Manchester Metropolitan University

e-space

Manchester Metropolitan University's Research Repository

Please cite the Published Version

Mirah, Doaa Hassan (2017) Understanding the relationship between HR practices and organizational commitment and job satisfaction of the members of Saudi Arabian universities. Doctoral thesis (PhD), Manchester Metropolitan University.

Downloaded from: https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/622065/

Usage rights: Creative Commons: Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0

Enquiries:
If you have questions about this document, contact openresearch@mmu.ac.uk. Please include the URL of the record in e-space. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our Take Down policy (available from https://www.mmu.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/policies-and-guidelines)

Understanding the Relationship between HR Practices and Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction of the Members of Saudi Arabian Universities

Doaa Hassan Mirah

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Manchester Metropolitan University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of People and Performance
Faculty of Business and Law
November 2017

Declaration

The author has not, whilst being registered for the award of Master PhD program, been a registered candidate for another award at any other university.
The material contained in this dissertation has not been used in any other submission for an academic award.

This thesis is empirically based, as defined in university guidelines.

Acknowledgements

This thesis has been written with the help of people to whom I would like to convey my deepest gratitude. First, I am deeply indebted to my supervisory team, namely Dr. Andrew Rowe, Dr. Anna Sutton and Professor Carol Atkinson, who have always been supportive, patient and helpful. Without their valuable guidance and constant support, this work would not have been accomplished. It has been my greatest pleasure to work under their excellent guidance. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge and extend my heartfelt gratitude to my parents for all their support, caring and guidance throughout my study. I would like also to convey my thanks to my brothers Dr. Hamed and Motaz, my children Sarah and Ubai and my friends for all their constant help and support. In addition, I would like to extend my sincerest thanks and appreciation to Dr. Abdullah Dahlan, my employer, who has provided precious help and support at the various stages of the present research. Finally, I would like to thank the university staff at MMUBS, especially the Research Degrees Office, for their kind support and cooperation.

Abstract

The overall aim of this thesis is to examine HR practices within university settings in Saudi Arabia and the extent to which these HR practices as perceived by staff are associated with employees (academics) level of job satisfaction and their commitment to their universities. In addition, consideration was given to the potential influences of demographic variables and country or cultural context. The author contends that Saudi Arabia like other middle eastern countries possess distinctive characteristics in terms of culture, tradition and other factors relative to western countries and notably models of human resource practice tend to be dominated by Western HR systems. Furthermore, there appears to be a dearth of relevant literature in the Saudi country context or its GCC neighbours in relation to this study's aim and objectives. This study relies on the use of the mixed methods approach, i.e. quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews), with sample sizes of 534 academics and 22 (both academics, HR personnel/management participants), respectively. Furthermore, cultural aspects such as Saudisation and demographics were also addressed in the interview phase. Quantitative analyses utilised Multiple Linear Regression Analyses and Thematic Analysis for qualitative.

Overall, the quantitative research showed that there is a poor perception of HR practices in Saudi universities but good levels of faculty's job satisfaction and organisational commitment to their universities. Regression analyses showed generally there is no association between perceived HR practices and job satisfaction and organisational commitment while the association was found between organisational commitment and job satisfaction. The surprising lack of association of Perceived HR practices with organisational commitment and job satisfaction, contrary to the academic literature, led the researcher to develop a second stage to investigate the potential influence of other factors such as contextual or cultural influences. Generally, qualitative data of both groups revealed there is generally a lack of knowledge and awareness of HR practices. Specifically, there is poor HR planning, ineffective attraction, retention strategies. However, they demonstrated

mixed views in terms of HR development, which focused primarily on training courses. Both groups' perspectives indicated there are high levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction within the universities. With respect to culture, it was emphasised by all participants that "*Wasta*" or "personal connections" are prevalent. However, it is a problematic issue that should have no place in any university and advocated employees be selected on skills alone. Furthermore, while the concept of Saudisation was welcomed, many believed that it should not be at the expense of high quality staff and advocated the need for diverse faculty in academia. In fact, the findings point to various challenges facing HR practices and how they are perceived in Saudi universities, and hence these should be addressed with the aim of improving job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst faculty staff members.

A key empirical contribution of this thesis is the expansion of academic research in the field of strategic HR management (SHRM) in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East in general and in higher education in specific. Furthermore, this study provides an original research and a new insight into how HR practices are perceived. The findings may provide guidance on practical implications for universities as well as decision- and policymakers, but it also contributes to developing the theoretical and applied approach in relation to perceived HR practices. Moreover, the theoretical contribution is reflected through the identification of perceptions around HR practices within the context of organisational commitment and job satisfaction. It is important to understand that cultural aspects were considered, while the overall research approach should be more comprehensive in the future.

Table of Contents

List of Tables:

List of Figures:

Chapter 1: Introduction

The main focus of this study is to explore the concept of perceived human resource (HR) practices in the Middle-Eastern context, by looking at the university sector in the KSA. It is essential that this research investigates and identifies employees' approaches to HR practices (PHRPs) as they are perceived in relation to organisational commitment and job satisfaction in the specific university sector. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have begun to focus more on establishing themselves as knowledge-based economies, with a developmental emphasis on moving away from their dependence on oil, in order to fuel economic growth and stability. The study will examine the relationship between PHRPs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and their influence on organisational commitment and job satisfaction. As an important driver for organisational success, this may have significant implications for the wider Middle Eastern region and the management of people as a valuable resource for continued growth and prosperity. The author of this doctoral thesis argues that in addition to organisational contexts, country contexts also play an important role in shaping appropriate HR practice strategy, particularly in countries that have distinctive characteristics compared to Western-dominated HR systems.

In comparison to previous years, there has been a sharp rise in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia (in line with Vision 2030) which also suggests that the Saudis attach a lot of importance to education and it is also largely promoted by the Saudi government (Alshuwaikhat, Adenle, & Saghir, 2016). As such, findings from this study which focuses on higher education in KSA can largely contribute to existing literature on the organisational aspect of Saudi universities.

In addition, the researcher will assess critically the nature of the relationships between perceived HR practices, as applied in KSA, and job satisfaction and organisational commitment as variables that impact organisational success. A key premise of this study is that the country context of the KSA, like other Middle Eastern countries with their distinctiveness in terms of culture, traditions and other such factors relative to Western countries, is likely to affect the nature and perceptions of HR practices, which must be understood to enable organisational success. Research of this type should be of primary importance for any organisation or government

interested in developing its most valuable resource: its people. With specific reference to the notion that Saudi Arabia attributes significant importance to the wellbeing of its employees, thereby reflecting a people-oriented approach, it is of utmost importance to examine the perceptions of employees, bearing in mind that KSA is also a country attracting workers from across the globe. Therefore, this draws attention to a currently very diverse workforce in Saudi Arabia, including university workers and lecturers, who often come from different cultural backgrounds. This diversity also characterises different experiences, viewpoints and hence varying perspectives on HR practices which need to be captured by new research. This again highlights the importance of the current study, which is based on empirical research, personal experiences and established networks chosen to explore the above within the university context, since this is one of the fastest growing sectors in the KSA.

It is also important to note that HR practices in Saudi universities have not been widely researched in comparison to other organisational settings in the kingdom. As such, there is a need to address this issue by empirically approaching HR practices in higher education in an attempt to shed light on their nature, issues as well as how staff members perceive the implementation of these practices. Along the same line, considerable attention is also drawn to intended and realised HR practices, although HR practices as perceived by workers are much less researched. There is existing evidence suggesting that there are several organisational factors that could affect both intended and realised HR practices (Harris, Doughty, & Kirk, 2002). However, few studies to date have considered the role played by HR practices as perceived by employees while acknowledging that this perception can in fact also influence both intended and realised HR practices. Gilbert, De Winne and Sel (2011) also focused on perceived HRM rather than intended HRM, bearing in mind that employees' perceptions can affect both their attitudes and behaviours.

It could therefore be suggested that intended and realised practices, and the perceptions of employees in relation to HR practices, are all interrelated. With this in mind, there is a need for new studies to focus on HR practices as perceived by staff, with an aim to elucidate this relationship.

Furthermore, in the context of universities attracting and retaining high-quality faculty, staff must be a priority, as low faculty retention rates might lead to adverse

monetary and academic consequences for educational institutions. It is argued that without well-qualified and committed staff, it would be difficult for firms to ensure organisational stability and quality in the long term (Pienaar and Bester, 2008). As such, another key premise of this study is that universities, as producers of knowledge, must absolutely value the area of HR practices and its perceptions, to remain competitive and relevant in a knowledge-based economy. Thus, a focus on university faculty is entirely appropriate and research in this area should be welcomed. Furthermore, it is argued that HR practices as a management concept require firms to make a disproportionate investment in individuals who are likely to make the most significant impact on the achievement of corporate strategy (Becker et al., 2009). Thus, it is hoped that the findings of this research will provide impetus for an increased focus on and understanding of HR practices in the KSA as perceived by staff and possibly the wider Middle East region, generally and specifically in university settings. In addition, the research intends to make an important contribution to expanding the limited empirical knowledge that currently exists on HR practices in non-Western contexts. It also seeks to expound the relationship between PHRP and organisational commitment and job satisfaction in the KSA.

This introductory section first provides the heart of the research and thereafter engages in elaborating the research's issues and problems and presenting an overview of its current context. Then, it details the aims, objectives and research questions of the study, i.e. the impetus of the research, research problem, while the final section provides information about its structure.

1.1. Research Focus

Generally speaking, and from a global perspective, in today's dynamic and competitive environment, organisational success in any setting is extremely valued. However, it is worth noting that this success also depends on several factors, namely on a micro level (e.g. within the organisation) and on a macro level (e.g. beyond the organisation, mostly involving external factors, including forces from the pestle factors and competitors, etc., which help in understanding the development approach associated with these external factors). This study focuses on factors on a micro level, one of which, as the main focus of this study, relates to academics'

perceptions of HR practices. HR management generally aims at being competitive, which often requires a strategic approach that takes the form strategic human resource management (SHRM) – an umbrella term for human resources (Lawler and Mohrman, 2003). SHRM involves various types of human resource practices, with some categorised as perceived practices in relation to employees working in the organisation, measured at different levels, including planning, retention, attraction and development. Moreover, it should certainly not to be assumed that simply having a HR department is the ultimate way to ensure desired organisational outcomes; rather, there is a need also to recognise the role played by employees in relation to how they perceive HR practices in real terms, in order to understand the role they play in helping the organisation provide the best work environment. The roles of the HR practices understood by employees are expected to enhance job satisfaction and organisational commitment, while the directive approach has been identified as supporting the ability to complete work at an optimum level.

1.2. A Contextual Elaboration of the Research Problem

Growing evidence is pointing toward the increasing and steady development of human resource (HR) practices across different organisational contexts (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright, 2003). Considering HR practices from an empirical perspective is necessary, especially in today's organisational climate, given that they have an impact on various work-related characteristics and hence do not operate in isolation. For example, there is some research reporting an association between HR practices and employee retention, productivity and performance (Huselid, 1995), the effect of HR practices on perceptions of organisational performance (Delaney and Huselid, 1996) and employees' attitudes and behaviours (Kehoe and Wright, 2013). Moreover, and of direct relevance to the current study, there is also increasing evidence on the relationship between HR practices and job satisfaction (Ileana Petrescu and Simmons, 2008; Saari and Judge, 2004; Tooksoon, 2011) as well as organisational commitment (Whitener, 2001; Chew and Chan, 2008) and employee retention (Chew and Chan, 2008). Saudi Arabia is also the largest and one of the fastest growing countries in the region with growing demand for a competent and established workforce as such developing greater understanding of the effectiveness

of existing practice and areas for improvement of the HR function is essential. Moreover, there is accumulating evidence (more details will be provided in the literature review section) suggesting that job satisfaction and organisational commitment are essential dimensions of any work environment, including in the field of HE. With KSA's growing emphasis on the importance and promotion of education research probing into employees, these elements are quite useful in providing an overview of how universities function. This could ultimately help to boost the success of the universities, including student satisfaction.

Therefore, all the above build a strong foundation for a further empirical investigation of this research area in a unique context such as Saudi Arabia.

1.3. Saudi Context

Founded in 1932, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the largest Gulf country, with a population of more than 29 million, 20 million of whom are Saudi nationals (CDSI website for 2012). Islam is the main religion in KSA (Rugh, 2002), and for many years, the kingdom has been viewed as a land of opportunity for expatriates, thanks to its oil production (The Ministry of Economy and Planning, 2015).

Importantly, the Saudi education system focuses on building a knowledgeable and competitive society, whereby children are considered to be at the core of development. Hence, education is free and accessible to everyone, including children with special needs, although it is not compulsory until elementary school age (National Commission for Childhood, 2003). The government remains responsible for providing all facilities at all stages of education (Zedan, 1980). The KSA has been working recently toward increasing development at all educational levels (Al-Shaer, 2007). In fact, student numbers have risen in general education from 536,400 in (1969/70) to 5.44 million in 2013, showing a yearly growth rate of 5.4% (The Ministry of Economy and Planning, 2015).

The educational system is founded on Islamic philosophy and embedded in cultural norms and ways of living and Saudi culture is male-dominated, patriarchal, hierarchical and collectivist in nature, with gender segregation mainly being the norm. These cultural standards are also reflected in the kingdom's educational system (Al-Rabiah, 2008), for example through Policy Article 155, which stipulates

that males and females should be separated in different societal institutions, including education (Smith & Abouammoh, 2013). Segregation also extends to teaching staff, in order to ensure that students are able to relate to a same-sex teacher while being educated (Gahwaji, 2006).

It is identified that over half of university graduates are female, and it advocates the need to enhance their roles in society by empowering them accordingly. The cultural norm of segregation can be seen across universities, with each institution having two sections, namely male and female, except for two single-gender universities, King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM) in Dhahran, which is a male-only university, and Princess Norah Bint Abdulrahman University (PNU) in Riyadh, which is an all-female establishment (Smith & Abouammoh, 2013). In the university sector, there are currently a limited number of academics in Saudi universities, especially female academics, bearing in mind that the education system is culturally influenced and gender-segregated. This situation raises concerns about whether there is an increasing demand for female enrolment, as the education sector may not be in a position to meet this increase without addressing the current lack of female faculty members. The "Islamic gender regime" approach is generally used to understand gender imbalances and complexities involved in the status of women in the workplace (Metcalfe, 2006). However, in recognising the continuing needs to develop females, it may be that the implementation of the Vision 2030 of Saudi Arabia addresses gender imbalance within the KSA.

There are 34 universities and colleges in the KSA (The Ministry of Education and Planning, 2015), 25 public and 9 private institutions, the latter being set up in the last decade (Mihael, 2015; Smith & Abouammoh, 2013). Moreover, there has been an eight-fold increase in higher education enrolment over the last ten years, from 172,600 students in 1993/1994 to 1.4 million students in 2013 (The Ministry of Economy and Planning, 2015). In the KSA, higher education funding is obtained from the government along with other means to support this increase in student enrolment (Al-Hamid et al., 2005). As well as being allowed to accept gifts, donations and endowments (Al-Hamed et al., 2005), universities also invest in establishing research institutes that can provide scientific and consultation studies, in Saudi Arabia and abroad. The impact extends beyond the funding needed to meet the

growth to the human element, in order to meet the demands of a developing educational system, which is provided through its teaching and faculty staff. In order to meet these demands, a lot of attention has been given to the contribution made by the expatriate community, which enhances the KSA's reputation as a labour-importing country (Ali, 2011). Moreover, high-quality education, employment and broadly accessible lifelong learning opportunities are considered vital precursors to knowledge-based economic development (Alhejji and Garavan, 2016).

There has been a boost in university enrolment over the last decade, and given Vision 2030's focus on higher education, this trend is expected to keep rising. In order to address this increase in demand, in line with the Vision's aim, universities need to devise ways and means to meet these demands by giving increasingly more attention to available curricula as well as the human capital required to strive for success in this regard. The 2030 Vision sets out that Saudi Arabia will have at least five of its universities in the top 200 international ranking universities, and it also envisages Saudi students to perform higher than international averages. This will take some planning as to how this will be achieved, which would ordinarily involve contributions from human resource departments. However, since HR departments are not set up within the KSA's universities, it is difficult to assess whether the forms of human resource practices used within these establishments are effective and in line with the aims of the Vision. Although there has been research in relation to human resource practices as they relate to universities in the Western world, the cultural differences of the KSA will require these practices to be considered in line with the kingdom's cultural influences and the Vision for the coming years. It is thought that the present research will contribute to considering HR practices in Saudi universities, by examining factors relevant to Saudi culture.

Human resource practices comprise factors such as planning, attracting, retaining and the development of an organisation's employees. All of these elements are important in addressing the increased demands, on various levels, placed on educational establishments. Saudi universities need to work toward meeting these demands on various levels, such as the programmes that will be delivered, the quality of these programmes and therefore the workforce required to deliver them correctly. More consideration needs to be given to attracting the most suitably qualified staff

to deliver the programmes, to ensure that Saudisation is complied with in parallel to recruiting those best qualified and ensuring that female staff are attracted and retained, especially given the percentage of female students who graduate. These factors are examples of human resource practices and the perceptions of employees that are important in recruiting and retaining suitable employees. In fact, these perceptions also tend to influence the behaviours and attitudes of these employees (Arthur, 1994; Huselind, 1995, as cited in Alnaqbi, 2011).

These human resource practices are considered to be vital contributors to an organisation's success (Nilsson and Ellstrom, 2012), and in an academic setting, recruiting highly qualified and motivated academic staff can have a positive impact on the quality of the programme that is delivered as well as the long-term success of that programme (Pienaar and Bester, 2008). Thus, if behaviours are determined by practices, it could be argued that employees' perception' of these practices are important in the successful implementation of decisions made by HR. It is highly likely that if HR is perceived as something different from what was intended by management, this could have a negative effect on behaviours and, subsequently, expected outcomes. As such, this highlights a sharp distinction between HR practices put into place by management from an objective viewpoint and HR practices as perceived by staff. This may or may not overlap. Awareness of these practices may also affect the level of commitment shown by an employee (Shahnawaz and Juyal, 2006). This is to say that if an employee considers that the organisation is investing in improving their overall work environment, respects its employees and considers them as vital to its success, this can enhance retention rates as well as the level of commitment. In a university setting, it is thought that tenure is positively associated with commitment (Iqbal, Kokash and Al-Oun, 2011).

Linked to the level of commitment shown by an employee to the organisation is the level of job satisfaction experienced by the employee (Ameen et al., 1995), which is considered an important outcome because it helps identify areas in which the organisation needs to make improvements. Moreover, employee satisfaction results in positive behaviour, whereas dissatisfaction results in negative behaviour (Spector, 1997) and therefore influences outcomes. If an employee is dissatisfied in their role, they are likely to seek employment elsewhere (Kehinde, 2011), and therefore the

organisation will have to go through a recruitment and selection process that will demand a lot of organisational knowledge on behalf of the employee. These are all practices that are within the remit of a human resources department, and taking into account that such departments have been absent in the KSA, it is hoped that this research will be informative in establishing human resource practices that take into consideration the unique culture within the kingdom.

1.4. Research Problem

This thesis focuses on HR practices as perceived by staff, based on a detailed overview of existing literature on the conceptualisation of human resource practices and HR dimensions (planning, attraction, retention and development). Furthermore, and given the emphasis on the Saudi context of this study, this study also outlines cultural differences in HR practices from an empirical perspective. In fact, there is limited research on HR practices as perceived by employees, as well as job satisfaction and organisational commitment. As such, due attention is also given to existing research evidence on HR practices in a university setting, in order to guide our understanding of this particular topic in line with the research questions of the current research. Given the increased recognition of the potential influence of various demographic variables such as age, gender and work experience, amongst others, on employee perceptions of HR practices, existing empirical evidence in this area is also outlined in this study. As well as considering HR practices on a global level, it is also important to adopt a cross-cultural perspective whereby previous literature on HR practices in Saudi Arabia is also explored across various organisational contexts. There seem to some shortcomings in this regard. It is important that cross-sector literature is used, in order to establish the importance and role played by specific factors such as demographics and culture in terms of how these could affect organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

In the present study, considerable attention is also given to existing research evidence on organisational commitment. In particular, it looks at how past studies and theories in human resource management attempt to define this concept, in order to provide an operational definition of organisational commitment for the purpose of addressing the research questions. Several aspects of this element are

also outlined in an attempt to draw attention to its importance in an organisational setting. It is commonly witnessed that although organisational commitment is highly valued in almost, if not all, institutions, very little is usually done on behalf of the organisation, particularly in the HR department, in order to safeguard or even enhance employee commitment. Therefore, the findings of the present study could help shed light on employees' perceptions of HR practices, which also often significantly overlap with the role played by the HR department.

This study also measures organisational commitment on three levels: affective, continuance and normative. Hence, previous studies that examined each of these levels in the field of HR are also outlined in an attempt to emphasise the distinction between each type of commitment. This is especially useful, since it is commonly accepted that although these levels can overlap significantly, they are still distinct in their own right and with varying outcomes for employees. Amongst the few available pieces of research evidence on the link between SHRM and organisational commitment, Green, Whitten and Medlin (2006) found that SHRM has a direct and positive influence. This suggests that top managers implementing a SHRM system can benefit from a boost in organisational commitment with the help of the organisation's human resource professionals. Moreover, it is generally observed that this particular research area involves mixed findings, often as a result of the influence of several moderating factors such as the demographic characteristics of workers. Thus, in order to address this issue, it would be useful to explore further the concept of organisational commitment in an attempt to either support or contradict past research evidence.

More importantly, there is yet again a significant dearth of research on organisational commitment in a university setting in Saudi Arabia, which further emphasises the novel contribution of this study. It is therefore important to consider cultural differences in organisational commitment.Current growing research in this area is also outlined in this chapter and specific references are made to the Saudi organisational climate in the HE sector. With regards to the latter, studies from a cross-cultural perspective on organisational commitment in a university setting are also outlined in close reference to the Saudi context where possible (Kroone and Freese, 2013). However, since Saudi-focused research in this area is rather limited,

this study aims to develop an understanding of organisational commitment in HE from the lens of Western countries as a stepping stone for future research in Saudi universities. In so doing, it would also be interesting to examine the extent to which comparable research in a Western context is similar or different to a Middle-Eastern context. There is increasing evidence suggesting a close link between demographic characteristics such as age, gender, job position and work experience (amongst many others) and organisational commitment. Therefore, in the current study, available past research revealing significant relationships between specific demographic characteristics and the extent to which an employee displays commitment toward the organisation is also detailed.

Along with organisational commitment as an important construct in the field of human resources, the present study also examines another essential and closely linked work-related construct: job satisfaction. Especially in light of the fact that it is listed as one of the most complex areas of human resource management (Hackman and Oldman, 1980; Herzberg, 1987; Holland, 1973; Locke and Latham, 1990). Although more empirical evidence is perhaps available in relation to job satisfaction and SHRM, there are only a handful of studies that have explored the impact that specific HR practices can have on job satisfaction. As such, particular attention will also be drawn to the conceptualization of job satisfaction, approaches to job satisfaction as well as its measurement, mostly from a theoretical perspective and based on past literature. Similar to organisational commitment, job satisfaction is also examined from a cultural perspective, in order to identify similarities and/or differences between research in the field of human resource management in Western and non-Western educational settings such as the HE sector in Saudi Arabia. An array of studies on job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia are outlined in support of this research in an attempt to develop a good understanding of the various factors including demographics which could have an effect on the level of satisfaction of Saudi and non-Saudi employees. Moreover, although it is acknowledged that there is growing research on job satisfaction in a university setting, empirical evidence in this regard is virtually non-existent.

This is to say that there is a significant dearth of research on HR practices in the context of higher education (HE) generally and in Saudi Arabia particularly.

Furthermore, in the HE context, there is a need to attract and retain high-quality faculty staff, bearing in mind that low faculty retention rates could lead to adverse monetary and academic consequences for universities. It is generally stipulated that without well-qualified and committed staff, organisational stability and quality would be difficult to sustain in the long term (Pienaar and Bester, 2008). As such, another key premise of this study is that universities, as educational establishments, must afford due importance to the perception of HR practices embedded in SHRM, in order to maintain a competitive edge in knowledge-based economies.

This study will focus on employees' perceptions in relation to the HR practices adopted by KSA universities and their impact on OC and JS. Strategic HRM researchers have progressively implemented an employee perspective to understand the influence of HR practices on employee outcomes and have called for studies to explain variability in employees' perceptions thereof. This research will therefore use the social information (demographic, cultural) processing perspective to inspect the appropriate influence on OC and JS. The universalistic model of HRM has long been researched with a focus on its various implications in an organisational setting. Past research examining the relationship between job satisfaction and job commitment posited that this association with HRM is also crucial, as it can significantly influence performance, although this association is better understood when examining actual practices rather than the intended (Kinnie et al., 2005).

However, the current literature, to date, has not been sensitive to the role played by the HR practices as perceived by employees – and even less so in the HE sector in Saudi Arabia. As stated by Gilbert, De Winne and Sels (2011), existing research in the area of HRM has given considerable attention to intended HRM rather than perceived HRM, hence drawing further attention to a lack of research on the perceptions of employees in an organisational setting. Therefore, the current study attempts to address all the aforementioned gaps in knowledge by considering perceptions of HR practices on job satisfaction and job commitment in a specific Saudi university.

1.5. Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

With all the above in mind, this study aims to address all the aforementioned gaps in knowledge by investigating the general concept of human resource practice and its

importance in an organisational setting, namely the Saudi university sector. Moreover, it has been recognised that employees hold common interests and beliefs about the extent to which their workplace recognises their contributions and shows concern for their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986). Nonetheless, not much empirical attention has yet been given to employees' perceptions of HR practices and how these in turn can influence other work-related attitudes in general and within the Saudi context in specific. By identifying this gap, this study therefore also aims to conceptualize HR practices and any related issues from the employee's prospective. HR practices will also be explored in specific areas pertaining to planning, attracting, retaining and developing employees.

Likewise, although there is increasingly accumulating evidence in the field of HR practices on organisational commitment and job satisfaction across various organisational settings, it should again be highlighted that much less research on each or both of these constructs is available in a HE context and, more importantly, in Saudi Arabia. Thus, taking into account this issue, this study also aims to develop an understanding of the organisational commitment of university staff (mainly academics and HR group management) and the level of job satisfaction that they experience in line with their perceptions. In line with the conceptual framework of this research, another aim to identify the specific role played by HR practices in influencing the job satisfaction and organisational commitment of Saudi employees in the HE sector, which is so far missing in the literature.

As previously mentioned, and in the current research era, a great deal of emphasis is also placed on the need to engage in cross-cultural research, with an aim to develop a better understanding of how culture can also have an effect on the attitudes of individuals, including workers. Although some studies have investigated human resource management, including strategic human resource management in a Saudi context, to the best of the author's knowledge, it should be reiterated that there is virtually no available research on this topic in HE in Saudi Arabia. As such, this study also aims to contribute to existing HR literature by putting forward novel findings in this regard. More specifically, this study has the following aims, objectives and research questions:

Research Aim:

This study aims to mainly to examine HR practices as perceived by staff within a university setting in Saudi Arabia and also examine the extent to which this perception of HR practices is associated with the employees' (academics and HR/management personnel) Job satisfaction level and their commitment to their jobs and organisation. In a nutshell, the main focus of the current study is to explore staff members' experiences of HR practices. It is essential also to point out at an early stage that when referring to perceived HR practices in this thesis, the latter terminology is treated strictly as a subjective experience in an organisational context. Moreover, HR practices are only measured based on perceptions rather than intended practices as being implemented in Saudi universities.

Research Objectives:

1. To examine critically what is meant by HR practice (with a focus on perceptions rather than intended practices), job satisfaction and organisational commitment, both worldwide and in the context of Saudi Arabia, and the nature of the relationships between them in the extant literature.
2. To understand and evaluate current perceptions of HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities.
3. To investigate the nature, strength and direction of relationships between HR practice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities.
4. To investigate the perspectives of HR practices held by different stakeholders (i.e. HR personnel/managers and academic staff) in Saudi universities.
5. To explore to what extent Saudi culture influences the formulation and implementation of HR practices in Saudi universities through empirical research.
6. To explore the extent to which demographics influence the formulation and implementation of HR practices in Saudi universities.

Research Questions:

Based on an understanding of the literature reviewed herein, the perception of HR practices is widely under-researched in the context of HR in Saudi Arabia, along with their effect on OC and JS. Focusing on the perceptions of employees is anticipated to provide a 'closer' conception of the experiences of HR practices. Importantly, this could help further to develop adequate programmes that could assist an organisation

to support its staff by addressing existing issues in human resource management. It is also anticipated that this new insight could also help to complement existing research findings on intended HR practices – an area which is more widely researched than the present one.

This empirical study looks at the available literature to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. How are HR practices currently being perceived by staff (the focus being on perceptions rather than intended practices) and, what are the current levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
2. What is the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between HR practice as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
3. What are the cultural/social influences on HR practices in Saudi universities?
4. To what extent do demographic variables (gender, education, age, role, experience) influence participants' views on HR practice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
5. Do academics/teaching employees have different opinions compared to managers and HR employees when it comes to HR practices?

1.6. Impetus and Contribution

In an attempt to meet the research aims and objectives of the current study, some recommendations are also suggested, in order to address any issues pertaining to the perceptions of university faculty members in Saudi Arabia in relation to HR practices. This is especially important given that, to date, no study has been conducted in this regard, and research into HR practices as perceived by staff in relation to both organisational commitment and job satisfaction in the Saudi HE sector is still very much in its infancy.

Importantly, in terms of the functioning of Saudi society, its uniqueness cannot be ignored, since the Saudi Arabian workforce operates in line with its set culture, norms, values and religious beliefs. As a result, its policies are also largely influenced by its unique cultural and societal expectations, which are guided strongly by an

Islamic framework. Moreover, in the Saudi organisational context, there are several issues such as *Saudisation* and *Wasta* (Wasta regarded as a very influential person with good connections who can get the things rolling for you), which influence work-related attitudes as well as career opportunities in several ways but which are also commonly accepted by the Saudis as being part and parcel of their society.

Ultimately, this research contributes to existing empirical evidence in several ways. First, it helps to expand our knowledge of HR practices in an organisational setting (with a particular focus on higher education), based on the perceptions of staff members. Second, this understanding is further enhanced using a cross-cultural perspective with an emphasis on the Saudi context. This is very important, bearing in mind that Saudi culture is also strongly founded in religious beliefs and hence quite powerful in shaping various institutions on several levels, such as organisational commitment, job satisfaction and HR practices. Third, research in the HE sector in Saudi Arabia is now growing with the need for more studies in this area, including from an organisational standpoint. Hence, the present study is also amongst one of the few available that addresses this gap in knowledge. Fourth, research findings in an organisational context based on staff perceptions are extremely valuable, and these can help to tailor appropriate intervention strategies that could eventually contribute to a more positive staff experience, better organisation commitment as well as a higher level of job satisfaction. Although these are micro-level outcomes, it is anticipated that these could eventually influence overall organisational performance. However, for clarity, the current study only aimed to measure the aforementioned individual organisational variables and not organisational performance as a single construct. Fifth, this study adopts a robust methodological approach, namely one embedded in a mixed methods approach using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. As such, in using this approach the current thesis contributes to existing research in this area by presenting both quantitative and qualitative findings with an aim to use both sets of complementary findings to obtain a more accurate and in-depth insight into the topic.

Therefore with all the above in the mind the value of the current study cannot be undermined, bearing in mind that there is a significant dearth of research in this area within a specific cultural context and setting such as the HE sector in Saudi Arabia.

In the sections to follow, details will be provided, as well as an empirical discussion based on the findings of this study, on all of the aforementioned concepts linked to human resource management and the university setting in line with existing literature on the perception of HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction across societies, including Saudi Arabia.

1.7. Structure of the Study

This study is structured based on the following chapters:

(a) The *literature review* provides a critical review of relevant research studies that revolve around the perception of HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction, in line with cultural and demographic dimensions. The aim of this chapter is to enhance understanding of the aforementioned concepts within the Saudi university sector, based on existing empirical evidence.

(b) The *research methodology* chapter outlines the study's use of approapriate research philosophy, research approach, research strategy, research choices, time frame and data collection techniques, in order to answer the research questions in the best way possible.

(c) Analysis and data presentation: this chapter presents all of the findings, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches that elucidate this topic in line with the proposed research questions.

(d) The *discussion* chapter provides a critical and inclusive analysis of the research findings to broaden our understanding of HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction from a cross-cultural perspective. This section is focused mainly on discussing the findings in relation to past research with an aim to either support or contradict existing evidence in the same research area. Importantly, similarities and differences between cultures within a HE organistional setting are also highlighted, where relevant.

(f) The *conclusion* section provides an overall summary of current findings as well as suggests suitable recommendations for further research, in order to address existing gaps in knowledge in this area. Moreover, recommendations on a practical level are also highlighted to boost organisational performance – in line with the study's findings relating to HR practices as perceived by the participants.

1.8. Chapter Summary

The introductory chapter, a background to the study was provided, in order to discuss the theoretical groundings of the research study. The research aim, objectives and questions were then established, to define possible outcomes and the target area of investigation. The research scope was also defined to show the limitations of the research, while research variables were outlined, to introduce them and describe their behaviour in relation to other variables.

Chapter 2: HR Practices

2.1. Introduction

The aim of the previous chapter was to introduce the area of study and to establish a basic understanding related to the specific research. It also provided an overview of the study and identified gaps that it hopes to address. This chapter begins with an overview of the constructs of the study and starts with a literature review of the perceptions of HR practices and associated dimensions, as well as sub-sections on organisational commitment and job satisfaction in relation to the university sector and Saudi culture. There is also a section exploring the relationship between all the variables in the study, in order to build a conceptual framework.

2.2. The perception of HR Practices

This section will discuss the concept of human resource practices in general and the importance of these practices in the organisational setting, from the perspective of the employee and how they might perceive these practices, looking specifically at the areas of planning, attracting, retainment and development. The chapter will go on to provide an overview of the concept of organisational commitment, namely the level of commitment shown by an employee to an employer, and the factors that could have an impact on this aspect, as well as the level of job satisfaction that an employee may have whilst working for an organisation. In so doing, this will help provide a good insight into HRPs, which aim mainly to influence employee attitudes positively. Common to the aforementioned sections is a discussion on how cultural differences relate to each area, their relevance to the university setting and how they fare in the context of the Saudi Arabian workforce, given its uniqueness in terms of its policies, such as Saudisation, and cultural influences therein.

2.2.1. The Concept of HR Practices

There is accumulating evidence suggesting that HR management can help companies gain a competitive edge by being more strategic (Lawler, 1995; Ulrich, 1997; Brockbank, 1999; Lawler and Mohrman, 2003). This endeavour is commonly referred to as a specific form of human resource management known as ‘strategic human resource management’ (SHRM), an umbrella term for ‘human resources’. SHRM is the assumption of a strategic stance with respect to the integration of the HR

function as an integral part of the strategic management process, and it views human resources as assets to be employed strategically by management – an approach contrary to being reactive, prescriptive and administrative (Budhwar, 2000; Buyens & De Vos, 1999).

According to Nataraja and Alamri (2016, 93), "SHRM is a cross-disciplinary concept and has foundations in human resources, organizational theory, industrial relations, institutional economics, and strategic management."

Furthermore, Delery and Doty (1996) suggest there are four theoretical perspectives from which we should view SHRM, namely the Universalist perspective, the configurational perspective, the contingency perspective and the contextual perspective. The emphasis of the Universalist perspective is that HR best practice could – and should – be applied successfully, irrespective of context, organisation or culture, and lead to improved organisational performance. It is also the simplest approach (Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernandez, & Sánchez-Gardey, 2005). The configurational perspective emphasises the internal human resource function and its effective integration (a 'horizontal fit'), whereas, the configurational perspective refers to correspondence between the HR system and other organisational characteristics such as strategy (Delery & Doty, 1996). There has been a recent and important shift in terms of analysing HRM from the contextual perspective, which emphasises the role of and relationship between context and the SHRM system, inclusive of all geographical and industrial contexts (Delery & Doty, 1996). The contextual approach proposes exploring from a broader perspective than the others, namely by integrating the human resource management system into the environment in which it is developed (Martín-Alcázar et al., 2005). In addition, it involves the application of more complex research techniques that allow for the deeper analysis of social, institutional and political forces, and it engenders a better understanding of the effects of human resource management decisions on the environment (Gratton, Hope-Hailey, Stiles & Truss, 1999). Adopting this contextual perspective will therefore mediate the methodologies employed herein. While this study does not focus specifically on SHRM as an umbrella concept influencing HRM practices adopted by firms, the contextual perspective is relevant, in that this author's research focuses on the Saudi context and its culture. Ulrich and Dulebohn

(2015) advocated that in order to lead successfully, management must be aware of contextual business factors (social trends, technological trends, economic trends, political trends, environmental trends and demographic trends), not only in the way these affect how their organisations work, but also, and more importantly, the nature of HR work and how that work will be done. For example, social trends may affect what makes an effective employee value proposition (Ulrich & Dulebohn, 2015).

Human resource practices form part of the systems that feed into the overall concept of HR management, and they can be regarded as the formal approaches used in managing people (Armstrong, 2006). However, as identified by Monks et al. (2013), HR practices do not sit in isolation; alongside policies and processes, they form a system whereby policies set out what the organisation is trying to achieve, with practices being those techniques needed to implement such policies and which are executed through the explanation provided within processes. Bowen and Ostroff (2004) describe policies and practices as the contents of a HR system, which are intended to achieve a particular objective, and they differentiate this from the process of how the system will be administered. Moreover, they consider HR practices as being a way of the employer communicating with the employee, with Gillespie and Dietz (2009) considering these practices as being a reflection of the strategy and policy of the organisation. Practices and strategy must be aligned if the performance of the organisation is to be enhanced and a competitive advantage obtained (Masa'deh, Obeidat, and Al-Dmour, 2015). Ogilvie (1986, as cited in Alnaqbi, 2011) considers practices to be distinct, tangible activities, with Alnaqbi (2011) stating they are informal ways to recruit, retain and motivate employees.

In line with the SHRM theory, human resource practices affect outcomes by determining the behaviours and attitudes of employees (Arthur 1994, Huslid 1995, as cited in Alnaqbi, 2011). Therefore, the importance of an organisation indulging in good practice cannot be underestimated; indeed, HR practices communicate important goals and desired employee behaviours (Bretz & Judge, 1994), and they can be seen as 'signals' and interpreted as such by employees (Hartog, Boselie & Paauwe, 2004, 563). Furthermore, employees can determine how committed the organisation is to them by looking at the practices that are implemented, which in turn can affect the commitment that the employee shows (Alnaqbi, 2011). Since HR

practices can potentially positively impact upon, for example, the wellbeing of workers (Demo, Neisa, Nuney, and Rozzett, 2012), it is arguable that they benefit both the employee and the organisation. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the effect of the practice varies across individuals as a result of the influence of various individual factors such as personality and attitudes, amongst many others (Nishii, Lepak, and Schneider, 2008). This point must be emphasised, as the signals of HR systems are often interpreted dissimilarly by individuals. It is argued, for example, that these differences may be due to differing life experiences, values or preferences (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). However, it is important to note that "HRM practices are viewed by employees as a 'personalised' commitment to them by the organization which is then reciprocated back to the organization by employees through positive attitudes and behaviour" (Hannah & Iverson, 2004, 339). Thus, the way HR practices are perceived by employees can influence organisational success.

Bretz and Judge (1994) advocate that an organisation's HR system should ideally reflect its strategy and context, both of which should be communicated accordingly to employees, since HR practices tend to shape employees' overall experiences within firms as a result of personal interpretations and social constructions (Rousseau & Greller, 1994) in the situated context. It is argued that firms should be less concerned with HR practices as policy documents to be followed, and rather they should be more focused on how their employees experience the HR practices that are instituted (Wright & Nishii, 2007). More specifically, to what extent their employees believe the implemented policies are likely to positively or negatively affect them individually is an important point, since the manner in which employees actually perceive the HR practice may have a more salient effect on organisational outcomes than initially intended by the firm. This is to say that the outcomes of any implemented HR practices are mostly dependent on employees' perceptions rather than the organisation's intentions per se. Again, the need to investigate HR practices as perceived by staff is of utmost importance, in order to address this discrepancy in perceptions and the actual objectives/practices implemented by a company, since these perceptions may be better proximal predictors of individual attitudes and behaviours (Khilji & Wang, 2006; Nishii, Lepak & Schneider, 2008). Nevertheless, this study has focused on gathering data from a range of employees –management,

human resources staff and other employees (academics) – in order possibly to unearth any differences based on position within the universities under examination. Organisational success is dependent on the behaviours and attitudes of the people who work for the firm, and it is therefore arguable that ensuring wellbeing will contribute to lowering absenteeism and raising productivity. This is an important point, because labour is an expensive resource (International Qualifications Network, 2016); however, without employees, an organisation would not be able to function and thus they should be regarded as a necessary investment. Furthermore, employees generate income through innovation and by increasing the quality of their output, and thus effective practice is important in providing firms with an advantage over competitors. Consequently, it is important to know which resources the organisation will need and to have practices in place to attract the right employees for business needs, such as an attractive remuneration package. As well as being costly, employees are also generally motivated by money (Alnaqbi, 2011), and so having staff benefits such as allowances will arguably contribute to their feeling that the organisation is investing in them. Consequently, if they feel that they have job security, they might be more committed to remain with the organisation, thus reducing staff turnover, which in turn contributes to maintaining the morale of the workforce in general (Alnaqbi, 2011). However, this is not to say that this applies to all employees regardless of any other forms of incentives which could equally be perceived as being attractive, if not even more than monetary benefits. It therefore follows that the practices needed to retain employees must address these issues, as well as having systems in place to develop them, so that it is clear that the organisation is investing in them and they keep their skillset up to date.

Human resource management can be classed as either 'hard' or 'soft', with the distinction being that employees are regarded as a resource to be managed and through which competitive advantage can be achieved, if adopting 'hard' HRM, whereas 'soft' HRM considers them as valuable assets rather than as objects. Since the focus of 'soft' HRM is on employees' needs, this in turn is thought to lead to increased organisational performance (Marescaux et al., 2013).

As well as being important for the individual employee in ensuring their basic needs are met, HR practices shape the core competencies that influence the ways firms

compete. Thus, human resource management and development practices such as training and development, staffing, motivation and maintenance are considered vital (Nilsson and Ellstrom, 2012). Research has revealed that such practices contribute significantly to how a firm performs; for instance, as suggested by Alfes, Shanz and Truss (2012, 410), "it is the way employees perceive these practices that ultimately exerts the most influence over how they feel and behave at work, and thus determines whether the outcomes for the organization and the individual are favourable." The perceptions an employee has of human resource practices are likely to influence their attitudes and behaviours (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). This notion arguably could be linked to social exchange theory, which states that when an individual enters into a relationship with another, and both can identify a benefit, this creates an obligation between them that needs to be fulfilled (Alwaqbi, 2011). Put simply, social exchange theory is based on norms of reciprocity within social relationships (Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013), and it provides an explanatory framework through which to illuminate how employees' perceptions of bundles of interrelated elements of HRM practices affect them as individuals. It is argued that employees who draw economic or socio-emotional benefits from their employers typically feel obligated to respond in kind (Blau, 1964; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Nonetheless, the effect is likely to differ amongst individuals, according to Nishii, Lepak and Schneider (2008), who build on the theory of social attribution, which states that people attach different meanings to the same thing (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). This depends on factors as set out by Nishii et al. (2008) that may be influential in this regard, such as personality, values, goals, needs, social roles, past experiences, competences and expectancies. Ultimately, those behaviours that are perceived to be of benefit will likely lead to a favourable attribution, as posited by Jones and Davis (1965, cited in Nishii et al., 2008), such as the intention to "attract and retain employees" or "being done out of the spirit of justice." Alternatively, the attribution could be negative if it needs to conform with government regulations. Rather than HR practices having an influence on resources, it is mostly the employees whose behaviour is affected that boost performance (Wright, 2014). Nevertheless, the provision of HRM in bundles can lead to higher levels of effectiveness and influence employees' actions, as individual HRM practices that are part of the bundle create

synergistic effects that are substantially greater than any single HRM element (Gooderham, Parry, & Ringdal, 2008) and are more relevant in determining employee attitudes and behaviours (Paauwe, 2009). Thus, management must seek to identify those practices that would ideally and collectively lead to positively held employee perceptions of the said practices. The focus of this study will be linked directly with the development of understanding HR practices as perceived by employees in the university sector, by determining organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

Organisations face a wide range of changing conditions in the environment in which they operate, and when faced with unpredictable and uncertain factors, the focus should be directed toward employees as a vital resource, in order to create the future they desire (Kagaan, 2011). Employees are an asset that cannot be imitated by competitors (Armstrong, 2006), and a competitive advantage can be achieved by obtaining and developing human resources that enable them to learn faster and apply their learning more efficiently than competitors' staff members (Hamel and Prahalad, 1989). This study focuses on the planning, attraction, retention and development of employees. As highlighted by Aycan et al. (2000), there is certainly an influence of the cultural context on human resources management and practices in different settings. However, there seems to be a dearth of research in this area in the HE context, and so the current study helps to address this gap in knowledge by making an empirical contribution.

2.2.2. Perceived HR Dimensions

HR practices and dimensions are often studied in various environments. HR practices as a concept are complicated, and many businesses often establish their policies and the practices they aim to achieve; however maintaining or implementing these policies in full is a hard undertaking. This leads to us distinguishing between two important concepts with regard to HR practices, namely indented vs. actual HR resources. Intended HR practices are designed by policymakers to help maintain the organisation and its success in moving forward (Boxall & Purcell, 2003), while realised HR practices are actualised and really implemented by the organisation or management (Khilji & Wang, 2006). The reality is that not every organisation succeeds in implementing all HR practices successfully, and as a result they are not

always in line with each other (Hope-Hailey et al., 2005; Khilji & Wang, 2006)). In terms of HRM, the gap between intended and realised practices is also highlighted; it has been reported in qualitative and quantitative studies that HR satisfaction levels vary among employees, thereby reflecting different satisfaction levels about the implementation of HR practices and their management (Khilji & Wang, 2006). For example, Truss (2001) highlighted the disconnect between main guidelines within the HR department and the reality of their application, by observing a company encouraging career management through various programmes; only a small proportion of the employees were satisfied with this arrangement. Managers are often responsible of the implementation of HR practices, and this is often compromised as a result poor management (Truss, 2001).

Now that the differences between intended and realised practices are clear, it should be noted that this study (in the Saudi universities context) does not particularly examine intended HR practices; in fact, not much is known about Saudi universities' HR policies, how they operate, their philosophies or management styles. It has been noted (via personal communication) that many of the universities do not have a conventional HR department, as many of them are considered new and still developing. Since little is known about universities' HR practices, this study cannot test the intended practices; however, it does address how employees perceive HR practices to work or the way they are applied. The current literature, to date, has not been sensitive to the role played by the HR practices as perceived by employees and even less so in the HE sector in Saudi Arabia. As stated by Gilbert, De Winne and Sels (2011), intended HRM rather than perceived HRM has been targeted, hence drawing further attention to a lack of research on the perceptions of employees in an organisational setting. Therefore, the current study attempts to plug this gap. The following narrative will attempt to explain HR practices while first explaining the role of SHRM.

As mentioned previously, it is commonly acknowledged that SHRM is an umbrella term under which human resource practices are sanctioned from the upper echelon of the firm and subsequently devolved or delegated to line managers to implement. Furthermore, it is also important to emphasise that this concept also encompasses HR practices and how they are perceived as a main element. As posited by Katou and

Budhwar (2006), it is not the HR practice itself which leads directly to improved organisational performance; instead, it is how these practices can have an influence on organisational resources, i.e. employees whose behaviour is affected, and lead to enhanced performance (Wright et al., 2014). As recognised by Abdul Hamid (1996), these practices provide employees with skills, incentives, information and decision-making responsibilities that improve the performance of an organisation, and how they are perceived by an employee contributes to their successful implementation. However, it should also be borne in mind that practices may be well thought out and well aligned with organisational goals, but they may not be thought of in the same terms as a result of differing opinions as to what 'best practices' actually constitute (Lambooij, Sanders, Koster, and Zwiers, 2006).

Furthermore, supporters of SHRM posit that there is relationship between the structure of the workplace and organisational success, given that skilled and motivated employees have their own ideas of the type of work performed in the organisation as well as how – and if – it is accomplished (Delaney and Huselid, 1996). This supports the link between SHRM and HR practices, which can be looked at in isolation to determine their effects on performance, or as systems such as high-performance work systems and high-commitment HR practices. There is also the potential that practices may conflict with each other by having differing aims and objectives that do not necessarily contribute to achieving the overall mission of the organisation. In addition, they may be substituted for other practices, and therefore focus must be directed toward how employees observe the overarching human resource management system, if the relationship between HRM and outcomes is to be understood (Alfes et al., 2012). However, Sadler et al. (2014) suggest that the point of these bundles is to work synergistically, in order to reinforce each other. Nevertheless, even if working in synergy, it is arguable that each practice will remain distinct.

Not in question, though, is the fact that it has been widely acknowledged that HR practices are associated with organisational outcomes (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Huselid, 1995; Wright, McCormick, Sherman, & McMahan, 1999). Nevertheless, in recent times, it has been acknowledged that the causal chain appears to be more complex than previously thought (Nishii et al., 2008). Distinctions have been made

between the intended HR practices of the organisation relative to employees' actual perceptions of said HR practices. Whitener (2001) advocated the significance of employee perceptions in this regard and suggested that employees may not always see or value objectives in the way the organisation intends. For example, management may promote, verbally or through formal policy openness, participatory decision-making, but employees may in reality believe that management are not receptive to such a practice. Work by Bowen and Ostroff (2004) highlighted the importance of employee perceptions in translating HR practices into desired organisational outcomes, with the 'strength of the HRM system' being the main driver in this regard. Furthermore, the authors argued that HR system must elicit unambiguous and shared insights that encourage, support and reward employees demonstrating positive organisational citizenship behaviours.

Building on the work of Bowen and Ostroff (2004), it was posited that employees respond attitudinally and behaviourally to HR practices based on the attributions they make in relation to managerial intentions in effecting particular HR practices (Nishii et al., 2008). Moreover, as suggested earlier, social attribution theory implies that people can attach different meanings to social stimuli (Fiske & Taylor, 1991), and based on prior experiences, their attitudinal or behavioural responses to these stimuli may differ. In this study, the author's intention was to explore how stimuli, in this case HR practices in the Saudi context, might have an influence in this regard.

It is important to note that employee attributions in relation to firms' HR practices may be either internal or external, as well as perceived positively or negatively. For example, internal attributions can be positive if employees believe that HR practices were designed by management with the intent of enhancing service quality or employee wellbeing. Alternatively, they may be identified negatively if they believe the intention is to reduce costs or exploit employees (internal), or solely to comply with union regulations (external) (Nishii et al., 2008). Koy (2001) similarly differentiated between internal and external casual explanations for HR practice. While these attitudes and behaviours more often than not originate from the individual level, it is argued that through social processes they are shared with the wider group. Consequently, what emerges is unit-level organisational citizenship behaviours that lead to desirable or undesirable organisational outcomes. Research

has shown that employee perceptions of HRM practices have a direct effect on the degree to which individuals engage in citizenship behaviours and whether they decide to stay in the employ of the firm (Alfes et al., 2012). Firms must therefore make every effort to ensure that their HRM practices are consistently and fairly applied. There have been strong suggestions by researchers that in order to examine effectively the influence of HRM practices on employee behaviour, it is imperative not to rely solely on senior accounts managers and their approach to HRM practices at a strategic level (Khilji & Wang, 2006; Nishii et al., 2008). This study will go some way in identifying the scope and impact of HR practices as perceived by employees in both public and private universities and reveal their effect on organisational outcomes such as commitment and job satisfaction. The role of HR practices is to attract and develop employee capability, for example through effective selective hiring, developmental performance appraisals and comprehensive training, the aim of which is to provide potential and existing employees with opportunities and motivation (Macky & Boxall, 2007) that ultimately lead to positive outcomes.

2.2.2.1. Planning

Organisations tend to plan not only for their future needs of equipment, supplies and financing, but also for their human resource needs (Lunenburg, 2012), which are arguably a significant financial outlay and therefore must be kept under control. By forecasting for these needs, action plans can be identified and developed around areas such as recruitment, training and career development, to meet the anticipated long-term needs of the organisation (Anyim, Ekwoaba, and Anthony, 2012). Effective HR planning is an integral part of the HR function, and should employees have a negative perception of this process, for example in terms of limited focus or administration by management, it is likely that this may potentially affect levels of commitment as well as satisfaction levels, since the apparent lack of planning by management in this regard may be generally frowned upon, generate negativity and contribute to an unfulfilling work climate or employee dissatisfaction. However, as forecasting is not an exact science, there must be a degree of flexibility so that planning can adapt to suit organisational needs (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Therefore, it is arguable that because people's plans are changeable, there should be

an element of contingency planning so that the organisation does not suffer because of these changes. Having been described as “manpower planning” (International Qualifications Network, 2016), human resource planning is regarded as a way of ensuring that an organisation will have the right employees in place at the desirable time (Anyim et al., 2012), which can be achieved by being reactive, i.e. recruiting to fill a vacancy with the most suitable individual, or through planned downsizing and letting those staff go who are surplus to requirements, either through a programme of redundancy or by encouraging them to leave on their own volition, by withholding loyalty incentives (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2002). The latter, of course, may trigger a grievance on behalf of the staff member.

In order to plan effectively for human resource needs, forecasting gives consideration to the supply and demand of available employees and attempts to bridge this gap, if there is one (International Qualifications Network, 2016). Therefore, being aware of the employment market within which the organisation is operating is vital. As observed by Armstrong (2009), if an organisation develops and trains its staff, it can run a flexible workforce that is able to adapt to changes, and by improving its utilisation of existing people, this flexible working system can be developed further. Armstrong also posits that in order to reduce dependence on an external workforce to meet key skill shortages, this can be achieved by formulating retention and development strategies. It is therefore arguable that HR planning is important, in that it feeds into other practices such as attraction, retention and development, which will be discussed later.

As stated further by Armstrong (2009), the ultimate goal should be to create an organisation that is more flexible and intelligent than its competitors, by hiring and developing staff that are more skilled and by extending their skills base. Organisations therefore need to forecast, recruit, retain and optimise how they deploy personnel to meet business requirements and objectives, and to respond to changes in the external environment (Sharma, 2012). Human resource planning can assist with this aim, achieved through “the forecasting of future business and environmental demands of the organisation and the adjustment of the personnel requirements to those conditions” (Siikaniemi, 2012, p.52). It can also be considered “a process in which an organization attempts to estimate the demand for labour and evaluate the

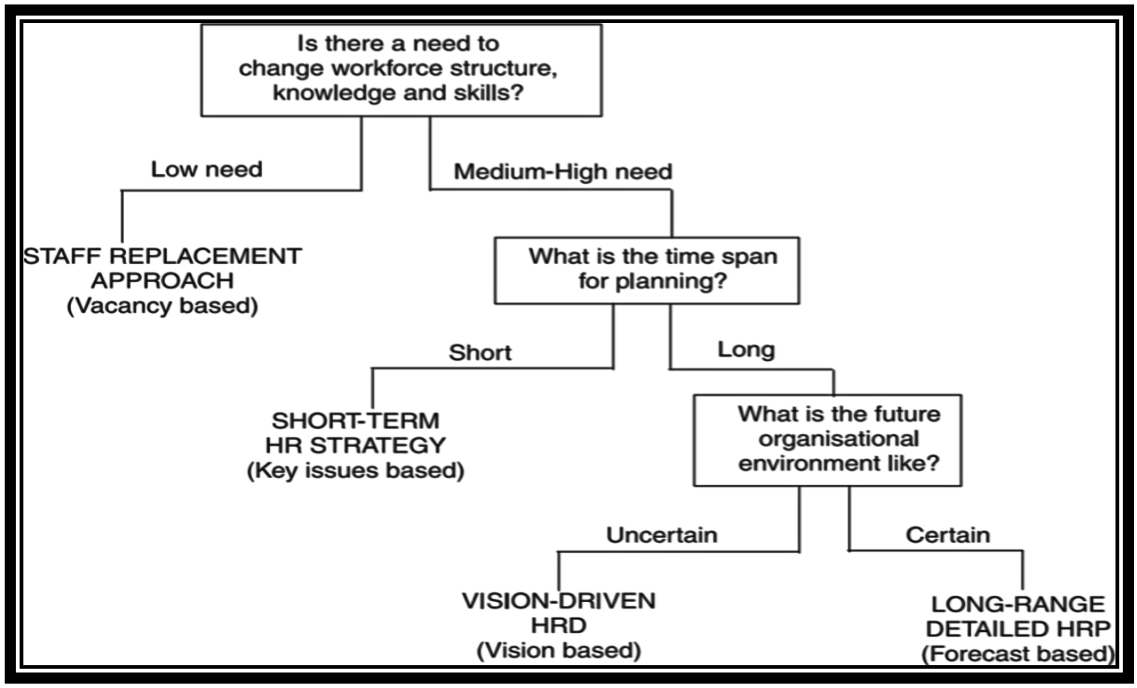
size, nature, and sources of supply which will be required to meet the demand" (Armstrong, 2009, p. 486). As a form of risk management, it allows an organisation to prepare itself for foreseeable contingencies (International Qualifications Network, 2016), and, as posited by Fajana (2002), by conducting an analysis of the human resource needs in ever-changing conditions, this allows the development of policies that contribute to business effectiveness in the long term.

