

High Performance Work System and Employee Commitment: An Empirical Study of Ex-Cadre Employees of Civil Bureaucracy

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore perception of Ex-cadre employees of civil bureaucracy regarding relationship of high performance work systems (HPWS) and employee commitment with mediating role of public service motivation (PSM) and moderating impact of role clarity. Data were collected from Ex-cadre employees through cross sectional research design. For this purpose 180 civil servants were approached with response rate of 92%. Convenience non-probability sampling technique was used. Data have been analyzed through structural equation modeling by using Smart PLS 3.2.0 software. The results supported the argument that HPWS has a significant impact upon employee commitment directly and indirectly through public service motivation. The interaction of PSM and role clarity was not proved in predicting employee commitment in civil servants. This study followed a cross sectional research design, which does not allow drawing a casual inference. Longitudinal data might provide unique contribution. Social exchange relations were tested from static rather than dynamic perspective, thus longitudinal data might bring different findings. Data from multiple sources might be interesting to explore new insights. Cluster sampling from the various segments can also be area for future avenues. Other potential mediators and moderators can also be tested in future. This study suggests that in order to improve service delivery process policy makers should focus on HPWS which increase the public service motivation and employee commitment of ex-cadre employees. This study has documented the perception of ex-cadre employees of civil bureaucracy, which have received a little attention of researchers in the past. The moderating impact of role clarity has also been tested between the relationship of public service motivation and employee commitment.

Keywords-HPWS, Employee Commitment, Public Service Motivation, Role clarity, Civil Bureaucracy, Ex-Cadre Employees

Introduction

Studies in public administration focused on unique attributes of officers of public sector organization which play key role in service delivery process (Feeney & Rainey, 2010). The devotion for serving society fosters employee commitment which is an essential feature known as civic duty (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008). The contemplate issue for public organization is to enhance employee performance and

commitment (Liu & Tang, 2011). In order to become a dynamic member of a public institute, employees utilize their skills and knowledge to perform everyday activities in their organizations. These skills and knowledge of employees in public service organizations are polished by human resource practices. A bundle of independent but relevant human resource (HR) practices specially composed to embellish employee's such abilities (Takeuchi, Lepak, Wang, & Takeuchi, 2007) is called high performance work systems (HPWS). Prior studies have considered various human resource practices under HPWS that include practices regarding recruitment (Datta, Guthrie, & Wright, 2005), information sharing and employee appraisal process (Takeuchi, Chen, & Lepak, 2009). Moreover, when employees work in a network and have high devotion towards organizational performance they exhibit their job satisfaction (Cohen, 2003). Specially, public organizations work groups are more concerned about their employee commitment. Prior studies suggested that employee commitment is vital for job satisfaction and organizational performance because satisfied employees are highly committed with their organization and colleagues (Kwantes, 2009). Prior studies shed light on the significance of human resource management practices for improvement of service delivery by enhancing employee's motivation, commitment and performance (Newman, Allen, & Miao, 2015). In the context of public sector, promotion, communication and training & development factors are often ignored by the administrative authorities (P. M. Wright, Gardner, Moynihan, & Allen, 2005; Zheng, Thundiyil, Klinger, & Hinrichs, 2016) which might reduce their intent to deliver quality public services.

The growing body of literature investigated the relationship of Public Sector Motivation (PSM) with broad dimensions of employee outcomes; like job satisfaction (Taylor, 2007) and organizational commitment (Vandenabeele, 2007) but perspective of civil bureaucracy is still missing. Study of Wright & Pandey (2008) suggested that employees in commercial organizations tend to show organizational commitment however investigations are required to explore the perspective of government servants which might differ. Lower level of commitment can result in low performance and poor service delivery with indifferent attitude towards citizens. Therefore, among ex-cadre employees such poor attitudes can bring drastic consequences. Thus, exploring the interrelationship of HPWS and commitment through mediating role of PSM (Newman et al., 2015) among ex-cadre employees of civil bureaucracy might add important insights into the literature.

In fast-growing economy, public organizations need

continual employee training to improve public service motivation. Training as human resource practice foster employee commitment and performance (Nkosi, 2015). However, on the contrary, an investigation between HR practices and commitment showed insignificant relationship (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993). Such contradict concluding remarks emphasized on the importance of employee commitment. While other HR practices which influence employee commitment are career development, appraisal practices and employee benefits program (Jiang, Lepak, Jia, & Baer, 2012).

