reap different mixed consequences on HR population. Moreover, these authors identified the idea of 'maintenance work' to show how practitioners involve in the formal and informal organisation to ease the running of these management systems.

In conclusion, qualitative studies on HPWS are rare. However, these research clearly show that the relationship between HPWS and performance is dynamic and complicated. Not merely studies cited above yet the majority was conducted in UK, USA and with very lesser numbers in Asia and South America. This supports the assertion of Delbridge et al (2011), who has claimed that research on HPWS are mostly conducted in western countries and dearth of research into HPWS in the other parts of the world and particularly the emerging markets. Furthermore, there has been debate between the earlier research on HPWS such as (Pfeffer, 1994; Boxall and Steenveld, 1999) and the recent research (e.g. Tregaskis et al., 2012, Waal and Frijns, 2011) about the influence of HPWS. Noteworthy, one of the important arguments in this debate has been the importance of the consistency between managers' intention and employees' perceptions (e.g. Waal and Frijns, 2011; Kroon et al., 2009), which provide more inducement for this research to focus on employees' perceptions by adopting the process approach. Particularly, as shown in the literature there were lack of qualitative research into HPWS in Arabic countries.

Chapter (4) discusses the role of justice in the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS and Task performance.

Chapter 3: Organisational justice

3.1. Introduction:

In the previous chapter lights have been shed on HPWSs definitions and arguments. It was concluded that employees' reactions towards these systems were relatively neglected in most of previous HR research. This can be noticed from the critics that pointed out to the intensive attention paid to performance on the cost of employees' welfare. Moreover, there is an insufficient understanding of why employees' perceptions towards HR practices are related to their outcomes (Farndale et al., 2011). One of the main objectives of this study is to explore employees' perception towards HPWS and the linkage of these perceptions to employees' task performance. Moreover, due to the prevalence of social cultural factors such as Wasta in Libya, which can negatively affect the perceptions of fairness, it is proposed that organisational justice could play an important role in this relationship (Fuchs and Edwards, 2012). Cremer (2005, p.4) describes organizational justice as "a dominating theme in organizational life". Moreover, according to (O'Donnell and Shieds, 2002), employees' perceptions about the fairness of HPWS, can shape their relation to the organisation and influence their responses to the practices. Large body of research has documented the significant effects of justice perceptions in work place and the impact of these perceptions on employees and organisational outcomes (Colquitt et al., 2013; Karriker et al 2009; Li and Cropanzano, 2009; Shao et al., 2013). However, in their important meta-analysis, Colquitt et al (2013) say that there has been unanswered question in the justice domain yet about the potential mediations variables between justice and employees' performance such as task performance.

In addition, several authors (e.g. Hretel et al., 2002; Wang and Yao, 2011) have called for more contextual view of justice. The contextual differences could be the reason behind the variation in the justice research findings (Enoksen, 2015; Johns, 2006). Therefore, this research explores the role of justice in the relationship between HPWS and task performance in a Libyan oil public company. In Arab countries, several socio-cultural factors are reported to be impactful in shaping employees' perceptions of HR practices (Branine and Pollard, 2010). Some of these factors such as socio-personal connections are integrated with the term Wasta (Branine and Pollard, 2010). Wasta refers to the social personal relationships that

used to get things done, it sometimes used as a synonym of nepotism, which contradicts treating employees equally (fairly). Thus, in such context, perception of fairness is suggested to be crucial (Pichler, 2012; Schyns and Day, 2010). This chapter discusses the concept of justice, incorporates the development of its dimensions, highlights the theoretical underpinning adopted, demonstrates debates about justice and reviews the link between fairness and HPWS.

3.2. Justice Philosophical and Social Perspectives:

The concept of justice and fairness has been given great importance from both social scientists and philosophers. Rawls (1971, p: 3) has been among the first authors who emphasised the significance of justice, he mentioned “justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought”. Both fields (philosophical and social) agree about the goodness and rightness of any just act. Likewise, scholars in both fields also agree that some acts can be good regardless they are fair or unfair. Nonetheless, there are some disagreement about how each side define justice. Philosophers consider any outcome of any action as just if it aligns with some ethical standers (Hosmer, 1995). From the social perspective, actions are perceived as unjust if observers determine that it is unfair. The social perspective of justice consider that others’ appraisal is the last word in this regard whereby an action is fair when someone judge it as fair and react accordingly. Tyler et al (1997) stated, that there is a thought among philosophers that societies should be constructed in a manner that shows what is fair by comparison with predominant philosophical systems. The foremost historical significant work in this field was the work of Plato and Aristotle. According to Grayling (1995, p: 369), Plato in his work *The Republic is justice* has claimed that justice is when everyone takes care of his job and keeps it within the commonwealth standards.

The work of Plato was extended by Aristotle, who was the first philosopher that focused on the allocation of the available resources and established the term distributive justice. This philosopher also differentiated between what was known as corrective justice and distributive justice. He argued that though corrective justice (certificatory justice) is about punishment and distributive justice concerns the allocation of resources equally, both of them reflect norms of equality. Other philosophers have also been influential in constructing the concept of organisational justice. For example, in the 17th century Hobbes (1651) wrote the important book *in Modern and Political Philosophy* in which he described about 12 laws

of nature, in the third law he stated that people need to accomplish their lawful covenants, this became Hobbs' definition of justice. Another influential publication which has contributed in conceptualisation of justice has been the work of Rawls (1971) *The Theory of Justice*, in this book Rawls has given more weight to individuals in this argument, he viewed that resources should be distributed with mutual consultation so there are no absolute winners and complete losers in the society. This view has been considered as the closest view to the social perspectives of justice as it allows more consideration to people and does not entail treating individuals as means rather than end in themselves (Bonache, 2004).

The social view to justice is very subjective as it takes into consideration that people differ in their views to actions and behaviours. Research that study individual's feelings about what is fair and unfair has been considered to have significant social consequences and effects on individuals' behaviours, regardless whether this impact is negative or positive. Whenever there is an allocation of any resources, questions are raised about the fairness of this decision. Because outcomes are central for relations in workplace, it is expected that individuals use justice to define the relationship between them and their employers. It was this what has made Greenberg (1987) to identify the term *organisational justice* by which he indicated to the theories that explain the social view of fairness. This research applies the social science perspective where action is considered fair not because it ought to be so, but because an individual believes it is fair. The next section will discuss the development of the organisational justice concept.

3.3. Development of Organisational Justice Concept:

The study of justice within the social science framework is more contemporary than the philosophers' concepts. Organisational specialists' first concern that attracted their attention to justice was about the fairness of outcomes (Greenberg, 1987). The first contribution in the field of organisational justice has been made by Adams's (1965), the author proposed the theory of equity and described the distributive justice. This theory suggest that individuals use compare their inputs (efforts) and outcomes to the other inputs and outputs. According to this theory equity accrues when person believes that ratio of research input / outcome is equal to other inputs/outputs. According to Leventhal (1976) the evaluations of individuals about the fairness of outcomes is their judgment of distributive justice. Thibaut and Walker (1975) argued that the fairness of outcomes alone cannot sufficiently achieve organisational justice, they highlighted the significance

of another dimension, which is procedural justice. Subsequently, scholars have identified three dimensions of Organisational justice. Distributive, procedural and interactional justice (Bies and Moag, 1986). Bies and Moag (1986) described the interactional fairness as concerns about the quality of treatment employees receive from decision makers. According to Greenberg (1993) and Colquitt (2001), interactional justice can be conceptualised in two dimensions; interpersonal justice which refers to the sincerity and honesty shown, and the informational justice which can be defined as the extent to which the process is being honestly and adequately illustrated. In addition to giving a meaning to justice, these dimensions mostly concern about the impact of individuals' judgments on what is fair and unfair on their attitudes and behaviours. Further they concentrate on to the extent these feelings are shaped by these judgments.

As highlighted earlier the dimensions of justice have developed gradually. Specialists have claimed that research in the field of organisational justice went in four waves. According to Tyler (1997) the first phase was the rise of distributive justice research. The second wave highlighted the procedural justice. Then, the rise of interactional justice. Colquitt et al (2005) introduced the fourth stage which combined some organisational justice dimensions. (see table 4). Further, the first overall justice explicit contemporary work is the study of Tornblom and Vermunt (1999), who discussed the overall judgment in relation to distributive and procedural justice. These authors developed the overall concept subsequently.

										Fourth wave integration			
								Third wave interactional justice					
						The second wave Procedural justice							
The first wave Distributive justice													
1949	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010 and later	




Table 4. Organisational justice waves. Adopted from Tyler et al (1997)

In this research, justice is operationalised in five taxonomies: Distributive justice, which is defined here as the fairness of resource allocation, procedural justice defined as the fairness

of the process by which these resources are allocated, interpersonal justice which refers to the extent to which supervisors treat their subordinates with respect and informational justice which means the adequacy and the sufficiency of information that is given to employees about their tasks. In addition to overall justice, which refers to the employees' holistic feelings about justice. Justice in this research is a multiple actors' event as the five dimensions are explored through employees and supervisors' perceptions. Whereas managers are asked about their generic thoughts about the effect of justice on employees' performance. Notably, justice and fairness are used in this research interchangeably and one is considered as a synonym for the other (Cuguerro-Escofet and Rosanas, 2013).

3.4.Organisational justice and HPWS and Task Performance:

As discussed in Chapter (2), a growing body of research has risen around the way by which HR practices affect positively organisational performance. Even though, it is repeatedly assumed, that a bundle of these practices can directly enhance both organisation and employees' performance (Boxall and Mackey, 2014). Guest (2011), however, asserted that, the focus on proving that HRM enhances performance has been at the cost of understanding the mechanism of this effect. Concerning HPWS, the main criticism is that there is inadequate understanding of why and how employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices are related to their outcome (Farndale et al., 2011). Several authors (e.g. Boselie et al., 2005; Fuchs and Edwards, 2012; Gilliland and Chan, 2001) have suggested that organisational justice plays an important role in this relationship. Frenkel et al (2012) mentioned that employees show positive attitudes towards the organisation when managers satisfy their need for organisational justice. Fuchs and Edwards (2012) say that the role of organisational justice has been neglected in exploring the link between HPWS and performance. However, the question remains how perception of fairness can interfere in this aspect of the black box (Boxall, 2013; Cullinane et al., 2014). In this, HPWS embraces many features that are likely to have an impact on employees' perceptions towards justice dimensions. Greenberg and Colquitt (2013) for example, mentioned that: by applying the concepts of justice to a wider set of organisational policies, we get a good way to learn about this phenomenon. Therefore, the rationale of the integration between employees' perception of fairness and HPWS in the current research is significant. This section discusses the relationship between justice dimensions and HPWS practices and task performance.

3.4.1. Distributive justice and High-Performance Work System:

Distributive justice refers to the fairness of resource allocation decision. The concept of perceived distribution justice originates from Adam's (1963) theory of equity. According to Greenberg (1990) the perceptions towards distributive justice are commonly judged with respect to some specific standards. For example, employees judge distribution fairness of the rewards they receive by the efforts they have made. This image can be described as an objective calculation as it reflects a kind of tangible exchange between employees and the organisation. However, Heffernan (2012) and Greenberg et al (2007) say that the process of forming perceptions of distributive justice is subjective as employees need to make comparison to their co-workers' contributions and gains. In this, the central argument concerning distributive justice has been what rule that shapes employees' perception about the fairness of any distributive outcome. Scholars have identified two main rules that can guide employees' decisions about distributive justice; need and deservingness (Cohen and Greenberg, 1982). The need principle states that distribution can be perceived fair when outcomes relate to recipients' need. Under the deservingness rule, the outcomes should meet the level of the contribution's effort. Huseman et al (1987) however, states that, sensitivity to equity differs from one employee to another because each employee may prefer a different outcome to his/her contribution. For example, Cohn et al (2000) have examined these principles in seven nations and found that in some countries the need principle is important, whereas as in the other nations the deservingness is dominant. Therefore, the preference of one rule over another is not rational as both are justifiable (Pascual et al., 2010). Moreover, to the researcher best of knowledge there has been dearth of research that explored the rules of justice judgment in Libyan organisations context.

Distributive justice perspectives are found to compass employees' reactions and behaviour (Ambrose and Arnaud, 2005; Cropanzano and Folger, 1991). In their study, Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001), have provided empirical evidence for the positive effects of distributive justice' perceptions on employees' performance. Regarding HPWS and distributive justice, perceptions of outcomes has been explored with respect of many practices such as performance appraisal, selection, rewards and pay. In performance appraisal process, employees perceive that distributive justice is embedded in three aspects: the results of this process should meet their expectations, they should get outcomes that meet the result of the appraisal and these outcomes also should be as they have expected them (Bowen et al.,

1999). There are some factors that could make the appraisal bias; personal interest of the evaluator, political orientations of the two parties and the interpersonal liking (Swales, 2013). All or some of these factors could lead to a negative distributive perspective. According to Gabris and Ihrke (2001) any deficiency in the distributive justice in this regard can lead to burnout, frustration and/or stress. Concerning selection, Greenberg and Colquitt (2013) mentioned that employee's perceptions of distributive justice regarding selection are significant and overlooked. These scholars claimed that, from distributive justice perspective, employees concern about equity in the selection process as they believe that the hired people should be the most qualified for the job. In rewards, when employees receive rewards, they make distributive justice judgement comparing to the work they have done, this in turn, impact their attitudes towards the organisation (Ambrose and Arnaud, 2005).

In terms of pay, employees' distributive perspective is derived from two principles. One is that, employees usually identify the desirable types and level of benefits by evaluating their input and outcomes comparing to the others (Miceli and Lane, 1999). The other principle, employees estimate how much they receive and how much they should receive (Lawler, 1981). Moreover, comparison may be with individuals who work for the same company or people outside the company. The fair pay could be seen through its level, deservingness, or range of the pay, it also could relate to rewards or compensation. In this, employees who perceive that they are being paid less than they deserve, they are most likely to be unsatisfied. Considerable number of research (e.g. Colquitt et al., 2001; Till and Karren, 2011) have studied pay distributive justice perception and found that it highly impacts employees' satisfaction. Interestingly, certain studies have shown that employees who think that they are paid more than they deserve are found with low satisfaction levels (Heffernan, 2012). Fairness perception of pay has also been in association with several other HPWS predictors such as commitment, turnover and job performance.

3.4.2. Procedural justice and High-Performance Work System:

As discussed in the first section of this chapter, Thibaut and Walker (1975) have introduced the procedural justice to complement distributive justice. They defined it as the perceived fairness of decision making process. Wu and Chaturvedi (2009) say, it is about employees' opinions and voice being heard. Leventhal (1980) introduced six principles to judge if a practice is procedurally fair. (a) The consistency of the practice over time and across individuals. (b)The extent of the personal interest. (c) The accuracy of the information on

which this practice is grounded. (d) The flexibility to be changed when found unfair. (e) Embraces all parties' interests. (f) The ethical and moral values that are taken into consideration. Furthermore, according to Lind and Tyler (1988), employees' procedural justice perceptions are based on the extent of their influences on the process. According to both group value model and control model, procedural justice is significant. In the former, procedural justice signifies that employee has a respect within the group he belongs to (Blader and Tylor 2003). In control model it allows inputs of those who are impacted by a decision. Furthermore, many authors (e.g. Cohen-Charash 2001; Lind and Tylor 1988) have argued that procedural justice is the most essential dimension in organisational justice. However, considering employees' perceptions towards the all four sub-dimensions of organisational justice is believed to give more insight on the effect of fairness perceptions on the proximal relation between HPWS and employees outcomes (Brockner and Wienesfeld, 2005). HRM is found positively linked to procedural justice perceptions (Colvin, 2006). In this, one of the main features of HPWS is that it increases employees' participation. Therefore, HPWS increases employees' procedural justice perceptions. Authors (e.g. Garcia et al., 2014; Wu and Chaturvedi, 2009) have provided evidence of the significant relation between procedural justice and HPWS practices. For example, Wu and Chaturvedi (2009) have found that training, performance appraisal, pay related to performance were linked to Procedural justice.

In the performance appraisal, while the outcome of this practice has been linked to distributive justice, authors (e.g. Haldbrook, 2002; Cawley et al., 1998) studied certain different principles in the context of procedural justice: (a) fair hearing. (b) Judgement based on evidence (c) adequate notice. Fair hearing suggests that supervisors should be conversant about their subordinates' work and they should be giving opportunities to comment before the decision is made. Voice is one of the most procedural justice indicators. Haldbrook (2002), Operationalised low opportunities as not giving employees' chance to give their opinions on their performance. Subordinates' voice on performance appraisal has been linked with Satisfaction (Cawley et al., 1998; Heffernan and Dundon 2016; Wu and Chaturvedi 2009). Concerning the adequate notice principle, employees should be aware of the objectives, criteria and are allowed to participate in developing these criteria. The third principle, is judgement based on evidence. Which states that the criteria of the appraisal should be consistent across employees, they should be given explanation by evidence about this decision and can appeal against the rating.

Job security refers to the employment stability that provided to the employees, it conveys a message to employees that the organisation is committed with them for a long time. Procedural justice provides employees with significant information to make their perspectives about job security (Wang et al., 2016). Thus, a high level of procedural justice could construct a positive employees' security perceptions. Consequently, they reciprocate by exerting more extra-role behaviour and loyalty. Job security is linked to job stress (Sverke et al., 2006), extra role behaviour (Kang et al. 2013) and turnover (Bernhard-Oettel et al., 2011) and many other several employees' attitudes and behaviours. In another vein, Meyer and Smith (2000) and Pare and Tremblay (2007), who studied the influence of HR practices on procedural justice found that it is positively linked with training and rewards. These studies and most of the previously mentioned ones were rather conducted in the western private context or/used different methodology to explore the role of procedural justice.

3.4.3. Interpersonal justice and High-Performance Work System:

Another element of organisational justice that has been integrated with the HPWS is the interpersonal justice. This dimension focuses on the extent to which employees are treated politely, with respect and dignity (Colquitt, 2001). Interpersonal justice is argued to be one of the most impactful justice dimensions in shaping employees' behaviour (Judge et al., 2006; Skarlicki and Folger, 2004). It has been discussed previously that supervisors can influence how HPWS practices are implemented (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007; Townsend and Loudoun, 2015). Furthermore, different supervisors' types and roles can lead to different employees' perceptions of fairness (Aryee, 2007; Kilroy and Dundon, 2015). Employees' experiences of interpersonal treatment perception are deeply rooted in the HPWS context. In this vein, Erdogan et al (2001) says that, in performance appraisal the main determinants of interpersonal fairness are: the supervisors should be always aware and focus on the kindness of his voice's tone, punctuality and respect the employees. Moreover, according to Heffeman and Dundon (2016), communication with employees during the implementation of a practice send a message to employees that the organisation is sensitive to their desires. This means that employees' participation can also be related to the perceived interpersonal justice. Fair interpersonal treatment has been linked to several employees attitudinal and behavioural outcomes such as satisfaction (Masterson et al 2000) work motivation (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Unfair interpersonal treatment can cause perceptions of uncertainty (Heffeman and Dundon, 2016).

3.4.4. Informational justice and High-Performance Work System:

Informational justice is operationalised in this study as the adequacy and sufficiency of information given to the employees. According to Cropanzano et al (2007), the honesty and the adequacy of information in several HPWS practices can reduce the uncertainty of the applicant, which in turn encourage him to show good performance. Bauer et al (1998) stated that vague procedures can lower employees' expectations. Further, Gilliland and Hale (2005) add that lack and dishonesty of information in selection could diminishes trust and higher the perception of injustice. In performance appraisal, explaining the rating criteria that used to judge performance is crucial (Bies and Shapiro 1988). Claiming that not all types of explanations are influential, Holbrook (1999) has classified explanations into two kinds; internal and external, the internal justification is based on the employee characteristic, whereby the employee's actions dictates the appraisal results. The external explanation concentrates on the factors or the excuses. Bies and Shapiro mentioned that the explanation is essential whether it is external or internal and can lead to positive reactions. Concern pay, Holbrook (1999) says that giving adequate explanation about the basis of any pay decision is found impactful on the perception of justice. Many imperial findings indicate that justifying any pay's decrease or cut for employees can make these actions to be perceived as fair (Schaubroeck et al., 1994).

3.4.5. Over all justice and High-Performance Work System:

Overall, justice refers to the holistic employees' perspectives about fairness in their overall work experience (Ambrose and Schminke, 2009). The literature in this area have emphasized that HPWS practices can be used as method to judge the overall justice in the organisation. These practices should enable employees to be fairly treated by the management during the implementation's phase (Tang and Tang 2012). Consequently, the practices build overall justice perceptions. More specifically, HPWS practice are found to enhance employees service capacity through selection and training when they are implemented in specific standards. In this, using relative and equal characteristics such as gender and/ or age or any other social based criteria can enhance the overall justice perceptions among employees (Harel et al., 2003). Training can also improve the overall justice perceptions when the same opportunities are given to employees to enhance their skills and knowledge, consequently gaining points in performance appraisal. In performance appraisal, Snell and Dean (1992) mentioned that the feedback process can be related to overall justice perceptions as they feel

that their efforts are acknowledged and not neglected. In another vein, rewards according to performance appraisal is also reported as another source of employees' overall justice perceptions. Rewards should be assigned objectively and not based on preference or/and of the supervisors (Harel et al., 2003). Equal participation opportunities can provide employees with chance to influence decision making process in their daily tasks. Moreover, according to Raub (2008), promotion and empowerment play another role in building over justice perceptions as employees feel that they are motivated based on their performance. Taken together, HWS practices employees under same practices can judge whether they are being treated fairly by their employer.

3.4.6. Justice and Task Performance:

Perceived fairness has been reported to have important relation with more than few individuals' attitudinal outcomes (Konovsky, 2000). Considerable number of research have been conducted to explore the impact of fairness on these outcomes. For instance, several empirical studies revealed positive relationship between dimensions of justice and commitment (e.g. Aryee and Budhwar 2002; Konovsky and Cropanzano, 1991). Certain others found that it is related to certain justice dimensions but not all. For example, Rai (2013) found that commitment is only related to procedural justice. Rubel and Kee (2015) have studied the effect of performance appraisal fairness, they found that commitment plays partial mediation role between the fairness of this single practice and employees' turnover intention. In similar vein, satisfaction is another individuals' outcome that has been widely studied in the literature. The studies of Aryee and Budhwar (2002), Konovsky and Cropanzano (1991), Nadiri, and Tanova (2010) and Rai (2013), have provide practical evidenced on the link between fairness and satisfaction. Interestingly, this might give a meaning to the Colquitt et al., (2003; p. 99) question "Why is it that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are popular dependent variables in justice research, but motivation is virtually ignored?". None the less, most studies have revealed inconsistent results regarding the strength of this relation and which justice dimension is more related than the others. Turnover has been also paid considerable attention as one of the individuals' outcomes that could be affected by perception of fairness. Most of the reviewed studies have reported positive relationship with turnover (e.g. Aryee and Budhwar 2002; Nadiri, and Tanova, 2010; Rai, 2013). Lee et al (2010) have found that only procedural justice plays a vital role in employees' turnover intention.

The reviewed literature for the most potential outcomes at individuals' level that linked to the perception of fairness indicated to three aspects. First, perceived justice is obviously a significant influential intervener in employees' performance. Further, employees' attitudinal outcomes such as commitment, satisfaction, turnover (e.g. Lee et al., 2010) and other outcomes as employees' absenteeism (e.g. Colquitt et al 2002; Lam et al 2002) and employees' engagement (e.g. Konovsky and Cropanzano, 1991; Ghosh et al., 2014) are important indicators for performance. However, it has been argued that task performance has more direct relevance to employees' performance (Judge et al., 2001). Second, it can be noticed that only few studies have covered all justice dimensions together and large section of them have focused on procedural and interactional justice. This might be because these dimensions have more direct relevance to employees' level. Third, this research suggests that mixed factors could intervene in the effect of fairness on employees' attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, such as cultural sectoral contexts which can justify the inconsistent results in the literature (Lund et al., 2013). Fourth, the role of perception of fairness in Middle Eastern public organisations have not paid enough attention.

The literature on the relation between perception of fairness and task-related environments has significantly increased in the last few decades (Colquitt et al., 2005), the reason behind that is that perception of fairness has been linked to several individuals' positive behaviours in the organisation (Conlon et al., 2005), such as decision making process (e.g. Leventhal 1980 ;Thibaut and Walker, 1975), organisation citizenship behaviours (e.g. Jafari and Bavarian 2012; Nadir and Tan ova, 2010) and Task performance (e.g. Colquitt et al., 2001). Task performance has been considered as one of key outcomes of perception of fairness (Colquitt et al., 2001; Miles et al., 2002; Nowakowski and Conlon, 2005). Moreover, Greenberg and Colquitt (2013) have classified the key behavioural outcomes which related to justice into three categories: the good (task performance and compliance), the bad (withdrawal behaviours) and ugly (counterproductive behaviours). This classification made by these scholars in one of the most cited books in this area shows the important relationship between perception of fairness and task performance.

However, despite the importance of the justice- task performance relationship, the theoretical mechanism of this linkage has been devoted little attention by the justice scholars (Colquitt et al., 2005). This could be for the reason that the previous reviews on justice have shown a pessimistic image about the impact of justice on task performance (Lind and Tyler, 1988). As a result, more attention has been paid to study the effect of justice on other organisational

behaviours. Notwithstanding, understanding the mechanism of justice effect on task performance can assist to explain why justice could positively impact employees' task performance. As mentioned above, several mediators have been suggested in this linkage. One potential mediator in this relationship is trust. For example, Bruckner et al (1997) and Bruckner and Wiesenfeld (1996) show that individuals use information about procedural justice to judge other parties' trustworthiness. Similarly, Aryee et al (2002), who have tested the effect of this perception on certain employee outcomes including task performance, found that justice impacts these outcomes through trust.

Motivation is another potential mediator in the effect of fairness perception on task performance. According to Latham and Pinder (2005), motivation is energetic power which initiates and determines the shape, strength and direction of task-related behaviour. In fact, this suggested mediator has been largely associated to distributive justice, and scholars have not given an adequate explanation for motivational linkage with other justice dimensions (Zapata-Phelan et al., 2009). For example, Colquitt and Greenberg (2003: p 99) questioned "why is it that job satisfaction and organisational commitment are popular dependent variables in justice research, but motivation is virtually ignored". Zapata-Phelan et al (2009) conducted two laboratory studies on 277 students from different nationalities to examine the role of motivation in the relationship between perception of fairness and task performance, they found that motivation plays a mediation role in terms of procedural justice and no significant role with interpersonal fairness. However, though it is expected that perception of fairness can act as a motivational factor that stimulates employee to exert more effort and display better performance, it is not clearly known yet whether it monopolises this role, or it aligns with other factors such as satisfaction and trust.

In spite of trust and motivation, in a study conducted by Suliman and Al Kathairi (2012) in the UAE (United Arab Emirates) found that both procedural and interactional justice have strong relations with job performance. Suliman and Al Kathairi's research which is relatively similar to the current research context, as it has been conducted in an Arabic country, they found that this relationship is moderated by commitment. In addition, Suliman and his colleague tested job performance with no mention whether it has focused on contextual or task performance. However, Wang et al (2016) found that job security mediates the relationship between procedural justice and employee extra role behaviour and turnover. Douthitt and Aiello (2001), tested the impact of participation and control and found a significant relationship between procedural justice and performance. This result concurs with the

findings of (Masterson et al., 2000), who have examined the impact of both procedural and interactional justice on performance. Colquitt et al, (2001) however concluded only modest relationship between these two dimensions and performance. According to Greenberg and Colquitt (2013) the reason behind this variation in the findings could be for two reasons. First, there have not been adequate studies by which specialists can compare the impact of all shapes of justice on performance because large number of studies testing the effect of distributive justice on performance have not included the arguments of procedural justice. Second, the way justice was measured in terms of justice source and the approach applied. The current research adopted qualitative inductive and deductive approach to explore the role of justice. This setting was made to obtain holistic picture about this aspect and to allow any potential relevant effective theme to emerge (see methodology chapter 5). These approaches were adopted in a case study in Libya where this aspect has been poorly understood.

3.5. Justice in Libya:

It has been argued in the literature that when exploring justice effect, sources of fairness can vary in their relevance. This generic perspective is predicated on the inconsistent findings from the empirical studies on the cultural impact. For instance, Deutsch (1975), claims that people can use 11 different values to determine justice (e.g. quality, common good and reciprocity), whereas Leventhal (1976) has identified only three, which can vary across people. Greenberg (2001, p.370) mentioned that “norms prevailing in various cultures influence what is perceived to be fair in those cultures” and criteria applied to assess the perception of fairness can vary across people and situations. Culture has been approved as one of the main factors that can shape employees’ perception (Peretz and Fried, 2012). Even though certain researchers in the area of cultural dimensions’ effects (e.g. Pillai et al., 2001) mentioned that there are insignificant differences among culture, there is growing body of research on the impact of culture or country on individuals’ attitudes and behaviours (Lund et al., 2013; Saari and Judge, 2004). These researchers and others (e.g. Wang and Yao, 2011) emphasis the significant impact of the socio-cultural factors on individuals’ judgments about what to be considered fair. Hence, several authors (e.g. Hertel et al., 2005; Wang and Yao, 2011) call for more contextual view of justice. The contextual differences could be the reason behind the variation in the justice research findings (Enoksen, 2015; Johns, 2006). Accordingly, many cross-cultural studies have been conducted to explore the effect of these factors and reported that results could differ cross countries and cultures. For example,

Brockner et al (2001) carried out four cross cultural studies in China, USA, Germany, Mexico and Hong Kong to examine the impact of power distance on employees' work attitudes and job performance, they revealed that this dimension has inconsistent impact across these countries. Another example, the study of Lam et al (2002), who examined the effect of the same dimension on employees' satisfaction and absenteeism in USA and Hong Kong, their study confirmed the impact of this dimension on employees' outcomes.

In similar vein, Harbi et al (2017) study the effect of culture and the perception of Wasta on the performance appraisal, they find that western performance appraisal model contradicts the Arabic culture and employees reject these cultural effects as it is being associated with nepotism and Wasta, which negatively affect the perception of justice. Libya is an Arabic North African country which has not been given enough attention in terms of exploring the role of organisational justice in the relationship between HR practices and performance. The possible reason could be that there were political and social limitations to investigate such critical topic. Notably, it is claimed that the government had strong interference in most of organisational activities in the public sector, and the dominance of socio cultural factors such as nepotism and Wasta in the Libyan public sector which can negatively affect employees' perception of fairness (Iles et al 2012). The political limitations which obstructed reaching reliable results in the past, has now relatively decreased due to the radical political changes occurred after the so called Arabic spring. Therefore, it is an opportunity to explore this topic in this country in less constrains and more convenient environment. By doing so, this study contributes in shedding lights on the uncovered issues in this side in a different context. To the researcher best of knowledge the current research is the first study to explore the role of justice with the integrations of HPWS in Libya.

3.6.The Theoretical Framework:

The fact that there have been several research about justice concentrating on various theoretical aspects, has invoked that scholars in this domain may have been deflected from the original track of exploring this theme. According to Colquitt (2001: 427), justice scholars could be "losing the forest for the trees". In this, while many authors have suggested different theories for justice, Gilliland and Chan (2001) mentioned that there are no theories for organisational justice. They claimed that all the discussed frames in the literature are a collection of constructs that called theories. To tackle this issue, organisational justice scholars have put in great efforts to develop certain frameworks that can integrate these

constructs to form wider organisational justice theoretical outline. Gilliland and Chan (2001) argue that any good theoretical framework for organisational justice should illustrate the two concerns about fairness; *how* individuals react to fair and unfair situations and *why* they concern about fairness. They add that explaining these two aspects, makes the theory a good framework. In his seminal work, Greenberg (1987) suggested a classification that differentiates between proactive vs reactive approaches and content vs process approaches to studying justice. The reactive theory of justice focuses on reactions to unfair actions, whereas proactive concentrates on behaviours which indorses justice. The content theories are about explaining the why part and process approach concern about the *how* aspects.