In order for the deployment of employees to be successful, management must ensure that tasks are allocated appropriately and the job description for each colleague is sufficient so that what is expected is clear. Planning can also provide a more effective and efficient workforce, help ensure that replacements are available to fill important positions, provide realistic staffing projections for budgeting purposes, deliver a clear rationale for linking expenditure for training and retraining, development, career counselling and recruiting efforts, and help maintain and improve a diversified workforce (Sinclair, 2004). If insufficient attention is paid to the recruitment effort, the results may not be satisfactory, thereby ending up with job applicants who are not qualified, who lack diversity or who may decline a job offer (Newby and Howarth, 2012).

According to Cotton (2007), human resource planning follows a seven-step model, with the initial steps defining the strategic direction of the organisation, after which they scan the internal and external environments to allow the modelling of the existing workforce to take place. Once that is carried out, attention is paid to the needs of the future workforce and gaps are identified, with strategies then being developed and implemented to close these gaps. Finally, these strategies must be evaluated, to determine their effectiveness, and revised as needed, and so the process involves conducting a competency and skills analysis of existing human resources. Moreover, Curson and Dell (2010) proposed that a human resource plan generally consists of the following elements: what the plan wants to achieve, the details associated with it and the expected benefits and risks. Having an effective human resource planning process determines the adequacy of the organisation's manpower, whereas an inadequate process may lead to a surplus or deficiency in the workforce (Sharma, 2009).

The literature provides a distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' human resource planning. Hard human resource planning is based on quantitative analysis that ensures the right number of the right sort of people are available when needed. Soft human resource planning, on the other hand, focuses more on creating an organisational culture that integrates organisational goals with employee values, attitudes and beliefs (Armstrong, 2009). However, regardless of whether the planning is hard or soft, it involves aligning human resources with an organisation's business plan. This is to achieve its mission by ensuring that it has and will continue to have the right people with the right skills in the right job at the right time, each of whom performs their tasks as efficiently and effectively as possible (Cotton, 2007). However, there is not one method to determine this need, though Kane and Stanton (1994), in Figure 1 below, summarise the processes of deciding which planning measures to adopt. The model covers the planning of organisational needs in the short (staff replacement approach), mid (short-term HR strategy) and long term (vision-driven development), which is important, because organisations operate in a changing environment (Anyim et al., 2012) and thus must be able to adapt to these changes. It must be borne in mind that as well as planning to meet changing needs, as posited by Anyim et al. (2012), HR planners must do so with equality and fairness in mind and provide a workplace that is just and fair for all employees, thereby eliminating all forms of discrimination. This means that there must be equal opportunities, and thus the training and development provisions for employees must be fair whilst concurrently ensuring that organisational needs are met.

Figure 1: A summary of the process involved in deciding the appropriate planning measures to adopt



(Anyim et al., 2012)

2.2.2.2. Attraction

Rees and French (2010) consider the decision to employ as underpinning the whole area of managing people, with the person who decides on the recruiting being regarded as having a gatekeeper role within the organisation. According to Porter (2008), the recruitment and selection process is a means of staffing and resourcing, of generating a pool of capable people to apply for employment (Bratton and Gold, 2007). However, in order to generate this pool, potential candidates must have some desire to submit an application. Any organisation, including HE institutions, must therefore make itself desirable to prospective employees, in order to attract them sufficiently well that they make an application. Thus, the recruitment process has been described as a marketing exercise (HRM, 2013).

If a decision is made that the vacancy does exist, then management must think about whether this can be filled by way of an internal recruitment programme, or whether to expand the existing pool of employees and to recruit externally. When taking steps to attract candidates to apply for the position, consideration ought to be given to attracting the right candidates, since there is no value in merely generating a high volume of applications, and a figure cannot be placed on what is the right number (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2006). Bratton and Gold (2007) treat selection as a process

whereby managers choose from a pool of applicants the person(s) more likely to succeed in the job, taking into account management goals and legal requirements – a notion mirrored by Ballantyne (2009) – as well as having the relevant qualifications (Snell and Bohlander, 2010).

Once an organisation resolves the issue of whether to advertise a vacant position, and regardless of this being done internally or externally, a recruitment and selection process must be undertaken. Armstrong (2009) describes this as being a four-stage undertaking, involving defining requirements, attracting candidates, selecting candidates and placing them into the job. Nevertheless, even within this process, recruitment and selection are themselves distinct stages, and although they are indeed closely connected with each other, they do require different skills and expertise (Foot and Hook, 2005). It has been posited that there is no single best way to conduct a recruitment exercise. A method ensuring that the organisation receives a sufficient number of suitably qualified candidates from which to select is what is required, with the choice of method being influenced by the available supply of prospective candidates (Rees and French, 2010). To choose the best candidate, the number of applications must be reduced so that focus can be given to what are considered the best ones – this is known as 'shortlisting' (Foot and Hook, 2005).

Recruitment is arguably a positive procedure, whereby a 'winner' is chosen from a pool of applicants, but it can also be negative, because it involves the elimination of candidates from that pool (Whitehill, 1991). However, considering it in different terms, recruitment provides an opportunity to attract people to an organisation, whereas selection provides a means of identifying the most qualified amongst that particular cohort (Ntiamoah, Abrokwah, Agyei-Sakyi, Siaw and Opoku, 2014). More importantly, it is essential to point out that the approach to recruitment is generally a two-way process in which the candidate also plays a role. Therefore, this can also subsequently influence employee perceptions of HR practices.

Whilst there are clear distinctions between processes, combining the recruitment and selection processes provides a way of ensuring that workers perform to the required standard and positive outcomes are achieved for the organisation (Rees and French, 2010). According to Turban, Forrett and Hendrickson (1998), attracting and retaining superior staff can provide firms with a sustained competitive advantage,

but they also observed that the strongest predictor of post-interview attraction is the candidate's attraction to the organisation pre-interview. As a result, it is arguably the candidate who has the final say in the selection process in deciding whether to accept the offered role, which shows the importance of the attraction element continuing after the distinct recruitment stage. The interview process can therefore be viewed as more than a selection device; it is a mechanism whereby the organisation can provide information about the job to the candidate, in order to minimise the risk of the job being rejected, if an offer is made (Rees and French, 2010). If the job is rejected by the candidate, this will have cost and time implications for the organisation, because another candidate will have to be found – although this could be another person who has also applied in the same round of recruitment. On the other hand, this may not be the case, and so another recruitment exercise may need to be conducted. Inevitably, in any event, it will be time-consuming. To resolve the issue of wasted resources with respect to interviewees turning down a firm's offer, there must be more explicit and informative techniques available. Information such as the profile of potential candidates desired by the organisation, and/or extolling the benefits of working for the organisation, would fill this remit.

The recruitment process could be perceived by an employee as indicative of the organisation as a whole; for example, if the organisation communicates the result of the interview in a timely manner, this is likely to impact more favourably than delaying the verdict, perhaps resulting in the candidate refusing a job offer. Perceptions of practices could also extend to recruitment processes that are run externally. This may give existing employees the view that the internal pool of staff is not of a sufficient standard to apply for the role and could be a factor in discouraging them from doing so in the future or believing the company does not wish to invest in its people. Internal recruitment and merit-based promotions, especially when there are viable internal candidates, are integral to increasing employee retention and commitment (Arthur, 1994). Such high commitment practices are indicative of a fair promotion process of mainly affective commitment and increased employee satisfaction (Macky & Boxall, 2007), which also aid employee retention.

2.2.2.3. Retention

Encouraging employees to remain in the organisation for a long period can be termed 'employee retention' (Das & Baruah, 2013), which is particularly important for the long-term health and success of organisations. Davis (2001), for instance, identified the practice as being a "strategic, coherent process that starts with an examination of the reasons why employees join an organisation." Walker (2001) identified seven factors to improve retention: compensate workers for their role; provide work that challenges employees and give those employees the chance to learn and be promoted; provide an appealing atmosphere in which to work; encourage positive relationships with colleagues and a healthy work/life balance and ensure good communication. Subsequent to Walker's observations, further studies have been conducted in relation to employee retention.

Barrow and Moseley (2005) posit that being viewed as a good employer (one who contributes to the success of the organisation) reduces staff turnover and therefore aids retention. Contrary to retention, though, staff turnover can be seen as necessary to remove those who are not performing to the required standard and are therefore unable to meet objectives (Waldman and Arora, 2004). It is also a way to reduce costs by replacing a staff member with another who will receive a lower salary for performing the same role (Heneman and Judge, 2006). Therefore, although a great deal of focus is on retaining staff, there is arguably some benefit to organisations from turnover (Mello, 2010). However, given that an organisation's key asset is its staff, it follows that it is in its best interests to implement practices that reduce turnover rates and thus increase competitiveness (Abeysekera, 2007).

Information provided in the recruitment phase might be a contributory factor in retaining employees, as identified by Raub and Streit (2006), who opine that providing unrealistic job information leads to a higher chance that the employee will resign. Thus, it follows that if an employee is provided with realistic information in the recruitment phase, and knows what to expect of the role, s/he is less likely to resign, thereby positively affecting retention. Nevertheless, although the recruitment phase has been said to be influential on the issue of retention, Olorunjuwon (2008) stresses that this is not enough, and it is a consideration that must be used alongside other motivational factors once the employee commences employment. Alnaqbi

(2011) is of the opinion that investing in high-involvement work practices, specified by Meyer and Smith (2000) to include regular appraisals, bonus and compensation schemes, training and development and regular constructive feedback, will promote a positive work environment, which in turn can reduce staff turnover and thus lead to increased staff retention. Deery and Jago (2015) identified that an organisation must engage with its staff to implement policies and practices with the most traction. In that study, the issue of work/life balance was identified as an issue which may affect retention, and if employees experience stress, exhaustion and burnout, these elements will negatively influence their work/life balance. Deery and Jago (2015) also posit that it is often too late when this is recognised, and therefore steps ought to be taken, when implementing practices to retain individuals, to assess if this is a problem. In a review of the literature, Kossivi et al. (2016) identified relationships with colleagues as being a determining factor in employee retention, and so it follows that organisations should encourage employees to befriend each other. This could be by way of implementing regular coffee meetings, having team days or encouraging activities amongst staff in general. Karatepe (2013) comments that perceived management support is positively linked to retention, with Paillé (2013) arguing that it is more important than organisational support when considering factors that affect retention. Some organisations are so large that employees may only interact with their direct line management, so it is important for those managers to establish a good working relationship, to provide that sense of support. Furthermore, Mbugua et al. (2015) stated that what happens on the first few days of commencing employment in terms of orientation is of crucial importance in long-term retention, so having a formal induction programme could be seen as a positive step. Kroon and Freese (2013) consider that if an employee is provided with developmental opportunities, this can positively increase their commitment to stay with an organisation. Mita et al. (2014) observe that an organisation should ensure that individuals can have a work/life balance if they are to be retained, as well as providing them with an attractive working environment (Spence, Leiter, Day, and Gilin (2009). Kossivi et al. (2016) identified monetary compensation as a short-term factor in positively influencing the decision to stay, although in their review of the literature, the authors observed that when it comes to compensation, the literature is “not

unanimous about the impact of pay on retention" (p. 263). In general, it could be argued that people seek employment to be compensated. However, if there are other issues that outweigh financial incentives, compensation will not address these issues (Apker, Prop, and Zabawa, 2009). For longer-term retention, compensation needs to be combined with other motivational factors, which agrees with what Alnaqbi (2011) says when he observes that the decision to leave can rarely be attributed to one single issue.

The retention of suitable employees has become a key issue at universities (van den Brink, Frutier, and Thunnissen 2013). Alnaqbi (2011), for instance, identified increased competition in the global marketplace as a problem. It is reasonable to assume that universities are caught up in this dilemma, for instance by having academic staff who collaborate with their peers globally to produce research papers or make contacts through networking whilst attending conferences. Furthermore, some universities have departments in different countries, and it should be borne in mind that cultural differences may affect the decision to remain with an organisation or to seek employment elsewhere, in which case retention practices may need to be reflective of such an issue. Al-Rubaish et al. (2009) reported that the majority of the academic staff in a Saudi university were satisfied with their jobs, although there was still significant dissatisfaction in relation to several job-related aspects along with demographic matters. As such, it could be argued that in cases of low job satisfaction, retention rates are more likely to be quite low. As far as research on the retention of academic employees in Saudi HE contexts is concerned, very limited empirical evidence is available to facilitate our understanding of this issue in the kingdom.

If an employee is provided with conditions that are flexible enough to meet their needs, this is arguably of benefit to them and will assist in their retention. Moreover, it may be that they perceive practices such as performance-related pay as being an encouraging incentive for them to produce work of a high standard for which they will be rewarded. Conversely, they may perceive this as nothing more than a way for the organisation to keep control of finances so lower pay can be justified, which will undoubtedly have a negative effect on their perception of this practice (Spreitzer, 1995). This demonstrates how the presence of one practice can have different meanings associated with it and thus will result in differing outcomes. As such, one

of the main aims of this study is to explore factors that could potentially influence commitment as well as the level of job satisfaction of employees working in a Saudi university setting.

2.2.2.4. Development

Employee development is associated with the learning of all individuals, whether frontline employees, professionals or managers, and can be delivered through a range of approaches such as off-the-job and on-the-job training, educational programmes and seminars, job rotation, self-study tutorials and mentoring programmes (Jacobs and Washington, 2003).

According to Noe (2008), training and development is increasingly part of human resource practices and attributable to the expansion of technology in the workplace. As a commitment-based human resource practice (Coyle-Shapiro, Hoque, Kessler, Pepper, Richardson, and Walker, 2013), development opportunities are seen a positive factor in assisting with employee retention (Kroone and Freese, 2013) and in increasing loyalty (Leidner and Simon, 2013). If employees are equipped with new knowledge and skills, this is positively linked to good business outcomes (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Rahman and Nas (2013) suggest that when the employee is aware that the organisation is committed to their development, whether that is personal through recognising and assisting in developing their career path or organisational through helping them meet their targets, this makes them less likely to leave and improves their performance. Latif (2012) suggests that by investing in their development and training, this creates satisfaction for the employee, which in turn benefits the organisation (Broadhurst, 2012).

This is an area where line managers are involved more directly than the human resource department, with training needs often being identified through an appraisal system or through the employee's self-evaluation (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2013). This can also result in a difference in how development opportunities are offered in practice, and as a result not all learning and development opportunities are offered equally across the company (Shuck, Twyfordm, Reio Jnr, and Shuck, 2014). In addition, some managers will not raise the topic of development opportunities with their staff (Reio and Sander-Reio, 1999). Reio and Sander-Reio (1999) observe that

some employees believe that the organisation invests little in their development, with examples being given of older employees or those that are part of a 'low-status' group. The authors specify this group as including racial minorities and women who are single, widowed or divorced. As posited by Shuck, Twyford, Reio Jnr and Shuck (2014), "it is not about having a robust offering of programmes and colorful catalogues within a corporate learning and development function—it is equally about employees perceiving equal access to and support for their involvement in those activities" (p. 137).

It is arguable that staff development starts when the individual commences employment and attends an induction course, as this sets the scene for what the employee can expect in this regard. The importance of induction training cannot be underestimated, as it is a way for the employee to learn about the culture of an organisation and cement their initial commitment.

An incentive of offering study leave and work exchanges to teaching staff can assist in their retention and in making teaching an 'attractive profession' (International Labour Organisation, 2012, p.53). The authors in this case also identified that problems with many career structures in the teaching profession arise because of what is described as a 'vertical career structure', namely progressing from classroom teacher through to head teacher or faculty Dean, or higher management positions. They treat this as a problem because it takes teachers out of the classroom and away from delivering a teaching session. However, the authors acknowledge that there will be individuals who are content with this vertical scheme, and so it should be available for those who want to progress through this route. The authors go on to highlight the importance of offering 'professional development leave' to teaching staff in both the short term or longer in the form of sabbaticals and workplace exchanges. This feeds into the fact that employees, including Saudi staff (both teachers and researchers), will perceive the university as being concerned about their needs, as well as the needs of the university, and it is therefore likely to influence positively their intention to remain a member of staff.

2.2.3. Cultural Differences in HR Practice

It is worth highlighting that most studies on HR practices have been conducted in Western countries particularly, mostly focusing on testing the generalisability of North American behavioural theories and technologies in other countries (Aycan et al., 2000), without due consideration for the relevance of any findings in other country contexts. It has also been observed that although nations can differ in many important ways (for example, institutional and regulatory environments, and labour force characteristics such as education), a dominant focus of the international management literature is on national differences in culture, especially cultural values (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). The role of culture in international research is gaining more and more traction and importance as we increasingly live in a globalised and liberalised business environment (Hendry, 1996). Furthermore, leading texts on international management warn that national cultural differences matter a great deal – and a manager ignores them at his or her own peril (Gerhart & Fang, 2005). This has pushed management to examine their practices from a cross-national viewpoint. The comparison of HRM policies and procedures at a national level would assist management in testing the convergence-divergence thesis (Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002). Questions include asking what HR practices are enacted, what are the similarities and differences and what is the influence of national factors such as culture, government policy and education systems? It has been reasoned that most HRM models have an Anglo-Saxon or Western base, which has led to the development of HRM principles that have been developed and based on a restricted sample of human experience (Budhwar & Debrah, 2013). It has therefore been questioned whether practices and policies in different environments are universally suitable, thereby leading to increased attention being given to the role of culture in management.

It is noteworthy that HRM in practice is associated strongly with social issues and activities, with differentiating factors between countries that are contextually inclusive of economic, political, legal, historical and sociocultural characteristics of the workforce and society playing substantive roles (Iles, Almhedie, & Baruch, 2012). Of all these country-based differences, it is claimed that culture is the most salient, since it is widely acknowledged that it is the basis of people's behaviour (Hofstede,

1991; Triandis, 1994; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1994). It has even been observed that the "very expression 'human resource' is derived from a cultural framework in which humans are considered to be instruments of production like financial, technical or physical resources, which is a specifically Western perspective" (Iles et al., 2012, 469). Drawing on this perspective, it can be argued that human resource management is a key asset for any organisation.

While there is indeed increasing focus on international human resource management and culture, desk research by this author has revealed that studies on culture and HR practice in the GCC are particularly sparse, inclusive of the Saudi context, which is even far more limited, especially in the field of HE. Research exploring differences in HR practices is important in developing a more global perspective on and understanding of potential issues and challenges that may arise from adopting a universalistic approach to application. According to Budhwar and Sparrow (2002), a sensible way of highlighting differences among firms in different countries is by identifying the main national factors (such as culture, industrial sector and institutions) that significantly influence HRM practices, which is one of the main aims of the current study.

One of the oldest definitions of culture was provided by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952, 181):

> *"Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action."*

Hofstede (1984) describes culture as being the collective programming of the mind that differentiates individuals of one group from another, while according to Ferrao (1990, 16), "For an idea, a thing, or a behavior to be considered cultural, it must be shared by some type of social group or society." House, Javidan and Dorfman (2001) explained culture as relating to the values, beliefs, identities and explanations of

significant events that arise from mutual experiences. According to Van Oudenhoven (2001), national culture distinguishes members of one nation from another, although not every individual in that nation has all of the stated characteristics of their culture (Schuler and Rogocsky, 1998). Furthermore, according to Zegarac (2010, 40), "[…] people are said to belong in the same culture to the extent that the set of their shared cultural representations are large." As recognised by Hofstede (1984), the culture of a country is reflected in the organisations that make up society. This notion is supported by the findings of Yaghi and Yaghi (2013), who reported the existence of a relationship between organisational management practices and the Arab culture. As stated by Obeidat, Al-Sarayrah, Tarhini, Al-Dmour, Al-Salti and Sweis (2016), human resource practices are shaped through culture, because the managers implementing such practices are themselves affected by the environment within which they live.

In addition, according to Matsumoto and Yoo (2006, 240), cultures are "human-made responses to the ecology within which societies exist; cultures are created as societies adapt to their contexts in order to meet the biological and social necessities of survival." Nevertheless, it is important to note that culture is very much as individual and psychological a construct as it is a social construct (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). For example, it should be evident that while the norms of any culture should be relevant to all the people within that culture, it is also true that those norms will be relevant in different degrees to different people, which makes understanding culture a difficult but fascinating undertaking. Nevertheless, Klein (2004) suggests that differences among groups or collectives arise from the shared experiences of people within them. These shared experiences are shaped based on how individuals in the group are raised, available resources and ecological and social pressures form a shared culture. She proposes that people from the same group "[…] share a 'lens' for making sense of the world" (Klein, 2004, 256).

A number of researchers have highlighted that national culture does influence HRM policies and practices (Iles et al., 2012; Jackson & Schuler, 1995; Schuler & Rogovsky, 1998; Tayeb, 1995). For example, it is argued that value orientations, norms of behaviour and customs influence individual preferences for specific HR policies and the extent to which these policies function effectively. Conversely, the nature of the socialisation process influences the characteristics of managers and how the

managerial role is defined. Consequently, it influences the competencies that firms feel are necessary of their employees to resource – and thus selection and development systems to match (Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002).

Tayeb (1995) observed that national characteristics such as individualism and collectivism, as proposed by Hofstede (1991) in a comparison of the USA and Japan, do in fact influence management and HRM policies. For example, they differ fundamentally in the way they are committed to each other, and this translates into the workplace. Due to collectivist orientation, Japanese employers and employees, and their shared sense of duty and indebtedness to their in-group impacts, are consistent with the view of employees as assets rather than as liabilities, and there is a long-term view of relationships and appropriate training in a range of functional areas to ensure flexibility (Hofstede, 1991). As a result, employees display a high degree of commitment and loyalty to the organisation. The USA as an individualistic society tends to emphasise personal interests, which translates into the workplace of short-term orientation both by employer and by employee. More often than not, US employees view firms as a step on the career development ladder and promptly leave when new opportunities arise, while firms fire or hire at will to serve their organisational objectives and adopt a short-term perspective (Tayeb, 1995).

It appears that cultural differences in KSA are most likely to affect human resource practices, because people, mainly from mainstream Saudi culture, who were referred to as 'culture bearers' designed those practices (Al-Sarayrah, Tarhini, Obeidat, Al-Salti, and Kattoua, 2016, p. 705). Mendonca, Kanungo and Aycan (1999) commented that those practices that are successful in Western societies will not be effective in non-Western cultures. Moreover, because of globalisation, organisations must consider global as well as local markets and find a balance between these when implementing practices, although this is slightly less applicable in Saudi Arabia than in other countries that are perhaps more open to embracing globalisation. This is something KSA is struggling to achieve, according to AL-Syaidh, Masa'deh, and Al-Zu'bi (2015), although it is important, because national culture affects major business activities (Leung, Bhagat, Buchan, Erez, and Gibson, 2005).

Schuler and Rogocsky (1998) are of the opinion that national culture accounts for the reasons why, for example, different compensation practices are used in different

countries. The national cultural dimension presented by Hofstede (2017) gives Saudi culture a dimension score of 60 and categorises it as a masculine society where people "live in order to work." Furthermore, managers are expected to be conclusive and forceful, and the emphasis is on equity, competition and performance, while conflicts are resolved through conflict. The other key dimension in relation to exploring Saudi culture is collectivism, since with a score of 25, the kingdom is certainly considered a collectivistic society. This is patent in a close long-term commitment to the member 'group' in the form of family, extended family or extended relationships. The supreme attribute of a collective culture is loyalty. In collectivist societies, relationships are professed in moral terms (such as a family link), and hiring and promotion decisions take account of the employee's in-group, while management is the management of groups. In terms of the recruitment process, Milikic (2009) identified that culture has a definite impact, which should be considered when deciding on what recruitment processes to use. Therefore, it is apparent that a one-fit approach cannot be taken when considering what human resource practices should be used.

However, Leat and El-Kot (2007) posited that societies are moving closer to each other, due to the impact of globalisation, and this includes the way that things are done, which the authors suggest also includes human resource practices. HRM in Middle-Eastern countries faces several challenges and is often considered complex and demanding as a process. This is mostly the case because of the influence of the socio-economic and political background of the country on HR practices as well as that of the national culture on policies surrounding these practices (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2006). Finally, it is argued that, "in order to evaluate and highlight the context-specific nature of HRM in different national or regional settings, we need to delineate the main factors and variables that could determine HRM in such settings" (Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002, 379). As such, in part this study, empirical research will determine these main factors and variables.

2.2.4. HR Practices in a University Setting

Nilsson and Ellstrom (2012) consider organisational success dependent on identifying, recruiting, managing and retaining high performers who can meet the

demands of the organisation. Lew (2008) stated emphatically that the implementation of appropriate HRM practices for university employees is essential, as this will lead to improved performance, since these employees play a strategic role in improving ratings in areas such as research quality, the academic reputation of the faculty, programme quality, contributions to research and, importantly, the development of tomorrow's leaders. Many countries have realised the strategic importance of promoting university performance and raising profiles internationally. One such example is Malaysia, which is focused on establishing itself as an international hub for world-class education and leading universities (Sirat, 2005). The Saudi government is also assuming a similar stance, and so the focus of this study should contribute to progress in this regard. Attracting and retaining quality faculty is an absolute necessity, since low retention or high turnover can have serious implications, both financially and academically. Moreover, without highly qualified and motivated staff, the organisational sustainability and quality of programmes cannot be assured in the long term (Pienaar and Bester, 2008). These members of staff are indeed the faces of higher education institutions, as they have the highest level of interaction with the student body. By attracting appropriate human resources, an advantage can be gained over competitors more than relying on an original product or services (Altamoney, Tarhini, Al-Salti, Gharaibeh and Elyas, 2016). It has been noted by Lorange (2006) that the quality of staff is vital in a university setting, not only in terms of quality of education and research, but also for the reputation of the university, which in itself will determine its competitive position. This is particularly relevant in the case of Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries, since as producers of knowledge, universities must value their staff to remain competitive in a knowledge economy (Lynch, 2007).

In general, there has been an observed shift away from the traditional collegial system, which had provided professors with high levels of independence, autonomy and freedom from strong managerial influence (Egginton, 2010) and accountability toward a more focused managerial model and the adoption of private-sector management practices (Smeenk et al., 2006). For example, individual performance systems have entered academia, and 'excellence' and 'talent' are increasingly linked to evaluation factors such as productivity, peer reviews, citation indexes and

internationally refereed publications in the UK and USA (Van den Brink et al., 2013). Another issue that arises when implementing policies and practices relates to the role and function of HR in the recruitment of academicians, as the traditional HR role is limited to administration and not to their recruitment, selection and supervision (Van den Brinket al*.,* 2013).

2.2.5. Demographic Influences

The way that employees perceive HR practices can be influenced by a number of demographic factors, such as age, with older employees rather than younger employees perceiving HR practices to be more relevant, which also applies to the finding in relation to the role within the organisation with those in a higher/managerial position seeing human resource functions more favourably. Ofori, Sekyere-Abankwa, and Borquaye (2012) posit that this could be attributed to the fact that an employee is more likely to reach a higher position within the organisation as their age increases. Variation in job type can also be influential on awareness (Kinnie, Hutchinson, Purcell, Rayton, and Swart, 2005), as can the length of time an employee has been with an organisation, which is linked to a positive perception being held, arguably because working conditions are not such that they cause the employee to want to leave, as observed by Alfesm, Shantz, Truss and Soane (2013).

2.2.6. HR Practices in the Saudi Context

National culture affects the way in which human resource policies and practices are designed and implemented, as well as on their effectiveness, their influence on employee behaviour and individual and organisational performance (Gerhart and Fang, 2005; Miah and Bird, 2007; Lertxundib and Landeta, 2011; Hassi, 2012).

This study, as it relates to Saudi Arabia, is also likely relevant to Middle-Eastern countries in general, especially those sitting on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), namely Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE, as they have commonalities such as religion, culture and language, as identified by Sidani and Al-Ariss (2014). According to Alhejji and Garavan (2016), these countries have retained their cultural identities despite globalisation and the presence of a foreign workforce, which can be seen in HRD systems in operation within the GCC. Nevertheless, Mellahi and Wood (2001) recognise an increase in the development of Western ways in Saudi Arabia,

which is likely to be linked to the increase in multinational firms operating in the kingdom (Ramlall, Al-Amri and Abdulghaffar, 2012). Nonetheless, it is noted in the Middle East and particularly in the GCC countries that HRM is greatly influenced by culture, Islam and the role of other factors such as "*Wasta*," as well as by national and global politics (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2006; Iles et al., 2012). Many companies in today's world do not consider the adoptive environments that comprehensively encourage employees to speak their minds. As an alternative, they make it very obvious that the only views that really matter are those of senior managers. This is very much the case in the Middle East. Organisational cultures are suffused with other influences – some direct progress and development, while others do not really make a positive contribution. One example of the latter is '*Wasta*', which is the exercise of using a family name or personal connections to drive career advancement. It is not strictly associated with hierarchy but is more about personal accomplishment and how an employee practices through family connections or through hard work and true merit (non-*Wasta*) (Alghanim, 2014). Furthermore, research into Arab management and HRM has only recently emerged with discussions on what type of HRM is found in Arab business organisations. Some researchers have suggested there is no 'Arab' management theory, while others insist that it has been slow to develop because of "cultural discontinuity," caused due to the clash between creeping Western ways and Arab tradition and/or religion, and the sudden processes of industrialisation (Ali, 1993). While this has been long-stated, it appears that these comments are still relevant today (Iles et al., 2012). This therefore reinforces the importance of this study in adding to the extant literature that exists in the country context of Saudi Arabia with respect to perceptions of HR practices relative to management behaviour and practices. This also applies to the potential of environmental influences such as culture and other factors that may be peculiar to the context under examination.

The cornerstone of social life in the Middle East is the family, as well as Islam (Ali, 1996). In a predominately Muslim country like Saudi Arabia, Islam, through national culture, influences organisations and HRM practice significantly (Tayeb, 1997). It is noteworthy that HRM policies are adopted and implemented within a national/country context, including culture, where religion even influences political

ideology, economic conditions and the legal system, which is unlike most secular Western countries. On the one hand, Islam not only represents one's faith, but it also meaningfully influences political and economic organisations as well as human relationships (Metcalfe, 2007). In essence, it provides a code of conduct for both the workplace and one's private life. However, the cultural milieu often leads to contradictions, such as the non-Islamic practices of authoritarianism and nepotism, as well as the distinct elements of ancient tribal systems of Arab culture, where leadership is unchallenged and family and kinship feature most prominently (Branine and Pollard, 2010).

Understanding the cultural context of individual countries is important, and HR practitioners and management must understand this point. For example, in the case of Saudi Arabia and other Middle-Eastern countries, the juxtaposition between Islam and Arab tradition has resulted in contradictions between the prevalent authoritative nature of management that exists in these countries, as it runs counter to Islamic teaching of consensus and consultation (Branine and Pollard, 2010). Consultative decision-making styles are simply rhetoric, as influenced by Islamic values of 'shura' or consultation, when in reality, decisions are not made jointly and are not delegated down the hierarchy, while alternatively subordinates may see joint decision-making as a weakness (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2007). Practices like participatory management and empowerment, related to transformational leadership styles and proactive HRM practice (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Braun, Peus, Weisweiler, & Frey, 2013), are more than likely to be stymied in a Middle-Eastern context such as Saudi Arabia. As such, a paucity in this regard can negatively affect job satisfaction, team performance and other related organisational outcomes (Braun et al., 2013; Bushra, Ahmad, & Naveed, 2011). Nevertheless, it is possible that Western influences and globalisation can possibly filter into existing management processes and practices within Saudi university contexts, which this study may in part reveal.

In the Arab world, one of the greatest challenges to managers and researchers is understanding '*Wasta*', often derived from relationships and close friendships and seen as a force in every significant decision in Arab life (Cunningham & Sarayrah, 1993). *Wasta* has been studied empirically, but descriptive accounts emphasise its ubiquity in organisational practices in the Middle East. It is intrinsic to the operation

of many valuable social processes, central to the transmission of knowledge and the creation of opportunity (Weir & Hutchings, 2005). It is contended that similar to *guanxi* in the Chinese context, *Wasta* has positive connotations of networking and negative connotations of corruption. Across the Arabic region, more than not, it is used to override established laws and traditions (Weir & Hutchings, 2005). These negative connotations often extend into workplace and human resources practices, where, for example, preferential hiring due to certain connections can lead to less qualitied candidates being taken on instead of more qualified candidates. Kinship, locale, ethnicity, religion and wealth are all factors in this regard (Sawalha, 2002). Moreover, cronyism is pervasive as a result of *Wasta* (Barnett, Yandle, & Naufal, 2013), and it is suggested that managers in the Middle East often show higher commitment to family and friends than to organisational goals and performance (Barnett et al., 2013). Relevant to HR practices is that greater credence is given to status, position and seniority than ability and performance (Al-Faleh, 1987), which can be demotivating to young and new hires. It is suggested further that those who do not engage in *Wasta* are actually punished, and it is a common observation that nothing can achieved in the world of business without knowing someone (Harbi, Thursfield, & Bright, 2016; Weir & Hutchings, 2005). Furthermore, recent research points specifically to its role in the career progression of women (Harbi et al., 2016), who in GCC countries have to rely on male family members' connections as career facilitators, to gain access to organisational opportunities, i.e. informal networks. Conversely, women in Western countries, in general, rely mostly on formal business networks (Abalkhail et al*.,* 2016).

Another factor that has a significant effect on HR practices in the Saudi context and in other GCC countries is the introduction of regional labour nationalisation policies (Forstenlechner, Madi, Selim, & Rutledge, 2012). The Saudi government is currently following a programme to replace expatriate workers with Saudi nationals, in a quest to reduce unemployment in the kingdom (Azhar, Edgar, and Duncan, 2016). This concept is referred to as 'Saudisation'. Azhar et al. (2016) observe that implementing this restrictive practice has been effective in the public sector but of limited success in the private sector, with banking a noteworthy exception. The impact, however, in human resource practice terms is that organisations are recruiting individuals who

may not be competent to do the job, simply to ensure that they recruit from a pool of Saudi nationals. Even if this is not the position, then it is arguably likely that it is perceived to be so. Dosary and Rahman (2011) suggest that emphasis should be placed on the development of skills in the local population instead of reliance on a quota system to achieve Saudisation. From the perspective of many private-sector operators, the advent of such policies is reportedly considered a form of indirect taxation (Al-Qudsi, 2006). Furthermore, from a regulatory standpoint, private firms appear less inclined to hire nationals, since it is argued that the "formal or informal rights of the nationals compared to alternative candidates cause employers to avoid recruiting them" (Harry, 2007, 138), particularly with respect to hiring and firing them.

In Saudi Arabia, Saudisation will undoubtedly have an effect on how practices adopted by organisations, including universities, are viewed. If the university selects staff to meet a quota, then the observation may be that the best staff have not been recruited; instead, the most suitable person could in fact be from the expatriate community. The issue of segregation may also have a negative effect; for example, a university may employ a male teacher, even though he is not the best skilled for the role, because the competing candidate is a woman who would not be able to teach in the majority of classes, as they will be attended by male students. The male teacher, on the other hand, is still able to deliver a lecture to impart knowledge to male and female students, albeit with the females attending via video conferencing, away from the university setting. In light of the above, with respect to the Saudisation policy, there is a need for public and private cooperation to create employment. It is argued that, to date, in GCC countries such as Saudi Arabia there have been limited efforts to apply modern forms of HRM systems and practices, as generally human resources are still seen as "costs" to employers and not as valued capital assets in which to invest (Harry, 2007). Furthermore, it would seem that the adoption of a strategic human resource management approach is some way off (Afiouni et al., 2013). The scarcity of empirical research on human resource management bodes well for the potential contribution this study can make to the extant academic literature on HR practices as perceived by employees in the Middle-Eastern context.

Gender segregation influences human resource practices within Saudi Arabia, which, as observed by Baki (2004), is practiced as a means of protecting the honour of females. However, as well as Saudi women not being permitted to mix with men (who are not family members), they cannot drive and need a chauffeur or a male relative to drive them, and they cannot easily access transportation. This lack of geographical mobility affects professional advancement, due to social and cultural barriers that prevent them from maximising their networking and development opportunities (Rutledge, Al Shamsi, Bassioni & Al Sheikh, 2011). On the macro level, the resultant low female participation rates in the job market lower any return from government investment in education, as a productive element of the workforce is lost. This is a critical human resource issue, particularly as it is observed that in GCC countries, female citizens are generally better educated than male citizens so are thus capable of performing and engaging in higher-level jobs (Girgis, 2002). The government must now be creative in identifying new types of jobs for this burgeoning group of citizens, since it has been observed that many Saudi women are not willing to take a job if it involves direct contact with men (Leeth, 2014), although there are some industries where segregation is easy to implement, such as banking, with female-only staff and branches for female customers, although in other establishments such as hospitals and hotels, this is not feasible, as they are mixed environments. Baki (2004) comments that with the implementation of Saudisation, there will need to be an increase in the employment of both genders in the future. This will likely affect the planning considerations of HR departments when deciding how to increase the quota of Saudi nationals, including female nationals, and when adhering to the segregation policy within the kingdom. Alhejji and Garavan (2016) noted the increase in educated Saudi females and the gap between the roles available to them compared to those available to Saudi males, with unemployed Saudi women being some 30% higher than male counterparts.

Issues such as *Wasta*, Saudisation and gender segregation are very relevant when considering HR practices in Saudi Arabia, and so unless cultures and societies merge into one common form, which it is reasonable to state as being highly unlikely, then HR departments must be mindful of local influences, not only when implementing

the practice, but also when devising a practice, and remember that one size does not fit all in this regard.

2.2.7. Summary

It is recognised that human resource practices are key to building and maintaining trust (Wright, 2004) and illustrating a firm's commitment (Mbugua et al., 2015). Human resource practices can be considered either on an individual basis or holistically. Snape and Redman (2010) consider that the holistic approach is preferential if their impact is to be assessed, whereas Goodeham, Parry and Ringdale (2008) theorise that it is by working as synergistic bundles that these practices have greater effectiveness, with Paauwe (2009) observing that it is the perception of bundles which may be relevant when determining attitudes.

Although practices in their own right, recruitment and selection are both important elements in HR planning (Porter, 2008) – a concept supported by Gilmore (2013), who writes that they should be considered within the context of HR planning. It is reasonable to think of retention as a human resource practice in this sense; however, it should not be considered in isolation. For instance, in a study conducted by Mbugua, Waiyango and Njeu (2015), it was concluded that employee retention is influenced by strategic employee recruitment. The practice of development can be linked to retention, in that by ensuring an employee has their career goals met and is provided with the skills to carry out the role effectively, s/he will perceive the organisation as being committed to their development. This demonstrates how practices are linked to each other, but they are also linked to the issues of job satisfaction and commitment, which will be discussed in the next sections. Incentives can make teaching appear an attractive profession and one in which the employee chooses to train and to remain. If the university offers preferential benefits such as flexible working and study leave, this is likely to be seen by the employee as being of benefit, and therefore applying social exchange theory will provide them with the incentive to repay the benefits they are receiving by remaining a committed employee.

In a world where organisations may have a global presence, and where human resource practices may be devised in one country for implementation elsewhere, it

is important to remember that it is likely to be local managers who will be responsible for implementing these practices. These managers will inevitably belong to a certain culture and may be influenced by the society and culture that surrounds them (Obeidat et al., 2016). Mendonca et al. (1999) postulated that practices that are effective in one country might not be transferrable or effective in another country. However, contrary to that statement, Leat and El-Kot (2007) stated that with globalisation and the integration of societies, this could result in HR practices that are equally effective across countries. In nations such as Saudi Arabia, it must be considered that it is not only the cultural aspect that might influence HR practices, but religion might also have the same effect, often with the two being interlinked. It would therefore be naive to devise a HR practice without considering these wider issues.

In light of the aforementioned summary, cultural, social and demographic influences will be studied with regard to HR practices. The empirical element in this regard will focus on two-stage data collection, in order to establish a basic understanding associated with the research aspects and areas of consideration. The next chapter will discuss organisational commitment and job satisfaction in relation to HR practices.

Chapter 3: HR Practices in relation to Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction

This chapter will expand on earlier literature review by discussing the association between HR practices and organisational commitment as well as job satisfaction.

3.1. HR Practices and Organisational Commitment

Whereas the previous section focused on employees' awareness of human resource practices, this chapter will focus on the commitment that an employee shows to an organisation. However, these two areas should not be thought of as separate and distinct considerations, because the degree of obligation will be influenced by the organisation's practices and policies (Shahnawaz and Juyal, 2006). Therefore, they can be viewed as interrelated. As such, this interrelationship also underlies a form of strategic human resource management. Altogether, this can also contribute to

achieving the overall mission of the institution. Human resource practices have been shown to be one of the major predictors frequently utilised when investigating the level of commitment shown by an employee (Suifan, 2015). It is how the employee sees these practices that will be the determining factor, and each individual may have a different idea on the same procedure, since psychological research suggests that they view reality differently (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Furthermore, employee perceptions may well differ to what were intended by management (Lambooij, Sanders, Koster and Zwiers, 2006). When such is the case there is a high risk of encountering serious discrepancies pertaining to an organisation's goals and intended outcomes amongst employees who will be less likely to share similar views or experiences in line with intended HR practices.

A study by Marescaux et al. (2012) revealed that the outcomes of human resource practices might be divided into two major categories: the employee's attitude to the job, including their level of satisfaction, and the attitude of the employee to the organisation, including level of commitment. The rationale that an employee places on the reason for the practice, and thus their understanding of why that practice has been implemented, is likely to influence their commitment, according to Wright and Kehoe (2008). In this regard, the authors provide an example of a highly paid employee's desire to remain with an organisation being attributed to the lack of alternative employment elsewhere paying the same rate, which could then cause resentment or low motivation. Alternatively, the obligation to stay could arise from the idea that the firm has chosen to reward the employee well, which leads to an appreciative and highly motivated employee. Thus, there is potential for the same practice to be perceived by employees in different ways, which in turn can affect whether or not they stay. In addition to the rationale an employee places on the reasons a practice (or bundle of practices) is used, importance has been placed on procedures seen by employees as consistent, as this also influences the level of affective commitment (Dorenbosch, Gibbels, De Reuver, Van Engen, and Sanders, 2005).

Organisational commitment is an indicator of whether HR practices are able to foster links between the employee and business goals (Sendogdu, Kocabacak and Guven, 2013). The idea is often conceptualised as "a psychological state that characterises

the employee's relationship with the organization" (Abdul Rashid, Sambasivan, and Johari, 2003; p. 709). According to Affum-Osei, Acquaah and Acheampong (2015), if an organisation wants to enhance its performance, then it should direct its policies (and therefore practices) toward improving commitment. However, according to Coopey and Hartley (1991), the conceptualisation of organisational commitment and its effect on the organisation also tends to vary, thus possibly also challenging its benefits, to some extent. Noah and Yong-Pin (2002) identified that not selecting staff properly, and failing to provide adequate training, is a predictor of a lack of commitment shown by the employee. Ahmed and Alvi (1987) posited that if the psychological needs of the employee are fulfilled and the organisation provides better working conditions, then this will have a positive influence. For example, Hakim (1989, cited in Iqbal et al., 2011) contended that in a university setting, when faculty possess inadequate opportunities to conduct research and are faced with rigid administrative procedures, employees will not engage sufficiently. Consequently, it is apparent that the organisation can take steps to improve its practices accordingly, in order to promote them as being beneficial.

It is therefore apparent that as social systems made up of people who come together to reach specific objectives, organisations should utilise their human resources effectively and ensure they have a committed workforce if they aspire to reach their goals and ensure their survival in a competitive world. It is those individuals who are educated, productive, aligned with organisational objectives and dedicated to the organisation that will enable the firm to be successful. Organisational commitment is regarded as a fundamental variable of interest (Fiorito et al., 2007), and as such, interest in the area has increased (Dursun, 2015) due to the significant impact it can have on performance. Moreover, Chew and Chen (2008) also stated that the devotion that an employee shows is considered one of the salient ongoing issues faced by companies and their managers.

When an employee is steadfast, this can reduce staff turnover, according to DeConinck and Bachmann (2011), which helps because replacing an employee has negative implications on expenditure (AlAdwan et al., 2013). The strategic focus of Middle-Eastern organisations includes focusing specifically on cost minimisation and the use of cheap foreign labour, who possess the highest levels of skills and technical

knowledge. In this regard, replacing an employee is regarded as a direct loss of costs and productivity. The education sector, like other areas of interest, also focuses on organisational commitment in relation to the development of employees through suitable training and development frameworks, a key part of which involves expatriates, ostensibly from Europe and South Asia (Wilkins, 2001). Accordingly, organisations have been trying to develop methods that will aid them in increasing employees' loyalty, by researching relevant factors, making evaluations regarding benefits and analysing the bonds between these two elements (Dursun, 2015).

Commitment is considered a desirable and crucial element in employees' behaviour, but it is somewhat elusive in some workplaces (Brian and Christopher, 2011). Previously, Schuster (1998) suggested that it is extremely valuable to firms frequently dealing with the need to make massive changes. Furthermore, it represents both an attitude that describes the link between the employee and the organisation, and a set of behaviours that employees follow to exhibit this link (Stites and Michael, 2011). It also reflects employee attachment and can be explained as an obligation to the whole organisation and as a reflection of how they are supported (AlAdwan et al., 2013).

Some of the factors related to low organisational commitment identified in the higher education sector include low salaries and positions, increasing trends in inflation and continuous changes (Evans, 1998). Faculties with high commitment have a strong bond with their institutions, students and subject matter, and they are expected to exhibit such values as faithfulness, independence, consistency, professional standards and morality (Somech and Bogler, 2002). These behaviours help achieve goals (Zia and Tufail, 2011). Even though various studies exist that examine the concept of organisational commitment, their findings are essentially based on studies undertaken in Western business and employment contexts. Given the rise in international business opportunities within and across a variety of cross-cultural contexts, it is of significant importance for organisations to determine whether concepts and understandings of commitment developed in Western contexts hold true for other cultural contexts (AlAdwan et al., 2013). Meyer (1997) supports this viewpoint. This section will introduce organisational commitment in an attempt to grasp a better understanding and to use it as a variable in this study.

3.1.1. The Concept of Organisational Commitment

Modern organisations require an empowered and committed workforce to ensure the effective functioning of their operations. As a result, their retention has become a critical issue in the corporate arena, especially with the rise in job switching. Changes occurring in employment practices have arisen primarily from the international marketplace and increased alternatives for skilled employees in a global economy. Skilled workers have the opportunity to move organisations, in order to develop their careers, without feeling the need to remain with the same organisation for any given period. Conversely, for the organisation, finding suitable and qualified replacements is considered a difficult task (Jain et al., 2009). This is challenging for HR managers, who must address this issue so that a plan can be devised to fulfil the aspirations of each employee, and to bring congruence between organisational and individual goals (Dwivedi et al., 2014).

Organisational commitment is considered more critical than job satisfaction in understanding employee behaviour, because it is regarded as more stable and less influenced by the daily fluctuations that might occur when considering job satisfaction (Joo and Shim, 2010).

For over half a century, academics and professionals have explored the concept of organisational commitment, following which various definitions have been proposed. This vast body of research has led to several conceptualisations in this regard. Becker (1960), for example, explained it as being the side-bets benefits that employees receive when they remain with an organisation, as well as the benefits that they lose if they leave. Kanter (1968) also referred to it as involving consideration and cohesion, and as a form of attachment a person has with social relationships formed within the workplace. Steers (1977) also talked about commitment as an "awareness of the impossibility of choosing a different social identity […] because of the immense penalties in making the switch" (p. 527). It is important to note that social identity is not necessarily the same as work identity, especially in the HE context, i.e. being a university employee does not always equate to being an academic with a particular research identity. Porter et al. (Mowday et al., 1979; Porter et al., 1974) defined organisational commitment as the relative "strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation" (p. 35). Thus, early work on

commitment explored the construct as a one-dimensional concept, namely as a mental attachment an employee had with the organisation (Becker, 1960).

There are many different views on how a person can bond with an organisation, with two in particular being regarded as significant. First is the concept of calculative commitment, where a person bonds because of sunken costs. This occurs when the employee calculates the costs and benefits of working, and then the result of the calculation determines their level of commitment. This type of commitment is seen as a structural phenomenon that results from individual-organisational transactions and alterations in side-bets or investments over time. The second notion is attitudinal commitment, which is concerned with emotional, mental and/or cognitive bonds such as loyalty, wanting to belong, attachment and belief in the value systems and goals of the firm (Lambert and Paoline, 2008).

Other approaches have also been proposed for conceptualising organisational commitment. The first is known as transactional theory and is based on the theory of side-bets developed by Becker in the 1960s. Side-bets means anything that the employee has invested in the organisation that has value to him/her and that would be lost if the employee left. These investments include, for example, time, effort and money (Mercurio, 2015). A second approach is the psychological perspective, whereby commitment comprises three components: identification with the goals and values of the organisation, a willingness to focus efforts on helping the firm achieve these goals and a strong desire to maintain membership in said company (Porter et al., 1974). A third approach is the attribution perspective, where commitment is viewed as binding individuals to behavioural acts that result from their commitment to themselves after engaging in behaviours that are characterised as being volatile, explicit and irrevocable (Reichers, 1985).

A multi-dimensional approach was later explored by Salancik and Staw (1977) and Mowday et al. (1979) explaining behavioural and attitudinal commitment as the dimensions of commitment. Behavioural commitment was explained as attachment resulting from past behaviour, whereby the employee acts in a committed way, as various factors influence their present actions (Iqbal, 2010). Meyer and Allen (1991) described it as a cycle that starts and ends with the individual's behaviour. According to Salancik (1997), based on the behavioural perspective, organisational commitment

arises from an attachment to the individual's own freely chosen actions, a supposed obligation to follow through with actions and the apparent cost of continuing or not continuing these actions. An attitude-based view suggests that organisational commitment is conceptualised as a form of emotional attachment and psychological attachment between employees and their employer (Mowday et al., 1979). It has been suggested that the attachment highlighted by Mowday et al. is based on the identification employees feel toward the organisation that results from specific attitudes and judgements developed early on in their careers. This usually occurs during the socialisation process, in which new members develop positive or negative attitudes as a result of the evaluations and judgements they make during their initial interactions (Madloch and Horan, 2009). Both of these studies suggested that these dimensions are cyclic.

Kanter (1968) identified three types of commitment, namely continuance, cohesion and control. Continuance commitment is an employee's knowledge of the benefits of staying in a job, cohesion commitment means being dedicated to the group and social relations in the organisation and control commitment is an obligation toward the authority and the norms of the group. Organisational commitment can also be described as being an attitude or a behavioural perspective. In addition, and from a broader perspective, Meyer and Allen (1997) indicated that attitudinal commitment generally involves three components, namely affective, continuance and normative, which will be the basis for measuring organisational commitment.

The primary assertion of the theories of behavioural commitment posits that an individual's dedication is a consequence of their actions. According to this theory, an individual's behaviour also creates the conditions through which a psychological state of commitment is reached (Mercurio, 2015). Other researchers, such as Wiener (1982), have theorised that commitment is partly attributed to an individual's predisposition toward or obligation to an organisation; this theory is known as the obligatory commitment theory. This state of obligation may arise out of specific norms that are internalised by the individual and are developed by a need or perceived expectation to reciprocate specific benefits (Mercurio, 2015). More recent research defines commitment as a multi-dimensional construct. A number of definitions are summarised in the table below.

Table 1: Definition of Orgnisational Commitment

Definition	Researcher
The employee's loyalty to their employer is established when there is great interest from both parties to maintain their working relationship	Zayas-Ortiz et al., 2015
Commitment is an obliging force that directs behaviour. It is more than a motive to engage in a particular course of action, or a positive attitude toward the entity that encourages the person to act in a way that benefits the entity	Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001
An individual's feelings about an organisation as a whole. It is the psychological bond between an employee and the organisation. Here, goal and value congruence, behavioural investments and the likelihood of staying in a job are related to organisational commitment	Joo and Shim, 2010
Organisational commitment can also be defined as an individual's emotional attachment with the mission, goals, and values of the employing organisation	Jaskyte and Lee, 2009
Organisational commitment is "an attitude of an employee vis-à-vis the organisation, reflected in a combination of affect (emotional attachment, identification), cognition (identification and internalisation of goals, norms, and values) and action readiness (a generalised behavioural pledge to serve and enhance the organisation's interests" (p.80)	Sollinger et al. 2008
The attachment, emotionally and functionally, to one's place of work	Elizur and Koslowsky, 2001

Another approach is to explore commitment from the context of the organisation's role. According to Dwivedi et al. (2014; p. 81) it is a "behaviourally anchored cultural variable of organisational environment." Hall et al. (1970), in this context, defined commitment as "the process by which the goals of the organization and those of the

individual become increasingly integrated or congruent." Similarly, Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) cited the 'exchange' approach as "a result of individual-organizational transactions, and alterations in side bets or investments over time." Thus, an employee's commitment to the organisation can be looked on as a function of their interaction and relationship with that firm, and a manifestation of management's attitudes toward them.

Based on the previously mentioned theoretical bases, important multi-dimensional models have been developed that conceptualise commitment as being nuanced with overlapping and multiple meanings, including all of the above definitions and theories. One of the most well-known and best enduring examples is Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model, which represents a complementary relationship between attitudinal and behavioural definitions of commitment, by stating that they are not mutually exclusive theories. The authors suggest that affective, continuance and normative commitment are interrelated and may be experienced by individuals simultaneously. They further propose that these various theories should not be defined as types of commitment but rather as components thereof (Mercurio, 2015).

3.1.2. Outcomes of Organisational Commitment

In short, organisational commitment reduces staff turnover rates, as reported by the studies of Sinclair et al. (2005) and Marchiori and Henking (2004). Positive outcomes arising from employees demonstrating commitment include higher productivity and quality (Riketta, 2002), increased resilience in the face of change (Rashid et al., 2003), lower absenteeism, greater loyalty and the degree to which they exert greater effort to achieve set targets and goals (Giffords, 2009).

Higher levels of commitment are also associated with higher levels of pro-organisational behaviour, such as increased performance and work effort (Watson and Papamarcos, 2002; Whittington et al., 2004). In addition, Neal et al. (2000) indicated that work environments with a strong goal-orientation that promotes higher levels of commitment experience less conflict compared to those that do not have this in place. Moreover, commitment is associated significantly with diverse employee behaviour, such as punctuality, citizenship, job satisfaction, reduced

workplace stress (Gupta and Singh, 2015), peer mentoring (Bryant et al., 2007) and job performance (Yeh, 2009). As such, highly committed employees are likely to exhibit important traits such as stability, productivity and enhanced performance (Giffords, 2009). Fostering employee allegiance is therefore considered a major concern for organisations operating in a knowledge-driven economy, as it is a way to reduce staff turnover and retain knowledge (Neininger et al., 2010), without it being transferred to a competitor.

The different variables explored as outcomes of organisational commitment are summarised in the table below:

Table 2: Outcomes of Organisational Commitment

Outcome variables	**Researchers**
Turnover	Sinclair et al., 2005; Marchiori and Henking, 2004
Turnover intentions	Jaskyte and Lee, 2009
Productivity	Riketta, 2002
Resilience to change	Rashid et al., 2003
Absenteeism	Giffords, 2009
Pro-organisation behaviour	Watson and Papamorzos, 2002; Whittington et al., 2004; Singh and Gupta, 2015

3.1.3. The Three-Component Model

As observed by Singh and Gupta (2015), despite the various ways in which organisational commitment has been conceptualised, Allen and Meyer's (1991) version has been used in the majority of the existing literature. The three-component model of was proposed because a one-dimensional model was not sufficient to capture the diverse nature of commitment among employees. Furthermore, it reflects an emotional desire to work (affective commitment), the perceived cost of changing jobs (continuance commitment) and the moral obligation to remain (normative commitment). Each component has a different effect on employee

behaviour and affects the need to distinguish between the differing forms of commitment (Sa'abreu et al., 2013), including in this study. This model has been used frequently from a single-country perspective by North American researchers, and it was concluded that there were too few studies available that systematically compared cultures to test the generalisability of the study outside of the continent (Esinga et al., 2010). Therefore, the component model developed by Meyer and Allen (1991) is used in the present study as a basis for research, given its widespread use and acceptance in the literature and the apparent need for additional research investigating the generalisability of the model in different cultural contexts.