HPWS are comprised upon practices which are coherent in nature and correlate with each other to improve the organizational effectiveness (Horwitz, 2012). These practices provide a mechanism which enables a reciprocal relationships between organization and its individuals, and thus employees show their commitment in return to organization and boost up their performance (Gupta et al., 2011). In Public and private sector HPWS in the shape of bundled HR practices are used to enhance employees' performance (Boselie, 2010). These practices generate positive employee attitudes namely, public service motivation (PSM) and commitment. Public service motivation (PMS) is defined as "a specific form of philanthropy or pro-social motivation that is dynamic by specific outlooks and values rising from public institutions and their missions".

Executive branch of government of Pakistan works through civil bureaucracy and ministries. Ministers are selected by democratic governments from the elected members whereas bureaucracy works through civil servants. These civil servants are inducted through various competitive exams (Badshah & Timoshenko, 2019). The Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) of Pakistan conducts competitive examination for Central Superior Services (CSS) annually (Badshah & Timoshenko, 2019). FPSC of Pakistan selects CSS officer for cadre posts and such employees are termed as cadre employees. Employees who came through other than CSS exam are called ex-cadre employees. Provincial Public Service Commission in Pakistan works on provincial level and each province has independent public service commission. In Pakistan, recruitment carried out by FPSC and PPSC which is limited to officer-level positions in the categories BPS-16 (Basic Pay Scale) and above (Jamil, Dhakal, & Paudel, 2019). Civil Servants in the ex-cadre are technocrats, available to government for service delivery, but it is perceived that ex-cadre members of civil bureaucracy remained outside from small elite group of cadre employees and ex-cadre employees are not treated as equal among other recognized professionals, therefore

limiting their development opportunities and suppress their career goals make them non-eligible for top administrative positions. Thus, situation might drive them towards lower motivation level, dissatisfaction, or even demoralization. In civil bureaucracy individuals must have completed a certain length of service in addition to departmental training examination (Jamil et al., 2019) (Jamil et al., 2019).

This investigation attempted to explore impact of HPWS on PSM and employee commitment in public sector organizations (Civil bureaucracy). The mediating role of PSM along with moderating effect of role clarity (Wang, Gan, & Wu, 2016) has been tested. Prime focus of this study remained at employee commitment because it is linked with improved individual performance as well as organizational performance (Kehoe & Wright, 2013). Hence in civil bureaucracy lower level of employee commitment can affect the service delivery process. Chen, Huang & Huang (2009) and Sun, Aryee & Law (2007) concluded that human resource management practices can help to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, but a little attention has been paid to focus HR practices which can be bundled as HPWS in the context of ex-cadre employees of civil bureaucracy.

Theoretical Development and Hypotheses

Relationship of HPWS and employee commitment

Previous literature has documented three types of commitment (Meyer et al., 1993), namely affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Commitment is a key which links HPWS and employee performance (Gong, Law, Chang, & Xin, 2009). Conferring to the research of Wright et al. (2005), HPWS builds positive relationship among employee and employer which are bounded shared relationships. In these bounded shared relationships organizations show their commitment towards employees growth and in return to this, employees demonstrate a higher level of positive attitude in the shape of commitment to improve organizational effectiveness and success (Kehoe & Wright, 2013; Perry & Hondeghem, 2008; Shore, Tetrick, Lynch, & Barksdale, 2006). Training is perceived as a practice to cater employees with distinct skills to rectify deficiencies in assigned jobs in such a way that it reshapes employees' attitude towards achieving organizational goals (Vasudevan, 2014). Similarly HPWS are equally effective in public and private sector organizations in producing positive attitudes (Mostafa, Gould-Williams, & Bottomley, 2015). Employees are bound to show reciprocal relationship which are based on socio economic benefits which make them bound to return favors for their organizations (Blau 1964), thus it is

assumed that:-

Hypothesis-1: High performance work system has an impact on employees' commitment

Mediating Role of PSM between the relationship of HPWS and employee commitment

Public Service Motivation (PSM) is a set of "beliefs, values, and attitudes that go beyond self-interest and concern with the general public" (Vandenabeele, 2007). Public service motivation (PSM) is a prosocial motivation which drives individuals of public sector institutes to work for betterment of society through proficient service delivery (Perry & Hondeghem, 2008). "PSM is motivational force that encourages individuals to perform meaningful public and social services" (Brewer & Selden, 1998).