3.7. Conceptual framework

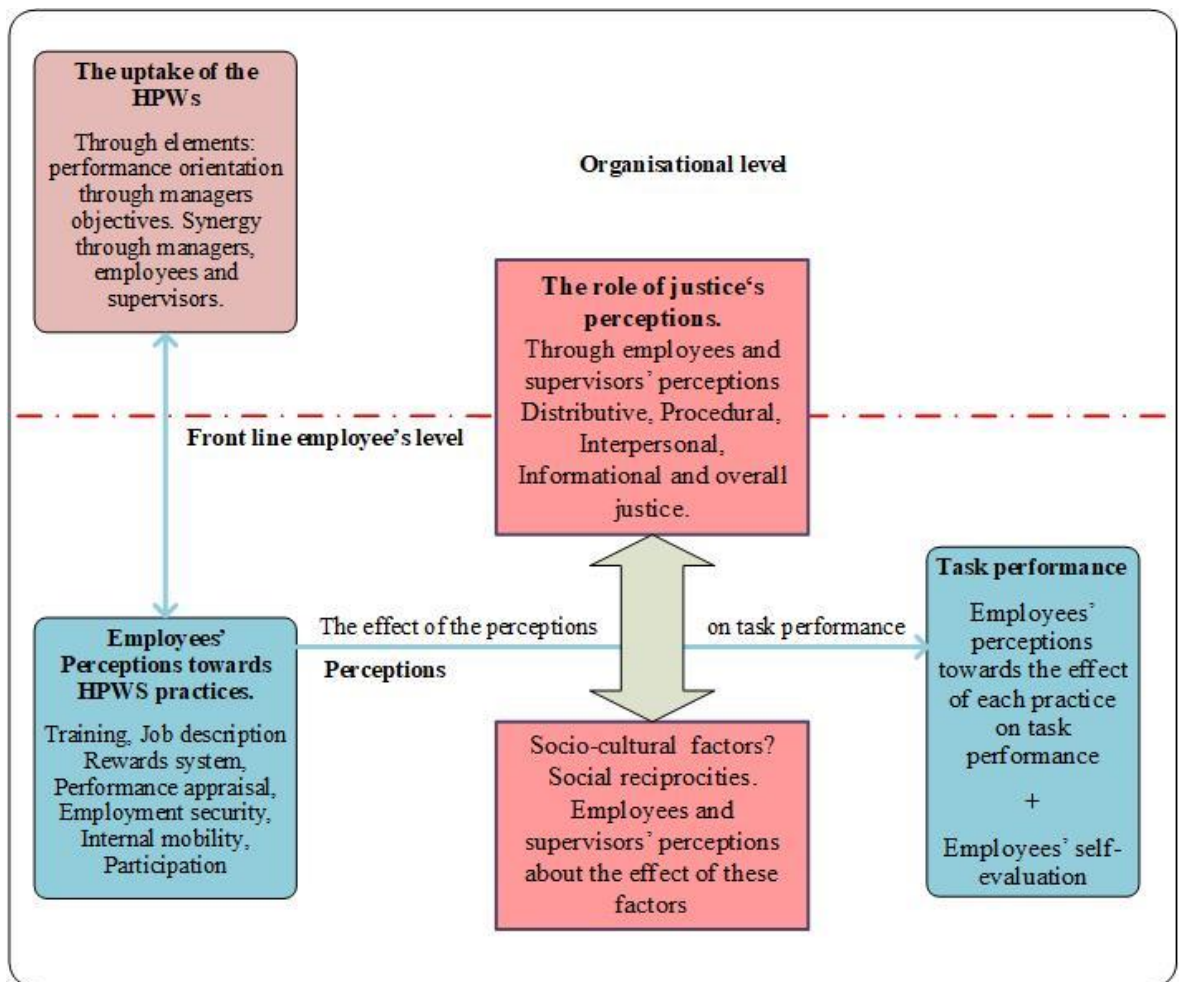


Figure (4) the conceptual framework

The conceptual frame work of this research incorporates two level of analysis (organisation level and the front line employee' level). The organisational theme incorporates one of the significant topics, which is investigating the uptake of the HPWS in a Libyan context. The adoption of this theme will be explored through the main HR decision makers view on the

intention to enhance employees' performance by deploying the HPWS practices and their perception on the interdependency of them. The organisational level also includes the exploration of the role of justice perceptions on the relationship between employees perceptions and task performance. Justice' perceptions will be explored through five facets (distributive, procedural, interpersonal , informational and overall justice), supervisor and employees will be interviewed for their thoughts about these dimensions. The Employees' level embraces the other important main themes in this project. Mainly, it focuses on exploring employees' perspective towards HPWS practices (training, job description, rewards, performance appraisal, employment security, participation and internal mobility) and their effect on task performance. The effect of social reciprocities is also included in the employees level, it concerns about the effect of this side of the socio-cultural factors. Employee supervisors will be asked about their thought towards this theme. To explore employees' task performance , they will be ask to self-evaluate their task performance and analysis to their perceptions towards the effect of HPWS on performance will be also studied.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Research Method

4.1. Introduction:

This research aims to explore the uptake of HPWS in the Libyan oil firm. It also aims to find out how HPWS practices are perceived by the employees. Assessing the effect of employees' perceptions towards HPWS on task performance is the third aim of this study. It also explores the role of perceived justice in this regard. Here, the main focus of this research is on obtaining detailed answers to the research questions through exploring employees' perceptions. This chapter focuses on the description and definition of the methodological and method choices that made to assess answering the following outlined research questions.

1. To what extent there is an adoption of the concept of HPWS in the research population?
2. How employees perceive HPWS practices?
3. What is the relationship between HPWS and employees' task performance?
4. How do perception of fairness affect the relation between employees 'perceptions and their task performance?

Research framework is vital to accomplish the research aims in a reliable and valid manner. Creswell (2014) has described a research framework that comprises three elements; First research ontology and epistemology. The second element is about the research approach. The third is the data collection and procedures. Research ontology is the researcher view of reality. Epistemology is the acceptable knowledge in a field of study (Saunders et al., 2009). Research approach is about the strategy of inquiry, it can be either qualitative or/ and quantitative. In this research the subjective ontology and interpretive epistemology with hybrid deductive and inductive qualitative approaches are seen the most suitable for this research. This chapter will discuss and justify these choices. The first section will discuss the research paradigm, which incorporates the ontological and epistemological stance. The second section introduces the design of this research. In the third section the research approach is discussed. The fourth unit is devoted to explaining the used method and the techniques utilised to operationalise this method. The analysis approaches that used to analyse the collect the data is illustrated in the fifth section. The final section explains the steps taken to enhance the validity and the reliability in all the research stages.

4.2. Research Paradigm:

Research ontology refers to “a formal, explicit, specification of a shared conceptualisation” (Gruber, 1993). Saunders et al (2009) say that there are two aspects of ontology; objectivism and subjectivism. The objectivism see that social entities are in reality independent and happen external to social actors. Whereas subjective ontology believes that social phenomenon can be understood through social actors’ perceptions. This research is concerned with the employee’s perceptions towards the research themes such as perspectives towards HPWS practices and fairness. As such, it is more about describing individuals’ lived experiences. In the organisational context, HR activities and practices could be designed and intended to achieve specific goals. However, workers differ in their interpretation of these activities (Bowen and Ostroff 2004). For example, several scholars (e.g. Heffernan, 2012; Greenberg et al., 2007) assert that justice’s perception is mainly subjective and employees differ in their fairness judgement. Fleetwood and Hesketh (2006) claim that, though surveys can emphasise the relation between HR practices and performance, yet they cannot illustrate in details *why* this linkage takes place. Fleetwood and Hesketh (2010) argue that HRM practices-performance linkage is ‘naturally complicated, has several dimensions and subjective. Thus, the subjective ontology is seen as the most appropriate ontological stance for this research.

In terms of the epistemological stance, Guba and Lincoln (1994) have used the terms ‘scientific’ and ‘naturalistic’, while Collis and Hussey (2013) have claimed that a continuous line of paradigms usually ends with terms positivism and interpretivism or constructivism. Positivist philosophy mirrors the main beliefs of natural science in which the researchers deals with” an observable social reality and where the end of product of such research can be law-like generalisations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists” (Remenyi et al,1998, p32). Further, a strong association is being seen between this philosophy and quantitative approach, since positivists assume that social phenomena can be measured. These facts have highlighted the need for another philosophy that can address the complicity and subjective nature of this relationship. The advocates of this calls assert that social phenomena cannot be measured. Moreover, when exploring the HPWS, more qualitative approach should be applied as it provides more details about how various agents understand and interpret several related issues (Fleetwood and Hesketh, 2008); Paauwe, 2009). In this, employees’ perceptions are subjective, and they are often underestimated

(Guclu, 2013). For example, an employee might perceive justice by comparing his situation with others, while another can express how the same situation should be. Here, the reality in this research is subjective and it only can be brought to the light through employees' interpretation. Thus, in line with the subjective ontology adopted in this research, and to fit with the research aims and data collection technique of this research, interpretive epistemology is seen the most suitable for this research.

In a related vein, the term methodology in this research refers to the generic approach adopted to carry out this piece of research, while method is used to express the specific techniques used for data collection and analysis (Bryman, 2007). Research methodology is closely associated with the epistemological research choice, which determine the research method's choice. Hence, as explained above, the epistemological position of this research is interpretive, and its design is qualitative case study approach that located in public study and explores the effect of HPWS on task performance and the role of justice in this effect.

4.3. Research Design:

This research adopted case study qualitative research design, which set out to achieve detailed answers to the research questions and in-depth exploration to employees' perception towards HPWS and fairness. Case study is used by many fields whereby in-depth analysis of a contemporary phenomenon is investigated. Data in case studies can be collected in many procedures. Creswell et al (2007) distinguishes qualitative case studies in terms of their intent to three types: single, collective and multiple case study. Creswell also suggests that when choosing a case to study, researcher can select ordinary, accessible or unusual case, he preferred to select the one that can provide various perspectives on the studied topic or phenomenon. In the current study, a single case study design is adopted. This decision is made for the following reasons: First, this research aims to obtain in-depth rather than numerical data, which provides the detailed answers to the research questions. Second, given the research qualitative strategy, it does not aim to generalise the findings whereby larger research population is preferred. Instead, it sought for the richness of the obtained data and insight from the analysis of this data. Unlike the quantitative, qualitative case studies concern about analytical logic rather than about findings' generalisation (Saunders et al., 2009; Yin, 2018). Third, the selected case study (Waha Oil Company) is one of the largest oil companies in Libya as it produces about 25% from the total Libyan oil production (se appendix 4) and employs about 3000 Libyan employees. The hugeness of this company and its prevalent on

various geographical areas across the country have guaranteed adequate variety of employees' backgrounds and work natures, which enrich the data about their perspectives (Saunders et al., 2009). Employees backgrounds and work nature are claimed to be essential in forming their perceptions (Hu et al., 2010). Thus, various perceptions from different employees who work in different places and different roles in this firm can be obtained.

4.4. Research Approach:

In the social sciences, there are several approaches that label the design of the research. According to Stern et al (2012), the design of the research usually depends on: research questions, the time in which the research is conducted, and the extent of the researcher's involvement. Researchers usually use inductive or/and deductive research approaches. Both approaches can be adopted in any qualitative or quantitative research, the inductive is often linked with qualitative while the latter is usually more associated with quantitative researches. Both approaches differ in terms of nature, design and reasoning. The deductive approach depends more on the literature and the existing theory to form the research questions and to direct the analysis of the collected data (Saunders et al., 2014). The inductive usually relies on the participants' points of views or primary data. According to Creswell et al (2007) the inductive research is "down top" study where the research starts from the participants points of view to generate wider themes and any interconnecting themes. In this researcher, a subjective relative ontology, and, interpretive epistemology with a qualitative deductive and inductive approaches case study research design were adopted. Schutz (1967), suggested a method of two orders of senses for an interpretive study of any social action. The first is the process used to interpret the phenomena, while the second is generating a specific type that the researcher uses to interpret this phenomenon. In practice, this research used a hybrid approach that incorporated both deductive and inductive approaches. The deductive approach was used to identify the specific theoretical aspects in the research. In this aspect, the research is utilising the process approach in exploring employees' perceptions, this approach suggests several dimensions in this regard such as consistency and consensus. The current research explored the consensus dimension components. Furthermore, based on the literature review, there were predetermines of the justice constructs to be explored, whereby each of the five facets formed part of the investigation questions. For the inductive approach, the researcher explored the perceptions towards the HPWS practices and based on the findings an interpretation about this aspect

was built. Also, starting from bottom (employees' perceptions) approach has allowed for any related themes to emerge and building a clear comprehension about this topic.

4.5. Research Method:

In qualitative research, there are many methods that can be adopted in the organisational studies to answer the why and how questions about employees' behaviours. The most common used methods in the organisational setting are focus group, in-depth interview, observation, ethnography and triangulation (Ehigie 2005; Saunders et al., 2012). These methods vary according to the research objectives, context, mechanism and the main focus of the research. In the current research the triangulation of data sources was utilised; interviews and formal documents. This section discusses and justifies this choice.

4.5.1. Data source triangulation:

The term data source triangulation means the utilisation of two or more independent data sources, to enhance the understanding of the research phenomenon (Saunders et al., 2009; Patton 1999). According to Denzin (2017), in qualitative research, triangulation adopts more than one source of data to enhance research reliability by the convergence of data from various sources. Moreover, collecting data from different sources breeds credibility (Eisner, 2017) and reduce potential biases due to the single source artefact (Patton, 1990). In the current research two data sources has been used: in-depth interviews and document analysis. This setting has been adopted to gain greater understanding of the themes being explored and the official reality through documents.

4.5.1.1. In-depth interviews:

In-depth interview is claimed to be favoured tool to dig down exploring a social science topic (kvale, 1996; Ehigie and Hesse-Biber, 2017; Saunders et al, 2012). Ehigie and Hesse-Biber (2017) describe this method as interactional scheduled conversation between a professional role participant and normal participant. Here, the interviewer encourages the participants to provide detailed answers about his/ her thoughts, whereby these answers is tape- recorded. This qualitative method is used to obtain clarification, explanation and justifications for answers about a phenomenon or an event. Kvale (1996) says if someone is looking for finding out how people comprehend their life, why not talk to these people. Ehigie and Hesse-Biber (2017) and Russel et al (2005) say that in-depth interview is an ideal powerful tool to access employees experience and perceptions. Thus, interviews can provide an access to understanding the subjectivity of employees' perceptions towards the research

themes. Ehigie (2005) defined the in-depth interview as a semi structured interview that intends to explore respondents' thoughts and feelings about a topic which very related to the explored themes, to come out with detailed exploration.

4.5.1.1.1. Using semi structured interview:

In this interview style the format includes some structured and some unstructured questions. Interviewer in the semi structured interview usually follow a prepared schedule in which the questions are designed in a consistent manner according to the research themes (Wilson, 2014). This schedule guides the interviewer to focus on the research themes and any potential related issues, which he wants to explore. This interview style has been described as the intermediate most common used style in the qualitative research (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000; QU and Dumay, 2011). Moreover, according to Saunders et al (2012), this style usually used to gather data that will be analysed qualitatively. Semi structured interviews can take from few minutes to hours, this depends on the arrangement's made with the participants and the themes under exploration (Robson, 2002). In another vein, certain authors (e.g. Denscombe, 2010), mentioned that in this kind of interviews, the interviewer may affect the how much details participants could provide as his/her background may differ from the participant's one. Further to this, conducting this kind of interviews requires careful planning in terms of the way questions should be asked and explained (SQ and Dumay 2011). Nevertheless, semi structured interviews have several advantages that justify the adoption of this style in this research, the researcher background may affect the interviews (Descombe, 2010). For example, when interviewing computer professionals, interviewer with management background cannot understand some details in this field, which may lead missing some important points. In this, with regards to the effect of interviewer's back ground claimed by Descombe (2010), the researcher in the current study has a long experience in dealing with employees and have a management background. Further, the focus in this study is on perceptions about HPWS and fairness, which are not so specific, they are all about thoughts and feelings.

In addition, several authors(e.g. SQ and Dumay 2011; Denscombe, 2010) say that this interview style has many advantages that has made the rational of adopting this type of interview structure: according to Wilson (2014), the semi structured interview requires less training from the interviewer as the prepared questions aid as starting points. Further, it is flexible for interviewer in terms of arrangements and to make comparisons between

interviews, which can improve the quality of interviews and ease the analysis process (SQ and Dumay 2011). Semi structured interview insure that the main points are covered because the use of the questions' guide. Moreover, in this structure it is easier to redirect the conversation when it degrees far from the explored topic (Wilson, 2014). Thereby, this research adopted this interview style to benefit these advantages and the researcher has believed that this structure can help to gain the required in-depth exploration to the research themes. In a related vein, the pilot study has helped improving the questions layout and enhanced the researcher experience in conducting the interviews.

In practice, 22 semi-structured interviews have been conducted to cover all the specified themes in this study (see table 4). In details, three main HR decision-makers, three supervisors and 16 front-line employees in Waha Oil Company were recruited. First, the recruitment of the three main HR key persons. These HR managers participated in answering questions about the general objectives in deploying the studied HPWS practices (training, job description, performance appraisal, rewards, participation, employment security and internal mobility) and the extent of these practices synergy. The performance orientation and the interdependency of the practices are the main elements of the uptake of the system in the case study. The general objectives perceptions were used to find out whether these practices have been deployed to enhance performance, while the interdependency of the practice to explore the systematic structure of the studied HPWS dimensions. Second, the three line-managers were employed to explore the practices interdependency, perceptions towards justice dimensions (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, informational and overall justice). They also participated in exploring the social exchange in the case study. Third, for the front-line employees, these participants were recruited to explore their perceptions towards the HPWS practices (training, job description, performance appraisal, rewards, participation, employment security and internal mobility), whereby each of them was asked an opening question about his perspective about each of these practices.

Then. Other questions were asked accordingly. These participants were also asked about their thoughts about the effect of each practice on task performance. Further, to obtain a clear picture about the effect of the system's dimensions on task performance, each of the employees was sked to evaluate his own task performance. Concerning task performance self-evaluation, the participants were required to justify their evaluations, so task performance dimensions can be identified. Further, these employees participated in answering questions about their perceptions towards the justice facets. Besides, employees

were involved in exploring the interdependency of the practices and the social reciprocities. Noteworthy, notices were taken during the answers and other exploratory questions were asked accordingly. Conducting these interviews has yielded the saturation of the rich data needed as there were enough information to replicate the study (Walker , 2012) no new themes and no new data can be attained (Amerson, 2011). The table (4) below aids explaining the themes elements and respondents for each theme. It summarises these elements and the approach/s used to explore theme. For example, to explore the theme of the uptake of the HPWS, two elements were adopted (The performance orientation and The systematic structure of the practice). To explore the first elements HR decision makers were asked about their general objectives to analyse their orientation.

Research theme	Elements	Approach	Respondents
The uptake of the HPWS	The performance orientation.	General objective perceptions by interviews. Documents.	HR decision makers.
	The systematic structure of the practice.	Practices interdependency perceptions by interviews. Documents.	HR key persons, supervisors and employees
Perceptions towards HPWS practices	Training, job description, performance appraisal, rewards, participation, employment security and internal mobility.	Employees perceptions by interviews + insight from documents	Front-line employees
Task performance	Effect of each practice.	Employees perceptions by interviews.	Front-line employees
	The effect of the system.	Employees self-evaluation by interviews.	

Justice	distributive, procedural, interpersonal, informational and overall justice	Perceptions by interviews	Front-line employees and supervisors
Social relationships effect	Social reciprocities.	Perceptions and effect on performance by interviews.	Front-line employees and supervisors

Table (5) Studied Themes' elements, approaches and data sources.

5.5.1.1.2. The Use of Telephone “Semi Structured Interviews”:

Many techniques adopted to conduct the in-depth semi structured interviews such as face-to-face interview, online, and over telephone interview. Each of these tools has its pros and cons. The current research used telephone in-depth interviews to collect data. Several methodological studies (e.g. Cachia and Millward 2011) mention the logistical and practical advantages of this tool. Many methodological specialists (e.g. Cachia and Millward 2011; Lechuga 2012; Musselwhite et al 2007; Saunders et al., 2012; Steven and Sweet 2002) have stressed on the advantages of conducting interviews via telephone. These advantages include logistical convenience, better access to geographical isolated participants, low costs, enhanced interviewers' safety and easier arrangements requirements. In terms of convenience, telephone interview is found to strengthen the methodological aspect as it provides increased anonymity and privacy for interviewees (Lechuga, 2012; Stephens, 2007). For instance, the privacy advantage of telephone interviews was reported in the health setting (Carr and Worth 2001) and when interviewing inside the prisons (Sturges and Hanrahan 2004). Further, telephone interviews do not rely on capturing any verbal cues, it provides more explicit follow up the interviewer questions instead. Furthermore, this technique is less intrusive tool for the interviewees as it is easier in scheduling, rescheduling or even ending the interview if required (Saura and Balsas, 2014).

In the current study, the 22 interviews have been conducted with participants from different work places in Waha Oil company such as oil fields, management and seaports, these places are usually located in the desert or away far from cities, which are often inaccessible to conduct face-to-face interviews due to locations and the security and safety regulations. Thus, telephone interviews have enabled the researcher to conduct interviews with

employees who are working in these places. It has been significant to the research to explore perspectives of employees who are working in places that differ from the work nature and the work environment. Especially, oil field workers are reported to be highly influenced by HR practices such as training (Sutawijaya et al., 2015) and more exposed to work stress (Brešić et al 2007). The average duration of the conducted interview was from 15-45 minutes. This means using the telephone interview technique has made it convenient for the researcher to have better response (Bourque and Fielder, 2003) and for the participants to schedule, as some of the interviews were conducted out of the work times because most of them were having busy work days.

However, a small body of literature pointed out to certain challenges when using telephone interviews such as the inability to observe the participants' environments at work and the potential loss of some data (Holt, 2010). Though these challenges have been debated in several studies in the literature (Novick, 2008; Drabble et al., 2016), these challenges were considered and tackling procedures were taken in this research. In this aspect, preparation calls were made with each participant to ensure the suitable and convenient time to conduct the interview. Whereby every participant was asked about his preference. This action yielded feelings of convenience amongst participants and gave them more confidence to express their thoughts. For example, five participants asked for out of work time calls (evening time) so they can speak conveniently. In similar vein, each participant was asked for a permission to recall him should any further clarification needed. This helped the re-access to certain participants, which tackled the loss of some data challenge mentioned above and to enrich the obtained data. Notably, it is more difficult to do this in face to face interviews. One more point is concerning the environment observation, this research does not aim to observe the work environment rather participants views about the research themes.

4.5.1.2. Documents Data Sources:

As mentioned previously, this research used triangulation data source. In this, both in-depth interviews and document analysis were used. In the previous section I have introduced the in- depth interviews as one of the triangulation sources of data used in this research. The second data source was from document analysis. Document analysis is defined as a systematic process of reviewing formal relevant materials. There has been an increase of the adoption of document analysis as a part of triangulation method in the recent years (Bowen,

2009). This method is usually adopted in combination with another qualitative one for the triangulation to study the same phenomenon (Denzin, 2017). The documents may take several forms such as registers, reports, programs outline, official papers diaries, journals and meetings' minutes. Further, any kind of documents can help to explore, uncover, enhance understanding, shed lights on relevant to the research topic (Mills et al., 2006). This research used formal written documents in Waha to explore the research themes.

In details, the researcher obtained 85 formal documents from the HR department, training department and from the trade union. From the HR department, a complete HR policy book that includes 200 pages were read and reviewed in addition to a full job description for all jobs in the company. Training policy was obtained from the training department, this document is in 76 pages. Eight letters and meeting minutes from the trade union were reviewed and evaluated critically to determine their relevance to the research topic. Generally, there were three criteria for the documents selection. Availability, reliability and relevance. Concerning the availability, the researcher faced considerable resistance from the managers providing the formal documents. Therefore, the researcher needed to conduct extra formal and informal contacts with the related departments to obtain certain formal documents. For example, to obtain an official copy of the HR policy, the HR director was contacted via email several times. In terms of reliability, any document is not considered as reliable unless it includes signature or/and stamp, date or obtained from a reliable source. The relevance criteria were determined after a close look to the content of the documents. Out of the 85 about 17 documents were used.

In practice, the researcher began with reading these documents to ensure their relevance to the topic. Then, another close look to spot specific lines or paragraphs. During this process the researcher went back to the literature to find out any support for the each specific article. For example, when reading the job description part and its relevance to training, the research went back to the literature to know how that was discussed and to find out any arguments about the point. As a third tool in this analysis, in each point I worked to find out any other related documents that may support or contradict the same point. The final step was to highlights the meaningful words and phrases and making codes.

In the qualitative literature, document analysis has been used as complement to another method such as in compilation with ethnography (e.g. Anger and Machtmes 2005) or even as stand-alone source of data (e.g. McMahan et al., 2009). Documents can be used to aid providing background about the context and themes, invokes question that could be asked

to the participants (Goldstein and Reiboldt, 2004), add to the existing knowledge that gained by using another method (Bowen, 2009), Provide historical information about any changes and developments, and help to co-operate findings from another source of data. Certain authors mentioned to some challenges that associated with the use of this method. For example, documents analysis is not always sufficient in terms of its cover of all research themes and often does not provide sufficient details as there can be difficulty to access to some required documents (Yin, 1994). However, Yin (2018) says that this data source has several strength sides. First, it enables reviewing documents repeatedly, which make data more accurate. Second, it is less costly as the documents are already there. Third, this method is unobtrusive as documents are not affected by the research procedure. Fourth, many of documents are publicly available especially in the era of the advanced internet use. Fifth, this method is efficient as it requires only data selection rather than data collection, which is time saving. Sixth, can cover several events and contexts. In addition, Bowen, (2009) claim that this method serves research that designed within interpretive philosophy, which made another endorsement to use this method in this research.

The obtained documents in this research has been used in two aspects: explore the general objectives by deploying the HPWS practices. And to give more insight about the obtained perceptions. For example, the findings about the rewards perceptions indicated that 13 participants have not been granted any rewards for any work they have done, which induced the researcher to find out the reason behind that. The analysis of the documents showed that there is a letter from the CEO to suspend the rewards for performance and another document from the head of the management committee in Waha to establish new reward strategy (see section 6.3.4). The data included in the documents require interpretation and analysis to extract the elicit meanings and to enhance an empirical comprehension about the research themes (Corbin and Srauss, 2008). In this, even though it is better to get access to a wider array of documents, researcher should be critical in using the documents (Bowen, 2009). This means that only the relevant documents should be used by keep considering the original purpose of the documents. Data included in the documents entails making sense of some selected phrases and synthesising.

4.6. Ethical Considerations:

This project has obtained the ethical approval from the College Research Ethics (CREC). it has been conducted by using clear ethical procedures, and guided by the code guidance on

ethical research of Nottingham Trent University Graduate School. The laws and regulations in force in Libya in this regard, where the field study has been carried out, were also observed in this research. Confidentiality and anonymity have been ensured at every stage of the research, with all the data generated from the interviews. In this, the audio recorded interviews has been kept in the researcher's password protected recording device, which only the researcher can access to. This precaution covered the periods during the field study in Libya, and during the analysis stage and writing up stage. After the project finishes only the anonymised transcribed data will be kept for further academic purposes and the audio recorded data will be destroyed. The transcripts of interviews have been anonymous, and the identity of the interviewees were disguised by giving them code names (e.g. EA0001, SM0001 and MN0001). These codes are indicators for their names and job titles. Consequently, there was nothing that can indicate the identity of the interviewees. This procedure has provided confidentiality for data and therefore participants. All the collected data (papers, electronic and notes) were kept in password-protected file and kept in a locked filing cabinet in researcher's desk at NTU in a safe and secure place at any stage of the research

Further, the interviews were conducted in places and times that chosen by coordination with the participants to ensure that he/she feels convenient, safe and can speak without any worries. Furthermore, the interviewees were provided with the researcher's details (address, e-mail address and mobile number) in case the respondents feel they need to contact him. They were also informed that the personal opinions which they provide will be kept strictly anonymous. In addition, the participant information sheets were sent to participants via email prior the interviews. Also, the consent of participants of interviews have been obtained via a written consent form, prior to the sessions. The interviewees were informed about the nature of the project and expected duration of the interviews. The researcher adopted the method of note taking in the interviews, whereby any data reports, quotations/extracts and notes taken during interviews, etc. were cited in order to maintain the anonymity and confidentiality that have been put into place for other elements of the project.

4.7. Research Sample:

In qualitative studies non-probability samples are utilised for population selection. In this kind of sampling, units are intentionally chosen to reflect specific features in the population. Here, the intention is not to statistically represent the population, rather, utilising the

characteristics of this population as premise of the selection. According to Hunt and Lathlen (2015), researcher has to have a sampling frame that incorporates a target population and its subdivisions. In this research Waha Oil Company has been selected to be the research population. This selection is based on two fundamental reasons. First, it embraces the required knowledge about the research phenomenon which intended to be explored such as the existence of HR targeted practices (Hunt and Lathlen,2015). Second, the accessibility, the researcher could have access to this company by obtaining formal approval from the NOC (Saunders et al., 2102) (see appendix2). Further, the decision of which technique is appropriate and adequate of sampling for a certain research should be based on its adequateness in producing related, applicable and sufficient information (Holloway, 2017). Furthermore, it should also take on consideration the purpose of the study and the research philosophy (Saunders et al., 2012). In this research the interpretive philosophy has been adopted. Therefore, the sample size does not have to be large as the intention is to obtain in-depth understanding of the employees' perceptions towards the HPWS practices and fairness rather than generalising the results.

4.7.1. The Use of purposive Sampling:

There are many sampling methods that can be utilised in the social sciences such as theoretical sampling, convenience sampling and purposeful sampling, purposive sampling is one of the dominant technique in qualitative research (Holloway, 2017; Creswell 2013). This research utilised the purposeful sampling, as it helped addressing particular aims that based on the research questions. Second, purposive sampling focuses on' in-depth information that employees generate. In details, front line employees were selected to represent employees' perceptions and fairness. In this, 16 employees were interviewed. The purpose here is to explore perceptions from the real recipients of the HPWS practices. Thereby, insure obtaining pure thoughts and avoid any bias point of view. For example, supervisors often have roles in implementing HPWP, therefore asking them about their perceptions towards these practices could be implausible. Moreover, three supervisors were recruited to answer questions about justice and to highlight their roles in implementing the practices. Consequently, in shaping employees' perceptions (e.g. interpersonal justice). Further, supervisors were asked about the synergy of HPWS practices. Thus, they can aid answering the research questions in this regard. Besides, to interpret the aspect of the HR

decision-makers objectives, the researcher had to purposely recruit the three main HR managers in Waha since they are the only participants who can answer the relevant questions.

To operationalise this, the research used a mix between two sampling techniques convenience and snow balling sampling. These two tactics were used in the following manners. In the snowballing, participants were used to recruit more relative cases that can be included to the research (Patton, 2002). For example, in Waha, the training department is separate from the HR department, so, the researcher has obtained the training director details that required to establish communications from the HR director. Giving the significance of the social relationships in the Libyan context, the researcher has used his own social connections to recruit additional participants who can provide in-depth information about the research themes. In this vein, after obtaining the formal approval from the NOC, the researcher contacted friends who are working in Waha to help or to contact other potential participants. This way has been effective for the researcher to identify individuals for interviews. Further, this technique has made the interviewees feel convenient since the interviewer was introduced by a mutual friend (Karolak 2015). For the convenience technique, among the recommended potential participant, the researcher selected the easier individuals to contact and to conveniently conduct fruitful conversation with. In this, the work nature for some recommended participants was not convenient to hold interviews. For example, two recommended participants were working in night shifts, which made conducting interviews with them difficult as they needed to rest in the day time. Table (6) incorporates more details about the participants and a the purpose of recruiting them (data required)

Participant	Interviewee job	Data required
MAN 1	HR Manager	General objectives and HPWS practices synergy
MAN 2	HR Manager	General objectives and HPWS practices synergy
MAN 3	HR Manager	General objectives and HPWS practices synergy

SUP 1	Operation unit Supervisor / oil field	Justice, HPWS practices synergy and social reciprocities
Sup 2	Material unit Supervisor/ warehouse	Justice, HPWS practices synergy and social reciprocities
Sup3	Instrument unit Supervisor/ oil field	Justice, HPWS practices synergy and social reciprocities
EM 1	Material employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM2	Financial employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM3	Oil field employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM4	Oil field employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM5	Oil field employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM6	Material employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM7	Instrument employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM8	Oil field driller	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.

EM9	Material employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM10	Oil field	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM11	Air conditioning employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM12	Small instruments employees	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM13	Oil field employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM14	Material employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM15	Material employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.
EM16	Oil field employee	HPWS practices perceptions, justice perceptions, HPWPs synergy, task performance and social reciprocities.

Table (6) participants jobs and required data

4.8. Data Analysis Methods:

Semi-structured interviews and documents analysis are a multi-stages process using different approaches. There are several approaches to analyse qualitative data. Content and thematic analysis are the most common used approaches for the exploratory and interpretive studies. (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). This research used the thematic approach in analysing the

collected data; the setting used because the flexibility of thematic analysis in terms of identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas (Braun and Clark, 2006). Moreover, it allows the emergence of several potential related themes from the collected data. Braun and Clark (2006) define thematic analysis method as a technique to identify and report patterns. This method goes beyond the explicit phrases and words and concentrates on spotting the implicit ideas. According to Namey et al (2008) thematic analysis helps connecting and comparing the research principle themes and its subsidiaries themes. In this research, data analysis process has been inspired by the analysis technique of Miles and Huberman (1994). Authors suggested the following steps for using the coding process to analyse the data.