Despite the popularity of the three-component model, it has been challenged both empirically, by researchers such as Ko et al. (1997), and conceptually, by Vandenberg and Self (1993), leading to the proposed revisions of the scales that measure it and the constructs that it represents. As recently as 2008, Solinger et al. (2008) were of the opinion that organisational commitment should be interpreted as a job attitude, thus possessing affective, cognitive and behavioural elements (Ajzen, 2001). Moreover, they deemed the model incomplete, since it neglected the behavioural readiness to act on behalf of the organisation's interests. Kell and Motowidlo (2012) supported this objection by stating that the three-component model does not account for how individuals internalise and identify with the organisation's values, norms and goals. Nonetheless, the model still continues to be one of the most important examples of its kind. Deaux and Snyder (2012) stated that despite the criticism, there is empirical support for the model (see Breckler, 1984), and there should be more research into it that can help understand commitment and its outcomes. Therefore, researchers should use it in commitment research.

3.1.3.1. Affective Commitment

Over the years, researchers have agreed that the construct of affective commitment can be described as the emotional attachment to an organisation reflected by an individual's identification with and involvement in that firm (Mercurio, 2015). Individuals remain in their jobs because of economic or other benefits associated with staying put (Zia, 2014). It also goes hand in hand with having a sense of

belongingness, feeling emotionally attached and part of the company, which therefore means sharing a sense of personal relatedness (Sa'Abreu et al., 2013).

When reviewing and analysing affective commitment with the intention of managing and developing the construct further, it is important to try to understand the origins that have led to its creation (Mercurio, 2015). Kanter (1968) conducted a non-experimental comparative study of Utopian communities, considered one of the first enquiries into affective commitment. The author proposed three major constructs that facilitate commitment to social communities and organisations, namely continuance (cognition), cohesion (cathexis) and control (evaluation). Cohesion by cathexis forms the notion of cohesion commitment, which in turn serves as the basis of affective commitment research. According to Kanter (1968), cohesion commitment refers to "[…] attachment to social relationships which absorb the individual's fund of affectivity" (p. 501). The author also found that successful communities employ strategies to design cohesion commitment, whereas unsuccessful communities do not do so. Furthermore, successful communities rely on communication, which refers to becoming part of the group. Following Kanter, Sheldon (1971) made an important distinction regarding affective commitment as a construct that links the identity of the individual to the organisation. This distinction of commitment as being attitudinal, as well as behavioural, paved the way for the development of affective commitment as a discriminating construct. The findings of Sheldon (1971) revealed that although individuals invest something in an organisation, they still withdraw if they do not involve themselves in it through social relationships. Buchanan (1974) supported these conclusions.

3.1.3.2. Continuance Commitment

Continuance commitment is the second concept proposed by Allen and Meyer (1990), and it centres on the concept that an employee stays with an organisation out of necessity, because the cost of leaving would outweigh the benefit. Kanter (1968) proposed that the decision to maintain membership in a social system involves an individual's cognitive orientation, determined by a cost-benefit notion. Continued participation is propelled by the fact that the cost of leaving the system would be greater than the cost of remaining. This concept evolved from the inducement-

contribution paradigm, which is concerned with the individual's level of calculative involvement in the organisation (Witting, 1985).

Two issues have been reported to act as stimuli for continuance commitment, namely side-bets and the lack of opportunities elsewhere. As such, continuance commitment is tied closely to the concept of mutual transactional behaviours, where cohesiveness is lessened whenever the perceived material and extrinsic inducements are reduced (Park and Rainey, 2007). According to this notion, employees fear leaving their jobs, as they would lose everything they have invested in the organisation (Zia, 2014). Such investments are considered non-transferable, such as working relationships with co-workers, retirement and career investments, acquired job skills which might be unique to a specific organisation and involvement in the community where the employer is located (Jha, 2011). This is in addition to the loss of health insurance benefits, retirement funds and tuition benefits (McCallum et al., 2014).

Therefore, employees stay because they believe that they will not find elsewhere the advantages they currently enjoy. Furthermore, these employees do not view staying with the organisation as stressful or harmful, as they remain in their positions in order to maintain good job conditions, a salary and fringe benefits, in addition to the benefits mentioned earlier. Leaving the organisation, on the other hand, would be viewed as potentially stressful, and so, according to the theory of conservation of resources, employees should appraise and monitor threats associated with leaving, since fear of loss lies at the core of the stress experience (Van den Bergh et al., 2011).

Second, the lack of job alternatives or opportunities available to employees (Zia, 2014) may be due to the dearth of demand for skill sets, or very few employers in the area. This issue is firmly grounded in Thibaut and Kelley's discussion on the principles of independence theory (1959), which states that an individual will only remain committed to a relationship as long as the outcomes received are greater than the outcomes available from the best possible alternative. Outcomes are determined by taking the difference between a relationship's rewards and costs, where the goal is to maximise rewards and minimise costs (Baruch and Cohen, 2007). Employees with high levels of continuance commitment, due to a lack of alternatives, feel that they are stuck in an organisation. They also view resources available to them at work, such as support, regard, respect and favourable job conditions, as low. This observation

also contributes to individuals experiencing stress, as suggested by the conservation of resources theory proposed by Hobfoll (2002). As a result, they view organisational membership as taxing their resources; in other words, they have not actually *chosen* to remain in the job.

3.1.3.3. Normative Commitment

The third form of organisational commitment is normative, based on the work of Wiener (1982), who stated that people engage in certain behaviour because they believe it is the right thing to do. Moreover, it is based on a company's culture of what is considered a typical and correct pattern of behaviour. According to Wiener, commitment refers to the "totality of internalised normative pressures to act in a way which meets organisational goals and interests, and suggests that individuals exhibit behaviours solely because they believe it is the right and moral thing to do" (p. 471). Consequently, normative commitment refers to a sense of responsibility to remain with the organisation, i.e. because they feel that they ought to do so (Zia, 2014). Furthermore, it is regarded as a loyalty attitude and plays an important role in social interactions, in that it reflects an obligation on the part of the individual to perform his/her job in a satisfactory manner, in order to maintain membership in the organisation (Ahmad and Abu Bakar, 2003). It also reflects a moral obligation to remain, in response to social pressures (Powell and Meyer, 2004).

Meyer and Parfyonova (2010) reported two aspects underlying the development of normative commitment: a person's internalisation of norms and expected behaviours (i.e. moral duty) and a person's need to reciprocate as a result of received benefits (sense of indebtedness). Personal norms have been identified as being responsible for the internalised norms that make commitment to a firm a moral obligation, such as the extent to which a person feels that s/he should be loyal, make a personal sacrifice and not criticise (Jha, 2011). In addition, as the relationships between parties develop and social norms between them emerge, individuals become increasingly motivated to act in a manner consistent with those norms. Reciprocity also plays a significant role in interpersonal and inter-organisational relationships, as people feel compelled to return a favour when one has been granted to them (Fullerton, 2014). As such, normative commitment can be seen as having a

dual nature, namely moral obligation or a sense of indebtedness, each of which has different implications for work behaviours and can manifest contrarily according to other components in the commitment profile of the employee (Tufail et al., 2012).

Because it is said that there is a correlation between normative and affective commitment, there has been limited research in relation to the former; however, Johnson et al. (2010) argued that both elements differ in several ways, suggesting that normative commitment is subject to cultural socialisation and one's beliefs about employment, whereas affective commitment is subject to organisation-specific experience. Moreover, normative commitment can exist prior to joining an organisation, whereas the alternative arises from time spent with the organisation. Furthermore, the underlying motivations for each element differ, in that normative commitment results from obligation and reciprocity, while affective commitment results from desire (McCallum et al., 2014).

3.1.4. Cultural Differences in Organisational Commitment

Research on the relationship between organisational commitment and variables such as efficiency and effectiveness (Beck and Wilson 2000) has resulted in increased attention on the subject. The section below mainly looks at this topic from a cultural perspective.

Gelade et al. (2006) explored the influence of culture on commitment, finding that sources of national culture, such as socioeconomic conditions, culture and aggregate personality, affect it somewhat. With the global operation of workforces today, and the existence of a multi-cultural workforce, it is important to assess the role of culture.

National cultures are important determinants of individual behaviour (Hofstede 1980; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998), and differences in work attitudes can be predicted from differences in national cultural values (Schwartz, 1999). This means that employees from collectivist and individualistic cultures will have different work-related attitudes and behaviours. It is well-established (Hofstede 1980; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998) that Eastern and Western cultures have significantly different influences on employees' behaviour, expectations and attitudes. In addition, expectations in terms of employee behaviour and attitudes are

different across national cultures (Lok and Crawford, 2004). For example, a study conducted by Bhuian, Al-shammari and Jefri (2001) found that in a sample of self-initiated expatriates in Saudi Arabia, only job satisfaction and job variety were related to commitment, whereas job characteristics and demographics were not associated with it.

Organisations seek to maximise commitment of their multi-national workforce, and therefore it is important to understand cultural differences that may influence attitudes. Recent research on organisational commitment and job satisfaction among public sector employees in Saudi Arabia revealed that there were moderate levels in this regard (Azeem and Akhtar, 2014). Furthermore, the study confirmed that there was a positive relationship between satisfaction and commitment, and job satisfaction facets and job tenure were identified as the key predictors of commitment. Similar to job satisfaction, organisational commitment has been studied widely around the world, particularly in Western countries, but research on the subject appears to be limited in the context of Saudi Arabia (Azeem and Akhtar, 2014). Hence, the work in this doctoral study will contribute to the extant literature, especially in the Middle East.

3.1.5. Empirical Studies in a University Setting

Numerous studies have explored commitment in university settings, with several factors found related to organisational commitment. For example, Ameen et al. (1995) identified role ambiguity and job satisfaction in this respect. The sample in this case was taken from the accounting department faculty. Wolverton et al. (1999) found that conflict and ambiguity surrounding the role were related to organisational commitment, but Ameen et al. (1995) had previously reported different results for the conflict issue. Falkenberg (2003) reported that gender and commitment are related, based on results from a sample of academics from Norwegian institutions. Furthermore, Rahim et al. (2001) reported that only procedural justice was related to commitment in their sample of Bangladeshi academics, and in their US academics sample, this relation was stronger when interactional justice was high. Smeenk et al. (2006) examined the effect of HRM practices on organisational commitment among Dutch university employees from the separatist and hegemonic faculties, finding that

in the separatist faculty decentralisation, compensation, training/development, positional tenure and career mobility were significantly related to commitment, whereas in the hegemonic faculty, age, organisational tenure, level of autonomy, working hours, social involvement and personal importance were highlighted. Participation, social interactions and job level are factors that were important in both faculties.

As far as research on the three different forms of commitment is concerned, Cetin (2006) found that job satisfaction was not related to continuance commitment, whereas Marchiori and Henkin (2006) reported that employment status, tenure, academic rank and college were indeed related. Adkins et al. (2001) reported that job security and tenure status, among a sample of academics in a US state university, were related to normative commitment. In addition, Cetin (2006) found that job satisfaction was related to normative commitment in a sample of academics from Turkey, while Marchiori and Henkin (2006) reported that gender was related in this regard. Ambrose and Cropanzano (2003) found that perceptions of procedural justice of the tenure process were related to affective commitment before the decision of allocation. The authors conducted a longitudinal study in management departments in the US and found that perceptions of the distributive justice of the tenure process were related to affective commitment, before and after allocation. Cetin (2006) found that job satisfaction was related to affective commitment, while Fuller at al. (2006) showed that perceived organisational support and external prestige relate to the same element. The sample for this study included academics and staff from a US university. Marchiori and Henkin (2006) also found that professional tenure is related to affective commitment.

Thus, there are some inconsistencies in the findings reported, and in some cases they are somewhat inconclusive. These erratic findings could be the result of a difference in the definition and operationalisation of organisational commitment, including its variations.

3.1.6. Demographic Influences on Organisational Commitment

Demographic variables have been said to have an effect on organisational commitment (Forkuoh, Affum-Osei and Addo Yaw, 2014). Mathieu and Zajac (1990,

as cited in Affum-Osei et al., 2015), for instance, reported a link between gender and attitude, with Kumasey, Delle and Foe (2014) reporting that male employees were more committed to an organisation than female employees. However, other studies have shown no correlation (Pourghaz, Tamini, and Karamind (2011).

In a study relating to Saudi Arabian public-sector organisations, age was deemed a predictor of commitment (Al Kahtani, 2012), with an increase in commitment running in line with an increase in age; however, in their study, which focused on a university in Saudi Arabia, Iqbal et al. (2011) found no significant correlation in this respect.

Education level has been said to be associated with organisational commitment, with individuals holding higher levels of qualifications being more likely to be committed. Affum-Osei et al. (2015) associate this notion with the fact that it is more likely that those who are educated to a higher level will hold a senior management position and therefore more responsibility; nevertheless, the authors also reported the converse argument that those with a higher level of education may expect more from the organisation, which could impact negatively on their overall commitment if their needs are not met accordingly. Iqbal et al. (2011) report that education is negatively associated with commitment, and they rationalise this finding on the basis that educated employees are more likely to have opportunities elsewhere.

According to Iqbal, Kokash and Al-Oun (2011), in their study on universities in Saudi Arabia, tenure is positively associated with commitment. The researchers posit that the longer an employee remains in their job, this may lead them to have a sense of responsibility for outcomes, which in turn enhances their commitment to the university. Another factor cited is that by remaining with the same organisation, the employee has to have made some personal investments in terms of their time, pay and friendships. The authors suggest that organisations should invest more in attaching these employees, because those who are attached will outperform those who do not have such a level of allegiance.

3.1.7. Organisational commitment in the Saudi Context

Additional work on organisational commitment and TQM (Total Quality Management) in Saudi Arabia has illustrated that four variables, namely leadership, strategic planning, people management and process management, are antecedents

to organisational commitment and job satisfaction, replete with various direct and indirect effects (Abanumy and Alshitri, 2015). This research was conducted with public and private employees in a research and development institutional context. It would therefore be useful to compare and contrast with this doctoral study those findings that explore both public and private sector employees in university settings, thereby providing new data and empirical insights into the concept of organisational commitment and other variables explored herein, such as culture and country context. Elamin and Tlaiss (2015) revealed individuals from different cultures react based on their traditional values and religious beliefs in ways that influence their organisational citizenship behaviours. These factors also determine the amount of importance they attribute to different forms of justice. For example, it was observed that in Saudi Arabia interactional justice was of far greater importance to managers/employees in influencing more dimensions of OCB (Organisational Citizenship Behaviour) than, say, distributive and procedural justice (Elamin and Tlaiss, 2015). This would appear to be consistent with Islamic teachings that necessitate the demonstration of respect and courtesy in dealings with others.

3.1.8. Summary

In conclusion, organisational commitment has been a variable of interest for researchers and academics alike because of its stability as a measure of employee attitude. In the current study, it has been selected as an outcome of interest because it is well established that universities are in need of committed members in order to succeed, especially given competition in the sector. Therefore, there is a need to increase employee commitment. The three-component model has been selected, as it allows for the comparison and the generalisation of results.

Several variables, such as age, education and tenure, have been explored as antecedents of organisational commitment, but there is still a place for more research in this area. There have been a number of studies in university settings, too, but they have not explored HR practices as variables that might affect commitment, and yet it is apparent that these practices, and how they are viewed by employees, have a definite effect.

Based on the summary above, this thesis acknowledges the importance of examining organisational commitment in the university setting. Hence, it seeks to examine the current status in the form of affective, continuance and normative commitment in Saudi universities, and also to test their association with HR practices as perceived by employees.

3.2. HR Practices and Job Satisfaction

Despite the popularity of job satisfaction as a variable of interest in research, there is no agreement on how it should be defined or what it represents. Given its significance, it is important to consider its nature as well as its effect on organisational activity. Thus, there are several approaches to define and study job satisfaction, some common and well-accepted definitions of which are analysed below.

Hoppock (1935, as cited in Aziri, 2011, p.77) defined it as "any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person truthfully to say I am satisfied with my job." This definition suggests that the level of satisfaction an employee enjoys is heavily influenced by external factors, although it is an internal feeling that an employee holds. Vroom (1964, as cited in Aziri, 2011, p.77) defined job satisfaction as "affective orientations on the part of individuals toward work roles which they are presently occupying," thus focusing on the employee's role in the organisation. Spector (1997), who has provided the most popular and widely used definition of job satisfaction, commented that it relates to how people feel about their job and aspects thereof. He also stated that the extent to which employees do not like their job is also important, which is why job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are both significant. Therefore, the former is in fact a combination of positive and negative feelings that an employee has toward their job. These feelings result from the mismatched expectations and what the job actually offers.

Over the decades, research (Hackman and Oldhman, 1980; Herzberg, 1987; Holland 1973; Locke and Latham, 1990) in this area has established its importance in organisational psychology (Doman and Zapf, 2001). Job satisfaction is a widely studied construct in the management literature (Bodla and Danish, 2009; Bodla and Naeem, 2009; Park et al. 2005), especially as an antecedent to employee

performance. Interest in the construct arises from its relationship with employee effectiveness and long-term success (Naumann, 1993). Furthermore, it can also be suggested that adopting a strategic human resource management approach that also encompasses the various HR practices discussed so far in this chapter could also perhaps contribute to increasing job satisfaction. Having said that, there seems to be a dearth in research on the association specifically between SHRM and job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is an important outcome for organisations. As Spector (1997) points out, human values should guide organisations, and therefore fair employee treatment should be very important to them. In such a scenario, it can serve as an important indicator of this treatment, with high satisfaction indicating that the employee has a good mental and emotional state. Moreover, satisfaction is also an indicator of how the organisation is functioning, and so decisions can be made regarding changes that may have the potential to improve performance. Furthermore, whether or not employees are satisfied will affect how they function and in turn how the business fares, because job satisfaction results in positive behaviour, while dissatisfaction ends up in negative behaviour (Spector, 1997). In fact, one of the main aims of HR practice is to work toward ensuring that employees score high on job satisfaction as much as possible, given that it is commonly known that there is also an association between it and performance (Saari and Judge, 2004). Measurement of this element is a common activity in organisations, because managers believe that the well-being of their employees is crucial to success (Harter, Schmidt and Keyes, 2003). Furthermore, it is established that job satisfaction affects other aspects of work such as motivation, productivity (Lin, 2012) and individual performance (Kelidbari, Dizgah, Yusefi, 2011).

According to Lee, Nam, Park and Lee (2006), employees are committed to an organisation if they feel empowered, and this empowerment in turn leads to job satisfaction (Jarrar & Zairi, 2002). It has been discussed in the previous chapters that the level of commitment shown by the employee, which is predicated by the practices used in the organisation and their perceptions thereof, has an impact on performance. Thus, as an alternative behaviour, it is reasonable to suggest that the

level of satisfaction experienced is something that can be affected by the human resource practices being implemented and the way employees view them.

Ting (1997) observed that human resource practices are associated closely with job satisfaction, while Weeratunga (2003) stated that providing an employee with the opportunity to participate in planning his or her own career enhances this feeling. These findings link in to the concept outlined by Park and Lee (2006), as well as by Jarrar and Zairi, regarding empowerment, because if an employee is involved in their career development, this will provide a sense of empowerment and they may have the perception that the organisation is investing in and committed to them. The practice of training and development has been said to influence job satisfaction positively (Garcia, 2005; Tzafrir, 2006). Similarly, it is another way that the firm shows it is committed to the employee, by investing resources in training them.

Karin, Lawter, Brockerhoff and Rutigliano (2014) posit that compensation is one of the main reasons why people work, with Ting (1997) identifying it as one of the most important determinants of job satisfaction in the USA. However, Herzberg's theory (outlined below) views this in an alternative light, in that whilst pay does not raise satisfaction levels amongst employees, if it is not what the employee considers they should receive, then it will determine dissatisfaction. According to Al-Sebaie (2000), the actual pay in itself is not the determining factor for satisfaction – more important is the employee's perception of the fairness of the actual pay system; if they believe it is not fair, the employee is likely to be dissatisfied. Schultz (1978) commented that the implications of an unfair pay system result in dissatisfaction and, accordingly, high staff turnover. As such, transparency in terms of open assurances that individuals are being paid similarly, based on position and policy, would minimise fears of (in) discrete treatment. Thus, it is important that organisations ensure that not only are their practices fair when implemented, but also that they must be *perceived* to be fair.

It is important for human resource departments to consider the impact that job satisfaction has on turnover, because there is said to be a correlation between the two (Kehinde, 2011), with a higher turnover being experienced where employees are not satisfied. Research has found a link between length of time in a job and job satisfaction (Khan, Ghauri and Akram, 2012), which in itself links in to the practice of

retaining staff and reducing turnover. Similarly, practices intended to help promote staff are found to be positive in their level of satisfaction (Tassema and Soeters, 2006), and similarly, this could be viewed as the organisation viewing its existing staff as worthy of retaining instead of seeking personnel externally.

In the academic setting, job satisfaction is especially important, because universities are responsible for providing education to citizens and those who will be the future of the country. Faculties are central to the education system and play a very important role in society, and so their performance depends on the faculties and their satisfaction. Thus, understanding their attitudes and behaviours is important, in order to ensure that a good level of performance on behalf of employees, as well as the organisation as a whole, is achieved (Tsui and Cheng, 1999). In a study of university teachers, one factor that provided a greater level of satisfaction was that those in the public sector had higher satisfaction arising out of the perceived level of security they felt when compared to private-sector colleagues (Khan et al., 2012). Nonetheless, it is worth highlighting that research in this area in a HE context is still in its infancy – and even more so in Saudi Arabia.

3.2.1. Concept of Job Satisfaction

Davis and Nestrom (1985) stated that satisfaction and individual behaviour are closely related. Cranny, Smith and Stone (1992, cited in Weiss, 2002) defined job satisfaction as an affective reaction that results from a comparison of actual outcomes with expected outcomes. It can result in recognition, higher income and more chances for promotion, as well as provide a feeling of a sense of achievement, all of which leads ultimately to a feeling of fulfilment (Kaliski, 2007).

Job satisfaction can also be viewed as the degree to which an employee is content with the rewards derived from work, and thus the focus of this definition is on intrinsic motivation (Statt, 2004). In general, recent definitions have defined satisfaction as the beliefs that a person holds about his job (Jones, George, and Hill, 2000), as a positive attitude toward one's job that leads to high performance (Daft and Marcic, 2001) or simply as a reflection of how the employee feels about different aspects of work. Another definition of satisfaction suggests that it is a feeling that

results from the perception that the job ensures that the person is able to meet all his material and psychological needs (Aziri, 2008).

Common to all of the different definitions of job satisfaction is the suggestion that it relates to a positive feeling about the job and aspects thereof. In addition, all of the definitions suggest that job dissatisfaction is at the other extreme. Nevertheless, it is equally important, as its impact will be negative on the organisation and should be something that is reduced as much as possible. Clearly, employee dissatisfaction cannot be eradicated completely, because there will be individual factors (i.e. personality, age, education) as well as other social and environmental matters involved which may be beyond the remit of the employer (Akhter, Hussain, Bhatti, Shahid, and Ullah, 2016).

3.2.2. Approaches to Job Satisfaction

There are several approaches to studying job satisfaction. One of the most well accepted theories is Lawler's theory (1973), based on four conditions: fulfilment theory (a main focus in the current study), which explains satisfaction in terms of reaching a required end, discrepancy theory, which explains satisfaction in terms of differences, contradictions and conflict, equity theory, which explains satisfaction in terms of equality, and the two-factor theory, which distinguishes between factors that lead to satisfaction and those that avert dissatisfaction.

Fulfilment theory states that workers are happy when their demands are satisfied and they get what they wish, while discrepancy theory states that what they expect and what they get determines their satisfaction. It is the employee's expectations, the evaluation of their fulfilment and their hopes associated with the work that determine satisfaction, and not the reality of the work. Equity theory states that worker satisfaction is derived when there is parity in treatment as well as in payment for work done. This theory states that fairness has to be in terms of one's expectation as well as in comparison to others. The two-factor theory, by Herzberg (1976), states that there are two kinds of factors, namely one that causes satisfaction and another that prevents dissatisfaction. However, he explained that there are separate sets of factors that lead to satisfaction in the workplace (motivators), while a separate set relates to dissatisfaction (hygiene factors). For example, he stated that challenging

work, recognition of one's achievement, responsibility and involvement in decision-making are motivators. However, these on their own are not sufficient for satisfaction, since hygiene or maintenance factors are necessary to ensure there is no dissatisfaction. Consequently, factors such as job security, salary, fringe benefits, work conditions, good pay and vacations are extrinsic to the work itself.

3.2.3. Measurement of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a complex concept and is difficult to measure, because being a psychological construct means that it is difficult to calculate scientifically. Aldalky (2000) stated that it can be determined through personal interaction or other available information about an organisation such as productivity, absence, tardiness and accident reports. Some of the different approaches to measurement are outlined below.

Herzberg's Way Story Approach:

Herzberg (1976) studied satisfaction by asking his group of engineers and accountants about the last time they were happy and unhappy at work. He also asked about the reason for their mood. From this study, he identified that different factors lead to satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Interviews and Questionnaires:

Interviews can also be used to identify factors that cause satisfaction. They can be structured or unstructured, formal or informal. Although this technique is flexible, it can only be used if the sample is small. In addition, interviews can be time-consuming. An alternative way to measure satisfaction is by using a questionnaire. Of course, reliability and validity need to be established. The questionnaires used in research to date have good reliability and validity and cover all aspects of job satisfaction. They are also easy to administer and cost-effective, and they can be used for large samples. Some of the most popular questionnaires in research are discussed in detail below.

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was developed by Weiss et al. in 1967 and is a popular research tool for measuring satisfaction. It covers 20 facets, such as ability utilisation, achievement, advancement, authority, company policies and procedures, co-workers, independence, job security, recognition, supervision, working conditions and so on.

The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) was developed by Smith, Kendall and Hulin in 1969. It is a very popular tool in organisational research and has been accepted as the most carefully developed and validated of its kind. This measurement assesses five facets: work, co-workers, pay, supervision and promotion. The whole scale contains 72 items, with nine to 18 items per subscale. A three-point Likert scale is used, with Yes, No and Uncertain options. In addition, each facet starts with a brief illustration and then the items that measure that facet. One limitation is that it has only five facets and not all items are relevant to all types of employees (Spector, 1997).

The Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) was developed by Spector in 1985. This instrument measures satisfaction against nine markers, namely pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, co-workers, nature of work and communication. This instrument assesses the overall satisfaction of the employee and includes 36 items, using a rating scale. Spector (1997) pointed out that it is easy to modify, albeit, as with any other questionnaire, it provides descriptive results and qualitative information is lost.

The Job in General Scale (JIG) was developed by Ironson et al. in 1989 and contains 18 items about the job in general. All the previous scales mentioned above measure facets of job satisfaction, while this measures overall job satisfaction. It uses a three-point scale with Yes, No and Uncertain options. It has good internal consistency and reliability and has good correlation with other global measures of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997).

3.2.4. Cultural Differences in Job Satisfaction

With globalisation, the changing workforce has engendered managerial concern in terms of managing workers from different cultures. This complexity of workforce management has made it crucial for organisations to understand cultural differences in terms of the relationship between the firm and the employee (Mullins, 2007). Employees from different backgrounds have different expectations and react differently to decisions made by the organisation. Moreover, job satisfaction is affected by variables at the individual, organisational, environmental, social and cultural levels, which could explain why employees do not experience satisfaction uniformly.

When comparing cultures based on Hofstede's dimensions, Kirkman and Shapiro (2001) found that higher levels of collectivism were associated with higher levels of job satisfaction. Kreitner, Kinicki and Buelens (1999) conducted an international survey on job satisfaction across different countries, finding that employees in Switzerland reported the highest levels of satisfaction, while those from Japan had the lowest levels in this regard. Andreassi et al. (2012) also found that different job characteristics have different effects on job satisfaction on account of variances in national culture. The degree to which job characteristics influence satisfaction are different, and thus job satisfaction is a variable that should be explored in different cultural contexts. However, Andreassi et al. (2012) also found that despite these differences, one thing that is similar across cultures is the basic need for accomplishment and recognition.

On reviewing the impact of antecedents of satisfaction, it is notable that cultural influences are a predictor of satisfaction. Beer and Walton (1990) found that as part of HR practices, managers in America place higher emphasis on pay for individual performance when compared with managers in Europe and Japan. In addition, European and Japanese companies pay more attention to promotions and seniority in terms of predictors of satisfaction than American companies.

3.2.5. Empirical Studies in a University Setting

Until recently, the focus of research on job satisfaction has been limited to the industrial sector, and studies have looked to adapting findings to university settings. However, with the impending shortage of faculty and the associated issues of retention and recruitment, the relevance of studying job satisfaction in this area has increased. In addition, it has highlighted the fact that universities are not immune to low levels of job satisfaction amongst their employees. However, low satisfaction among faculty can lead to lower productivity, decreased teaching quality, greater use of sick leave, depression, student cynicism and burnout (Mendal, 1987). Thus, it is important to recognise factors that lead to this situation, in order to eliminate them and find ways to enhance the job satisfaction of faculty members (Tack and Patitu, 1992).

Schuster and Finklestein (2006) reported that over a 30-year period, from 1969-1998, faculty satisfaction steadily declined for all types of institutions, genders, races and tenure statuses. The researchers attributed this decline to increased workloads and a decrease in institutional support. Research (Morse, 1953; Ward and Sloane, 2000) has shown that pay inequities have an effect on satisfaction. For instance, Hagedorn (1996) found that salary differences between male and female faculty members translated into differences in the levels of job satisfaction reported. In addition, she found that administrators were critical about creating a work environment that ensured faculty success. Morse (1953) also found that when faculty experiences pay inequity, on account of discipline or the amount of work accomplished, they are dissatisfied. This was a factor also observed by Petrescu and Simmons (2008) in their general observations, while Bohloko (1999) also found that job satisfaction for males was higher than that of females in a sample of academic staff at education colleges. Brown and Hewood (2005) confirming this finding in relation to the university setting and adding that although male teachers experienced greater job satisfaction, female teachers were more satisfied with HR practices.

Bedeian, Ferris and Kacmar (1992), from their sample of academic staff at educational colleges in the Orange Free State, found that tenure was a better predictor of satisfaction than age. However, in a sample of community college chairpersons, Green (2000) found no correlation in this respect. In the meantime, a National Centre for Education Statistics report (1997) for American teachers also found that faculty satisfaction and salary & benefits had a weak correlation. In addition, the report stated that age and gender had little or no significant effect on job satisfaction. Liacqua et al. (2001) found that the variables of tenure, rank, years teaching and age were significantly related to job satisfaction in a sample of faculty at a private business college. Pay is another factor that has significant effect in this regard. When compensation is high, job satisfaction and retention rates for assistant and associate professors are also higher (Ehrenberg et al., 1990).

Ward and Sloane (2000) stated that there are differences in job satisfaction levels based on the gender and disciplinary affiliation of faculty members. They reported that engineering faculty members showed the highest levels of satisfaction with pay compared to faculty in other sciences, social science, medicine and arts. Sabharwal

and Corley (2009) studied gender and disciplinary differences in job satisfaction among US faculty and found that females in healthcare fields had the highest levels of job satisfaction, followed by those in science, while females in engineering had the lowest fulfilment. Among male faculty members, those in social sciences had the highest levels of satisfaction and those in natural/physical sciences had the lowest levels.

Tack and Patitu (1992) stated that it is important also to identify factors that prevent job dissatisfaction, namely interpersonal relationships, salary, tenure, policies and administration, rank, supervision, working conditions, fit between the faculty role and the person involved and collective bargaining. Mapesela and Driekie (2006) found that faculty today look to increase their achievements in teaching and research and so place greater emphasis on the service aspect of their jobs. Thus, faculty seek financial support for development, wages and transparency and openness from university quality assurance departments.

Grace and Khalsa (2003) found that the most important factors indicating faculty satisfaction were professional development and salary packages. They also reported that when considering a faculty position in an institution, university support and employment options were considered as the most important. The role of departmental chairs is another factor that influences satisfaction (Miller et al., 2001; Nienhuis, 1994). Miller et al. (2001), for instance, found that departmental chairs used on-campus faculty development, mentoring programmes and workload flexibility to manage satisfaction, and they also reported that the elements they perceived as challenges to job satisfaction were available financial resources, faculty workload and technology impact. Thus, there is significant research that has looked at aspects that affect faculty satisfaction in relation to different departments, types of institutions and countries.

3.2.6. Demographic Influence on Job Satisfaction

The current research sets out to examine demographic factors that have a negative effect on the job satisfaction of academic staff members at universities in the Saudi context. The selected demographic factors are current working status, teaching experience, gender, age, highest level of education, monthly salary, marital status

and number of children), and we inspect whether there is an association between job satisfaction and these elements.

DeVaney and Chen (2003) demonstrated that demographic variables, including age, gender, race and education, influence job satisfaction. Malik (2011) intimated that the demographic variables age, job rank, job qualification and years of experience were somewhat linked.

Paul and Phua (2011) specified that the variables job position and age inclined more toward levels of job satisfaction, while academic qualifications, gender, marital status and length of employment had no effect of statistical consequence. Noordin and Jusoff (2009) noted that the demographic factors current job status, marital status, age and salary seemed to have a substantial influence on their respondents' levels of job satisfaction. Ward and Sloane (2000) contended that gender had no statistical significance in terms of overall job satisfaction, with reference to certain extant studies, while Sseganga and Garrett (2005) showed through research in Uganda that gender has no influence at all.

3.2.7. Job Satisfaction in the Saudi Context

Whereas it has been found that culture is an influential factor in job satisfaction, it can also be argued that there is a difference between demographic variables within culture when assessing satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. When evaluating this issue among academic staff at the King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia, a significantly lower level of satisfaction was found among Saudi nationals, females, those below the age of 40 and in particular those in the medicine and dentistry faculty (Al-Rubaish, Rahim, Abumadini, and Wosornu, (2009). In this study, it was found that the majority of the Saudi staff that took part in the study were females, with the majority of male staff being expatriates. Although the study revealed that the level of dissatisfaction amongst females was high, it was said that this was because they were overrepresented in the sample and so provided a higher rate of dissatisfaction, not necessarily because they were female. The authors posited that citizenship played a determining role in satisfaction levels, with Saudi nationals being less satisfied than their expatriate colleagues with their lot. It is arguable that if expatriates were not satisfied in their work, they could leave and find employment elsewhere, as it is

reasonable to posit that there are no ties to Saudi Arabia that would keep them in a job that causes them dissatisfaction. However, it should also be noted that this assumption can also be challenged based on the fact that in cases where expatriates have their own family unit settled in Saudi Arabia, such an exit strategy would not be an easy task to accomplish despite experiencing job dissatisfaction. It was suggested in the study that psychosocial influences, such as marital status, recreational activities and home atmosphere, affect satisfaction at work. The authors reasoned that in terms of the sampled females, outside influences could have a bearing on the large scale of dissatisfaction. These elements included the balance between job/family commitments, their duties in child bearing and raising and inadequate spousal support, in terms of assuming sole responsibility for caring for children due to the patriarchal nature of Saudi society, where responsibility and caring for the children resides with the mother.

In a study examining how employees' perceptions of fairness at work affect job satisfaction, Elamin and Alomaim (2011) considered the effect on both Saudi employees and expatriate workers, finding that for both groups, job satisfaction was influenced by how they viewed the fairness of organisational rules, procedures and policies. The study recognised that the workforce comprised 49% Saudi nationals and 51% foreign nationals, with women accounting for 15.4% of the total workforce (SAMA's Forty Four Annual Report, 2008 cited in Elamin and Alomaim, 2011). It was acknowledged that foreign workers were mainly from other Arab and Muslim countries, thus having the common ground of religion, language and a collectivist lifestyle, and worked mainly in the private sector because, due to Saudisation, jobs in public-sector organisations were reserved for Saudi nationals, who received greater privileges as a result, such as healthcare benefits, scholarships and enhanced financial benefits. Standards that are reinforced by Islamic teachings, namely honesty, courtesy, timely feedback, respect for rights and the chance to express a viewpoint, were deemed to be requisite cultural components. In this regard, the most important predictor of satisfaction was the quality of treatment received from supervisors when policies and procedures are implemented, which is arguably a subjective viewpoint by the employee.

3.2.8. Summary

Job satisfaction is a variable that has garnered a lot of attention from researchers and practitioners, due to its relationship with other outcomes, which can be categorised into affective reactions, such as satisfaction and commitment, and behavioural reactions, such as absenteeism and turnover (Wright and Kehoe, 2008). Despite the vast body of literature in this area, there are only a handful of studies that have explored the impact that specific HR practices can have on satisfaction, although it should also be noted that the SHRM literature is much broader with perhaps more empirical evidence available in relation to job satisfaction and SHRM. Furthermore, satisfaction is affected by national culture, and the characteristics of universities present a unique context and sample in which to explore the topic. There are very few studies that have explored the job satisfaction of academics in universities in Saudi Arabia, and so this research will provide a contribution in that area. Furthermore, it is of utmost importance to also point out that there are no HR departments in Saudi universities, and instead they have what is coined "employee affairs." As such, this could also be a plausible explanation as to why so there is no research in HR, since there is no such department in Saudi universities. Therefore, with all the above in mind, this thesis seeks to examine the current levels of job satisfaction and its association with perceived HR practices in Saudi universities.

3.3. Conceptual Framework

3.3.1. Introduction

The previous sections examined the concepts of human resource practices as perceived by staff, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. In this section, the researcher will explore the possible relationships between HR practices and organisational commitment, HR practices and job satisfaction, as well as between job satisfaction and organisational commitment, as these are seen as significant variables in how human resource practices actually play out in a workplace.

In the previous section of the literature review, HR practices as perceived by employees, organisational commitment and job satisfaction were all examined and reviewed in isolation. The purpose of this section is to analyse if there is a difference between these variables, by considering the impact that they have on each other and

on human resource practices overall, specifically within the context of the Saudi Arabian university sector. Other factors that may have an influence, such as demographics and culture, will also be examined. Having developed the framework itself, a subsidiary task is to explain how the hypotheses for this thesis were deduced and also to show the results from similar studies in the past.

3.3.2. HR practices

The number of Saudi Universities is increasing rapidly and this is in line with the goals of the Saudi Governemnt called vision 2030. In comparison to previous years there has been a sharp rise in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia which also suggests that the Saudis attach a lot of importance to education and it is also largely promoted by the Saudi government (Alshuwaikhat, Adenle, & Saghir, 2016). HR practices in Saudi universities have not been researched compared to other organizational settings in Saudi Arabia, something that is not compataible with vision 2030. As such, there is a need to address this issue by empirically approaching HR practices in higher education in Saudi Arabia in an attempt to shed light on their nature, issues as well as how staff members working in a university context perceive the implementation of these practices. It should be noted that not much is known about the HR policies in the universities and how much of these policies are implemented is also hard to work out. Past research gave considerable attention to intended and realized HR practices although HR practices as perceived by workers are much less researched. There is existing evidence suggesting that there are several organizational factors that could impact both intended and realized HR practices (Harris, Doughty, & Kirk, 2002). Few studies have considered the role played by HR practices as perceived by employees while acknowledging that this perception can in fact also influence both intended and realized HR practices. Gilbert, De Winne and Sel (2011) also focused on perceived HRM rather than intended HRM bearing in mind that employees' perception can affect both their attitudes and behaviours. As far as the researcher is aware little is known about the HR practices, hence it is important to examine how employees and management with universities view the current practices and how they are implemented. The basis of this research aims to study

generic HR practices (planning, attraction, retention, development) along with orgnisational commitment and job satisfaction.

3.3.3. Relationship between HR Practices and Organisational Commitment

As an informal way of managing employees (Armstrong, 2009), HR practices can also be regarded as a method of communication between the employer and the employee (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004), which can impact on the behaviour and attitudes of the latter (Huselind 1995, as cited in Alnaqbi, 2011). The intention of an organisation may be positive when the practice is implemented (Lambooij, Sanders, Koster and Zwiers, 2006), though it is how the employee perceives this practice that will be the deciding factor as to whether it is successful (Marescaux et al., 2013), with each individual employee having a different opinion (Nishii, Lepak and Schneider, 2008). The importance of the employee's opinion cannot be underestimated, as the effectiveness of the practice being implemented will determine how a firm performs as a result of how the employee responds and behaves in the workplace (Alfes, Shantz and Truss, 2012). Shahnawaz and Juyal (2006) stated that the degree of commitment shown by an employee will be influenced by the practices and policies of the organisation. As stated by Kroon and Freese (2013), if the employee believes that the employer's practice is a way of showing commitment to them, for example by developing them, this will have a positive impact and encourage them to stay in their job. Thus, human resource practices and how they are seen by employees are deemed major predictors in the level of commitment shown to the organisation by the employee (Suifan, 2015).

Marescaux et al. (2013) suggested that the impact of HRM practices on affective commitment can be understood using the cognitive appraisal theory, which states that employees judge the favourability of outcomes. Therefore, when an employee perceives an outcome as favourable, it leads to emotions that are more positive and this in turn increases affective commitment. In addition, the norms of reciprocity (Eisenberger et al., 1994) suggest that an employee will feel obliged to care for an organisation that has invested in him through human resource development practices. Human resource practices are used to motivate employees, according to Alnaqbi (2011), who recognised the link between perceived practices and

commitment to the organisation, positing that the implementation of such practices can show the employee how committed the organisation is to them, which in turn can affect the level of commitment shown to the organisation. As postulated by Affum-Osei, Acquaah and Acheampong (2015), if an organisation wants to enhance its performance, then it must direct its attention to policies and practices that improve commitment shown by employees.

The social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) is concerned with the social exchanges between employees and organisations, suggesting that these exchanges lead to the formation of obligations. Thus, the rule of reciprocity, i.e. give and take, leads to a mutual reinforcement of the relationship between employees and firms. Where human resource management is concerned, this social exchange begins with the company's treatment of the employee (Gould-Williams and Davies, 2005). When they begin to trust their employer, think they are seen as assets and are provided with opportunities to fulfil their needs, they are then more likely to reciprocate this obligation to the employer in terms of increased commitment (Fontinha et al., 2012; Marescaux et al., 2013; Nishii et al., 2008). Iles et al. (1990) and Bartlett (2001) found a strong relationship between investment in training and organisational commitment.

3.3.4. The Relationship between HR Practices and Job Satisfaction

Human resource practices can affect job satisfaction significantly (Edgar and Geare, 2005; Tring, 1997). Firms understand that their success depends on how employees view their practices and how satisfied they are in their work, and this notion is proved by research on this topic in the Western context. Increased competition has forced organisations to focus on employee attraction and retention, ensuring that the best are in the right job and have a clear career path. This acts as a driver for better opportunities at work and in turn leads to increased satisfaction (Taj al-Din and Maalitafti, 2008). Likewise, job satisfaction can be enhanced by giving an employee the opportunity to develop their own career (Weeratunga, 2003). Similarly, the perception of the training and development system can positively or negatively influence job satisfaction (Tzafrir, 2006), as well as how the employee sees the

fairness of the pay system (Al-Sebai, 2000), in which case the organisation must ensure that not only is the system fair, but it is also seen to be.

The analysis of the relationship between these practices and employees' perceptions of such practices, and how this contributes to job satisfaction, is important because it can help understand the influence that such routines have on human resources (Sayaadi et al., 2012). Ultimately, there has been very little empirical research exploring this relationship.

3.3.5. The Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment

The empowered employee is committed to his or her organisation (Lee, Nam, Park and Lee (2006), which in turn leads to job satisfaction (Jarrar and Zairi, 2002). In the education setting, Mendal (1987) observed that low levels of satisfaction experienced by an employee were related to an increase in absenteeism, including levels of sickness and depression, and to a decrease in teaching quality. This can have a knock-on effect on the achievements of students, as a decrease in teaching quality can potentially affect the grades a student receives and therefore the reputation of the university if standards fall. In the university setting, a degree programme runs over a number of years, and it is therefore beneficial if academic staff remain throughout, to ensure consistency, especially if they are assigned as a course tutor for the duration of the degree. If the staff member feels satisfied in the role, this will likely lead to them being retained by the university and ensure consistency in teaching. It is arguable also this will influence the morale of the students – it is reasonable to assume that if being taught by a tutor who demonstrates a level of dissatisfaction, this will affect the student negatively. In the context of Saudi Arabia, although Saudisation means that nationals are being recruited as a priority, there are significant numbers of foreign workers, and it may be that if the reputation of the university is lowered, this will affect the ability to recruit skilled foreign personnel, which may be especially so given the perceived enhancement in benefits if a Saudi national is employed compared to a foreign worker.

3.3.6. Demographic Influences on PHRPs, Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction

Factors such as gender, age, role and experience can potentially affect perceived human resource practices, commitment and satisfaction. Age is notable because older employees are of the opinion that human resource practices are more relevant, compared to younger employees. This could be associated with the fact that older employees are more likely to be in a managerial position or position of influence (Ofori et al., 2012). Furthermore, age could also be related to the fact that an employee has been with an organisation for a significant period of time, and for those in that position it is arguable that the working conditions have been favourable to them such that they did not choose to seek work elsewhere (Alfes et al., 2013). This also links in with their commitment to the organisation, because it has been said that the longer an employee works for a firm, the more committed they will be (Al-Kahtani, 2012), because with tenure comes a sense of responsibility toward an employer (Iqbal et al., 2011). Affum-Osei et al. (2015) found a positive correlation between higher levels of education and commitment, observing that this could be because those with a higher education level may be more likely to be in managerial or senior positions, while Kumasey et al. (2014) posited that males were more committed than their female colleagues. In terms of job satisfaction, results on the influence of demographic variables are mixed. Spector (1996), for instance, found that satisfaction did not differ across the genders, although more recently, Vecchio (2000) observed a difference between genders and satisfaction, with DeVaney and Chen (2003) positing that the effect in this regard varied across occupation levels. In terms of age and satisfaction, research has produced mixed results, although Newby (1999) thought it was not as straightforward as age, and the variables of professional and non-professional roles had to be considered, because when these were taken into account, the satisfaction of professionals increased with age, whereas with non-professionals there was a decrease in satisfaction before it eventually increased with age.

3.3.7. Cultural Influences

It is apparent from the literature review that cultural influences shape human resource practices and should not be ignored. As a country with a unique culture,

Saudi Arabia has its own influences (e.g. Saudisation, *Wasta* and gender segregation), the impacts of which will be explored through the use of the interview questions later in this research. In addition, Saudi Arabia also attracts a diverse workforce, which in turn suggests that people from different cultural backgrounds can also hold different perceptions of HR practices based on their personal experiences, own culture as well as country of origin. Further studies need to be done in this area, to examine the influences of culture as well as social influences on these practices.

3.3.8. Summary

This chapter has provided a framework in line with the proposed research questions for understanding the relationships between human resource practices as perceived by employees and the core variables of organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Discussions around these elements within the context of PHRP took place, while the literature was accessed to identify and demonstrate the diversified approaches within the contexts of Gulf countries and the generic approaches adopted in other parts of the world. The conceptual framework diagram proposed and outlined above draws attention to existing inter-relationships between the variables in this study, i.e. potential associations between HR practices as perceived by staff members, organisational commitment, job satisfaction as well as demographic characteristics. This framework also highlights the importance of considering all these relationships from a cultural perspective, which further reiterates the need to explore the relationship between HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction in a different and unique organisational context such as the HE sector in Saudi Arabia. The current study's focus on any existing interrelationship between HR practices as perceived by staff members, organisational commitment, job satisfaction as well as demographic characteristics is a key contribution to existing literature on SHRM, given that there is now increasing attention on how each of these variables can have different effects on the other.

The main contribution of the current study is to move away from widely researched intended and realised HR practices and instead include the perceptions of HR practices. This is an important area which has not been addressed so far from an empirical perspective. As such, findings from the present study can help gain a first

insight into the perceptions of employees of a Saudi university, which could in turn be compared with existing evidence pertaining to intended and/or realised HR practices. Furthermore, these findings will also be unique to the Saudi HE sector, which adds further value to the contribution of this study from a cross-cultural perspective. Current findings can also act as a stepping stone for future studies on HR practices in the HE sector, based on the perceptions of university workers. Additionally, the challenges facing the implementation of HR practices are important to all stakeholders, including Saudi employees. It is also important to target employees at different levels, such as academics as well as HR management personnel in the context of the current study, to ensure that shared goals are achieved as a team. By investigating the role of HR practices as perceived by employees, the espoused goal of HR practices is to enhance overall organisational performance by bringing in improvements on an individual organisational level with a focus on micro-level factors such as job satisfaction and work commitment. With reference to *Wasta,* by focusing on the perceptions of HR practices, this study is more sensitive to individual differences based on one's own personal experience and interpretation thereof. Doing so could have important practical implications in the Saudi/Middle-Eastern context while also signposting key areas for future research to consider. Another key contribution of the present study is the fact that the Saudi educational sector is growing and changing in terms of employee composition. Consequently, there is a pressing need for consideration of how HR practices are perceived particularly by Saudi employees, because HR practices tend to draw from Western countries.

The following methodology chapter will explain the different research tools utilised to answer the research questions.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapters explored different HR practices and how they are perceived, with the literature in particular providing an overview of four HR practices, namely planning, attraction, retention and development. Furthermore, organisational commitment and employees' job satisfaction were studied relative to observed HR

practices, which, although frequently studied, have not been studied within Saudi universities. This chapter aims to set out the methodology and methods used to research this topic and unearth a number of findings. The aim associated with this study is to examine Perceived HR practices within university settings in Saudi Arabia and the extent to which these perceived HR practices are associated with employees' (academics, HR personnel and management participants) level of job satisfaction and their commitment to their universities. The objectives to be addressed in the thesis are as stated below:

1. What are the current levels of HR practices as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
2. What is the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between HR practice as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
3. What are the cultural/social influences on HR practices in Saudi universities?
4. To what extent do demographic variables (gender, education, age, role, experience) influence participants' views on HR practice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
5. Do academics/teaching employees have different opinions compared to managers and HR employees when it comes to HR practices?

In keeping with the above aim and objectives, this chapter explains the research methodology and methods used to answer them. The explanation of research methods and methodology is based on the research 'onion' (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2012, p. 128), which covers five six layers: research philosophies, research approaches, methodological choice and research techniques and procedures. To cover all of these aspects, the methodology chapter will start by providing an overview of common research philosophies such as positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism, which is followed by explaining the research approach, its design, data collection tools, population and sampling, ethical considerations, data collection procedure, data analysis methods and, finally, a brief summary of the methodology.

Due to the nature of the research topic, the limited amount of data on the topic in KSA and the unique socio-cultural context of the kingdom, it was firmly believed that

the best-suited research approach should be an exploratory study design in the form of a mixed methods research design. Combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches through the mixed methods (pragmatic) approach allows for greater depth of understanding.

Although it will be explained in more detail in later sections, it is essential to understand the researcher's position in this thesis and the philosophy adopted herein. The aims of this study vary between exploring opinions and testing relationships and associations. Hence, the position the research adopts is 'pragmatic', i.e. the researcher will utilise various methods in an aim to meet the research aims fully. To explore this position or paradigm thoroughly, this study will first explain the various philosophies and then rationalise the use of pragmatism as a research philosophy.

4.2. Research Philosophy

Every research study generally aims to seek knowledge, and research philosophy is related to the development of knowledge and the nature thereof (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012, p. 127). Sarantagos (1998, p. 32) defined a methodology as "a model which entails theoretical principles as well as a framework that provides guidelines about how research is done in the context of a particular paradigm." Furthermore, the research philosophy adopted is crucial, because it has an effect on the assumptions that researchers make at different stages in the process (Crotty, 1998). The researcher's understanding of the research question is also influenced by assumptions about human knowledge and the nature of realities, but it also has an influence on the choice of research method and the interpretation of research findings. There are broadly three research philosophies to which a researcher can subscribe, namely positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism. Each one has a unique set of assumptions and implications. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) stated that a paradigm is a basic set of beliefs that guide actions, and it consists of ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions. Morse (1994, p. 137) explained ontology to be "concerned with the nature and relations of being" while epistemology was described as "the study or theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge." The ontological assumption is considered to be a general theory about

what kind of things or substances exist in the world, and it is usually presented as one aspect within a metaphysical system. A more modest use of the term refers to the range of entities and relations acknowledged within a particular field of knowledge or scientific specialization. Thus, ontology asks questions such as “What is the nature of reality?” or “What is there that can be known?”(Guba and Lincoln, 1989: p. 83). Epistemology is “a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know” (Crotty, 2003, p. 3), but it is also concerned with “providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate” (Crotty, 2003, p.8). The epistemological assumption is described by Klein (2004) as a branch of philosophy that seeks to discriminate true from false knowledge and attempts to answer the question “What is the relationship of the researcher to that being researched?” A methodology, on the other hand, is “the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of the methods to the desired outcomes” (Crotty, 2003, p. 3). Its aim is to define, assess and defend the use of particular methods (Wellington, 2000).

In summary, based on the above explanation, the adopted research philosophy (paradigm) needs to be based on ontological, epistemological and methodological choices made by the researcher. To understand the researcher’s position in this study, it is essential to review two main research paradigms and their relevance, before moving on to the researcher’s choice; in particular, the researcher’s choice of a combination of paradigms is useful in providing a conclusive understanding of the research topic, in this case understanding perceived HR practices in Saudi Arabian universities. The next three sections will explain positivism, interpretivism and finally pragmatism, the latter of which is the chosen philosophy, although there is a need to understand positivism and interpretivism beforehand, as pragmatism combines both elements.

4.2.1. Positivism

Positivists hold the belief that reality is always stable, does not change and can be measured objectively. Additionally, it can be observed and described without interference with the phenomena under consideration (Levin, 1988). Positivism as a

philosophy assumes that human beings are observed in an objective manner, and so it is seen as a paradigm seeking to use or apply the natural science model as a starting point for investigating a social phenomenon and the social world (Denscombe, 2010). Poole and Jones (1996) indicated that in order to create and build knowledge, the positivist approach focuses on discovering perfect and universal laws through the collective piecing together of bits of information. Research driven by the positivist tradition is a systematic and methodological process (Koch and Harrington, 1998), which adopts special values such as rationality, prediction, objectivity and control (Streubert and Carpenter, 1999).

Being a scientific, evidence-based philosophy, Feldman (2004) claims that epistemology must rely on empirical results, in order to help people critically analyse knowledge, and yet positivist researchers believe that qualitative work (perhaps mostly in its pure form, which is not the case in the current study) will not produce the objectivity they desire (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Positivist research generally follows a deductive approach, which means that the researcher confirms the nature of the relationship of theory and research, i.e. based on what is already known about a particular concept, the researcher produces a hypothesis that is then subject to empirical examination (Bryman and Bell, 2003, pp. 11-12). Thus, the approach depends on logic – and not on observation or experience – to examine and understand a concept. As a result, reality is best tested and captured through quantitative/numerical research instruments such as experiments and questionnaires (Blaxter et al., 2006). Therefore, positivism is utilised, since it is believed that reality is stable and can be observed and described from an objective viewpoint (Levin, 1988).

It can be understood that such perceptions are based on rules and laws that are scientifically measurable. In social science research, positivists claim that despite the fact that attitudes are subjective, there is a history of using positivist research to measure them, treating attitudes as quantifiable phenomena. In the current research, perceived HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction are investigated. Hence, understanding how such topics relate to each other, along with measuring causations and effects, will reflect a positivist stance. These topics are

often measured from a positivist point of departure, and in the field of education it is common to use positivism as a research paradigm (Scott and Morrison, 2006).

4.2.2. Interpretivism

The interpretivist research philosophy takes a different position from positivism. Interpretivism is commonly referred to as a research paradigm aiming to provide and focus on getting a clear and emphatic understanding of how people generally feel inside. Furthermore, this paradigm seeks to explore deeper meanings and feelings and the reasons for behaviours (Rubin and Babbie, 2012, p. 56). In other words, interpretive researchers believe that reality significantly overlaps with people's subjective experiences of the external world, and consequently, they may rely on an inter-subjective epistemology rooted deeply in an ontological belief that reality is a socially constructed entity (Thomas, 2010). As stated by Walsham (1993), interpretive researchers aim mostly at generating their constructs through an intricate examination of the research topic.