High performance work system (HPWS) tend to induce positive outcomes in the employees, thus HPWS has a potential to affect public service motivation of the employees (Giauque, Anderfuhren-Biget, & Varone, 2013; Mostafa et al., 2015). On the basis of Process Theories (Adams, 1963; Locke & Latham, 1994; Vroom, 1964) argument can be drawn that public service motivation can lead individuals to achieve desirable outcomes in exchange of communication, promotion and training and development. Similarly according to self-concept theory (Snyder, 1965) when employees seek to maintain pro-social identities in their networks they derive satisfaction from in role performance which are aligned with their identities (Shamir, 1991). Public sector employees can be encouraged and motivated to show effective response if they are facilitated with proper communication and feedback (Kim, 2012), then such employees would be in a position to display positive attitudes which are beneficial for both society, and general public (Leisink & Steijn, 2009). In a social exchange relationship due to HPWS, employees can show positive outcomes in the shape of PSM (Mostafa et al., 2015), thus in this study PSM has been anticipated to mediate the relationships of HPWS and employee commitment. HR practices in the domain of HPWS are likely to promote such environment in which public sector administrators promote upward communication for relevant issues (Newman et al., 2015) which encourages individuals to participate in decision making, and thus transmits a signal to the individuals that they are valued by their employer, which brings a positive attitudinal change in them. Therefore, it can be assumed that HPWS is indirectly related (through PSM) to employee commitment (Grant, Dutton, & Rosso, 2008). Thus it can be assumed that:

Hypothesis-2: High performance work system has a significant relationship with public service motivation

Hypothesis-3: Public service motivation has a significant relationship with employee commitment

Hypothesis-4: The relationship between high performance work system and employee commitment is mediated by Public service motivation

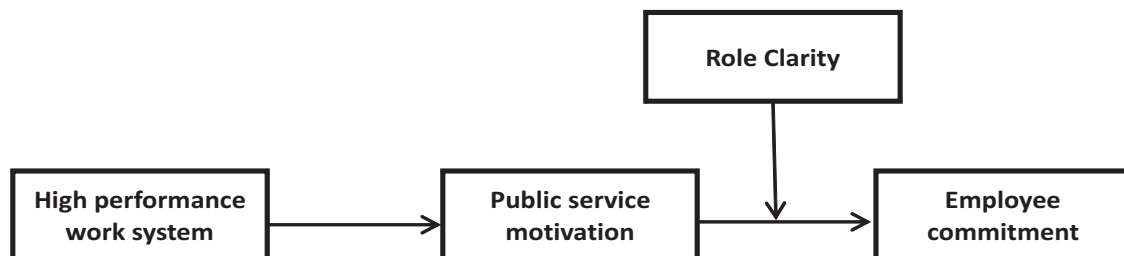
Moderating Impact of Role Clarity

Role clarity is defined as providing necessary information to perform a specific job (Newman et al., 2015). Employees with adequate instruction and information to do a job can perform better as compared to those who are not clear about their responsibilities (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). Due to prevalent role ambiguity, individuals found themselves in bizarre situation which triggers negative feelings and most of the time they struggle to understand the desired behaviors and effective work to perform (Gilboa, Shirom, Fried, & Cooper, 2008). Role ambiguity brings change in employee attitudes which eventually lower their performance at workplace (Mukherjee & Malhotra, 2006).

Employees with role clarity tend to perform their duties efficiently when they are clear about necessary work settings and requirements (Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolaou, 2004). According to Eatough et al. (2011) lower-level of role clarity drives individuals into zigzag situation because most of the time they waste to understand their basic role, key tasks and responsibilities. To identify role clarity, effective administration plays a decisive role (Bandura, 1986) because it encourages employee to show commitment and guide them how to carry out their functions in a way that clear up ambiguous role (House, Schuler, & Levanoni, 1983). Furthermore, role clarity can work as a potential moderator in such cases where employees are more concerned about their performance (O'Driscoll & Beehr, 1994). Thus, lack of role clarity constrains the capacity for public sector employees to be effective and consequently it can act as a moderator of the relationship between PSM and employee commitment, hence it is proposed that:-

H5: The relationship between public service motivation (PSM) and employee commitment is moderated by role clarity in the employees of civil bureaucracy.