- a) Collecting the raw data.
- b) Unpacking and reducing the raw data
- c) Translating and transcription
- d) Immersion in broader analysis
- e) Generating initial codes
- f) Reviewing the themes and categorising them.

The collected data were audio-recorded, transcribed, carefully revised and translated. The process is explained in figure (4) below:

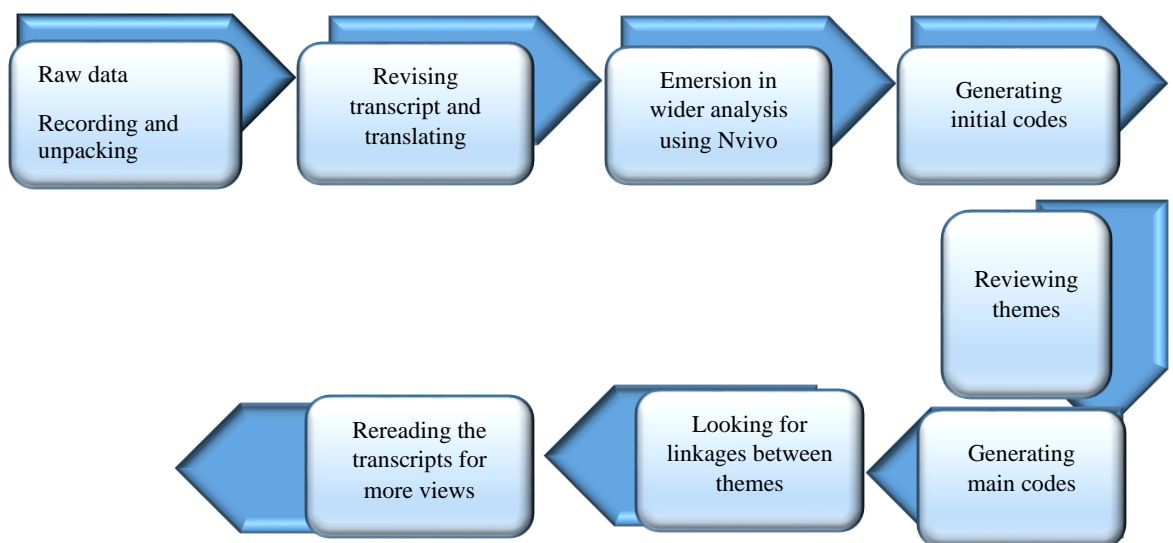


Figure (5). Coding Process

22 interviews were conducted via telephone, whereby each interviewee was contacted post the interview to arrange for the interview time and to make sure that participants has adequate information about the study. During the interviews, the researcher was taking notes about any phrases or words that needed to be noticed. So, it can be taken in consideration afterward. Interviews, audio recording device was used to audio tape the interviews. The data then were unpacked and transcribed in Arabic language. These transcripts were subsequently revised to insure not missing any words or/phrases due the large amount of writing. The translation process involved to transferring the meaning from the transcripts to the English language.

Thus, special care been taken to guarantee that meaningful data is produced in the new translated transcript. To reduce the possibility of distortion in the translation, the back-translation technique (Neuman 2006) was adopted. In this method, the written data was translated to English then translated back to Arabic by second translator. The anonymous transcripts were sent to Libya for translation. Translating the transcripts in Libya was decided as the interviewees spoke with the local Libyan Arabic language, which includes some phrases that are not originally Arabic. Only Libyan people can understand these kind of phrases as they are deeply local. In terms of the coding process, the researcher went through the transcripts highlighting any meaningful relevant words or phrases. As shown below, the coding process went through eight stages.

- 1- Recording the interviews and taking notes during the interviews to highlight some ideas.
- 2- Transcribing and translating the data.
- 3- Carefully reading the transcribed data.
- 4- Underlining the important phrases, sentences and/or words.
- 5- Apply initial codes for each underlined sentence and/ or phrases. For example, in the analysis of training perceptions the following phrases was underlined (*they have done great efforts, this company is a leader in training, “Waha is known as a school for the other companies and Waha is the best in this regard) and given initial codes (great efforts, leader in training and the best)*
- 6- Group the initial codes to form developed codes and allow for themes emergence. The previous initial codes were grouped and formed an emerged theme, which have been given a code (Pride). Figure(5)

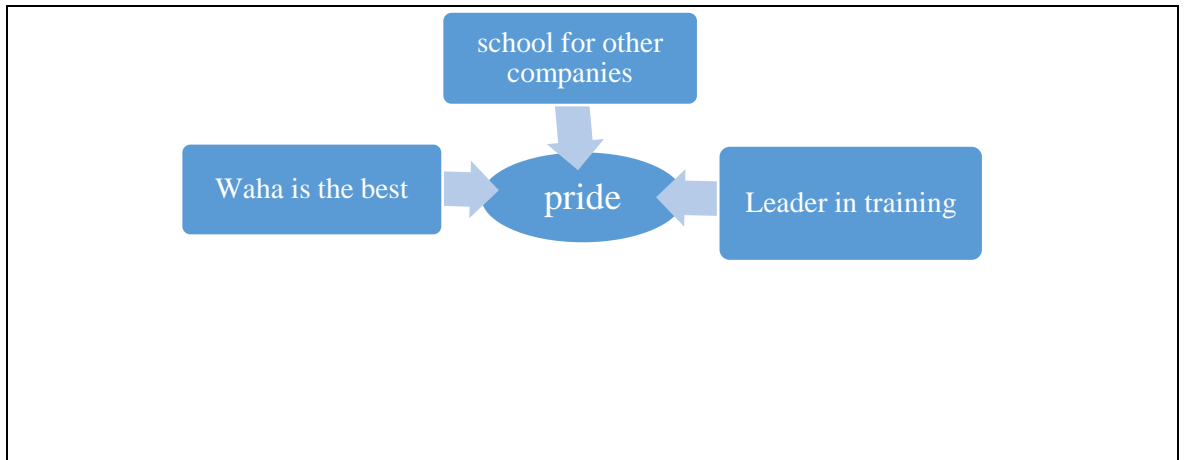


Figure (6) ,example of data analysis for employees’ perception towards training, grouping initial codes

- 7- Categorising all the grouped codes to come out with the final codes
- 8- Looking for any possible relationship/s between the themes. For example, between training’ perceptions and task performance and also between justice perceptions and self-evaluation task performance (see section 6.2.1)

Numerous themes emerged for the codification. As another example, when analysing employees’ perceptions towards the performance appraisal the social relationships emerged as negative perceptions that constrained the fair implementation of this practices. In this regard, employees used phrases such as *you have to show obedience, a process to complement friends* to express the effect of the social relationships on the implementation of this practice. These phrases show the effect of the social connections in the HPWS practice, which were coded as the emergent of the social relationship effect. Figure (6) show the emergence of the social relationship in the analysis of the perceptions towards performance appraisal.

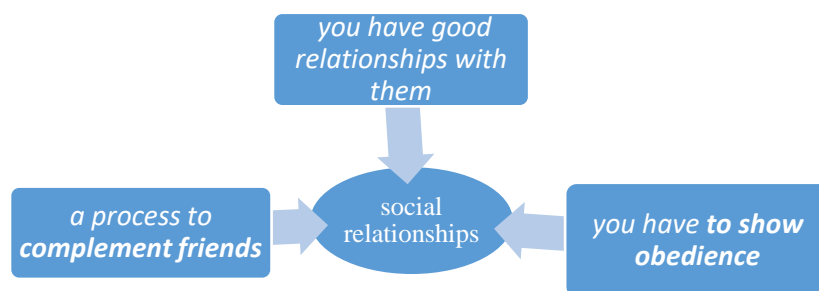


Figure (7) ,Example of data analysis for employees’ perception towards performance appraisal;, grouping initial codes and the emergence of the social relationships.

In the final step, the researcher made another round of texts reading to obtain another picture about each participants’ perceptions and compare them with the whole analysed perceptions. This step was very useful to ensure the analysis align the participants’ general feelings about the themes. Moreover, this step helped to spot any missing meaningful words or phrases. For example, Participants (11 and 15) were the only front-line employees who were found with low interpersonal justice perception (section 6.6.3), when the researcher made another round of reading, researcher found that these interviewees were also the employees who found feel that their voices are ignored in the analysis of the participation practice (section 6.3.5) . This helped to interpret the connection between the two perceptions and ensure the consistency of the answers.

4.8.1. Using Nvivo:

Computer software are a helpful in several stages of data analysis process, as they aid and help to efficiently managing the collected data (Weitzman and Miles, 1995).

NVivo, is a system that based on codes, which provides support for qualitative data analysis by its sophisticated and adaptable tools (silver and Lewins, 2014). According to Lee and Onwuegbuzie (2011), this qualitative data analysis program can help in dealing with large amount of data, particularly, those which embrace different file-types. This program can reduce the manual work, save time, give the researcher chance for more focusing on identifying the research themes and to come out with conclusion (Hilal and Alabri, 2013). In this research, NVivo 11.3 used to manage the data, whereby all the transcripts were

uploaded in this version. Applying the thematic analysis to this software has been effective and efficient. All the transcripts were uploaded into NVivo in the source function. Using the Nodes function, these sources were then line by line coded according to their meanings. Several initial child nodes were produced, which subsequently were gathered in broader codes (nodes). These codes and any other emerged ones were then categorised into the research themes using a function called classification. In this vein, the final stage before concluding the findings was using the relationship function to look out for any potential relationships between the research themes which can answer the research questions in this regard.

The screenshot shows the NVivo 12 Pro interface with a list of codes. The table below represents the data visible in the 'codes' pane.

Name	Files	Referen	Created On	Created	Modified On	Modified
task performance1	0	0	14/05/2018	EZEDDE	14/05/2018	EZEDDE
med task perfor	2	2	29/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZ
Low task perform	0	0	29/05/2018	EZEDDE	29/05/2018	EZEDDE
how to improve	0	0	15/05/2018	EZEDDE	15/05/2018	EZEDDE
self welling(d	1	1	15/05/2018	EZEDDE	15/05/2018	EZEDDE
need to be tr	1	1	29/05/2018	EZEDDE	29/05/2018	EZEDDE
high task perfor	3	3	15/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZEDDE
criteria of task pe	0	0	15/05/2018	EZEDDE	15/05/2018	EZEDDE
Synergy of the HPW	0	0	14/05/2018	EZEDDE	14/05/2018	EZEDDE
socio cultural factors	3	3	30/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZEDDE
social receproties	0	0	14/05/2018	EZEDDE	14/05/2018	EZEDDE
promotion practice	2	3	30/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZEDDE
Mangers general obj	0	0	14/05/2018	EZEDDE	14/05/2018	EZEDDE
justice perception	0	0	15/06/2016	EZEDDE	15/06/2016	EZEDDE
HPWS perceptions	1	1	15/06/2016	EZEDDE	14/05/2018	EZEDDE
training percepti	0	0	14/05/2018	EZEDDE	14/05/2018	EZEDDE
training effect	5	6	15/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZEDDE
training cont	3	6	15/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZ
proudness	3	4	29/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZ
motivation ef	2	2	31/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZ
beneficial trai	3	3	17/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZEDDE
Rewrds	0	0	14/05/2018	EZEDDE	14/05/2018	EZEDDE
subjective ma	1	1	30/05/2018	EZEDDE	30/05/2018	EZEDDE
social relation	1	2	30/05/2018	EZEDDE	30/05/2018	EZEDDE
no rewards	5	7	15/05/2018	EZEDDE	31/05/2018	EZEDDE

Figure 8. Nvivo during the analysis phase

4.9. Trustworthiness:

According to Hammersley (1987), the term validity means that an account accurately represents the features of the phenomenon, which the research intends to explore, test or describe. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), the rigor in qualitative research is mainly accrues in the analysis stage. Reliability refers to consistency, where the same results are yielded each time or by different means (Bernard, 2000).

Guest et al (2011) introduced stages for improving qualitative research Trustworthiness (validity and reliability). These specialists stated that rigor can be enhanced during all stages of the study. Guest and his colleagues suggested certain steps to take during the research design, data collection and during the analysis. Concerning, the research design stage, one important techniques for enhancing validity and reliability is to collect the data from multiple sources so the multiple points of reference can be accumulated and minimising the single source bias. In this research, two data sources were employed (semi-structured interviews and document analysis) to bring more lights on the management formal objectives and to find more explanation to certain participants' perceptions.

In a related vein, when using semi-structured instrument, other techniques are suggested for more trustworthiness by Krueger and Casey (2009). Krueger and Casey described process to design and accomplish valid and reliable semi-structured interviews method. These processes are divided into; steps for data collection and other steps for data analysis. First, in data collection stage, 7-steps can be followed, to enhance method reliability: (a) Brainstorm, which is about thinking and discussing the proper way to establish applying the method. (b) Phrase the interview questions so the researcher can adapt them to research themes and has time to review them. (c) Setting the questions in logical order in which they can yield in depth meaningful answers. (d) Estimating the adequate time for each question so this eases the time of the interview can be used efficiently. (e) The research may ask for feedback from others about his interviews plan including questions sequence, time and phrases. (f) These questions should be revised and tested before establishing the interviews. In support of these steps, Guest et al (2011) commented that, though not all of the 7 steps are relevant to every qualitative research, these steps are useful in accomplishing reliable and valid research method. In the current study, several steps including these 7-steps were followed, the next section interprets how these steps have been operationalised.

With regards to brainstorming, the method and technique were discussed with the supervisory team in several meetings, which has yielded several constructive points. In terms of phrasing the questions, the interviews' question was phrased and discussed with the director of the study, whereby several amendments have been made to certain questions. For instance, the question; do you know the term internal mobility? was add to the internal mobility question as introductory question to make sure that the participants know what they are talking about. Furthermore, the questions were tested in terms of their sequence and time.

Concerning testing the questions and gaining feedback, the researcher has conducted a pilot study with three participants. In these interviews the questions were tested, and feedback were obtained from the interviewees about the time of the interview and any other comments that may help improving the quality of the data. For example, some terms were amended as they were found very academic for the pilot study participants. Further, Krueger and Casey (2009) mentioned that field training on the collecting technique is essential. The pilot study in this stage has provided a field training for the researcher on conducting the semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, it has also contributed to adjust certain structure of interviews to serve the research objective, whereby, the structure's level of certain questions was lessened to align the research approach and to allow for more relevant themes to emerge. In similar vein, during the main data collection stage, immediate feedback about the interviews and the participants answers was obtained, which helped to improving the quality of the data. In details, during the data collection in this research, the research kept writing down any notes from the participants and any other noteworthy points that emerged from the interviews. Besides, after each interview the researcher asked each interviewee should they need to add any comment or/and ask any question. This step has helped to write down the feedback from the participants and make any necessary action/s.

Second, in terms of the steps that should be taking during the analysis stage, scholars (e.g. Gust et al., 2011; Mclillan et al., 2003) suggested certain rigor enhancing actions. These steps include data transcription, translation, using precise codebook and peer review of coding. Concerning transcribing the data, several authors (e.g. Mclillan et al., 2003) stated that whichever the transcribing method is, it should be consistent to analysis planned. Moreover, using a precise codebook when using deductive approach for thematic analysis can enhance the coding reliability as it helps to avoid issues with interpretation of codes meanings (Gust et al., 2011). In the deductive analysis of this research, each code was given interpretation and listed in side notebook. This helped in coding consistency and in comparing themes. Another suggested point for better validation and reliability is the peer review of coding, which can provide checks on individual biases. To implement this point in the current research, the researcher invited another qualitative PhD researcher to review the conducted codes and comparison was made with researcher existing codes. The result of this review showed a high degree of consistency between the two reviews.

Chapter 5: Findings

5.1. Introduction:

This research assesses the extent of the HPWS adoption in Waha Oil Company. It also explores employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices and how these perceptions affect their perceived task performance. Further, the research also explores the role of the fairness perceptions in this relationship. This research asks four questions:

1. To what extent the HPWS is adopted in the Libyan oil firm?
2. How employees in the Libyan oil company perceive the HPWS practices?
3. How employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices influence their perceived task performance?
4. How do perceptions of fairness affect the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWPs and perceived task performance?

This chapter is structured according to the research themes. The first section incorporates the findings of the uptake of the HPWS in the case study, it is divided into two main parts; top management objectives and the synergy of the practices. The first part of the first section includes only organisational views (formal documents and managers perceptions) while the synergy part lists the organisational views from documents and managers interviews, supervisors and employees' perceptions. The second section includes the findings from the analyses of employees' perceptions towards the HPWS practices (training, job description, performance appraisal, rewards, participation, employment security and internal mobility) to understand how these practices are perceived, it also analyses the perceptions towards the effect of each practice on task performance. Only employees were recruited to explore this theme, while the document analysis were used to give insight for the found perceptions. The third section of this chapter includes the findings about the employees' self-evaluation task performance and its elements. The fourth section then incorporates assessment of the relationship between employees' perceptions and employees' task-performance. The fifth section includes the analysis of the fairness perceptions and its role in this relationship. This section includes both employees and supervisors' thoughts about the five fairness dimensions. The sixth section is devoted to present the findings of the role of the social

relationships based on employees and supervisor views. The final section summarises the findings of this research. Noteworthy, each section will show any emerged relevant them/s and any evidences or / and insight found from the document analysis. Due to the use of several elements and for each theme. To enable the reader to have general view on findings of this study, table (7) summarises the findings and the approaches used to these findings.

Theme explored	Elements / participants	findings	Example/s quotes
The uptake of HPWS	<p>Performance orientation of the HPWS practices. Trough management objectives + documents analysis</p> <p>The interdependency of the practice (systematic structure). Employees, supervisors perceptions + documents</p>	<p>Relatively high adoption of the system due to. Management orientation to enhance performance.</p> <p>High interdependency between the HPWS practices.</p>	<p><i>“Our objectives are to (burnish) [enhance] employees’ performance”</i></p> <p><i>“I perceive them 100% [interdependent], they are as a chain”.</i></p>
Employees perceptions towards HPWS practices	<p>Employees’ perceptions towards the practice and its effect on task performance.</p> <p>Employees’ perceptions towards the practice and its effect on task performance.</p> <p>Employees’ perceptions towards the practice and its effect on task performance.</p> <p>Employees’ perceptions towards the practice and its effect on task performance.</p> <p>Employees’ perceptions towards the practice and its effect on task performance.</p> <p>Employees’ perceptions towards the practice and its effect on task performance.</p>	<p>Training: High degree of satisfaction and pride tow. Some concerns about the content.</p> <p>Job description: participants perceive the JD as informal, they are acknowledged their JD informally.</p> <p>Performance appraisal: employees are concerned about the fairness of the implementation of this practice as they think that social relationships play role in unfair PP.</p> <p>Rewards: lack of rewarding strategy implementation created lack of motivation perceptions among the interviewees.</p> <p>Participation: participants are given opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. positive perceptions towards the effect of this practice on task performance.</p> <p>Employment security: most of the participants feel secured.</p>	<p><i>“Comparing to other oil companies, Waha is the best in this regard [training]”.</i></p> <p><i>“I know my JD by experience”.</i></p> <p><i>“My appraisal is unfair, extremely unfair”.</i></p> <p><i>“There are no rewards, only overtime pay, this is not a reward. Null, Null”.</i></p> <p><i>“We influence the decision-making process and my voice is being heard.”</i></p>

	Employees' perceptions towards the practice and its effect on task performance.	<p>mild rise of the negative effect of employment security on task performance.</p> <p>Internal mobility: employees tend to see this practice as vague practice as they lack information about its implementation.</p>	<p><i>"In the public sector, it is so difficult that you lose your job".</i></p> <p><i>Any way, it [internal mobility] is not that clear".</i></p>
Task performance	Employees' self-evaluation	<p>Eight interviewees evaluated their performance as high.</p> <p>four participants evaluated their task performance as medium.</p> <p>four front-line interviewed employees evaluated their task performance as low</p>	<p><i>"It [my task performance] is excellent".</i></p> <p><i>"[my performance] Very poor performance".</i></p> <p><i>Still need more [to the higher level].</i></p>
Justice	Employees and supervisor's perceptions towards distribution, procedural, interpersonal, informational and overall justice.	<p>Distribution justice: (10 out of 19) were either perceive the allocation of the resources in Waha as unfair or they were uncertain.</p> <p>Procedural justice: employees tend to perceive process by which the resources are allocated as unfair.</p> <p>Interpersonal justice: interviewees think that they are treated fairly.</p> <p>Informational justice: participants tend to think of that the information they receive about this their tasks are fair enough.</p> <p>Overall justice: low overall justice perception is found amongst the participants.</p>	<p><i>"I mentioned, there is a disparity".</i></p> <p><i>"There is a nepotism in this".</i></p> <p><i>"It is an excellent treatment.</i></p> <p><i>"In general, more than enough information.</i></p> <p><i>"Generally, there is no fairness".</i></p>
The relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance	Employees perceptions towards the effect of system on their task performance and the self-evaluation task performance	Relatively high relationship as employees tend to have positive perceptions towards the effect of the system practices on task performance and the relatively high self-evaluation task performance.	NA
The role of justice	Through close analysis and comparison between justice findings and employees self- evaluation task performance	Eight high self-evaluation task performance participants pointed out to high justice 10 times. (Represent 250%). four-medium self-evaluation task performance participants mentioned to the intermediate feelings of justice. seven times (Represent 87%).	NA

		four-low self-evaluation task performance, participants point out to the no feelings of justice (five dimensions) in their work places 13 times.	
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Table (7) the themes explored, elements of the themes and findings

5.2. The uptake of the High-Performance Work System:

The first element in this theme is wither the top management intends to enhance performance by deploying the HPWS practices. The second element is the synergy and interdependency of these practices. The findings of each element are presented in separate part and summary of the findings will be presented at the end.

5.2.1. Top Management Objectives:

For the first element, the three human resource managers in the company has been asked about their general objectives from deploying the HPWS practices in this firm. As shown in the quotations below, It is found that there is performance enhancing intention in their answers. For example, the Participant Man (2) seems, to focus on enhancing the organisational performance through improving employees' performance. Participant thinks that providing services to the current employees can result in better performance. Man (3) talked directly on performance as main objective. This participant used the word "production" to indicate to performance. Noteworthy, the most meaningful words and phrases have been highlighted.

*"Helping employees so they can **perform better**".* Man 2

*"Our objectives are to (burnish) [enhance employees' performance] employees so we increase the oil **production** and work quality".* Man 3

Therefore, it can be seen that two out of the three, main HR decision makers in Waha have the intentions to enhance performance in the company by utilising these HPWS practice. This, confirms the performance orientation in deploying the practices.

Further, to explore the formal side of the organisational objectives about this aspect the researcher has reviewed the HR policy book to find out the formal objectives of the top management in the company. By analysing the relevant parts in this official policy, it is found that the analysed documents contain phrases that stressed on considering certain

HPWS practice such as training, as an encouragement method by which the top management can increase the technical skills of its employees. The paragraph quoted below explicitly talked about elevating the skills and the proficiency of the employees. The inclusion of words “improving their [employees’] level” in this formal policy means an intention of continuous performance improving process. In this paragraph, the policy used the phrase “Waha is keen” which signal to general strategy to encourage employees for better performance.

Moreover, the paragraph B in the section 3 which titled as the elements of training plan, indicates that trainee should be acknowledged that the aim is to enhance the performance level. It adds another confirmation to the performance enhancing intention in the formal view in Waha using the word level and performance, this combination of the two words in this document in addition to the term productivity can be seen is a clear formal objective that focuses on enhancing performance by deploying the training practice. The following statements elaborates the findings in the HR policy in Waha.

*“Al Waha is keen to **encourage** and assist its employees to improve their **level** in order to increase their **proficiency and technical skills within their** current job areas or in the framework of the work that may be assigned to them through future mobility or promotion”.*

Training policy chapter C-7

*“To **clarify** the objective of the training and development of each trainee, whether with the aim is increasing the level of **performance**, accuracy and raising productivity, or because of the introduction of new systems and methods of work, or to prepare the trainee for a new job through mobility or promotion or other objectives”.* Training policy chapter C-7 article 3 paragraph B.

To sum up, from the analysis of the gathered data from the two sources, it can be mentioned that the top management in Waha has the intention of enhancing employees’ performance when they deployed the HPWS practices. This can affirm the first element of the uptake of the HPWS in this company, which is the performance orientation of the practices.

5.2.2. The Synergy of the Practices:

The second element that used to assess the extent of the uptake of the HPWS in Waha is the interdependency of the studied HPWS practices. This element helps to identify the systematic structure of the practices. To obtain a clear picture about this aspect, the researcher interviewed three HR decision makers, three supervisors, analysed the relevant documents and asked 16 front-line employees about their perspective towards the synergy and interdependency of the HPWS practices.

First, the interviewed managers were found feel that the practices are synergic. They seem to be quite sure of the synergy among the deployed HPWS practices. These managers participants expressed their thoughts by using, different words and phrases such as “yes for sure”, “of course” and “all serve each other”. These phrases indicated to the links between the HPWS practices in Waha. For example, Man (2) mentioned that each practice works to prepare the other practice, which means that they depend on each other. Thus, the managers’ view confirms the interdependency of the studied HPWS practices in Waha.

“Yes, for sure [HPWS practices are interdependent]”. Participant Man 1

“Yes, they are, of course, each one prepares for the other, like training prepares the employee to participate and enhance his unit”. Participant Man 2

Second, the synergy of the practices was also explored through the supervisors’ perspectives. The three supervisors’ participants think that the practices are interdependent. However, they think that they are partially interdependent as they used the phrase “kind of” to express that. Whereas one of them add that there is no complete synergy. The supervisors’ participants were mentioned in the examples quotes as (Sup) in the quotations below.

“Kind of [interdependency]”. Sup 2

“Kind of, there is no complete interconnectivity”. Sup 3

Third document analysis, to find out any relevant evidences that can help exploring the interdependency of the deployed practices in the case study, the researcher reviewed the relevant obtained formal documents that may include any indication/s to this aspect. One, of

the analysed relevant document was the training policy. In this document, it is found that the training program in Waha is interconnected with both job description and the performance appraisal practice. For the former, an article titled “the execution of the training plan”, indicates to the interdependency of training and job description. It shows that the priority for training should be according to the job description of the nominated trainee. The article 4 paragraph A (quoted below) clearly associated the training practice with the job description practice. It ties the implementation of training courses to the description of the job, which signal to the dependency of training on job description.

*“The priorities for training, skills developments for the human resources working in the company should be according **to the job description** of each profession or job”.*

Training policy chapter 7 article 4 paragraph A

Further, Paragraph D in the same article mentions to the analysis of the performance appraisal of employees as one of the steps for executing the training plan. The connection between training and performance appraisal is clear in this formal document since it considers performance appraisal as a step for executing the training session. It also indicates that the training is interdependent with performance as employee needs to get specific rate to be eligible for training course.

*“Analysis and **evaluation of the performance** appraisal rates of employees and the identification of candidates for training in terms of technical aspect and the age”.*

Training policy chapter 7 article 4 paragraph D.

Furthermore, another interdependency indications are found in a letter from the CEO of the NOC addressed to all the owned oil companies in Libya including Waha. It includes a pausing of linking the annual pay increase on the performance appraisal result. However, the document mentioned to a condition that an employee should not have less than good average in the performance appraisal result to be eligible for this annual increase. (See performance appraisal section 5.3.3). Even though, this letter seems to untie the rewards from performance appraisal, it sustains the dependency of annual rewards on certain average of performance appraisal results. Moreover, this letter is relatively recent, which indicates that the connection between rewards and performance appraisal was higher and this letter

could be temporary action for certain circumstances. This is because this has not made any amendment in the general formal policy of the company.

*“We inform you that from the date 28/7/2017, all the annual performance motivation will be fully granted for all employees according to attached table. Employees who **get less than good performance appraisal rate will not be granted this motivation**. We insist that the evaluation should be earnest and objective without considering the amount of money that will be granted to the employee”* Ref 1070. 28/3/2017 the CEO of NOC

Fourth, employees' thoughts, the interviewed employees seem to think that the HPWS practices are interdependent in the case study. In this regard, 14 out of 16 interviewed employees feel that the practices are totally interdependent. The following quotes represent the employees view on how synergic and interdependent the HPWS are. In certain cases they used word and phrases that explicitly express their thought, while in some others used indirect phrases.

“I perceive them 100% [interdependent], they are as a chain, every one of them follows the other, when I pass each one as it should, I will succeed in the next and so”. Participant 1

*“Yes they [HPWS practices] **complement** each other. They are like a chain”*. Participant 12

*“Sure, they are [interdependent], it is a **package like tuning**”*. Participant 7

*“**Sure, sure**, they [HPWS practices] are like a **chain**”*. Participant 13

From the analysis, of the all interviewed front-line employees' answers, it is most likely that they feel with significant degree of interdependency between the HPWS practices in the organisation. This is because among the 16 participants there were no one that feel they are not synergic and interdependent. Further, the used expressions indicated to high confidence of this interdependency. Thus, it can be mentioned that from the employees' view, the studied HPWS practices are interdependent.

- **Emerged Themes from Analysis:**

During the analysis, it is noted that the three interviewed HR key persons in Waha talked about different objectives. Man (1) mentioned to effective selection practice as his main objective

*“We aim to **get** the best people that available in the work market”*. Man 1

*“Assign **the suitable** person in the suitable position”*. Man 1

*“**Help other departments** in this company to accomplish their projects by working together to assess their needs of required human resources”*. Man 1

This participant mainly stresses on the quality of human resources as he aims to compete in attracting more qualified individuals to work for Waha. He also used the phrase “assigning the suitable person”, which means that he is also focusing on the job requirements. Apparently, this HR key person in Waha intend to use the previous points (selection) so all departments in the company are provided with the required quantity and quality of the human resources. This can be seen from his answer “help other departments”.

In another part of his answers, this HR decision maker add that they aim to use certain practices such as medical insurance to keep employees committed to Waha.

*“**Keep** our employees as long as we can through providing several bonuses such as medical insurance housing and other benefits and keep a good relationship with employees who have already left the company”*. Man 1

Here, Man (1) talked about enhancing the organisational commitment by employing certain bonuses and benefits that can make the current employees committed to Waha. It is more likely that this manager intends to reduce the turnover in the company. This could be because he feels that other organisations in the field can provide more attractions that may make current, good and experienced employees’ leave.

The participant Man (2) mentioned different objectives as he sees that providing services to employees as an objective.

*“Our main objectives are **service**; we provide all of employee’s required services”*. Man 2

*“Our objectives are to (burnish) [enhance] employees’ performance so we increase the oil **production** and work quality”*. Man 2

This HR key person also, talked about providing another kind of benefits to employees, yet he thinks that these services are performance enhancing methods.

Participant Man (3) thinks that enhancing employees' performance is an objective.

*“Our objectives are to (burnish) [enhance employees' performance] employees so we increase the oil **production** and work quality”.* Man 3

This participant directly pointed to performance enhancing as a main objective in his thought. This can indicate to considering performance as priority.

In light of these answers, it can be mentioned that there is lack of consensus among the top management regarding organisational objectives. In this, the three key HR decision makers tend to have different intentions from the practices deployment. Also, the findings from the two data sources are not in complete consensus. In the written formal objectives, improving performance was found as one of the main objectives, while data from interviews add another different objective such as providing services and enhancing commitment.

5.2.3. Summary of the High-Performance Work System uptake:

After presenting the 22 participants' perceptions (Employees, Supervisors, Managers) and based on the analysis of data collected from two sources, for the two elements of the HPWS these elements are confirmed. First, the performance orientation of the HPWS practice, this element appeared from the analysis of the top organisational views. In this, both the HR key persons and the formal documents gave indications that in Waha, the deployment of the practices is associated with enhancing performance intention. Second, the systematic structure of the studied practice, which surfaced from the analysed perceptions among employees, supervisors. In details, the analysed documents show indications to performance enhancing formal intention in the top management. Further, 18 out of 22 participants highlighted that the practices are synergic and in systematic structure as they depend on each other and interconnected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a relatively high adoption of the HPWS in the case study.

5.3. Employees Perceptions Towards HPWS Practices:

This section includes the analysed perceptions towards the studied HPWS practices and any emerged relevant themes. These practices are; training, job description, performance appraisal, rewards, participation, employment security and internal mobility. The structure of this section follows the sequence of these practices and at the end of each part, should any theme emerge, it will be incorporated in separate. Also, insight from the formal documents that can shed more light on the found perceptions is presented in each part. For this section, only front-line employees were employed to answer the questions about perceptions towards HPWS practices to ensure pure thoughts from pure recipients of these practices. Mainly, the questions about this part was what you think about the practice? Based on the answer and notes taken during the interviews some other questions were asked. Following the analysis of practices explored.