Moreover, this paradigm attributes considerable importance to the use of qualitative research methods (Ponterotto, 2005), amongst which – and of direct relevance to the current study – is the growing use of interviews (Aspers, 2004). In fact, Creswell (1998, p. 51) explains that research that uses this paradigm emphasises greatly "the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon." It is worth drawing attention to the fact that given that the present study is rooted in cultural aspects (i.e. the potential influence of the Saudi context on perceived HR practices), often linked with human beliefs, attitudes and behaviour, its nature, similar to any other research acknowledging these determinants, also becomes phenomenological (Wender, 2004). In a nutshell, studies based on interpretivism (fully or partly) recognise that the world is perceived as socially constructed and subjective. Researchers supporting this paradigm focus on meaning, and knowledge is generated with the help of theoretical abstraction based on a qualitative approach (Collins, 2010, p.38). Furthermore, interpretivist research often follows an inductive approach, whereby the researcher moves from a specific point to the more general, seeking to build and explore theories (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007).

This research pursues a qualitative and in depth understanding of perceived HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment while also paying attention to any influence of culture on perceived HR practices in a Saudi context. This is achieved mainly with the help of a qualitative data collection phase (using interviews), which also forms part of the methodological framework (discussed later in more detail in this chapter).

4.2.3. Pragmatism

From the aforementioned paragraphs, it can be understood that the main two schools of thought are positivist or interpretivist, though these two philosophies are viewed differently. Positivism is objective and based on science, rules and quantitative data, whereas the interpretivist philosophy is subjective, based on opinions and experiences and is measured qualitatively. However, pragmatism, as a research philosophy, sidesteps the contentious debates about reality and truth, since it accepts that there are singular and multiple realities that are open to empirical evidence while trying to solve practical problems (Creswell, Pano Clark, 2007).

In short, pragmatism allows the researcher to be free from constraints associated with positivist and interpretivist research (Feilzer, 2010), by offering the researcher the chance to combine different methods. In line with previous research, there is growing evidence that pragmatism indeed helps researchers develop a better understanding of the various ways in which their approaches can be combined together successfully (Hoshmand, 2003) by also recognising and embracing the best opportunities for satisfying the research questions (Johnson and Onwuegbozie, 2004). When pragmatism is adopted in a study, it also allows the researcher to be free from the influence of mental and practical obstacles, which are usually enforced by the "forced choice dichotomy between post-positivism and constructivism" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p. 27). In addition, researchers are not limited to being "the prisoner of a particular [research] method or technique" (Robson, 1993, p. 291). Moreover, and in contrast to positivism and interpretivism in their purest form, pragmatism offers a different perspective that strives mainly to focus specifically on the research problem and the consequences of the research (Brewer and Hunter, 1989, p. 74; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p. 26; Miller, 2006;

Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). Pragmatists are also strong supporters of the "anti-representational view of knowledge," claiming that research should not be restricted simply to representing reality accurately through the mere provision of an "accurate account of how things are in themselves;" rather, it should be useful, that is, to "aim at utility for us" (Rorty, 1999, p.26).

Morgan (2007) postulated that the pragmatic approach is embedded strongly in abductive reasoning, which tries to function by finding a balance between induction and deduction that firstly transforms observations into theories and then subsequently moves on to the evaluation of those theories through action. The above author pointed out further that this abductive process is commonly attributed due importance by researchers who combine quantitative and qualitative methods sequentially (Ivankova, Creswell and Stick, 2006; Morgan, 2013). In other words, the inductive outcomes emerging from a qualitative approach can feed into the whole process of meeting the deductive objectives of a quantitative approach, and vice versa. This is an interesting observation and of direct relevance to the current study, which equally chooses to adopt this approach by using findings from one method to serve as inputs for the other method. According to Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007), it is currently profoundly recognised that the main philosophy of mixed research is tied very closely to the concept of pragmatism. This is to say that, in general, any mixed methods research approaches knowledge (both theory and practice) from not just one but various viewpoints, perspectives, positions as well as standpoints (from both a qualitative and a quantitative perspective). This research is rooted deeply in existing, well-documented and strong arguments supporting the use of pragmatism as the most efficient philosophy that can also effectively support mixed method research. The aforementioned authors, along with Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2006), also stated that those who adopt pragmatism as a research paradigm are closely connected to the notion that just as research paradigms can certainly remain separate, likewise there is no doubt that they can also be merged into a different model. In addition, although researchers using one approach might, at times, not generate the answers they wish for, the use of a pragmatic paradigm engenders a greater chance of understanding the phenomenon, without having to change or abandon the original questions (Feizler, 2010). With all of the above in

mind, the current study adopts a mixed method approach (abductive) while also being very careful to ensure that the imposed dichotomy of quantitative and qualitative methods and data is reduced, and that data are not used or presented as "totally or largely independent of each other" (Bryman, 2007, p. 8).

4.3. Chosen Research Approach: Mixed Methods (Abductive Approach)

Following the pragmatism philosophy, this study adopts a mixed methods research approach. Pragmatism sees benefits in any method, or a mixture of methods, to best answer research questions, i.e. it is not tied to one method. Furthermore, it offers the researcher flexibility to combine knowledge from different and contrasting methods. As explained earlier, positivism is generally objective, deductive and numerical in its nature (Blaxter et al., 2006), whereas interpretivism offers subjective knowledge that is inductive and measured qualitatively. Pragmatism in this thesis will seek to combine methods from both philosophies (qualitative and qualitative), to meet the research aims and follow an abductive approach.

As far as the quantitative aspect of the current study is concerned, Smith (1983) stated that it is associated with the traditional, positivist, experimental or empiricist paradigms, while qualitative research is associated with the constructivist approach, or the naturalistic, interpretative, humanism and post-modern perspectives. Furthermore, Creswell (1994: p. 1-2) defined quantitative research as "an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analysed with statistical procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalisations of the theory hold true," whereas a qualitative study is "an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting." On the one hand, quantitative research tests a theory deductively from existing knowledge, through developing hypothesised relationships and proposed outcomes, in order to produce a legitimate and scientific answer. On the other hand, qualitative research is a philosophical approach that can generate deeper understanding of a research phenomenon compared to quantitative research.

Hence, in the present study, the variables and concepts of interest (HRP perceptions, OC and JS) are examined through the use of both quantitative survey instruments and qualitative interviews, to understand and to gain a better insight into employees' perceptions.

Quantitative methods are generally deductive (following positivism), while qualitative methods are inductive in their nature (following interpretivism). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012, p. 144) explained that deduction is concerned with movement from theory to data and is concerned with scientific principles. Thus, it looks to explain causal relationships between variables. There is a need for research independence if the concept being researched and the need to have a sample are of a sufficient size. Thus, methodologically, it is very structured and involves the collection of data and controls, to ensure the validity of data. Furthermore, deduction is about generalising from the general to the specific. Accordingly, data are collected to evaluate propositions or hypotheses derived from existing theory, thereby seeking to refine a theory through testing and falsification. The reasoning behind the deduction approach is that hypotheses can be tested and refined if they are not found to be valid.

Now that the inductive and deductive approaches have been explained, this research seeks not to be constrained by either of them, by adopting instead (in line with pragmatism) an abductive approach, as it offers the sort of flexibility that is often associated with mixed methods. The abductive approach or logic is explained by engaging in imaginative thinking about findings and returning to the field to check them again, albeit using a different method (Charmaz, 2009). In abductive research, the researcher moves back and forth between deductive and inductive approaches (Morgan, 2007). This approach reflects the process that the researcher uses to double check inferences creatively with more data, thereby helping develop insights associated with the perceived Human Resource Practices. In essence, this approach offers the advantages associated with both the deductive and the inductive methods, as it allows the researcher to double-check and look at the research phenomenon from different angles, in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. The study of perceived HR practice, organisational commitment and job satisfaction and associated factors (e.g. cultural and demographical variables)

fits well within an abductive approach. Using quantitative data, which are traditionally viewed as deductive, will allow the researcher to gain an empirical understanding of the research phenomenon in university settings. Furthermore, it allows for measuring correlations, which could answer the nature of the relationship between perceived HR practices and organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Additionally, helps the researcher measure whether or not demographic variables (e.g. gender, age, experience, academic rank, university type) influence the ways HR practices are perceived. Furthermore, the abductive approach allows the researcher to generate qualitative data to deepen further understanding of perceived HR practices, in order to expand knowledge beyond the quantitative data. In the context of this study, opinions are measured qualitatively, to validate and enhance the quantitative outcomes. In addition, cultural influences (such as Saudisation, gender, religion) are also explored through the development of relevant insights associated with perceived HRP. Notably, deductive approaches test hypotheses, whereas abductive approaches permit the research to explore and enable issues to emerge during the empirical study, which in turn allow for developing and exploring broader spectrum.

4.4. Research Design: Sequential Mixed Design

This research follows the mixed methods and abductive approaches, i.e. quantitative and qualitative research methods. A mixed method was developed mainly in an attempt to combine traditional research methods while also overcoming the deficiencies and bias that can occur in research when a single method is used (Gill and Johnson, 2005). Therefore, this mixed methods research (quantitative-qualitative) design is believed to be very useful for investigating complex issues such as perceived HR practices within a specific social and cultural setting, as it enables the use of multiple methods and approaches. Using a multilevel sequential mixed design, the quantitative and qualitative methods used in this study are meant to inform and supplement each other, using two different research strategies (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). The multilevel sequential mixed design is considered because quantitative data collected from the faculty members while the qualitative data collected from faculty members and the managers as well. Particularly, the research

follows a multilevel sequential mixed research design, in that it starts by generating firstly quantitative data followed by qualitative data. The aim of the quantitative approach was to gain a numerical understanding of the current opinions on HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction and then to quantify the association between them, mainly in order to answer questions relevant to causation and association. Following the quantitative data, the researcher used the qualitative approach, which was informed by findings from the quantitative phase. In contrast to the quantitative research design adopted in this study, the rationale for the inclusion of qualitative resides in the notion that "qualitative research enables scholars to gather detailed data about the experience of individuals within social contexts in a way that surveys conventionally cannot" (Miller, 2005, p. 10). This approach seeks mainly to answer the "why?" and not the "how?" of its research topic by carefully examining unstructured information that could, for example, be collected mainly with the use of interview transcripts and recordings, notes and many other forms of feedback (Creswell, 2009).

4.5. Limitations of pragmatism and the mixed methods design:

The advantages of the mixed methods approach are many, but most importantly it allows the researcher to seek knowledge or examine a phenomenon using different tools which increase validity. Also, combining two methods eliminates or reduces the limitation of the other; hence, the researcher will have more information representing a deeper understanding. However, following pragmatism as a research paradigm and adopting mixed methods for data collection has a number of limitations. According to Denscombe (2008), research does not have to be pragmatic to follow a mixed methods approach, while mixed methods do not always follow the pragmatic approach; in fact, it is argued that researchers do not use pragmatism appropriately in research. Although mixed methods have become prominent in many recent studies, combining research methods has long been used (e.g. Mayo, 1933; Roethlisburger & Dickson, 1939), although it has become a favourable approach only in recent times, raising the prominence of the pragmatism as a paradigm competing with positivist and interpretivist paradigms.

Evidence suggests that many old and new studies have failed to acknowledge the use of the mixed methods approach and its philosophical assumptions despite combining different methods to generate and test knowledge (Bryman, 2006; Greene et al., 1989; Gorard & Taylor, 2004). This was evidenced by a content analysis study (Bryman, 2006), which established that 27% of 232 journal articles failed to justify the use of mixed methods approach. And in a following qualitative study, Bryman (2007 explained that researchers (20) seemed to ignore the epistemological and ontological assumptions behind their research while purely exhibiting pragmatic opinions (not as a philosophy) behind their work. Consequently, it can be understood that mixed methods and pragmatism as a philosophy do not offer a clear paradigm. Writers in research methodology have not always related the combination of two methods to the mixed methods approach/paradigm, and they have often ignored or not included narratives about the intellectual origins of mixed methods.

The lack of clarity in research and methodological books about the underpinnings of the mixed methods approach and the definition of pragmatism as a paradigm is certainly a limitation. Researchers (e.g. Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2004) have explained a number of other practical limitations of mixing two methods within a study. Qualitative data are often time-consuming and demanding in terms of resources, and quantitative tools (e.g. questionnaires) are judged to be more efficient, although they provide abstract information. It is safe to say that that collecting data, regardless of the tool, is not particularly easy. Employing two data collection methods (questionnaire and Interviews) is certainly more time-consuming, as opposed to following only one method. Mixed methods required more expertise, a complex design and sequence (deciding on the sequence of data collection). Also, any conflicting results are more difficult to explain, i.e. findings from one data collection tool might contradict or not support the findings of the other, which raises challenges for the researcher seeking to find logical explanations (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Despite the limitations of mixed methods or pragmatist philosophy, it is still an approach that provides more conclusive ideas and valid outcomes. It should be noted that individually, quantitative or qualitative research approaches have their own limitations; hence, this research runs with the assumption

that combining both methods is worthy and will produce an in-depth understanding of HR practices through the ways they are perceived within Saudi universities.

4.6. Data Collection Methods

Following a sequential research mixed methods design, this study adopted quantitative and qualitative tools (sequentially) in the form of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, respectively.

4.6.1. Questionnaire

The use of a questionnaire as a data collection tool is popular in research, as it helps researchers collect standardised data from a large population economically, and it also allows for a comparison of the results (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012, pp. 176-177). Additionally, this strategy allows researchers to collect and analyse data by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Data collected from the questionnaire can be used to explain and understand the relationship between variables (e.g. between perceived HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction).

The study includes a self-completion questionnaire (Appendix 2) as a tool for data collection. The choice was influenced by matters of time and cost. In addition, Bryman and Bell (2003) pointed out that there are several advantages of using self-completion questionnaires, namely the aforementioned time and cost in administration as well as ease of administration, respondent convenience and the fact that there is no interviewer effect or interviewer variability. Moreover, questionnaires allow the use of a large sample size and also reduce the likelihood of respondent answer distortion (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). As a rationale for using a questionnaire, it is noted by various authors conducting similar research on perceived that it is the preferred tool for data collection (Walter et al., 2010; Chengeni and Salavati, 2016).

A self-administered questionnaire was conducted through Hard-copy and online-questionnaires (link) which respondents could answer the questionnaire on a computer, where internet access was available. In other words, it was decided to set up an online link only to be completed by respondents who had not completed a hard copy, which helped significantly in increasing the number of respondents in the study. In public sector universities, before establishing the online link, the total

number of responses was 150, while after establishing an online link, 190 responses were gathered. Conversely, the number was 120 responses in a private sector university, and after establishing an online link, another 75 responses were received.

4.6.1.1. Questionnaire content

The constructs involved in this study are: perceived HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Additionally, demographic data were also obtained to establish the respondents' profiles. Furthermore, besides data on demographics (e.g. gender, age, academic ranking, and years of experience), measures employed in this research, which have a history of reliability, were adapted from previous studies.

4.6.1.1.1. Demographic Data Items

The demographic profiles of the respondents were collected in order to provide an insight into their composition, age, gender, academic ranking and years of experience. Age is seen as an influential factor when examining the way HR practices are perceived (e.g. Ofori, Sekyere-Abankwa, and Borquaye, 2012), while it is also reported to be influential on the level of commitment employees exhibit toward their organisations (e.g. Meyer, 1990; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Karsh et al., 2005), although others have reported no association (e.g. Kwon, 2000; Hawkins, 1998).

The issue of gender segregation is one that affects human resource practices within Saudi Arabia. As observed by Baki (2004), segregation is practiced in organisations, and hence it is important to see whether or not it is influential. Gender differences seem to exist, according to a number of researchers, when it comes to job satisfaction (e.g. Hunjra et al., 2010; Santhapparaj and Alam, 2005; Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005), while commitment to the organisation appears potentially to be influenced by gender as well (e.g. Rahim et al., 2001; Smeenk et al., 2006).

This thesis also examines academic rank (or position) as a potential influencing factor. Although its impact on perceived HR practices is lacking evidence, it is often associated with organisational commitment (e.g. Kanchana and Panchanatham, 2012; Balay and Ipek, 2010). Academic rank also appears to affect job satisfaction level, with a higher rank showing more satisfaction (e.g. Oshagbemi, 2003; De Noble and McCormick, 2008; Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005).

Years of experience or tenure is a are demographic variables that haves been studied with reference to commitment and satisfaction. Mathieu and Zajac (1990), in their meta-analysis, reported a positive relationship between experience and commitment, while other researchers reported various relationships as positive and curvilinear (Kushman, 1992; Meyer et al., 1993).

4.6.1.1.2. Perceived HR practices Items

HR practices and the way they are seen among university staff are the main concern of this thesis. By reviewing the literature, HR practices are essential for the success of any organisation, as they ensure that communication and the relationships between employees and employers are well stipulated and clear, while the employees' clear insights are taken into consideration. There are many HR practices; however, for the purpose of this research, the main topics under consideration are HR planning, recruitment, retention and employee development. These four HR practices are viewed as a cycle which is often followed by HR, and this is also true for Saudi universities as organisations. HR planning can be defined as the process of developing strategies to arrange the amount and levels of human resources based on an organisation's needs, which enables management to develop and deploy the right people in the right places at the right times, in order to achieve desired objectives (Hafeez and Aburawi, 2013).

Second, attraction and recruitment methods are also important. Bratton and Gold, (2007), for instance, see recruitment as the process of generating a pool of capable people to apply for employment. Following recruitment, it is also essential that the organisation has faith in its employees to carrying out their jobs in the long term, which is referred to as 'employee retention'. Bidisha and Mukulesh (2013) describe retention as a process that involves the organisation encouraging its employees to remain for the longest period of time. Keeping employees is important, but developing their skills is also required, in order to keep up with the latest developments and technologies. If employees are equipped with new knowledge and skills, this is positively linked to organisational outcomes (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Following on from the earlier research, this study develops a construct that measures the four HR practices, using 23 items drawn from the work of Tummers et

al. (2014). Lewis and Heckman (2006) stated that it is important for measurement tools to meet rigorous scientific approaches for tool development. Yet, fundamental measurement principles have been ignored in HR practices literature, and therefore there is a dearth of tools in this area.

HR practices were split into four sub-factors, namely: human resource planning, attraction, retention and development. Human resource **planning** measured the university's initiatives around human resource planning. The construct is operationalised using six items e.g. the university's management tries to find appropriate mechanisms to work, the university's management attempts to bridge the gap between the demand for employees and the available supply. **Attraction** measured how, or if, the respondents agreed with the measures their university takes to attract employees (five items), e.g. the university's management assesses candidates to fill job positions, how the university's management attracts and appoints employees with creative skills. **Retention** measures respondent agreement with the measures universities utilise to retain employees (six items), e.g. the university's management ensures the positive contribution of talents to serve the university, the university's management applies a rewards system. **Development** measures how, or if, the respondents agree with measures taken to develop employees (seven items), e.g. the university's management invests in and develops the talents of their employees, the university's management develops programmes to develop creativity. Items in the scale (as per the examples provided) were rated on a five-point "Likert-scale" ranging from 1 [strongly disagree] to 5 [strongly agree].

4.6.1.1.3. Organisational Commitment Items

Organisational commitment is a well-studied construct, and so several scales are available to measure the construct. As mentioned in the literature review, this study adopted the three-component model by Allen and Meyer (1990). Organisational commitment is characterised and studied in terms of three dimensions: affective, continuance and normative commitment. In terms of scale, affective commitment is defined as "emotional commitment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisations" (Allen and Meyer, 1990) and was measured through eight items, e.g. 'I enjoy talking about my university with people outside it'; I really feel as if this

university's problems are my own'. Continuance commitment is defined as "an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organisation" (Allen and Meyer, 1990). This subscale was measured also through eight items, e.g. 'Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my university now'; 'It would be too costly for me to leave my university now'. Normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment (Allen and Meyer, 1990). This subscale was measured through eight items, e.g. 'Jumping from university to university seems unethical to me'; 'One of the major reasons I continue to work in my university is that I believe loyalty is important'.

This model has been adopted by a number of researchers in Western and Eastern societies (e.g. Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999; Vandenberghe et al. 2001; Meyer et al., 2002, Cheng and Stockdale, 2003; Wasti, 2005). All items were rated on a five-point "Likert-scale" ranging from 1 [strongly disagree] to 5 [strongly agree].

4.6.1.1.4. Job Satisfaction Items

Spector (1997) opined that there were a number of advantages to using existing job satisfaction scales to assess job satisfaction. One such advantage is that they cover the major facets of satisfaction as pointed out by literature. In addition, the scales allow for comparison and interpretation by setting norms for the same. Most of the scales used in the literature have both construct validity and reliability, which the ensures consistent measurement of satisfaction. There is also the added advantage of saving time and money in using an existing scale. Job satisfaction was measured based on pay satisfaction (e.g. the amount of pay (basic salary) and fringe benefits I receive); job security (e.g. the amount of job security I have) social satisfaction (e.g. the people I talk to and work with in my job.); supervisory satisfaction (e.g. the degree of respect and fair treatment I receive from my supervisor(s)); growth satisfaction (e.g. the feeling of worthwhile accomplishment I get from doing my job). Participants were asked how satisfied they are with these aspects of their job. All items were scored on a five-point Likert scale (1=strongly dissatisfied and 5= strongly satisfied).

4.6.1.2. Pre-testing (Questionnaire)

Dillman (2000) identified four stages for the validation of survey an instrument, which are discussed in detail below in relation to the complete questionnaire.

Stage 1: Content validity:

Content validity establishes the degree to which the test statement sufficiently signifies the relevance of items/questions under study. Cooper and Schindler (2003) proposed presenting a questionnaire to a panel of judges. In the present study, for the purpose of content validation, the questionnaire was presented to supervisors and a co-supervisor. In the next phase, it was presented to the head of a HR department, three doctoral candidates and two experts in human resources management from the educational sector. The panels in both phases were asked to:

- Review questions and recommend amendments
- Recommend the removal or addition of questions/statements from the questionnaire, based on their experience in the area of HRM practices in Saudi Arabia.

Stage Two: Readability

The second stage involves readability. For this purpose, the questionnaire was presented to fellow colleagues and some university employees for evaluation. The objective of this exercise was to identify if the wording was easy to understand and the questionnaire readable. It was assessed if the questions would take too much time in developing an understanding. It was also assessed if the items/statements were not too lengthy so that the meaning was not lost in reading.

Stage Three: Pilot Study

Before the actual quantitative data collection, a pilot study was also conducted in order to evaluate the instruments being used for the actual data collection phase. Data for the study were collected from both public and private sector universities. The objective of the pilot study was to ascertain the reliability of the constructs, determine whether the questionnaire was easy to understand and improve the questionnaire in terms of sentence structure and item phrasing. In total, 20 respondents were selected from private and public universities in Saudi Arabia, mainly to simplify terminology and the way the questions were presented in the questionnaire.

Stage Four: Mistake Elimination:

The final stage involved re-evaluating the instrument after adaptation, in order to correct any responses that might have gone unnoticed.

4.6.2. Semi-structured interviews

The second research strategy stemming from the qualitative approach adopted in this study is the use of semi-structured interviews. The survey gives a certain amount of breadth (i.e. enables the sampling of a larger number of people) but it does not provide insights (depth) into the relationship between the variables covered by the latter, which is important. The specific research looks at the perceptions of HRP experiences in the Saudi HE sector, while the specific data collection stage allowed the development of more in-depth insights related to individuals. The interview method was mainly used, as it helps to understand how respondents feel or think. In addition, an interview helps the researcher recognise the meanings provided by interviewees in relation to their behaviour, motives and intentions. This is mainly possible because an interview provides the opportunity for a long and detailed answer (Creswell, 2013). With the help of face-to-face semi-structured interviews, it was anticipated that the researcher would have a better opportunity to probe into issues the participants deemed as being important (e.g. their views on HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment).

Furthermore, this data collection tool also assists the interviewer in examining further those issues that she considers to have high significance in relation to meeting the research objectives (Creswell, 2013). With this in mind, although this research was highly focused on identifying cultural/social influences in relation to HR practices, a research question that was anticipated to be best satisfied with the help of interview data was asked with the exploration of the relationship between PHRPs, OC and JS during the interview to enhance the basic understanding associated with the research. In fact, it has been documented previously that semi-structured interviews are especially useful in research where detailed information is needed on a novel topic with a very small sample available, albeit enough to produce rich data (Shneiderman and Plaisant, 2005). Therefore, taking into account that the current study also examined a new topic in as much detail as possible with only a limited number of 'expert' participants, the above advantage of this research strategy is certainly important and relevant. The interviews offered in-depth opinions about HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction while offering insights into cultural influences.

By developing a relevant critical analysis of the literature identified previously, as well as the research aims and objectives, the interview schedule was designed based on relevant themes along with a list of open-ended questions aimed at exploring the following: current HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities; the perceived nature, strength and direction of relationships between perceived HR practice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment and cultural/social influences in relation to HR practices. The use of open-ended questions as part of the interview was pre-planned, since it allowed the researcher to encourage the respondents to become thoroughly immersed in the process (Daymon and Holloway, 2002).

The interview schedule included 18 questions subdivided into specific sections, such as background information, perceived HR practice, organisational commitment, job satisfaction and Saudi context and culture. The purpose of the interviews was to expand on knowledge generated from the questionnaire, which provided closed-ended questions and a numerical understanding of general perceived HR practices, along with job satisfaction and organisational commitment. After careful consideration of findings from the questionnaire, the interview questions aimed at generating in-depth information about the topic in general and the role of culture in particular. Cultural influences such as '*Wasta*' and 'Saudisation' were discussed, as they are considered significant in human resources across organisations in Saudi Arabia. Examples of some of the interview questions are as follows (see Appendix 4 and 5 for full details):

1. Can you describe how the university engages in formal HR planning?
2. What strategies does the university use to attract suitable candidates for academic employment?
3. What are the main strategies/methods that the university uses to retain staff at the university? Are there set criteria?
4. How does the university develop and train its faculty? What are the delivery methods?
5. How would you assess faculty's emotional commitment to the university or staff at this university? Do you think the university offers long career prospects? Explain why or why not.

6. How satisfied/dissatisfied are current employees at the university? And why? What are the main reasons behind your answer (current salary, security, social environment, supervision, contribution)?
7. What are the influences of *Wasta* (social connections) in HR practice in general?

Furthermore, the nature of the interview, being semi-structured, allowed the researcher to elaborate and prompt with further questions that could potentially generate valuable information.

4.6.2.1. Interview piloting

A pilot of the study provides the researcher with an idea of what can be expected. Leon et al. (2011) explained that the main purpose of a data collection pilot is to examine the feasibility of the research tool, but it also offers the researcher a second chance to adjust the research tool based on any problems uncovered in the pilot stage.

The self-designed interview was pilot tested with two participants who matched the sample criteria of the study, namely that both worked in academia in a Saudi university. The interview was audio-recorded for practice, in order to provide consistency and conformity of the responses provided by the participants while also achieving the consent of both participants. The researcher started by introducing the research aims and herself, before moving on to asking the interview questions. Both interviews were conducted in Arabic, due the fact that it is the participants' first language and they were better able to understand the relevance and intensity of the questions. After finishing each of the interviews, the researcher asked the interviewee for feedback. Both interviewees provided plenty of positives; however, one explained that the interview was particularly lengthy and that he was feeling "fatigued." In addition, the interviewee explained that some of the questions would be better asked using simpler terminology with which academics in Saudi Arabia are familiar. Similar comments were made by both interviewees, who also added notes about the terminology, for example stating that "Saudisation" might not be understood by everyone and could be a sensitive topic to non-Saudis, hence it needed simplifying and definition during interviews. As a result, the researcher made

sure that the interview did not exceed an hour (as it was first explained to participants). In addition, the wording of some questions was changed to generate better understanding. Feedback from the pilot study was used to make appropriate changes to questions, in order to refine the interview schedule. The piloting of the interview enabled the researcher to estimate the time the interview might take, as well as provide the chance to correct questions or modify them, if they were difficult to understand. This approach opened up the more comprehensive and robust development of the data collection tool with the potential outcome. This helped in developing a clear understanding of the participants in relation to the purpose and spectrum of the data collection strategy.

4.7. Population and Sampling Strategies

The word 'population' refers to an entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate (Sekaran, 2003). According to the KSA's Ministry of Higher Education, there are currently 56,059 academic members of staff in Saudi Arabia (KSA Ministry of Higher Education, 2014). The most accurate way to research is by census, but due to the constraints of time, money and resources, surveys mostly adopt a sampling approach (Bajpai, 2011). Since it was not possible to obtain information from all faculty members working in different universities across KSA, there was a need to identify a suitable representative sample to represent this population, mainly for the questionnaire.

A sample is referred to as a subset of the population. According to Sekaran (2003), there are two main types of sampling design, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Whereas elements in the population have a chance or probability of being selected as a sample subjects designs, in the probability sampling, such elements do not have a predetermined chance of being selected as subjects in non-probability sampling designs. Moreover, there are six main types of probability sampling: simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling, cluster sampling, area sampling and double sampling. Non-probability sampling designs consist of convenience sampling and purposive sampling (i.e. judgement and quota sampling).

4.7.1. Questionnaire Sample

For the current research (considering questionnaires), since elements in the population did not have an equal chance or probability of being selected, this research adopted the non-probability sampling method. In other words, 56,059 academic staff in KSA were considered as the population size. However, as KSA is the largest Arab country in the world (www.mapsofworld.com/saudi-arabia) and its universities vary geographically, the area of research was large, and so it was difficult to consider data collection from all academic staff. Furthermore, it is also a challenging task for a female researcher to move indiscriminately across the country and collect data. Coupled with time and costs constraints the convenience sampling technique was utilised for the study. Although the technique limits generalisation, due to other limitations, the non-probability technique was used to gather data. Nevertheless, it should also be acknowledged that the chosen sample might not necessarily be an accurate representation of the target population (Zikmund, 2003), so it should be emphasised that the extent to which these findings are generalisable is rather limited.

Sekaran (2003) recommended that in order to conduct multivariate research (within quantitative research), the sample size should be at least 10 times or more greater than the number of variables in the research, while Roscoe (1975) projected that a sample size of over 30 and fewer than 500 is appropriate for most studies. The total population in the present study is 56,059, based on the sample size calculation for a given population size by Sekaran (2003), and so it was decided to set a minimum sample size of 381. However, the researcher managed to exceed that number by recruiting 534 participants – 340 from public universities in Saudi Arabia and 194 from private universities. More background information is reported in the questionnaire analysis.

4.7.2. Interview Sample

Twenty two (22) interviews in total were conducted, fourteen (14) with HR personnel and management, and eight (8) academic staff from Saudi universities. The interviews mainly targeted the opinions of academic/teaching and administrative staff at Saudi universities. Although more than 60 potential interviewees were approached for the interviews, only this cohort of 22 agreed to take part. Inviting

potential interviewees and interviewing them was particularly challenging for the researcher (being a female), and some potential participants declined participation on the basis of this issue, a factor related to gender-based bias linked directly to specific cultural attributes in the Saudi context.. The respondents were also concerned about the confidentiality of their answers and thus this may have led to some potential bias in their responses.

The questionnaire was restricted to a limited number of closed-ended questions enquiring about perceived HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. However, the interviews were designed to target new issues, without the restrictions offered by the questionnaire. Additionally, the interviews aimed to garner opinions from HR and management personnel in comparison to academic/teaching staff. The view was that those within HR or management might shed more light on why and how HR practices are perceived, as they are often involved in decision-making or recruitment and their opinion adds a substantial dimension to understanding perceived HR practices and how cultural aspects such as Saudisation and gender issues are potentially influential. Furthermore, those working in HR and in management positions are more likely to have experience in undertaking the planning, attraction, retention and development of employees. Nevertheless, interviewing academic staff may add further detail and opinions to what they reported within the questionnaire. Background information on the interviewees is reported in the results chapter (the following chapter). The interviews included the same questions, tailored to suit each interviewee's position.

4.7.3. Sampling Strategy associated with the Research

It was articulated previously that a convenience sampling technique was utilised with the reasons given. Additionally in this regard, it must be reiterated that access to the participants was limited due to specific factors such as their availability at a particular point in time, ease of access and their willingness to be part of the research (Dörnyei, 2007). It should be noted that a semi-structured interview is conducted to expand knowledge generated from a questionnaire and to gain better insights related to the perceived approach; the aim was not to generalise the findings to the greater population but rather explore the opinions of the sample only.

4.8. Data Collection Procedures

The researcher approached universities and departments with a request to collect data for the questionnaire and the interview. For the questionnaire, convenience sampling was used on account of time and cost constraints and available contacts in the universities. Two universities – King Abdul Aziz University (Public) and University of Business and Technology (Private) gave a favourable response in this matter, and the sample consisted of mix of Saudi national and expatriate faculty respondents. Next, the researcher approached heads of department in these universities with a request to distribute the questionnaires amongst faculty. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and then distributed the questionnaires, informing them of a later date for collection. Some of the faculty requested an online link, so the researcher created an online questionnaire in Google Forms and passed on the link to the faculty. The researcher then collected the completed questionnaires and used them for data analysis.

Heads of departments distributed the relevant questionnaires (hard copies and online links) to their faculty. Collectively, it should be noted that the total number of faculty at the King Abdul Aziz University (public) which has three large campuses across Saudi Arabia is 7,065 faculty members all of whom had the opportunity to participate based on communications, however, only 340 completed questionnaires (hard copy and online links) were completed and returned. This resulted in a response rate of approximately 4.81%. While at the University of Business and Technology (private) the total number of faculty is 400 all of whom had the opportunity to participate in the study. In total, 194 questionnaires were completed and returned, providing a response rate of 47.5%. The overall response rate for both universities was therefore 7.09%. Notably, the entire data collection process including the above mentioned was completed over a four month time period. The response rate was low despite frequent reminders; however, there were no incomplete questionnaires, as the participants had to complete all questions to indicate completion. Despite a substantial number of participants who took part in the study (534 participants), the response rate was low. Following their participation, online participants received an automatic email to thank them for taking part while providing them again with contact details if they wished to know more about the

study in the future. Furthermore, a general thank you was also passed onto head of departments to acknowledge other participants who submitted hard copies. All participants were also assured that confidentiality and complete anonymity would be maintained.

With regards to the procedure involved as far as the qualitative study is concerned, access to these universities and participants was obtained through personal connections (between the researcher and the university and its staff) through the support and coordination of research centers within these universities. The researcher first approached these universities and then arranged a meeting with research centers to get their permission to approach HR employees, management (departmental) and academic staff members. After the initial meeting, the researcher explained the objectives of the qualitative research, which is considered a second phase of data based on an original phase (questionnaire). After careful consideration, each of the approached research centers provided consent and a list of staff emails. Messages were sent to all potential participants, by the researcher, explaining the aims of the research and asking if they wished to participate. The email explained fully the levels of confidentiality and anonymity and provided contact details for the researcher, as well as her dissertation supervisors and sponsoring university. Once acceptance from the respondent was received, an appointment time for the meeting was set. The researcher mainly conducted the interviews at each respondent's office, although some of the interviews were conducted by phone, due to the longer distance and the location of the respondent in relation to the researcher’s location. The number of respondents interviewed by phone was six.

In total, 24 participants took part, albeit two of the interviews were removed from the study by the participants, i.e. they did not wish for the data to be considered. The main reason was that they feared that the information they had provided would compromise their position in the university. The researcher politely accepted their decision, and as a result their interviews were removed. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the participants in this study were all approached using a convenience sampling strategy, as they were the people who had the required information and knowledge to answer the research questions. Each interview was initiated by a greeting and basic introductions, then proceeded to questioning. All interviewees

were given the option to be interviewed in Arabic or English, however, all chose the mode of English as it is the main language used for teaching in these universities. On a rare occasion, the researcher as a native speaker of Arabic may have explained some enquiries in Arabic for greater understanding but, for the most part all discussion was in English. Their participation was voluntary and they were aware of their rights to withdraw and not answer, if this is what they wished. In addition, aspects of confidentiality and anonymity were assured to all. All interviewees were thanked for taking part and contact details were shared for future communication. The interviews were then transcribed manually for each participant. It should be opted that interviews were conducted over a three month time period.

4.9. Research Ethics

Research requires compliance with a number of ethical guidelines, in this case set by the Ethics Committee at Manchester Metropolitan University. As part of the PhD process, the researcher was required to undergo two separate ethical approvals, one for the questionnaire and the second for the interview stage. Following recommendations and adjustments, ethical approval was generated for both data collection tools. Bryman and Bell (2007) identified a number of ethical considerations that need to be followed in social sciences research. The current research made sure that participants, for the questionnaires and in the interviews, were not pressurised to answer the questions and were only reminded politely to respond to the questionnaire. Consent for the study was obtained from Deans at the target universities, in order to collect responses from faculty. All participants provided consent to participate in the study. Additionally, all questionnaires and interviews were anonymous, and no names or any information that could lead to the identification of respondents or the organisation was recorded. Raw data (generated through questionnaires and interviews) were not shared with anyone and were kept confidential at all times. All efforts were made to ensure that any type of communication in relation to the research would be honest and transparent, and it was explained to all participants that the data would be used for the purposes of a PhD thesis along with potential publications, and in every circumstance their anonymity would be assured.

4.10. Data Analysis Methods

With regards to the quantitative data, the research analysis conducted for the present study involved a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques as well as a thematic analysis for qualitative data. Data from the questionnaire were analysed using SPSS (a statistical package for social science), while the interviews were fully transcribed and analysed using a qualitative data analysis method (a manual form of thematic analysis).

4.10.1. Reliability Analysis

Reliability is a standard for good measurement (Bajpai, 2011), the essence of which is captured in the term 'consistency' (Huck, 2012; Hair et al. 2003). Reliability, according to Pellissier (2007), deals with the extent to which research findings can be replicated. The greater the magnitude of correlation, the greater the reliability (Herbst and Coldwell, 2004). Cronbach's Alpha is the most widely used measure of reliability, and alpha values range between 0 to 1. The closer the value to 1, the higher the reliability of the construct. Field (2005) suggests that reliability can be assured with a Cronbach's Alpha over .70 (70%); therefore, it was used to test the reliability of the constructs in this study, the results for which are reported in the data analysis chapter. The reliability of HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction sub-scales are reported in the results chapter.

4.10.2. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics techniques are utilised to describe the data at hand, and they summarise and present data in a form that is easy to understand. Descriptive statistics in the present study were utilised not only to describe the sample at hand, but also to identify if any anomalies existed in the data. Descriptive data such as the frequency of a score (n) or its percentage (%), SD (standard deviation) mean (average score) and rank (ranking items from highest to lowest) were all used. Minimum and maximum values for each of the variables were identified to ascertain that all the data entered into the software was correct and ready for analysis. Data normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis statistics. Lomax and Hahs-aughn (2012) considered that a variable is normally distributed if the values of skewness and kurtosis fall between +2.00 and -2.00. It should be noted that descriptive analysis

aims at reflecting data that are true for the sample used and not to generalise outcomes to the greater population, i.e. outcomes are true for the sample only.

4.10.3. Inferential Statistics

This thesis utilised multiple linear regression tests to answer the Association between perceived HR practices, Job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Such association was measured through Pearson's r correlation coefficient and multiple linear regression analysis. Furthermore, an Independent Samples t-test was used to measure the differences between private and public universities and between genders. This test is useful, in that it allows the researcher to establish if both variables significantly affect HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. An independent sample analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also conducted, as it measures the differences between three groups or more (e.g. academic rank, age and experience), in this case by testing whether there is a significant difference between groups when measuring for perceived HR practices, commitment and satisfaction (Field, 2009).

4.10.4. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted for perceived HR practices, as it allows the researcher to find latent variables within the questionnaire. It also helps group variables and categorize them according to their loading on the factor analysis. This method was followed in line with instructions provided by Field (2009). Factors were extracted if they have an Eigenvalue of 1 or above, while items with a loading higher than 0.4 were included in each of the extracted factors (following a rotated component matrix).

4.10.5. Qualitative data: Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was chosen for the qualitative data in the current study, with due consideration given to the fact that this analysis tool helps make sense of transcribed interviews by transforming verbatim the participants' responses into themes that are closely identified, described, analysed and reported within the dataset (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The main strength of this analysis is its ability to provide an opportunity to conceptualize the participant's own perspective through his or her experiences, beliefs and perceptions (Guest, MacQueen, and Namey, 2011). The nature of the

qualitative phase of the current study, investigating the issues and experiences of the participants working in an organisational setting in KSA, which also underlies a cultural context, is rather complex. This technique is nevertheless appropriate given that it has the power to offer an in-depth understanding of the different ways in which cultural traditions could potentially influence the perception of HR practices amongst the participants. In fact, this analysis tool gives due importance to their social context (Lacey and Luff, 2001). In addition, thematic analysis is designed specifically for qualitative data and usually allows a lot of flexibility in terms of providing different analytic options (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This could perhaps be especially desired in any field of research such as the current one, that is, any research area which is underexplored.

The process of thematic analysis involves a coding phase whereby the first stage of the qualitative data analysis refers to "the process whereby data are broken down into component parts, which are given names" (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 567). Bam (1992) commonly labelled these codes as words or phrases indicative of themes. Similar to previous qualitative research on HR practices using thematic analysis, such as Swart and Kinnie (2010), this research also carried out its thematic analysis systematically, by going through five key stages as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006, P. 87): 1) This involved reading through all the data transcripts several times in an attempt to familiarize oneself with the whole dataset, which then led to the transcription of the tapes; 2) the classification of emerging key themes based on an inductive identification of its thematic framework; 3) use of textual codes; 4) charting thematic information to facilitate reading and 5) interpreting the dataset by looking for patterns and associations in order for links to be identified.

Any qualitative research often necessitates the establishment of rigour. In the current study, this was ensured by providing a constructed reality of the respondents' experiences that was "as informed and sophisticated as it can be at a particular point in time" (Guba and Lincoln, 1989, p.44). Moreover, there is also some evidence suggesting that as a researcher, one's personal and professional 'prejudices' could have a negative influence on the trustworthiness of a study (Koch, 2006). This is of direct relevance to the current study and also recognised as a potential barrier, given that the researcher also comes from Saudi Arabia. As such, no attempt was made to

hide any unintended influence on behalf of the researcher or even any participant bias as a result of sharing the same cultural identity. Hence, in an attempt to deal with this issue as effectively as possible, the researcher tried to be continuously aware of her concerns throughout the research process. Personal reflections and opinions were avoided, and data were analysed qualitatively based on the opinions provided.

In line with the above, another issue to highlight is what is commonly termed 'reflexivity', which is conceptualised as an awareness that the researcher and the object of study can have a mutual influence on each other during the whole research process (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). With this in mind, again, since the researcher is herself a Saudi citizen, it was very likely that a link (intentionally or unintentionally) would be made between herself, her background, history and experiences in relation to the participants (Howard et al., 1994). It could also be argued further that the interpersonal, political and institutional situations in which researchers are involved can also have an impact on their decisions (Bell and Roberts, 1984), which could potentially also be an issue in this study with the researcher sharing the same social and cultural background as the participants.

4.11. Summary

Overall, the study opted for a mixed methods abductive approach to satisfy the research questions. Using the abductive approach, the research sought to answer the research questions using a sequential mixed methods design, starting with quantitative data collection (questionnaire) followed by qualitative data. The questionnaire aimed to generate a numerical understanding, while the qualitative data sought to expand on the former. In relation to the quantitative phase, a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from academics at a public and a private university.

Both the questionnaire and the interviews looked at perceived HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Data from the questionnaire was coded into SPSS (statistical package for social science) and analysed using appropriate statistical tests (e.g. descriptive statistics, factor analysis, multiple linear regression, independent sample t-test and ANOVA). As for the qualitative phase of this study,

participants were conversed with in face-to-face semi-structured interviews, following which all of the interview data were transcribed and then analysed, using thematic analysis. The results for both data collection tools are reported in full detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Questionnaire Data Analysis

5.1. Introduction

Previous chapters have stressed on the importance of HR practices and the way they are perceived among employees. Specific attention was given to HR practices such as planning, attraction, retention and development of employees. HR practices in the Context of Saudi Arabian Universities are under research, hence this study aimed at studying each of the aforementioned practices, as well as orgnisational commitment and job satisfaction. There is an urgent need to study these practices and examine how employees perceive them. To fully understand them the researcher applied two data collection tools that aim to complement each other, a quantitative tool in the form of a questionnaire and a qualitative tool in the form of semi-structured interview. This chapter will provide in depth analysis of data generated via the Questionnaire

Data generated from the questionnaire will provide an understanding of the current HR practices within Saudi Universities as well as Orgnisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction and how they are perceived. Furthermore, this chapter will also report the association between all three factors, along with influences of demographic cultural variables.

This study looks at the available literature to seek answers to the following research questions which could be quantitatively explained:

1. What are the current levels of HR practices as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Saudi universities?
2. What is the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between HR practice as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Saudi universities?
3. What are the cultural/social influences on HR practices in Saudi universities?

4. To what extent do demographic variables (gender, education, age, role, experience) influence participants' views on HR practice, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Saudi universities?
5. Do academics/teaching employees have different opinions compared to managers and HR employees when it comes to HR practices?

The questionnaire will answer research questions **1, 2 and 4** stated above.

To answer these questions, the questionnaire analysis firstly provides background information that is descriptively reported which include demographic details, exploratory factor analysis and reliability of scales, followed by sections about perceived HR practices based on factor analysis. Thereafter, the first part will report organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Correlations and group differences will also be conveyed. The final section will utilise multiple linear regression to predict Job satisfaction and organizational commitment subscales (as separate dependent variables) from HRPs (planning, attraction, retention and development) which will be considered Independent variables.

5.2. Demographic and Background Information

A total of 534 participants (340 from a public university and 194 from a private university) took part in this study, all of whom are academic staff working at universities. In total, 64% were recruited from public universities and 36% from private universities. Of the cohort, 51% of the participants were males and 49% females, and their ages varied across four categories, with 15.4% aged between 20 and 29 years of age, the majority between 30 and 39 (49.6%), 23% between 40 and 49 and, finally, 12% 50 years or older. Figures 2 and 3 provide further details about the participants' experience and academic ranking.

Figure 2: Participants' years of experience in their jobs across four experience categories

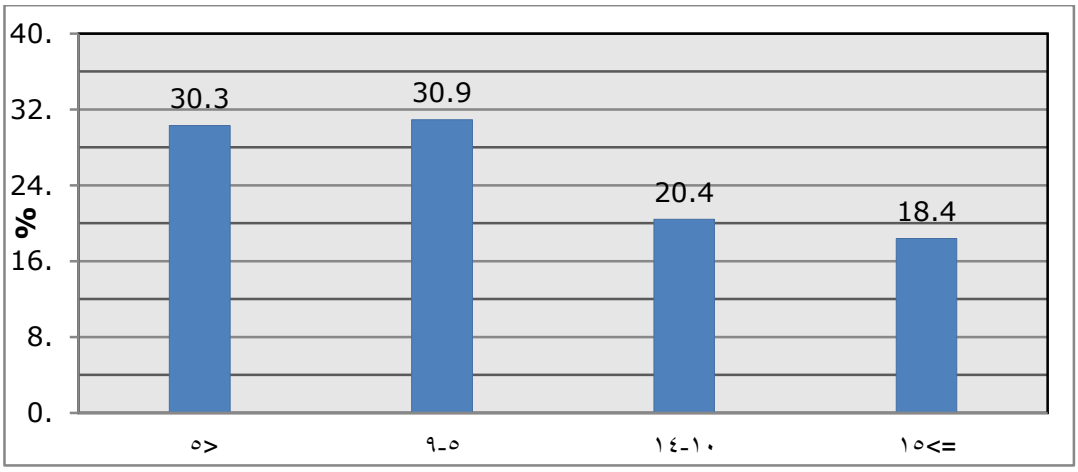
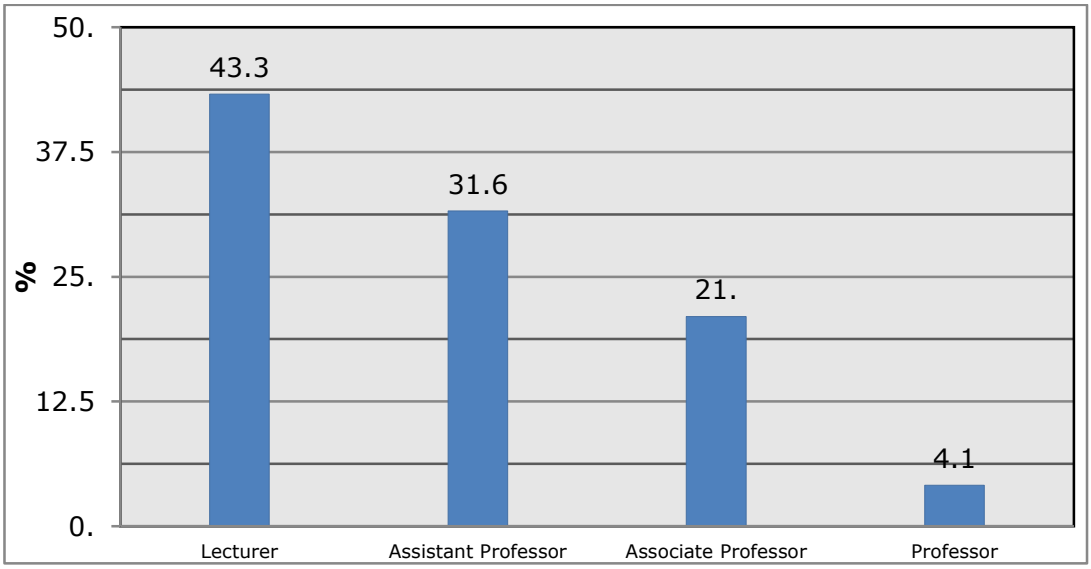


Figure 3: Participants' academic ranking across four academic categories



5.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to examine latent variables within perceived HR practices. Overall, the questionnaire included 23 items/questions enquiring about different aspects of HRPs, and they were organised theoretically into four groups, namely HR planning, attraction of employees, retention of employees and, finally, the development of employees. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA), in multivariate statistics, is considered a statistical method that enables the researcher to uncover latent variables or the underlying structure of a large number of variables. As a technique, EFA aims at identifying underlying relationships between variables (Norris & Lecavalier, 2009). In other words, it allows the researcher, in the current context, to group variables within PHRPs into different groups (latent variables). Ideally, these groups should reflect predetermined groups. Factors are

extracted based on an Eigenvalue of 1 and above, and each of the extracted factors explains a proportion of the variances in the dataset. In this study, a varimax rotation of EFA was manipulated, and sampling adequacy was tested through the -Meyer-Olkin Measure (0.917) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $X^2(253)=5429.22$, $p<0.001$. Both tests suggested that the sample was adequate for the use of factor analysis. Factor 1 explained 23.29% (after rotation) of variances within the data, followed by factor 2 which explained 12.96% of the variances. In addition, factor 3 explained 10.37% and, finally, factor 4 explained 9.82% after rotation. In total, all four factors explained 56.46% of the variances. What this highlights is that there were four latent variables within the data, and so the next step was to look at those items loading highly under each of these factors.

5.3.1. Rotated Component Matrix and Latent Variables

Using SPSS, the loading of items within each of the factors was sorted by size in descending order, while loadings of less than 0.4 (40%) were excluded from the rotated component matrix, i.e. items with low loadings were not considered. The higher the loading of an item, the more association it has with the factor. Table 3 shows the four extracted factors, and within each factor, variables with a high loading are included (above 0.4). By reflecting on the items for each of the factors, each was given a name that reflected the theme within (the latent variable):

- **Factor 1:** Includes 10 items, all of which can be explained to reflect perceived **development** with HR practices.
- **Factor 2:** this factor includes four items, reflecting perceived **retention** practice within HR.
- **Factor 3:** five items loaded highly on this factor, all reflecting perceived **attraction**
- **Factor 4:** the final factor included four items, reflecting perceived **planning**

These factors were similar to the predetermined groups (based on the original questionnaire), and only three items were moved (due to factor analysis) from one scale to another. However, after careful examination of these items (in italic), it was concluded that they belonged to the development factor, so it was right to move them (two from retention and one from planning, as per the original questionnaire).

Table 3: Rotated component matrix showing items' loading on each factor

	Component			
HRPs items	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
The university's management develops programmes for the development of employee creativity.	.786			
The university's management encourages innovation among employees and supports them.	.758			
The university's management develops the creative capabilities of employees.	.728			
The university's management supports talented employees by providing them with an appropriate environment.	.711			
The university's management helps individuals plan their career paths.	.703			
The university's management provides an appropriate climate for talented employees to work in.	.702			
The university's management invests in and develops the human talents of their employees.	.692			
The university's management provides effective training opportunities appropriate to the needs of employees.	.687			
The university's managements prepares new talented employees well to start working in the university.	.586			

The university's management predicts the human resource needs of the university.	.464			
The university's management ensures the positive contribution of talents to serve the university.		.746		
The university's management develops regulations and laws that improve the talent management system.		.712		
The university's management focuses on employee talents that contribute to the success of the university.		.696		
The university's management applies a rewarding and just rewards system.		.584		
The university's management sorts out job applications and focuses on those who are qualified.			.675	
The university's management attracts and recruits the best talent from both inside and outside the university.			.672	
The university's management attracts and appoints employees with creative skills.			.612	
The university's management assesses candidates to fill jobs within the university.			.597	
The university's management uses different advertising means that are appropriate to attract employees.			.534	
The university's management develops action plans to meet the anticipated needs of human resources.				.697
The university's management attempts to bridge the gap between the demand for employees and available supply.				.679
The university's management determines the tasks and job descriptions of all employees.				.594
The university's management tries to find appropriate mechanisms to work.				.583

*Loadings <0.40 are omitted

5.4. Scale Reliability

Based on exploratory factors analysis, perceived HRPs were categorised into four scales/factors, namely planning, attraction, retention and development. Organisational commitment was assessed based on three sub-scales, namely effective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment, while the final scale looked at job satisfaction with regard to pay, job security, social, supervision and growth satisfaction. Cronbach's alpha is an indicator of internal consistency within scales, i.e. the extent to which items inter-correlate with each other and values exceeding 0.7 are often considered acceptable, i.e. they reflect acceptable reliability. Table 4 illustrates that all scales and subscales achieved acceptable Cronbach's alpha levels, and hence they were considered reliable.

5.5. Examination of Overall Variables (Computed Variables)

This thesis is concerned with perceived HR practices (planning, attraction, retention, development), organisational commitment (affective, continuance, normative) and job satisfaction (pay, job security, social, supervisory and growth satisfaction). As all sub-scales were considered reliable, an overall variable was created for each of them as well as the whole scale, which was done by computing the overall mean/average score for each of the subscales. This resulted in 15 variables, four representing HR practices, three representing commitment and five representing satisfaction. In addition, an overall mean was created for HRPs, commitment and satisfaction.

Following the computation of these variables, they were all tested for normality, in order to examine whether or not they followed a normal distribution, i.e. scores were distributed normally around the mean average. There are a number of methods available to test the normality of data, such as the skewness test, which looks at how much the data is skewed (negatively or positively), or the kurtosis test, which tests the narrowness or peak of the data distribution. A score close to zero in both tests represents normal distribution, while it is also a rule of thumb that if the results of the two tests fall between +/-2, they ought to be considered normally distributed.

Table 4 shows descriptive statistics of all 12 variables, none of which is considered non-normal; this can be deduced by observing scores under the skewness and kurtosis tests. The normality of data is considered an essential point when

considering the type of tests to undertake in a study. The data (variables) is considered normally distributed, involving a high number of participants, therefore the data herein is considered parametric. As a result, it was felt that **parametric tests** should be utilised, to test and examine the main objectives of the research.