Figure-1 Conceptual framework



Methods

Population and Sample

Data were collected from the ex-cadre employees of different federal organizations working across Pakistan via paper-and-pencil survey, and they were requested to report their responses regarding HPWS, employee commitment, public service motivation and role clarity. Non probability sampling technique (convenience sampling) was used. Ex-cadre employees of civil bureaucracy in Pakistan are geographically disbursed and posted at various stations, thus approaching them through convenience sampling technique was quite useful and was relevant to the purpose of this study. Participants were approached through personal contacts. Among the respondents, total 180

questionnaires were distributed, 170 were received back, and out of which three were partially filled which were discarded from further analysis and at the end 167 completely filled responses were considered for data analysis. The response rate remained at 92 %. In this study self-reported questionnaire was used and data were collected from a single source, thus there was a possibility of common-method bias. However researchers tried to minimize the common method biasness by following the guidelines of Podsakoff et al. (2003), we provided a brief introduction regarding the variables and respondent were assured that all their responses would be treated as confidential and will be used only for academic purpose. Moreover, individuals were clearly explained by the researchers regarding purpose of study and they were

ensured that they can express their opinions without any fear. In addition to this, questionnaires were prepared in two sets; the first set was comprised upon demographic information, along with questions pertaining to HPWS and public service motivation whereas the second set was comprised upon questions pertaining to employee commitment and role clarity. Almost 63% respondents were male and 37% were female. More than 55% respondents were married; similarly half of the respondents were above the age of forty years with handy experience in public sector employment. Most of the respondents hold professional degrees in addition to the basic requirement of ex-cadre employment.

Measures

Constructs were measured using multi-item scales based on previous studies. All items of questionnaire pertaining to study variables were measured on a 5-point Likert scales with endpoints “strongly disagree” (1) and “strongly agree” (5). Three human resource practices namely communication (Paré & Tremblay, 2007), promotion (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997) and training & development (Conway & Monks, 2008) were taken to measure High performance work system (total 10 items). Sample items include, “In my organization trainings program are comprehensive and in my organization there is provision of priority to merit in promotion.” Although other practices such as performance appraisal and compensation are also in use for measurement of HPWS in the literature but we have focused only three practices which are relevant to the context and respondents of this study. PSM was measured using 8-item adapted from the scale developed by (Perry, 1996), covering the dimension of self-sacrifice and attraction to public policy making. These two dimensions were aligned with HR practices which were considered in HPWS. Sample items include, “I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of the society, and I am very interested in the politics”. Role Clarity was measured by using six items questionnaire developed by (Rizzo et al., 1970). Sample items include, “I know exactly what is expected of me”. Commitment was measured using an abridged six-item version of Meyer, Allen & Smith (1993) scale. Sample item include, “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization”.

Data analysis

Smart PLS v. 3.2.0 was used to assess measurement and structural models. PLS-SEM is an alternative approach to the CB-SEM. Variance based approach was opted for this study due to several reasons. Firstly studies pertaining to ex-cadre employees are very few and theory is under

development, so basic and fundamental purpose of using SEM in this study was predicting outcome variables and explanation of variance (Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). Secondly, sample size in this study was not large enough, thus Smart PLS 3.2.0 was a best available option because PLS-SEM eradicates the tension regarding distributional assumptions being a non-parametric data analysis technique (Hair Jr et al., 2016).

Results

Results of this study has been reported in two steps, in the first step Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) results pertaining to measurement and structural models have been reported and in the next step results generated under process macro have been reported.

Assessment of Measurement Model

Outer model in SEM is usually assessed through reliability and validity, here reliability has been estimated on the basis of indicator reliability (Outer loadings), Cronbach's Alpha & composite reliability, whereas validity of measurement model has been assessed through Average variance extracted (a measure of convergent validity) and Fornell-Larcker (1981) criterion as a measure of discriminant validity (Hair Jr et al., 2016).