5.3.1. Employees' Perceptions towards Training:

The opening question for training perceptions was: have you received training in this company? Employees who's answered with yes, were asked: what do you think about these courses? Out of 16 front-line participants, 15 have received training courses. The 15 have expressed their satisfaction and even pride of training sessions they have attended either by mentioning their satisfaction directly or by focusing on the benefits of training courses they have got. Interviewees, expressed their satisfaction by saying words and/or phrases that rate their satisfaction such as "it is excellent", "very good". They are most likely feel satisfied because of the enhancement impact of the courses they attended. In this, most of them have mentioned to the extended impact of training even on their daily life.. Besides, participants have also shown a likelihood of appreciation to what the company offered when they used words and, which emphasise that they feel they have been given opportunities to develop their skills. Nevertheless, certain unpleasant perspective emerged about the content of these training courses(shown as emerged perceptions below).

*"Waha is known as a **school** for the other companies in training"*. Participant 15

*"Waha is a **leader** in training, it is (a school) in training"*. Participant 1

*"There are **excellent** training programs for the geologists"*. Participant 1

*"Opportunity, magnificent opportunity yes **magnificent opportunity**"*. Participant 11

*“Makes him [the employee] feels that he has been **moved forward** from one stage to next one”*. Participant 6

*“Good, it [training course] makes me aware about how to **deal with tools and machines in safe way**”*. Participant 3

5.3.1.1. Training Effect on Task Performance:

To have a holistic picture about employees’ perceptions, the participants were asked questions about what they think about the effect of training on task performance? This question was to explore interviewees’ attitudes towards training effect. 14 out of 16 answered this question. 12 participants think that training has important effect on task performance. Here, most of the positive effect advocators focused on the courses that benefited them and that were in line of their needs, which means that not all courses are perceived as beneficial. For example, even though these employees expressed their perceptions on the effect of training courses on their task performance using different ways, five of them focused on the English language courses. Three focused on the training that matches their jobs. The other participants in this category highlighted general positive phrases about the effect of training on task performance. The following statements represent the sentiments of the participants.

*“They [training courses] **enhance my performance**, especially for my job as I am dealing with **foreigners**, the abroad training has enabled me to know their culture and language”*

Participant 13.

*“Training **motivates the employee**”*. Participant 6

*“**English language** training has affected [my task performance] positively, very much, in terms of work understanding and developing”*. Participant 11

*“This course [**enterprise resource planning** system] has enable me to understand this new system and consequently my task performance has been enhanced”*. Participant 9

All in all, the interviewed employees tend to feel that the effect of training on task performance is significant. This is because 14 out of 16 were found with high positive effect perspectives about this aspect.

5.3.1.2. Emerged Perceptions:

During the analysis, two themes emerged; training content and country situation.

Firstly, participants showed some concerns about the training content. In this, seven interviewees have mentioned certain aspects such as training needs and some other practical points. Interestingly, these satisfied employees and even the proud interviewees have mentioned some points concerning the content of the training system in this company. In this emerged theme, the most highlighted concerns in this regard is the training needs determination as there are feeling among the interviewees that certain courses are not in line with the actual work needs. This can be seen for example from the participant (4), who used phrases such as “not relative” and the participant (8) who explicitly stated that training courses are not in line with the actual needs. Further, three other have mentioned words and phrases that embed the content aspect by stressing on what kind of training has been useful or what they lack

*“It [training] should be according to **needs** not just pre-scheduled sessions”* Participant 12

*“The sessions are not in line with the **company’s needs**”.* Participant 12

*“There is a shortage in specifying training **needs** in this company and in all the country”*
Participant 8

*“Some training courses was not effective as they were **not relative**”* Participant 4

*“**Language** training yes was useful, training should be modified”.* Participant 7

*“Specially the **linguistic** training”* Participant 11

The noticeable point in this side is that participants who commented on the training content were among the satisfied interviewees. This can indicate the likelihood of the content’s mild influence on the employees’ satisfaction perceptions. Therefore, to gain more understanding for this perceptions about training needs determination, the researcher recommunicated with a supervisor and asked him about the process by which the training needs are determined in Waha. According, to the participant Sup (3), usually the training department sends the training courses available to the units to suggest trainees for each course, he mentioned that employees are selected according to how long they have worked for the company. Here, it seems that the training department has an annual fixed training courses based on the past years or/ and based on the contracts with the trainers (agents).

“We suggest [trainees] according to the training courses available, sometimes we don’t need these training courses” sup 3.

Secondly, the situation in Libya has also emerged when five interviewees talked about the unstable situation in Libya as another effective factor. Participants expressed that the current unstable situation in Libya has made the implementation of certain training programs difficult, which also influenced their perceptions towards training. They also think that the circumstances delayed certain training program. However, there was no indication to blaming the company in this regard. (See also the insight from the documents).

*“I mentioned because of the **current situation** in Libya, these [training improvements] initiatives could not be implemented” Participant 1*

*“Due to the **national** and company circumstances the older employees who have spent longer time working for this company has been oppressed” Participant 8*

5.3.1.3. Insight from Document Analysis:

The researcher sought to find any other explanation for the emerged themes through the document analysis to the relevant formal document in Waha. Therefore, close look to the training policy documents has been made to find out any related formal declaration about these points. Concerning the training content and training needs determination, the finding from this analysis suggest that there is no a clear mentioning to the mechanism and process by which the training needs are determined. The only relevant phrases (training policy chapter C-7 quoted below) that were found is the conditions for being legible for a training course, the involvement of the nominated trainees’ department in training needs determination and certain timing aspects of the training plan. The first relevant section in the policy is the annual training plan. This part demonstrates that the training department is responsible for preparing the plane in cooperation with the other departments. It also shows the time line of the training plane. One important point is that this plane is prepared in June and actually starts in January next year as the plane needs to get approved from NOC, which could indicate to longer time to start implementing the plan, in this time (8 months) the

training needs can change.

*“The Training and Development Department is **responsible** for setting an annual training and development plan in **cooperation** with the relevant departments within the company. It starts from the first of June and ends at the end of August of each year and is submitted to the National Oil Corporation at the beginning of September. And adopt them and begin to implement them at the beginning of the following year (January)”*. Training policy chapter C-7

The effect of the current unstable situation in Libya on training was emerged during the analysis of the data collected by interviews. One document was obtained concerning this aspect in Waha. The analysed document was written in 21/7/2016 by the CEO of the NOC. It was addressed to all the oil institutes in Libya such as companies, centres and colleges. The CEO restricted the delegation of any employee for any abroad training unless permitted from the NOC. Despite the potential negative effect of this action on the progress of the training plans in Waha, this part highlights the importance of involving employees about any decision either by providing adequate information about the decisions or/and direct participation in the process of the decision making. It also shows kind of justifications provided to employees about the decision. Exceptionally, the interviewed participants showed a higher acceptance for the top management decision in this regard. Employees tend to excuse the management and comprehend this as unavoidable constrain since they are experiencing the effect of this situation in their daily life.

*“Due to the **circumstance in the country** and the situation in the oil sector, all kinds of abroad **delegations are paused** this includes any of the oil sector employees unless obtaining a permission from the NOC”*. Letter 1938 file 19-13-25 by the CEO of NOC

5.3.1.4. Summary:

From the analysis of interviewees' perceptions towards training and the evidences from the document analysis, the researcher came out with the following points: First, the interviewed front-line employees tend to feel proud and satisfied of the level of training they have been offered from the management as they compared this level with the other oil companies in

the sector. Second, there is a degree of satisfaction towards training in Waha due to the enhancement impact of the training courses. Third, Training content matters for employees including the implementation procedure. In this, there is an issue regarding the determination of the training needs in this company. As additional information, technical employees who work in the oil fields have the highest degree of satisfaction towards training as they represent the highest proud employees. This could be because they feel the alignment of the training courses with certain work needs or/ and potential extra care given to the work in the oil fields as it is the core business of the company.

5.3.2. Job description (JD) :

To obtain in-depth understanding of participants' thoughts about the job description practice, the opening question was: is there job description in this company? All interviewees mentioned that there is job description in Waha, nevertheless two of them needed an explanation of what is the job description, which is more likely due to the academic term used in the beginning. The next question was: what do you think about this JD? After finishing the coding process of the answers. Findings suggest that the current in the case study JD is informal. In express these thoughts, the participants used phrases the indicated that they have new their job details by experience or they were told about the assigned daily tasks. One participant used the word "**customary JD**". Notably, even though all the interviewees mentioned that there is JD in company, only one interviewee mentioned that he has read a documented JD. The following quotes represent employees' thought towards the JD in Waha.

"I know my JD by experience". Participant 15

"I learned that from the day to day work" Participant 4

"All I know is that they [HR department] told me to work in that department". Participant 1

"It is known [from employees] what production engineers should do". Participant 14

"I have done some jobs out of my JD, which happen, this happened more than once, you can say it is customary JD". Participant 7.

It is worth noting that two employees justified the informality of the JD in this company as it is out of date and needs to be developed.

*“The available JD is **out of date** it has been written since the establishment of this firm and has not been developed, it was prepared since 1965”*. Participant 7

Three interviewees were found uncertain about the JD. Though these participants mentioned that there is JD in this company, they could not be precise about their roles or whether it is formal or informal JD. This indicates that these employees have not obtained or provided the adequate information about their JD.

*“**There has not been any clarification**, it was just two words “junior geologist”*. Participant 3

*“**Do not know my precise role**”*. Participant 3

*“**I cannot differentiate** between me and other colleague who has the same job name”*. Participant 3

These uncertain interviewees have had a kind of confusion about their job roles in this company, which indicates that they are uncertain whether this is the formal or the informal practice. They used words like “cannot know”, “cannot differentiate” to express their uncertainty.

Two participants (8 and 11) mentioned that the current JD is not suitable for their jobs and they prefer flexible job description. They used phrases that express their preference of group team work with no strict on the JD. One of them has justified that by the nature of work in the oil fields, which has some unexpected tasks that need to be done quickly regardless who do them.

*“There are certain **work natures** that if we follow strict JD, it is broken [Ruined]”*. Participant 8

*“Doing this [following the JD] in oil fields **may be very costly**”*. Participant 8

*“This work **requires flexibility**”* Participant 11

These participants expressed that they prefer to work as a group without any restrictions on who do what, which might be useful in certain cases or times such as in crises. The preference of flexible JD is more from administrative employees who work in offices, the researcher recommunicated two participants (8 and 11) to clarify more about this point. They mentioned that they had worked in the oil fields before and have come across similar situations.

5.3.2.1. Emerged Theme in job Description:

From the analysis of the employees' answers, two main themes have emerged as influential in shaping their perceptions. These themes are the effect of the social relationships, which was mentioned by two interviewees and the current situation in Libya.

- **Social Relationships:**

When analysing the perceptions towards job description practice, the effect of the personal relationships was mentioned two times by two interviewees.

*"In sum, the **social relationships** and the situation of the country make us unable to stick on the JD".* Participant 13

*"It is Waste. The most important thing for them is to **make their friends happy**." Participant 8*

These participants emphasised that this factor is obstructing the perfect implementation of the JD. They also see the social relationships (Wasta) as a way for the management to make their friends happy by not imposing the formal JD. In both perceptions, it is perceived as negative factor. Noteworthy, the participant (13) has the perception of prefer fixable and interviewee (8) is analysed as uncertain perception employee.

- **Circumstances in Libya**

In the job description (JD) perceptions, the country circumstances are more likely influenced the participants thought as it was, perceived to be one of the reasons for not implementing the formal job description.

*"In sum, the social relationships and the **situation of the country** make us unable to stick on the JD".* Participant 13

*"The normal conditions, when the oil production is about 330 thousand barrel there was no problem. However, in **this condition [country situation]**, this [informal JD] is the best way".* Participant 11

These participants are mostly feels the effect of rapid changes in the external environment due to the conflicts that going on in Libya, which affect the production of the company (participant 11) and needs quick response from the company to face them. This kind of work pace cannot be accomplished when complying with the job description.

5.3.2.2. Insight from Documents Analysis:

The findings of the analysis of the data collected from interviewing the front-line employees indicated that the participants tend to perceive the existing JD as informal or/and needs updating. To obtain, a clear picture about these perceptions, the researcher has obtained a full formal job description document. It shows, a holistic picture about the formal job description in Waha and includes a detailed description for each job.

*“The job description is one of the main **pillars**, which help organising units inside the organisation, so the planned objectives can be achieved”*. Job description page 18 (introduction).

*“The job and the employee are the main **props**, on which work depends on. Therefore, setting a job description for each job which specifies each job’s responsibilities, duties and tasks required. In addition, it specifies the **qualification** and the experience required for each job”*. Job description page 19 (introduction)

*“The job description helps in decision making about **human resource planning** and organisational structure that built on scientific and logical clear bases*. Job description page paragraph 2

*“It also helps the **recruitment**, mobility and selection whereby the requirements and the work nature of each job are compared with the applicant’s qualification”*. Job description page paragraph 3

- *Job name sixth fuel distributor*
- *Tasks and responsibilities of the job:*
- *Checking, operating and monitoring the work of the pump.*
- *Topping up fuel as requested for vehicles.*
- *Managing fuel distributing cards for all kinds of vehicles.*
- *Reporting the supervisor about any kinds of damages or disorders in the pumps.*
- *Reporting the fuel level.*
- *Documenting the issued fuel.*
- *Applying safety and fire cautions.*
- *Conduct any other assigned tasks, which have direct association with his job.*

- *The minimum qualification requirement is basic education.*
- *Experience required minimum 3 years.*

Job description of job 24/1/22 page 604

The documents show that the top management, seems to formally signify the job description and considers it one of the important organising tools (Job description page 18 introduction; Job description page 19 introduction). In the job description, there is also a clear mentioning to the job requirements, which was one of the main concerns of the interviewed employees (job description page paragraph 3). The introduction of the job description includes phrases that highlight the benefits of employing job description such as promotion decisions, mobility and selection. The front-line employee's tasks are clearly stated in the formal job description documents (Job description of job 24/1/22 page 604).

Therefore, the formal documents explain the employees' perceptions as they show the existence of the formal job description. However, in another document, there was complaint from the employees about the right jobs in which they have been allocated. The document is a letter communicated between the relevant departments concerning this issue. The analysed document is a letter from the head of the complaints' review committee addressed to one of the management committee members. In this document, the former asked for permeation to make an action concerning this issue according to the regulations.

*“With reference to the above-mentioned topic and to the instructions of the head of the administration committee about the definition of control as a position and salary, we would like to inform you that we will comply to the decision of previous general committee (general ministry) and **decisions of the National Oil Corporation regarding the jobs positioning and its mechanism and applications.** (Copy from the table of the jobs and their names is attached)”. Internal company messages, signed by the head of complaints review committee, 29/09/2013*

The job description, here was mentioned as the list of job names. Further, there were many decisions regarding the jobs and positioning from higher government authorities in this company, which could overlap or contradict with the company internal policies including the job description. Apparently, these decisions mentioned here are made either to replace or to complement the job description. This could be one of the reasons behind not employing the job description in this organisation. This may also indicate to two more issues: the effect of the absence of job description on promotion practice as employees complained from their

current job positions that has not been elevated. Besides, the job description was relatively ignored because there are other regulations have been issued from the NOC regarding jobs and employees' promotion.

To conclude, even though top management formal intention seems trying to apply the job description and it is acknowledging the significant role of deploying it in Waha, the implementation of this practice is most likely to be obstructed by the government intervention, which makes the employees tend to perceive this practice as informal.

5.3.2.3.Effect of Job Description on Task Performance:

Regardless, of their perceptions towards the current JD in Waha, each interviewed employee was asked about his perception about the effect of the JD on task performance. The question was: Do you think that a clear job description has any effect on your in-role performance? 16 participants answered this question, 13 of them feel that a clear JD can positively affect their task performance in different ways. The findings suggest that job description can enhance task performance by avoiding the confusion, that may happen because of the overlapped tasks in the job. To show these perceptions, they used words such as “increase concentration”, “focus” and “only your job”. These phrases show that they think a clear JD can help to resolve this and increase their focus and consequently better task performance. It also indicates to potential confusion going on because of the issues with the current JD.

Here are the example quotations employees' that represent the positive perceptions towards the effect of a clear JD on their task performance.

*“When I know my JD, I will come to my office switch on my computer and work only on my tasks **without thinking about the other part of the tasks**”.* Participant 1

*“Yes, it increases my **focus** and prevent confusion”.* Participant 15

*“When the employee knows his duty and what he should do and what he should not, there will be no **infringements**”.* Participant 8

*“Sure [it has], [now] I don't know my precise role and I cannot differentiate between me and **other colleague** who has the same job title”.* Participant 3

*“It [JD] helps to preserve rights in case of **troubles**”*. Participant 8

5.3.2.4. Summary:

In light of the analysis of the employees’ perceptions towards the JD, it can be summarised that most of the interviewees perceive that they are working with informal JD. In addition, certain interviewees think that the current JD is not suitable for some kinds of jobs that requires immediate accomplishment and prefer to work in a team work style or with updated JD to align the work nature. Participants tend to prefer flexible JD that allow exchanging roles among them for the same tasks. Concerning the effect of the JD on task performance, participants tend to feel that a clear and updated job description can have a positive effect on task performance. Noteworthy, there were inconsistent perceptions between the participants when integrated to their work place and nature. These fluctuations may be because of the variation in the degree of the social reciprocities in each work place and nature.

5.3.3. Performance Appraisal and Pay Reliance:

The perceptions towards the performance appraisal as one of the HPWS practices were explored by asking the interviewees an opening question; do you receive formal performance appraisal in a routine basis? 15 front line employees have answered with “yes”, while one has not been appraised because of the current situation in Libya. The second question was: what do you think about it? The findings suggest that employees concern about the fair implementation and the content of this practice. The quotes below emphasise these perceptions. Notably, The practice is being proceeded through a form that contains 10 criteria (See appendix 5) . Another notable point is that the higher-level management can also change the rating of the direct supervisor for any front-line employee (see evidence from document analysis below).

*“The hard-working employee **does not get fair appraisal**”*. Participant 6

*“In general, there is **oppression** [unfairness in PA]”*. Participant 4

*“Thus, this makes employee feels **discriminated** from his colleagues, this makes him feel frustrated”*. Participant 16

*“There is a **crit**erion [in the appraisal form] on how tidy the employee is, this criterion is limited“.* Participant 13

*“There is **inflexible** form [can’t make any changes in its 10 articles]”.* Participant 12

*“Mainly depends **on the month** that this process takes place in, there should be something like daily **activity record**””.* Participant 7

The interviewees, in this category indicate, that they either have been unfairly underrated or worry about getting unfair performance appraisal. In this aspect, they used terms such as “employees are concerned” and direct words such “I have been oppressed”. Further, Interviewees used direct expressions such as “discrimination” and “extremely unfair” to show the deep feeling of the unjust implementation of performance appraisal. In all. There is an attitude of unjust implementation of this practice among these employees.

5.3.3.1. Pay Reliance on Performance Appraisal:

Another, followed question was asked to the 15 participants about the reliance of pay on performance appraisal. The question was what do you think about the reliance of pay on performance appraisal? Employees’ perspectives towards this side show mild reliance of pay on performance appraisal. In this, 12 employees were found with mild reliance perceptions. Here are some quotes that represent these perceptions.

*“Only some annual increase, it is **not that effective**, because the salary is based on the regulations”.* Participant 13

*“There is [reliance] yet **not important** impact”.* Participant 14

*“**Not that much** [reliance]”.* Participant 15

*“**Not important** relation, only on the annual increase”.* Participant 12

Here, the interviewees have interpreted their answers by using words and phrases which show that they feel that this reliance is a mild (insignificant) reliance. They used words and phrases such as “not that much”, “not important”. These perceptions are classified as mild reliance. Besides, these employees seem to lack enough information about the amount of the annual increase as one of them (participant7) mentioned it is LD 80 while another one (participant 11) highlighted that it is DL 100 for all employees, which is more likely embed that they belittle the linkage between the performance appraisal and pay. Thus, due to the fact that the majority of the interviewees think that the reliance is insignificant, it can be concluded that that there is a mild reliance of pay on the performance appraisal.

5.3.3.2. Emerged Perceptions:

The analysis of this practice has also yielded the emergence of three main influential factors. These factors are the social relationships, which caused the use of Wasta, power distance cultural factor and the situation in Libya.

- **Social Relationships:**

The most significant theme that emerged during the analysis of the participants' thought towards performance appraisal is the social relationships. The role of the social relationships was discussed by six participants concerning the performance appraisal.

*“Given the **social relationships**, employees' performance appraisal for some jobs, which has low workloads could be better than employees who work in a high loads jobs”.*

Participant 5

*“50% of them [supervisors] evaluate objectively yet the other does that according to **personal affairs**”.* Participant 4

*“It is just a process to **complement friends**”.* Participant 2

This practice is most likely to be highly effected practice by the use of the personal relationships in the implementation phase. Interviewed employees tend to see the social connections as a way to gain higher evaluation. They used direct phrases such as “social relationships and indirect expressions such as you “need to gossip” and “to show obedience”. All these phrases signal to a sort of social connections rather than any other formal communication.

- **Power Distance:**

In performance appraisal, two employees talked about the top management actions that affected their performance appraisal results (see the next section 5.3.3 for more insight). They are likely to feel that they are suppressed, and the top management has its own rules, which applied without any explanation provided.

*“So, by their [top management] **own law**”.* Participant 12

This interviewee (12) stated about an incident in which the top management ordered the supervisor to not exceed specific rates in the employees' performance appraisals, he considered that as illegal action by the top management and considered that as the top management own law.

*“My direct supervisor granted me expellant [rate] in the appraisal, but when it arrived at the **director**, he made it lower than that, without giving any reason”*. Participants 11

Again, this participant (11) came across a similar situation, which indicates that the power concentrated in the top managers affects the front-line employees' perceptions in the lowest level as they are more likely lack information about decisions and tend to not accept these decisions.

- **Circumstances in Libya**

One interviewed employee mentioned about the effect of the ongoing conflicts in Libya and how it affected the implementation of the performance appraisal. This participant highlighted the influence of the hardship of the daily life that employees facing because of this instable situation to sort their affairs, which affected their performance and consequently their appraisal results. Also, he mentioned the way the management reacted to these circumstances.

*“The **daily life** in Libya has made it too hard to perform well. As you know, sometimes you need to spend the all day in the bank to withdraw your money”*. Participant 1

*“Due to the **current situation**, the management has made this practice [performance appraisal] more flexible to motivate employees and make them continue working”*.

Participant 1

5.3.3.3. Insight from Formal Documents:

To gain more insight about employees' perceptions towards performance appraisal and the pay reliance on this practice, the researcher has analysed 2 obtained performance appraisal documents for two different employees at the same department (see appendix 5). One of them was rated as high performer while the other was appraised as low performer. The obtained formal documents show the criteria of appraising employees in Waha and any action that should follow. There are 10 standards by which each employee is appraised, each one weights 10 marks. These standards are:

1- Following HSE policies.

- 2- *Familiarity with and knowledge of work.*
- 3- *Accuracy of work performance at required time and standards.*
- 4- *Neatness and orderly of work.*
- 5- *Ability for oral and written composition.*
- 6- *Obedience by work rules and procedures.*
- 7- *Aptitude for development and guidance.*
- 8- *Behaviour and punctuality.*
- 9- *Responsiveness to work pressure.*
- 10- *Cooperation with others.*

After appraising each employee in each of these ten standards, the supervisor should write down his recommendation for each employee according to the result of this appraisal. For example, in one of the analysed documents, one of the employees was rated as poor performer with 44% overall performance while the other one was rated as outstanding performance with 91% overall performance and the supervisor wrote “this employee should be motivated”. Notably, the appraised employees must sign that they have acknowledged with Performance appraisal result, which means that they are giving opportunity to know their results. However, as shown in the form, the manager in the higher level can amend this appraisal. This invokes, the mentioning of the managers’ intervention in this practice as unfair action by four interviewed employees.

In another vein, the analysis of the interviewed employees’ perceptions showed that there is mild reliance of pay on performance appraisal practice. There was also a tendency of uncertainty among employees about this as four out of 16 think that there is a reliance. The researcher sought for formal evidence about the regulations of this aspect in Waha , that can explain these perceptions and give more insight about the practice implementation. One formal document has been obtained. The obtained document is a letter from the CEO of the NOC addressed to all the owned oil companies in Libya including Waha. It includes a pausing of linking the annual pay increase on the performance appraisal result. Instead, all employees will be granted the same increase in money yearly regardless of their performance evaluation. The only condition is that employee should not have less than 50% in the performance appraisal result to be eligible for this annual increase.

*“We inform you that from the date 28/7/2017, all the **annual performance motivation** will be **fully granted for all employees** according to attached table. Employees who get less than*

good performance appraisal rate will not be granted this motivation. We insist that the evaluation should be earnest and objective without considering the amount of money that will be granted to the employee” Ref 1070. 28/3/2017 the CEO of NOC

This decision shed lights on two sides regarding performance appraisal practice: first it partially unties the pay from performance appraisal and insists that the performance appraisal process should be implemented objectively. However, this also means that the annual increase in employees’ salaries was significantly rely on performance and it’s partially and may be temporarily untied. Second, it is more likely that this decision could be one of the reasons that made employees stress on the fairness of performance appraisal since they could feel that they are treated unfairly in terms of the impact of the performance appraisal results on the money they are paid. This is because it is unfair to grant the high performers like the low ones. Also, this letter has not included any justification for this action and its purpose.

5.3.3.4.Summary:

After presenting the findings of the participants perceptions from the interviews and the insight that obtained from the formal documents, it can be concluded that; participants are most likely to focus on performance appraisal fair implementation as they tend to concern about this aspect. In addition, participants tend to worry about certain content elements of this practice such as the criteria and the continuity of this practice as this was another perspective among the interviewees. There is no significant reliance of pay on performance appraisal. In addition, from the employees’ perspectives, to gain the required positive effect of performance appraisal on task performance, performance appraisal should be implemented fairly. As an emerged theme, the social relationships plaid significant role in these findings as the personal affairs resulted in the unfair and subjective implementation of the performance appraisal practice. There was a variation between participants according to their work place and work nature.

5.3.4. Rewards (Perceptions):

In exploring this dimension of the HPWS, the 16 interviewees were asked opening questions to see whether they have received any rewards. In this, 13 out of 16 pointed out that they have not received rewards for any work they have done. As a second stage, all the interviewees were asked about their perceptions about the fact they have or have not received rewards. The findings show lack of reward strategy implementation in the company. This is because most participants express kind of frustration of not getting rewards for work that they have done, which also shows feeling of losing motivation. Following quotes that represent these thoughts.

*“There are no rewards, only overtime pay, this is not a reward. **Null, Null**”*. Participant 8
*“No, I have not [have not received any rewards] as **they don’t want to motivate us**”*.

Participant 4

“NO, only the annual increase in the salary”. Participant 6

*“No have not received any rewards, if you work hard or not, there is **no motivation**”*.

Participant 12

*“It depends on the manager **and how is your relationship** with him rather than work wise”*. Participant 7

5.3.4.1. Rewards and Task Performance:

By analysing the participants’ thoughts about the effect of rewards on task performance and unsatisfactory perceptions that dominated the picture among participants’ perceptions. Their thought analysis suggest that employees in feel that they lost a motivational tool that can contribute enhancing their task performance. However, some participants perceive that as a fair way as long there is no fair implementation of this practice. (see the quotes below).

*“The company has lost one of the **motivational tools**”*. Participant 1

*“This [lack of rewards] is very bad very bad, there is **no motivation**”*. Participant 14

“

*“This [lack of rewards] **cannot** enhance performance”*. Participant 15.

“There is no works that need rewards”. Participant 1

“Why I need to care about that [performance as I will not be rewarded]”? Participant 4

Thus, the dominant perceptions towards the effect of rewards on task performance is the perspective of lack of motivation as there is no clear implementation of the rewards in the company.

5.3.4.2. Emerged Themes:

During the analysis of the interviewees’ perceptions towards the rewards practice two influential cultural factors that has affected the interviewees’ perceptions have emerged. Namely the social relationships and power distance.

- Social Relationships:

Rewards’ implementation in Waha was associated with the use of the social and personal connections by 6 interviewees. These participants were found thinking that the rewards in Waha depends on the social relationships and how close relations the employee has with the top management.

*“Even for the business trips, you need to have **relationships** with that person or this person to get it”.* Participant 1

*“The implementation of the strategy is different to how it is in the policy, it depends on the manager and how is your **relationship** with him rather than it is a work”.* Participant 7

*“They [management] look at it [rewards] with a **personal point of view** not as work wise”.* Participant 4

The used phrases that indicate to the effect of the social relationships were not different from those which were used in the other practices such as performance appraisal, only one interviewee used the term “security square”, which is a local phrase means the safe zone or the high important zone. This indicates to the significance of the social connections as it is perceived as a way to help in granting rewards and avoiding any neglecting.

- Power Distance:

The interviewees’ perceptions towards the rewards practice in Waha, were also found affected by the influence of the power distance, which emerged in two occasions.

*“Rewards for managers are **not the same** for employees”.* Participant 16

“We employees do not know about managers”. Participant 16

“I don’t know, this something to do with the management committee [top management]”.
Participant 2

One of the interviewees is likely to feel that the top managers get more or better rewards than employees, while the other participants is likely to lack any information about the top level’ rewards.

5.3.4.3. Insight from Document:

The only document can the researcher obtained is a letter from the head of chair management committee in Waha in which he announced the establishment of a new reward to be granted monthly for the best performer in the month (see appendix 3). This letter was addressed for all employees of the company and dated 07/01/2018.

“As a recognition from the company and to raise the moral of the any employee, who provides services or work to help improve the methods of work or raise the efficiency of performance or save on expenses or achieved a brilliant leadership of a team was assigned to the completion of work or project or was part of a team was dedicated and distinctive in the performance of his work as well as dedicated in his day-to-day work and keen to implement it diligently and faithfully. The management committee decided to grant an encouraging reward to those chosen as the employee of the month at the company various locations”. Chairman of the management committee

The analysis of this document shows that this reward decision was a relatively new action taken by the first man in the company, which might indicate to the absence of permanent strategy for rewards in Waha before that.

5.3.4.4. Summary:

From this holistic picture of employees’ perceptions towards the rewards in Waha, which obtained from the analysis of the interviews and the insight that gained from the document analysis, it can be concluded that there is a lack of rewarding strategy implementation in Waha. This has created lack of motivation perceptions among the interviewees towards the reward strategy. Significantly, three factors could be behind the formation of these perspectives. These emerged effective themes are the use of the social relationship, the power distance between the top management and the employees.

5.3.5. Participation Perceptions:

To have a holistic and deep understanding for the interviewees' perspectives towards their participation in the decision-making process, all the participants were asked the following question: What do you think about your participation in the decision-making process? The findings suggest that there is positive perspective amongst the participants towards their contribution in the decision making process. In this, 11 of them are found feel that their voice is being heard. The quotes below represent the found perceptions.

*"We **influence** the decision-making process and **my voice is being heard**."*

Participant 12

*"We are **being involved** in the daily operations that related to maintenance".* Participant 6

*"I have an effect on the decision-making process in **my current job, we discuss everything and come out with a decision together**".* Participant 7

*"We discussed about the technical issues; **employee has an opinion**".* Participant 4

*"I have **proposed some ideas for improving** work, some of them were approved and some were not".* Participant 5

It can be noticed from the interviewees' answers that they did not hesitate to say yes or any other phrases that indicated to feeling of high participation in their jobs. There are two main ways that the participants with the high positive perceptions can participate in the decision - making in their jobs: discussions in meetings and direct involvement by giving ideas and proposals. Participants (7) and (10) for example, expressed the first way of participation by using words such as "discussions" and "family". The others seem to be given the opportunities to propose their ideas directly, they used phrases like "have the authority to propose" and "ask for my opinion". Thus, in both ways their perceptions indicate to high positive perceptions towards participation.

However, only four employees are likely to feel that they don't have any role in the decision-making process in the work.

*"According to my experience in the oil sector, I have **no any influence** in Waha Company".*

Participant 1

“I don’t have any role in this [participation]”. Participant 15

*“Yet we [employees] **did not know** about this [a decision about new medical insurance strategy] unless from other people [not in a formal way]”*. Participant 15

*“They **do not give us opportunity**”*. Participant 11

*“Employees’ effect in decision **making process is so weak**. I don’t feel that I am valued”*. Participant 3

These participants expressed, that by using words and phrases which indicate to lack of participation. Direct phrases such as “ *I have **no any influence**”, “**do not give us opportunity**”* explicitly indicate that they are not given opportunity to participate. The highlighted quoted phrases are the most meaningful spotted words in this regard.

5.3.5.1. Participation and task performance:

From the analysis, of the 16 interviewees about their perceptions towards the effect of participation on task performance, it is found that participants tend to feel of positive effect of this practice on task performance as shown in the quotes, which represent these perceptions.