Table 4: Descriptive analysis of the variables' scores and distribution

		Descriptive Statistics			Skewness		Kurtosis	
	α	**Range**	**M**	**SD**	**Statistic**	**SE**	**Statistic**	**SE**
Planning	0.739	4.00	2.28	.72	.56	.106	.317	.211
Attraction	0.740	3.40	2.38	.75	.45	.106	-.437	.211
Retention	0.822	4.00	2.49	.88	.40	.106	-.242	.211
Development	0.905	3.70	2.52	.81	.34	.106	-.212	.211
Overall HRPs	**0.916**	3.30	2.44	.64	.45	.106	.230	.211
Affective commitment	0.865	4.00	3.64	.76	-.64	.106	.321	.211
Continuance commitment	0.811	4.00	3.24	.76	-.41	.106	-.240	.211
Normative commitment	0.739	4.00	3.34	.64	-.26	.106	.352	.211
Overall commitment	**0.841**	4.00	3.41	.51	-.55	.106	1.068	.211
Pay satisfaction	0.771	4.00	3.25	.97	-.42	.106	-.183	.211
Job security satisfaction	0.783	4.00	3.37	.92	-.53	.106	.085	.211
Social satisfaction	0.795	4.00	3.62	.73	-.64	.106	1.128	.211
Supervisory satisfaction	0.795	4.00	3.62	.87	-.72	.106	.559	.211

Growth satisfaction	0.819	4.00	3.57	.80	-.63	.106	.524	.211
Overall satisfaction	**0.849**	4.00	3.52	.59	-.83	.106	2.041	.211

5. 6. Descriptive Analysis of HR practices

Following from the exploratory factor analysis, this section of the questionnaire analysis provides an explanation of the data generated descriptively for its four main subscales (four extracted factors), namely HR planning, attraction, retention and development. This explains and explores opinions about HR practices among academic staff. This part of the analysis answers the question:

This empirical study looks at the available literature to seek answers to the following research question: *What are the current levels of HR practices as perceived by staff in Saudi universities?*

5.6.1. HR Planning

HR planning is concerned mainly with the perceptions staff have of HR planning and the way HR plans for recruiting staff members through four items. By observing Table A (Appendix 1), it is evident that across all items and across the five-point Likert answers, there are more disagreements than agreements, i.e. most participants disagree that the university does apply HR planning. Such perception among participants is noticed across all items of planning. To establish which of the items generated more agreement than the rest, all items were ranked based on the mean score, which again reflected low agreement across all items. Although more disagreement was generated for all, here is a examination based on the items that received more agreement than others. Most agreement was generated for those items explaining that the "university's management attempts to bridge the gap between the demand for employees and the available supply" (M=2.40) followed by participants explaining that the "The university's management develops action plans to meet the anticipated needs of human resources" (M=2.31) and that the "The university's management determines the tasks and job descriptions of all employees." (M=2.22). The least agreement was shown for items explaining that the "university's management tries to find appropriate mechanisms to work" (M=2.20). Overall, it can be concluded

here that the faculty staff indicated that the university does not provide the necessary HR planning, which is reflected by high proportions of disagreement cross all items.

5.6.2. HR Attraction

HR attraction refers to the efforts and the means the university and its management use to attract employees to vacant jobs. By looking at the frequency of the participants' answers across all 5 items, it is evident that there were more disagreements than agreements, reflecting a negative perception about the university and management's efforts to attract employees. The scale reflects how attraction is viewed, despite the predominant disagreement across all items, this part ranks items in terms of their mean, i.e. items that have received more agreement are ranked first. By ranking items based on the mean score, we are able to see which of the items generated more agreement than the others. In so doing, it is clear that the highest agreement (although low) was found for the item stating firstly that "The university's management uses different advertising means that are appropriate to attract employees" (M=2.47). This was followed by the second highest in agreement "The university's management attracts and recruits the best talent from both inside and outside the university" (M=2.38), thirdly participants explained that the "The university's management assesses candidates to fill jobs within the university." (M=2.37) while in the fourth rank participants explained that "The university's management sorts out job applications and focuses on those who are qualified" (M=2.34).

Finally, the lowest mean score (the lowest agreement) was generated for the item stating "The university's management attracts and appoints employees with creative skills" (M=2.32). Similar to HR planning, faculty staff members appear to have a negative overall opinion about their universities' attraction methods. (See Table B, Appendix 1)

5.6.3. HR Retention

HR retention refers to the efforts the universities make to retain employees across 4 items. Again, and following on from the previous two scales, participants had a negative opinion of HR retention within their universities. This is observed by more

disagreement than agreement across all items. By ranking items, for the purpose of comparison, the highest agreement is found for items explaining "The university's management applies a rewarding and just rewards system" (M=2.54), this was followed closely by the opinion that "The university's management develops regulations and laws that improve the talent management system." (M=2.50), that "The university's management ensures the positive contribution of talents to serve the university." (M=2.48). The least ranked item within this retention scale explained that "The university's management focuses on employee talents that contribute to the success of the university" (M=2.44). The difference between the highest ranked item and the lowest was small, which indicates further the consistent opinions (mostly disagreement) across all items, and hence HR retention overall seems to have received negative opinions. (See Table C, Appendix 1).

5.6.4 HR Development

The development of staff s at the university reflected the fourth HR practice, with ten items. Table D (Appendix 1) illustrates faculty staff members' answers across all items, and again it is evident that there is more disagreement across all items than agreement. Following the ranking of all items, the highest agreement was found for "The university's management develops programmes for the development of employee creativity" (M=2.70), this was followed by the opinion that the "The university's management helps individuals plan their career paths" (M=2.61). Thirdly, "The university's management encourages innovation among employees and supports them." (M=2.59), and fourthly "The university's management supports talented employees by providing them with an appropriate environment. (M=2.57). The least agreement was found for the opinion that "The university's management prepares new & talented employees well to start working in the university." (M=2.37) and that "The university's management predicts the human resource needs of the university" (M=2.37).

It can be understood from this that opinions about HR development were similar to those of HR planning, retention and attraction, i.e. mostly negative, as reflected in more disagreement than agreement.

5.7. Descriptive analysis of Organisational Commitment

In this part of the analysis, the researcher seeks to elaborate on the descriptive side of the orgnisational commitment i.e. this also provides an answer to the first research question: *What are the current levels of organizational commitment in Saudi universities?*

5.7.1 Affective Commitment

The purpose of this scale is to understand how the employee is emotionally attached to the university. An employee who is affectively committed strongly identifies with the goals of the organisation and desires to remain a part of said organisation. Using eight items, affective commitment was measured. By observing Table E (Appendix 1), it can be concluded that there appears to be positive agreement that faculty staff members have positive affective commitment. However, when comparing items, some generated more agreement compared to others, i.e. some aspects of affective commitment were agreed upon more often. The highest agreement was generated for the item reflecting "I do feel a strong sense of belonging to my department" (M=3.77), which was closely followed by an item reflecting "I do feel like 'part of the family' at my university" (M=3.75). At the other end of the scale, the lowest ranked items, albeit with more agreement than disagreement, were "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this university" (M=3.54) and "I think that I could not easily become as attached to another university as I am to this one" (M=3.50). It can be concluded here that affective commitment was rated positively overall; however, there it is also clear evidence that many participants chose the neutral stance (neither agree nor disagree).

5.7.2. Continuance Commitment:

The purpose of this construct to understand how much the employees feel the need to stay at the university. The underlying reason for their commitment lies in their needs to stay at the university. Table F (Appendix 1) shows each of the 8 items using descriptive statistics, most agreement were generated for the items "It would be very hard for me to leave my university right now, even if I wanted to" (M=3.38) and "I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up"

(M=3.38). Although they generated the same mean scores, the first item generated more agreement.

The least ranked item was "One of the few serious consequences of leaving my university would be the scarcity of available alternatives" (M=3.10). Overall, it can be stated that there was more agreement than disagreement across all items, meaning that the participants had positive continuance commitment to their organisation.

5.7.3. Normative Commitment

Normative commitment refers to faculty members' sense of obligation to the university. The purpose of this construct is to understand how much the employees feel they should stay at their university. Employees who are normatively committed feel that they should stay in a job, and the underlying reason for this commitment is a sense of guilt at the thought of leaving. All items showed positive agreement, indicating positive normative commitment among faculty staff. By examining each of the items on the scale, the highest agreement was found for "I do believe that a person must always be loyal to his/her university" (M=3.64), followed by "I do think that being a 'university man' or 'university woman' is sensible" (M=3.51). At the other end of the scale, the lowest ranked items were "If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere, I would not feel right leaving my university" (M=3.22) and "Jumping from university to university seems unethical to me" (M=3.08). Overall, as seen in Table G (appendix 1), all items indicate positive agreement; however, one should note that there is a proportion of the participants who reflected disagreement or had no opinions on the items within normative commitment.

5.8. Descriptive analysis of Job Satisfaction

In this part of the analysis, the researcher seeks to elaborate on the descriptive side of the orgnisational commitment i.e. this also provides an answer to the first research question: *What are the current levels of job satisfaction in Saudi universities?* (see Table H, Appendix 1).

5.8.1. Satisfaction with Job

Faculty staff members were given a satisfaction scale, to measure how satisfied they were in their current jobs. Satisfaction was measured based on pay, job security, social satisfaction, supervision and growth satisfaction. They were asked to answer

questions based on five-point Likert scale reflection satisfaction: (1) Strongly dissatisfied (2) Dissatisfied (3) Medium (4) Satisfied (5) Strongly satisfied.

5.8.2. Pay satisfaction

Two items were included, to ask about how satisfied faculty members were with the amount of pay they received. Across both items, there was more satisfaction than dissatisfaction, but here there was slightly more satisfaction for "The amount of pay (basic salary) and fringe benefits I receive" (M=3.28) compared to "The degree to which I am paid fairly for what I contribute to my organisation" (M=3.23).

5.8.3. Job security

A two- scale reflected participants' satisfaction with the level of job security, measured in terms of the perception they had of the current and future levels of job security. Table H (Appendix 1) shows descriptive statistics for each of the two items, illustrating that outcomes across the two items are more in agreement that participants are generally satisfied. The difference between the two items was very small in terms of agreement, with "The degree to which I am paid fairly for what I contribute to my organisation" (M=3.39) having slightly more agreement compared to "How secure things look for me in the future in my organisation" (M=3.63).

5.8.4. Social Satisfaction

Social satisfaction points to the level of satisfaction university staff have in their interactions with people on the campus. It is clear (by observing Table H, Appendix 1) that there is overall satisfaction with the social side of the, especially for the item "The chance to help other people while at work" (M=3.75). Additionally, there was also satisfaction with "The chance to get to know other people while on the job" (M=3.59) and with "The people I talk to and work with in my job".

5.8.5. Satisfaction with Supervision

Supervisor satisfaction refers to the level of satisfaction an employee has with his/her supervisor. The purpose of this construct is to develop an understanding of how much the university staff members were satisfied with their supervisors. Satisfaction with a supervisor was measured on the basis of three terms: fair treatment, guidance and quality of supervision. Overall, there was satisfaction with the supervisory team; however, the highest item to generate satisfaction was "The degree of respect and

fair treatment I receive from my supervisor(s)" (M=3.69), followed by "The amount of support and guidance I receive from my supervisor (s)" (M=3.61) and, lastly, "The overall quality of the supervision I receive in my work" (M=3.57).

5.8.6. Growth Satisfaction

Growth satisfaction refers to the level of satisfaction employees have with the opportunities they have for growth. The purpose of this construct is to develop an understanding of how much the university staff members are satisfied with their opportunity to grow in the setup. Growth satisfaction is measured in terms of personal growth, accomplishment and challenges (four items). More than 50% of the participants reflected satisfaction across all four items. The highest satisfaction was found for "The amount of challenge in my job" (M=3.63) and the lowest was found for "The amount of personal growth and development achieved in doing my job" (M=3.52).

5.9. Pearson's Correlations r between all variables

This part of the analysis helps in understanding the nature of the relationship between HR practices, Orgnisational commitment and job satisfaction. This corresponds also with research question: What is the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between HR practices as perceived by staff and job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Saudi universities? (See Table 5 for values).

A Pearson's correlation coefficient is a parametric test that enables the researcher to measure the correlation between two variables. The correlation coefficient ranged in value between 0 and 1 (positive or negative), with a score of 0 reflecting 0% correlation while a score of 1 reflected 100% correlation. A positive correlation indicates that changes in the score in one variable (increase of decrease) lead to a similar change in the other variable, while a negative correlation indicates that changes in the score in one variables are associated with an opposite change in the other (one increases in score and one decreases in score). Such a correlation coefficient has to be significant, in order to conclude a relationship. Significance is determined by an alpha level of 5% (p=0.05), which represents the chance of the results/correlation being down to chance. A significance level equal to or smaller than

5% ($p=<0.05$) reflects significant correlation, i.e. the two variables are significantly correlated and there is a chance equal to or less than 5% of this result being down to chance. The alpha level is used in all inferential statistics. This section attempts to find the correlation between scores within perceived HR practices variables, organizational commitment variables and the job satisfaction variables (Table 5).

Planning was found to have a significant positive correlation with attraction ($r=0.477$, $p<0.01$), retention ($r=0.378$, $p<0.01$) and development ($r=0.428$, $p<0.01$), and no correlation with other scales ($p>0.05$). Attraction showed a positive correlation with retention ($r=0.495$, $p<0.01$) and development ($r=0.528$, $p<0.01$). It also had a negative correlation with normative commitment ($r=-0.115$, $p<0.01$) and job security satisfaction ($r=0.087$, $p<0.05$), while retention had a significant positive correlation with development ($r=0.588$, $p<0.01$). Finally, development showed a significant negative correlation with normative commitment ($r=-0.089$, $p<0.05$). Clearly, the way in which participants think of each of the HRPs is positively associated with the way they view others in HRPs, while they have negative correlations with other subscales.

Affective commitment was found to have a significant positive correlation with continuance commitment ($r=0.136$, $p<0.01$) and normative commitment ($r=0.329$, $p<0.01$), which explains that the higher the commitment is, the more normative and continuance committed participants are.

Affective commitment showed a significant positive correlation with all job satisfaction variables, pay satisfaction ($r=0.148$, $p<0.01$), job security satisfaction ($r=0.170$, $p<0.01$).

Social satisfaction ($r=0.259$, $p<0.01$), supervisory satisfaction ($r=0.353$, $p<0.01$) and growth satisfaction ($r=0.411$, $p<0.01$). This explains that the more affectively committed the participants are, the more likely they are to be satisfied across all job satisfaction variables.

Continuance commitment was positively and significantly correlated with normative commitment ($r=0.307$ $p<0.001$). Furthermore, it was positively correlated with all job satisfaction variables, pay satisfaction ($r=0.161$, $p<0.01$), job security satisfaction ($r=0.155$, $p<0.01$), social satisfaction ($r=0.163$, $p<0.001$), supervisory satisfaction ($r=0.136$, $p<0.01$) and growth satisfaction ($r=0.181$, $p<0.01$).

Normative commitment showed positive and significant correlations with all job satisfaction variables, i.e. the more normatively committed the participants are, the more likely they are to show pay satisfaction ($r=0.173$, $p<0.01$), job security satisfaction ($r=0.248$, $p<0.01$), social satisfaction ($r=0.188$, $p<0.001$), supervisory satisfaction ($r=0.251$, $p<0.01$) and growth satisfaction ($r=0.340$, $p<0.01$).

Pay satisfaction showed a positive correlation with all other types of job satisfaction within the work environment. Higher pay satisfaction leads to higher job security satisfaction ($r=0.363$, $p<0.01$), social satisfaction ($r=0.190$, $p<0.01$), supervisory satisfaction ($r=0.256$, $p<0.01$) and, finally, growth satisfaction ($r=0.355$, $p<0.01$).

Job security satisfaction was positively associated with social satisfaction ($r=0.338$, $p<0.01$), supervisory satisfaction ($r=0.260$, $p<0.01$) and growth satisfaction ($r=0.387$, $p<0.01$). Higher job satisfaction leads to higher supervisory and growth satisfaction.

It was found that the more socially satisfied participants were more likely to be satisfied with supervisory satisfaction ($r=0.419$, $p<0.01$) and growth satisfaction ($r=0.392$, $p<0.01$).

Supervisory satisfaction was significantly and positively associated with growth satisfaction ($r=0.468$, $p<0.01$).

Table 5: Pearson's correlation coefficients between all subscales

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1-Planning															
2-Attraction	.477**														
3-Retention	.378**	.495**													
4-Development	.428**	.528**	.588**												
5- Overall HRPs	.643**	.757**	.761**	.909**											
6-Affective commitment	-.013	-.041	.028	-.018	-.016										
7-Continuance commitment	.069	.084	.079	.059	.086*	.136**									
8-Normative commitment	-.060	-.115**	-.007	-.089*	-.092*	.329**	.307**								
9-Pay satisfaction	-.003	.022	.020	-.015	.001	.148**	.161**	.173**							
10-Job security satisfaction	.006	-.087*	-.038	-.052	-.059	.170**	.155**	.248**	.363**						
11-Social satisfaction	.004	-.045	.001	-.023	-.023	.258**	.163**	.188**	.190**	.338**					
12-Supervisory satisfaction	-.045	-.036	-.020	-.019	-.033	.353**	.136**	.251**	.256**	.260**	.419**				
13-Growth satisfaction	-.013	-.079	-.051	-.023	-.048	.411**	.181**	.340**	.355**	.387**	.392**	.468**			
14-Overall commitment	.003	-.027	.050	-.017	-.004	.699**	.693**	.737**	.226**	.266**	.288**	.347**	.436**		
15- Overall Satisfaction	-.018	-.068	-.030	-.036	-.048	.412**	.229**	.357**	.585**	.629**	.671**	.728**	.809**	.468**	

**P<0.01(2-tailed) *P<0.05 (2-tailed).

5.10. Differences between Universities (Public vs. Private)

While enquiring about the influences of demographic and background information, it was important to distinguish between public and private universities (also corresponding to research question 4). Hence, this part of the results is concerned with differences between public and private universities when measuring for HR practices (planning, attraction, retention and development) along with organisational commitment (affective, normative and continuance) as well as job satisfaction (pay, job security, social, supervisory and growth). An independent samples t-test was used to measure the differences between both types of universities. This test is useful when measuring for the effect of an independent variable that has two levels and is based on continuous dependent variables. Table 6 shows the results of the t-test.

Using an independent samples t-test, the university type showed a significant effect on continuance commitment $t(532)=4.97$, $p<0.001$, where the public universities group showed significantly higher agreement ($M=3.63$) compared to the private universities ($M=3.03$). Furthermore, a significant difference was found when measuring for normative commitment, $t(532)=3.25$, $p<0.001$. The public universities group showed significantly higher agreement in relation to normative commitment ($M=3.41$) compared to the private universities ($M=3.22$).

The public universities group showed significantly higher scores for pay satisfaction ($M=3.33$) compared to the private universities ($M=3.11$), and the results were significant at $t(532)=2.53$, $p=0.011$. Significant differences were also found for satisfaction with job security, whereby the public universities group showed significantly higher agreement ($M=3.52$) compared to the private universities group ($M=3.11$). The results were significant at $t(532)=4.96$, $p<0.001$. However, the private universities group showed significantly higher satisfaction with supervision ($M=3.74$) compared to the public universities group ($M=3.55$), $t(532)=2.36$, $p=0.019$. Finally, a significant difference was also found for growth satisfaction, $t(532)=2.20$, $p=0.028$, and the public universities group ($M=3.62$) showed significantly higher satisfaction with growth compared to the private universities ($M=3.46$). Finally, it should be noted that no significant difference was found between either type of university across any of the other variables ($p>0.05$).

Table 6: Group statistics across public and private universities along with t-test values

	Public			Private			T-test	
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	t	df
Planning	340	2.29	0.73	194	2.27	0.71	.227	532
Attraction	340	2.35	0.76	194	2.41	0.74	-.882	532
Retention	340	2.46	0.87	194	2.54	0.89	-1.021	532
Development	340	2.49	0.79	194	2.57	0.86	-1.081	532
Affective Commitment	340	3.63	0.72	194	3.66	0.82	-.574	532
Continuance Commitment	340	3.36	0.73	194	3.03	0.77	4.979**	532
Normative Commitment	340	3.41	0.64	194	3.22	0.64	3.259**	532
Pay	340	3.33	0.94	194	3.11	1.01	2.538*	532
Job Security	340	3.52	0.89	194	3.11	0.91	4.961**	532
Social	340	3.64	0.69	194	3.59	0.81	.816	532
Supervisory	340	3.55	0.87	194	3.74	0.87	-2.360*	532
Growth Satisfaction	340	3.62	0.72	194	3.46	0.91	2.201*	532

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

5.11. Gender differences

An independent samples t-test was conducted to measure the difference between males and females. The results showed no significant differences between either cohort in relation to HR practices, organisational commitment or job satisfaction

($p>0.05$). This also provides an answer to research question 4 about demographic influences.

5.12. Age Effect

Furthermore, to answer research question 4, the effects of age on HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction, as measured through an independent samples Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), are illustrated in Table I (Appendix 1). It measures the effect of an independent variable (of three levels or more) on continuous variables (Dependent Variables); it is suitable for measuring the effect of age, as it has four levels (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50+).

Using ANOVA, age was found to have a significant effect on continuance commitment $F(3,530) = 5.70$, $p<0.01$. The mean scores between groups varied, in that the oldest group showed the lowest mean (20-29=3.27, 30-39=3.34, 40-49=3.17, 50+=2.92). A Bonferroni post hoc test was used to measure the difference between any two categories, and significant differences were found between those who were 50 years or older compared to 20-29 years and 30-39 years ($p<0.05$).

Furthermore, age was found to have a significant effect on normative commitment $F(3,530) = 2.77$, $p<0.05$. (20-29=3.33, 30-39=3.30, 40-49=3.31, 50+=3.56). The Bonferroni post hoc showed significant differences between those 50 and overs and 30-39-year-olds ($p<0.05$).

Age also had a significant effect on satisfaction with job security at $F(3,530)=3.55$, $p<0.05$ (20-29=3.46, 30-39=3.24, 40-49=3.51, 50+=3.51). Using a post hoc test, significant differences were only found between those who are 30-39 and 40-49 years ($p<0.05$).

5.13. Academic Ranking

Academic ranking as an independent variable of four levels (lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor and professor) was measured for its effect on HR practices, commitment and satisfaction. The academic rank was found to have a significant effect on a number of the dependent variables, as illustrated in Table J (Appendix 1). This also provides a quantitative understanding of research question 4. A significant main effect was found on affective commitment $F(3,530) = 3.32$, $p<0.05$ (lecturer=3.53, assistant professor= 3.71, associate professor=3.73, professor=3.87).

However, Bonferroni post hoc tests showed no significant difference between any two groups. In addition, a significant effect was also found on continuance commitment F (3,530) = 4.96, p<0.05 (lecturer= 3.19, assistant professor= 3.33, associate professor=3.32, professor=2.73). The post-hoc test in this instance showed a significant difference between professors compared to any other group (p<0.05). Differences across academic groups were found in normative commitment F (3,530) = 7.36, p<0.001 (Lecturer=3.21, Assistant professor= 3.37, Associate professor= 3.53, Professor=3.51), while significant differences were only found between lecturers and associate professors (p<0.05).

Furthermore, academic rank had a significant effect on pay satisfaction F (3,530) =5.48, p<0.01 (lecturer=3.07, assistant professor=3.33, associate professor=3.50, professor=3.22), and significant differences were found between lecturers and associate professors (p<0.05). Finally, a significant effect was found for academic rank on growth satisfaction at F (3,530) = 4.83, p<0.01(lecturer=3.43, assistant professor=3.60, associate professor=3.76, professor=3.70), while significant differences were only found between lecturers and associate professors (p<0.05).

5.14. Experience effect

Participant experience was measured via four categories (=<5 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years, 15 years or more). A significant effect of experience was found on continuance commitment at F (3,530)=3.59, p<0.05 (<5 years =3.21, 5-9=3.26, 10-14=3.41, >=15=3.08). Post hoc Bonferroni tests showed significant differences between those with 10-15 years and those with 15> (p<0.05). Furthermore, a significant effect of experience was also found on normative commitment at F (3,530)=3.59, p<0.05 (=<5 years =3.23, 5-9=3.31, 10-14=3.41, =>15=3.49). The Bonferroni post hoc test showed significant differences between those with experience of fewer than 5 years and those with 15 years or more (p<0.05). See Table K (Appendix 1).

5.15. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The general aim of this section of the analysis is to examine how participants' perceptions of HR practices (independent variables) explain variances in organisational commitment and Job satisfaction variables (dependent variables), i.e. to measure to what extent the independent variables explain variances or predict the

dependent variables. These are referred to as “multiple linear regressions,” because they use more than one independent variable to predict a dependent variable.

Here, ten multiple linear regressions were used to predict organisational commitment (three models) and job satisfaction (six models). The first section predicted and explained variances in organisational commitment, and the second section produced models to explain variances in job satisfaction. Perceived HR practices are the main predictors in these models, namely planning, attraction, retention and development.

The main indicator of whether or not a particular variable is a significant predictor is the alpha, or significance, level (probability). Predictors with a significance level (p) equal to lower than 5% indicate significant predictors (i.e. less than 5% of results are down to chance), while the Beta coefficient indicates the direction of the association between the dependent variable and the predictor. Regression analysis helps answer the second main research question: What is the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between HR practices as perceived by staff and job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?

5.15.1 Predicting Organisational Commitment

Multiple linear regressions were conducted to measure the association between organisational commitment and perceived HR practices. The regression tests sought to discover how much HR practices explain (variances explained) organisational commitment and its subscales (affective, continuance and normative commitments). The independent variables here were the HR practices planning, attraction, retention and development, while the dependent variables were the organisational commitment subscales and overall organisational commitment (four regression models, see table 7).

When predicting overall commitment, the model was not a significant fit for the data ($F=1.03$, $p>0.05$), and none of the predictors was significant: planning ($B=0.010$, $p>0.05$), attraction ($B=-0.038$, $P>0.05$), retention ($B=0.061$, $p>0.05$) and development ($B=-0.034$, $p>0.05$).

A multiple linear regression was also conducted to predict affective commitment. The model was not significant ($F=0.697$, $p>0.05$), and all four predictors (HR practices)

were not significant in explaining variances in affective commitment: planning (B=0.001, p>0.05), attraction (B=-0.063, p>0.05), retention (B=0.066, p>0.05), and development (B=-0.028, p>0.05)

The third model showed that the four predictors of continuance commitment did not result in a significant model (F=1.27, p>05), leading to non-significant predictors: planning (B=0.033, p>0.05), attraction (B=0.050, p>0.05), retention (B=0.041, p>0.05) and development (B=-0.008, p>0.05).

The last model, predicting normative commitment, was significant (F=2.815, p<0.05), albeit this was due mainly to attraction as an independent variable (B=-0.102, p<0.05). Higher agreement on attraction predicts lower normative commitment. Other predictors were not significant in explaining normative commitment: planning (B=-0.005, p>0.05), retention (B=0.076, p>0.05) and development (B=-0.067, p>0.05).

Table 7: Linear regression models predicting organisational commitment

	Commitment overall		**Affective Com.**		**Continuance Com.**		**Normative Com.**	
	B	**Std.E**	**B**	**Std.E**	**B**	**Std.E**	**B**	**Std.E**
Constant	3.415	.090	3.697	.134	2.970	.134	3.577	.113
Planning	.010	.036	.001	.053	.033	.054	-.005	.045
Attraction	-.038	.037	-.063	.056	.050	.056	-.102*	.047
Retention	.061	.033	.066	.048	.041	.048	.076	.041
Development	-.034	.036	-.028	.054	-.008	.054	-.067	.046
F(4,529)	F=1.03, p=0.390		F=0.697/p=0.594		F=1.27/p=0.279		F=2.815, p=0.025	
R2/Adj.R2	0.008/0.000		0.005/-0.002		0.010/0.002		0.021/0.013	

*p<0.05

5.15.2 Predicting Job Satisfaction

This section examines whether or not HR practices can predict or explain variances in overall job satisfaction and its subscales (pay, job security, social, supervisory and growth satisfaction).

A linear regression was performed to predict overall satisfaction from HR practices. The model was not a significant fit (F=0.661, p>0.05), showing that none of the

predictors significantly explained the participants' overall level of satisfaction: planning (B=0.016, p>0.05), attraction (B=-0.060, p>0.05), retention (B=0.003, p>0.05) and development (B=-0.006, p>0.05).

The second regression analysis was performed to predict pay satisfaction, again resulting in a non-significant model (F=0.313, p>0.05) in which planning (B=-0.017, p>0.05), attraction (B=0.047, p>0.05), retention (B=0.041, p>0.05) and development (B=-0.061, p>0.05) were all non-significant predictors.

The third model aimed to predict participants' job security satisfaction. The model was not significant (F=1.45, p>0.05) and none of the predictors was significant: planning (B=0.084, p>0.05), attraction (B=-0.129, p>0.05), retention (B=0.006, p>0.05) and development (B=-0.03, p>0.05).

The fourth model was conducted to predict social satisfaction, resulting in a non-significant model (F=0.473, p>0.05). It was evident that none of the predictors significantly explained social satisfaction: planning (B=0.032, p>0.05), attraction (B=-0.063, p>0.05), retention (B=0.029, p>0.05) and development (B=-0.020, p>0.05).

The fifth model was conducted to predict supervisory satisfaction, but it was not significant (F=0.315, p>0.05). By checking predictors individually, none of them was significant: planning (B=-0.046, p>0.05), attraction (B=-0.027, p>0.05), retention (B=0.001 p>0.05) and development (B=0.010, p>0.05).

The final model looked at predicting growth satisfaction, leading to a non-significant model (F=1.08, p>0.05), while each of the four predictors was not significant: planning (B=0.035, p>0.05), attraction (B=-0.100, p>0.05), retention (B=-0.034, p>0.05) and development (B=0.034, p>0.05).

Table 8: Linear regression models predicting job satisfaction

	Satisfaction		Pay		Job Security		Social		Supervisory		Growth	
	B	**Std.E**	**B**	**Std.E**	**B**	**Std.E**	**B**	**Std.E**	**B**	**Std.E**	**B**	**Std.E**
Constant	3.63	.104	3.23	.172	3.55	.161	3.68	.130	3.76	.154	3.726	.141
Planning	.016	.042	-.017	.069	.084	.065	.032	.052	-.046	.062	.035	.057
Attraction	-.060	.043	.047	.071	-.129	.067	-.063	.054	-.027	.064	-.100	.059
Retention	.003	.038	.041	.062	.006	.058	.029	.047	.001	.056	-.034	.051
Development	-.006	.042	-.061	.069	-.031	.065	-.020	.052	.010	.062	.034	.057
F(4,529)	F=0.661, p=0.620		F=0.313, p=0.869		F=1.45, p=0.216		F=0.473, p=0.756		F=0.315, p=0.868		F=1.08, p=0.363	
R^2/Adj.R^2	0.005/-0.003		0.002/-0.005		0.011/0.003		0.004/-0.004		0.002/-0.005		0.008/0.001	

*None was significant

5.16. Summary of the questionnaire findings

This chapter looked at HR practices, and how they are perceived among academic participants in Saudi universities. The study aimed at studying HR practices, orgnisational commitment and job satisfaction. Overall, HR practices and how they are perceived to be implemented in the university generated more disagreement i.e. poor implementation of basic HR practices (planning, attraction, retention and development). On the other hand participants reflected good levels of commitment and job satisfaction, explaining that they are committed to their jobs and are generally satisfied despite perceiving HR practices to be poorly followed.

This section of the results chapter aimed to study perceptions of the HR university sector in Saudi Arabia, using academic members of staff as participants. Overall, it is evident from the descriptive section of the data analysis that there is general low agreement across all HR practices, reflecting more disagreement than agreement with current HR practices in Saudi universities i.e. that HRPs are not sufficiently followed. However, all types of organisational commitment and job satisfaction seem to be positive.

Associations between perceived HR practices and organisational commitment as well as job satisfaction were measured using multiple linear regression analysis. Ten regression models were conducted, to predict firstly organisational commitment (overall, normative, continuance and affective commitment) and then job satisfaction (overall, pay, growth, social, supervisory and job security). The predictors were planning, attraction, retention and HR development. Overall, there was no significant association between any dependent variable and the independent variables (perceived HR practices). However, only one model was significant when predicting normative commitment, showing that perceived attraction was negatively and significantly associated with normative commitment, i.e. the more positively perceived HR attraction as a practice, the less normative commitment.

Further statistics showed that there was a significant positive correlation between participants' commitment across all three subscales with all job satisfaction subscales, too. This explains that higher agreement with organisational commitment is associated with higher agreement with job satisfaction. The demographic variables' effects on the main variables (HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction) were also measured. University type had a significant effect on continuance commitment (more public), normative commitment, pay satisfaction, job security satisfaction and growth satisfaction (higher in public universities) and supervisory satisfaction (higher in private establishments). Age had a significant effect on continuance commitment, normative commitment and job security satisfaction, while academic ranking had a significant effect on normative commitment, continuance commitment and affective commitment as well as growth satisfaction. Finally, participants' years of experience in their jobs significantly affected their continuance and normative commitments.

Chapter 6: Interview Analysis

6.1. Introduction

Following on from the questionnaire analysis, this chapter will present findings generated from the semi-structured interviews. The general aim here is to study HR practices, orgnisational commitment and job satisfaction among Academic and HR and management personnel; this will provide a qualitative understanding that could explain and expand on the findings generated from the questionnaire.

This chapter is based on qualitative data analysis and development, to enhance understanding associated with the research.

This chapter seeks to provide qualitative answers to:

1. What are the current levels of HR practices as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Saudi universities?
2. What is the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between HR practice as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Saudi universities?
3. What are the cultural/social influences on HR practices in Saudi universities?
4. To what extent do demographic variables (gender, education, age, role, experience) influence participants' views on HR practice, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in Saudi universities?
5. Do academics/teaching employees have different opinions compared to managers and HR employees when it comes to HR practices?

Qualitative data analysis is based on the different sections firstly reporting background information of the group (Academic then HR and Management), followed by their views and themes based on information provided on HR practices: employee attraction & selection, employee retention and employee development within the university sector in Saudi Arabia. The third section allows one to establish relevant understanding associated with organisational commitment, by covering information related to affective, continuous and normative commitment. The fourth section explores understanding related to job satisfaction, followed by information associated with the Saudi context and cultural aspects.

This study was undertaken to ascertain the opinions of those working in a university on the perceived human resource practices in place. This chapter will be presented by two groups: those referred to as “Academics’ (academic/teaching members of staff), and those referred to as the “HR and Management group” (referring to participants’ HR responsibilities and management responsibilities). A summary of the similarities and differences found between the two groups is given at the end of the chapter. In order to produce this report, a thematic analysis was used to analyze semi-structured interviews, and this was done following the six-step process detailed in Braun and Clarke (2006). By using thematic analysis, themes within data are identifiable and are able to provide an overall picture of what the data are saying.

In order to identify the themes, the researcher familiarized herself with the data [step 1], which were obtained as a result of a semi-structured interview. After familiarizing herself with the data, the researcher produced a list of information contained within the data, and then generated a list of interesting information from that data, which is also the process of developing ‘codes’ [step 2]. Once codes were identified, the researcher looked again at the information obtained in the form of codes and analysed this to identify themes, that is information that is broader than that contained in the codes and which can encompass the codes [step 3]. A further analysis was conducted to review the themes, to determine whether they formed any pattern, and a thematic map was developed and the themes refined to ensure that they were representative of what the information was saying [step 4]. There was further refinement of the themes for clarity, and the data therein were analysed to identify the story told by the theme [step 5]. A report was then produced to provide an overall picture of what was identified from within the data [step 6].

This section provides a thematic analysis of two groups of participants, one considered the academic group (eight participants), i.e. working as academics within the university, and the other group the HR group, referring to individuals working in HR and management (14 participants) at university sector in Saudi Arabia (Public and Private Universities). In brackets, the participants’ numbers (IDs) were referenced across all themes. Themes were driven based on interview’s questions (refer to the interview questions in Appendix 4 & 5).

6.2 Views of Academic Participants

Academic participants were asked a number of questions on their backgrounds (e.g. role, experience, nationality) and if they knew about HRPs. These were followed by specific questions about HRPs within universities (attraction and selection, retention and development), about organisational commitment and job satisfaction, and finally they were asked about cultural and contextual influences on HRPs in universities. Following a semi-structured interview, some of the questions required short, descriptive answers and others were more in depth and included more personal experiences and opinions (see Appendix 5 for the interview questions). It should be noted that this analysis only reports opinions and findings as analysed, and it will not include a discussion or the researcher's personal opinion. The discussion of these findings, along with the questionnaire findings, will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

The analysis for academic participants was divided into five main subsections, namely background information, HR practices, organisational commitment, job satisfaction and Saudi cultural influences.

6.2.1. Background Information

The participants were asked questions with the aim of obtaining some background information. The majority of the participants provided information relating to their gender, nationality, academic position within the university, their experience and time in academia and their awareness of HR practices.

Of the academic staff group, five were females and three were males, four of them were Saudis and four non-Saudis. For all staff for whom teaching was their main job, three were lecturers, three vice deans, one a head of department and one associate professor. Three of the participants had experience less than 10 years and five had 10 years or more of teaching experience, with five from the private sector and three from the public sector.

Table 9: Academic staff's general background details

Gender	Male	Female

	3 (2, 8,1)	5 (3, 4, 5, 6, 7)		
Nationality	**Saudi**	**Egypt**	**Syria**	**Tunis**
	4 (1, 3,6,7)	2 (2,4)	1 (8)	1 (5)
Academic	**Lecturers**	**Vice dean**	**Head of Department**	**Associate professor**
	3 (1, 3, 6)	3 (7,2, 5)	1 (8)	1 (4)
Experience	**<= 2 years**	**8 years**	**>10 years**	
	2 (5, 7)	1 (3)	5 (1, 2, 4, 6, 8)	

Awareness of HR Practices

When asked about the functions of the HR department, and their awareness of HR practices, some participants categorised their awareness into internal functions of the department and external functions. In this question in the interview, participants were only asked to list functions without elaboration (later parts of the interview asked for in-depth opinions). "Internal" referred to tasks/functions of the department (decided by the department or conducted within the department without external influences), while "external" referred to tasks that they perceived to involve outside parties or organisations. Of those external functions, the recruitment of new staff was a recurring theme, with four participants (1, 2, 4, 7) stating expressly their awareness. Participant 8 referred to an external function of the HR department as involving planning every year for courses, specifically stating the issue of who would teach the courses as a question to be decided, which is arguably linked to the issue of recruitment if it is decided that an external member of staff is needed.

Of the internal functions, four participants (1, 2, 3, 6,) mentioned personal affairs such as salary, staff surveys, training, scholarships and assistance, with electronic support/emails being functions attributable to the HR department.

It is apparent from the answers provided that not all academic staff were particularly clear about the role of the HR department, with three participants (3, 4, 5) expressly

stating that they did not know much about the HR department and its functions, therefore lacking clarity about its function. For example, participant 3 stated:

> "I honestly do not know a lot about what the HR department stands for; there is no communication with it, and I only know that they recruit and pay employees, not much else."

One participant (4) commented that the department was unprofessional and based this on an example of staff members "sending emails too late in the evening."

6.2.2. HR Practices

Following on from the background information, the participants were asked specific questions about HRPs, such as employee attraction and selection, retention and development. The following analyses include themes generated after asking questions relevant to each practice.

6.2.2.1. Employee Attraction and Selection

When asked about the practices the university used to attract a member of staff to an academic position, the answers were divided into the application process used to attract employees and the factors that attracted people to submit an application. Four participants (1, 3, 7, 8) referred to the process used to submit an application, and five participants (2, 3, 4, 5, 6) stated the factors that led to applications being submitted. Participants here listed their answers without providing views about such strategies.

Of the four participants that referred to the application process, reference was made to the job advertisement (1, 3) as well as to the university's participation in career days (1). Participant 7, in particular, was aware of a staff member who had received an invitation from the university to submit an application. In terms of the processes used, participant 8 stated that the university usually started the process with an interview.

Factors attracting participants to apply for a role at the university were described by one participant (2) as including the higher salary on offer compared to other private universities, the geographical location of the university and the curriculum offered by the university, with this participant expanding on this point by stating that it was based on the curriculum at Oxford University. The common factor that the majority

of participants (3, 4, 5, 6) identified as attracting people to the university was based on personal connections.

Knowledge of Vacancies:

Although in the previous answers, some participants provided responses as to how they became aware of vacancies; the researcher explicitly asked the question again for all participants to answer. Surprisingly, three participants (2, 4, 5) chose not to answer this question, i.e. they would rather not say how they heard of or knew about the vacancy. Three participants (3, 7, 8) cited personal connections leading to an awareness of vacancies, either through the university contacting potential applicants (7) or through referrals (3, 7, 8). By contrast, four participants (3, 6, 7, 8) stated that the most common method of advertising the roles was through an online portal, citing the university website as a place where the role was advertised. Participant 3 stated that advertising methods had changed, through a shift away from referrals toward posts advertised on the official university website. The modernisation of the advertisement process was also reflected by two participants (1, 6), who stated that social media was being used as a method for advertising vacancies, with one participant (6) expressly referring to the use of Twitter to raise awareness.

Candidate Selection:

Being considered a suitable candidate depends on whether the role is being advertised on a full-time or a part-time basis. If being advertised on a part-time basis, a candidate must be a Saudi national, according to four participants (2, 4, 5, 8), although two participants (7, 8) stated that in terms of recruitment policies based on nationality, there was no identifiable difference. This was not the opinion of all participants, however, as two participants (4, 5) stated that nationality was indeed an issue, with participant 5 going on to refer to personality traits being important on the basis of 'whether your beliefs and values will fit in or not in the university'. This this was corroborated by participant 1. Therefore, it could be argued that priority is given to Saudi nationals. Candidate must have the beliefs in the Saudi university system because they will have greater awareness of what these will be in comparison to a non-national.

Unsurprisingly, qualifications are used as a selection criterion, according to three participants (2, 5, 7), as are the grades that a candidate obtains (1, 3, 8). Participant 3 stated:

> "When you apply for a job, your average grade must not be less than 3.85 or 3.75 at least, with a grade description of B, which is considered very good. If it is less than that, you won't be accepted. In addition, they check if there is any academic stumble such as failure, a warning, a letter or expulsion and that you pass the written test and interviews."

The experiences a candidate can demonstrate will also be considered (8, 7), with the results of a written test and interview also being determinative factors (3,4,6). Since curricula might also be taught in English, this will require a candidate to be fluent in the English language, if teaching in English (2, 8). These criteria can therefore assist the university in sifting out candidates and reducing the numbers that are considered for the role.

Attracting Saudi Nationals:

The participants were asked for their views on why they believe their Saudi colleagues were attracted to their job at the university. Salary package was cited as the most common factor (2, 4, 6), as well as the social status/reputation that accompanies such a role (1, 3, 4). Participant 4 stated:

> "In combination, the pay's generally good at the university, so that attracts most people. Equally, I think people look up to those who work in universities, and it has a good status among people in Saudi Arabia."

Since the work environment (3, 5) is regarded as happy, and flexible hours (4, 6) can be worked in the university, these participants thought they were attractive factors, with participant 6 stating the role of professor at the university came with more freedom in general. Working at a private university was also thought, by one participant (1), to provide job stability. Female Saudi colleagues were attracted by the holiday allowance (4) and the ease with which they could be segregated from male colleagues.

Reward System:

The reward system used at the university was not seen as effective, according to four participants (1, 3, 4, 6). The basis for this assertion was apparently based on the low financial rewards offered to employees (1, 3, 4, 6). Participant 6 said:

> "Although we are paid well overall, I don't think the reward for our work is sufficient or effective, I don't think there is a method for how the reward works. And when there is a form of reward, it is generally low."

In addition, whereas in the past the low salary was offset by allowances, these allowances have stopped, and staff are not paid for overtime or given any extra incentives (3), although participant 4 observed that if he took on extra duties, this would result in extra pay, even though at other universities in the kingdom he would receive a pay rise without having to do so.

Two participants (2, 4) considered the system to be nationality dependent, although participant 7 thought that everyone was dealt with equally regardless of nationality, and participant 4 said that although there are differences between national and non-nationals, it remained fair because whereas a national might take extra cash, the non-national will take the difference in services, such as being provided with a travel ticket and having their stay to be paid for.

Two candidates (5, 8) did not answer the question sufficiently or at all. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the majority of the participants were of the opinion that the reward system was deficient.

Effectiveness:

By looking at the content of the participants' answers concerning attraction and selection, the effectiveness of such practices was overwhelmingly poor (1, 3, 4, 6, 7). A number of respondents explained that methods of attraction are not effective (1, 4, 6, 7), need improvement (1, 3, 6), were not up to standard (3, 4), lacked professionalism (4, 6) and were not clear or transparent (1, 7). Participate 7 stated:

> "Since being recruited, I have not had much contact with those who recruited me. I don't think the way I was recruited was effective, because I don't think there was competition from other candidates for the same position."

Participant 8 referred to the HR department as a small department concerned mainly with welfare:

> "Honestly speaking, we call it a HR department, but really it is a small department that deals with employees' welfare and no one knows what they do there. So I would say I don't know much about the way they attract and select people for jobs. I don't think they have rules and regulations, so there must be improvement in that aspect."

Participant 3 recalled an experience, stating:

> "When I was invited for a job interview, I knew they wanted me to fill the position, and they seemed desperate for me to join, without even knowing much about me. Even when I went for the job interview, it only felt like a formality. So I don't think they were professional."

6.2.2.2. Retention Practices

The interviewees were asked about the way their HR department attempts to keep them in their jobs. Generally, the participants provided information about the strategies and the methods used, and although some answers were purely descriptive in nature, some participants provided more in-depth opinions.

Strategies Used to Retain Employees:

In relation to the strategies used to retain employees, three participants (2, 4, 7) observed that there was no formal system in place in this regard. Two of those participants (4, 7) highlighted that motivational strategies had not been adopted, referring specifically to the absence of pay awards. On this point, participant 7 stated:

> "I don't think we are doing that much retention; there's not even an annual increase every one or two years. They don't have a plan for these issues, but maybe if you are doing good, you are perfect and then, perhaps, you want to leave, they may try their best to keep you with them, but there are no certain motivation strategies. I believe this is one of the things they have to work on, if they want to make more efforts about this point."

However, in contrast, three other participants (3, 5, 8) provided information on what they perceived to be retention strategies. Of these, two (5, 8) cited the ability to participate in training as a means of retention, with participant 5 referring to the opportunity to attend international conferences:

> "By offering good training and motivational incentives, our dean is always trying to make sure there is conference access outside Saudi Arabia."

Aside from the provision of training opportunities, one participant (8) stated that medical insurance was available to employees, which he regarded as a way of retaining their services. However, this was not referred to by any other participant as something that was offered by their university, so either they were not in receipt of it or they did not consider it something that would be used as a retention strategy.

Of the remaining two participants, one (1) stated that he did not have enough information to answer the question, and participant 6 did not provide an answer.

Employee Motivation:

Given that there were mixed views on the strategies used to retain staff, the participants were asked about their motivation for continuing in employment with the university. It is evident through their answers that four participants (1, 2, 4, 7) had a sense of belonging to the university and the loyalty that accompanies that feeling, and therefore they were motivated by emotional ties to the university. However, this is not reflective of strategies used by the HR department to motivate staff, and it seems to be something that the staff do to motivate themselves, as illustrated by participant 4:

> "It's the simple things they do, like the breakfast gathering or picnic outside the university. However, this is not a HR arrangement, this is an arrangement between the departments."

Two participants (3, 6) referred to the physical factor of the work environment as being a factor that motivates them to stay, with one participant (6) citing the flexibility of the role as being a decisive factor, whereas for one participant (1), in addition to the sense of belonging they felt, believed the role provided the opportunity for professional development. Two participants (5, 8) did not provide an answer.

Performance Evaluation:

Performance evaluation plays a major role in employee retention, and so asking about it in the interview was essential. Recommendations by managers (those who appraise) could result in retrieving, promoting or dismissing employees. For example, participant 2 stated "I have been frequently appraised, and although I think it is a

formality, it was always the occasion when I was told that the university wants to keep me and will count on me."

Participant 5 stressed that:

> "Appraisals from management and from students are equally important. I know a number of academics who were dismissed following an appraisal, as their performance in their job was not good enough."

From the information provided, all participants were appraised by a senior member of staff, as well as by the students completing an evaluation of their experience. However, one participant (4) did not regard this as a formal process but rather as "pretending":

> "[It's] nothing formal, just pretending. There's a form we fill out and there's a section for student evaluation, and then this form gets signed by the dean, and if she sees anything she wants me to change, she tells me – that's all."

Therefore, although the dean was indeed involved, the perception of participant 4 was that this did not provide the process with any level of formality.

Promotion:

Four participants (1, 2, 3, 6) referred to the process of being promoted, and three (1, 3, 6) said that promotion was dependent on gaining a degree. However, according to one participant (6), an application for a promotion must be made, although it is clear it is not guaranteed:

> "What frustrates me a little is that I finished the Master's degree and wished to become a lecturer directly, so I would feel of value. It's been four years since I finished my Master's degree and I'm still a teaching fellow. I wasn't promoted to be a lecturer."

One participant (2) was of the opinion that promotion and retention depend on the revenue that is generated for the university:

> "I think, on occasions, employees are promoted because the budget allows so, and their promotion means their retention."

6.2.2.3. Employee Development

Development as an HR practice was assessed, and the participants were asked about the strategies the universities follow, in order to develop employees in conducting their role.

Courses:

Training courses are perceived as the primary method of developing employees, according to all eight participants. These courses could be internal courses, run by the university (1, 2, 6), or external courses, including conferences (1, 2, 5, 7, 8). Two participants (3, 4) did not differentiate between internal and external courses. Of those that referred to the external courses, two participants (7, 8) cited conference attendance in particular, with both stating that the employee must participate in the conference. Participant 8 stated:

> "Conferences are more important than courses for the staff… he must be a speaker-participant in the conference."

Linked to training, workshops were cited by participants 3 and 6, who specifically referred to the deanships involved in developing staff, such as the Deanship of Skills development. One participant (8) referred to induction courses for new employees as a means of development.

One participant (3) considered quality management as a method used to develop staff, alongside the input from the deanships.

Equality of treatment within development:

In terms of equality of treatment between Saudi and non-Saudi employees, three participants (6, 7, 8) said that both groups were treated equally by the university. Participant 8 (faculty member) said:

> "In the academy, there is no such thing as Saudi and non-Saudi – what we care about is only performance."

However, participant 8 expanded on this point to highlight that the reality is different and dependent on the individual member of staff, who makes choices when it comes to nominating for attendance on a course. Participant 8 said:

> "I nominated a Saudi professor. There was a visit to industrial cities, and they asked me to nominate two professors from the faculty members. I nominated two Saudis… because, in the end, he will benefit the country even if he leaves

> me. The non-Saudi will go to Egypt or Jordan ultimately, and I'll not benefit from the thing I'll train him."

Participant 8 clearly highlighted that there is a risk of inequality in treatment, explained by preferring to nominate those who will benefit the country (i.e. Saudis) and not those who are likely to leave. It clearly exhibits that nationality is indeed important.

Awareness of Training for New Employees:

In relation to the training provided to new employees, six participants (2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8) described initial training as including orientation training (2, 3, 4, 7), although its content differed between responses. Two participants (2, 3), for instance, referred to new employees being taught practical skills, such as how to lecture and deal with students, to being shown how to use the systems in place at the university (4). As to the length of this orientation training, participant 7 stated that it lasted a whole semester. The training referred to by participant 8 was in the form of supervision and being accompanied by a superior when delivering classes. As for the sufficiency of training, participant 5 stated:

> "They always make sure that you are trained enough before you are assigned any task."

Although not referencing any specific training, participant 1 stated that training for new employees was optional and not mandatory, while participant 6 said there was a lack of training awareness of any training meant for new employees.

Selection of candidates for training:

The participants provided vague responses in relation to the criteria required for being selected on a training course, with one participant (2) simply stating that an employee can attend if he is in need of improvement. Participant 5 stated that attendance was on the recommendation of the boss, although did not expand on this as to whether it was due to needing improvement or because he was working to a satisfactory level and it was a way to further develop. Participants 3 ad 4 stated that attendance was based on the availability of places and did not set out any further criteria. Three participants (1, 6, 7) did not provide a response.

6.2.3. Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment is an important aspect within this study, and hence the interview sought to find out the way participants view it. They were asked about affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment.

6.2.3.1. Affective Commitment/Career Longevity:

Participants were asked about the possibility of the university offering long career prospects (referred to as affective commitment). In terms of their affective commitment and career longevity at the university, it is apparent that emotional commitment to the university was a determining factor, with seven of the participants (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) referring to factors that could be regarded as an emotional connection to the university. Two of them (6, 7), however, stated expressly that the emotional connection would influence their affective commitment. Participant 6 stated:

> "For me, I have emotional commitment. I feel this is one of the things that helps me tolerate even things like a delay in my promotion."

In the context of having an emotional connection, four participants (1, 2, 4, 6) described a sense of belonging being a determinative factor, with three (4, 5, 8) describing their colleague relationships. Participant 5 commented:

> "I feel my direct boss cares deeply about my progress, as she makes sure I feel comfortable and I get what I deserve. She supports each one of us."

The environment within which they work was also a factor for three participants (1, 3, 5), who all described the motivating environment within which they work. Only participant 3 referred directly to the opportunities that were available as a reason for wanting to remain at the university.

6.2.3.2. Continuance Commitment

Participants were asked about their continuance commitment to the university and whether they would find it difficult to leave. When considering the possibility of leaving the university to work elsewhere, six participants (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) commented that it was not an easy decision for them to make. However, the reasons for saying this ranged from being recently promoted (5), there not being many better places to work (6), having no other option (4) and having observed people leaving and

returning (7). The response from participant 4 was negative, because it seems that he felt he had no choice but to remain, which is in contrast to those who decided to stay because they enjoyed it. Participant 4 said:

> "Unfortunately, it is actually a difficult equation for me, because I'm unsure about whether to stay and adapt to whatever situation or to leave directly and decide to not handle or adapt to anything. What I am trying to say is, that if I leave I won't go anywhere else. I'll stay at home. I used to stay at this place whatever the situation. So, I'm not the kind of person that can negotiate."

Not all participants would find it difficult to leave, but participant 1 would do so if it were advantageous to him to work elsewhere.

6.2.3.3. Normative Commitment

Normative commitment is assessed by participants' obligations and loyalty toward the university. In terms of the loyalty shown to the university, five participants (2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8) considered there was loyalty amongst the staff. Two participants (2, 5) thought this was demonstrated by the extra work that staff would carry out without receiving additional pay. Participant 3 said, "When I am assigned a task, I love to do my work to the fullest."

This could be a general statement that is reflective of personality rather than loyalty to a particular organisation. For participant 6, he said that although people say they do not have loyalty, this is not reflected in their actions, because they have remained employed by the university: "There is discontent in words only."

One participant (1) rated their loyalty to the university as 6/10, but did not provide any further comment. Participant 4, despite providing an answer, did not address the issue of commitment, and so the response was not taken into account.

6.2.4. Job Satisfaction

Participants were asked to state their satisfaction with their jobs. It seems that the majority of staff demonstrated a positive level of job satisfaction, with five (2, 3, 5, 7, 8) listing factors such as receiving feedback on performance or through feeling appreciated and being thanked for work done (2, 3), as well as other personal factors such as management consulting with staff when setting timetables (8). A reasonable and manageable workload adds to job satisfaction (7), which can be linked to the

ability to have a social life (5) and therefore achieve a proportionate work-life balance.

Administrative workload caused dissatisfaction, linked with administrative work related to the faculty by three participants (1, 5, 6), who commented that any dissatisfaction they felt was the result of policies that had been put in place (1) and the lack of clarity of what was expected by the HR department, because "their rules and responsibilities aren't clear" (5). Participant 6 corroborated this dissatisfaction, and as well as feeling there was too much administrative work that needed to be completed, he considered salary as not being reflective of the effort exerted by staff. This contributed to dissatisfaction with the university, which is in contrast to participants 5 and 6, who considered the salary to be adequate. For participant 2 appreciation was a factor, it was commented "even if the salary is not satisfactory, the fact that people feel appreciated is the determining factor."

The answer provided by participant 4 was unclear and was therefore not taken into consideration.

6.2.5. Impact of Perceived HR Practices on Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction

Additional questions were prompted during the interview, and all of the academics were asked to state their opinion on the relationship between HR practices within the university and their own level of commitment.

6.2.5.1. Organisational Commitment and HR practices

Positive association:

Four of the participants (1, 2, 4, 7) indicated that there is a strong association between the university's HR practices and the way academics are committed to their jobs. Participant 1 answered:

> *"Of course they are correlated, because the way the university treats us through the employees' affair department reflects on our intention to carry on doing the jobs we are doing. I am very committed to this university, and if it did not provide great HR practices, then I would definitely consider different jobs."*

In addition, participant 4 said "there is no question that the two are linked somehow, but I think not all HR practices are as influential as each other."

Those who explained that there is an association, were asked to give details about which HR practice has the greatest impact, and which of the commitment types is the strongest in association with other HR practices. HR development was the main answer, surprisingly, with all four participants thinking that the way the university develops its employees is a strong indicator of commitment. Two participants (2, 4) said they were *ambitious* and the university had helped develop their skills toward achieving their goals. Participant 2 said:

> *"I am ambitious and I frequently attend training courses that help me develop my skills in academic settings and also develop my administration and management skills. The university invests a lot in that, and my commitment grows as a result."*

Furthermore, two participants (2, 7) saw the expansion of the university campus and new opportunities in the university helping them develop new skills that allowed them to gain extra responsibilities. Participant 7:

> *"The university has recently invested in a research department and expanded the campus, and as a result I have got more into research and developed my research skills, so I think such development is allowing me to carry on with this job and be more committed."*

The participants did not provide details about the <u>type of commitment</u> that correlated most with HR practices, but participant 4 noted that "commitment to me is one thing; it is either there or nothing, so I cannot really judge which is more influential than the other." Justification in relation to commitment is linked with overall understanding related to the following three types of commitment.