Values pertaining to all measures of reliability and validity were above the cutoff values of respective measure (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013; Hair Jr et al., 2016). Further model fitness indicator SRMR was also within the acceptable range $SRMR = .07 < .10$. Outer loadings of all indicators were above the cut point of 0.708 except items C1, P2 and P3. However, these three indicators were retained in the model as the AVE of respective construct was within the acceptable range of .50 (Hair Jr et al., 2016). Similarly two items from Public Service Motivation (PSM) AP2 & AP3 and one item IEC from employee commitment was also retained, besides having outer loadings were less than 0.708 but the AVE was within the acceptable range i.e. $> .50$ (Hair Jr et al., 2016). Values of composite reliability, ρ_A and Cronbach Alpha were also within the acceptable range, i.e. greater than 0.70. Hence reliability was established (Table-1). Discriminant validity was established as square root of AVE value (Table-2) for each variable was higher than the correlations of other constructs of study (Fornell & Larcker 1981).

Assessment of Structural Model

Path coefficients and Coefficient of determination (R^2) have been reported in figure-2. Significance of paths was assessed by applying bootstrapping technique at sample size of 5000. Path from high performance work system to public service motivation was significant with $\beta = .665$,

$p < .05$ & $R^2 = .442$. Similarly path from high performance work system to employee commitment was significant at $\beta = .201$, $p < .05$ & $R^2 = .457$, while path from public service

motivation to employee commitment was significant with $\beta = .526$, $p < .05$ & $R^2 = .457$ (Table-3). Thus, H1, H2 and H3 are accepted

Figure-2 Path Coefficients of HPWS, PMS and EC

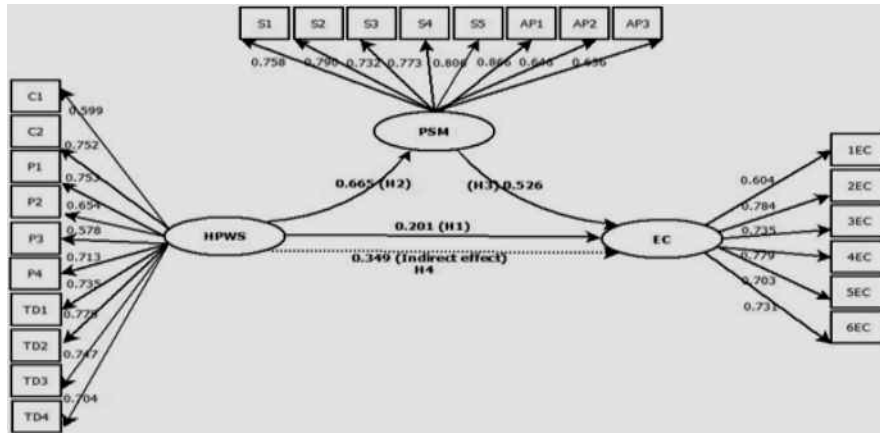


Figure-3 Moderation analysis

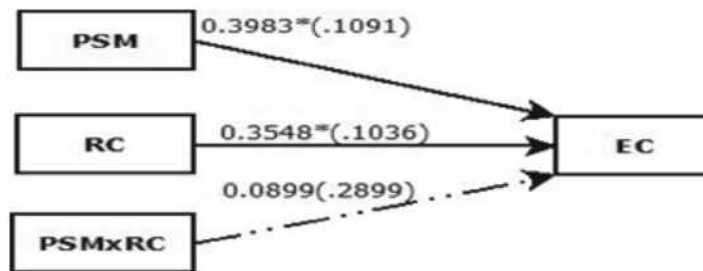


Table-1 Indicator Reliability, Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, AVE