*“It **boosts employees’ morale**, even though his [an employee] participation was wrong, he will do his best to compensate this mistake”*. Participant 10

*“Yes **sure, sure**, it makes employee feel responsible and **valuable**”*. Participant 9

*“When an employee has opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, he will improve his performance as he wants to prove that his opinion was right and feels **responsible**”*. Participant 4

*“It has **good effect** on my task performance. I feel respected”*. Participant 7

These interviewees highlighted two important mechanisms by which they think this practice can positively influence task performance. In this, they mentioned the role of elevating employees’ moralities and confidence as the main points. Certain others mentioned that given opportunity to an employee to participate makes him feel valuable. Another notable point is that most of these interviewees did not hesitate in their answers and used

confirmation words such as sure, of course and yes, which signal to their confidence of their answers.

Only 4 participants tend to feel that they are negatively affected by not given opportunities to participate.

“Sure this [ignoring employees’ voice] has side effects on employees”. Participant 1

“When an employee gives an opinion, it should be heard, it makes him feel ignored [if it is not heard]”. Participant 15 (see also this participant’s perception towards interpersonal justice 6.2.1)

“When the decision is made without my participation this can negatively affect my performance”. Participant 11(see also this participant’s perception towards interpersonal justice 6.2.1)

“Employees are so far from this practice, there is no good effect”. Participant 3

These four participants think that their task performance has been negatively affected were found with voice ignored perceptions. This confirms the significant impact of giving employees the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process to gain positive effect on task performance.

5.3.5.2. Emerged Themes in Participation:

Two interviewed front-line employees implicitly mentioned the effect of the power distance, as they are likely to feel they don’t have any role in the higher level.

“At higher levels we don’t have any roles. Participant 11

“They [top management] face these initiatives [proposals, ideas] with either rejection or ridicule them”. Participant 11

“No, no that [give us opportunity to participate] have not happened, all to do with the management”. Participant 11

For example, participant (1) argued that he feels lack of participation saying that he has no role in his department. Then the researcher asked him what about in the company? He answered, “No No”. These thoughts are analysed as an effect of power distance as they represent the gap between the top and low levels. These answers also indicate that the participation of the front-line employees in Waha is most likely to be limited in the lower

level with less opportunity given in the higher levels.

5.3.5.3. Summary:

After presenting the detailed findings, employees' perceptions can be summarised in the following points: First, participants are given opportunities to participate in the decision-making process in their work place. This HPWS practice has provided employees with high moralities which could motivate employees for better performance. Second, interviewees tend to have positive perceptions towards the effect of this practice on task performance. Another notable point that there was mentioning to the effect of the power distance, which has made employees participation is limited at the lower level and less opportunities are given in more strategic decisions-making.

5.3.6. Employment Security:

The opening question that the research begun with it to explore interviewees' perceptions towards the employment security practice was: What do you think about the employment security in this company? 16 front-line participants answered this question. Certain interviewees needed an explanation to understand the term as it seemed unfamiliar to them. The researcher had to explain it to these employees before starting answering the questions. The findings of the analysis suggest that participants feel secured and satisfied with the employment security practice because only four employees tend to feel unsecured (e.g. participants¹⁰). Apparently, the personal relationships (Wasta) is the main source of this perception. The following selected quotes show these findings.

*"Theoretically all rights of **employees are reserved**".* Participant 12

*"Libyan **public** companies have high employment **security**; this is because this company tries to maintain their employees".* Participant 13

*"[Now I am her for] about 20 years now **no one get sacked unless for a big reason**".*
Participant 8

*"Employees are **secured** from the first day".* Participant 9

*"In our country this subject is to do with (**Waste**) it is a big issue".* Participant 10

These participants expressed their feeling of being secured, they talked either about their or/and their colleagues experience. The notable point here is that some interviewees mentioned the nature of the employment security in the public sector, which they describe as a secured work places. In general, they tend to have positive perceptions towards the employment security practice in Waha and feel happy about that.

5.3.6.1. Employment Security and Task Performance:

The interviewees are likely to have two different perceptions towards the effect of this practice on task performance. There were seven participants who tend to have positive perceptions about the effect of employment security on task performance, while nine who are likely to perceive the influence as negative.

First, the seven participants who think that employment security can positively influence task performance.

“This is good for my performance; I am not worried”. Participant 11

“Feeling secured can make you perform better”. Participant 9

Interestingly, the next interviewee (10) is among the 4 participants who feel unsecured, which means that he thinks that feeling unsecured can positively affect his task performance.

“Highly affects performance”. Participant 10

The researcher, asked participant to explain his answer in light of his perception towards the practice. Interviewee (10) answered: *“I will be worried to lose my current job”*

Participants with positive effect perceptions seem to have a very precise explanation for the mechanism by which this practice can affect task performance in addition to feeling convenient and not worried. They almost think that when they feel secured, they can focus more, which in turn can enhance their performance. Moreover, one of them (10) think feeling unsecured can make the employee more eager to his performance to maintain his job. This perception was also found among seven other interviewees in the next category.

The other category incorporates the analysed perceptions of nine interviewees who tend to have negative perspectives towards the effect of employment security on task performance.

Surprisingly, seven of these participants think that when an employee feels so secured, this can make him not taking enough care of his tasks.

*“This [feeling secured] can **negatively** affect performance, there should be stricter rules in this [employment security]”*. Participant 13

*“The more employee **feels not very secured** the more eager he is”*. Participant 16

*“After that [feeling with strict roles] you cannot be **absent** to work or do anything that contradicts the work regulations”*. Participant 2

*“When employees don’t feel that they are **monitored**, and this could make them perform less”*. Participant 3

The perceptions for these seven interviewees can be classified into two main parts. First employees who think that the feeling of strict rules and punishments can make them more eager to show better task performance. For example, the first four interviewees (13,16,2 and 3). The second classification is interviewees who think that the feeling over secured can make the employee does not take enough care to his performance (e.g. participants 9 and 14). The participant 1 do not think that there is any effect of employment security on task performance.

The following employees think that feeling unsecured will make them worried and not focusing on performing their tasks as they should do.

*“Feeling unsecure has **negative effect** on task performance”*. Participant 5

*“Of course, it [feeling unsecure] **took a part of mind**, I was thinking how to avoid this man [his supervisor]”*. Participant 15

These two participants expressed their perspectives on the negative effect of feeling unsecured on task performance. They think when the employee feels unsecured, he will be worry and can be distracted from the focus on accomplishing his task as they should.

5.3.6.2. Emerged Them:

From the analysis of the interviewees answers the questions about their perceptions towards employment security, the social factor was emphasised by three interviewees concerning the implementation of this practice. It was mentioned that the social relationships and connections affect the implementation of the practice as they are used as a method to avoid being sacked or punished.

*“The security man [who reported a theft incident] could not continue in his job in the same oil field, everyone blamed him, they hated him, and they **got away from him** [socially]. Even his roommate left the room”.* Participant 11

*“My **colleagues** asked me to withdraw my complainant against [the technician who made a mistake] him as he has a **family**, so I did”.* Participant 11

Participant (11) narrated an incident in which a security employee reported a theft incident. Subsequently, this employee was socially avoided by his colleagues, which made him change his job. There was a mention to the alternative term “Wasta” by one interviewee. The other participants directly pointed to this aspect as a factor that negatively affect the practice.

*“Even if you are a new employee, the **social factor** can prevent this [get sacked]”.*

Participant 7

*“In our country this subject [employment security] is to do with (**Wasta**), it is a big issue”.*

Participant 10

These interviewees two exchangeable terms for the personal social connections (social factor and Wasta) to emphasise their perceptions about the effect of this factor.

5.3.6.3. Summary:

It can be summarised that most of the participants feel secured in in the Company. 12 of them highlighted, they are happy with practice. One more interesting finding is that, there is mild rise of the negative effect of employment security on task performance. This is because feeling secured can lead to lack of eagerness among the employees, according to five participants. The social relationship has an impact of this practice as certain employees tend to feel secured because of potential good relationships they have.

5.3.7. Internal Mobility:

To make sure that the participants know the term, they were asked what they know about the internal mobility. The perceptions' exploration question was what you think about the practice. All the 16 front-line participants have answered the question. The findings of this practice's perceptions indicate that internal mobility in this company is perceived as vague. Hence, 11 out of 16 feel that there is no clear process for the eternal mobility in Waha. Only five participants tend to feel that there is a regulation for implementing this practice as they mentioned some conditions or /and requirements for the process.

This category shows the responses of the 11 participants, who used word and phrases that mean they perceive this practice as unclear or difficult to be applied.

"Any way, it [internal mobility] is not that clear". Participant 10

"There is such procedure yet not clear, it [internal mobility] is not regulated by the internal law". Participant 12

"I don't think that there is a clear process". Participant 14

"There is a process to this, yet it is not formal". Participant 15

"Very weak process". Participant 5

"It is normal, no problem in this". Participant 11

These participants used phrases such as "I don't know", not clear, "very difficult.....etc. certain interviewees added some phrases such "it is kind of experience, which were more likely a speculation rather than a knowledge. Other participant (5 and 3) perceive the practice as very weak and hard to be applied. All these perceptions points to an issue with this practice in the case study. The possible reason is the emerged intervention of the social connections in this (see the emerged them below).

5.3.7.1. Internal Mobility and Task Performance:

The interviewed employees were asked about the effect of the practice on task performance.

Here, even though participants were found to feel that the internal mobility is relatively obscure, the analysis of these responses in terms of its effect on task performance suggest that the participants are more likely to think that a clear process of internal mobility can positively affect task performance. The following quotes represent the participants' thoughts towards the effect of this practice on performance.

*"It is good because it [a clear internal mobility] **increases knowledge and experience**".*

Participant 10

*"Your work **skills will be enhanced**, it also helps enhancing employee's expectations and **information sharing**".* Participant 7

*"Of course, understanding the work **knowing more details** about it helps".* Participant 8

*"Yes of course, it [internal mobility] **positively affects task performance**".* Participant 2

*"Sure, it has [an effect on task performance], as it facilitates **employees' interests**".*

Participant 12

*"Negatively [effect task performance], this **negatively** affects the participation and boosts the **role of social relationship**".* Participant 13

Participants who tend to feel the positive effect of this practice on task performance, used words and phrases which focused on the way a clear process of internal mobility can influence task performance. They stressed on increasing experience (e.g. participants 10 and 7), enhancing work skills, and information sharing (e.g. participants 8 and 2). These indicate the mechanism by which these employees think that this practice can effectively enhance task performance when implemented in a clear objective manner. The noted emergent point here is the focus on employees' interests when applying this practice. Further, there was another mentioning to the social relationships factor as it can boost the negative role of the social relationships.

5.3.7.2. Emerged Theme:

Social relationships seem to have another role in the participants' perceptions. The interviewed front-line employees tend to perceive the social relationships' role as a way to facilitate the internal mobility process. This theme was mentioned five times in the internal mobility. Interviewees used the direct expression "social relationships", "vitamin W" (Wasta) and the term under the table to emphasise the social relations role in implementing the internal mobility practice.

*"It [internal mobility] depends on the **social relationships**".* Participant 13

*"If you don't have **friends and relationships** [in terms of the internal mobility]".*
Participant 4

*"This [internal mobility process] means **under the table**".* Participant 15

*"You need big effort in addition to **vitamin (W)**, [Waste]".* Participant 14

5.3.7.3. Summary:

Perceptions towards the internal mobility show that interviewees had lack of information about the internal mobility in Waha and tend to see it as vague practice. Even though, participants tend to feel that internal mobility is obscure in their company, they are more likely to perceive it a positive impactful practice on task performance when it is implemented clearly. There was a mentioning to the negative role of the social relationships in implementing the internal mobility.

5.4. Task Performance:

The task performance perceptions were explored through two main ways; Self-evaluation task- performance and justification for the answers. Concerning the self-evaluation, the answers were classified into three categories: high, medium and low task performance. In terms of the justifications to the answers, this conversation was set to identify the criteria of the task performance in the case study. In this, the 16 participants gave different answers about the reasons of evaluating their task performance in certain level.

5.4.1. Employees Self-Evaluation:

As mentioned above the participants were asked to evaluate their task performance. The analysis yielded eight participants who perceive their task performance as high, while four interviewees think that it is medium, and four others see that their in-role performance as low.

- High Performance:

The eight interviewees who think that their task performance is high, expressed that by using direct ranking expressions such as excellent, very good, they tend to stress more on the formal numeric evaluation. The other three mentioned that they are happy and satisfied from their performance level.

*“It [my task performance] is **excellent**”*. Participant 14

*“In the last year it reaches **very good** performance because of the experience I have got.* Participant 4

*“Very good I don’t want to exaggerate a to say **excellent**”*. Participant 2

*“I am **satisfied and happy** with my performance”*. Participant 6

- High Performance Criteria:

The high task performance interviewees mostly focused on the experience, which is likely the source of knowledge

*“I am very **precise** in a very big load of work”*. Participant 14

*“I have enough **experience** to do all tasks in this department”*. Participant 9

*“I **know a lot** about what I am doing, I keep developing myself and like it [my job]”*. Participant 12

They also mentioned time criteria as they usually finish their tasks in time.

*“Finishing my tasks in **time**, long **experience**, **disciplined** and good **relations** with my colleagues”*. Participant 6

There were other criteria such as the ability of working under pressure.

*“I can **work under pressure**”*. Participant 5

*“In time and **disciplined**”*. Participant 2

Only one front-line employee mentioned the religious factor which induced him to perform in the high level.

*“I am getting **Halal salary**”*. Participant 8

- **Medium Performance:**

The four interviewed employees included in this part were analysed as medium task performance. These medium task performance participants used words such as “I can do more”, “not bad” or my performance is “good”. Interestingly one of the medium task performance interviewee justified his medium performance as the lack of experience, which again highlights the role of experience in task performance in Waha.

*“I do what required from me as it is, but **I feel that I can do more** [perform better]”*.

Participant 7

*“**Still need more** [to the higher level] because I am the least experience”*. Participant 16

*“**Not bad** [task performance]”*. Participant 3

- **Medium Performance Criteria:**

The above medium task performance participants seemed giving reasons to why they are not in a higher level of task performance.

*“**The general situation in the country, social relationships** [social commitments]”*.

Participant 13

*“**[Lack of] job description** is the main issue here and the social relation effect”*.

Participant 7

*“**I need to know more** about my job”*. Participant 16

*“**I feel oppressed**”*.³

Here, the social affairs were mentioned again as negative factor as the nature of the social life outside the organisation requires many commitments. Also, the lack of Job description was pointed out again as another negative influential factor. The participant (3) justified his medium task performance because he was treated unfairly.

- **Low Task Performance:**

The other four participants evaluated their own task performance as low.

*“**Now it is not good**”*. Participant 1

“Very poor performance”. Participant 15

“I don’t have the desire to work, there is a kind of frustration”. Participant 10

“I was eager to execute my tasks in the same day but now I don’t care”. Participant 11

The most notable point here is that two of the low task performance interviewees mostly feel frustrated. For example, participants (10) stated that he does not have any desire to show better task performance and participant (11) stated that he does not care. The other two low self-evaluation task performance used the direct ranking words such as “very poor” and “not good”.

- **Justifications for low Task Performance:**

The four-weak task performance explained what they think the reason/s for their perspectives on their task performance.

“If they provide me with good work environment and the required facilities so I don’t think about the external issues, I can do any a big load”. Participant 1

“There is a kind of frustration”. Participant 10

“Because they appointed unqualified persons and I am assigned tasks that are not in my roles”. 15

“I have been oppressed in the training and from the director treatment with me, this has made me frustrated”. Participant 11

The four interviewees tend to feel frustrated due to unfair treatment or due to the hardship of the life in Libya. Participant (15) is likely to be affected by the lack of JD and improper implementation of the promotion practice, which also signal to unfair promotion in the company.

5.4.2. Emerged Themes in Self-Evaluation Task Performance:

Participants mentioned two socio-cultural aspects that could be influential on their task performance. In this Religion and ethnicity were mentioned as factors that affect the task performance.

*“I am having **Halal salary** [performing better to fulfil the god regardless any other negative factors]”*. 8

*“The foremost and priority thing is the fear from **the mighty Allah** and obeying his mighty orders”*. Participant 1

*“I was about to get my **salary in “Haram”** [having salary without performing]*. Participant 5

*“Everyone wants to appoint people from his **city or tribe**”*. Participant 11

*“They think that just because I am from **Tarhuna** [a tripe in Libya], I am against them”*. Participant 5

In terms, of the religious factor it is used as one of the inducements that make employees perform better regardless of any other factor. (See chapter 2 for more details). The ethnicity is one of the possible issues that can obstacle performance as it can form another background or/ stereotypes that interferes in the organisational relationships.

5.4.3. Summary:

To conclude the self-evaluation task performance findings, participants evaluated their task performance in three categories. First, the **high level of task performance**, eight interviewees evaluated their performance as high. Further, the most repeated dimensions for the high task performance were the experience and finishing work in time. The other less mentioned task performance dimensions were: work load and disciplinarian and knowledge. There was mentioning to the religious factor as another odd factor that can make employee exert better performance. Second, in terms of the **Medium task performance**, four participants evaluated their task performance as medium. The social relations affairs and the situation of the country are likely to play a significant role in lowering these interviewees task performance. Moreover, Lack of job description and the unfair treatment seem to be another important factor that may have negative effect on task performance. The final level is the **Low task performance**, in this analysis, four front-line interviewed employees evaluated their task performance as low. The justifications explained from these employees were almost related to the feeling of frustration due to unfair treatments they have experienced. In addition, promotion and the lack of job description are other reasons for this low performance. In other words, there is relative high task performance perceptions among the interviewees as eight of them think that their task performance is between very good and excellent. Justice and the other socio-cultural factors could play important role in employees’

task performance. These findings are in line with the relatively high positive perceptions towards the HPWS practices that found in the perceptions analysis. Table 8 summarises the overall picture of the findings from the participants self-evaluation task performance.

Employees			Self-Evaluation	Reason/s
Number	Place	Work Nature		
14	Oil field	Technical	High	Precise in a very big load of work
5	Oil field	Admin	High	Can work under pressure
9	Oil field	Admin	High	Experience
4	Office	Technical	High	Experience
2	Office	Technical	High	In time and disciplined
8	Oil field	Admin	High	Religious reason
6	Office	Admin	High	In time, experience, disciplined, good relations with colleagues
12	Office	Technical	High	knowledge, self-development and like the job
13	Office	Admin	Medium	Situation in the country, social affairs
7	Office	Technical	Medium	Job description and social relations
16	Office	Admin	Medium	Lack some knowledge
3	Office	Technical	Medium	Oppression
1	Oil field	technical	Low	Work environment and facilities
10	Office	technical	Low	Frustration
15	Office	technical	Low	Lack of JD and promotion
11	Office	Admin	Low	Unfair treatment

Table (8) self-evaluation task performance

In table(8) each level of the self-evaluations task performance is given different colour to ease the comparison between them. The reasons' column summarises the criteria and the justification for the evaluation that given by each participant.

5.5. The Relationship between Employees' Perceptions and Task Performance:

The analysis of the interviewed employees' perceptions towards High Performance Work System HPWS practices showed that participants have different perspectives for each practice. For example, while most participants have been found satisfied with the training practice, they are likely to feel that the internal mobility is a vague practice. In similar vein, employees were found with unsatisfactory perceptions towards rewards practice, yet they tend to be acknowledged about the motivation role of this practice the company has missed.

Moreover, even though the front-line interviewed employees tend to have positive perspectives towards the linkage between the practices and task performance, they are more likely to think that the implementation of these practices has decreased this effect. In this, the participants used different expressions for that, such as if it implemented as it should, it depends on the implementer, some courses do not match the training needs and the fairness of the implementation has been also found central for obtaining the required effect of these practices on task performance. During the analysis, certain influential themes were emerged, which are most likely to be impactful on the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS and their task performance. The most apparent intervened them that can have important impacts on this is the social relationships. The interviewees expressed the effect of the social relationships role as a negative aspect in implementing these practices, they are likely to think that they are being treated unfairly since the priorities were mostly given on the kinship and other sides of the social relationships bases such as nepotism and favouritism. This was more obvious in performance appraisal and internal mobility practices. To support this, for the four employees who evaluated their task performance as low, the social relationships' effect was mentioned seven times, which represents a likelihood of a significant negative effect of this factor on the task performance (table 7 below). The ongoing unstable situation in Libya has also impacted employees' perceptions towards HPWS and consequently their task performance. These conflicts have affected the participants' daily life in several aspects, which in turn impacted their performance in their workplace. This issue could be clearly noticed in the low task performance self-evaluation participants (see table7). The third emerged theme that is likely to have an influence on the relationship between interviews perceptions towards the HPWS practices and their task performance is the power distance. Participants are found to feel that there is a high gap between them and the top management. They mentioned several times to some top management's decisions and actions that they don't know anything about it and, they tend to not accept some of these decisions.

To conclude, the relationship between employees' perceptions towards the HPWS and task performance is relatively high as employees tend to have positive perspectives on the effect of these system practices on task performance and relatively high self-evaluation task performance also was found.

The system is more influential on employees perceived task performance through satisfaction and motivation, which are mainly from training, participation and employment

security dimensions with the help of the effect from the religion factor. This factor was found one of the high task performance dimensions. Interviewees tend to believe that if the practices of this system are implemented properly with a clear internal mobility process, flexible formal job description, fair performance appraisal and fair and consistent rewarding strategy, the effect will be greater on task performance. Moreover, several contextual and cultural factors have made the effect of employees' perceptions towards the system less effective than it should. Namely, the Wasta that resulted from the rooted traditions of the social relationships, the power distance and the circumstances in the country. Table (7) merges the found perceptions, self-evaluation task performance, emerged socio-cultural factors.

Employees			Training	JD	Performance A/ Pay reliance		Rewards	Participation	Employment S	Internal M	Task performance
Number	place	Work nature									
14	Oil field	Technical	Proud	Informal	Content	Mild	Un satisfied	Voice heard	Feel secured	Obscure @	High
5	Oil field	Admin	Beneficial *	Informal	Fairness matters@	Mild	R satisfied	Voice heard	unsecured	Obscure	High
9	Oil field	Admin	Proud	Informal	Fairness matters	Mild	R satisfied	Voice heard	Feel secured	Regulated	High
4	Office	Technical	J satisfied *	Informal	Fairness matters @	Reliance	Un satisfied	Voice heard	Feel secured	Obscure @	High
2	Office	Technical	Beneficial @	Informal	Fairness matters@	Reliance	Un satisfied §	Voice heard	Unsecured	Regulated	High
8	Oil field	Admin	J satisfied * C @	Prefer flexible @	Fairness matters@	Reliance	Un satisfied@	Voice heard	Feel secured	Regulated	High
6	Office	Admin	Beneficial	Formal	Fairness matters	Mild	Un satisfied	Voice heard	Feel secured	Obscure	High
12	Office	Technical	J satisfied *	Informal	Content §	Mild	Un satisfied	Voice heard	Feel secured	Obscure	High
13	Office	Admin	Beneficial *	Uncertain @ C	Content	Mild	No R satisfied	Depends	Feel secured	Obscure @	Medium
7	Office	Technical	Proud *	Informal	Content	Mild	R unsatisfied @	Voice heard	Feel secured @	Obscure	Medium
16	Office	Admin	Beneficial	Informal	Fairness matters	Mild	Un satisfied §	Voice heard	Feel secured	Obscure	Medium
3	Office	Technical	Beneficial	Uncertain	NA	Mild	No R satisfied	Ignored	Feel secured	Obscure	Medium
1	Oil field	Technical	J satisfied C	Informal	Content C	Reliance	Un satisfied @	Ignored	Feel secured	Regulated @	Low
10	Office	Technical	NA C	Uncertain	Content	Mild	Un satisfied	Voice heard	Unsecured @	Obscure	Low
15	Office	Technical	J satisfied	Informal	Fairness matters @	Mild	Un satisfied	Ignored	Unsecured	Obscure@	Low

11	Office	Admin	J Satisfied* C @	Prefer flexible	Fairness matters @ §	Mild	Un satisfied §	Ignored §	Feel secured@	Regulated	Low
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@: Social relationships §: power distance C: country circumstances *: content of the practices

Table (9). Integration of employees' perceptions, self-evaluated task performance and the emerged factors

The table (7) incorporates all the analysed perceptions for each participants and self-evaluation task performance. It also includes the mentioning of the social and cultural factors by the participants. From this table we can see the frequency of the contextual intervention in each practice and interviewee. For example, the four participants (1,10,15 and 11) are the low self-evaluation task performance, these participants talked about the social relationship (@) eight times in the internal mobility, employment security, rewards, performance appraisal and training. On the other hands, the eight high task performance employees talked only 10 times about these factors. This shows the high frequent mentioning in the low task performance employees comparing to the high participants. This also indicates to the high effect of these factor on the perceived task performance.

5.6. Perceptions of Fairness:

One of the main aims of this study is to explore how perceptions of fairness influence the relationship between the employees' perceptions towards the HPWS practices and task performance. The justice perceptions were explored in five dimensions: distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, informational justice and overall justice. These dimensions were explored as multi actor aspects. In this, 16 front line employees and three supervisors were interviewed. The interviewed participants were asked about if they know the term organisational justice. Nine interviewees did not recognise the term, the researcher needed to explain the meaning for those participants. The fairness term seemed to be more common with employees. This way was followed in each dimension to ensure that every participant knows exactly what he is talking about. This section is structured based on the justice dimensions (one part for each dimension). Another section is for the emerged themes. The section will end up with a summary paragraph. Notably, the supervisors' participants in this section were giving the prefix (Sup) in the quotations, while the front-line employees were given just numbers.

5.6.1. Distributive justice:

The analysis of the participants' perceptions indicate that there is intermediate feeling of fair resource allocation in Waha. This is because out of 19 participant, 9 think that the resources in this company are allocated fairly and 10 perceive that the resources are not fairly allocated. The unfair allocation perceptions are likely influenced by the bower distance, that make the participants either lack information about this side or feel that there no fair allocation. Noteworthy, that the three interviewed supervisor found with fair resource allocation perceptions. The quote below represent these perceptions.

*“All the resources that needed for the jobs are **fair**, any job that need any resources they provide it”*. Participant 9

“It [Fairness of Resource allocation] is not 100% fair as the most resources are allocated to the main departments”. Participant 7

“Justice is so difficult to be found yet I can say 80%”. Participant 6

“I see it very fair. It is according to needs of each department and unit”. Sup 2

*“I feel that there is **no fairness** [in resource allocation]”*. Participant 10

*“There is **no fair** allocation [for the resources]”*. Participant 11

*“I **don’t know** about this [level]”*. Participant 16

*“I **don’t know** about this, but I think that it is relatively fair”*. Participant 4

In other words, it is found that the perceptions towards the distributive justice is intermediate to low average because more than half of the interviewees (10 out of 19) were either perceive the allocation of the resources in Waha as unfair or they were uncertain.

5.6.2. Procedural justice:

To obtain detailed analysis of the participants’ perspectives towards the procedural justice, they were asked a question to determine their knowledge about the term procedural justice. Then, the main question regarding the procedural justice was: What do you think about the fairness of the process of allocating these resources? All the participants answered this question. The analysis of their answers suggest that the process by which the resources are allocated in Waha is not fair. This is because 12 interviewees tend to feel that the process is unfair, only three participants think that it is fair, while three perceive the process as intermediate fair. Only one employee mentioned that he does not know about procedural justice. The selected quotes from the participants’ answers below clearly demonstrate these feelings.

First, the unfair category, employees who expressed that they perceive the process as unfair gave different explanations for their thoughts.

*“The processes **are not fair**. For example, I saw an employee who has a very tough circumstance came to the department asking for a loan from the company they did not give him, whereas at the same day another employee asked for marriage loan, they granted it to him in the second day”*. Participant 5

*“**There is a nepotism** in this [process of resource allocation]”*. Participant 2

*“All the **process depends on the social relationships**, if you don’t have good relationships you need to wait for long times”*. Participant 15

*“I think **99% fair**. Sup 2*

*“From the employees’ point of view, they are **not treated equally concerning the processes of resource allocation**”.* Sup 3

I don’t know about this either. Participant 16.

*“The **situation in the country** and the civil war have made it very difficult to judge about this, but I can say the process is not fair”.* Participant 1

Here, four participants are likely have formed their perceptions based on incident/s they came across. Others expressed their feelings by saying phrase such as “there is no justice”. There were mentioning to the role of the social relationships using direct phrases such as “it depends on the social relationships” and indirect words such as “nepotism. The situation in Libya was mentioned once as a factor which might made it difficult to judge (participant 1).” Noteworthy, only one supervisor (sup 3) think, that the process is not fair. Even this supervisor participant talked about this point from the employees’ point of view. To conclude, the interviewed employees tend to perceive process by which the resources are allocated as unfair in the case study. This is because only four participants perceive the process as fair. Also, the used expressions such as “there is no fairness” and “ I am oppressed”, “there is nothing” etc, confirm the found perspectives about this dimension. Unlike the employees, supervisors tend to perceive the procedures of the resource allocation as fair. In this, two of the supervisors mentioned that it is fair while only one employee thinks the procedures are fair.

5.6.3. Interpersonal justice:

The analysis of the participants’ perceptions towards the interpersonal justice was based on the opening question: How do you see the treatment you receive from your supervisor? All the participants answered the questions and the explanation required related questions. The of this dimension suggest that there is high positive perceptions towards the interpersonal justice amongst the interviewees. Further, this dimension tends to be given a high importance from the participants since 17 out of 19 participants are more likely to feel that they are treated fairly.

*“It [the supervisor treatment] is the **most important thing that affects me**”.* Participants 14

*“It is an **excellent** treatment [from my Supervisor]”.* Participants 6

*“**Mutual respect** [between me and my supervisor], good”.* Sup 1

“Very fair [supervisor treatment]”. Participants 7

“Mutual respect relationship, good, it reduces doubts, jealousy”. Participants 16

“My experience with many supervisors is that 90% of them treated me in excellent manner”. Participants 9

“My supervisor has applied centralisation to the extent we have had to dispute with him”. Participant 11

“It is not good [treatment]”. Participant 15

In this perceptions category, 14 interviewed employees think that they are treated fairly by their supervisors. Some of them mentioned to the mutual respect (e.g. participant 16, 2, 3 and 8), while others (5, 4, 7 and 12) expressed the same feeling by ranking the treatment by using words such as excellent, very fair and significant. Therefore, it can be mentioned that these employees were found with high positive perceptions towards the interpersonal justice. Supervisors perceptions are almost in line with the employees' perceptions towards the interpersonal justice since the three of them were found feeling that they are receiving respectful treatment from their managers. Further they used the same phrases such as respect and very good. One supervisor (sup 2) add that his manager treats him “as a son”, which indicate to a higher level of feelings about this dimension. Only 2 participants feel that they are not treated fairly, explained that the centralisation is the reason. these participants feel that they are not treated fairly. One of them (11) stated that the supervisor applies the centralisation in the work place. To find out an explanation to the participants' feelings, the researcher went back to their perception towards the participation and found that they had the perceptions of voice neglected in the decision-making process.

In all, the findings of this analysis show that the interviewed front-line employees and supervisors perceive the treatment they received from their supervisors as fair. The used phrases seem to be rich in appreciation and affections. Furthermore, they linked this to the task performance without asking them about that. For example, participant (8) mentioned “sometimes we show a better performance just to not let him [their supervisor] down”. Participant (1) for another example, mentioned that this enhances performance. This clearly shows the importance the interviewees give to the supervisor treatment.

5.6.4. Informational Justice:

As mentioned in the literature review chapter, the informational justice in this research refers to the adequacy of information provided to the employees about their tasks. Thus, the researcher explored the interviewees perceptions towards this aspect. The analysis indicates that they are most likely to perceive the information they receive as adequate and fair. In this, 15 out of the 19 interviewees think that they are provided with fair information about their tasks. These interviewed employees expressed their feeling towards the informational justice using phrases and/ or words that signal to a feeling of fair information provided (e.g. very good, very rich, fair enough. Etc). only 4 employees were found feel that the information they are provided are not adequate. The following quotes show the found perceptions.

“Very adequate information, the clearer and adequate information the higher performance”

. Participant 6

“Very rich information and even some extra information, he [the supervisor] simplifies it in a nice way”. Participant 5

“In general, more than enough information”. Participant 1

“I cannot remember that I needed more information about anything, they sometimes we hold meetings for that”. Participant Sup 2

“Not adequate information”. Participant 15

To conclude the perceptions about this dimension, participants (employees and supervisor) tend to think of that the information they receive about this their tasks are fair enough. Which indicate to another high perspective towards the informational justice in the company.

5.6.5. Overall Justice:

One of the important constructs in justice is the overall employees experience about the fairness in their overall work. To explore the interviewees' perceptions about this aspect of justice they were asked the following question: what do you think about fairness in this company? The 19 participants answered the question. The analysis of their answers resulted in a low feeling of overall justice among the participants. This is because 10 out of the 19 are likely to think that there is no justice. Only 6 employees tend to see justice in Waha as intermediate, while only two participants think that there is justice in the company.