No association:

Furthermore, three academic staff (3, 8, 6) elaborated that they <u>did not think there is an association</u> between HR practices and commitment. Although they provided brief answers, it was generally explained that they were not completely aware of HR practices and did not see how they would affect their commitment to their jobs. Participant 8 said:

"Even though I know a few things about how the university looks after its staff, I personally cannot judge that there is an association, simply because I haven't seen people less committed because of the way HR operates. I talk to a lot of the staff members and not many ever mention commitment in the same lines of HR practices."

Participant 3 explained that pay at the end of the month is what counts toward commitment, i.e. pay leads to commitment:

"We at the university don't tend to complain a lot about HR. We get on with our jobs and as long as we are paid at the end of the month, I do not see how the two things are associated."

The explanation provided by participant 3, addressing the area related to just performing the job, is based on previous narration. It means that the job allocated to the individual has to be performed. and any perceptions about it are linked directly with the outcome in the form of remuneration.

The association is mediated by opportunities:

Other opportunities and other jobs within academia seem to explain why participants are not affected by HR practices. Two participants (6, 8) explained that it is hard to find an alternative job or better conditions somewhere else, and so everyone is attached to their jobs and their commitment does not change. Participant 6 also explained that commitment is always shown:

"If you are not committed, you will get fired, and if you get fired, then it will be impossible to find another job, so commitment is what we show regardless of anything else."

The narration provided above demonstrates the individual's commitment due to limited job opportunities, which results in overall commitment irrespective of desire. Participant 8 said:

"I am not happy with certain things at the university. My commitment was questioned once and I looked for other jobs, but honestly speaking, I thought I should have never compromised my commitment, as I couldn't find a better job. So I am very committed now, even though HR practices are not perfect."

6.2.5.2. Job Satisfaction and HR practices

Although it was hard to differentiate between the participants' answers on commitment in relation to HR practices, satisfaction was often mentioned along the same lines. When they were asked whether HR practices affect their satisfaction, they main answered yes.

Positive association:

Seven participants said that at least one type of job satisfaction is associated with HR practices positively. The most influential categories in this regard were pay (1, 2, 3, 7) job security (2, 3, 5, 6), growth (3, 4) and supervision (1, 7). Participant 2 noted:

> *"HR and management decide how much I get paid at the end of the month, and the more I get paid, the more I will be satisfied, I think."*

Participant 2 was referring here to salary based on experience and ranking when recruited in the first place, although the university's pay structure is clear. This analysis of pay level is linked with the individual's skills, which are assessed partially by HR.

Participant 5 explained that job security is crucial and is influenced by retention as an HR practice:

> *"It is not easy to find another job, so I think HR as a department – and the long contracts or permanent contracts and the benefits they provide – indeed influence the way I am satisfied with my job. I don't think many would dispute that."*

Growth satisfaction was linked to perceived HR practices, as participant 4 noted:

> *"I am very satisfied with the way I have developed here, and the way I have personally gained skills and moved forward, and that was down to the frequent training I received, which, for me, is quite important."*

No association:

One participant (8) said that satisfaction with their job was not associated with the way the HR department operates. *Lack of interaction* was indicated as a reason by participant 8, who said:

> *"I don't think there is any association. The HR department is somewhere in the university and I do not attend it at all, so I cannot say that it has anything to do with my satisfaction. I would say there are other things that impact my*

satisfaction, but they are different from HR practices, e.g. students' attitudes toward us, getting bored of doing my job, lack of challenges, etc."

6.2.6. Saudi Context

Decision-Making Process:

In terms of the decision-making structure at the university, it was described as being 'flat' by five participants (2, 4, 6, 7, 8), with the caveat provided by participant 4 that "when you are Saudi, you get involved with the decision-making." Participant 5 described a mixed structure, whereby staff are part of the decision-making process, whereas at other times a decision is made in the traditional hierarchical way and disseminated to staff without consultation. This is reflective of the perception of one participant (3), who felt the process was bureaucratic and "the decision is going to be implemented regardless of your opinion." It therefore seems that because the university is private, in general this removes the barriers between staff and management, whereby staff are consulted to a greater extent than if the decisions were being made at a public university. This distinction was referenced by one participant (2).

Saudisation:

In terms of Saudisation, there is a problem in terms of the skills possessed by Saudis being appointed to certain roles. Five participants (2, 3, 4, 6, 8) felt this skills issue was problematic, and even though it was said that Saudisation was important generally (2, 3, 4), it was questionable whether in higher education there should be full Saudisation, because diversification was an important factor in helping institutions learn new things from other cultures (3, 4, 6). Participant 8 also went as far as questioning the commitment of a Saudi national based on his experience, suggesting "some of my colleagues prefer committed instructors – and preferably not Saudi."

The Impact of Wasta:

Six participants (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8) acknowledged that *Wasta* exists within Saudi society, whereas two participants (6, 7) stated that they didn't feel this was the case. However, regardless of whether it does exist, a person should still possess the relevant qualifications to carry out a role, at least according to seven participants (2,

3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). Nevertheless, even with relevant qualifications, the issue of equal opportunity remains a factor, as highlighted by Participant 3, who observed:

> "Efficiency should play a great role in recruitment, and if the applicant is qualified enough, there should be no need for nepotism in order to get a job opportunity."

The negative impact of *Wasta* was highlighted by participant 1, who simple observed that it is "a social phenomenon that has negative dimensions on Saudi society," although they did not expand further on what was meant by this comment.

6.3. Views of HR and Management Participants

Similar to the previous analysis of academic staff, this part includes a description of the participants' answers across five subsections: background information, HR practices (planning, attraction and selection, retention and development), organisational commitment (affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment), job satisfaction and Saudi cultural influences. Here, participants were asked about their opinions of how employees perceive HR practices, satisfaction and commitment within their university.

6.3.1. Background Information

The majority of participants in this group were males, at nine in total, compared to five females, and they were mainly Saudi nationals (11), with three non-Saudis. Eight participants had an academic past before moving to management, while five had a business and HR background. Seven of the participants had fewer than 20 years' experience, and seven had more than 20 years. Seven were from the private sector and five from the public sector.

Table 10: HR and Management staff's general background details

Gender	**Male**	**Female**		
	9 (1,4,5,6,12,13,14,7,10)	5 (2,3,8,9,11)		
Nationality	**Saudi**	**Filipino**	**Missing**	
	11 (1,2,3,4,5,8,9,11,12,13,14)	1 (6)	2 (7,10)	
Background	**Academic Senior Admins**	**Managerial Potions**	**Missing**	
	8 (1,2,3,5,6,8,10,12)	5 (4,7,9,11,14)	1 (13)	
Experience	**=<8 years**	**>8 years**	**>20years**	**>30 years**
	4 (1,5,13,14)	2 (3,7)	3 (2, 6,12)	4 (4,8,10,11)

Awareness of HR practices:

The same 14 participants provided background information on the HR practices that were being applied at the university at that time. Seven participants (2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13) cited the recruitment of staff as a current practice, which was closely followed by six participants referring to training and development (1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 13), including orientation training (13). One participant (1) thought that because the training was not tailor-made, was is not sufficient enough to develop staff.

Practices relating to pay were cited by five participants (2, 3, 4, 10, 14), including benefits such as healthcare cover (10), while contractual issues were mentioned by four participants (2, 4, 8, 11), with two of those participants (8, 11) referring specifically to contractual issues relating to foreign workers.

The protection of labour and employee rights, based on labour law, including the development of policies, was another practice referred to by four participants (3, 4, 9, 14).

The general administration of leave, including annual leave, sick leave, maternity leave and sabbatical leave, was cited by two participants (2, 8). Within the linked group of practices, performance management (12) and retention (10) were also cited. In terms of planning practices, four participants (2, 6, 7, 10) made reference to planning, including consideration being given to skills inventory, succession planning and retirement issues.

6.3.2. HR practices

HR staff and managers were asked to provide information about HR practices within the university. They were asked about the way they plan for recruitment, the way they attract and select, the retention process and the development of employees.

6.3.2.1. HR Planning Practices

When asked about the HR planning practices that were being used, seven participants (1, 2, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14) did not consider there was any formal planning in place. Participant 13 stated that when recruiting, they "submit a request that we want to hire two or three people to HR." Strategic planning was referred to by six participants (2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10), , as highlighted by participant 10, who was in the group unable to identify HR planning practices, "this is different from talking about planning for the institution," because strategic planning was thought of as something being planned for the university as a whole.

Eight participants (2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11), however, did refer to what they perceived to be practices used by the HR department, and of these, participant 2 was amongst the group that said there was no official plan. However, practices such as training plans, employee distribution policies and job title planning were mentioned specifically by participant 2. Although participant 14 referred to what others would perceive to be planning practice, namely introducing a manpower inventory, he was adamant that this was not a practice per se, because although HR "have procedures, [they are] not practiced." Three participants (7, 9, 11) did think that HR planning took place in-house as opposed to be done externally, with participant 11 mentioning the formal HR planning followed a university's mission and vision, as well as the Saudi 2030 Vision. Participant 11 stated that in-house planning practices could be executed, because

"The Institute of Administration offers us a special training package on planning and achieving goals."

6.3.2.2. HR Attraction Selection Practices

Following planning, the participants were asked about how they attract and select employees to fill university vacancies. The university used a compensation package as a means of attracting employees, according to eight participants (1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14). Compensation packages include attractions such as allowances (1, 8, 12), benefits such as massages at work or the use of a gym (9) and, where foreign employees are concerned, ticketing (3) and housing allowances (1, 12) as ways of increasing the compensation package. Whereas participant 9 described 'branding' as a means of attracting employees, this was described in terms of the reputation that branding provides, which arises out of the benefits provided by the university (massages/gym onsite), so that prospective employees perceive it as a place that puts on fun activities for its staff. Participant 9 stated:

> "When you treat all your employees with a high-level attitude, they will bring CVs to you and refer other people to you. This is great, because when someone refers another to this university, it means that she has already told her about the culture of this place and it is possibly that she has chosen people who already fit. So the branding, reputation and achievements of the university will attract you – and all this is displayed on the website."

Therefore, branding is linked closely to the practice of recommendation, which was described by three participants as a practice in itself (5, 9, 14). Linked to the practice of recommendation is the use of *Wasta* as a means of attracting and recruiting people to the university, although the two participants (4, 8) that referred to *Wasta* did so in a negative light and did not consider it as positive for the university, because although it attracts prospective employees, these may not be the right people for the job.

As well as the compensation package benefits on offer, the research opportunities afforded to staff were also regarded as a form of attraction (14), presumably referring to academic staff who are thinking about their long-term career in academia.

In terms of the practical steps and tools involved in attracting candidates, advertisements (2, 5 ,8) were placed in newspapers or online via the university website, with information detailing a clear job description and information if the right candidate was being encouraged to apply. The use of an external agency, such as an international agency (6) to attract a foreign candidate, or through a 'head hunter' (9) who could find a person with a certain characteristic (academics), was also an attraction tool. According to participant 9:

> "Head hunters are agencies you go to and provide them with the characteristics you are looking for, and then they bring them to you."

The above narration provides the sense of availability of human resources in the job market and the sense of competition, which lead to job security as an integral factor for individuals.

6.3.2.3. Employee Retention Practices

Furthermore, participants were asked about the way retention processes within universities take place. From the answers provided by the participants, employee retention practices can be categorised under financial and non-financial incentives. The answer provided by participant 14 confirmed this point: "Some people want students, while others want money."

In this regard, a distinction was being made between employees who simply "love their job," as per participant 6, who sees this as a retention method in itself, and those referred to by participant 11, who said "money motivates them to stay."

Eight participants (1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 13) referred to financial incentives as a means of retention, including allowances received such as health insurance, ticketing, school tuition fees and health insurance.

In relation to non-financial benefits, ten participants (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14) thought they could be used to retain staff. Amongst these benefits, eight participants (2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14) discussed assessment and recognition when asked about retention practices. Presumably, a feeling of appreciation through somebody taking their time to assess your efforts is meaningful, with participant 13 stating that as a form of recognition, the award for best researcher of the month is great, presumably because it provides kudos amongst research staff and helps with career

development. However, in some instances, the assessment and evaluation practice is simply used to determine the renewal of a contract for an employee. This was stated by participant 8 only and is not conducted on Saudi nationals, therefore putting the control of the employee into the hands of the employer. In other instances, the system is merely a formality with no real meaning, as identified by participant 6:

> "Sometimes, if I'm faculty member, I will tell my colleagues or my students, if you don't put me down as 'excellent', you will not receive any grades or extra marks."

Nine participants (1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14) discussed promotion issues, with participant 13 stating specifically that promotion should be used as a retention strategy. However, one participant (8) stated expressly that it should not be offered as a basis to retain employees, as it is seen as carrying an extra burden for which an employee does not receive extra pay. Participant 8 was alone in seeing it as a negative practice.

Development opportunities, such as being able to attend training or conferences, were seen as important for academic staff, as identified by five participants (1, 2, 4, 8, 14), with one participant (2) specifying the importance of research opportunities, and another referring to him being able to offer a career path (14), if that is what motivates the employee. The importance of a healthy work environment was a factor cited by four participants (3, 6, 9, 10), including health and spiritual awareness within the environment according to one participant (9), who was also of the opinion that massages and having fun were retention strategies, as was an employee simply loving their job (6).

6.3.2.4. Employee Development Practices

As a final HR practice, the participants were asked about the way employees are developed within their job – and the methods used to do so. One participant (4) recognised the wider benefit that training brings:

> "I care about increasing productivity, which will only be achieved by developing existing competencies through domestic and external training and

> through participation in seminars, conferences and researches. All this contributes to raising the efficiency level of the participant."

Twelve participants (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14) referred to the relevance training opportunities being available for employees to attend, which included the need to improve soft skills, to include achieving quality and standards in teaching and learning (10), as well as attending specialised courses.

Three participants (4, 8, 11) said that training was achieved through the university having a dedicated specialised training centre, whereas one participant (10) stated that the university had an agreement with another university to deliver training. Four participants (2, 3, 7, 10) made express reference to training courses being attended externally as well as internal opportunities, with participant 2 saying that attendance was decided by the Scientific Council, based on the major and job description of the applicant.

The participants were asked about whether new staff were offered orientation training, with five (3, 4, 7, 9, 13) confirming that it was offered. Participant 7 highlighted its importance at the university:

> "The orientation takes one week, so at least they understand the business, and then we will meet them again and ask them questions related to the orientation, if they understand the business. If they do not, we train them again until we make sure that they understand the process and policies here related to the academy."

However, according to four participants (1, 10, 11, 14) orientation training was not being offered, although participant 14 said that the material was in place to implement it in the coming months.

In terms of opportunity of attendance at training, eight participants (2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 14) thought there was equality between Saudi and non-Saudis, although one (11) said that non-Saudis were not funded. Three participants (1, 4, 6) commented that priority was given to Saudi nationals. Two participants (6, 14) recognised practical issues, in that there is a language barrier in sending non-Saudis on courses which may be delivered in Arabic. One participant (8) commented that in his opinion, Saudis were not interested in development and "prefer not to get exhausted rather than professional development."

Aside from training, four participants (4, 8, 11, 12) said that conference attendance was encouraged, with two (4, 8) specifying this was for participation as a speaker or similar. One participant (11) stated that attendance was allowed as either a participant or an attendee, although the criterion was that only those who publish may attend conferences, which was echoed by a second participant (12).

Only one participant (14) referred to having a formal training needs assessment in use at the university to determine training needs.

6.3.3. Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment was assessed through three main questions about affective commitment, continuous commitment and normative commitment.

6.3.3.1 Affective Commitment

When discussing affective commitment to the university, and career longevity, seven participants (1, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14) said that the university was considered a home or second family by employees, with participant 12 commenting:

> "The president of the university used to hold a meeting in his house every Monday for faculty members – not a formal one, just for fun… this relaxing environment is good."

However, external factors such as a manager could influence their feelings toward the university, according to one participant (11). Furthermore, the removal of certain allowances such as the scarcity allowance affected employees negatively, according to two participants (4, 10), although a further two (8, 9) thought that money was not seen as an influential factor. Four participants (2, 6, 13, 14) observed that there is an emotional attachment to the university, which provides a sense of ownership (6) and responsibility (2) and goes beyond the contractual hours expected to work (13, 14). In terms of nationality, two participants (4, 10) were of the opinion that the commitment rate was higher amongst Saudi employees, and, as stated by participant 4:

"Non-Saudis they have other options, because the whole of the Middle East's universities in the gulf region are open to them."

6.3.3.2 Continuance Commitment

Continuous commitment was assessed through a question that enquired about the ease participants might have in quitting their job at the university. When discussing the ease with which an employee could leave, ten participants (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14) felt that it was not easy, whereas one participant (6) said it would be easy "if there was a lack of satisfaction and no emotional attachment." Job security, loyalty, location and longevity were factors that led to six participants (1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 14) saying it would not be easy to leave. The reasons for leaving were said to be to gain experience elsewhere by taking up other opportunities (2, 3, 5), or for logistical reasons such as those referred to by participant 5:

> "Two of them said they wouldn't pass their PhD and left. Two of them were young they were my age. One of them said he would open his own business. He just wanted to gain experience in being in contact with people. The other one got a better offer, a much better one than our university… but it wasn't because he didn't want the university."

Three participants (2, 3, 11) knew of people who had left and returned, and sometimes the university encouraged them to leave, if it was better for the employee (7).

In terms of the role nationality played on the decision to stay or leave, one participant (3) felt that it was easier for Saudis to leave and referred particularly to the new generation, whereas two participants (4, 12) felt that it was easier for non-Saudis, with participant 12 asking where would a Saudi who left actually go to?

6.3.3.3 Normative Commitment

In terms of obligations and sense of loyalty toward the university, five participants (1, 2, 3, 8, 11) said these aspects were displayed through the extra work that employees do without remuneration, although participant 8 said ," you cannot ask a staff member to perform any task unless it is a paid one." Loyalty (4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13) may be based on their perception of the university (4, 6, 13), and examples of loyalty included "refusing a job with higher pay to remain at the university" (7). Additionally, longevity was a factor influencing loyalty, with those with high longevity being more loyal and committed (10). One participant (11) described his loyalty in descending order of being "number one for me is the university, then my family and children."

Perhaps the opinion of participant 11 summarised normative commitment best and highlights why loyalty is crucial in that sense:

> "Loyalty is a delicate thing, depending on your personality and what you stand for. For me, I am very loyal to the university and I am obliged to my job in the best manner possible; however, I am a realist, too, and sometimes your loyalty is broken by poor treatment, being used or taken advantage of in different ways. So I think the university should reward those who are loyal and nurture their loyalty and not simply assume it."

6.3.4 Job Satisfaction

As a main dimension in the study, participants were asked about their satisfaction with different aspects of their job. When discussing the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that the employee had at the university, six participants (3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12) reported that the satisfaction level was deemed high, with two (4, 10) noting a satisfaction rate of around 55% in feedback. However, four participants (2, 6, 7, 8) reported a medium level, whereas two participants (1, 11) reported a low level of satisfaction. Two participants (13, 14) said satisfaction had decreased but the university was working to improve the level, and if aware of dissatisfaction, one participant (2) outlined steps taken to address this issue: "we have a job rotation committee that moves and rotates employees."

Twelve participants (1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14) said that if an employee said they were not satisfied, the first step would be to communicate with the employee to understand the issue and to sift out those who were simply complaining and nagging (4, 5, 10). However, the purpose of the initial discussion may not always end up favourably for the employee; for example, participant 5 said "we always try to make anybody who comes to us satisfied," while participant 14 said "we start a discussion with him. We mediate in the beginning. If this does not work, we bring another person in to moderate this relationship. If this does not work, we move him. If this doesn't work, we fire him." It may therefore be to the detriment of the employee to raise issues of dissatisfaction if such steps are taken.

Whether satisfaction levels can be 80% is debatable in any event, with one participant (7) having the opinion that not everyone can be satisfied, attributing this to emotional barriers. This was also reflected by participant 6.

When influential factors were discussed, it was apparent that those which increase satisfaction can also decrease it, such as the environment within which people work (1, 3, 4, 8, 10, 12), economic aspects, such as salaries and allowances (1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11), job security (13, 14), workload (3), emotional commitment (9, 12) and feeling appreciated (12).

6.3.5. Impact of Perceived HR Practices on Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction

All participants were prompted with additional questions to seek opinions on how perceived HR practices affect or correlate with their organisational commitment and satisfaction.

6.3.5.1 Perceived HR Practices and Organisational Commitment

Six of the participants (2, 4, 6, 7, 13, 14) said that that there was no association between commitment and perceived HR practices. Lack of interaction was provided as a reason by two participants (7, 14), with participant 14noting:

> *"I personally think there is no association. We work from different sites, there is no interaction between HR and academic employees are generally committed regardless of the way we do our jobs."*

Lack of awareness seemed to be another issue (2, 4), with participant 4 explaining:

> *"Many of the employees lack awareness of what we really do in HR. Generally, their main concern is the pay and is often resolved very quickly, so lack of awareness of the different roles here might be a reason behind that."*

Furthermore, participant 7 explained that attachment to the job is a key factor:

> *"There are many HR practices that could impact commitment, but none of what you have mentioned would explain that in the Saudi context, simply because I think academic staff are very attached to their jobs."*

Finally, participant 2 ended by saying that:

"HR practices on the whole don't impact the jobs directly. I have come across two academic employees who were not committed, and the main reasons behind their lack of commitment had nothing to do with HR."

Positive association:

Three participants (1, 5, 10) explained that both perceived HR practices and commitment are indeed positively associated. It was explained that the way HR and management look after their employees is seen in their commitment to their jobs. Participant 1 related that the *management style* is key in this regard:

"I think they both go hand in hand. Every employee wants to feel appreciated and wants to have a positive environment to work in, and most often the way we manage them and they way we develop them as employees is shown in their commitment. HR practices are very influential and they are often translated in the way employees are managed, and positive management means positive commitment."

Participant 5 said not all HR practices are influential:

"[…] although not all HR practices are influential, some are more detrimental in ensuring employees' commitment."

Further elaboration behind the most influential practices in relation to commitment showed that *retention and development* are key. Participant 10 explained:

"I think development and retention are both crucial, as employees can get really bored of their jobs after a while and we keep alternating and developing their skills, sending them away on training courses, showing them that they are wanted by the university and involving them in decision-making. We all work as a family – and that shows in commitment."

Committed Regardless:

Three of the participants (9, 12, 7) explained that employees were committed to their university, regardless of perceived HR practices. It was explained that the way HR conducts its business is separate from their commitment, as they could not see themselves leaving the job if HR practices were poorly conducted. Participant 12 said "many employees have worked in this university for some time now, and they have a lot of students and love doing their jobs. Their commitment to the job should never be questioned." When asked to elaborate, it was stated that:

"It is not easy to find a better position locally, and they will carry on doing this job until they are no longer needed. I have worked hard to get to this position, and even if HR is not doing a good job, it will not impact employees' commitment."

6.3.5.2 Perceived HR practices and Job Satisfaction

Positive association

Overall, there seems to be a positive correlation between satisfaction and HR practices. Part of the question also asked the participants to indicate which of the satisfaction categories (named by the interviewer) were particularly influential. Participants here indicated that it is mainly job pay (1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14), job security (3, 6, 8, 15) and growth (5, 13, 16) that are very influential and could be associated with HR practices (specifically retention and development). Participant 3 explained:

"I agree that satisfaction is influenced by the way HR operates; it is clear to , based on my experience, that the more you pay your employees, the happier they get and the more they are satisfied, and I think this is the case in many other jobs: such extrinsic motivation is very important. I think we as an HR department often decide the pay and we can sense the satisfaction straight away when pay is increased."

Job security was another crucial aspect to explain the correlation, with participant 8 explaining:

"At times, we have to employ people on short-term contracts, but they often don't feel secure and their satisfaction is impacted, so I think the way we set contracts and retain the services of individuals affects their satisfaction. This is often noticed when we decide to turn contracts into permanent ones or promote individuals – automatically, their satisfaction is enhanced."

No knowledge:

Participants (12, 7) explained that it is difficult to separate commitment from satisfaction, and hence they do not know how either of them is influenced by the way HR practices are perceived. Participant 12 explained:

"I don't really know a lot about what is going on out there with employees to answer you. I can hardly make a distinction between commitment and satisfaction, so I really do not know how they are correlated."

6.3.6. Saudi Context

Saudi culture is different and unique. The questionnaire as a tool did not ask about the influences of culture within HR practices, so the interviewees were asked how cultural issues play a part.

Fair Treatment:

In describing their views as to whether employees are treated fairly, the participants made reference to nationality and gender, to discuss the issue as to how effective HR practices are in this regard.

Seven participants (3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14) viewed HR practices as being effective overall, with participant 3 referring to the unified salary scale for people in the same job roles, and the fact that all employees receive the same health insurance regardless of gender or nationality.

Participant 2 said:

"*I feel we have a great opportunity regarding promotions for both men and women. Before, men had a bigger opportunity, but now it is available for everyone. Now we have equality. HR efficiency is improving*."

This sentiment was echoed by participant 7, who said "We are all the same here inside the organisation."

In terms of gender equality, three participants (1, 2, 14) said equality was present. However, participant 9, although saying practices such as pay were equal, commented that male employees were not able to take part in all activities, referring particularly to fun activities.

One participant (1) perceived this difference to be based on nationality and thought that this extended to workload, vacations and pay, with Saudis being treated differently to expatriates. However, the participant did not expand on who was favoured by this difference in treatment.

One participant (13) referred to the university being in a transitional period as far as equal treatment was concerned.

Impact of HR Practices on Workplace Culture:

In terms of how the practices influence workplace culture, it was thought that there was scope for development (1, 6, 8, 13), although it was also debatable as to the role that HR played in establishing a good workplace culture, with one participant (2) questioning HR's role in this matter, whereas another (8) attributed the happy work environment to HR practices. It seems that awareness of HR is something that needs to be addressed (7), and HR personnel need to work on their communication skills, according to participant 6, who considered them to be "the soul of the organisation."

Gender Roles:

Females are in a position of authority and run the university (3, 5, 9), according to participant 3, who said "it's a female university." Therefore, the type of university and faculty will be determinative of the answer provided and is a factor to bear in mind, although even in male-dominated environments, as referred to by six participants (1, 2, 8, 10, 12, 13), in some places females are encouraged to participate. This was highlighted by participant 10, whereas participant 12 said that segregation still existed.

However, all participants did not simply side with male or female domination, and three participants considered there to be equality between genders (6, 7, 11).

Managerial Style/Decision-making:

The terms "management" and "leadership" were used interchangeably in some responses, although one participant (14) was clear that in his opinion there was a difference: "There are no management styles, but there are different leadership styles."

The traditional hierarchal and authoritative style was described as the dominant style by five participants (1, 6, 9, 11, 14), although mixed leadership is what might be needed, according to one participant (13), who said that although an authoritative approach was not healthy, it was dependent on the situation:

> "Leadership is contextual. Some situations, you need to be authoritative, others are transformational, and some situations are other styles. Mixing is very essential."

One participant (10) referred to his own style of management as a transformational leadership style but did not describe this as being mixed with any other style. According to participant 11, even with a formal hierarchal structure in place:

> "[…] the most important administrative position in any university is chairman [overall head]. Why? Because they have daily contact with faculty, students and the university management."

This is therefore reflective of the opinion of participant 13, who thought that a variety of styles was needed, because in this situation, although a formal hierarchy exists, with the president at the top, in practice it is not the president who runs the university. This sentiment was echoed by another two participants, who thought that faculty were involved in decision-making (1, 5). In terms of decision-making, two participants (2, 3) had the view that committees made the decisions in any event, and this was not something for which the individual was responsible.

Saudisation:

Saudisation is thought to be detrimental, because people may be hired who are not equipped to do the role, as highlighted by three participants, due to lack of qualifications (1, 6, 7), although one participant (8) provided a contrasting opinion, stating that "most Saudi members are highly qualified and exceptionally skilled." It is also questionable whether there are sufficient numbers of Saudi PhD holders to fulfil requirements (3, 4), and for those who are available, they opt to work in the public sector (3) because seemingly less is required of them. Furthermore , by hiring Saudis only, this affects the cultural diversity to which students are exposed (1, 8). As mentioned by participant 1, "students should gain knowledge and experience from different backgrounds; they have to be more open to the world."

One participant (2) was of the opinion, however, that it is beneficial because Saudis have travelled abroad to gain experience: "I expect they can replace the non-Saudi employees that we have now." In terms of commitment levels displayed by Saudis, there were mixed opinions, with it being said that Saudis lack commitment (3), although this was evident more with administrative staff than academic staff. In contrast, loyalty was regarded as a factor in this regard by one participant (5), due to this particular Saudi having an affiliation to his country.

Wasta:

When discussing whether *Wasta* existed in practice, ten participants confirmed that it did exist (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14), with three participants (3, 7, 9) saying it was not used in their university. Participant 9 said "I feel proud that our president doesn't use this."

Of those that did acknowledge its use, it was said to destroy performance because of the use of unsuitably qualified people (1, 6, 8). Even with *Wasta*, though, some participants (4, 5, 7) would only employ qualified staff, and presumably it was not as problematic to use connections to get an interview, if the candidate were suitably qualified. Additionally, it might be beneficial in terms of costs. Participant 4 said:

> *"Economically, I prefer recruiting a citizen because it is less costly, as I don't have to pay tickets, recruitment fees, residency and other expenses. On a national economic level, nationalisation keeps money within the country."*

As a result of the use of committees, it is thought that unqualified faculty members are rare (2), and therefore this is not an issue if correct steps are taken to ensure staff are qualified for the role.

One participant (2), however, thought that *Wasta* provided opportunities to people who were qualified that might not otherwise have been given the job, presumably meaning that it would have gone to a non-Saudi without *Wasta*.

Challenges or Problems Facing HR Practices:

Although a number of participants were critical of some of the HR practices as previously reported, they were asked about what they perceived as a challenge facing the successful implementation of these practices.

Although the best practices (how to perform HR practices) are known, they are not always followed in practice, according to one participant (5). Recruitment is seen as a challenge (9, 10), due to issues such as Saudisation and issues relating to gender, making it difficult to recruit female staff. Lack of planning is regarded as an issue that must be tackled (2, 12) along with the retention of employees (3, 6, 12). Participant 12 suggested the need for additional incentives to encourage staff to stay, and factors such as low satisfaction that arise from matters such as a poor work environment or relationships with management needed to be addressed. It was suggested (6) that by increasing trust, policies can be implemented and will have an impact on the commitment shown by an employee, presumably leading to higher satisfaction and

retention levels. Employee development is seen as a priority (2, 3), presumably so that the employee can see that the employer is committed to them, although for this matter, financial support is needed (2).

6.4. Summary of the Interview Analysis

The academic group was a majority female group, whereas the HR and management participants were majority male. Common to both cohorts was that they comprised predominantly Saudi participants. Whereas the academic group participated with little knowledge about HR functions, the HR and management group had a vast amount of experience in HR functions and practices.

Academics generally expressed limited awareness or understanding of the functions and activities of HR. On the other hand HR personnel and management all had understanding of HR practices as recruitment process, training and development, pay and benefits, contractual issues, protection and labour rights, general administration of leave, performance management. Only a minority acknowledged the role of planning.

Planning as a practice among HR personnel and management was viewed as informal and that there is no official method to it installed in the university. Academics viewed HR attraction and selection as poor and ineffective in the context of the university, they seem to be lacking information about the process. The HR and management thought this was done sufficiently and seem to generally express that through offering good compensation packages which includes allowances and benefits in order to attract employees. Information about HR retention was not sufficiently reflected, however it was explained that there are no formal policies or procedures in place for staff retention. Differently, HR and management seemed to have more knowledge about retention who explained retention through methods such as financial/non-financial packages (Financial- allowances, benefits and promotion, Non-financial- recognition, developmental opportunities offering a career path, and feeling of appreciation). Academics saw HR development being done mainly through method of developing employees whether internal or external training courses including conferences. HR and management explained there are training opportunities available to all employees including the need for soft skills. They also

stressed on equality explaining there is also equal opportunity between Saudi and non-Saudi. The majority of academics indicated a positive level of job satisfaction. Reasons such feeling appreciated, receiving feedback on performance, management consulting with staff, work life balance. Some areas of dissatisfaction were reported such as administrative workload and salary. However the HR and management group explained mixed opinions regarding the level of satisfaction of their employees. Reasons for mixed views such as work environment, economic aspects, job security, workload, and feeling appreciated.

Academics showed positive organisational commitment overall; there is generally a sense of emotional connections of staff with the university (affective commitment). Furthermore, the majority indicated a fairly high level of CC for reasons such as recently promoted, limited choice of job opportunities, observing people leaving and returning (continuance commitment). Similarly they had positive loyalty and obligation amongst faculty (normative commitment). When looking at the answers generated from HR and management, they explained that most employees considered the university as their second family and that they have emotional attachment to the university which provides a sense of ownership and responsibility (affective commitment). Furthermore, the majority expressed that it was not easy for their employees to leave the university. Factors such as job security, loyalty, location and longevity were identified as reasons (Continuance commitment). And finally HR and management reported high level of loyalty and obligation amongst the employees (Normative commitment).

Participants also elaborated on the association between HR practice and their perceived association with commitment. Academics provided mixed opinions. There was a general view that a positive association would be linked primarily to HR development activities that help them to improve their skills and career path. Some believe that there is no link between HR practice and their commitment but also acknowledge that they were not completely aware of the HR activities of the university e.g. "If you are not committed, you would get fired, and if fired it would be impossible to find another job".

The same mixed views were noticed among HR and Management, some felt there was no connection to commitment because lack of interaction and awareness with HR. While those who indicated positive, indicated it was important how management interact or treat employees is seen in their commitment to their job. As for the perceived association between HR practices and job satisfaction, academics agreed that satisfaction is predominantly determined by pay, job security, growth and supervision. The positive association is also reflected by the HR and management group, all reflected similar factors leading to satisfaction with, but highlighted that the retention and the development as HR practices are most influential in improving satisfaction.

There is a general view of fairness among employees regardless of nationality or gender. Management and HR explained the workplace culture is influenced by HR practices and acknowledged that this is an area that needs to be developed. Gender was not reported to be an issue in HR while equality was perceived to exist. Academic thought that the managerial style and decision making is flat with faculty involved in decision-making, however, Saudis are more involved than the non-Saudis. On the other hand the HR group explained that the management style is traditional hierarchical and authoritative style was described as the dominant style utilized. It is acknowledged a mixed style is needed.

One of the main issues raised by academics is that there is a general sense that there is a lack of skills issue with Saudi nationals is problematic even though it is believed that Saudisation is important. Other issue raised was a need for diversification to help the university to learn new things from other cultures. Another issue was lack of commitment of Saudi nationals to their jobs. Similarly HR and management explained that some Saudi people are hired and they are not equipped for the role. However, Saudisation has another benefit but it affects the cultural diversity to which students should be exposed. It was questioned whether there are sufficient Saudi PhD holders to fill roles. The issue of lack of commitment by Saudi employees was raised. There was broad acknowledgement that wasta existed in Saudi society, as reported by academics; however, regardless whether it exists the view is that persons should still

possess the relevant qualification to carry a role. "You get the job easier if you have personal connections".

HR and management also explain that Wasta exists and it could destroy performance because employees are not qualified or ill equipped. Some have stated that even though it existed if you hire the qualified individuals it would not have negative impact. Furthermore, this group explained that there are a number of challenges facing HR such as: recruitment due to issue of Saudisation and gender (makes it difficult to hire female staff), lack of systematic retention and the need for additional incentive, low satisfaction that arises from matter such as poor work environment or relationships with management and finally employee development is seen as a priority.

Chapter 7: Discussion

7.1. Overview

A number of research questions were set by the researcher to examine the way HR practices are viewed by academics and employees within HR and management. These research questions were evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively to provide an understanding of HR and the way it is perceived. Following from the quantitative and qualitative analysis chapter, the discussion here will aim to discuss clearly these outcomes in the context of Saudi Arabia. As a reminder, the main aim of this study is to examine HR practices as perceived by staff within university settings in Saudi Arabia and the extent to which HR practices are associated with employees' (academics, HR personnel/ management participants) level of job satisfaction and their commitment to their universities. To reiterate, the research questions of this study were to:

1. What are the current levels of HR practices as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
2. What is the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between HR practice as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
3. What are the cultural/social influences on HR practices in Saudi universities?
4. To what extent do demographic variables (gender, education, age, role, experience) influence participants' views on HR practice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?
5. Do academics/teaching employees have different opinions compared to managers and HR employees when it comes to HR practices?

The findings will also be discussed with close reference to the research questions, with the aim of shedding light on the research topic under scrutiny. The intention is to use the current findings (quantitative data from the questionnaire administered to academics, and qualitative data from the interviews conducted with academics, as well as HR and management participants) to answer the research questions by providing a contextual conceptualisation of HR practices as perceived by employees, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi Arabia universities.

Particular attention will also be paid to developing an understanding of the findings of the present study in relation to overriding issues and contextual factors influencing the perception of HR practices in Saudi Arabia in comparison to Western countries. The author theorised that Middle Eastern countries are rather distinct relative to those in the West, based on the cultural contexts of those countries, which differ significantly from each other as a result of the influence of different values, beliefs and societal norms. With this in mind, the current study also seeks to probe into the influence of culture on the participants' perceptions of HR practices and the latter's association with job satisfaction and organisational commitment while also investigating the potential implications for HR practices in the GCC region. Moreover, another main contribution of this research to current literature in the field of management is the possibility of also examining the similarities and dissimilarities between academics' and HR and management participants' views on HR practices as well as any association with job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

This chapter is divided into several sections, in an endeavour to answer each of the aforementioned objectives and related research questions. Central to the discussion is the division of views from academic and HR employees and management, and so it is essential that the views of both groups are reported and discussed separately. The structure of this chapter is outlined and explained below.

7.2. Main Discussion Addressing the Objectives of the Study

The following section will discuss findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data collection phases in the current study. Although of a different nature, findings from both the questionnaire and the interviews will complement each other, in order to develop an in-depth understanding of this research topic from the perspective of the academics as one of the two samples under study. This is to say that the academics were the only group from which both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered. The second sample under study was the HR personnel and management group. A separate section on this group's perception of HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction will also be presented herein. Furthermore, the perceptions and experiences of the two samples are compared in an attempt to identify similarities and especially differences across the two groups in

relation to their perceptions of HR practices. In addition, any implications that any difference in perception could also potentially have on the future of higher education from a managerial standpoint was explored. Last, but not least, specific attention was given to the influence of the Saudi context on the perceptions of the HR and management participants.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: 1) current views of HR practices (academic staff and HR personnel and management staff) on planning, attraction, retention and development; 2) current views of organisational commitment (academic staff and HR personnel and management staff) on affective, continuance and normative commitment; 3) current views on job satisfaction (academic staff and HR personnel and management staff); 4) relationships between perceived HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment; 5) influence of demographic variables on perceived HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment; 6) influence of the Saudi context on perceived HR practices (academic staff and HR personnel and management staff) and 7) conclusion. This structure has been adopted in order to have separate and clear sections on each variable under study, for which findings from both groups of participants are presented and also compared. Furthermore, for each section in this chapter a direct link is made with the associated research question put forward in this study.

7.2.1. Perceptions of HR Practices

Findings in this section will be discussed in line with the **first research question** relating to the exploration of current levels of HR practices as perceived by staff: "What are the current levels of HR practices as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities?" Moreover, the views of the academic staff will also be compared to those of managers and HR employees to answer the **fifth research question** pertaining to whether there are differences in opinions across both groups: "Do academics/teaching employees have different opinions compared to managers and HR employees when it comes to HR practices?" That is, the participants' (academic staff as well as HR and management group) perceptions of HR practices in a Saudi setting will be discussed in close reference to past literature in this area. In this study, HR practices have been conceptualised in

terms of planning, attraction, retention and development. Findings from both the questionnaire and interviews will be outlined and discussed in accordance with the corresponding group of participants.

7.2.1.1. Views of Academic Staff of HR Practices

In this section of the chapter, findings pertaining to the views of the academic staff on HR practices (planning, attraction, retention and development) are discussed in line with past research as well the current HE sector situation in Saudi Arabia. Whilst there is support for current findings in general, the present study also contributes to existing research by highlighting some novel discoveries.

Planning

In terms of HR plans for the university and staff members, overall, it was found that most participants disagreed that the universities engaged in adequate HR planning. Moreover, with specific reference to the items used in this subscale of the questionnaire, the majority of the academics mostly agreed that the university's management attempts to bridge the gap between the demand for employees and available supply. The recruitment of new staff members was recognised by more than half of the academics who were interviewed as a main element of HR practices and part of its external functions. Interestingly, three participants referred to personal connections as a means of becoming aware of vacancies. Assad (2002) drew attention to this issue whereby there are often cases where participants are hired mainly as a result of family or personal considerations and with minimal consideration for the candidate’s skill set or educational attainment.

However, when recruitment is carried out in a democratic way, a list of different candidate selection variables was reported by the interviewed academics, for instance being a Saudi national (four participants), previous work experience (two participants) and qualifications (three participants). With regards to the Saudi nationality as one of the main selection criteria for recruitment purposes, there is evidence suggesting that in an endeavor to combat unemployment in the country, the Saudi government is following a programme to replace expatriate workers with Saudi nationals (Azhar, Edgar, and Duncan, 2016), a process known as Saudisation. Subsequently, HR practices on the level of good planning in order to value creativity,

skills and new talent are undermined by the implementation of Saudisation. That is, although vacancies are being filled, hence meeting supply and demand requirements, it cannot be taken for granted that the best candidates have been taken on board. Possessing relevant qualifications remains an important criterion in the recruitment process, and this finds support in past research suggesting that a well-planned selection process provides the organisation with the opportunity to choose the best candidate for a role (Ntiamoah, Abrokwah, Agyei-Sakyi, Siaw and Opoku, 2014). This is often linked to having the relevant qualifications for the position (Snell and Bohlander, 2010).

Manpower planning has been placed previously in the limelight in relation to HR practices (International Qualifications Network, 2016), whereby human resource planning involves ensuring that an organisation is able to recruit the right employees and at the desirable time (Anyim et al., 2012). Hence, it could be argued that this practice is indeed important in regulating the demand and supply curve of available employees, which seems to be successful in this case, according to the views of the participants. Similarly, Siikaniemi (2012, p.52) also supported the idea that HR planning can help with bridging the gap between the demand for employees and available supply, bearing in mind that it is closely linked to 'the forecasting of future business and environmental demands of the organisation and the adjustment of the participants requirements to those conditions'. This attempt is also essential from a broader perspective, given that it can contribute considerably to achieving organisational and individual objectives (Hafeez and Aburawi, 2013). Failure to bridge this gap successfully can have an adverse impact on the organisation, such as a surplus or deficiency in the workforce (Sharma, 2009).

Nonetheless, the majority of the academics did not particularly agree that the university's management was able to find appropriate and effective mechanisms. Likewise, further support came from the interview findings, whereby half of the sample of academics considered the reward system used at the university as relatively ineffective. This system was also considered nationality-dependent by two participants, although they also clarified that it still functioned based on the principal of fairness. Anyim et al. (2012) emphasised that HR planners must consider equality and fairness in an attempt to provide a workplace that is just and fair for all

employees, regardless of any differences. Kane and Stanton (1994) proposed a model that could help in deciding which planning measures to adopt in the short (staff replacement approach), mid (short-term HR strategy) and long term (vision-driven development). Given the aforementioned finding, it could be argued that the Saudi university under study did not seem to have a reliable model or alternative measures in place. This is in fact essential when taking into account the dynamic nature of the environment in which organisations operate nowadays through the necessity for the organisation to respond and adapt to these changes (Anyim et al., 2012). Furthermore, the participants' overall dissatisfaction with current HR planning in a university context, in relation to staff recruitment, can also be associated with the organisation's limited ability to deal effectively with human resource needs while also in a position to develop resourceful action plans. As stated by Lunenburg (2012), organisations are actively involved in planning for their future needs of equipment, supplies, financing as well as their human resource needs. In doing so, it is more likely for action plans to be identified and developed, such as planning around identified recruitment, training and career development, with an aim of satisfying the anticipated needs of the organisation.

Meeting the anticipated needs of human resources, and developing adequate action plans, is considered vital for the long-term success of an organisation (Anyim, Ekwoaba, and Anthony, 2012). This view was also shared by Fajana (2002), who emphasised strongly the interrelationship between the analysis of the human resource needs of an organisation and the development of policies that help toward enhancing the organisation's effectiveness over time. Other researchers, such as Pilbeam and Corbridge (2002), also posited that there is a need for the HR department to predict and act on the HR needs of the organisation. Altogether, it could be suggested that the negative perception of the majority of the participants of HR planning is perhaps rooted in the above issues, which led them mostly to disagree on the role played by HR practices in good planning for recruitment purposes. This is a serious pitfall, as there is some evidence suggesting that a lack of recruitment effort can lead to unsatisfactory outcomes such as recruiting job applicants who are not qualified, who lack diversity or even who may refuse the job offer (Newby and Howarth, 2012).

Attraction

The extent to which academics agreed on the efforts and the means used by the university and its management to attract employees for vacant jobs was also examined in the quantitative phase of this research. Their responses mostly reflected a negative opinion regarding the university and management efforts to attract employees. That is, while the highest agreement (although low) was reported in relation to the university's management using different advertising means appropriate to attracting employees, they mostly disagreed in relation to the university's management of attracting and appointing employees with creative skills. The interview findings from half of the sample pointed toward the university's use of their online website and social media, mainly to advertise vacancies. It has been previously documented that whilst there is certainly a need to identify resources that an organisation will need, it is equally as important to have practices in place to attract the right employees in line with the needs of the organisation (Alnaqbi, 2011). In other words, every organisation has to engage in various means and efforts to look appealing to prospective employees, in order to attract them in such a way that they feel prompted to make an application. From the interviews, four participants also made reference to the application process as an important stage. In their efforts in this domain on behalf of the university would include job advertisements and the university's participation in career days.

Thus, it cannot be denied that the recruitment process remains a marketing exercise, with the organisation selling itself to the labour market with the ultimate aim of attracting the 'best' candidates (HRM, 2013). Very often, the entire process involves different stages such as defining requirements, attracting candidates, selecting candidates and placing them in a job (Armstrong, 2009). In fact, the interview data revealed that the academics pointed to a list of incentives that could help attract participants to apply for a role at the university, namely salary, geographical location, curriculum offered by the university and even personal connections with people already working at the institution. Indeed, it is acknowledged that providing incentives can make teaching more appealing as a profession, and this attraction to the job can also encourage the employee to train and stick with it, as this is more likely to be perceived as beneficial to them. With specific reference to the university's

aim of attracting Saudi nationals as employees, perhaps as a consequence of Saudisation, several factors were perceived to be attractive by the interviewed academics: pay, social status, flexible working hours, positive work environment and job stability. Shafiq et al. (2013) supported the notion that organisations that are able to provide work environments that attract, motivate and retain hardworking individuals are more likely to achieve success in a competitive environment.

In the case of the current study, the academics did not perceive that this process was actually effectively implemented and followed through (e.g. low ratings on subscales such as reviewing job applications, seeking the best talent, assessment of potential candidates and so on), thereby perhaps explaining their overall disagreement on the level of "attraction » as part of HR practices. Not doing so can have serious drawbacks. For instance, Turban, Forrett and Hendrickson (1998) and Altamoney, Tarhini, Al-Salti, Gharaibeh and Elyas (2016) explained that attracting and retaining superior talents can provide firms with a sustained and competitive edge over their competitors. Rising competition in the business market compels organisations to focus on employee attraction and retention in an endeavour to employ the best employees for the right job and those who have a clear career path. With specific reference to the university context, it has been found previously that attracting and retaining quality faculty is of utmost importance, as low faculty retention or high turnover can lead to severe implications, both financially as well as academically. In the absence of the successful recruitment of highly qualified and motivated staff, university sustainability as an organisation, and the quality of programmes, cannot be guaranteed on a long-term basis (Pienaar and Bester, 2008).

With all the above in mind, especially regarding the negative impact of an organisation not investing enough in attracting high-calibre candidates on the functioning and future of this organisation, this is perhaps a major concern of the academic participants in this study, who seemed to be mostly dissatisfied in this area. It could therefore be implied that the university's HR practices are not performing on a satisfactory level in this domain, hence leaving room for improvement in the eyes of the academics. Talents and creativity are important characteristics that should be sought by HR when recruiting new staff. Recently, individual performance systems have been introduced in academia, with "excellence" and "talent" being increasingly

associated with evaluation factors such as productivity, peer reviews, citation indexes and international refereed publications (Van den Brink et al., 2013). As such, it could be strongly argued that universities and their HR departments should invest in attracting employees, if they hope to have access to the most talented and creative candidates.

Retention

The academics' perspective on HR retention, i.e. the efforts put in and strategies the universities have in place to retain and keep its employees, was also investigated in the survey. Similar to the previous HR practices dimensions, participants mostly had a negative opinion about HR retention in the university setting. In line with the emphasis placed on the need for talented employees in the previous section, the least agreement was recorded for the role played by the university's management in focusing on employee talents that contribute to the success of the university. Similarly, a negative attitude to the university in this area was emphasised further by five participants during their interviews, with specific reference to no motivational strategies, no formal system put in pace to retain employees and no pay rewards. Just as the recruitment process remains influential in attracting candidates as potential employees, it can also affect their retention. Nonetheless, as stated by Olorunjuwon (2008), this does not operate in isolation and must be considered together with other motivational factors as soon as the employee commences employment. As for longer-term retention, compensation needs to be combined with other motivational factors (Alnaqbi, 2011). Three participants during the interviews showed satisfaction with training and development opportunities available as a means of retention at the university. As part of any commitment-based human resource practice (Coyle-Shapiro, Hoque, Kessler, Pepper, Richardson, and Walker, 2013), development opportunities are indeed seen as helpful in preserving employee retention (Kroone and Freese, 2013) and enhancing employee loyalty (Leidner and Simon, 2013). Loyalty with a sense of belonging embedded in strong emotional ties with the university was also reported by half of the sample of academics, hence drawing more attention to the need of the HR department to invest in various strategies aimed at retaining employees on a long-term basis.

According to Kyndt, Dochy, Michielson and Moeyaert (2009), there is a need to retain knowledge and skills if an organisation aspires to be economically competitive. Along the same line, Alnaqbi (2011) found that issues arising from unsuccessful retention can have an adverse effect on organisational productivity and performance. Moreover, while it is widely known that skilled workers have the flexibility to shift from one organisation to another to develop their careers, such is not the case for the organisation, as it can be a very daunting process to find suitable and qualified replacements (Jain et al., 2009). Therefore, the need for any organisation to retain its talented employees is yet again emphasised, thereby supporting the concerns raised by the academic participants in this regard.

In addition, the retention of suitable employees has drawn a lot of attention in universities (van den Brink, Frutier, and Thunnissen, 2013), and this is perhaps the outcome of increased competition in the global marketplace (Alnaqbi, 2011). In the present study, HR retention is measured mostly in terms of the university's HR practices in relation to talent and its management systems, which seems to be an area requiring more effort and investment if the university aspires to retain its talented skill force and thus retain its own place in a very competitive higher education field in Saudi Arabia.

Development

Another HR practice that was measured was the universities' efforts in developing current staff. Staff development was perceived in different forms by the interviewed academics, for example training courses, conferences, induction courses and quality management. The participants mostly disagreed on this point, especially in relation to university management preparing new talented employees well enough to start working in the university. This negative perception was also reported by employees in the study by Reio and Sander-Reio (1999), who felt that their organisation engaged in minimum investment in staff development. Past literature highlights that human resource management and development practices, such as training and development, staffing, motivation and maintenance, are indeed key ingredients in the success of organisations (Nilsson and Ellstrom, 2012) – an element missing in this study's university organisational climate from the perspective of the academics. In fact, increasing attention is now attributed to the importance of induction training,

which is mainly a way for employees to familiarise themselves with the culture of an organisation. According to HRM (2013), in situations where employees are not able to benefit from such training, there is even a risk of them quitting shortly after they have commenced the job.

Interestingly, though, a rather different perception was noted on behalf of most of the academic interviewees, whereby they mostly reported a positive view of some of the training available to new employees at the university in the form of initial training, orientation training, teaching of practical skills and supervision. As such, it could be argued that views on this aspect seem to differ, based perhaps on other factors influencing the academics' attitudes to the university's management in the provision of these staff development opportunities. Alternatively, there could also be a distinction made between what HR is made available to new staff and the extent to which these are actually implemented, which perhaps is understood differently by the academics.

Some ratings of agreement were still reported for the following items: the university's management develops programmes for the development of employees' creativity followed by the university's management helps individuals plan their career paths. Dosary and Rahman (2011) laid a lot of emphasis on the development of skills instead of reliance on a quota system to achieve Saudisation. This also suggests that promoting employee creativity could certainly help toward the development of skills. With specific reference to the Saudi context, it has also been previously noted that expanding an employee's knowledge to enhance job performance is highly prioritised in Saudi Arabia (Ramlall, Al-Amri and Adulghaffar, 2012). Along the same line, three academic interviewees also reinforced the aim of the university to focus on achieving high performance regardless of whether the staff member was of Saudi origin or not. This is a noteworthy finding, given that the participants were from different countries, such as Egypt, Syria and also Saudi Arabia. It has been emphasised previously that equality of opportunity within an organisation is necessary, including training and development opportunities provided to employees while simultaneously meeting the needs of the organisation. Further support on this point comes from Spector (1997), who posited that human values should guide organisations, and this includes fair employee treatment as a priority. When career development is

concerned and it works in accordance with the foreseen needs of the organisation, this alliance has the potential to pave the way for the success of an organisation in the long run (Anyim, Ekwoaba, and Anthony, 2012). Furthermore, as stated by Rahman and Nas (2013), when an employee benefits from the commitment of the organisation in terms of investing in their professional development, which also includes assisting them in developing their career path, this contributes largely to employee retention and better performance. Further support comes from the work of Eisenberger et al. (1994) on norms of reciprocity, suggesting that an employee would be much more likely to care for an organisation that has invested in him through human resource development practices. Although the above items obtained some agreement from the participants in their responses, given the overall disagreement on the universities' efforts in promoting staff development, it is clear that there is still a lot of scope for improvement in this area.

Based on the interview findings, it is worth noting that not all academic staff were particularly clear about the role of the HR department. In fact, three participants clearly stated that their awareness of the roles played by the HR department was quite limited, and therefore they were not very clear about its function at all. This is a very interesting finding, as this could also be a potential explanation for the overall negative perception of these academics on Saudi universities' HR practices. Moreover, in relation to the criteria put in place by HR in the selection of candidates for training, some of the academics who were interviewed seemed to have a lack of clarity in this area, as they provided very vague responses as a result of not being well informed about this aspect of HR practices in their institution.

7.2.1.2. Views of HR Personnel and Management of HR Practices

This section of the chapter highlights findings reflecting the views of the HR Personnel and Management on HR practices (planning, attraction, retention and development) which are also discussed in accordance with past research including the current situation of the HE sector in Saudi Arabia. This section ends with a comparative approach emphasising key similarities and/or differences in views between the academics and the HR Personnel and Management staff.

HR and management personnel were interviewed as the second group of participants, and they provided their responses in relation to their perceptions of applied HR practices in the organisations. In their view, similar to the academics, these took different forms such as the recruitment of staff, training and development, salary, varied benefits, retention and planning practices. In addition, they also mentioned the protection of labour and employee rights, annual leave as well as performance management. The importance of fairness is again emphasised in this study, and in fact, it is known from past research that HR practices play a determining role in building and maintaining trust (Wright, 2004). Additionally, they can also influence people's views on the trustworthiness and fairness of an organisation, with its employees associating these practices with the extent to which the organisation is committed to them (Mbugua et al., 2015). As far as annual leave is concerned, it could be suggested that it indicates flexibility at work especially in relation to an employee's changing personal circumstances. In fact, past literature also suggests that allowing access to 'professional development leave' to teaching staff – in both the short and the long term, such as sabbaticals and workplace exchanges – facilitates continuing professional improvement. Subsequently, employees will perceive the university as being sensitive to their needs, which can ultimately lead to a positive effect on staff retention. From a gender perspective, female employees also highly value flexible plans such as childcare, maternity leave or even career-break schemes (Aycan, 2005).