Latent variable	Indicators	Outer Loadings	VIF	Composite reliability	Cronbachs Alpha	rho- A	AVE
High performance work system	C1	0.599	1.541	0.907	0.886	0.893	0.496
	C2	0.752	2.205				
	P1	0.753	1.944				
	P2	0.654	1.610				
	P3	0.578	1.548				
	P4	0.713	1.851				
	TD1	0.735	2.273				
	TD2	0.775	2.762				
	TD3	0.747	2.188				
	TD4	0.704	1.850				
Public Service Motivation	SS1	0.758	2.319	0.913	0.890	0.893	0.569
	SS2	0.790	2.652				
	SS3	0.732	1.889				
	SS4	0.773	2.147				
	SS5	0.806	2.457				
	AP1	0.866	3.034				
	AP2	0.646	1.566				
	AP3	0.636	1.572				
Employee Commitment	1EC	0.604	1.364	0.868	0.818	0.832	0.526
	2EC	0.784	1.718				
	3EC	0.735	1.611				
	4EC	0.779	1.788				
	5EC	0.703	1.737				
	6EC	0.731	1.892				

Table-2 Fornell & Larcker(1981) Criterion

Variables		Mean	Std: Deviation	1	2	3
1	Employee Commitment	3.34	0.7562	0.725		
2	High Performance Work System	3.06	0.8626	0.550	0.704	
3	Public Service Motivation	3.15	0.8636	0.660	0.665	0.754
4	Role Clarity	3.14	0.8987	0.636	0.700	-

Note: Diagonal values represent the square root of average variance extracted (AVE); while below the diagonal values are correlations.

Further blindfolding procedure was applied at omission distance of 7 to calculate Q2 as a measure to check the predictive relevance (Geisser, 1975; Stone, 1974). Q2 values for endogenous latent variables were greater than zero, confirming predictive relevance (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009; Vinzi, Trinchera, & Amato, 2010). Further effect size (f2) was also estimated. Value of f2 for HPWS? PSM was .793 (Large effect size) and HPWS? EC

was .041 (Small effect size) and for PSM? EC was .285 (Medium effect size(Hair Jr et al., 2016)(Hair Jr et al., 2016). Thus, hypothesized model is confirmed by the data and it is a satisfactory and substantial model. Mediation paths (H4) was tested through variance accounted for (VAF) and value of VAF was .634>20% and <80%, thus concluding partial mediation (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair Jr, 2014). Thus H4 accepted.

Table-3 Structural Model–Hypotheses Test Results

Hypotheses	Path	Path coefficient	Std: deviation	P value	Results
H1	High Performance Work System →Employee Commitment	0.201	0.087	0.02	Supported
H2	High Performance Work System→Public Service Motivation	0.665	0.041	0.00	Supported
H3	Public Service Motivation→Employee Commitment	0.526	0.081	0.00	Supported

Table-4 Mediation Effect of Public service motivation

Hypotheses	Path	Product of Coefficients			VAF	Results
	IV=> MV => DV	Indirect effect (ab)	Direct effect	Total effect		
H4	HPWS =>PSM =>EC	(.665*)(.526*) = .349	0.201	0.550	63%	Accepted

HPWS=High performance work system (Independent variable), PSM=Public service motivation (Mediating variable) EC=Employee commitment (Dependent variable)

Table-5 Moderation results

	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
$R^2=.49, MSE=.38$						
<i>Constant</i>	3.012	0.0641	46.9875	0.0000	2.8854	3.1386
<i>RC (M)</i>	0.3548	0.1036	3.4263	0.0008	0.1503	0.5593
<i>PSM(X)</i>	0.3983	0.1091	3.6523	0.0003	0.1830	0.6136
<i>PSM*RC</i>	0.0899	0.0847	1.0617	0.2899	-0.0773	0.2572
$Change\ in\ R^2=.0067, p=.2899$						

Here Role clarity does not moderate the relationship of PSM and employee commitment as shown by the significance level of change in R2 which is $p>.05$ i.e. $p=.2899$. Thus H5 rejected.

Discussion, Findings and Conclusion

In this research we have explored the mechanisms through which human resource management practice in the shape of HPWS affect PSM eventually leading towards the ex-cadre employee's commitment. First the empirical findings of this study showed that human resource practices promote employee commitment among civil servants when used as bundle in the shape of HPWS (Jiang et al., 2012). HPWS as a bundle of communication (Paré & Tremblay, 2007), promotion (Wayne et al., 1997), and training & development (Conway & Monks, 2008) have been found significant predictor of employee commitment in ex-cadre employees of civil bureaucracy. However the relationship among HPWS and employee commitment in Ex-Cadre servants has been found at moderate level which might be due to the reason that ex-cadre employees are not treated as equal among other recognized professionals in civil bureaucracy of Pakistan, this unequal treatment limits their development opportunities and suppress their career goals which make them non-eligible for top administrative positions, hence this state of affairs may lead them to develop lower level of commitment (Jamil et al., 2019).