*“Generally, **there is no fairness**”*. Participant 10

*“I think if you ask the employees, 99.9 % will say that there is **no justice**”* Participant.1

*“**There is no justice at all**, you make great efforts in your work and then they oppress you”*.
Participant 11

*There is **no justice***. Participant Sup 3

*“From **40% to 50% fair**”*. Participant 8

*“There is **no absolute justice** yet in some practices there is no justice”*. Participant 16

***Somewhat** there is fairness yet in some cases it is not exist”*. Sup 1

*“I think **there are fairness**; this makes me satisfied”*. Participant 13

The direct answers such “as there is no justice” and “it is only 20%” are often used in the answers in this perceptions category indicate to the degree of the participants' confidence about their answers. Some participants repeated the term “No” to confirm his answer. Also, it is noteworthy to mention that two of the neglected voice participants are among this no overall justice. In sum, it is more likely that the participants think that the feeling of overall justice is weak in this company. This is due to the high number of participants who hold this feeling and the words and phrases used to express that. In support of this, one HR decision maker mentioned that they failed in applying justice in this company, this manager mentioned that when asked about their objectives. *“You can say we have not succeeded to **employ a system that insure justice**”*. Participant Man 1.

5.6.6. Emerged Themes in Justice Perceptions:

Two important themes that emerged during the analysis, which are likely to have effects on employees' perceptions towards justice in Waha: namely the social relationships including nepotism and wasta and the effect of power distance.

- **Social Relationships Effect:**

The aspect of social relationship was expressed by the participant as a negative theme, they are more likely that they are not being treated fairly concerning the implementation of the HPWS practices. This factor was mentioned 16 times by nine employees. One supervisor mentioned this factor as well.

*"In Waha, I needed to use my **personal** relationships to find place to set my office"*. Participant 1

"If someone has the power [he is relative to someone who is high position], he can get whatever he wants from the company". Participant 13

*"**Nepotism and Wasta** are in any public-sector organisation in Libya"*. Participant 14

*"When there is no fairness and there is **favouritism**"*. Participant 15

*"Sometimes you are in the **black circle**, so they eliminate you"*. Participant 11

*"There are some people that are qualified to be managers, yet others are appointed [promoted] only by **friendship relations** or by luck"*. Participant 4

The concept of the social relationships tends to be deeply rooted in the case study context as it was mentioned 10 times in this dimension. Employees complained from this factor especially in terms of promotion (e.g. participant 13 and 4) and in overall management affairs (e.g. 1,14,15 and 2). This cultural factor has resulted in the Wasta and favouritism in the work place and consequently low feeling of overall justice.

- **Power Distance:**

During the analysis some used phrases found that they indicate that participants don't feel that the power is distributed fairly, not accepting some decisions and lack information about the top management. This factor was mentioned by five employees.

*"The **managers and directors are granted cars and free fuel**, whereas they don't even give employees a chance to attend some seminars"*. Participant 11

“I don’t know about this [the top management level]. Participant 16

“The part which deals with the head quarter in Tripoli, I don’t know about it”. Participant 12

“I don’t know exactly as the company is huge, don’t know”. Participant 13

“My name was removed from the list by the top management without giving any reason”. Participant 8

From the spotted phrases that signal to the presence of this factor in the case study, it seems that employees such as participant 11 is influenced by the unfair distributions of the bonuses that granted to the top management persons. Whereas, others tend to feel the distance between the employees and the management because they do not know anything about the decisions that taken in that level. In general, this factor has emerged as negative effective aspect on the employees’ perceptions towards the justice dimensions.

5.6.7. Justice Summary:

To sum up, the analysis of the interviewees perceptions towards justice show that there is a high feeling of injustice among the participants, especially in procedural justice, overall justice and distributive justice. The most unfair dimension is the procedural justice. These dimensions are more likely to be affected by the social relationships and power distance factors. The fairer found dimensions are the interpersonal and the informational justice, which indicates the significance of the supervisor role in forming employees’ perceptions. These dimensions were also found less exposed to the effect of the cultural factors since the informational and interpersonal justice are much closer to the front-line employees’ level. Supervisors tend to be more certain about their judgment than employees and their answers are likely to confirm the analysis of the employees’ perceptions. There is a significant lack of overall justice perception among the participants.

5.6.8. The Role of Justice:

To identify the role of justice on employees’ perceptions, the researcher analysed the justice thoughts considering their self-evaluation task performance. In this, a close and precise look was conducted to the analysis of the interviewees’ perceptions and their self-evaluation task performance to find out any possible relationship between them. In addition, comparisons were made between the task performance self-evaluation levels (high, intermediate, low)

and feelings of justice in the five studied dimensions (see table 8). The comparisons have yielded the following findings:

First, participants with high justice perceptions. In this, eight high self-evaluation task performance participants pointed out to high justice' perceptions (five dimensions) in their work places 20 times. (Represent 250%). The four-medium self-evaluation task performance participants pointed out to high feeling of justice (five dimensions) in their work places 10 times. (Represent 250%). The four-low self-evaluation task performance participants pointed out to high thoughts of justice (five dimensions) in their work places only five times. (Represent 125%). Thus, it can be seen that participants with high and intermediate task performance feel with high justice 100% more than the low task performance. This can indicate that the feeling of high justice could have an important relationship with employees' perceived task performance.

Second, in terms of participants with intermediate or uncertain justice perceptions, another comparison has been made between the participants who were found with intermediate justice perceptions and the three levels of self- evaluation of task performance. More specifically, eight high self-evaluation task performance participants pointed out to the intermediate feelings of justice (five dimensions) seven times (Represent 87%). Further, the four-medium self-evaluation task performance participants mentioned to the intermediate feelings of justice (five dimensions) five times. (Represent 125%). The four-low self-evaluation task performance participants pointed out to the intermediate feelings of justice (five dimensions) in their work places one times (Represent 25%). This precise comparison shows that employees who were found feeling with intermediate justice, are the most intermediate task performance perceptions which can be considered as an intriguing finding in this research as both justice perceptions and task performance are most likely to be in direct relationship.

Finally, participants with feelings of no justice exist. This comparison incorporates how many the low feelings of justice perceptions were mentioned by each level of self-evaluation task performance. The eight-high self-evaluation task performance participants pointed out to the no feelings of justice (five dimensions) 13 times (Represents 162%). The medium self-evaluation task performance participants point out to the no feelings of justice (five dimensions) in their work places five times. 125%. In the four-low self-evaluation task performance, participants point out to the no feelings of justice (five dimensions) in their

work places 13 times. 325%. Another interesting finding is that the participants who expressed the very low feelings of justice represent the high percentage of the low task performance. This can confirm the significant linkage between the perceived task performance and justice perceptions.

5.6.9. Summary of Justice Role:

It can be concluded that perceptions of fairness are significant in the relationship between the HPWS and employees perceived task performance as a direct link was found between the two themes. To support this finding, no one of the low task performance participants found feeling with fair thought about the five dimensions except in interpersonal and informational justice. However, two of them are the only employees who found feeling unfair interpersonal and informational justice. In other vein, Power distance and social relationships factors are most likely affected participants' thoughts about the procedural, distributive and overall justice. Further, the role of power distance and social relationships seem to be less effective in the interpersonal and informational justice. Furthermore, the overall justice perception in the company tend to be weak. Apparently, the most effective justice dimensions are the interpersonal and informational justice. The table (8) merges the findings of justice perceptions for each dimension and the self-evaluated task performance findings.

Employees			Task performance	Distributive Justice			Procedural Justice			Interpersonal Justice		Informational Justice		Overall justice		
Number	place	Work nature		Fair	Uncertain	Unfair	Fair	Inter M	Unfair	Fair	unfair	Fair	unfair	fair	Inter M	Unfair
14	Oil field	Technical	High	√				√	√		√		√			
5	Oil field	Admin	High			√		√	√		√				√	
9	Oil field	Admin	High	√				√	√		√				√	
4	Office	Technical	High		√			√	√			√			√	
2	Office	Technical	High			√		√	√		√			√	√	
8	Oil field	Admin	High	√				√	√			√				
6	Office	Admin	High	√				√	√		√		√			
12	Office	Technical	High		√			√	√		√			√		
13	Office	Admin	Medium		√			√	√		√		√			
7	Office	Technical	Medium	√			√		√		√			√		
16	Office	Admin	Medium		√			√	√			√		√		
3	Office	Technical	Medium			√		√	√		√				√	
1	Oil field	Technical	Low					√	√		√					
10	Office	Technical	Low			√		√	√		√				√	
15	Office	Technical	Low		√			√		√		√			√	
11	Office	Admin	Low			√		√		√	√				√	

Table (10) the integration of justice perceptions and self-evaluated task performance.

(√) indicates to the mentioning of justice in each self-evaluation level (high, medium and low).

Table (8) integrates the findings of justice perceptions with the findings of self-evaluated task performance, it can be noticed that the frequency of participants complaining from justice is higher in low task performance (red) than in the high task performance (green).

5.7. Social relationships:

Due the claims of the effect of social relationships in the Libyan public sector discussed in the literature review chapters, the researcher explored the role of the social reciprocities in Waha by asking the participants (employees and supervisors) about this aspect and its effect on their task performance. 17 of them expressed a high positive feeling about this aspect, and only two employees think that this aspect depends on the characteristics of the employee. The quotes below represent the analysed perceptions.

*“They [social reciprocities] are **hundred per cent** [excellent]”*. Participant 10

*“The social **reciprocities** are **excellent** in this company especially in these times [country situation] they make the live easier for me”*. Participant 9

*“Very **excellent** [social reciprocities]”*. Participant 8

*“In my work place, they [social reciprocities] **very good**. It can be taken as a model”*. Participant 4

*“We are like **one family**”*. Sup 2

*“**Excellent** [social reciprocities], this is through group meetings even out of duty times”*. Participant 6

These interviewees responded using high ranking word “excellent” and “very excellent” to show the high positive perceptions they have towards this theme in their work place. They mentioned (e.g. participant 6) to the group meetings that held between employees to socialise and exchange ideas and knowledge. Even though some participants used less strong phrases such “very good”, other words and phrases spotted in their answers (e.g. “we are like one family” sup 2 and “it can be taken as a model” Participant 4), also imbed high positive perceptions towards the social reciprocities in the case study.

To conclude, there is a high positive perception among the participants towards the quality of the social reciprocities in Waha. This is because most interviewees were found with this feeling and the words that used to express the feelings were confirmative.

5.7.1. Social Reciprocities' Effect on Task Performance:

The next question was: is there any influence of the social reciprocities on your task performance? 16 interviewees (13 employees and 3 supervisors) think that the social reciprocities have positive effect on task performance as they could enhance information sharing create motivation, or/and enhance work environment through generating empathy among employees. Only three participants think that they have negative effect.

First, participants with positive effect perceptions. These interviewees think that the social reciprocities can positively affect task performance. They mentioned to the mechanism by which the social reciprocities enhance performance. This mechanism is mainly through information sharing and enhancing work environment.

*“They [social reciprocities] create kind of assistance among employees. Especially in **discussing some matters in the work** so everyone will benefit from the discussion”.*

Participant 10

*“They [social reciprocities] allow **information sharing** and help the new **comers** to adapt quickly”.* Participant 6

*“Sure, as they [social reciprocities] create **amiability** among employees, this **increases our understanding to each other** and this will benefit the performance”.* Participant 8

*“They [social reciprocities] ease the **communication** with the managers in the higher levels”.* Participant 3

*“They make us **work as a team**, imagine if there are no good social reciprocities, Waha could not make the comeback in the country crisis”.* 15

*“The social reciprocities generate a kind of **amiability** and reduce **power distances**, they remove the feeling of dread and enhances employee’s participation”.* Participant Sup 3

These selected quotes from employees and supervisors’ perceptions indicated that the social reciprocities in the work place of Waha affect the performance through three main aspects: information sharing and exchanging knowledge between employees (e.g. participants 10 and 6). Also, they improved the communications between employees and managers, which may signal to a weak communication between the organisational levels (e.g. participants 8 and 3). The last way that participants mentioned that the social reciprocities can enhance the

work environment by creating amiability, boosting the team work, and breaking the routine (e.g. participants 4, 15 and 3). This can be considered as another interesting finding in this study as participants are most likely to think that this aspect has a very important impact on their task performance also because of the way they think that it can enhance their task performance.

In sum, one more intriguing finding in this aspect is the significant effect of the social reciprocities in the case study that surfaced through the participants' perceptions. In particular, the mechanism by which these reciprocities can enhance task performance. This effect is through information sharing, improving the work place environment and enhancing organisational communication by decreasing power distance effect.

5.8. Conclusion of the findings

This study set out to explore the uptake of HPWS in the Libyan oil firm. The Second intention was to find out how HPWS practices are perceived by employees. The third aim is to assess the relationship between the employees' perception of HPWS and their task performance. Fourth, this study sought to explore the role of perception of fairness in the relationship between HPWPs and employees' task performance. Further, given the two data sources that employed in this research interviews and document analysis, the conclusion will demonstrate both findings from the two data sources.

Firstly, the uptake of the HPWS in the case study. According to the analysis of the related aspects of the interviews, there is relatively high adoption of the universal concept of HPWS. This level of the HPWS uptake in Waha is affirmed for three reasons: the presence of the HPWPs practices in the company, which are commonly used in the HPWS literature. These HPWS practices are found in a high degree of synergistic linkage between each other, which made them work as a system and interdependent manner. Further, the top management mainly intend to enhance employees' performance by deploying these practices, which is the main function of the HPWS. Therefore, the three main characteristics of the HPWS: bundling, synergy and aim to enhancing employees' performance through these practices are exist in Waha. However, the intervention of the NOC in certain practices such as selection can be considered the only obstacle for full and high adoption of this concept.

Secondly, employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices. The analysis of the employees' perceptions has identified several perspectives among the interviewed employees. These perceptions will be summarised according to the practices supported with any evidence from the analysed formal documents that can give more insights or an explanation for these perceptions. Concerning the analysed perceptions towards training. The analysis of employees' perceptions towards this practice has shown a significant degree of satisfaction among the participants about the training programs provided by their employer. There were certain concerns about the content of the training courses as the training needs are not in line with some employee's training needs. However, this is unlikely to affect employees' satisfaction perceptions rather an improvement suggestion. From the document analysis another finding appeared concerning training needs determination, the company lacks a clear detailed fixed policy that explains the procedure by which training needs are determined, this can justify the concern perceptions amongst the interviewees. Moreover, the interviewed front-line employees are most likely to think that training has a positive direct effect on task performance. Noteworthy, training in Waha is partially affected by the unstable current situation and the social relationships. In terms of employees' perceptions towards job description in Waha, the analysis has identified that even though there is a formal JD in this company, which states tasks and responsibilities for each job (from document analysis), employees tend to perceive this JD as informal. The lack of clear formal JD in Waha is likely to affect the other practices such as promotion, which has emerged as another issue during the analysis (from document analysis). Further, participants are likely to prefer updated flexible JD. Furthermore, the interviews with the front-line employees clearly indicated to high positive perspectives towards the effect of a clear JD on task performance.

In performance appraisal, employees are most likely to be concerned about the fairness of performance appraisal practice. The analysis has also shown that the content and procedure such as the criteria by which employees are being appraised matters for the interviewees. In addition, there is an insignificant reliance of pay on performance appraisal. This is because, pay based on performance appraisal has been suspended by the National Oil Corporation NOC (from document analysis) without any explanation. In terms of employees' perspectives towards the effect of this practice on task performance, participants are likely to perceive performance appraisal practice as an effective practice on task performance if implemented fairly. The social relationships are found to negatively affect employees' perceptions towards this practice. Fourth, the exploration of rewards in Waha has shown that

employees perceive that there were no rewards for work in the company, the only reward is the annual increase in the salary, which is granted for employees at the end of the year. Moreover, Participants tend to feel unsatisfied towards the reward strategy in this organisation, they also think that they lack this motivational tool. The document analysis showed that the top management in Waha has recently established a new reward strategy, which is called the employee of the month, this was in 2018. The fifth analysed perceptions were the participation, the analysis of participants perceptions towards this practice shows that there is a high participation among employees, they tend to think that their voices are being heard in their workplace. However, feeling of participation among the interviewed employees is likely to be limited on the lower level. This could be because that the participation is likely to be slightly affected by the power distance cultural factor. Besides, the interviewed front-line employees perceive the participation as significant impactful factor on task performance.

With regards, to employment security Participants are likely to feel secured in Waha Oil Company. Further, there were no dominant perspectives among the participants about the effect of this practice on task performance, they tend to feel even feeling secured can have negative effect on performance. Concerning the internal mobility, the responds of the interviewees show relatively high negative perspectives towards this practice, as they tend to feel that the internal mobility process is vague. Even though participants tend to feel that internal mobility is obscure in their company, they are more likely to perceive it a positive impactful practice on task performance when it is implemented clearly. Notably, the external mobility is also found affected by the social relationship factor as there were mentioning to this socio-cultural factor by the participants.

Thirdly, the relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance. The findings show that there is relatively important relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance. This is because employees' perceptions towards the system' dimensions were relatively high. Moreover, evidences of links between the effect of satisfaction from training and motivation from participation and employment security were found. However, this relationship is moderated by justice and affected by power distance and the content of the studied practices. More specifically, this relationship is also negatively affected by the socio-cultural factors such social and personal connection (Wasta), power distance. The use of social and personal connections such as kinship and favouritism has resulted in lack of perceptions of fairness. Injustice perceptions which mainly surfaced from

distributive, procedural and overall justice have negatively influenced the effect of employees' perceptions towards HPWS on task performance. Moreover, the content of the practices is likely to play an important role in this relationship. Another emerged theme is the lack of consensus that found among the top management concerning their general objectives from deploying the system practices.

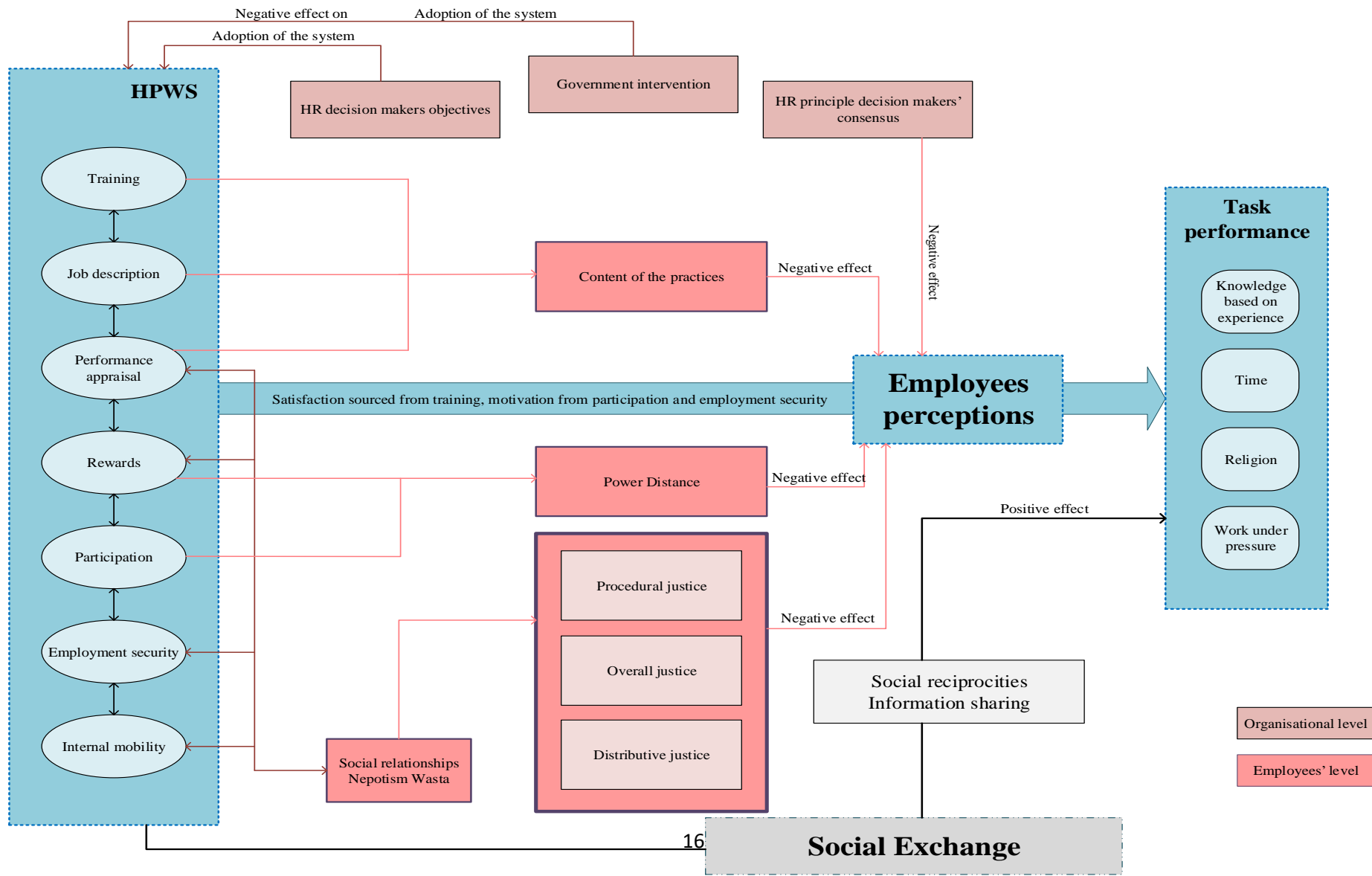
Fourthly, Justice Perceptions. A common view among the participants was that there were concerns about the fairness of practices implementation of the studied practices. These views surfaced mainly in relation to procedural distributive and overall justice. There is evidence suggests that the social relationships in this high collective context may affected the justice perceptions amongst the interviewees. If we turn to the role of justice perception, this aspect is most likely to play a significant moderation role in the relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance. This is because even though employees seem to hold positive perspectives towards the effect of HPWS practices on task performance and the self-evaluation was relatively high, there was a clear evidence of a relationship between the low self-evaluations participants and low justice perceptions.

Fifthly, emerged effective themes. Three broad themes emerged from the analysis that most likely impacted the participants' perceptions towards the studied practice. Concerns regarding the role of social relationships were widespread. This factor is most likely to negatively affect the fair implementation of the practices. The other important finding in this regard, is that there were feelings amongst the participants of the power distance effect, they tend to not accept the power distributions and feel the gap between the organisational levels. Further, the current unstable situation in Libya has also influenced the implementation of certain practices and consequently their perspectives towards them.

Finally, Social reciprocities in the research context. The social reciprocities are found significantly high in the research context and play another important role in information sharing, decreasing the effect of power distance and creating better environment in the work place. The reciprocities are mainly between employees and seem to be less between employees and the employer.

The figure (9) in the next page summarises the findings of the data analysis. The figure shows the direct effect of the HPWS on task performance (blue arrow), this effect basically through three key HPWS dimensions (training, participation and employment security), and these elements provided satisfaction and motivation to employees. Also, it can be noticed

that there are negative effects on both the HPWS adoption and employees' perceptions. These factors are divided into two levels (organisational" brown colour" and employees 'level red colour). Each of these factors is linked with arrow to its main source. Further, the role of the social reciprocities is shown in the bottom as they aid the information sharing in the case study and directly affecting task performance. Finally, the figure below shows the elements of the high task performance that found in the analysis. These are knowledge, experience, finishing tasks in time, working under work pressure and religion.



Chapter 6: Discussion of the findings

6.1.Introduction:

As discussed in the literature review chapter, this research is another effort to understand one of the uncovered aspects in the what so called the HRM black box. It explores the relationship between employees' perceptions towards the high-performance work system practices and task performance. Further, this proximal link between perceptions and employees' performance has been relatively neglected in the literature and rarely previous studied in contexts, other than western countries. Furthermore, the mechanism by which employees' perceptions can affect their performance has not been completely understood yet, as there are many factors that influence this mechanism. Perception of justice is one of the aspects, that claimed to have potential role in this linkage. Therefore, this research asked the following questions that can help to give more insight about this topic.

1. To what extent the HPWS is adopted in the Libyan oil firm?
2. How employees in the Libyan oil company perceive the HPWS practices?
3. How employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices influence their perceived task performance?
4. How do perceptions of fairness affect the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices and perceived task performance?

This chapter discusses the findings and will demonstrate how these findings relate to the previous work in this domain. It is structured according to the research questions. Firstly, it discusses the findings of the uptake of HPWS in the Libyan oil company and the consensus among the Human Resource decision makers. Secondly, it deliberates the analysed employees' perceptions towards the practices (training, job description performance appraisal, rewards participation ,employment security and internal mobility) and their perspectives about the effects of these practices on task performance. Thirdly, it discusses the relationship between the perceptions and task performance. The fourth section discusses the role of the fairness perceptions. The final section deliberates the emerged themes that emerged from the analysis.

6.2.The Extent of the HPWS Adoption:

The findings of this research suggest that there is relatively high adoption of HPWS in Waha. It was discussed that there is a dearth of research on the adoption of HPWS in non-western countries (Rhodes et al.,2008; Budhwar and Sparrow,2002; Budhwar et al., 2018). Also, to the researcher best of knowledge there has been no previous research on the adoption of this system in Libya (see research limitations section 7.5). Despite, the dearth of research on the uptake of this system in Libya, the use of HPWS in the African context has been discussed in certain studies (e.g. Aryee et al., 2012; Ovadje and Muogboh, 2009; Seidu et al., 2013). In this, Seidu et al (2013) argued that the adoption of HPWS in the African organisations is essential to survive in the global marketplace.

Therefore, Seidu and colleagues expected that the African management will do well to adopt this system. Other studies such as (Aryee et al., 2012; Ovadje and Muogboh, 2009) stated that several organisations in Africa have already adopted HPWS. In contrary to Seidu et al (2013), (Marler, 2012; Adeleye. and Anibaba, 2014) have explained that the adoption of the HPWS in the African countries is due to the management consultation between the western and the African organisations. Also, due the fact that many African managers were educated in western institutions, which in turn led to the homogenisation of the used HR practices and systems with the western world. In relation to the uptake of this system, the result of this research is in support of Aryee et al (2012) and the others as it confirms the uptake of this system in one of the Libyan organisations. Besides, this research is in accord with Marler (2012) and Adeleye & Anibaba (2014). This is because it was found that several employees and managers have been trained in the western countries and obtained qualifications degrees from European and American universities, which indicate that the concept of HPWS has been transferred through the education and training processes. To support this, Waha deploys the same bundle of practices that are most commonly used in the HPWSs literature (e.g. Huselid and Becker, 2011), which are mostly conducted in the western countries.

However, because the studied case is a public Libyan company, the oil regulator in Libya intervene in certain practices such as selection, which has made the bundling process and the control over the implementation are not as they should. The intervention of the government in several organisational policies and practices was also mentioned by Almhdie et al (2006). Moreover, several socio-cultural factors such as social relationship and power distance were

found negatively affecting to the implementation of the systems' dimensions and performance. Scholars such as Marler (2012) and Lertxundi & Landeta (2011) has been argued this aspect . The current research highlights the potential sensitivity of this system to cultural factors. Also, it recommends that the contextual differences should be carefully considered before taking decisions regarding the adopting this system.

6.3.Perceptions Towards HPWS Practices:

In respects of employees' perceptions towards the high-performance work system practices, this section is discussing the findings of each studied practice.

6.3.1. Perceptions Towards Training:

As the data in chapter (6) indicate, most of the participants feel proud and distinctive to what the company has provided for them. There was also a high degree of satisfaction towards training among the interviewees (see section5.3.1). In terms of pride perceptions, even though the organisational pride perception has not been widely explored with few exceptions, this perception among employees was linked with several employees' outcomes such as organisational commitment (e.g. Arusteu, 2014; Gouthier, 2011), job satisfaction (e.g. Yamamura, 1999) and motivation (e.g. Garg and Rastogi, 2006). Gouthier (2011) for example, is one of the few authors who have studied the organisational pride perception and recommended wider studies on it. Noteworthy, Yamamura (1999) has considered pride as satisfaction, which can sign also to the degree of satisfaction perception that found among this research's participants. Thus, this research agrees with these few studies about organisational pride and calls for more exploration to deeply understand its influence on performance and how it can be linked to employees attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (see section 7.6). With respect of satisfaction, the finding agrees with the majority of the previous research (e.g. Santos and Stuart, 2003; Combs et al., 2006; Gallie, and White, 1993; Schmidt, 2007; Blum and Kaplan, 2000; Bulut and Culha, 2010) about training. The consistency of the findings with the previous research is not merely in terms of the effect of training on employees' satisfaction, it is also regarding the mechanism by which training can enhance employees' satisfaction. For example, Santos and Stuart, (2003) found that satisfaction perception towards training is mainly derived from the training benefits in enhancing skills and knowledge, which is exactly what was found in this research.

Emerged Perceptions in Training

Training Content:

From the emerged finding, it can be argued that in addition to how employees perceive training, the content of this practice is also important for employees to complement the required effect on performance. In their ground-breaking work, Bowen and Ostroff (2004) introduced this new view for the aspect. They argued that there should be a combination between the content of the practices and the way employees comprehend these practices to gain the preferred impact on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. Moreover, participants tend to have consensus perceptions about this practice as majority of them found satisfied with the implementation of training, nevertheless certain content issues. Therefore, this research agrees with this argument of Bowen and Ostroff and the other subsequent work such as Nishii et al (2008).

External Environment Effect on Training:

The effect of the external environment's changes on HPWS practices, was mentioned in the literature (e.g. Ngo et al., 2011; Wei et al., 2010; Marler, 2012) as an important factor that the organisation should be adapted with. Though, this research is in line with the findings of these studies in terms of the impacts of the external environment on HPWS practices, it however argues that when employees are acknowledged about any factor in the external environment that could affect the practice, the impact of these circumstances can be reduced. This approach was also introduced by several authors in the literature (e.g. Shaw et al., 2003; Colquitt and Chertkoff, 2002). These writers claimed that adequate explanation should be provided to employees to avoid any undesired changes in their attitudes and to reduce the change resistance. This is because participants in this research tend to excuse the employer for the short training, as they consider these circumstances as unavoidable. For example, in document analysis (section 5.3.1.3) the oil regulator in Libya addressed all the oil companies to pause all kinds of abroad delegations; the reasons were explained and justified.

Perceptions Towards the Effect of Training on Task Performance:

The relationship between training and task performance has been discussed from several studies in the HPWS research. Several research has found that training has significant effect on task performance (e.g. Appelbaum et al., 2000; Locke et al., 1984; Shen et al., 2014). The current research found that training in Waha is one of the main motives for participants' performance, because interviewees were found with high levels of satisfaction perceptions

towards this practice. Thus, it far supports the idea that training effect employees' task performance through satisfaction that revealed by several previous research (e.g. Schmidt, 2007; Aziz and Yusof, 2018; Bradley and lee, 2007). Bradley and Lee (2007) for example, found that training on the Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) is significantly linked with satisfaction, which is necessary for the ERP system achievement. This also was found in this research as quoted by an ERP trainee in Waha (section 5.3.1participant 9). However, the relationship between the HPWS and task performance is discussed below, where the self-evaluation task performance is adopted.

6.3.2. Perception Towards Job Description:

This finding in this area is significant in at least two aspects. One is that, it insights the importance of employees' understanding of the HPWS practices in the implementing stage. As in the document analyses, the top management in Waha intends to apply the formal job description (section 5.3.2.2). whereas employees perceive it as informal. This supports the previous research into this brain area, which have emphasised the gap between the intended practices and the actual perceived practices (e.g. Sandars et al., 2014; Wright and Nishii, 2013). Second, according to the participants' perceptions, job description is found the weakest HPWS dimensions in this company as most of the participants understand their tasks by experience (see section 5.4 task performance below), which clearly indicates to the absence of clear job description. Further, concerning the effect of job description on task performance, the participants think that a clear job description can have significant effect on task performance. This has supported the previous research (e.g. Murphy, 2013; O'Grady, 2018) about the essential role of the job description and its link to of task performance. These studies found that clear job description can adequately explain the elements of each task, which in turn enhance performance.

However, this result of deploying informal job description and how can that affect employees' task performance has not been widely discussed in the literature. The only exception in this domain is the study of Morrison (1996), who found that imposing rigid formal job description can lead to more economic exchange rather than social ones between employees and the employer. According to Snape and Redman (2010), Economic exchanges often grounded on contracts terms and conditions, which specify obligations for the required

task performance with no expectations for any performance beyond the contract terms. Even though Morrison studied the effect of certain practices on another aspect of job performance, he is almost in line with some participants' perceptions in the present research, who were found preferring the flexible JD (section 5.3.2). The only contradiction of this study with Morrison's conclusion is that participants in this research justified their preference by the work nature rather than any kind of reciprocities' effects.