Planning

When the HR and management participants were interviewed about their views on HR planning practices, similar to the overall survey findings from the academics, most of them also disagreed on the implementation of any formal planning strategy by the HR department, although some of them still referred to strategic planning, which in their opinion was implemented to some extent. Amongst these procedures were training plans, employee distribution policies and job title planning. Nevertheless, the majority of the sample clearly identified the absence of a formal plan as part of the institution's HR planning practices. Strategic planning as part of any effective HR planning was supported by Cotton (2007), who put forward a seven-step model that benefits the organisation as well as its workforce. In fact, any form of strategic

planning bears significant advantages, notably strategic employee recruitment, which is positively associated with employee retention based on empirical evidence (Mbugua, Waiyango and Njeu, 2015) similar to the positive correlation (using Pearson's correlation coefficient) between planning and retention reported by the academics in this study. Moreover, and with specific reference to the Saudi context, ongoing work on organisational commitment and TQM (Total Quality Management) in Saudi Arabia identified several variables such as leadership, people management, process management as well as strategic planning as antecedents to organisational commitment and job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia characterised by various direct and indirect effects (Abanumy and Alshitri, 2015).

Attraction

As far as HR attraction practices were concerned, most of the participants referred to the university's provision of compensation packages to attract employees, with one participant also pointing out the use of branding linked with a good reputation of the organisation and recommendations as another technique. Linked to the practice of recommendation, some interviewees also mentioned the use of *Wasta* as a means of attracting and recruiting people, although this was not always viewed in a positive light. Similar to the academics (mostly based on their survey responses), the use of advertisements was also supported by the HR and management group, albeit by only a few of the participants and not the majority. Karin, Lawter, Brockerhoff and Rutigliano (2014) claim that compensation is actually one of the main reasons why people work. Past studies have revealed that compensation is undoubtedly an important aspect of HR practices, given that it can reduce staff turnover (Meyer and Smith, 2000), increase retention of employees (Kossivi et al., 2016), increase commitment to the organisation (Smeenk et al., 2006), enhance job satisfaction (Tring, 1997) and attract employees, especially females, by offering compensation practices with flexible benefits (Aycan, 2005). In a university context when compensation is high, job satisfaction and retention rates for assistant and associate professors are also higher (Ehrenberg et al., 1990).

The reputation of the organisation is also noteworthy, as it has been argued previously that even before the start of the recruitment process, the reputation of the organisation largely influences an individual's decision to respond to an

advertisement. Furthermore, although Saudisation prevails in Saudi Arabia, that is, a preference to recruit mostly Saudi employees, there are still significant numbers of foreign workers that are also recruited, and if the reputation of the university is not top notch, this can also negatively affect the organisation's ability to attract and recruit skilled foreign workers. Similarly, *Wasta*, specific to Saudi society, also plays a role in attracting employees. Nonetheless, although it is recognised that whilst women in GCC countries mostly require the support of male family members' connections, as career facilitators, to benefit from organisational opportunities, this is mostly via informal networks, whereas women in Western countries rely mostly on formal business networks (Abalkhail et al., 2016). This suggests that using *Wasta* as a means of attracting employees is not based on meritocracy and hence is debatable, as also highlighted by some of the participants.

Retention

The HR and management group categorised employee retention practices under financial and non-financial incentives. On the financial side, these were mostly considered to be allowances and general benefits (as also reported by the academics), including promotions, whilst on the non-financial side, the majority of the participants discussed assessment, recognition and development opportunities, including a healthy work environment. Some of these retention strategies have already been discussed previously in this chapter as findings common to both groups of participants. As for the ones that are unique to this particular group (e.g. promotion, assessment and recognition), it has been documented previously that recognition, better income, attractive opportunities for promotion and being able to benefit from a feeling of a sense of achievement all contribute to making an employee feel fulfilled (Kaliski, 2007). In line with the equity theory, employees usually expect their performance to be evaluated and, if positive, they also anticipate to benefit from some form of reward system, which can include promotions and recognition. Matubber and Miah (2001) also found that feedback in terms of recognition of good performance positively influences an employee's satisfaction level. Interestingly, regardless of cultural differences, employees across countries strive to fulfil their need for accomplishment and recognition (Andreassi et al., 2012).

Development

In terms of employee development practices, the HR and management group mostly held a positive view on the availability of sufficient development opportunities (in contrast to the academics' survey responses, although similar to the latter's interview responses) and reported having access to training courses as well as a dedicated specialised training centre. Nonetheless, both groups attributed significant importance to the element of training as part of staff development. Although not a majority, some of the participants (nearly half of the sample) perceived that induction training was available to new staff, which is in sharp contrast to the majority of the academics' perceptions that such training was in fact lacking as part of the university's HR practices (based on survey responses). Similar to previously reported findings from the academics, this group also perceived fairness mainly in terms of opportunities to attend training sessions given to both Saudis and non-Saudis, although, according to a few participants, Saudisation still remains deeply engrained in Saudi society. Conference attendance was also seen by a few participants to be encouraged as part of HR practices.

With all of the above in mind, it can be concluded that although there seem to be a number of similarities in the perspectives of the academics and the HR and management group in relation to their organisation's HR practices, there are still some discrepancies which were noted and therefore necessitate further investigation in the future.

7.2.2. Current Views of Organisational Commitment

In line with the first research question, this section discusses the current level of organisational commitment in Saudi universities. Also, the views of the academics and HR staff are compared to address the fifth research question revolving around the identification of similarities and differences in perceptions across both groups. In the section below, the two groups of participants' (academic staff as well as the HR and management group) views about organisational commitment in a Saudi setting will be discussed in line with existing research in this area. The concept of organisational commitment, generally defined as 'awareness of the impossibility of choosing a different social identity… because of the immense penalties in making the switch' (Steers, 1977, p. 527), has been conceptualised in terms of affective

commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings will be outlined and discussed for the two groups of participants.

7.2.2.1. Views of Academic Staff of Organisational Commitment

In this section of the chapter, findings pertaining to the views of the academic staff on organisational commitment (affective, continuance and normative) are discussed in line with past research as well the current HE sector situation in Saudi Arabia.

Affective commitment

Academic staff responded to the survey questions pertaining to their perceptions of faculty staff's affective commitment, measured in terms of their positive affection and attitude toward their job. Overall, it was clear that most of the participants agreed that faculty staff members displayed positive affective commitment. As stated by Perry (2004), affective commitment represents bonding between the employee and the organisation, often reflected in an acceptance of organisational goals and values as well as a strong desire to associate with the organisation. Highest agreement was reported on items relating to a sense of belonging to the department as well as to the university, albeit with slightly less agreement on faculty staff's enthusiasm to spend the rest of their career with the same university and the idea that they could not be as easily attached to another university.

Although the reasons accounting for the participants' general sense of commitment to the university have not been investigated in this study, in general, it is acknowledged that employees tend to remain with an organisation as a result of economic or other benefits associated with staying in the job (Zia, 2014). Perhaps this is a plausible argument accounting for flexibility displayed by the participants in this study in terms of their decision to choose to work for the same organisation on a long-term basis, as there is no guarantee that these benefits would always be present as work incentives. Another explanation could be derived from the study of Fuller at al. (2006), using academics and staff from a US university, which found that perceived organisational support and perceived external prestige were also linked to affective commitment. As such, these seem to be important factors, in that the academics in this study might also be looking for a successful career with any university that could

offer these elements. Based on the study by Marchiori and Henkin (2006), professional tenure is related to affective commitment.

It has been documented previously that affective commitment is related closely to a sense of belongingness, an emotional attachment and also feeling part of the organisation, which subsequently brings about a sense of personal relatedness in employees (Sa'Abreu et al., 2013) – this also seems to be the case for the academics. In fact, emotional commitment also emerged as a main finding from the interviews, as almost all of the interviewees reported a sense of emotional commitment to their university. In addition, half of the sample of academics interviewed reported experiencing a sense of belongingness toward their university, which further supports the survey findings. Along the same line, Kanter & Sheldon (1971) emphasised the concept of affective commitment as being one that links the identity of the individual to the organisation. This could also explain the strong sense of belongingness reported by the participants. The interview findings also indicate a sense of loyalty from some of the participants. According to Lambert and Paoline (2008), the concept of organisational commitment does involve mental, cognitive and both emotional and loyalty elements which define this construct to a large extent. Further support comes from Giffords (2009) and Zayas-Ortiz et al. (2015), who also reported loyalty as an important aspect of organisational commitment. More importantly, the role played by HR practices in boosting affective commitment is significant for any organisation to invest in, because, according to Marescaux et al. (2013), HRM practices certainly influence affective commitment.

Continuance Commitment

The participants' perceptions of continuance commitment (measured as the fear of losing one's job) were also explored in the questionnaire. In general, it was found that the academics mostly displayed positive continuance commitment to their organisation. Most agreement was reported for specific items relating to their reluctance to quit the university (i.e. their job), even if they might be willing to do so. In addition, they mostly rated themselves high on being afraid to quit if they did not think that there was another job lined up for them. Likewise, almost all of the academics who were interviewed also revealed that it was not an easy decision for

them to make in relation to leaving the university for similar reasons. Once more, loyalty also emerged as an important contributing factor for some of the participants. Indeed, it has been documented previously that continued participation within the same organisation is often driven by the fact that the cost of leaving one's job would be higher than the cost of remaining (Witting, 1985), which also seems to be a plausible explanation for the above findings. Further support comes from the study of Park and Rainey (2007), in which it was found that there is a positive correlation between continuance commitment and the concept of mutual transactional behaviours, whereby cohesiveness decreases when perceived material and extrinsic inducements also decline. Bearing in mind that the academics studied in this research exhibited continuance commitment mostly as a result of a fear of quitting for no better options, it might be worth reminding the readers that employees are more likely to feel stuck in the organisation while simultaneously considering resources available to them at work such as support, regard and respect from the organisation as well as positive job conditions, as not being highly prevalent. As a result, these employees are at risk of experiencing stress, as suggested by the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 2002). With this is mind, again, there is no doubt that the role of HR practices in limiting such negative perceptions is essential to empowering workers to display continuance commitment for positive reasons strongly rooted in self-motivation and satisfaction for the well-being of the workers themselves. Subsequently, it could also be argued that in doing so, the organisation would also be in a better position to benefit from this in the form of better work performance on behalf of its workforce.

On the other hand, less agreement was reported on the scarcity of employment opportunities if they were to leave a job. Viewed from a theoretical perspective, there are mainly two factors that can trigger and maintain continuance commitment: side-bets and the lack of opportunities elsewhere. The concept of side-bets refers to elements that would be lost if an employee chose to quit their job (Becker, 1960). This could perhaps make it more understandable as to why the participants mostly displayed major reluctance to leave the university (also embedded in fear and uncertainty), even if this might actually be seen as a good option in their view. However, and in contrast to what Becker (1960) proposed, the academics in the

current study did not engage in continuance commitment as a result of believing that they would not benefit from other opportunities in the labour market. Overall, they were rather positive about this domain, and hence it can be concluded that the above theory does not explain their continuance commitment.

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment conceptualised as one's sense of obligation to the university, in this case that of the faculty staff from the perspective of the academics, was also examined. Overall, a positive normative commitment among faculty staff was perceived by the participants, with the highest agreement found for their belief that a person must always be loyal to his/her university, followed by another belief that being a "university man" or "university woman" is sensible. Similarly, most of the academics who were interviewed reported a perception of high loyalty amongst staff members. The interview findings provided a deeper insight into some of the indicators of the employees' loyalty, which was often expressed as unpaid extra work that some staff were willing to carry out happily. Indeed, it has been stated previously that normative commitment is seen as a loyalty attitude and highly influences social interactions in the sense that it reflects an obligation on behalf of the individual to carry out his/her job satisfactorily in an endeavour to keep his/her membership within the organisation (Ahmad and Abu Bakar, 2003). The public universities group showed significantly higher agreement on normative commitment compared to the private universities, which is interestingly in contrast to the study of Azeem and Akhtar (2014), wherein a moderate level of commitment was reported in the public sector. Further support is also derived from the qualitative interviews, in that most of the interviewed sample from the public sector also displayed a high level of normative commitment in specific forms, such as loyalty to their institution and carrying out unpaid extra work.

Nevertheless, slightly less agreement was noted with regards to not making the decision to quit a job for a better job offer elsewhere, as well as moving from one university to another being seen as being unethical. This finding is interesting, given that whilst it is generally agreed that normative commitment refers to a sense of responsibility to stick to the same organisation, with employees choosing to remain because they feel that they ought to do so (Zia, 2014), such was not a belief or

perhaps even an attitude shared by the academics in the current study. On the contrary, they seemed to be mostly willing to take on another job if the latter were considered better in different ways, and this did not seem to compromise their moral or ethical responsibility as an employee toward their previous workplace. Powell and Meyer (2004) also linked normative commitment to an employee's moral duty to remain in an organisation in response to social pressures, which again does not find support in the findings of the current study. Furthermore, and perhaps mostly from a cultural and religious perspective, it has been suggested previously that the extent to which a person feels that s/he should display loyalty to an organisation is also reflected in their efforts to engage in personal sacrifice and make no attempt to criticise, which are also considered appropriate measures or indicators of an individual's feelings of moral obligation (Jha, 2011). With regards to the current findings, although the participants certainly displayed loyalty to the university, they did not agree that doing so should also involve personal sacrifices such as remaining in the organisation regardless of their career ambition for a better job elsewhere.

As also seen in this study, there is indeed an interrelationship between affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment, and each element may be experienced by individuals at the same time (Meyer, 1990). In addition, it is worth drawing attention to the idea that this study makes its contribution to growing research on normative commitment by bearing in mind that there is a dearth of research in this area. Additionally in this regard, affective commitment tends to overlap significantly with the construct of normative commitment. Furthermore, when asked about their opinion on the relationship between HR practices within the university and their own level of commitment to the university, half of the sample indicated that there is a strong association between the way the university's HR practices are implemented and the way academics are committed to their jobs, in particular HR development. As such, there seems to be an interrelationship between the views of some of the academics on the implementation of HR practices by the university and their level of commitment to their job. Interestingly, although only three participants shared this view, they did not think there is any association between HR practices and commitment, which mostly seemed to be the outcome of a lack of awareness of their workplace's HR practices

or even limited job opportunities causing them to feel committed to their organisation in order to retain their position. Bearing in mind that research in this area is very limited, this necessitates further empirical investigation in the future, with the help of current findings pointing toward a novel direction from an empirical perspective. However, with regards to the type of commitment, no distinction was made by the participants, although no further explanations were provided to shed light on this matter.

7.2.2.2. Views of HR Personnel and Management of Organisational Commitment

Affective commitment

In this section of the chapter, reported findings highlighting the views of HR personnel and management on organisational commitment (affective, continuance and normative) are discussed with specific reference to past research in this area while also considering the current situation of the HE sector in Saudi Arabia. The views of the academic staff and those of HR personnel and management are also compared at the end of this section with an aim to provide a better and more in-depth understanding of any similarities and differences in the perception of organisational commitment.

Affective commitment

The HR and management participants were also interviewed about their perceptions of organisational commitment to the university. Concerning affective commitment, the majority of the participants explained that the university was considered the home of academic staff, or their second family, which again adds support to previous findings from the academics. A strong emotional attachment to the workplace was also reported by a third of the sample of participants who were interviewed, which was also shared by most of the academics. Therefore, it could be concluded that regardless of the nature or job position of the employees, the majority of them were seen to display a positive attitude toward their job, in this case, in the form of a strong sense of belongingness. Nevertheless, some of the HR and management participants referred to a few external factors such as mainly the role played by the manager and

the removal of incentives as having a negative impact on their affective commitment, a notion which was also noted by Zia (2014).

Continuance commitment

Again, similar to the academics, this group also explained that it was not an easy decision for academic staff to leave the university. This group elaborated further on a list of factors that acted as moderators, for instance loyalty, job satisfaction, emotional attachment, job security, location and longevity. The role played by these aspects in influencing continuance commitment should be explored further in new research.

Normative commitment

With regards to normative commitment, both the academic interviewees and the HR group reported a sense of loyalty on behalf of academic staff toward the university, which was also expressed in terms of unpaid extra work on a voluntary basis. For a few participants, they perceived that the priority attributed to the workplace was commendable, for example valuing the job the same as, if not more than, their personal life and also declining a promotion if it was not within the same institution. Similar to the academics, some participants did not perceive any correlation between commitment and perceived HR practices, with plausible explanations pertaining to a lack of interaction between HR and academics and a lack of awareness of the university's HR practices as well as normative commitment. The perception of limited job opportunities as a main explanation was also shared by this group of participants. In contrast to the academics, only three participants perceived a positive association between perceived HR practices and commitment, which is a very interesting finding, as this shows that the nature of one's job can equally affect one's perception and evaluation of HR practices.

Overall, it can be concluded that the views of the two groups of participants on faculty organisational commitment in the work context matched significantly, based on the qualitative findings. It is important to understand that these qualitative findings are able to demonstrate the cultural aspects associated with the study.

7.2.3. Current Views of Job Satisfaction

Similar to the previous first two sections in this chapter, this section also aims to use current findings to discuss the first research question in relation to the investigation of current levels of job satisfaction in Saudi universities. The focus is on the comparison of views between academics and HR managers and employees in line with the fifth research question.

The questionnaire used in this study also aimed to explore the views of the academics about the extent to which they felt satisfied about their current job. Similar to the previous section, the two groups of participants' (academic staff as well as HR and management group) views about job satisfaction in a Saudi university will be discussed. As far as the quantitative findings are concerned, job satisfaction was measured in relation to pay satisfaction, job security, social satisfaction, satisfaction with supervision and growth satisfaction. The qualitative findings emerging from the interviews will also be outlined and discussed for both groups of participants, in line with existing literature on this topic.

7.2.3.1. Views of Academic Staff of Job Satisfaction

Past literature stipulates that in an attempt to assess the satisfaction levels of employees across different departments in an organisation, the latter can then make important decisions to bring about positive changes that could subsequently improve employee performance. Satisfied employees function better, and this in turn determines the success of the business, bearing in mind that job satisfaction leads to positive behaviour while job dissatisfaction results in negative behaviour (Spector, 1997). Pay is the most basic need in the work environment (Luthans, 2005), and as far as the Saudi educational organisation is concerned in the current study, in general most of the participants reported more satisfaction than dissatisfaction with regards to pay satisfaction. In particular, they were happy about their salary as well as fringe benefits to which they were entitled. However, slightly less satisfaction was noted about receiving fair payment in accordance with the amount of contribution they make to the university. These are interesting findings, especially given that Spector (1996) and Al-Sebaie (2000) both clarified that pay in itself is not an influential factor for satisfaction but it is rather the employees' perception of the fairness of the pay system that determines whether they feel satisfied. Likewise, Morse (1953) as well

as Petrescu and Simmons (2008) reported that faculty members are mostly dissatisfied if they experience pay inequity, especially on the level of discipline or the amount of work contributed. Perhaps in this study fairness was evaluated in reference to the employees' perceived level of contribution to their workplace which seems to be slightly lower than what they anticipated. Nonetheless and as a matter of fact, there is increasing research evidence suggesting that there is a positive correlation between pay and job satisfaction which is also the case in this study (e.gs., Witt & Nye, 1992; Liacqua et al., 2001; DeVaney & Chen, 2003). Furthermore, as shown in this study, the public universities group showed significantly higher scores on pay satisfaction compared to the private universities. This is in contrast to previous research on job satisfaction among public sector employees in Saudi Arabia, whereby only a moderate level of job satisfaction was reported (Azeem & Akhtar, 2014). Pay satisfaction was also positively associated with perceived HR practices by the majority of the participants. As explained by Spreitzer (1995), the perception of practices such as performance-related pay is often viewed as a very good incentive for workers to perform even better. Hence, it could be suggested that pay satisfaction can in turn also influence their perception of HR practices positively, which could be a plausible explanation with regards to this study. The participants were also mostly satisfied about feeling secure in their current job, the social side of their job, especially in relation to helping others at work and socialising with them, and the supervisory team, as they felt that they were treated fairly, well-respected, received support and guidance. Overall satisfaction was expressed about the quality of supervision as well as the extent to which they felt that they could grow as a professional, with the highest satisfaction recorded on finding the job challenging enough, although they still seemed slightly less satisfied in terms of personal growth and development while on task. Lee, Nam, Park and Lee (2006) stated that employees are mostly committed to an organisation if they feel empowered, and this empowerment indeed paves the way to job satisfaction (Jarrar & Zairi, 2002). In addition, according to Weeratunga (2003), it is important also to allow an employee to participate in planning his or her own career, as this can have a positive effect on job satisfaction. As such, it could be suggested that perhaps the academics in the present study did not necessarily feel empowered and perceived that they had enough opportunities to engage in personal

growth and development. This could be a plausible explanation for a lower satisfaction level in this area. There is accumulating research emphasising the relationship between practice of training and development and job satisfaction (Garcia, 2005; Tzafrir, 2006).

Empirical support for the above findings pertaining to the positive relationship between job satisfaction and job security stems from a study of university teachers. It was found that academics in the public sector had higher satisfaction because of their perceived level of job security than their private sector counterparts (Khan et al., 2012). Based on the findings of the current study, the public universities group also showed significantly higher agreement compared to the private universities group in relation to satisfaction with job security. Although not in direct reference to job satisfaction, Alnaqbi (2011) and Adkins et al. (2001) also put forward some supporting evidence whereby employees who felt secure in their job displayed more commitment to their workplace. Therefore, it seems that there is a dearth of empirical research focusing specifically on the existing association between job security and job satisfaction, which, more importantly, also emphasises the important contribution of the current study in helping to shed some more light on this area. The academics' social satisfaction finds support in past research by Kanter (1968), which referred to commitment as a concept which also involves consideration and cohesion, including a form of attachment an employee has with the social relationships within an organisation. The importance attached to social relationships in creating positive feelings in employees was also documented by Sheldon (1971), Buchanan (1974), Robbins (1996) and, more recently, the study by Smeenk et al. (2006), which examined the effect of HRM practices on organisational commitment among Dutch university employees.

The role played by the participants' supervisory team in eliciting positive feelings in the form of job satisfaction was also reported by Tack and Patitu (1992) as well as George et al. (2008), who equally found a positive association between the two. Furthermore, perhaps closely linked to support and guidance on behalf of the supervisory team of the academics in this study, Madlock (2008) also found that a supervisor's communication competence and employee satisfaction were positively linked. More importantly, and in relevance to the Saudi context, attention has been

drawn to the role played by the supervisory team in relation to the quality of treatment in determining the level of satisfaction of workers (Elamin and Alomaim, 2011). Similar findings amongst academics in other countries were also reported in the UK (Oshagbemi, 1996) and Uganda (Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005).

Further support for the aforementioned findings is derived from the interviews, in which the majority of the academics also reported an overall positive level of job satisfaction. It was gathered from the interviews that positive feedback on performance (Hunter, 2006; Katzell, Thompson and Guzzo, 1992), a feeling of appreciation (Wright and Kehoe, 2008), opportunities to consult with staff members (Oshagbemi, 1996; Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005) and a reasonable workload (Witt and Nye, 1992; Miller et al., 2001; Schuster and Finklestein, 2006) were all contributing factors to their job satisfaction. However, for three participants, administrative elements caused dissatisfaction, in particular implemented policies, a perceived lack of clarity of what was expected by the HR department as well as a salary perceived to be much lower than what they were contributing to the university. The latter finding was also reported by the academics in the questionnaire findings in the form of diminished job satisfaction. As stated by Deery and Jago (2015), it is important for an organisation to invite participation from its staff, in order to implement policies and practices with the most traction. In doing so, perhaps this could also contribute to enhancing their job satisfaction on this level.

7.2.3.2. Views of the HR Personnel and Management of Job Satisfaction

Similar to the above section, this one will present and discuss the views of HR personnel and management staff on job satisfaction. Importantly, this section will also point out any similarities and/or differences in the views of the two groups of participants. This comparative approach is key to a better understanding of this topic from different standpoints pertaining to one's assigned job role and related responsibilities and expectations.

As far as the HR and management participants were concerned, the interview findings again mostly point to overall positive job satisfaction – as was the case for the academic staff. In contrast to the academics, though, this group laid more emphasis on the steps to be taken in order to address any issue of dissatisfaction

amongst staff, such as communication with employee/s in this regard, which was the most significant measure in their opinion. Similar to the academics, a list of factors influencing job satisfaction was also mentioned by this group, for instance salaries and allowances, a feeling of job security, workload, feeling appreciated, work environment (Neal et al., 2000; Gupta and Singh, 2015; Rinehart and Short, 1993; Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005) and emotional commitment (Spector, 1997).

Actually, it is often acknowledged that job satisfaction is affected by countless variables on different levels, such as the individual, organisational, environmental, social and cultural. Hence, this could explain why the participants in the present study viewed faculty employees in an organisation as not always experiencing satisfaction unvaryingly.

In contrast to the academics where no correlation was reported between the satisfaction variables as well as overall satisfaction and HR practices, the HR group reported a positive correlation between satisfaction and HR practices, with job satisfaction listed as the main factor explaining this correlation. Again, these findings point to a need for further research in this area, given that it is so far quite limited.

7.2.4. Relationships between perceived HR practices, Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment

The following section aims to answer the second research question by examining the nature, strength and direction of relationships between HR practices as perceived by staff, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities. Current findings are also discussed, using the proposed conceptual framework from Chapter One.

Perceived HR practices with organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction:

With the aim of predicting variances in HRPs, using Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction variables, it was found that only attraction predicted normative commitment. Along the same lines, attraction was negatively correlated (using Pearson's correlation coefficient) with normative commitment and job security satisfaction. It could be argued that perhaps once the employee is fully attached to the organisation and satisfied with the salary, they in turn attribute less importance to incentives. In fact, it is important to note that none of the HRPs variables were

found to be significantly correlated with overall job satisfaction as well as overall organisational commitment. Results from the interviews indicated that there were mixed relationships between perceived HR practices and commitment in general, with some viewing positive associations and others indicating no relation at all. As a matter of fact, there is not much available empirical evidence or even theoretical explanations for the aforementioned findings. People who display normative commitment often also feel obliged to return a favour when one has been offered to them (Fullerton, 2014), thus giving minimal importance to developmental opportunities in the workplace. This perhaps also explains the negative correlation (using Pearson's correlation coefficient) between normative commitment and development reported in this study. That is, it might be possible that the higher they scored on normative commitment, the less value they subsequently attached to the need for staff development.

In particular, although no correlation (using Pearson's correlation coefficient) was found between overall perceived HR practices and continuance commitment, interview data revealed that it is a relevant and an important aspect contributing to faculties overall organisational commitment in Saudi universities. It is worth noting that there is not much – if any – specific research, including in a Saudi context, which has investigated the relationship between overall perceived HR practices and continuance commitment. As such, this is an area for future research on HR practices to explore further, bearing in mind that the findings of the current study can be seen as a stepping-stone to examining this interrelationship in greater depth.

Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction:

In terms of the correlation (using Pearson's correlation coefficient) between the commitment variables and the satisfaction variables, it was found that affective commitment has a significant positive relationship with continuance commitment and normative commitment as well as with all of the satisfaction variables (i.e. pay satisfaction, job security satisfaction, social satisfaction, supervisory satisfaction and growth satisfaction). As previously highlighted in this chapter, the interrelationship between the different components of organisational commitment again finds support in the proposition of Mercurio (2015), who suggested that affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment are linked to

each other and may all be experienced by people at the same time. Interestingly, though, it seems that there is still a dearth of research on the association between the other two components and normative commitment, given an existing assumption that they are similar concepts. Nonetheless, there is still some empirical evidence suggesting the contrary (e.g. Johnson et al., 2010; McCallum et al., 2014), and so it could be argued that this assumption necessitates further empirical examination in the future, in order to lend support to the current findings.

Concerning the reported positive correlation (using Pearson's correlation coefficient) between affective commitment and job satisfaction (all its variables), it has been reported previously that if an employee shows commitment to an organisation and henceforth is also able to retain a job, this can have a positive effect on the employee's level of job satisfaction (Khan, Ghauri and Akram, 2012). Normative commitment was also found to share a positive and significant correlation (using Pearson's correlation coefficient) with job satisfaction (all its variables), similar to the study of Cetin (2006), in which job satisfaction was related to normative commitment in a sample of Turkish academics. Altogether, there is evidence suggesting that an empowered employee is committed to his or her organisation (Lee, Nam, Park and Lee, 2006), and this subsequently paves the way for the experience of job satisfaction (Jarrar and Zairi, 2002). All of the above findings seem to confirm that human resource practices can play a determining role in the level of commitment shown to the organisation by the employee (Suifan, 2015).

Whilst pay satisfaction was positively correlated (using Pearson's correlation coefficient) with all of the other satisfaction variables measured in this study, job security satisfaction only showed a positive association with social satisfaction, supervisory satisfaction and growth satisfaction, and supervisory satisfaction was only significantly correlated with growth satisfaction. Based on the current literature on associations between the aforementioned components of job satisfaction, there does not seem to be any specific research that has equally tried to investigate these relationships or even employees' perceptions thereof. Therefore, the current study makes a valued contribution to the literature with regards to this specific area in the field of HR. Nevertheless, and in relation to pay satisfaction, Al-Sebai (2000) also found that how the employee perceives the fairness of the pay system does indeed

affect their overall job satisfaction. In addition, organisations that work toward investing in their employees on various levels are also in a better position to pave the way for better opportunities at work, in turn improving satisfaction among employees (Taj al-Din and Maalitafti, 2008), including providing an employee with a chance to also develop their own career (Weeratunga, 2003).

In summary, the relationship between perceived HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment is comparatively weaker than the aforementioned reported findings in this area. As it stands, it is still unclear why a rather weak correlation was found in the current study, and perhaps future research in a Saudi HE context could probe further into this issue. It may be possible that in a Saudi HE context employees mostly tend to relate to each of these variables separately in the absence of a well-structured HR department. This remains a source of speculation which is yet to be explored. Furthermore, this lack of a clear association between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and perceived HR practices could be explained by the fact that, for most employees, HR practices are mostly unimportant unless there is a specific issue that needs to be addressed in relation to the working relationship. It could also be argued that given that the respondents are professional academics whose identity is focused much more upon their work rather than their workplace, the organisational setting may be less important to them. Nonetheless, given that a significant association between these variables was still reported, future studies in this area should still recognise an existing inter-relationship between them.

7.2.5. Influence of Demographic Variables on Perceived HR Practices, Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment

The current study was also interested in exploring the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the sample and perceived HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Therefore, the following section aims to answer this particular research question with the main focus on specific demographic variables such as gender, education, age, role and experience. In other words, to what extent do demographic variables (gender, education, age, role, experience) influence participants' views on HR practice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities (research question 4)?

Although it is widely acknowledged that the prevailing nature of gender segregation does have an impact on human resource practices in Saudi Arabia, no significant gender differences between both generated in HR practices, commitment or satisfaction were reported. Interestingly, gender differences in other societies such as Norway have been reported in relation to organisational commitment amongst academics (Falkenberg, 2003). Likewise, Marchiori and Henkin (2006) found that gender was related to normative commitment, while Kumasey, Delle and Ofei (2014) concluded that male employees showed more organisational commitment than female employees. Interestingly, and similar to the current findings, Pourghaz, Tamini, and Karamind (2011) also found no correlation between gender and commitment. As for the effect of gender on job satisfaction, although Benton and Halloran (1991) found that men reported higher satisfaction than women, Quinn, Staines and McCullough (1974) and Spector (1996) found no significant gender effect on job satisfaction, which is also the case in the current study. However, there is still accumulating research pointing toward gender differences in relation to job satisfaction (e.g. Vecchio, 2000; Green 2000). Therefore, the mixed findings recorded above suggest that the relationship between gender and satisfaction still remains inconclusive, with some researchers in fact advocating a non-linear relationship (Texas, 2004). Given the Saudi context and the issue of gender segregation in its society, this finding is perhaps unexpected, thus directing future research to examine further the influence of gender on perceived HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

In contrast to no gender effect, age was found to have a significant effect on continuance commitment, normative commitment and satisfaction with job security amongst the academics. The study by Al Kahtani (2012) on Saudi public sector organisations also found a significant association between age and organisational commitment, with age being a predictor of organisational commitment. In fact, as age increased, commitment also increased. On the other hand, in another study based on a university in Saudi Arabia, Iqbal et al. (2011) reported no significant correlation between commitment and age. According to a report on American teachers, conducted by the National Centre for Education Statistics report (1997), both age and gender had little or no significant impact on job satisfaction. As far as

the relationship between age and job satisfaction is concerned, existing research mostly reports mixed findings in this area, ranging from positive linear and negative linear through to no significant relationship (Bernal, Synder and McDaniel, 1998). Al-Rubaish, Rahim, Abumadini and Wosornu (2009) examined the level of satisfaction amongst academic staff in the King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia and found that females, especially aged less than 40, displayed the lowest level of satisfaction. Hence, overall, existing research in this area indicates inconclusive results. More importantly, the specific relationship between age and satisfaction with job security is yet to be researched, as there seems to be very limited empirical evidence available to either support or contradict the positive relationship between the two, as shown in this study.

The academic ranking of the participants was found to have a significant effect on affective commitment, pay satisfaction and growth satisfaction. Research explaining these findings seems to be limited to the study of Marchiori and Henkin (2006), reporting a significant association between academic rank and continuance commitment, and to that of Affum-Osei et al. (2015), also reporting the same finding, albeit in relation to organisational commitment as a general construct. Evans (1998) identified a list of factors responsible for low organisational commitment in the educational sector, amongst which were also the educator's low salary and position. Not much research is available to shed light on the association between academic ranking and pay satisfaction as well as growth satisfaction. As such, the current study provides novel findings in this area that certainly necessitate further investigation in the near future. With regards to the experience of the academics, this was also shown to have a significant effect on continuance commitment and normative commitment. Again, in order to have a better understanding of this association, the latter needs more empirical attention in new studies on HR practices. So far, there seems to be a considerable dearth of empirical support in this area.

7.2.6. Influence of Saudi Context on Perceived HR Practices

In an attempt to answer the third research question, this section mainly examines cultural/social influences on HR practices in Saudi universities from the perspectives of academics and HR employees.

Both the academic staff and HR and management participants were interviewed about their views on the extent to which they perceived that the Saudi context in which they were working had an influence on HR practices. However, not all interview questions presented to the HR and management group were used with the academics, since some questions were not related to them at all. The sections below outline a discussion of the interview findings for both groups of participants in close reference to existing literature on cultural influences (including Saudi influence) on HR practices.

7.2.6.1. Views of Academic Staff of Saudi Context on Perceived HR Practices

When interviewed about the decision-making structure at the university, more than half of the sample described it as being 'flat'. Where some sense of empowerment does exist, staff and management were perceived to work hand in hand in relation to the decision-making process. That is, according to most of the participants, staff were seen to be more involved in decision-making, and this was also attributed by one participant as being linked to their nationality. This is indeed a positive attribute of the functioning of the Saudi university, in line with Abdul Hamid (1996), who acknowledged that providing decision-making responsibility to employees can help boost the performance of an organisation. It is very important to consider and understand that the literature is able to provide the supportive understanding related to the employee's empowerment linked with organisational performance, which can also contribute to overall job satisfaction and commitment.

The prevalence of Saudisation in society was again emphasised by more than half of the participants as being rather problematic, because it could possibly create the same sense of polarisation and could create a hindrance while the expected outcome should be supportive. That is, as mentioned by the academics, very often Saudis who are appointed do not necessarily have the relevant or the best skills required to perform their role at its best. This perception again finds support from Dosary and Rahman (2011), as previously pointed out in this chapter. In addition, sometimes in comparison to non-Saudi employees, they can be less committed to their role if the sense of polarisation does exist. Successfully competing in a knowledge economy is especially important in the case of Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries, and

therefore, as producers of knowledge, universities are expected to value all of their staff (Lynch, 2007). A few participants explained that although Saudisation has its benefits to their society, it is still worth advocating for diversity, as the latter provides an opportunity for institutions to learn from other cultures, which is of great value and can be helpful in creating a more comprehensive and committed workforce. Actually, it is difficult to deny that Saudisation can indeed have an impact on the perception of HR practices adopted by organisations, with no exception for universities. Issues like Saudisation and *Wasta* are unique to Saudi Arabia and should be considered when planning and implementing HR practices in the kingdom (Leat and El-Kot, 2007) because an individual's perception of the abovementioned factors can be considered as more contributive factors.

As far as *Wasta* is concerned, almost all of the academics recognised its prevalence in Saudi society, with some concerns raised by a few participants about equal opportunities and a potential overall negative impact. In fact, past research in this area has concluded that a perception exists around procedural and organisational injustices following the influence of *Wasta* that affect employees in the Saudi workplace, regardless of their gender. Furthermore, in the performance appraisal process in a Saudi organisation, these perceived injustices are incongruent with Western values of meritocracy, which is strongly embedded in procedural justice and a distinct form of egalitarianism. Nonetheless, it was made clear by most of the participants that any person who is appointed should still have the relevant qualifications and skills to accomplish his/her role, which requires being tested through an appropriate and more structured approach and the development of relevant procedures.

7.2.6.2. Views of HR Personnel and Management of Saudi Context on Perceived HR Practices

The HR and management participants elaborated on the issue of fair treatment of employees in Saudi society, with half of the sample agreeing that HR practices at the university were generally effective, regardless of nationality and gender differences. This is to say that equality was, for example, mostly perceived in terms of pay, promotion opportunities and health insurance. However, although they came from very few participants, some concerns were still raised in relation to existing inequality

(although minor) between Saudi and non-Saudi workers, with one participant accounting for this situation as the university being in a 'transitional period' as far as equal treatment was concerned. Interestingly, the study of Elamin and Tlaiss (2015) in Saudi Arabia found that interactional justice had more significance for managers/employees than distributive and procedural justice. Fair treatment across employees in Saudi Arabia is of the utmost importance, as there is research suggesting that citizenship has a key role in influencing satisfaction levels. Moreover, even Saudi nationals are at risk of feeling less satisfied than their expatriate colleagues, as they feel more tied to their country than others and hence are less willing to leave their country for a more satisfying job position (e.g. Al-Rubaish, Rahim, Abumadini, and Wosornu, 2009). Besides, Elamin and Alomaim (2011) found that for both Saudi employees and expatriate workers in Saudi Arabia, job satisfaction was influenced by their perceptions of fairness regarding organisational rules, procedures and policies.

As far as gender was concerned, overall, and based on the responses of the participants from the interviews, it could be deduced that gender segregation did not seem to be a major issue, at least not in the context of the universities under study, with some participants even acknowledging that the university environment was quite female-dominated. This is a very interesting finding, bearing in mind that gender segregation in Saudi Arabia is a very common and accepted practice, as it is mainly considered as a way to protect the honour of women (Baki, 2004). The above finding in the context of this particular Saudi university could perhaps be explained whereby it is commonly known that whilst it is easy to implement gender segregation in specific organisations such as banking, it is not always feasible in other work environments (e.g. hospitals and hotels), as these mostly tend to be inevitably mixed environments. As such, educational institutions seem to be no exception, given that education is for all, regardless of gender in most countries.

Similar to the academics, the HR and management group (five participants) also reported the university's managerial style as being mostly authoritative, with an emphasis on shared decision-making and goal setting. Although not investigated in this study, it is important to point out that there is accumulating empirical evidence suggesting that there is an association between leadership style and job satisfaction

(e.g. Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson, and Spangler, 1995; Jones, Kantak, Futrell, and Johnston, 1996; de Vries, Roe, and Taillieu, 1998 as cited in Baker, 2011). With specific reference to managerial style, more recently, it has been recognised that there has been a move away from the traditional collegial system, whereby professors are given more opportunities to display high levels of independence and autonomy, thereby experiencing more autonomy, away from strong managerial influence (Egginton, 2010). However, in terms of decision-making, a handful of participants perceived this process as being mostly one-way, from committees to staff members. This is somewhat in contrast to the responses of the academics in this regard.

In terms of the perceptions of the HR and management group of the impact of Saudisation, their responses were very similar to those of the academics. That is, they also perceived this practice as having potential detrimental effects on their society and labour market in the form of the low recruitment of skilled labour while prioritising the Saudi nationality as the main eligibility criterion for application purposes. As such, this seems to imply that more efforts still need to be put into the recruitment process to ensure a higher level of overall worker effectiveness. Additionally, they noted limited exposure to cultural diversity as well as a potential risk of Saudi employees exhibiting a low level of work commitment, which is often less the case for foreign employees. Similarly, this group of participants also considered *Wasta* as being part and parcel of Saudi society, and they mostly viewed it in a negative light with an emphasis on how this process leads to the recruitment of unsuitable qualified people. Nonetheless, a couple of participants justified the practice of *Wasta* in cases where a well-qualified person could benefit from a social network and connections, in order to gain access to a certain job position. Thus, this group of participants contributed to understanding the practice of *Wasta* from a broader perspective, without necessarily categorising it as being purely negative and non-meritocratic.

The ensuing chapter sets out to provide a brief summary of the main findings, in line with the aims and objectives of the present study. It also provides concluding remarks and suggestions in relation to the extent to which perceived HR practices are associated with job satisfaction levels and job/organisational commitment in a university setting in Saudi Arabia. Last but not least, in the chapter, attention is drawn

to the implications of this study, its limitations as well as future recommendations based on the reported findings.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

As noted in chapter 1, there is still a rather alarming dearth of research on HR practices in Saudi universities in comparison to other organisational settings in the kingdom. Current literature on HR practices is extensive. However, to date, *perceived* HR practices including within a specific cultural context have received much less empirical and theoretical attention. Therefore, the main aim of this study was to examine HR practices as perceived by staff within university settings in Saudi Arabia and the extent to which HR practices are associated with participants' (academics, HR personnel and management participants) level of job satisfaction and their commitment to their universities. HR practices were also examined within this cultural context, with specific reference to how Saudi society also affected the perceptions of the participants. Moreover, the extent to which demographic variables (gender, age, role, and experience) influenced the participants' views on HR practice, job satisfaction, organisational commitment in Saudi universities was also

examined and discussed, along with the identification of plausible reasons for which academic/teaching employees have different opinions compared to managers and HR employees when it comes to the perception of HR practices. As outlined in previous chapters of this thesis, the aforementioned research aims find support in the context of universities as producers of knowledge to value the area of HR practices and how they are perceived by employees if they are to remain competitive and relevant in a knowledge-based economy. As noted in chapter 1, this is increasingly essential given that Saudi Arabia is a country with a growing interest in expanding its educational sector with a specific focus on higher education (Alshuwaikhat, Adenle, & Saghir, 2016).

This chapter summarises the main findings of the current study and discusses key contributions from both a theoretical and a practical perspective. In this section, some recommendations and directions for future research will also be discussed, along with the limitations of the study.

8.2. Main Findings

In an attempt to answer the first research question on how HR practices are currently being perceived by staff and, what are the current levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities, the main findings of the present research mostly revolve around mixed views on HR practices in Saudi universities, from the academics and the HR personnel /management. This study chose to adopt a comparative approach with an aim to also examine whether academics/teaching employees have different opinions compared to managers and HR employees when it comes to HR practices. In terms of HR planning, attraction and retention, most of the academics held more of a negative rather than a positive view on the extent to which these were successfully carried out at the university. However, they displayed mixed views on the extent to which the university provided opportunities for staff in the field of HR development. Similar to the academics, the HR personnel /management group also held mostly a negative view about effective HR planning and an equally positive view about HR development practices. In contrast to the academics, and in relation to HR attraction and retention, the HR group mostly elaborated on the various ways in which they perceived the university invested in

these in order to achieve their targets and increase overall performance, which mostly reflect a positive rather than a negative perception.

With regards to organisational commitment, both groups recognised that staff members generally reflected affective commitment, continuous commitment as well as normative commitment towards their organisation. Likewise, a generally positive attitude was recorded on behalf of both the academic and the HR group toward experiencing a sense of satisfaction in their job on several levels, such as pay, job security, supervision and staff development opportunities. With an aim to also examine the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between perceived HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities, each of the components of HR practices in this study (i.e. planning, attraction, retention and development) were found to be important, based on the significant existing interrelationship across each of the PHRPs variables. But it should be stated that that PHRPs did not show expected correlations with job Satisfaction and organisational commitment. Moreover, there was also a significant relationship between organisational commitment variables and the satisfaction variables, thereby indicating that each of these concepts has an influence on the other.

This study was also interested in assessing the extent to which demographic variables (e.g. gender, education, age, role, experience) influence participants' views on HR practice, job satisfaction and organisational commitment in Saudi universities. No gender differences were reported in relation to the influence of demographic variables on HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment. However, age had a significant effect on continuous commitment, normative commitment and satisfaction with job security. The academic ranking of the participants also had a significant effect on affective commitment, pay satisfaction and growth satisfaction. Last but not least, the experience of the academics also had a significant effect on continuous commitment and normative commitment.

One of the main contributions of the current study to existing literature is also the exploration of the cultural/social influences on HR practices in Saudi universities. It was revealed that the cultural aspect of Saudi society seemed also to have an impact on perceived HR practices amongst the participants. That is, the decision-making process within the organisation was viewed mostly as being characterised by

collaborative work between leaders and staff members, while there was an underlying authoritative managerial style. Fair treatment was provided mostly to all employees, including non-Saudi workers, gender segregation was not perceived to be particularly prevalent in their educational work setting, although it remains an issue in the wider Saudi society, whilst other issues unique to the Saudi context, such as Saudisation and *Wasta*, were clearly reported by the participants to have a major influence on HR practices. As highlighted in chapter 1, countries such as Saudi Arabia indeed have distinctive characteristics embedded in their cultural background, values, beliefs and traditions that cannot be assumed to be similar to Western-dominated HR systems. Hence current findings are valuable as an insight into this distinctiveness in HR practices as perceived by employees in Saudi universities which is expected to be quite a different experience from employees in Western universities.

Here, the findings revealed various core issues and challenges facing HR practices and how they are perceived in Saudi universities and hence these should be addressed with the aim of improving job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst faculty staff members. Due to the similar nature of institutions in other Middle Eastern countries, particularly its closest neighbours in the GCC, these same findings could be extended to these countries as well. This is especially relevant in line with observations made in chapter 1 concerning increasing mobility of workers from other countries to Saudi Arabia; some with similar Islamic cultural backgrounds whilst others with different cultural backgrounds. As such, current findings could be used to cater for both Middle Eastern workers and also, to better equip those with a different cultural insight. It would appear that Saudi universities based on these findings do not proactively engage in human resource planning, attraction, retention, and development. The author' observation as a Saudi national and university faculty is that Human Resource departments are not well established. Hence, yet another important contribution of this research as pointed out in chapter 1 is the possibility for the findings to inform the development of HR Departments in Saudi universities and/or the tailoring of HR practices to better address the needs of staff across different levels while also considering the unique culture of Saudi Arabia. In many instances, there are very few personnel often limited to a human resource manager

and a couple human resource assistants (Achoui, 2009). The limited size of the department and resources invested in this departmental function does not fully support a proactive human resource agenda. The limited size also reflects the unavailability of specialty roles where existing human resource personnel in Saudi universities that are forced to be generalists simply dealing with more mainstream human resource functions on a less than strategic level. Previous research in Saudi also supports the notion that there is a lack of HRD skilled employees and managers to manage the HRD structures and functions (Fadhel, 2007).

Another issue raised was the lack of a focused plan, and the lack of policies and tools to attract and retain the right staff, in this case—university faculty. As highlighted in chapter 1, it is important to also ensure that adherence to Saudisation occurs in parallel with the recruitment and retaining of the best qualified staff especially females. However, with reference to Saudisation identified as a major issue by the participants in terms of limiting the recruitment of the 'best' workforce, this could also underlie some unspoken tension in this process. University staff recognized the HE sector as one which should advocate for efficiency over and above the nationality of employees/academics. Hence, negotiating between saudisation and the recruitment of the right staff can also create some tension. There is evidence suggesting that perceptions of employees can largely influence their behaviours and attitudes (Arthur, 1994; Huselid, 1995, as cited in Alnaqbi, 2011). In line with this, findings revealed that HR practices were perceived by university faculty not to be meaningfully practiced at Saudi universities. This is in part challenging for Saudi universities because they lack sufficient qualified local personnel to fill the burgeoning need for academics to teach at the continuously expanding higher education institutions. As they are introducing new programmes and disciplines as well as totally new institutions that are opening up (KSA Ministry of Higher Education, 2014).

Results indicated generally that there was no significant correlation between Perceived HR practices and Organisational commitment, Perceived HR practices and job satisfaction. This means that there was no evidence that supported the relationship between Perceived HR practices and these factors. On the other hand, the last two variables examined the relationship of organisational commitment and

Job satisfaction exclusive of HR practices were found to be significant. The researcher believes these findings are quite instructive.

The findings of the quantitative research in terms of the relationships between HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction were unexpected. As a review of the extant literature revealed that there is an expected direct positive relationships between HR practices and Organisational Commitment, HR practices and Job Satisfaction (as evidenced in Chapter 2&3: Literature review), But notably these were largely in different business and/or country contexts. The quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that the majority of employees of Saudi universities felt that existing HR practices as perceived by staff did not have any impact on Job Satisfaction and organisational commitment. It is possible that the study and implementation of HR practices in Saudi Arabia universities is still weak. With very little research carried out in this area. Especially in the academic context, it is possible that Saudi universities have an unstructured, weak and essentially ad hoc and heuristic approach towards HR practices. The findings of quantitative and qualitative research also indicate that the leaderships and managements of Saudi universities definitely have to take up the issue of HR practices and its perception amongst the faculty members in a planned and systematic manner if they wish to achieve effective results by way of enhancement in Organisational Commitment, Job Satisfaction.

Again, as a reflection of the unsupported relationships between HR practices as perceived by staff and Organisational commitment and job satisfaction, the descriptive statistics and qualitative findings indicate that on all perceived HR practices dimensions, the study participants were on average between the disagree and neutral range, which shows is a poor assessment of the performance of the human resources department and its practices. Therefore, it is clear that Saudi universities do need to place investment in raising the awareness about the HR practices amongst their faculty members and most importantly, place more dedicated investment in HR practices within their institutions.

As discussed and evidenced above, drawing on the findings of the study and referential support from the academic literature, the author has illustrated the critical importance of the culture in developing and conducting HRM policy and practice. This necessitates improved levels of HR planning, attraction, retention and

development practices within universities in Saudi Arabia. The findings in this study have unveiled that HR practices sub dimensions and their practices are strongly influenced by culture at least within universities in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government has recognised the importance of HRD and raising the standards of technical and scientific educational institutions, they have also commenced strategy in terms of reforming and developing policies specifically in higher education institutions. This is a first step, but this also needs to transcend into HRM practice within the universities. That can be effectively and efficiently utilised to not only attract and retain the best quality faculty but also increase the global competitiveness of the Saudi universities through improved performance.

8.3. Theoretical and Practical Research Contributions

8.3.1. Theoretical Contribution

In light of no 'Arab' management theory (Ali, 1993), the findings of the current study are valuable, given that research in this area, especially in the context of HE in Saudi Arabia and even in the wider Middle Eastern context and its neighbouring GCC countries, seems to be somewhat limited. Herein lies potential contributions of this doctoral thesis with respect to filling the gap and adding to the extant literature on an under-researched subject area as well as in the country/ or regional context as a GCC country and emerging market. As such a major theoretical contribution of this study is the identification of the role that Saudi Arabian culture plays in influencing HR practices in the country context. From a theoretical standpoint, the "Islamic gender regime" approach to understand gender imbalances and complexities involved regarding the status of women in the workplace (Metcalfe, 2006) has been introduced in chapter 1. Although not directly explored in this study, the possibility to establish a link between this approach and currently reported perceived HR practices can be useful if one aspires to better understand the lived experiences of female employees in Saudi universities. For example, this study revealed that gender segregation, which is a commonly experienced issue across sectors in Saudi Arabia, did not seem to be a matter of concern in the context of this study as no gender differences were identified in job satisfaction and organisational commitment. As such, this study raises some interesting questions: to what extent is the "Islamic

gender regime" approach implemented in Saudi universities from a HR perspective? Is this to the benefit of female employees? If so, in what ways? These are potential interesting areas for future research to investigate in order to develop a more comprehensive cultural understanding of this topic.

Along the same line and as previously outlined in this thesis (chapter 1), the Saudi organisational context is also characteristic of Saudisation and Wasta that can influence work-related attitudes as well as career opportunities, and which are commonly accepted in the community. These issues have also been reported by the participants in this study. These findings contribute to theory by enhancing our understanding of perceived HR practices within a very specific cultural context; the Saudi HE organisational setting. In particular, current findings further support SHRM theory which stipulates that human resource practices affect performance via employees' behaviours and attitudes (Arthur, 1994; Huslid, 1995 as cited in Alnaqbi, 2011). Furthermore it could also be suggested that the concept of Wasta is a reflection of the social exchange theory based on norms of reciprocity within social relationships (Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013). That is, employees who receive economic or socio-emotional benefits from their employers typically feel obligated to return the favour (Blau, 1964; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). However, a direct association between Wasta and the social exchange theory is yet to be established although there is some evidence suggesting that since organisational justice finds support from the social exchange theory, relationships between employers and employees have to be less influenced by power and personal contacts to promote the perception of a link between contribution and performance in a more ethical sense (Harbi, Thursfield, & Bright, 2017). Along the same line, it would also be interesting for future studies to focus on the association between Wasta and perceived HR practices with an emphasis on how this could potentially impact organisational commitment and job satisfaction in Saudi universities. Wasta, as part of the cultural aspects of the Saudi organisational setting, equally contributes to other theoretical frameworks such as the obligatory commitment theory. As stated by Mercurio (2015), this theory advocates a sense of obligation arising in response to specific norms that can cause an individual to internalise the need to reciprocate specific benefits in order to meet perceived expectations; which could also be the

case in the context of Wasta. Therefore, Wasta as explored in this study sheds further light on the obligatory commitment theory which, so far, has not been linked to this cultural aspect in a non-western context. However, empirical evidence for this association is yet to be found.

Furthermore, examining perceived HR practices amongst the academics and HR personnel/management group is another contribution of this research, as it also helped to provide an in-depth insight into the perceptions and experiences of HR practices from two different perspectives. In so doing, this could entail positive implications for the university on both a financial and an academic level. It is also worth highlighting that since both job satisfaction and organizational commitment were reported by the participants in this study, this adds further support to the relevance of fulfilment theory in the context of Saudi HE. With specific reference to the sample of female employees in this study, since gender segregation was not experienced this could have contributed towards sustaining a high level of organizational commitment. This is also in line with the cognitive appraisal theory. The likelihood of scoring higher on organizational commitment is greater in the presence of perceived positive outcomes (Marescaux et al., 2013). As such, although not directly examined, perhaps this was also the case for the female participants in this study. Present findings also support the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 2002). Since academics scored high on continuance commitment this also implies that they sought adequate resources as support in an attempt to balance work stress. All in all, current findings are certainly valuable from a theoretical standpoint bearing in mind that they seem to provide further support to existing theories on HRM practices.

Correspondingly, it is important to highlight that in Saudi Arabia the HR department is mostly referred to as “employee affairs,” which perhaps also implies that future research could examine whether there is any difference between commonly known and structured HR departments in Western countries and the employee relations departments in Saudi organisational settings, especially in terms of whether any such difference could have an impact on the perceptions of HR personnel. The development of the literature themes allowed to understand the overall structured development approach, with the clear identification of aspects associated with the

employee's perceptions of HR practices. The contextualisation of organisational commitment and job satisfaction was also the key aspect of the literature, with the focus provided on demographic and cultural aspects within these areas. Whilst there is a lot of research highlighting the influence of demographic characteristics on perceptions across various fields, there still seems to be limited theoretical understanding of the influence of demographic background on perceived HR practices especially in a Saudi context. As such, the current research makes another theoretical contribution to the literature on the commonly established marked influence of demographic variables on people's perceptions; and even more so in organizational research.