Further, reason for moderate level relationship among HPWS and employee commitment might be the involvement of political or military leaders, as it is alleged that promotion and lucrative postings are unattainable in the absence of such influence (Jamil et al., 2019). Lower level of employee commitment might be a signal of alarming situation for the policy makers as almost 1.70 billion population is being served by the civil servant in South Asia. Thus delivery of efficient services to the general masses can be affected by lower level of employee commitment. It is pertinent to mention that ex-cadre

employees constitute major portion of gazette posts in federal ministries of Pakistan. But these ex-cadre employees enjoy relatively less career progression as compared to En-cadre civil bureaucracy. This research provides an insight how commitment level of ex-cadre employees can be enhanced through a bundle of human resource practices. Thus overall system of service delivery in can be increased by improving the commitment level of ex-cadre employees.

Similarly the relationship of HPWS and public service motivation was found significant and strong which indicates that bundled HR practices in the shape of communication, training and development and promotion promote public service motivation of civil servants. Partial military control for almost six decades has been observed in Pakistan, but during the last decade Pakistan has enjoyed the democracy and a more representative bureaucracy resulted in inclusive governance, which ensured greater legitimacy and acceptance democratic government in society (Jamil et al., 2019), thus civil servants might show higher level of public service motivation in a democratic government. Partial mediation of PSM between the relationship of HPWS and employee commitment shows that public service motivation is a phenomenon which enhances the impact of HPWS on employee commitment in civil bureaucracy. Thus public service motivation must be considered an important factor for the policy makers. This research contributes to the literature by adding important insights from theoretical and practical perspectives; firstly this study proved that public service motivation is a motivational mechanism which can enhance the significance of human resource management practices. Secondly our study is unique as it has documented the perception of public sector employees from an Asian context. Thirdly this study explored the perception of ex-cadre employees of developing nation where civil bureaucracy plays a vital role in development and service delivery to the masses. In addition to this

moderating role of role clarity has not been observed in this study. On the basis of this, it can be implied that interaction of public service motivation and role clarity in ex-cadre employees does not influence employee commitment. Age and experience might be factors behind this reason as most of the respondents in this study were above the age of forty with handy experience in public sector employment. With such strong demographic background they are clear about their role in service delivery. Findings of this study are also in line with the previous theories, i.e. Process Theories (Adams, 1963; Locke & Latham, 1994; Vroom, 1964), Social Exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and self-concept theory (Snyder, 1965) which show that public service motivation can lead individuals to achieve desirable outcomes in exchange HPWS.

Like other researches, this study has also some limitations; the research design in this study was cross-sectional, which does not allow drawing causal relationship. Second, social exchange relations have been analyzed from a static rather than dynamic perspective (Janta, Ladkin, Brown, & Lugosi, 2011) thus longitudinal data might provide important insights regarding HPWS perceptions and its relationship with employee commitment and public service motivation and thus it may be materialized to identify and address the issues of causal inference. Third, to avoid problems of common method biasness (Podsakoff et al., 2003) data from multiple sources might be interesting to explore new insights. Further additional HR practices under HPWS such as compensation and performance appraisal can also be added in future studies, to explore the links between employees' commitment and public service motivation. Alternatively, subordinate and supervisor perspective can also be documented in future. Assessing the moderating role of employees' perceived indebtedness might bring important theoretical insights from eastern perspective of civil bureaucracy. Fifth, in this study public service motivation partially mediated the relationship of HPWS and employee commitment, thus other potential mediators await discovery.

Results of this study can be generalized but with care. Data in this study is based on convenience sampling collected from ex-cadre employees of civil bureaucracy, thus, one should be optimistic that further studies by incorporating other sampling criteria may bring important insights to discuss in future. In spite of these limitations, this study showed that PSM is a notable mechanism in civil bureaucracy by which high performance work systems are associated with desirable employee commitment in public sector organizations. Thus south Asian countries should formulate policies which are focused to increase the public service motivation of the ex-cadre employees for delivery

of quality services

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