6.3.3. Perceptions Towards Performance Appraisal:

It was discussed in the literature review that the results of the performance appraisal practice can directly affect employees' perception towards both procedural and distributive justice (Bowen, 1999; Greenberg and Colquitt, 2013; Mulvaney et al., 2012). The main aspect in performance appraisal practice by which it impacts the fairness' perceptions is that it should meet employees' expectation about the outcomes of this practice (Bowen et al., 1999). The findings of the present research are in agreement with this argument as it was found that participants feel disappointed at the unexpected results they got. This apparently, has caused frustration among the participants and consequently negatively affected their perceived task performance. The same result was concluded by Ihrke (2001), who found that any shortage in the fair implementation of the performance appraisal can lead to frustration. One possible interpretation of this finding, the analysis of data collected by the two data sources (interviews and documents) has not shown any deployment of any principles of performance appraisal fairness that discussed in the literature such as fair hearing, adequate notice or/and evidence-based judgment. Several authors have indicated to the same conclusion (e.g. Haldbrook, 2002; Heffernan and Dundon 2016; Wu and Chaturvedi, 2009). Moreover, performance appraisal in this research is found to be affected by certain social and personal factors (see section 5.3.3.1), this finding is in consistence with Swailes (2013) about the effect of some socio-cultural factors such as the interpersonal likening, political orientations and other social elements of the two parties (rater and ratees), according to Swailes (2013), these factors are the main cause of performance appraisal bias.

Further, as indicated in the analysis, participants mentioned to several aspects concerning the content of the appraisal (section 5.3.3). Even though the performance appraisal form applied in Waha (section 5.3.3.3) includes most of the 10 criteria that mentioned in the literature (e.g. Bernardin and Wiatrowski, 2013) such as quality, quantity, time line, cost

effectiveness and interpersonal impact, there is evidence of concerns about these criteria among the interviewees. This finding is in line with several studies in this area (e.g. Bernardin and Wiatrowski, 2013, Erdogan, 2002), these authors indicated to the importance and the impact of determining the criteria of the performance appraisal and how it should be based on the job analysis. The job analysis in Waha is likely to be weak for two reasons. First, the participants perceive the job description as informal, which is likely due to the absence of the practical deployment of JD. This could be evidenced in some employees' complaints about being assigned in jobs that do not align with their qualifications (section 5.3.2.2). The second reason that highlights the lack of job analysis in the company is the interviewees' complaints from the promotion practice implementation, which is not based on any job description or analysis. Thus, it is most likely that the lack of job analysis has impacted the performance appraisal and boosted the intervention of the social factors. This research is also in agreement with the body of research (e.g. Pichler, 2012; Levy and Williams, 2004) which has emphasised the importance of the social context of the performance appraisal as it is obviously plays an important role in shaping employees' reactions towards this practice.

Concerning employees' perceptions towards the effect of performance appraisal on task performance the finding affirms the post studies (e.g. Alnawafleh et al., 2018) in this regard. For example, Alnawafleh et al (2018) asserted that performance appraisal should be fairly proceeded, so it can positively affect task performance .

Pay Reliance on Performance Appraisal:

Given the dominant perspectives found in this research, which indicate to concerns about the fairness of this practice and the employment of the social relationships by supervisors, the finding of this study confirms the association between trust in supervisor found by previous research (e.g. Baker et al., 1988; Milanowski, 2007; Lawler, 1971) and gaining the intended outcome from the for performance. This is because, participants in this research tend to lack trust in the raters' fair evaluation that mentioned in the section above. The only unexplained aspect is the NOC purpose by stopping the pay for performance strategy (section 5.3.3.3). The researcher can only think about two possible reasons; the effect of the current situation in the country, which caused the announcing of the force- majeure in several oil fields. These circumstances could be what has made the NOC decided to untie the pay from performance as the work load has got lesser. The second reason is that the NOC might be aware of the subjective evaluation and has made this decision to reduce the effect of this

on the suppressed employees. Noteworthy, this can be considered as another assertion to the need for explanation and justification for any decision from the top management, which discussed above (the effect of the external environment) and the alignment with the previous research (e.g. Shaw et al., 2003; Colquitt and Chertkoff, 2002) in this domain.

6.3.4. Perceptions Towards Rewards:

These found perceptions are associated with the lack of the financial rewards strategy in this company. Several reports have shown that rewards can affect employees' behavioural and attitudinal outcomes. However, the lack of rewards is claimed to have a negative effect on employees' perceptions such as feeling inequality and dissatisfaction (e.g. Seitovirta et al., 2017) (e.g. Atif et al., 2014; Masum et al., 2016; Mudali and NKosi, 2015).

The findings of this research are in accord with these recent studies. This is because in addition to the dominant dissatisfactory perceptions, there was mentioning to the social relationships as a negative effective factor, which in turn affected the feeling of equality among the participants. Another interesting effect of lack of rewards in this case study is the feeling of losing motivation (section 5.3.4). The analysis of the data in this research indicates to feelings of losing motivation among the interviewees. This supports the findings of the previous research about the motivational role of rewards (e.g. Cho et al., 2012, Lindner, 1998).

In terms, of employees' perceptions towards the effect of rewards on task performance, employees associated the rewards in Waha with motivation. Despite, the lack of rewards in this company employees tend to focus on the motivational role rewards. This association between motivation and rewards in this research accords with the various research in this regard (e.g. Cameron and Pierce 2002; Bijleveld et al., 2011; Wiesenberger and Shanock, 2003) since employees feel that they lost this motivational tool in their workplace. These studies and others have explored the mechanism of rewards and concluded that rewards usually impact performance through motivation.

6.3.5. Perceptions Towards Participation:

The effect of participations has been studied by several research, considering certain cultural dimensions. In this, while the large body of research asserted the significance of employees' participation and its effect on several organisational attitudes and behaviours (e.g. Zacharatos et al., 2005, O'Donoghue et al., 2011, Cregan and Brown, 2010). Others such as Zhang et al (2011) and Harrison (1992) still cautious, about the moderation role of certain cultural and contextual factors such as power distance on the relationship between participation and any organisational employees' outcomes. The findings in this research are in agreement with the literature argument, about the role of employees' participation and the potential effect of power distance in employees' participation in the higher organisational levels. Moreover, the other important finding of this research the participation found significantly linked with high task performance. This can be clearly noticed from the participants' perceptions towards the effect of this practice on task performance (section 5.3.5.1). This finding seems to consist with those of Brownell and Hirst (1986) and the recent study of Treku and Sun (2018). Who concluded that employees' participation in the decision-making process can motivate employees to show better performance.

6.3.6. Perceptions Towards Employment Security:

The findings are in line with the previous research, in which the importance of perceived job security was highlighted (e.g. Kraimer et al., 2005; Pearce, 1993) these studies have found that perceived job security is essential, when linked to the context to understand the relationship between this perception and employees' performance. In this vein, Gong and Chang (2008) found that employment security is higher in the public owned organisations than private firms. In this research, only few participants were found feeling insecure. This slight variation in employees' perceptions towards this practice is already discussed in the literature. For example, Pearce (1998) explained that it is a psychological state. These participants however, might feel insecure because of some issues going with their superiors, which may make them feel insecure about their positions yet not losing jobs, because in the Libyan public sector it is very difficult to lose a job, which accords with Gong and Chang (2008), asserted that employment security is higher in public sectors. In terms of the effect of employees' perceptions on task performance, the participants were asked about their perspectives towards the effect of employment security on task performance. The findings

indicated to two different dominant perceptions. The first perception is that employment security has positive effect on task performance. This result agrees with several studies in this arena such as Delery and Doty (1996) and Pfeffer (1994). For instance, Pfeffer (1994) argues, that employment security can significantly enhance innovation and productivity. However, the findings in this regard is in contrary with certain other conclusions such as Herzberg (1959), who argued that this practice does not enhance employees' motivation and satisfaction.

Back to the findings of employees' perceptions towards the effect of this practice on performance, another significant finding in this respect is that employment security could have negative effect on task performance. In this, the evidence (section 5.3.6) indicated that when employees feel much secured, they may not take enough care about their tasks' accomplishment. On one hand, this confirm the significant role of employees' perceptions with respect of comprehending the HPWS intended practices by the recipients, which agrees with the process approach discussed in the literature review. On the other hand, this outcome contradicts many important studies such as Boselie et al (2000), Kraimer et al (2005) and even with the resent research conducted in this area such as Pruneda (2017). A possible explanation for this might be the intervention of the social connections in implementing this practice as quoted by participants (section 5.3.6.2 participants 7, 10 and 11). In fact, employees are more likely to feel secured because they know that they can use their social connections to avoid contract termination or any other job treating actions. For example, there are statements in the contracts about the conditions in which an employee may lose his job, which embed the possibility of getting sacked in certain circumstances. However, the use of social relationships can prevent any decisions like that. Another possible explanation is that the company is a public owned firm, where the government usually care about the unemployment rates in public sector. Therefore, Libyan government might not strictly impose this aspect of the regulations. The link between the job security and the unemployment rates have been studied in the literature (e.g. Heckman, 2000).

6.3.7. Perceptions Towards Internal Mobility:

There is relatively dearth of research on the perceived internal mobility in the literature. Only few studies such as Muir and Li (2014), Martin and Peterson (1987) have focused on employees' perceptions towards this practice and its effect on employees' performance. The

dominant perceptions among the participants that found in this research is intriguing as it raises questions about the HRM communication practice in this company. This is because most of the interviewees seem not knowing about the procedure by which this practice is implemented. Therefore, the finding in this research emphasises a deficiency in the communication in this firm because employees are not aware about an important practice that directly related to their work. The issue with communication found is in accord with the conclusion of some work in this area (e.g. Tourish and Hargei, 1996). This study for example, concluded the same result in the British health sector in the UK using a qualitative method. Concerning the perceptions towards the effect of internal mobility on task performance, the data indicted to high positive perspectives about the effect of this practice on task performance. Never the less, interviewees associated these perceptions to the existence of a clear policy of internal mobility. This means that employees are aware about the influence of this practice when implemented properly. Even though, internal mobility has been included as one of the HPWS dimensions in large body of research, there are few studies that studied the effect of this practice on employee's attitudes and behaviours (Gang and Chang, 2008), and on task performance in particular. None the less, internal mobility is reported to have important effect on other employees' attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. In this, research that based on the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Tsui and Wu, 2005) argued that employees usually reciprocate to this practice by increased commitment because internal mobility is often linked with the career advancement. The current research cautiously agrees with these results because it is found in the present research that internal mobility is contextually sensitive practice as it was affected by social factors such as social relationships (section 5.3.7.2). Therefore, we must consider the contextual factor when studying internal mobility.

6.4. Using the lens of employees

This research has adopted a rare approach that totally rely on the employees' point of view. Never the less, certain scholars(Bowen and Ostroff 2004; Snap and Redman, 2010; Wright and Nishii, 2013) have called to widen the research on this aspect, there is dearth of research that applied the lens of employees to study the topic of the HRM black box (Sanders et al., 2014). The finding of this research strongly supports the reliance on employees' perceptions in studying the relationships between the HR practices or/and systems and the employees' outcomes. This conclusion is set for two reason; one is that even though this research has

been conducted in a different cultural and organisational context, the findings of the employees perceptions analysis showed the significance of the employees points of views towards the HR practices and perceptions. The second point is when using the employees' outcomes as a performance indicator, it plausible to study the employees 'outcomes through their perspectives as they are the real final recipient for these practices or systems and the actual results are known through them.

6.5. Perceptions of Fairness:

As mentioned earlier one of the main objectives of this research is to explore the role of fairness perceptions in the relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance. In this study, fairness perception is operationalised in five dimensions: distributive, procedural, interpersonal, informational and overall justice. Even though data show relatively low fairness perceptions among the interviewees, this feeling has mainly surfaced in terms of distributive procedural and overall justice. In this section the findings of all studied dimensions will be discussed.

6.5.1. Distributive Justice:

In the current study, it is found that there are low distributive fairness perceptions (section 5.6.1), which has negatively affected employees' perceptions towards the studied HPWS practices such as performance appraisal, rewards and pay. In performance appraisal, the low feeling of justice among the participants is mainly derived from the result of this practice's outcomes as employees tend to feel that the kinship and nepotism have negatively affected these outcomes. In addition, the lack of the connection between pay and performance appraisal has affected the interviewees perceptions. This is because they tend to feel that the outcomes do not meet the results of the appraisal. Therefore, findings of this research are in agreement with the study of Bowen et al (1999) in this regard. In details, distributive justice in performance appraisal is embedded in three aspects: the results of this process should meet employees' expectations, they should get outcomes that meet the result of the appraisal and these outcomes also should be as they have expected. Moreover, the findings are also in accord with Swailes (2013), about the factors that can make this practice bias. Swailes (2013), pointed out to three factors: personal interest of the evaluator, political orientations of the two parties and the interpersonal liking. However, in terms of the political orientation, though the country is in ongoing political dispute, there was no evidence of any effect of this factor on the bias of the performance appraisal. Whereas, the interpersonal likening and personal interest were the main affecting factors that negatively affected the fairness of this

practice as they are main social relationships elements. In addition, like what Lawler (1981) found, the lack of pay for performance strategy in this company has also made low distributive justice judgment concerning performance appraisal. The result agrees with Lawler about the idea that employees estimate how much they receive and how much they should receive, yet there were no evidences for the comparisons between colleagues. Pay for performance can be also linked with rewards, as data indicated, there was lack of rewards in this company, which is seen by participants as an unsatisfied issue. The short in pay and rewards in Waha caused frustration perceptions among the participants and consequently lack of motivation to accomplish tasks as they should be done. Thus, these findings agree with (Collquitt et al., 2001; Till and Karren, 2011) about the link between distributive justice and satisfactions and consequently task performance.

In other words, the low feeling of fair resource distribution among the interviewees is more likely affected the perception towards certain HPWS practices such as performance appraisal, pay for performance and rewards. The most factors that caused these perceptions are the personal likening and the other aspects of the social relationships. The bias of these practices has resulted in feelings of frustration (e.g. Ihrke, 2001) and dissatisfaction, which in turn negatively affected employees' task performance.

6.5.2. Procedural justice:

The other dimension of justice, that found significantly affected is procedural justice. Data analysis shows significant low perceived procedural justice (section 5.6.2). These feelings amongst the interviewees can be discussed in light of Leventhal (1980) principles that were mentioned in the literature chapter. Leventhal's principles are used to judge whether a practice is procedurally fair. Given the emergence of some socio-cultural factors such as nepotism and personal likening during the analysis of the participants' perceptions towards procedural justice and the complaints about the accuracy of some practices' implementation such as job description and performance appraisal. The most possible explanation for this result can be seen in two of Leventhal's principles; the accuracy of the practices and the extent of the personal interest. In view of this, in performance appraisal, it is found that interviewees tend to feel that the criteria of this practice are not accurate, and the supervisors are not eligible to implement the practice. Moreover, as discussed in the literature, in distributive justice the focus was on the outcome of the practice, while to explain the findings in terms of procedural justice different principles can be used to judge whether performance

appraisal is procedurally fair. One of these principles that found affecting the fairness perceptions among participants is that the appraisal should be based on evidence. because during the analysis the content of this practice has emerged as one of the issues regarding this practice. In addition, this research agrees with Harbi et al (2017) about the effect of the cultural dimensions such nepotism on performance appraisal and consequently perceptions of fairness. This is because the dominant perceptions about the appraisal practice was concerned about the fairness of this practice.

Thus, performance appraisal can be seen as one of the important source of the low procedural justice perceptions in Waha. Further, in line with Wu and Chaturvedi (2009), the lack of pay for performance in this company could provide another explanation for this poor procedural justice perceptions among the interviewed employees. In another vein, in terms of job description, most of the participants expressed the need to upgrading the job description in Waha, which signal to the inaccuracy of this practice. Moreover, this practice is also found influenced by the external environment, which also degraded the accuracy of the job description and consequently led to low procedural fairness' perceptions. However, surprisingly, data showed that there was an insignificant link between the high level of participation perceptions and procedural justice. Here, though the participants were tending to feel that their voice is being heard, there was significant low perceived procedural justice amongst the interviewees. This outcome is in contrary with several previous works (e.g. Tyler, 1988; Colvin, 2006), which emphasised the link between participation and procedural justice. One explanation for this result is that due to the power distance' effect, participation in Waha is limited in the employees' low level units and very weak voice hearing in the higher strategic levels. This could be because of the high-power distance feelings that emerged from the analysis (section 5.3.5.2). Another surprising finding is that while several studies (e.g. Wang et al., 2016; Pare and Tremblay, 2007) asserted that job security and procedural justice have mutual relationship, the current research found no link between the two themes. This is because while perceptions towards job security were found significantly high, the perceptions towards procedural justice were low. This result may be explained by the fact that in this sectoral and cultural context, employees usually tend to perceive that employment security can be sustained using the social relationships rather than an advantage provided by the government (Iles et al., 2012; Harbi et al., 2017).

6.5.3. Interpersonal Justice :

In this study, interpersonal justice dimension is found significantly high (section 5.6.3) as the majority of the interviewees feel they are treated with respect and dignity. Given the lack of the distributive and procedural fairness perceptions found among the participants, the interpersonal justice dimension seems to play an important role in shaping employees' perceptions and provides motivation for employees in this case study (see employees' quotations section 5.6.3). This finding can be discussed in two ways. First in light of the important role of the supervisors in shaping employees' perceptions. Second, the effect of the interpersonal justice perception when integrated to the HPWS. In terms of the supervisor role in shaping employees' perceptions, it was discussed in the literature the important role of line managers and their effect on employees' perceptions and the calls to expand the research in this area by many authors (e.g. Kilroy and Dondon, 2015). In this. Even though many studies (e.g. Bos-Nehles et al., 2013; Woodeow and Guest, 2014; Townsend and Loudoun, 2015) highlighted the impactful role of supervisors in western contexts, the finding of this research agrees with these studies in terms of the significant role of supervisors in shaping employees' perceptions. This can also highlight that the role of line manager is more likely to be non-contextual sensitive as the findings of the present research in this regard is in accordance with the mentioned studies, which were conducted in different contexts. Concerning the interpersonal justice and HPWS practices, the data showed an important effect of interpersonal justice on employees' perceptions. For example, in the participation practice, participants found feel with appreciation the opportunities given to them participating in the decision-making process, which provided them with feelings of respect, their desires and ideas are valued. In turn, they perceive that as a proper treatment by their managers and provided them with motivation to exert better task performance. This is what other research in this area (e.g. Heffeman and Dundon, 2016; judge et al., 2006; Sharlicki and Folger, 2004) have also found, the agreement of this finding is based on the significant high perceptions and effect that found from the data analysis.

6.5.4. Informational justice:

Similar to the finding of the interpersonal justice, informational justice was found importantly high (section 5.6.4). The data indicated that the participants feel that they are being provided with adequate information. Several reports (e.g. Cropanzano, 2007) have shown that the adequacy of information provided can reduce uncertainty and enhance performance. The finding of this research is in consistence with these reports in this area. However, there was no evidence found in this research about the link between the uncertainty

of certain practices and informational justice. For instance, participants tend to lack information about the internal mobility practice as there was a dominant perceptions of vague internal mobility practice. Another example, large section of the interviewees was found uncertain in terms of job description. This can be explained in what some specialists (Madlock, 2008; Kernan and Hanges, 2002) claimed. In this, these authors stated, that at the employees' level, good quality of reciprocities can positively affect employees perceived interpersonal and informational justice and lead to the required employees' outcomes. In agreement with this, the social reciprocities in the employees' level in Waha was found significantly high and importantly helpful in information sharing (see section 6.6 below for details). This is most likely what has reduced the effect of the lack of information in certain practices such as internal mobility and job description. Wu et al (2014) has also studied this aspect and found that there are link between the social reciprocities and information sharing. In addition, this is in line with the process approach (Bowen and Ostroff,2004), which has suggested that high quality of communication is essential for HPWS practice to gain the intended objectives.

6.5.5. Overall justice:

The data gathered from the participants showed low perceived overall justice (section.5.6.5). This finding can be explained by the lack of fairness in several practices' implementation such as performance appraisal, rewards, internal mobility, the clear pervasion of nepotism and favouritism in the case study. Therefore, this research is in agreement with the several findings that discussed in the literature (section 3.4.6). In this domain for example, even though this research did not include selection as a HPWS dimension, there is an agreement with Harel et al (2003) about this aspect because there were low satisfaction perceptions about the fairness of assigning employees to certain jobs. Another striking example, is in performance appraisal, the interventions of Wasta has made employees concern about the fairness of this practice, which they think have affected the accuracy of appraisal outcomes, this is what Snell and Dean (1992) has also found in their study. Moreover, lack of rewards based on performance appraisal was mentioned by Harel et al 2003 as another source of overall justice judgement ways. Thus, we agree with Harel and colleagues in their result. In terms of promotion, this theme was one of the important emerged themes in this research as it was found that employees feel with unfair promotion criteria in this company. This is in accord with Raub (2008) conclusion about the effect of employees' perceptions towards promotion on forming overall justice perspectives. Therefore, performance appraisal,

rewards and promotion are more likely the practices that caused the low over all justice perceptions amongst the interviewed front-line employees. In different aspect, evidence found in this research about considering overall justice as independent construct. This is because participants' perceptions found significantly high towards interpersonal and informational justice. Which means if overall justice is a dependent construct, these high perceptions could have made the perceptions towards the overall justice higher as a result. This finding contradicts the statement of Beugre' and Baron (2001) and Schminck (2009) asserted that interpersonal and procedural justice can predict overall justice perceptions. However, this result supports the conclusion of Nicklin et al (2014) argued that over all justice is an independent dimension.

6.6. Relationship Between Perceptions and Task Performance:

According, to the data analysis findings (section 5.5) a relatively important relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS and task performance was found. In details, despite the negative perceptions from certain participants towards the employment security effect on task performance, a tendency of positive perceptions effects of HPWS practices on task performance were found from the data. Moreover, the analysis of the self-evaluation task performance was found relatively high as half of participants evaluated their task performance as high, whereas the other half were between medium and low. Based on the finding the satisfaction and motivation which mainly sourced from training and participation HPWS dimensions with help of the religion factor, which induced certain participants to exert better task performance. Noteworthy, employees' perceptions were conditional as employees think that HPWS cannot positively affect task performance unless it is implemented fairly and properly. Accordingly, the relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance was found significant and direct (section 5.8). However, the mechanism of this relationship is significantly influenced by certain factors. The first factor that moderates this important relationship is justice. The second factor is the content of HPWS practices. The third factor is the socio-cultural factors such as socio-personal connections (Wasta) and power distance cultural dimensions. These factors that negatively influenced the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS and task performance is discussed below.

In terms of justice, as discussed in the literature review chapter, several reports (Colquitt et al., 2013; Karriker et al., 2009; Li and Cropanzano, 2009; Shao et al., 2013) showed that

justice can play significant role in the relationship between HPWS and performance. The finding of this research is in complete agreement with these reports about the fundamental role of justice. Further, according to Colquitt et al (2013), there is a missing aspect of the mechanism of justice's effect on task performance. The current research found that justice can affect task performance through job satisfaction as evidence found that associated high justice perceptions towards certain HPWS practice with high task performance and vice-versa, which agrees with what Aryee et al (2015) have concluded. More specifically, the prevalence of Wasta and other socio-cultural elements such as kinship, nepotism and personal likening has significantly affected fairness perceptions and consequently diminished the effect of employees' perceptions towards HPWS on task performance. Unfair actions such as predilection to prioritise friends and relatives caused frustration amongst the front-line employees. Consequently, they reciprocate in low task performance. This interesting finding agrees with the post studies in this area (e.g. Branine and Pollard, 2010; Pichler, 2012; Harbi et al., 2017). In sum, perceptions of fairness have played a significant role in the relationship between perceptions towards HPWS practice and task performance, the lack of fairness perceptions among the participants in this study is derived from the existence of strong social relationships in the research context.

The content of the HPWS practices is the second factor that found affecting the mechanism of the HPWS practice's influence on task performance. In addition to the perceptions towards the system, evidence found indicated that the content of the practice of this system is impactful. In this, the analysed perceptions towards practices such training, performance appraisal and job description indicated to issues regarding the content of these practices, which diminished the effect of these perceptions on task performance. For example, even though the perceptions towards the training practice were highly satisfactory (section 5.3.1), the content of this practice matters for the participants. This is most likely due to the lack of clear strategy for training needs determination (section 5.3.1.2). Several authors (e.g. Timmermans et al., 2010; Dobkin, 2007) have emphasised the significance of the training content and the employment of task-oriented training performance. The current research consists with these writers, particularly in terms of aligning the training components with the required tasks. Another instance, interviewees in this case study were found perceiving job description as informal and need to be updated (section 5.3.2). The analysis of the job description's document (section 5.3.2.2) emphasised that there is a formal job description in

this company however. Thus, it is most likely that the job description content doesn't align with the work changes.

Therefore, the findings of this research support the process theory by Bowen and Ostroff (2004). This approach asserted that it is the combination between the content of the practices and how these practices are perceived, which can positively impact employees' performance. More specifically, in addition to the fairness component that suggested in the consistency element of the process approach, the consensus among the HR decision makers about the intentions of the system deployment is another main aspect, that was found significant in this research. In this, the data indicate a lack of agreement among the principle HR decision makers (section 5.2.1) about the strategic goals of the system in Waha. This in turn, has made the disagreement amongst the front-line employees. In other words, taking in account the contextual and cultural differences, it can be mentioned that the consistency part of the process approach is strictly applicable to the current case study.

The last factor that may affected the relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance is the power distance. This cultural dimension has diminished the effect of the HPWS on task performance by effecting the implementation of certain practices in this system. In this vein, even though the participation' perceptions were high, the actual participation is limited in the lower level, thereby, employees seem to lack opportunities to participate in the higher strategic relevant decisions (section 5.3.5). Further, interviewees tend to not accept some decision from the top management and lack information about certain others. As discussed in the literature review chapter, the impact of this cultural dimension was intensively studied (e.g. Brockner et al., 2001; Lam et al., 2002; Jo et al., 2018) in terms of its effect on the relationship between HR practices and several employees' outcomes. Though these studies have come out with inconsistent explanations of the mechanism by which power distance can affect HPWS, besides, they explored the effect of the power distance in different contexts, they all emphasised that it is a significant impactful dimension. This study came out with the conclusion that, in this high-power distance context, the implementation of HPWS is negatively affected. Consequently, the relationship between employees' perceptions towards the HPWS and task performance is diminished.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendation

7.1.Introduction:

This research was conducted to explore an important aspect of the HRM black box that has been yet uncovered in different contexts other than western contexts. As one of the main objectives, it assesses the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS and task performance. To fulfil this aim and the other aims and obtain quality research finding, an appropriate methodology is essential. Therefore, given the main focus of the research on employees' perceptions and to obtain in-depth exploration to research themes and participants subjective thoughts, hybrid deductive and inductive qualitative approaches using semi structure interviews method with case study research design were adopted. In addition, document analysis data source was also employed to aid the data source and explore the formal aspect about perceptions. This chapter aims to round up the thesis and conclude the findings from the data analysis. The chapter will include summary of the thesis to conclude the key arguments in each chapter. The second section will illustrate how the research aims were achieved. The third section will interpret the research contribution. The fourth part of this chapter incorporates research limitation . In the final section suggestions for further research are incorporated.

7.2.Thesis Summary:

The introduction chapter was to introduce the reader to the research topic and the area of the exploration. It incorporated in the first section the HRM black box definition as the mechanism by which HR practices and system can affect performance, which has been one of the ongoing debate in the HRM. Then, an explanation to why it is imperative to uncover this aspect to completely understand the HRM-performance link. Also, it highlighted certain relevant arguments in this area of research such as the level of analysis (organisational and employees levels). The second section in this chapter is the research motivation. In this section the motivations to this research were classified into two aspects. The personal motivations such as the results of the researcher's master's study and the alignments of this study with the research career. Subsequently, the academic inducements for conducting this

work were interpreted. In this, the interest in adding to the existing knowledge about the best practice debate and to contribute to more understanding of the mechanism of the HPWS effect on performance. Also, considering the contextual differences, this study is the first to explore the adoption of this system in Libya,

The second chapter, shed lights on the research context. It illustrated the geographical, demographic and cultural characteristics of Libya. Chapter two comprised an introduction to the HRM in Libya and the effect of the cultural dimensions on the HRM in this country. The effect of these dimensions in this country were introduced. Further, it interpreted how these dimensions differ from the western countries where the concept of HPWS was developed and most of the previous research were conducted, which justifies the decisions to conduct this study in Libya. In the following section in this chapter the importance of the oil sector in Libya was introduced as the case study is one of the biggest companies in this industry in this country. Besides, it presented synopsis about the main companies and information about the case study (Waha oil company). Further, to give more emphasis on the sectoral differences, the second chapter highlighted the characters of the HRM in the oil sector.

The third chapter went through the literature review of the HPWS. In the first sections of this chapter, the concept of HPWS was defined and a historical view of its development was discussed. In the second section, the arguments about the use of this universal concept in the public sector was reviewed. Interestingly was found that the implementation in the public sector differ from the private one because of the different HRM strategies, policies, objectives. Thus, there has been an ongoing debate about what are the outcomes of HPWS practices that can be generalised. The third section in this chapter showed the theoretical underpinning of this concept. This section illustrated the theoretical suggestions to how HPWS intervene in enhancing performance. It also presented the social exchange theory and justified its adoption in the present research. In this, The HPWS was found to be important contributor in the social process, also, the ability of this theory to explain the effect of this system in a collective context where the social criteria are more likely to be high influential. Then, in the followed section, the links between HPWS and performance was discussed. This section showed the debate on the effect of HPWS on both organisational and employees' performance, it also highlighted the neglection of studying this relationship at the employees' level, which in turn led to poor understanding to the mechanism by which this system can influence performance.

The relationship between task performance and HPWS and arguments in this regard were

reviewed in the fourth part. This section incorporates the inconsistency of the previous research on this relationship and the need for more research in this area. To understand the reliance on employees' perceptions and experience in the current research, the sixth section in this chapter introduced the process approach. It highlighted its dimensions and emphasised the debate about its capability in different contexts such as Libya. A review of the post qualitative studies in this area was conducted. This review concluded that there has been dearth qualitative research on the effect of HPWS on performance and the scholars' calls to apply more qualitative approaches in exploring the HPWS-performance link.

The fourth chapter is a review of the justice literature. In this chapter, the development of this concept was explained and defined. The justice dimensions in this research were discussed in the following section. It is found that justice is usually conceptualised in four facets: distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational. However, overall justice has attracted the specialist attention in the last 10 years as another justice dimension. In the review it was also found that there has been a debate about whether overall justice dimension can be considered as independent dimension. The link between justice and HPWS and task performance in the literature was reviewed. It is concluded that justice could play a significant role in the relationship between HPWS and task performance, especially in the Libyan context as the social aspects such as Wasta can negatively affect employees' perceptions. Besides, the adoption of the social exchange theory and justice was discussed and justified. In this the social reciprocities can explain employees' judgment on what can be just or unjust.

The methodology and method were presented and discussed in the fifth chapter in this thesis. In this chapter, the research paradigm is illustrated in the first section, whereby the research ontology and epistemology were incorporated. In this, it was shown that subjective ontology and interpretive epistemology is most suitable stance for this research to achieve its aims and answering the questions, while the second section discussed the adoption of the qualitative case study research design in this research. The third part explained the research approach. Here, to obtain a holistic understanding to the research them, a mix of deductive and inductive approaches were applied. In this, the deductive approach was deployed to explore the theoretical aspect and the predetermined themes such as the justice construct, while the inductive approach was used to allow any relevant themes and factors to emerge. The research method was interpreted in detail in the fourth unit, this research used telephone semi-structured interviews to investigate participants' perceptions and the document data

source to explore the formal side in the case study. The data collection techniques including sampling strategy were incorporated. In the fifth section it was discussed that the use of purposive convenience sampling was applied. Then the adoption of the thematic data analysis approach was justified as it is more flexible and can aid obtaining both explicit and implicit meanings from the obtained data. The coding steps were explained in the sixth part. The final part includes the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the used method.

Chapter six included the findings of the data analysis, whereby they were structured according to the research questions. In this, the following interesting research findings were presented. First, it was confirmed that there is a relatively high adoption of HPWS in the case study as all elements of this system were evidenced. Second, in relation to the relationship between employees' perceptions and task performance, it was concluded that there is a direct effect of employees' perception towards HPWS practices on their task performance. Third, justice was found playing an important moderating role in the relationship between employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices and task performance. Further to these findings, several socio-cultural aspects such as the social relationships and power distance have emerged as influential factors in this relationship. In terms of the social exchange, another intriguing finding is that the social reciprocities in the case study were found to contribute in the HPWS-performance link as an information sharing method.

The seventh chapter was the discussion of the findings. In this chapter a deep discussion for the answers of the research questions and demonstration of how the findings relate to the previous work in the same area of this research.

7.3. The Accomplishment of the Research Aims:

The research questions that are listed in the first chapter (section 1.4) were adequately addressed. Therefore, accomplishing the research aims (section 1.3). To achieve these aims several researching steps were taken. First reviewing the relevant literature on the HPWS, justice and task performance. For example, in section (2.2) the concept was defined and its elements were identified. This review of the relevant literature has provided a significant insight and helped the researcher organise the research method's questions. Second these questions were tested in the pilot study and important amendments were made in the main interviews' questions. Third, 16 front-line employees, three supervisors and three HR key persons answered the questions about these themes. For example, in relation to the

employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices, only the front-line employees were interviewed, while explore the themes such as the synergy of the practices and the general objectives the participants from the three levels were recruited. In addition, the documents data source was utilised to obtain the formal aspect of these themes. All the answers and data that obtained from the documents were thematically analysed. There have been four aims of this research.

The First Aim :

“To find out the extent of the adoption of the HPWS in Waha oil company”.

To achieve this aim, the two elements of the HPWS system were identified. Namely, the systematic structure of the deployed practices and the performance enhancing orientation of these practices. In terms of the systematic structure of the practices, all the participants were asked about the extent of the interdependency of them. In addition, several formal documents were analysed to find out the extent of these practices synergy. The findings indicated to high interdependency and synergy among the studied practices. Concerning the performance orientation of these practices, the main three HR key persons in the company were interviewed to find out their general objective from deploying the practices. Besides, the formal documents were explored to obtain more understanding to this dimension. According to the analysis of the obtained data from the two sources, the top management intended to enhance employees' performance by deploying the HPWS practices. Further, the case study deploys the same practices that are most commonly used in the HPWSs literature. Thus, these evidences indicated to high relatively adoption of the HPWS in the case study.

The Second Aim:

“To find out how high-performance work practices are perceived by employees”

This aim was attained drawing on employees' perceptions, which were obtained through in-depth interviews with front-line employees who do not have any supervision role, so perceptions from pure recipients to the HPWS practices could be obtained. The participants thoughts were inductively analysed to ensure a holistic comprehension to this important theme in the research. Findings suggested that interviewees hold different thoughts for different practices. In this, some deductively determined themes such as satisfaction were found and certain emerged perceptions (e.g. social relationship role) were emerged. For example, while participants were found satisfied from the efforts the employer made in training and benefits they have gained from the training courses they have attended, they were concerned about the performance appraisal fair implementation. Another instance,

participants tended to feel positively towards participation as they feel that their voice is being heard in the decision-making process. However, they are more likely to feel that internal mobility practice is vague. The variation of some perceptions among front-line participants was found associated to the inconsistency among the top management objectives, which confirmed the process theory approach that adopted in this research as an approach to investigate the research themes.

The Third Aim:

“To assess the relationship between the employees’ perception of HPWS and their task performance”.

The link between HPWS and performance is one of the unfolded HRM black box aspects. Thus, one of the main aims of this research was to assess this relationship in different context that has been neglected. To accomplish this aim, the researcher went through several stages. The first stage participants were asked about their perceptions towards the effect of studied HPWS practices on their task performance. The answers for these questions were analysed and a tendency of high positive perceptions among the interviewees was found. The HPWS tend to positively affect employees task performance through satisfaction, which mainly sourced from training dimension and motivation that mainly coming from the participation and employment security. Moreover, the high social reciprocation among employees in the lower organisational level has contributed positively by enhancing work environment and sharing work information. In the second stage, another step to ensure the reliable results in terms of the task performance evaluation was taken. In this, in consistency with this research orientation that relied on employees’ perceptions which mainly originated from the process approach (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004), the researcher asked the interviewees to evaluate their own task performance (self-evaluated). In the third step, a close analysis and comparisons between the perceptions towards the practices and perceived task performance was conducted. The findings from the two steps were mostly the same as there were a tendency of high task performance amongst the interviewed employees. Nevertheless, third of the participants evaluated their task performance as low. The result also indicated to important relationship between these two themes. However, this relationship is being impacted by certain cultural factors. In this high collective context, the social relationships such as kinship and friendships have affected the implementation of certain practices in the case study.

The Fourth Aim:

“To explore the role of perception of fairness in the relationship between HPWS practices and employees’ task performance”

This aim was adequately accomplished by conducting a holistic exploration to the participants perceptions towards five justice dimensions. To do this, distributive, procedural, interpersonal, informational and overall justice were explored. The findings of the analysis showed high feelings of injustice amongst the interviewees. These perceptions mainly surfaced from the distributive, procedural and overall justice dimensions. However, the interpersonal and informational justice were found high. Evidences have been found of link between the thoughts of low feeling of fairness among the interviewees and their task performance. To support this, all the low self-evaluated task performance participants were found with high thought of injustice. These perceptions were mainly sourced from the prevalence of the personal connections (Wasta) in the research context, which has led to low feeling of fair implementation of the practices. Therefore, perceptions of fairness are most likely to play a significant moderating role in the relationship between the HPWS and employees perceived task performance as a direct link was found between the two themes.

7.4. Research Contribution:

This part of this chapter emphasises the contribution to the existing knowledge of this study. The contribution of this study is highlighted in three parts.

7.4.1. Contribution in the Theoretical Level:

One of the biggest contributions of this study has been the additional insight about the mechanism by which HPWS’ effect on employees’ task performance (*the how question*). It has proved that employees’ perspectives and experiences are significant to the HPWS and managements should take them as one of the main outcomes in the organisation. This intriguing finding may redirect the policies makers to give more attention to how employees perceive the HPWS practices. Accordingly, the decision makers may need to make amendments to polices and/or practices to align them with employees’ perspectives. (see also research recommendations)

Moreover, another aspect of the contribution in this area is the application of the process approach in investigating one of the important areas in the HRM black box. In this, the current study contributed to the debate about the content vs process approach. This is because, as the first study to apply this approach in the Middle east and North Africa, it expands our knowledge about the applicability of this approach in wider range of research including different themes and contexts. For instance, Sanders et al (2014) have used the process approach to HRM and concluded that the HRM black box is uncovered yet and more research on the content and process approach are needed (section 4.4). The link between the intended and the actual practices has been given more insight in this research using the psychological process by which employees understand the intention of the management in deploying the practices, which also provides an additional support for Bowen and Ostroff (2004) approach as the finding indicated that the process approach is applicable to the public Libyan context in the consensus dimensions in particular. Further, the finding of this research approved that employees' actual experience of HPWS practices is affected by the consensus among the management about the intention of implementing the practices. Furthermore, this research has also shown that it is the combination of process and content of the system that can create system effectiveness. Thus, the policies makers in the company can benefit the finding of this research to ensure that there are balanced efforts towards both the content and psychological effect of the HPWS practices on employees. This can be accomplished by continues process of constructive feedback. This can aid reducing the gab that found between the top management intention and the actual practices as obtained through employees' experiences.

This research has also identified perception of fairness as a significant impactful theme by confirming its important moderating role in the selected case study. It has been proved that justice can affect employees' perceptions towards the HPWS implementation. This finding is significant in two aspects; it has shed lights on the significant role of perception of justice in the relationship between HPWS and task performance. Further, the findings have identified the link between perceptions of fairness and the cultural context. In this, there has been calls for more exploration of the contextual justice from several authors (Pichler, 2012; Schyns and Day, 2010). Therefore, the current research has succeeded to contribute to add to our existing knowledge in this area of research, which can also open doors for more attention to this aspect in such context. Besides, the findings of this research have brought out to the light the significant role of the supervisors in shaping employees' perspectives, as

it was found that both interpersonal and informational justice, which are mainly focusing on line-managers in treating subordinates with respect and provide them with adequate information. These finding can persuade the decision makers in Waha to initiate policies that can actually execute justice in this company and reduce the effect of the social relationships that negatively affected the fair implementation of the HPWS practices. Further, according to the findings, supervisors should have greater roles in this regard.

Relatedly, in one of the main contributions in the area of justice research, this study has shown that overall justice is most likely to be independent justice dimension (see section 7.5.5 for detailed discussion). It was discussed in the section (3.3.4) that there is ongoing debate in the literature about whether overall justice is dependent and can be predicted by procedural and interpersonal justice dimensions (e.g. Beugre' and Baron, 2001; Schmink, 2009) or it is independent as fifth construct of justice (e.g. Nicklin et al., 2014). Thus, the finding of this research has expanded the knowledge in this regard and put a stepping stone for more research in this area of research in Libya.

Another important contribution is concerning the best practice debate. Though the concept of HPWS is claimed to be universal, the applicability of this system in the Libyan context, which has different cultural complexity, has not been explored. In turn, the how and why aspects of its effect on performance in other countries remain uncovered. This is because the adoption of the HPWS has not been adequately investigated in Libya yet. This research contributed by identifying the extent of this concept adoption in Libya. Thus, it adds to our accumulating knowledge about the uptake of HPWS in one of the biggest oil public firms in Libya. This can also expand the adoption of this system in other organisations in Libya.

Last but not the least, one of the intriguing findings in this regard is the reciprocations in information sharing amongst the participants, whereby employees tend to exchange formal and informal information in the work place. This is more likely has replaced the weak communication system in Waha. This interesting finding can be taken as stepping stone for further research on the link between information sharing and the cultural characteristics in Libya. In particular, the effect on communication in the Libyan organisational contexts.

7.1.1. Contribution to the Methods:

The current study has made two contributions to the methodology that has been used in investigating HPWS. Chapter (4) has discussed number of the critics in methodological issues that appeared in the previous research in the area of HPWS (section 4.2). These critics

include the level of analysis applied, and the performance measurements adopted. This research attempted to overcome these disadvantages by adopting two sources of data and qualitative approach to obtain in-depth understanding to employees' perceptions towards HPWS practices and performance, which allowed the participants to explain their thoughts and for more relevant themes to emerge.

Several critics (e.g. Legge, 2001) have pointed to the incapability of the positivistic stance in the prior research on HPWS. The critics claimed that this research's design has ignored some difficulties to measure themes. Thus, it was unable to unfold this aspect in the HRM black box. Moreover, quantitative data using the survey method was dominant. Several scholars (e.g. Fleetwood and Hesketh, 2010) asserted, that the link between HPWS and performance is subjectively complicated, and it can only be brought to the light by qualitative approaches, others directly called for applying qualitative approach to answer the how and the why questions concerning HPWS and gain more detailed understanding about any related issues. The use of the in-depth semi-structured interviews in the current research has allowed the researcher to obtain detailed understanding of the psychological comprehension of the front-line employees about this system and its practices. Moreover, the document analysis has helped in gaining a clearer picture about the top management objective and the formal side that may shaped the participants' perceptions. For example, the use of the in-depth interviews enabled the researcher to spot the link between each practice and fairness perceptions. In addition, the use of the document analysis helped identifying, specifying and explaining certain top management objectives that they may did not mention during the interviews, which has also increased the reliability of the method applied. Another point, the inductive approach has allowed for the emergent for many significant intervenient themes such as (Wasta) and factors such the religion in shaping employees perceptions and in affecting their task performance. Therefore, the deployment of this method has provided more evidence to the priority that should be given to the qualitative approaches when exploring employees experience towards HR practices and in exploring the gap between the intended and actual practices.

An additional contribution is the level of analysis in this research. Even though, the research is mainly at employees' level, the organisational level was explored in terms of the general objective to find out whether they intend to enhance employees' performance by adopting the HPWS practices. also, to assess the extent of the systematic structure of the studied practices. Besides, the adoption of the both deductive and inductive approach has allowed to

another important topic to surface. In this, the consensus among the HR decision-makers about their objective and the link between these consistency and employees experience could be assessed. This is because, according to the process approach adopted in this research, there should be a consensus among the key HR persons in terms of objective and messages they intend to convey to employees in order to yield consensus employees' perceptions. In doing so, the current study has bridged the two levels, which was intensively required in the HRM research, see Sanders et al (2014) and Wright and Nishii (2013).

Moreover, in terms of task performance, this research has provided more insight on the adoption of the self-evaluated task performance. In this regard, in accordance with the research ontology, and due to the critics that the previous research on the link between HPWS and performance have received concerning performance measurements adopted. This research adopted the self-reported task performance as a performance indicator. This setting was made to overcome issues surfaced in adopting managerial level in this part. For example, Gust (2017) and guest (2001) has claimed that managers are subjective judges and do not pay enough attention to employees' wellbeing and reactions. Further, Judge et al (2001) have mentioned that task performance is directly related to performance more than other indicators such as satisfaction and commitment. Thus, task performance is considered as more reliable indicator than the other nun performance measurements adopted in most previous research. This has extended the existing knowledge about the adoption of the self-evaluation task performance as performance indicator especially in oil industry.

7.1.2. Contributions in the Practical Level:

The findings of this study can help HR practitioners in organisations in acknowledging the significant role of the implementation of HPWS and that it can positively affect the performance. In this regard, this research has clearly showed that the presence of the HPWS practices can have negative impact on employees' performance if not implemented fairly. Waha Oil Company can utilise the findings of this research to design an effective system that taking in account fair implementation of the system.

As mentioned earlier one of the important contribution in this study is the more lights it has shed on the role of the supervisors in having effective HPWS. This is because it has shown that supervisors are essential in shaping the employees' perceptions and consequently affecting their task performance. For example, the two justice dimensions that directly related to supervisors' treatments were found high. However, employees were found concerned about the fairness of supervisors in the performance appraisal. Thus, a key

challenge is motivating supervisors to implement the practices of this system in fair way, so it gives the maximum positive effect on employees' perceptions and performance. Two suggestions to tackle this issue, one is to establish intensive training to line-managers in how to implement HPWS practices, which can expand their knowledge on the features and benefits of such system. Secondly, is to make important changes in the process and procedures such as performance appraisal in the company to reduce the reliance on the personal subjective judgement. These changes should be based on systematic numerical approaches, so the effect of the social relationships can be reduced.

The second contribution of this study in this regard is that it emphasised the negative role of the social relationships and power distance in the company. These two factors have negatively impacted the implementation of the system practices. Therefore, management in Waha can utilise this finding in overcoming these two cultural issues to maximise the required impact of this system. For example, better communication system, which enables employees for more participation in the higher and more opportunity for feedback is most likely to essential. In this regard, the Enterprise Resource planning (ERP) system that the company is working on can be one of the solutions as it will ease the communication process between organisational levels inside the firm.

Another contribution for the practitioners is concerning the validity of the universalist statement of the HPWS, which assume that all practices can be applied to any organisation or group of employees. This research showed that these claims can be cautiously considered as there were several contextual and cultural factors that prevent the maximum utilisation of HPWS in this Libyan public company. Thus, we suggest that the assumption of the best practice should not be adopted in separate of the contextual and cultural consideration. Instead, when designing an organisational HR system, it should be based on a realistic organisational vision that taken in account the internal and external cultural characteristics.

7.2. Research Limitations:

Conducting an academics research usually associated with some constrains. This research is not an exception. The limitations that faced this research has been taken in consideration have not affected the findings of the research. However, they might be useful for other researcher in the same area to attempt to tackle them. The research limitations are as follows:

- Due to the nature of this study, it is important to emphasise that the research was limited in both time and location (case study) and it only relied on the perceptions of

the participants. Moreover, because of the transitional period that Libya is experiencing now, the time played another limitation factor. Therefore, longitudinal research conducted by different researchers can highlight different matters to the issues found in this study.

- Another limitation is concerning the gender of the participants. Even though the majority (84%) of the Waha employees are males (NOC human resource annual report 2013), all the participants in this research were males. Due to the high masculinity cultural orientation in Libya, which do not allow women to meet or talk to strangers, the researcher faced difficulty to recruit any female employees'. However, this could not affect the findings of the research as females only represent 16% from the employees.
- There was a lack of literature on the HRM black box in Libya and to the researcher best of knowledge there was no literature on the HPWS in particular. Therefore, no prior knowledge about this area were available, which slightly affected the deductive approach of this study and lessen the ability for any comparison between the findings of this research and previous studies to come out with any potential improvements. However, the pilot study has helped the researcher to identify more primary information about the context, which significantly helped in tackling this issue.

7.3.Recommendations for Further Research:

This study is one single PhD four-year time project and it is commonly restricted to what can be achieved in this time. A significant result of such research is a set of new questions that can propose other ideas for more research in the field of HRM. Therefore, this research suggests the following topics for further research.

Due the ongoing changes in Libya, which in turn can have profound changes on the nature of the managerial work, and due the limitation of the time of the current study. This research suggests conducting a longitudinal research in this area to explore the relationship between employees' perceptions and their performance. This kind of research can come out with more detailed findings that may shed lights on the effect of the stability in the external environment on the causal relationship between HPWS and performance. Moreover, HPWS is relatively new concept in the Libyan management. Thus, more research on other institutions can be beneficial for more understanding of this concept adoption and the

mechanism of its effect on performance. This can be done on one of the private organisations.

The findings of this research indicated to the applicability of the process approach on the case study, which offers starting point for more research on this approach in Libya. This is for the reason that, the main focus in this research was on the consensus dimension of this approach. Thus, a research that specifically to examine this approach will provide more contribution to our existing knowledge about the applicability of this approach in other Libyan firms.

Another recommendation is concerning the use of employees' perceptions in understanding the mechanism of the HPWS effect on performance. The analysis indicated to potential impacts of the employees work nature on the perceptions. Therefore, the relationship between the work nature and perceptions towards HR practices can be an area of further research, which can bring to the light other potential factors that may play a role in shaping employees perceptions towards HR practices.

This research has taken the lead to explore the effect of justice in the relationship between HPWS and performance, which has made stepping stone for more research in this important topic in the Libyan context. Especially, the findings indicated that the cultural dimensions are one of the main sources of injustice perceptions. Thus. Further research in the link between each cultural factor and perceptions of justice is essential. Further, another research in this area can include the overall justice as fifth dimension so it enriches the argument in this domain.

The link that found between social reciprocations and information in this research indicated to an additional potential aspect of the social exchange, which is reciprocating in information sharing among employees. Particularly, in association with the absence of effective information system in the organisation. These kinds of social reciprocations are more likely to have impact on the organisational work structure and policies. Thus, further investigation in this area may enrich the debate in the literature (e.g. Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Chernyak and Rabenu, 2018) on the social reciprocations norms and their effect.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: The Interviews questions

Employees' questions

Training and development

Q1: Have you received formal training?

If the answer is yes: What do you think about the training sessions you have received?

If the answer is no: Why do you think that you have not been trained and what do you think about that?

Q2: Have these training sessions impacted your in-role performance?

If the answer is yes: How do you explain this impact? Can you give examples please?

If the answer is no: Why do you think that it did not have any effect on your performance?

Q3: have you received any other development practices?

If the answer is yes: what are they? What do you think about them?

Q4: Do you want to add anything about training?

Job description

Do you know the term Job description?

Q1: Is there a job description in this company?

If the answer is yes: is it formal or informal JD?

If the answer is no: Why do you think that there is no job description?

Q2: Do you know your job description?

If the answer is yes: What do you think about the job description in this company?

If the answer is no: Why do you think that you are not aware about your job descriptions?

Q3: Do you think that a clear job description has any effect on your in-role performance?

If the answer is yes: How? Can you explain please?

If the answer is no: Why? Can you explain please?

Performance appraisal

Q1: Do you receive formal performance appraisal in a routine basis?

If the answer is yes: What do you think about it?

If the answer is no: How your performance is evaluated?

Q2: Who is responsible to evaluate your performance?

Q3: Do you think that your pay relies on your performance appraisal? Can you give examples?

Q4: Does the performance appraisal process affect your in- role performance?

If the answer is yes: How? Can you explain please?

If the answer is no: Why?

Rewards system

Q1: Have you received any rewards for any work you have done?

If the answer is yes: Why you have received this reward/s?

If the answer is no: Can you explain why you did not receive any?

Q2: what do think about the reward strategy in this company?

Employment security

Q1: What do think about the employment security in this company?

Q2: Do you think that employment security can affect your in-role performance?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Participation

Q1: What do you think about your participation in the decision making process?

Q2: Are there any initiative that can involve you in the decision making process?

Q3: Do you think that there is any link between participation and your in-role performance?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Internal mobility

Q1: What do you know about the term internal mobility?

Q2: Do you think that there is clear process for your internal mobility?

If the answer is yes: What do you think about the process?

If the answer is no: Why do you think so?

Do you think that there is any link between internal mobility process and your in-role performance?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Is there any other practices in this company?

HPWPs synergy and fairness

Q1: Do you think that practices employed in this firm are interconnected?

If the answer is yes: How?

If the answer is no: Why?

Q2: In wider perspective, what do you think about the practices?

Q3: How do you perceive the fairness of these practices?

Q4: Do you have anything to add in this regard?

Organisational justice

Q1: What does the term organisational justice means to you?

Distributive justice:

Q2: What do you think about the fairness of resources' allocations in this company?

Procedural justice:

Q3: What do you think about the fairness of the process of allocating these resources?

Interpersonal justice:

Q4: How do you see the treatment you receive from your supervisor?

Q5: What do you think about the impact of this treatment on your in role-performance?

Informational justice:

Q6: How do evaluate the information you receive about your tasks from your supervisor?

Have you came across any unfair incident in this company?

If the answer is yes: what was it about? How that effected your task performance?

If the answer is no: Apart from you, is there any kind of injustice?

Overall justice:

Q7:How do you see the overall justice in the company?

Q8: Do you think that fairness can affect your task performance?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Task performance

Q1: How do you evaluate your in-role performance?

Q3: why you think that?

Q2: do you think that your performance can be improved?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Social reciprocities (for employees+ supervisor+ managers)

Q1: What do you think about the social reciprocities in this company?

Q2: Is there any influence of the social relationships on employees' task performance?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Supervisors' questions

Q1: Do you think that practices employed in this firm are interconnected?

If the answer is yes; can you explain please?

If the answer is no: why?

Q2: What do you know about the term organisational justice?

Q3: What do you think about the fairness of resource allocation in this firm?

Q4: What do you think about the process by which these allocation are allocated?

Q5: Do you think that your subordinates are treated fairly?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Q6:What do you think about the overall justice in this company?

Social reciprocities (for employees+ supervisor)

Q1: What do you think about the social reciprocities in this company?

Q2: Is there any influence of the social relationships on employees' task performance?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Managers' questions

Q1: What are your objectives from deploying these practices?

Q2: What kind of messages do you want to send to employees through these practices?

If the answer is no: why?

Q3: do you think that the practices adopted in this company are interdependent?

If the answer is yes: can you explain how?

If the answer is no: why?

Appendix 2: The obtained formal approval from the NOC



دولة ليبيا المؤسسة الوطنية للنفط

التسجيل : 2016/70
الملف : 2
التاريخ :
الموافق : 2016-2-9

Dear /Ezedden Ahmed

With Reference to your request in conducting a field research in Libya, Specifically on those operational companies owned by the National Oil Corporation (NOC).

We are confirming that this research work can be undertaken in a very safe and suitable environment.

We can also ensure that the full support will be provided by the Human Resources General Department (HRGD).

Please do not hesitate for any further information and help, and future contacts must be made through the HRGD of the NOC.

Sincerely Your's

SAAD.MOHAME

Employee Relations Department Manager



شارع بشير المصداوي (ميدان جنة العريف) طرابلس - ليبيا - هاتف : +218.21.3345700 - 09 / +218.21.3337141- 44

Appendix 3: The new reward strategy in Waha

OPS Committee Members
ABS
HR-Original.

WAHA OIL COMPANY شركة الواحة للنفط
مراسلات الشركة الداخلية
INTRACOMPANY CORRESPONDENCE



To : All Employees of WOC. (Distribution I) إلى : جميع مستخدمي الشركة (توزيع رقم 1)
From : Ahmed Abdallah Ammar من : أحمد عبد الله عمار
Chairman Management Committee رئيس لجنة الإدارة
Date : 07/01/2018 التاريخ : 2018/01/07 ميلادي
Subject: Reward for Employee الموضوع : مكافأة تشجيعية لمستخدم

As a recognition from the company and to raise the morale of the employee, who provides services or works to help improve the methods of work or raise the efficiency of performance or save on expenses or achieved a brilliant leadership of a team was assigned to the completion of work or project or was part of a team was dedicated and distinctive in the performance of his work As well as dedicated in his day-to-day work and keen to implement it diligently and faithfully, the Management Committee decided to grant an encouraging reward to those chosen as the Employee of the month at the company's various locations.

تقديراً من الشركة ورفعاً لمعنويات المستخدم الذي يقدم خدمات أو أعمالاً تساعد على تحسين طرق العمل أو رفع كفاءة الأداء أو توفير النفقات أو حقق نجاح باهر في قيادة فريق عمل تم تكليفه بإنجاز عمل أو مشروع أو كان من ضمن فريق عمل وكان متفانياً ومميزاً في أداء عمله قررت لجنة الإدارة منح مكافأة تشجيعية لمن يتم إختياره مستخدم متميز خلال الشهر بمواقع الشركة المختلفة.

It is also granted to the employee in the service category as a result of his excellence in the work and the tasks assigned to him with his commitment to the ethics of the public service, his preservation of the company's property, and his dedicated and positive work.

كما تمنح للموظف ضمن الفئة الخدمية نتيجة تميزه في الأعمال والمهام الوظيفية المكلف بها مع إلتزامه بأخلاقيات الوظيفة العامة ، ومحافظة على ممتلكات الشركة ، وعمله المتفاني وإيجابيته.

The field or port manager at a meeting that includes all the heads of the sections choose between the candidates and select the employee of the month in their location. The company headquarters in Tripoli and its branch in Benghazi will select one candidate during the first meeting of the operations committee after the end of the month.

ويتولى مراقب الحقل أو الميناء خلال إجتماع يضم جميع رؤساء الأقسام المفاضلة بين المرشحين و إختيار مستخدم الشهر بموقعهم أما مقر الشركة بطنرابلس وفرعها بينغازي فيتم إختيار مرشح واحد بينهما خلال أول إجتماع للجنة العمليات بعد إنتهاء الشهر.

Nominations shall be submitted to the Management Committee during the first week of the following month effective January 2018.

تقدم الترشيحات إلى لجنة الإدارة خلال الأسبوع الأول من الشهر الذي يليه. وذلك اعتباراً من شهر يناير 2018 م.


أحمد عبد الله عمار
Ahmad Abdallah Ammar

Appendix 4: Oil production decrease in Libya

إنتاج النفط الخام حسب المجموعات العاملة Production of Crude Oil by Operating Groups

Table No. (40)
In Millions of Barrels

جدول (40)
بملايين البراميل

Operating Groups	During							نسبة مساهمة المؤسسة الوطنية للنفط National Oil Corporation %	المجموعات العاملة
	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008		
Mellitah Oil (E.N.I)	38.9	47.5	72.7	30.4	102.2	94.9	107.0	85.5	مليحة للنفط (إيني)
Arabian Gulf	33.8	70.6	118.6	50.2	147.3	146.6	158.1	100.0	الخليج العربي
Sirte	20.6	24.6	23.7	5.5	31.7	31.4	33.4	100.0	سرت
Harouge (Veba)	4.8	14.6	30.0	8.4	24.8	27.3	34.8	88.0	الهرج (فيبا)
Waha	20.7	70.4	107.8	20.8	124.6	121.1	127.0	59.2	الواحة
Zuweitina	1.6	11.1	15.4	7.7	20.9	19.7	20.9	88.0	الزويتينة
WinterShall	3.1	16.4	30.5	8.8	26.0	31.8	40.0	51.0	وينتر شل
Mabruk (Total)	15.7	22.0	24.7	8.4	21.0	18.2	11.6	50.0	المبروك (توتال)
O.M.V	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	65.0	أو.م.في
Akakus (Repsol)	36.0	85.4	107.3	38.4	117.1	101.2	110.5	88.0	أكاكوس (ريپسول)

Appendix 5: Performance appraisal form and criteria

شركة الواحة للنفط
WAHA OIL COMPANY
تقرير تقييم الأداء
PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL REPORT
الوظائف الإدارية والكتابية
ADMINISTRATIVE & CLERICAL JOBS

11/11/2017 إلى 11/11/2016 تقرير تقييم الأداء عن الفترة من
APPRAISAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD FROM To

تخطيط المخزون	القسم	المواد	الإدارة	الرقم	الاسم
	DIVISION		DEPT	Co. No.	NAME
/	العقوبة التأديبية	%55	آخر تقييم	ب7	محل ثالث مواد
PENALTIES	LAST EVALU	DATE OF HIRE	GRADE	JOB TITLE	
EVALUATION FACTORS	طريقة التقييم EVALUATION METHOD			عناصر التقييم	
	العلامة النهائية FIN REM	الوزن WEIGHT	العلامة على 10 REM ON 10		
Followed HSE policies	5	10	5	اتباع سياسات الصحة و السلامة	1
Familiarity with & Knowledge of Work	4	10	4	معرفة العمل والإحاطة به	2
Accuracy of work Performance at the required time & standard.	3	10	3	الدقة في إنجاز العمل في المستوى والموعود المطلوب	3
Neatness & Orderly of work	4	10	4	الترتيب والنظام في العمل	4
Ability for Oral & Written composition	5	10	5	القدرة على التعبير كتابيا وشفهيا	5
Abidance by work rules & Procedures	6	10	6	الالتزام بأنظمة ولوائح العمل	6
Aptitude for development & guidance	5	10	5	المقابلية للتوجيه والتدريب	7
Behavior & Punctuality	5	10	5	السلوك والمواظبة	8
Responsiveness to work pressure	2	10	2	الاستجابة لضغط العمل	9
Corporation with others	5	10	5	التعاون مع الآخرين	10
	44	100	44	درجات التقييم	
OVERALL EVALUATION	ضعيف			التقييم العام	
- RECOMMENDATIONS					توصيات الرئيس المباشر
_____We recommend proper training and awareness ? _____					
EMPLOYEE REMARKS					ملاحظات المستخدم

PREPARED – IMM. SUPERVISOR					أعدده – الرئيس المباشر
REVIEWED – HIGH. SUPERVISOR					راجعده – الرئيس الأعلى
CONCURRED (EMPLOYEE)					أطلعت – المستخدم

EVALUATION ELEMENTS معايير التقييم

	60 – 74 (GOOD) جيد -3	89 – 75 (VERY GOOD) جيد جداً -2	100 – 90 (outstanding) ممتاز -1
Per 2-54	45 Below (POOR) ضعيف -5	45 – 59 (ACCEPTABLE) مقبول -4	

تقرير تقييم الأداء

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL REPORT

الوظائف الإدارية والكتابية

ADMINISTRATIVE & CLERICAL JOBS

الي 01/03/2018

تقرير تقييم الأداء عن الفترة من 1/3/2017

APPRAISAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD FROM

To

مراقبة تخطيط المخزون	القسم	المواد	الإدارة	الرقم	الاسم
DIVISION			DEPT	Co. No.	NAME
تعويبة التأديبية	%55	آخر تقييم	تاريخ التعيين	الدرجة ب.7	الوظيفة
PENALTIES	LAST EVALU	DATE OF HIRE	GRADE		JOB TITLE
EVALUATION FACTORS	طريقة التقييم EVALUATION METHOD			عناصر التقييم	
	العلامة النهائية FIN REM	الوزن WEIGHT	العلامة على 10 REM ON 10		
Followed HSE policies	6	10	6	1 اتباع سياسات الصحة و السلامة	
Familiarity with & Knowledge of Work	3	10	3	2 معرفة العمل والإحاطة به	
Accuracy of work Performance at the required time & standard.	3	10	3	3 الدقة في إنجاز العمل في المستوى والموعد المطلوب	
Neatness & Orderly of work	4	10	4	4 الترتيب والنظام في العمل	
Ability for Oral & Written composition	4	10	4	5 القدرة على التعبير كتابيا وشفهيا	
Abidance by work rules & Procedures	3	10	3	6 الالتزام بأنظمة ولوائح العمل	
Aptitude for development & guidance	5	10	5	7 القابلية للتوجيه والتدريب	
Behavior & Punctuality	6	10	6	8 السلوك والمواعيد	
Responsiveness to work pressure	5	10	5	9 الاستجابة لتسعة العمل	
Corporation with others	5	10	5	10 التعاون مع الآخرين	
DEGREE EVALUATION.	44%	100	44%	درجات التقييم	
OVERALL EVALUATION	جيد جدا			التقييم العام	
- RECOMMENDATIONS	يتم ترشيح المعنى لدرجات تأهيلية خلال هذا العام و تقييم النتائج لاحقاً			توصيات الرئيس المباشر	
EMPLOYEE REMARKS					
ملاحظات المستخدم					
PREPARED – IMM. SUPERVISOR				أعدته - الرئيس المباشر	
REVIEWED – HIGH. SUPERVISOR				راجعته - الرئيس الأعلى	
CONCURRED (EMPLOYEE)				أطعته - المستخدم	