The current limited theoretical information associated with the Saudi context enabled this thesis to provide a structured understanding and development of information within the literature context associated with the Saudi context, by considering perceived HR practices, organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Therefore, overall, it should be noted that this study contributes to the theoretical background on SHRM by taking into consideration the cultural context of HR practices as perceived by employees in a Saudi HE context. Although past research has drawn considerable attention to employee attributions about HR practices (Nishii, Lepak, & Scheider, 2008), it seems that so far, there is yet to be a theory explaining the relationship between HR practices and organizational commitment and job satisfaction with cultural differences as a mediating factor. As such, with the emphasis on the influence of culture on perceived HR practices in the current study, there is a need for future research to develop theories in the field of SHRM that are tailored specifically to address cultural needs of employees including those from a Saudi background. This is increasingly important given that (as demonstrated in this study) specific cultural aspects such as Wasta and Saudisation are still influential in the Saudi community and largely influence the perceptions of employees in an organizational setting. In conclusion, it can also be stated that how HR practices are perceived by employees in the HE context are different between Western and non-western societies. However, there is not much theoretical evidence as support. In line with this and from a methodological standpoint, the qualitative findings are valuable given the dearth of research and theory development in this area. Although the use

of grounded theory could perhaps have further contributed towards theory development the use of thematic analysis in this study is usefulness for various reasons. For example, as a more flexible analysis method it helped to provide an insight into the experiences of the participants by providing a rich, detailed and complex account of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was particularly important given the cultural context of the topic under study. This analysis method also helped to compare themes between the two groups of participants for a better understanding of similarities and differences in their experiences and perceptions of HR practices. Last but not least, this study applied a mixed methods approach incorporating the benefits of each method used herein, with the latter also compensating for the weakness of the other. Therefore, it can be argued that the methodological approach of the current study is more robust as a result of employing the multiple method approach. Exploring the perceptions of HRP from academic and HR practitioners' points of view in a cultural context certainly contributes to existing research on HRP, given that this research area is still in its infancy. Although the cultural context is limited within the available information and only the qualitative data contribution is able to focus on the specific cultural aspects and other relevant areas associated with the culture can contribute more comprehensively within the context of future research. The present study also acts as a stepping stone for future research to shed further light on other factors contributing to perceived HR practices.

8.3.2. Practical Contribution

A key empirical contribution of this thesis is the expansion of academic research in the field of strategic HR management (SHRM) in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East. Furthermore, this study provides an original research and a new insight into how HR practices are perceived. The findings may provide guidance on practical implications for universities as well as decision- and policymakers, but it also contributes to developing the theoretical and applied approach in relation to HR practices. The findings can lead also to improved HR practices not only throughout the university context in Saudi Arabia. Findings can also possibly be applied to other universities in the Middle region and GCC countries. The work can also extend to firms operating in the broader business context. Furthermore, as noted in chapter 1, Saudi-focused

research in this area is scant. Consequently, using existing research in the western context as a baseline, this study attempted to provide a first understanding of organisational commitment in HE in Saudi Arabia which can elicit further research in Saudi universities as well as comparative studies involving western and Middle-Eastern universities with an aim to capture similarities and differences grounded in cultural influences.

There is wide agreement on the worth of employees and their position as the most critical of organisational resources and the most important factor in organisational differentiation and achievement of competitive advantage. For example, enhancement of organisational commitment helps business universities immensely by reducing employee attrition and motivating employees to continue with the university despite the availability of extremely attractive offers from other universities. As such focus on HR practices and its general perception by academic staff could have influences on the overall organisational performance. Moreover, whilst there is considerable research focusing specifically on managerial perspectives, this study adds yet another contribution on a practical level by examining employee responses. Findings based on this employee-centred approach can also further help to develop a better understanding of the well-being of employees in the HE context including in a Saudi setting. In fact, current findings pertaining to job satisfaction and organizational commitment indicate that future studies should inform the development and implementation of specific programs that could support both academics and HR management personnel in terms of their well-being. In so doing, performance outcomes can also improve which will be an additional benefit on a managerial level.

Furthermore, since it has been observed that few universities currently actively engage in formal HR practices (Lynch, 2007) this research would go some way in informing practice and highlighting the importance of increased focus on the HR functions, particularly in the Saudi Arabia and Middle Eastern contexts. The timing of this research study's work was highly appropriate since it has been observed that Saudi Arabia institutions and those of its Arab Gulf neighbours are lagging behind competing organisations domestically and internationally with respect the practice of HR.

As noted earlier on in this study, the timely focus of this dissertation work is also consistent with the Saudi Arabia government's strong focus on diversifying its economy and it 2030 vision and shift from an oil-dependent nation to a knowledge economy. As a result, it has begun to reform and develop policies to enhance the quality of higher education. More broadly at all levels to improve the quality of teaching at its educational institutions through having a well-motivated and driven workforce. Therefore, in a practical sense, this is a key empirical contribution of this work, with Saudi Arabia aiming to develop its educational base and the academic/management environment of the country through the establishment of sound HR practices.

Last but not least, bearing in mind that the present research is not the only study which focused on perceived rather than intended HR practices (e.g. Gilbert, De Winne, & Sel, 2011), the current study still brings an original contribution to existing research in this area in several ways: 1) focusing specifically on the Saudi HE context with reference to commonly experienced issues such as Saudisation and *Wasta*; 2) the use of a comparative approach to elucidate employees' perceptions of HR practices (academics vs. HR and management personnel); and, 3) the implementation of a mixed-methods approach. That said, although there is evidence and speculation that it is worth considering intended, realised and perceived HR practices as inter-related constructs (see introduction), it is still of the greatest importance to place emphasis on the need to also study intended, realised and perceived HR practices separately, given that each is conceptualised differently and can also entail different outcomes on both an individual and organisational level. In fact, Wright and Nishii (2006) distinguished clearly between intended, implemented and perceived HR practices. Therefore, it could also be argued that it is far more important to consider the views of employees on HR practices, given that this can profoundly influence intended as well as realised HR practices. Regarding the input of the current study in this regards, HR practitioners in particular tried to articulate the intended HR practices mostly whilst also noting a level of divergence with realised HR practices. Therefore, this is still an area which needs further empirical investigation in new studies.

8.4. Research Recommendations

As discussed previously in this chapter, HR planning plays a determining role in any organisation, and since almost all of the HR personnel/management indicated there was no official or formal planning process. This certainly has implications for the higher education sector of Saudi Arabia. In other words, Saudi universities need to invest more in HR planning, with the aim of achieving both organisational and individual objectives (Hafeez and Aburawi, 2013). Similarly, based on the findings, HR attraction and retention also seem to be areas with scope for improvement in association with HR practices. Again, not paying enough attention to these elements could have serious implications over time, as it has been documented previously that in the absence of highly qualified and motivated staff, organisational sustainability and quality of programmes cannot be guaranteed in the long term (Pienaar and Bester, 2008).

It can be argued further that HR should be more open to Western-style HR practices and attempt to adopt what could be considered as equally applicable to the Saudi organisational context. The current reality is mostly the recognition of best practices, although little effort has been made to achieve these in different ways and at different levels, such as increased funding for staff development purposes, innovative policies, empowerment in the form of increased collaborative work and more funding to attract and recruit the best candidates.

In terms of recruitment, HR should also improve access to visas for non-Saudis, since this process is currently seen as being very tedious and time-consuming. In the same vein, more attention should be drawn to the pay scale of both Saudis and non-Saudis, as this is a very good incentive to attract the best candidates. The salary scale for the faculty should be revisited in order to have a pay compensation system that is comparable to other public sectors. Thus, the university's strategic plan should be promoted further in an attempt to boost employee satisfaction. In fact, concerns have been raised in the current organisational climate that employee satisfaction in the university context is generally quite low, due mostly to an unsatisfactory work environment and manager-employee relationships – issues that need to be addressed with the help of good HR practices. Furthermore, and in line with concerns raised by some of the participants, with one interviewee explaining that

"communication is just a form relaying messages," there is a need for HR departments in Saudi Arabia to not limit their role to paperwork but rather engage more effectively in good communication across the faculty, in order to limit employee disengagement. It is important that this in collaboration with the development of perception of HR practices within the employees of the organisation will result in more satisfaction and enhance productivity. Along the same lines, it is worth noting that Saudi universities do not benefit from a specialised HR department per se. With this in mind, findings from the current study could pave the way for a more specialised and fully functioning HR department in these universities. Doing so would also contribute towards limiting any discrepancies in terms of the perceptions and experiences of different groups within the same organisation. Having such a department could also facilitate the implementation of HR practices that meet the needs of specific group of employees resulting in the smoother running of universities in Saudi Arabia.

Although the issue of gender was not raised particularly by the participants in this context, despite the common practice of gender segregation in the workplace in Saudi Arabia, it is still worth noting that Baki (2004) comments that with the implementation of Saudisation, there remains a need to increase the employment of both genders in the future, particularly the female workforce. This study drew a lot of attention to Saudisation and *Wasta* as existing unchallenged issues in Saudi society and which also seem to affect the HE sector. In other words, for the majority of Arab nations, an 'inadequately educated workforce' remains a powerful barrier to their development (Achoui, 2009). Therefore, the Saudi government needs to issue clear guidelines in terms of addressing these issues while simultaneously preserving the social and cultural etiquette of society. Saudisation applies in other sectors such as commerce and sales, albeit much less in the educational sector, as this is a field strongly advocating for efficiency with minimum attention paid to the nationality of employees/academics. Moreover, embracing multiculturalism in the Saudi academic would bring about a prospective international perspective whereby Saudi students would also get a chance to gain exposure to other cultures and make the most of the associated benefits from an educational standpoint. As stated by Boxall and Purcell (2011), each Arab country has its own labour legislations and some unique

institutional issues that indeed need to be distinctly addressed. Likewise, in Islamic countries, including Saudi Arabia, along with the cultural influences on HR practices shown in this study, religion is an equally highly influential factor, given that culture and religion often tend to be intertwined. Hence, the uniqueness of Saudi society also implies that organisations should model their HR practices in accordance with all of the aforementioned issues. More research is required to shed light on the particular amalgamation of religion and culture and its impact on employees' overall approach to different HR practices.

Throughout this chapter, and based on a thorough discussion of the findings, it is difficult to overlook the fact that there are several challenges facing HR practices in Saudi universities, namely planning (includes recruitment), retention and some issues (although minor and relevant to only a few participants) pertaining to low organisational commitment and job satisfaction. This leads us to conclude that employees' perceived HR practices are not always positive, which is actually a good indication of existing issues within an organisation that need to be addressed with the help of appropriate measures taken both internally and externally (e.g. governmental policies). This also includes the development of a generally progressive approach toward understanding these elements alongside other contributing factors (e.g. culture). As a main recommendation, and in short, the main roles of HR are to administer payroll and employee documentation, focus on building employee relations with any labour relations and enforce labour law. The latter remains the prime objective of HR in Saudi universities, though it is unfortunately not a priority but still needs to be addressed in the near future. That said, a comparative approach with Western HR practices, and the perception development approach, would help enhance the scope of development.

8.5. Research Limitations and Future Research

As discussed throughout this chapter, this study has contributed to current literature on this topic by addressing existing gaps in knowledge, thereby providing greater research depth in this area in the Middle East. Nevertheless, this research also has a few drawbacks, which would be useful to point out in an attempt to direct future studies to address them in an endeavour to expand further our knowledge on this

topic. In addition to this section, other directions for future research have also been highlighted throughout this chapter in respect to any raised issues, identified gaps in knowledge and/or the present study's theoretical and empirical contributions.

This study focused on just a few Saudi universities and, more importantly, on only a single-demographic university faculty with a rather small sample size in the qualitative phase (academics and HR and management interview groups). It should be acknowledged that the findings (quantitative and qualitative) are not representative of all – if not most – Saudi universities across faculties, and hence cannot be generalised. Furthermore, given that the number of academics, and in particular the HR group participants, represented a small sample size, this limits the extent to which the qualitative findings are conclusive. New studies should therefore aim to target a larger sample of academics, staff and HR and management group participants in an endeavour to address this issue. In addition, samples of participants should also be drawn from different universities in future research, in order to increase representativeness and for the new findings to be more generalisable than the current ones. It is also worth pointing out that new studies should focus more on the perceptions of HR practitioners, using a larger sample, as the role played by this particular group in a Saudi organisational setting was determined on various levels, especially in relation to the unique aspects of Saudi society, namely gender segregation, '*Wasta*' and Saudisation.

From a gender perspective, and in relation to the interviewed sample, the academic group was mainly a female group, whereas the HR and management participants were mostly males. This could perhaps lead to some form of bias in terms of comparing the perspectives of both groups, with each cohort mostly reflecting the perceptions of the opposite gender. Perhaps future research should aim at replicating this study by balancing participants in terms of both genders, in order to find support for the current findings. This is a key point to address, bearing in mind that the issue of gender segregation is powerful enough to affect human resource practices within Saudi Arabia (Baki, 2004). Hence, it is of the utmost importance to probe into the perceptions of both genders to ensure that human resource practices are structured accordingly. The importance of considering the influence of gender, using gender-balanced cohorts in an organisational setting in future research, is yet again

emphasised, given that it has also been previously reported that gender and commitment can be related (Falkenberg, 2003; Kumasey, Delle, & Foe, 2014) and that attitudes and gender are also correlated (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990, as cited in Affum-Osei et al., 2015).

This study adopted a mixed methods approach. However, this approach is not without its limitations. For example, one main limitation of direct relevance to the current study is the heterogeneity of data collected from different instruments (surveys and interviews), which needs to be interpreted carefully. Working with quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously certainly adds richness to the data, although being of a different nature these data need to be interpreted with caution (Feilzer, 2010).With regards to the questionnaire, one major issue which was encountered in some areas (e.g. questions relating to affective commitment and normative commitment) was the case of many participants choosing a neutral standpoint. Although this is not a major drawback in itself, perhaps future research should test the same questionnaire or use others with a shorter and more precise Likert scale that could help classify participants' responses into more distinct categories. Moreover, since the commitment and satisfaction variables were only correlated with each other, causation could not be established. Consequently, it is important also to highlight that these correlational findings are only restricted to potential associations between scores within the commitment variables and the satisfaction variables and offer no inference of causality in any direction. Future research could perhaps engage in advanced statistical analysis with an aim to explore causality. Correspondingly, more attention should be paid to the construction of a future questionnaire, in that it should be expanded to include more HR practices than the current ones, thereby increasing its reliability in new research. This is in line with Lewis and Heckman (2006), who stated that it is important for measurement tools to meet rigorous scientific approaches for tool development. In fact, this is also an area which needs more attention in future research when it comes to the development of new questionnaires or even in the case of refining the existing questionnaire developed in the current study. Along the same line, perhaps future research should also design a questionnaire in this regard that is intricately tailored to reflect the Saudi culture. This would help boost the validity of new research in a Saudi context.

8.6. Overall Conclusion

As outlined in chapter 1, research on perceived HR practices is scant. This gap in knowledge brings current findings in the limelight of academic research in this particular area. The main objective of this study was to provide a first insight into the concept of perceived human resource (HR) practices in the context of Saudi universities and in particular, the measurement of current levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment. This study also assessed the nature of, strength and direction of relationships between HR practices as perceived by staff (academics and HR personnel management), job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Specific attention was also attributed to cultural and social influences on HR practices in the Saudi university. Furthermore, the extent to which demographic variables such as gender, education, age, role and experience influenced participants' views on HR practices, job satisfaction and organisational commitment was assessed. Last but not least, the present research also investigated whether academics/teaching employees have different perceptions of HR practices compared to managers and HR employees. Given the dearth of research in the context of Saudi Arabia, this study, with its mixed method design, thus adding more richness to the data, makes an essential contribution to the existing literature, including from a cross-cultural perspective. This study draws further attention to the importance of transcending a Western-centric view of SHRM. That is, western and non-western HE sectors operate differently with differential effects on employees' perceptions of HR practices. In the context of this research, a sharp distinction is made between western and Saudi research in this area. The cultural aspects of the Saudi community were clearly shown to have an influence on perceived HR practices, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This supports other studies (e.g. Xian, Atkinson, & Meng-Lewis, 2017) in human resource management that question the extent to which constructs developed in western societies can be used in a non-western context. In line with Froese and Xiao (2012) and based on current findings, this study also advocates the development of indigenous attitudinal measures that are better tailored to respond to cultural influences. Current findings are more so valuable especially in the absence of established HR departments in the Saudi HE sector, which also raises the question: is there a need for Saudi universities to develop and introduce HR departments to

cater for the needs of employees across all levels from a well-being perspective? Hence, there is little doubt that the present study is a stepping stone to further research that should also attempt to address the aforementioned identified limitations of this study, in order to boost the reliability, validity and generalisability of the findings.

References

Abanumy, A.N. and Alshitri, K.I. (2015) 'TQM practices in Saudi Arabia: Antecedents and consequences of organizational commitment among RandD center

employees.' *International Information Institute (Tokyo). Information*, 18(2), pp. 463.

Abdul Rashid, Z., Sambasivan, M. and Johari, J. (2003) 'The influence of corporate culture and organisational commitment on performance.' *Journal of Management Development*, *22*(8) pp. 708-728.

Abdulfattah Yaghi, Ihsan Yaghi, (2013) 'Human resource diversity in the United Arab Emirates: empirical study.' *Education, Business and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues, 6*(1) pp.15-30,

Abeysekera, R. (2007) 'The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Marketing Executives Turnover of Leasing Companies in Sri Lanka.' *Contemporary Management Research, 3*(3).

Adkins, C.L., J.D. Werbel and J.L. Farh, (2001) 'A field study of job insecurity during a financial crisis.' *Group Organ. Manage., 26* pp. 463-483.

Affum-Osei, E., Acquahh, E. and Acheampong, P. (2015) 'Relationship between organizational commitment and demographc variables: Evidence from a commerical bank in Ghana.' *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, 5 pp. 769-778.

Afiouni, F., Karam, C.M. and El-Hajj, H. (2013) 'The HR Value Proposition Model in the Arab Middle East: Identifying the Contours of an Arab Middle Eastern HR Model.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 24*(10) pp. 1895–1932.

Ahmad, K.Z. and Bakar, R.A. (2003) 'The association between training and organizational commitment among white-collar workers in Malaysia.' *International Journal of Training and Development*, *7*(3), pp. 166-185.

Ahmad, S., and Schroeder, R.G., (2003) 'The impact of human resource management practices on operational performance: recognizing country and industry differences.' *Journal of Operations Management,* 21 pp. 19-43.

Ahmed, S. W. and Alvi, S. A. (1987) 'Assessing organizational commitment in a developing country: Pakistan, a case study.' *Human Relations*, 40(5) pp. 267-280.

Ajzen, I. (2001) 'Nature and operation of attitudes.' *Annual Review of Psychology*.' *52*(1), pp. 27-58.

Akhter, N., Hussain, A., Bhatti, M.U.S., Shahid, F. and Ullah, H.M.E. (2016) 'Impact of HR Practices on Job Satisfaction: A Study on Teachers of Private and Public Sector.' *International Review of Management and Business Research*, *5*, 2.

Aladwan, K., Bhanugopan, R. and Fish, A. (2013) 'To What Extent the Arab Workers Committed to Their Organizations? Analyzing the Multidimensional Perspective of Organizational Commitment in Jordan.' *International Journal of Commerce, and Management, 23*(4) pp. 306-326.

Aldalky, H. (2000) '*The relationship between job satisfaction and leaving work in Jordan bank*, unpublished thesis Dissertation (Masters). Alyarmok University.

Alfes, K., Shantz, A. and Truss, C. (2012) 'The Link between Perceived HRM Practices, Performance and Well-being: The Moderating Effect of Trust in the Employer.' *Human Resource Management Journal, 22*(4) pp. 409–427.

Alfes, K., Shantz, A., Truss, C. and Soane,E. (2013) 'The link between perceived human resource management practices, engagement and employee behaviour: a moderated mediation model.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 24*(2) pp. 330-351.

Alfes, K., Shantz, A.D., Truss, C. and Soane, E. C. (2013) 'The Link between Perceived Human Resource Management Practices, Engagement and Employee Behaviour: A Moderated Mediation Model.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 24*(2) pp. 330–351.

Alghanim, O. K. (2014) The culture of 'wasta' has outlived its use. [Online] Available at: http://gulfnews.com/business/analysis/the-culture-of-wasta-has-outlived-its-use-1.1414068 [Accessed 16 September 2017].

Alhejji, H. A. and Garavan, T. N. (2016) 'Human Resource Development in the Middle East' in *Global Human Resource Development: Regional and Country Perspectives*.

Ali, A. (2011) 'Talent management in the Middle East.' *Global Talent Management*, pp. 155-178.

Al-Kahtani, S.N. (2012) 'An Exploratory Study of Organisational Commitment, Demographic Variables and Job and Work Related Variables among

Employees in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.' *Online International Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, *3* pp. 1-13.

Allen, N.J. and Meyer, J. P. (1990) 'The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization.' *Journal of Occupational Psychology, 63* pp. 1-18.

Alnaqbi, W. (2011) The relationship between human resource practices and employee retention in public organisations: an exploratory study conducted in the United Arab Emirates.'Retrieved from http://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/424.

Al-Rubaish, A.M., Rahim, S.I.A., Abumadini, M.S. and Wosornu, L., (2009) 'Job Satisfaction Among the Academic Staff of a Saudi University: An Evaluative Study.' *J. Family Community Med*, *16*(3) pp. 97-103.

Al-Sarayrah, S., Tarhini, A., Obeidat, B.Y., Al-Salti, Z. and Kattoua, T. (2016) 'The Effect of Culture on Strategic Human Resource Management Practices: A Theoretical Perspective.' *International Journal of Business Management and Economic Research(IJBMER)*, *7*(4) pp. 704-716.

Al-Sebaie, M.M. (2000) An analytical study of job satisfaction among Saudi nationals in the Saudi economic offset program companies. Durham theses, Durham University. http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/4507

Alshuwaikhat, H. M., Adenle, Y. A., & Saghir, B. (2016) 'Sustainability Assessment of Higher education Institutions in Saudi Arabia.' *Sustainability*, *8*(8), 750.

AL-Syaidh, N.H.J., Masa'deh, R. and Al-Zu'bi, Z. (2015) 'Transformational Leadership and its Impact on the Effectiveness of Employees' Behavior in the Public and Private Jordanian Hospitals.' *Jordan Journal of Business Administration*, *11*(1).

Alvesson, M. and Skoldberg, K. (2000) 'Reflexive methodology. *New Vistas for*.

Ambrose, M. L. and Cropanzano, R. (2003) 'A longitudinal analysis of organizational fairness: An examination of reactions to tenure and promotion decisions.' *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *88*(2) pp. 266.

Ameen, E. C., Jackson, C., Pasewark, W. R. and Strawser, J. R. (1995) 'An empirical investigation of the antecedents and consequences of job insecurity on the

turnover intentions of academic accountants.' *Issues in Accounting Education, 10*(1) pp. 65.

Andersen, K.K., Cooper, B.K. and Zhu, C.J. (2007) 'The effect of SHRM practices on perceived firm financial performance: Some initial evidence from Australia.' Asia Pacific Journal of Human *Resources, 45* 168-179.

Andreassi, J.K., Lawter, L., Brockerhoff, M. and Rutigliano, P. (2012) *'Job Satisfaction Determinants: A Study Across 48 Nations.'* WCOB *Faculty Publications.* Paper 220.

Anyim, F.C., Ekwoaba, J.O. and Anthony, I.D. (2012) 'The Role Of Human Resource Planning In Recruitment And Selection Process.' *British Journal* of *Humanities* and Social Sciences, 6(2) pp. 68-79.

Armstrong, M. (2006) *A Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice.* 10th ed., London: Kogan Page.

Armstrong, M. (2009) *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice.* 11th ed., London: Kogan Page.

Armstrong, M. and Taylor, S. (2014) *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*, London: Kogan Page.

Arthur, J. B. (1994) 'Effects of human resource systems on manufacturing performance and turnover.' *Academy of Management Journal, 37* pp. 670-687.

Aspers, P. (2004) Empirical phenomenology: An approach for qualitative research. *Methodology Institute at the London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK.*

Aycan, Z. (2005) 'The Interplay between Cultural and Institutional/Structural Contingencies in Human Resource Management Practices.' *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 16*(7) pp. 1083-1119.

Aycan, Z., Kanungo, R. and Sinha, J. (1999) 'Organizational Culture and Human Resource Management Practices: The Model of Culture Fit.' *Journal of CrossCultural Psychology, 30*(4) pp. 1-26.

Aycan, Z., Kanungo, R., Mendonca, M., Yu, K., Deller, J., Stahl, G. and Kurshid, A. (2000) 'Impact of culture on human resource management practices: A 10-country comparison. *Applied Psychology*, *49*(1), pp.192-221.

Azeem, S. M. and Akhtar, N. (2014) 'Job satisfaction and organizational commitment among Public Sector Employees in Saudi Arabia.' *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, *5*(7).

Azhar, A., Edgar, D. and Duncan, P. (2016) 'The Impact of Saudization Policy on Recruitment and Retention: A Case Study of the Banking Sector in Saudi Arabia.' *Journal of Business*, pp. 1-14.

Aziri, B. (2008) *Human resource management, job satisfaction and motivation of employees.* Gostivar, Macedonia: Tringa Design.

Aziri, B. (2011) 'Job satisfaction: A literature review.' *Management research and practice*, *3*(4) pp. 77-86.

Bajpai, N. (2011) *Business Research Methods.* India: Pearson Education India.

Baki, R. (2004) 'Gender-segregated education in Saudi Arabia: Its impact on social norms and the Saudi Labor market.' *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 12*(28) pp. 1-15.

Bakker, A. B. and Demerouti, E. (2007) 'The Job Demands–Resources model: State of the art.' *Journal of Managerial Psychology,* 22 pp. 309–328.

Balay, R. and İpek, C. (2010) 'Teachers' perception of organizational culture and organizatıonal commitment in Turkish primary schools.' *Journal of World of Turks, 2*(1) pp. 363-384.

Ballantyne, I. (2009) Recruiting and selecting staff inorganizations. in S. Gilmore and Williams, S. (eds) *Human Resource Management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bam, K. (1992) Research methods for business and management.

Barnett, A., Yandle, B., and Naufal, G. (2013) 'Regulation, Trust, and Cronyism in Middle Eastern Societies: The Simple Economics of 'Wasta'.' *The Journal of Socio-Economics, 44* pp. 41-46.

Barrow, S. and Mosley, R. (2005) *The Employer Brand: Bringing the Best of Brand Management to People at Work.*Chichester: Wiley.

Baruch, Y. and Cohen, A. (2007) *The dynamics between organisational commitment and professional identity formation at work' in Identities at work,* Netherlands: Springer.

Beck, K. and Wilson, C. (2000) 'Development of affective organizational commitment: A cross-sequential examination of change with tenure.' *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *56*(1), pp. 114-136.

Becker, H.S. (1960) 'Notes on the concept of commitment.' *American Journal of Sociology*, *66*(1) pp. 32-40.

Bedeian, A.G., Ferris, G. R. and Kacmar, K. M. (1992) 'Age, tenure, and job satisfaction: A tale of two perspectives.' *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 40*(1) pp. 33-48.

Beer, M. and Walton, E. (1990) 'Reward Systems and the Role of Compensation' in *Manage People, Not Personnel: Motivation and performance Appraisal. A Harvard Business Review Book,* 15-30.

Bell, C. and Roberts, H. (1984) *Social researching*. Routledge and Kegan Paul Books.

Bhuian, S.N., Al-shammari, E.S. and Jefri, O.A., (2001) 'Work-related attitudes and job characteristics of expatriates in Saudi Arabia.' *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *43*(1) pp.21-32.

Bidisha, L. D. and Mukulesh, B. (2013) 'Employee Retention: A Review of Literature.' *Journal of Business and Management, 14* pp. 8-16.

Blau, P.M. (1964) *Exchange and power in social life*, London, UK: Transaction Publishers.

Blaxter, L. Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (2006) *How to Research*. Open University Press.

Bodla, M.A. and Danish, R. Q. (2009) 'Politics and workplace: an empirical examination of the relationship between perceived organizational politics and work performance.' *South Asian Journal of Management*, *16*(1) pp. 44-62.

Bowen, D.E. and Ostroff, C. (2004) 'Understanding HRM-Firm performance linkages: the role of the "strength" of the HRM system.' *Academy of Management Review, 29*(2) pp. 203-221.

Bowen, D.E. and Ostroff, C. (2004) 'Understanding HRM–firm performance linkages: The role of the "strength" of the HRM system.' *Academy of Management Review*, *29*(2) pp. 203-221.

Boxall, P. and Purcell, J. (2008) *Strategy and Human Resource Management*. 2nd ed., Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Boxall, P., & Purcell, J. (2003) Strategy and Human Resource Management (Vol. 57, p. 299). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Branine, M. and Pollard, D. (2010) 'Human Resource Management with Islamic Management Principles: a Dialectic for a Reverse Diffusion in Management.' *Personnel Review*, *39*, 6 pp. 712-727.

Bratton, J. and Gold, J. (2007) *Human Resource Management: Theory and Practice*, UK: Macmillan

Bratton, J. and Gold, J. (2012) *Human resource management: Theory and practice*,5th ed., UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology'. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2) pp 77-101.

Braun, S., Peus, C., Weisweiler, S. and Frey, D. (2013) 'Transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and team performance: A multilevel mediation model of trust.' *Leadership Quarterly, 24* pp. 270-184.

Breckler, S.J. (1984) 'Empirical validation of affect, behavior, and cognition as distinct components of attitude.' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *47*(6) pp. 1191.

Bretz, Jr., R. D. and Judge, T. A. (1994) 'The role of human resource systems in job applicant decision processes.' *Journal of Management. 20*(3) pp. 531-551.

Brewer, J., and Hunter, A. (1989) *Multimethod research: A synthesis of styles*. Newbury Park. CA: Sage.

Brewster, C., HoltLarsen, H. and Trompenaars, F. (1992) 'Human resource management in Europe: evidence from ten countries.' *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 3*(3) pp. 409-434.

Brian, E. and Christopher. C. (2011) 'Strengthening affective organizational commitment: The influence of fairness perceptions of management practices and underlying employee cynicism.' *Health Care Manager, 30*(1), pp. 29-35.

Broadhurst, J. (2012) 'Employee development is a great business opportunity: Investment in people is the key to company growth.' *Human Resource Management International Digest, 20*(6), pp. 27-30.

Brockbank, W. (1999) 'If HR were really strategically proactive: Present and future directions in HR's contribution to competitive advantage.' *Human Resource Management, 38*, pp. 337-352.

Brown, M. and Heywood, J. S. (2005) 'Performance appraisal systems: determinants and change.' *British Journal of Industrial Relations, 43*(4) pp. 659-679.

Bryant, S. E., Moshavi, D. and Nguyen, T. V. (2007) 'A field study on organizational commitment, professional commitment and peer mentoring.' *ACM SIGMIS Database, 38*(2) pp. 61-74.

Bryman, A. (2006) 'Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: how is it done?' *Qualitative Research*, *6*(1), 97-113.

Bryman, A. (2007) 'Barriers to integrating quantitative and qualitative research.' *Journal of mixed methods research*, *1*(1) pp. 8-22.

Bryman, A. (2007) 'Barriers to Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Research.' *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1*(1), 8-22.

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2003) *Business research methods*, New York:Palgrave Macmillan.

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2007) Business research strategies. *Business research methods*.

Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2007) *The nature* of quantitive *research*. In: *Business Research Methods*. New York. Oxford University.

Budhwar, P. (2000) 'A Reappraisal of HRM Models in Britain.' *Journal of General Management*, 26(2) pp. 72–91.

Budhwar, P. and Debrah, Y. (2013) *Human Resource Management in Developing Countries*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.

Budhwar, P. and Mellahi, K. (2007) 'Introduction: Human Resource Management in the Middle East.' *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 18*(1) pp. 2-10.

Budhwar, P.S. and Mellahi, K. (2006) *Managing human resources in the Middle-East*. Routledge.

Budhwar, P.S. and Sparrow, P.R. (2002) 'An integrative framework for understanding cross-national human resource management practices.' *Human Resource Management Review*, *12*(3) pp. 377-403.

Bushra, F., Ahmad, U. and Naveed, A. (2011) 'Effect of transformational leadership on employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment in banking sector of Lahore (Pakistan).' *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, *2*(18) pp. 261-267.

Buyens, D., and De Vos, A. (1999) The added value of the HR-function. In C. Brewster and H. Harris (Eds.), International HRM. Contemporary issues in Europe. London: Routledge. pp. 31–47.

CDSI website for 2012

Cetin, M.O. (2006) 'The relationship between job satisfaction, occupational and organizational commitment of academics.' *Journal of American Academy of Business*, *8*(1) pp. 78-88.

Cheng, Y. and Stockdale, M. S. (2003) 'The validity of the three-component model of organizational commitment in a Chinese context.' *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *62*(3) pp. 465-489.

Cheng, Y. and Stockdale, M.S. (2003) 'The validity of the three-component model of organizational commitment in a Chinese context.' *J. Vocat. Behav., 62* pp. 465-489.

Chew, J. and Chan, C.C., (2008) 'Human resource practices, organizational commitment and intention to stay. *International journal of manpower*, *29*(6) pp. 503-522.

Chew, J. and Chan. C. A. (2008) 'Human Resource Practices, Organizational Commitment and Intention to Stay*. International Journal of Manpower. 29*(6) pp. 503-522.

Collins, H. (2010) *Creative research: The theory and practice of research for the creative research.* Lausanne, Switzerland: AVA Publishing SA.

complementary HR calculus.' *Human Resources Planning*, *27*(3) pp. 6-9.

Cooper, D.R. and Schindler, P. S. (2003) *Business research methods,* UK, McGraw Hill.

Coopey, J. and Hartley, J., (1991) 'Reconsidering the case for organisational commitment.' *Human resource management journal*, *1*(3) pp.18-32.

Cotten, A. (2007) *Seven steps of effective workforce planning*, IBM Center for the Business of Government.

Coyle-Shapiro. J., Hoque. K., Kessler. I., Pepper, A., Richardson, R. and Walker, L. (2013) *Human Resource Management*, London: University of London.

Cranny, C., Smith, P. C. and Stone, E. (1992) 'Job satisfaction: How people feel about their jobs.' *Personnel Psychology*, *46*(2).

Creswell, J. (2009) *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Creswell, J.W. (1994) *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, London:Sage Publications.

Creswell, J.W. (1998) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. (2013) *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V. L. (2007) *Designing and conducting mixed methods research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Crotty, M. (1998) *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*, New York: Sage.

Crotty, M. (2003) *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspectives in the research process*, London: Sage Publications.

Cunningham, R.B. and Sarayrah, Y.K. (1993) *Wasta: The Hidden Force in Middle Eastern Society*, Praegar, Westport, Connecticut.

Curson, J.A., Dell, M.E., Wilson, R.A., Bosworth, D.L. and Baldauf, B. (2010) 'Who does workforce planning well?.' *nternational Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance, 23*(1) pp. 110-119.

Daft, R. and Marcic, D. (2001) *Understanding Management*, Boston: South Western Thomson Learning.

Das, B. L. and Baruah, M. (2013) 'Employee retention: A review of literature.' *Journal of Business and Management, 14*(2) pp. 08-16.

Davis, K. and Nestrom, J.W. (1985*) Human Behavior at work: Organizational Behavior*. 7 ed., McGraw Hill, New York.

Davis, P. (2001) 'The governance of co-operatives under competitive conditions: issues, processes and culture.' Corporate Governance. The International

Journal for Effective Board Performance, MCB University Press, Emerald. 1(4) pp. 28-39.

Daymon, C., and Holloway, 1. (2002) *Qualitative research methods in public relations and marketing communications. New York: Routledge*.

Deaux, K. and Snyder, M. (2012) *The Oxford handbook of personality and social psychology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

DeConinck, J. B. and Bachmann, D. P. (2011) 'Organizational commitment and turnover intentions of marketing managers.' *Journal of Applied Business Research, 10*(3) pp. 87-95.

Deery, M. and Jago, L. (2015) 'Revisiting talent management, work-life balance and retention strategies.*International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 27*(3) pp. 453-472.

Delaney, J.T. and Huselid, M. A. (1996) 'The impact of human resource management practices on perceptions of organizational performance.' *Academy of Management Journal*, *39*(4), pp. 949-969.

Delery, J. and Doty, D.H. (1996) Modes of Theorizing in Strategic Human Resource Management: Test of universalistic, contingency and configurational performance predictions.' *Academy of Management Journal, 39* pp. 802–835.

DeNobile, J. and McCormick, K. (2008) 'Organizational Communication and Job Satisfaction in Australian Catholic Primary Schools.' *Educational Management Administration and Leadership, 36* pp. 101-122.

Denscombe, M. (2008) 'Communities of practice.' *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,2,* 270-283.

Denscombe, M. (2010) *The Good Research Guide: for small-scale social research projects.* 4th ed., Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Denton, J. (2000) 'Using Web-based projects in a systems design and development course.' *Journal of Computer Information Systems, 40*(3) pp. 85-7.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (1998) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*, JSTOR.

DeVaney, S.A. and Chen, Z.S. (2003) Job Satisfaction of recent graduates in Financial services, US Department of Labour. Bureau of Labour Statistics, Compensation and Working Conditions Online

Dillman, D. A. (2000) Mail and Internet Surveys. New York, John Wiley and Sons.

Dorenbosch, L., Gubbels, W., De Reuver, R., Van Engen, M., and Sanders, K. (2005) '*The Influence of HRM on Organizational Commitment: a case of consistency among HRM practices?*.' Istanbul, paper presented at EAWOP conference, May 14.

Dormann, C. and Zapf,D. (2001) 'Job satisfaction: A meta-analysis of stabilities.' *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 22* pp. 483-504.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007) *Research methods in applied linguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dursun, E. (2015) 'The relation between organizational trust, organizational support, and organizational commitment.' *African Journal of Business Management. 9*(4) pp.134-156.

Dwivedi, S. and Kaushik, S. (2014) 'Impact of Organizational Culture on Commitment of Employees: An Empirical Study of BPO Sector in India.' *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, *39*(3).

Edgar, F. and Geare, A. (2005) 'HRM practice and employee attitudes: different measures – different results. Personnel Review, 34 (5), pp. 534-49.

Egginton, B.E. (2010) 'Introduction of Formal Performance Appraisal of Academic Staff:The Management Challenges Associated with Effective Implementation.' *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, *38*(1) pp. 119-133.

Ehrenberg, R., Kasper, H. and Rees, D. (1990) *Faculty turnover at American colleges and universities: Analyses of AAUP data*. Washington, DC: Working paper from the National Bureau of Economic Research.

Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., and Sowa, D. (1986) 'Perceived organizational support.' *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71* pp. 500–507.

Eisinga, R., Teelken, C. and Doorewaard, H. (2010) 'Assessing crossnational invariance of the three-component model of organizational commitment: A six-country

study of European university faculty.' *Cross-Cultural Research, 44*(4) pp. 341-373.

Elamin, A.M. and Alomaim, N. (2011) 'Does organizational justice influence job satisfaction and self-perceived performance in Saudi Arabia work environment?.' *International Management Review, 7*(1), pp. 38-49.

Elamin, A.M. and Tlaiss, H. A. (2015) 'Exploring the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational justice in the Islamic Saudi Arabian context.' *Employee Relations*, 37(1), pp. 2-29.

Elizur, D. and Koslowsky, M. (2001) 'Values and organizational commitment.' *International Journal of Manpower*, *22*(7) pp. 593-599.

Eskildsen, J., Kristensen, K. and Westlund, A. (2004) 'Work motivation and job satisfaction in the Nordic countries.' *Employee Relations. 26*(1/2) pp. 122-36.

Evans, L. (1998) *Teacher morale, job satisfaction and motivation*, London: Sage.

Fadhel, A. (2007) 'HRD in Saudi family business companies', *An independent MBA research project supervised by M. Achoui, Department of Management and Marketing-KFUPM*.

Fajana, S. (2002) *Human Resource Management: An Introduction*, Lagos

Falkenberg, J. (2003) 'Decreasing numbers at increasing levels: an investigation of the gender imbalance at NHH.' *Gender, Work and Organization, 10*(2) pp. 175-193.

Feilzer, M. Y. (2010) 'Doing mixed methods research pragmatically: Implications for the rediscovery of pragmatism as a research paradigm.' *Journal of Mixed Methods Research. 4* pp. 6 – 16.

Feldman, R. (2004) Methodological naturalism in epistemology' in Greco, J. and Sosa, E., eds., *Methodological Naturalism in Epistemology*, USA: Blackwell Publishing.

Field, A. (2005) *Discovering statistics using SPSS*, 2nd ed, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage.

Field, A. (2009) *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. 3rd ed., London: Sage Publications

Fiorito, J., Bozeman, D. P., Young, A. and Meurs, J. A. (2007) 'Organizational commitment, human resource practices, and organizational characteristics.' *Journal of Managerial Issues*, pp. 186-207.

Fiske, S. T. and Taylor, S. E. (1991) Social Cognition. McGraw-Hill.

Foot, M. and Hook, C. (2005) *Introducing Human Resource Management*. 4th edn., Spain: Prentice Hall.

Forkuoh, S.K., Affum-Osei, E., Osei, M.A. and Addo Yaw, V.J. (2014) 'Employees' Commitment and Growth of Family Businesses.' *International Journal of Economics*, *Commerce and Management*, 2 pp. 1-14.

Froese, F., & Xiao, S. (2012) 'Work values, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in China.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 23*, pp. 2144–2162.

Forstenlechner, I., Madi, M. T., Selim, H. M., and Rutledge, E. J. (2012) 'Emiratisation: determining the factors that influence the recruitment decisions of employers in the UAE.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 23*(2) pp. 406-421.

Fuller, J.B., Hester, K., Barnett, T. and Relyea, L. F. C. (2006) 'Perceived organizational support and perceived external prestige: Predicting organizational attachment for university faculty, staff, and administrators.' *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 146(3) pp. 327-347.

Fullerton, G. (2014) 'The moderating effect of normative commitment on the service quality-customer retention relationship.' *European Journal of Marketing*, 48(3/4) pp. 657-673.

Gahwaji, N. (2006) 'Designing a Tool for Evaluating the Quality of Preschool Education in Saudi Arabia PhD Degree thesis, College of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of Exeter, UK.

Garcia, M. (2005) 'Training and business performance: The Spanish case.' *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 16* pp.1691-1710.

Gelade, G.A., Dobson, P. and Gilbert, P. (2006) 'National Differences In Organizational Commitment Effect of Economy, Product of Personality, or Consequence of Culture?.'*Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 37*(5) pp. 542-556.

Gerhart, B. and Fang, M. (2005) 'National culture and human resource management: assumptions and evidence.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 16*(6) pp. 971-986.

Giffords, E.D. (2009) 'An examination of organizational commitment and professional commitment and the relationship to work environment, demographic and organizational factors.' *Journal of Social Work*.

Gilbert, C., De Winne, S., & Sels, L. (2011) 'The influence of line managers and HR department on employees' affective commitment.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *22*(8), 1618-1637.

Gill, J. and Johnson, P. (2005) *Research Methods for Managers*. 3rd edn., London: Sage Publications.

Gillespie, N. and Dietz, G. (2009) 'Trust repair after an organization-level failure. *Academy of Management Review. 34*(1) pp. 127–145.

Gilmore, S. (2013) Recruiting and selecting staff in organizations. in Gilmore, S. and Williams, S. (eds), *Human resource management.* 2nd edn., Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 89-110.

Girgis, M. (2002) 'National versus Migrant Workers in the GCC: Coping with change", In H. Handoussa and Z. Tzannatos (Eds) *Employment Creation and Social Protection in the Middle East and North Africa*, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

Gooderham, P., Parry, E. and Ringdal, K. (2008) 'The impact of bundles of strategic human resource management practices on the performance of European firms.' *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 19* pp. 2041-2056.

Grace, D. and Khalsa, S. (2003) 'Re-recruiting faculty and staff: The antidote to today's high attrition.' *Independent school, 62*(3), pp. 20-27.

Gratton, L., Hope-Hailey, V., Stiles, P. and Truss, C. (1999) 'Linking Individual Performance to Business Strategy : The People Process Model.' *Human Resource Management, 38*(1) pp. 17-31

Green, J. (2000) *Job satisfaction of community college chairpersons*,Internal Virgina Polytechnic and State University Report, unpublished.

Green, K.W., Wu, C., Whitten, D. and Medlin, B., (2006) 'The impact of strategic human resource management on firm performance and HR professionals' work attitude and work performance.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 17*(4) pp. 559-579.

Greenberg, J. (1999) *Managing behavior in organizations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Greene, J. C., Caracelli, V. J., & Graham, W. F. (1989) 'Toward a Conceptual Framework for Mixed-method Evaluation Designs.' *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 11*(3), 255-274.

Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y. S. (1989) *Fourth generation evaluation*, Newbury Park, California: Sage.

Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y. S. (1994) Competing paradigms in qualitative research' in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y.S., eds., *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, USA: Sage Publications 163-194.

Guest, G., MacQueen, K.M. and Namey, E. E. (2011) *Applied thematic analysis*. Sage.

Gupta, V. and Singh, S. (2015) 'Leadership and creative performance behaviors in RandD laboratories examining the mediating role of justice perceptions.' *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, 22*(1) pp. 21-36.

Gupta, V. and Singh, S. (2015) 'Leadership and creative performance behaviours in R and D Laboratories. Examining the mediating role of Justice perceptions.' Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, *22*(1) pp. 21-36.

Hackman, J.R. and Oldham, G.R. (1980) *Work redesign*, Reading, MA:Addison-Wesley.

Hafeez, K. and Aburawi, I. (2013) 'Planning human resource requirements to meet target customer service levels.' *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences, 5*(2) pp. 230-252.

Hagedorn, L. S. (1994) 'Retirement proximity's role in the prediction of satisfaction in academe.' Research in Higher Education, 35(6), pp. 711-728.

Hagedorn, L.S. (1996) 'Wage equity and female faculty job satisfaction: The role of wage differentials in a job satisfaction causal model.' Research in Higher Education, 37(5) pp. 569-598.

Hair, F.J., Samouel, P., Money, H. A. and Babin, B. (2003) *Essentials of Business Research Methods*, London: John Wiley and Sons.

Hall, D.T., Schneider, B. and Nygren, H. T. (1970) ‘Personal factors in organizational identification.’ *Administrative Science Quarterly*, pp. 176-190.

Hall, D.T., Schneider, B. and Nygren, H. T. (1970) 'Personal factors in organizational identification.’ *Administrative Science Quarterly*, pp. 176-190.

Hamel, G. and Prahalad, C.K. (1989)Strategic intent.*Harvard Business Review,* May-June*, 67*(3) pp. 63-78.

Hampden-Turner, C. and Trompenaars, F. (1994) The Seven Cultures of Capitalism. London: Piatkus

Hannah, D. and Iverson, R. (2004) Employment relationships in context: implications for policy and practice. In Coyle-Shapiro, L. Shore, S. Taylor, and L. Tetrick (Eds), The Employment Relationship: Examining Psychological and Contextual Perspectives (pp. 332–350). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harbi, S. A., Thursfield, D. and Bright, D. (2016) ‘Culture, Wasta and perceptions of performance appraisal in Saudi Arabia', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, pp. 1-19.

Harris, L., Doughty, D., & Kirk, S. (2002) ‘The devolution of HR responsibilities–perspectives from the UK’s public sector.’ *Journal of European Industrial Training*, *26*(5), 218-229.

Harry, W. (2007) ‘Employment creation and localization: the crucial human resource issues for the GCC.’ *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 18*(1) pp. 132-146.

Harter J.K., Schmidt F.L. and Keyes, C. (2003) Well-being in the workplace and its relationship to business outcomes: a review of the Gallup studies, In C.L.Keyes and J.Haidt, (eds) Flourishing: the positive person and the good life. Washington, D.C. *American Psychological Association*, pp. 205-224.

Hartog, D.N. den, Boselie, P. and Paauwe, J. (2004) ‘Future directions in performance management.’ *Applied Psychology: an International Review, 53*(4) pp. 556-569.

Haskins, M.E. and Shaffer, G. R. (2010) ‘A talent development framework: tackling the puzzle.’*Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal,* 24(1) pp. 13-16.

Hassi, A. (2012) 'The impact of culture on corporate training design: A review of the current state of knowledge.'*International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management, 12*(1-2) pp. 119-139.

Hendry, C. (1996) 'Continuities in human resources processes in internationalization and domestic business management.' *Journal of Management Studies, 33*(4) pp. 475-494.

Hendry, C. and Pettigrew, A. (1986) 'The practice of strategic human resource management.' *Personnel Review*, 15, 2-8.

Heneman, H.G. and Judge, T.A. (2006) Staffing Organizations, 5th ed., McGraw Hill Irwin: Parus.

Herbst, F. and Coldwell, D. (2004) *Business Research*, Cape Town, SA: Juta and Company Ltd.

Herzberg, F. (1976) *The managerial choice: To be efficient and to be human*. Homewood, IL: Dow Jones-Irwin.

Herzberg, F. (1987) One more time: How do you motivate employees? *Harvard Business Review,* Sept-Oct 1987.

Hobfoll, S.E. (2002) 'Social and psychological resources and adaptation.' *Review of General Psychology*, *6*(4) pp. 307.

Hofstede, G. (1980) *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values*, London:Sage.

Hofstede, G. (1984a) 'The Cultural Relativity of the Quality of Life Concept.' *Academy of Management Review, 9*(3) pp. 389- 398.

Hofstede, G. (1991) Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. London, UK: McGraw-Hill.

Hofstede, G. and Hofstede, G.J. (2005) Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind. 2nd ed., New York: McGraw-Hill.

Holland, J.L. (1973) *Making vocational choices: A theory of careers*, Prentice Hall.

Hope-Hailey, V., Farndale, E., & Truss, C. (2005) 'The HR department's role in organisational performance.' *Human Resource Management Journal, 15*(3), 49–66.

Hoppock, R. (1935) *Job satisfaction*, New York:Harper and Brothers.

Hoshmand, L.T. (2003) ‘Can lessons of history and logical analysis ensure progress in psychological science?.’ *Theory and Psychology, 13* pp. 39-44.

House, R., Javidan, M. and Dorfman, P. (2001) ‘Project GLOBE: An Introduction.’ *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 50*(4) pp. 489-505.

Hrebiniak, L.G. and Alutto, J.A. (1972) 'Personal and role-related factors in the development of organizational commitment', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *17*(4), pp. 555-573.

http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrswp/481

Huck, S.W. (2012) *Reading statistics and research*, Boston: Pearson.

Hunjra, A.I., Chani, M.I., Aslam, S., Azam, M. and Rehman, K. U. (2010) ‘Factors effecting job satisfaction of employees in Pakistani banking sector.’ *African Journal of Business Management*, *4*(10), pp. 2157-2163.

Huselid, M.A. (1995) ‘The impact of human resource management practices on turnover, productivity, and corporate financial performance.’ *Academy of management journal*, *38*(3), pp.635-672.

Ileana Petrescu, A. and Simmons, R., (2008) ‘Human resource management practices and workers' job satisfaction.’ *International Journal of Manpower*, *29*(7) pp.651-667.

Iles P, Almhedie A, Baruch Y. (2012) ‘Managing HR in the Middle East: challenges in the public sector.’ *Public Personnel Management 41*(3) 465–492

Iles, P., Almhedie, A. and Baruch, Y. (2012) ‘Managing HR in the Middle East: Challenges in the Public Sector.’ *Public Personnel Management, 41*(3) pp. 465-492.

Iqbal, A. (2010) ‘An Empirical Assessment of Demographic Factors, Organizational Ranks and Organizational Commitment. International Journal of Business and Management, 5(3).

Iqgbal, A., Kokash, H.A. and Al-Oun, S. (2011) ‘The Impact Assessment of Demographic Factors on Faculty Commitment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Universities.’ *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, 8, pp. 1-13.

Ivankova N., Creswell J. W. and Stick S. (2006) ‘Using mixed-methods sequential explanatory design: From theory to practice.’ *Field Methods, 18*, 3-20.

Ivankova, N., Creswell, J. and Stick, S. (2006) 'Using mixed methods in sequential explanatory design: From theory to practice.' *Field Methods, 18*(3) pp. 3-20.

Iverson, R.D. and Buttigieg, D.M. (1999) 'Affective, normative and continuance commitment: can the 'right kind' of commitment be managed?.'*Journal of Management Studies*, *36*(3) pp. 307-333.

Jackson, S., and Schuler, R. (1995) 'Understanding human resource management in the context of organisations and their environments.' Annual Review of Psychology, 46(2) pp. 237-264.

Jacobs, R. and Washington, C. (2003) 'Employee development and organizational performance: a review of literature and directions for future research.' *Human Resource Development International,* 6(3), pp. 343-354.

Jain, A.K., Giga, S.I. and Cooper, C. L. (2009) 'Employee wellbeing, control and organizational commitment.' *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, *30*(3) pp. 256-273.

Janssen, O. (2004) 'The barrier effect of conflict with superiors in the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational commitment.' *Work and Stress*, *18*(1) pp. 56-65.

Jarrar, Y.F. and Zairi, M. (2002) 'Employee Empowerment – A UK survey of trends and best practices.' *Managerial Auditing Journal, 17*(5) pp. 266-271.

Jaskyte, K. and Lee, M. (2009) 'Organizational commitment of social workers: An exploratory study.' *Administration in Social Work*, *33*(3) pp. 227-241.

Jha, S. (2011) 'Influence of psychological empowerment on affective, normative and continuance commitment: A study in the Indian IT industry.' *Journal of Indian Business Research*, *3*(4) pp. 263-282.

Johnson, B. and Onwuegbuzie, A. (2006) 'Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come.' *Educational Researcher, 33*(7), pp. 14-26.

Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004) 'Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come.' *Educational Researcher, 33*(7), 14-26.

Johnson, R.B. and Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004) 'Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher, 33*(7), pp. 14-26.

Johnson, R.B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J. and Turner, L. A. (2007) 'Toward a definition of mixed methods research.' *Journal of mixed methods research*, *1*(2), pp. 112-133.

Johnson, R.E., Chang, C.H., Yang, L.Q. (2010) 'Commitment and motivation at work: The relevance of employee identity and regulatory focus.' *Acad. Manag. Rev., 35* pp. 226-245.

Johnsrud, L. and Heck, R. (1994) 'A university's faculty: Predicting those who will stay and those who leave.' *Journal for Higher Education Management*, *10*(1) pp. 71-84.

Jones, E.E. and Davis, K.E. (1965) From acts to dispositions: The attribution process in person perception. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology,* Vol. 2. New York: Academic Press. pp.219-266.

Jones, G.R. and George, J. (2000) *Contemporary Management*, New York:McGraw-Hill.

Joo, B.K. and Shim, J.H. (2010) 'Psychological empowerment and organizational commitment: The moderating effect of organizational learning culture.' *Human Resource Development International*, *13*(4) pp. 425-441.

Kagaari, J.R.K. (2011) 'Performance management practices and managed performance: the moderating influence of organisational culture and climate in public universities in Uganda.' *Measuring Business Excellence, 15*(4) pp. 36-49.

Kaliski, S. (2007) *Encyclopedia of Business and Finance*, 2nd ed., Detroit:Thompson Gale.

Kanchana, P.N. and Panchanatham, N. (2012) 'The influence of demographic factors on organizational commitment.' *International Journal of Exclusive Management Research*, 2(5) pp. 1-13.

Kane, R. and Stanton, S. (1994) Human Resource Planning in a Changing Environment. In *Readings in Strategic Human Resource Management*, ed. A. R. Nankervis and R. L. Compton. Melbourne: Thomas Nelson Australia

Kanter, R.M. (1968) 'Commitment and social organisation: A study of commitment mechanisms in utopian communities.' *American Sociological Review, 33*(4), pp. 499-517.

Kanter, R.M. (1968) 'Commitment and social organization: A study of commitment mechanisms in utopian communities.' *American Sociological Review*, pp. 499-517.

Karatepe, O.M. (2013) 'High-Performance Work Practices, Work Social Support and Their Effects on Job Embedded- ness and Turnover Intentions.' *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 25* pp. 903-921.

Karin Andreassi, J., Lawter, L., Brockerhoff, M. and J. Rutigliano, P. (2014) 'Cultural impact of human resource practices on job satisfaction: A global study across 48 countries.' *Cross Cultural Management, 21*(1) pp. 55-77.

Karsh, B., Booske, B.C., Sainfort, F. (2005) 'Job and organizational determinants of nursing home employee commitment, job satisfaction and intent to turnover.' *Ergonomics. 48* pp. 1260–1281.

Katou, A.A. and Budhwar, P.S. (2006) 'Human resource management systems and organizational performance: a test of a mediating model in the Greek manufacturing context.' *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 17* 1223-1253.

Kehinde, A.O. (2011) 'Impact of Job Satisfaction on Absenteeism: A Correlative Study.' European Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, *1*(1) pp. 25 – 49.

Kelidbari, H.R., Dizgah, M. R. and Yusefi, A. (2011) 'The relationship between organization commitment and job performance of employees of Guilan Province social security organization.' *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, *3*(6) pp. 555.

Kell, H. J. and Motowidlo, S. J. (2012) 'Deconstructing Organizational Commitment: Associations Among Its Affective and Cognitive Components, Personality Antecedents, and Behavioral Outcomes1.' *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *42*(1) pp. 213-251.

Khan, I., Ghauri, T.A. and Akram, K. (2012) 'Relationship between Job Satisfaction and HR Practices, an Empirical Research of Different Sectors of University Teachers in Pakistan.' *International Journal of Learning and Development*, *2*(3), pp. 25-33.

Khan, M.A. (2010) 'Effects of Human Resource Management Practices on Organizational Performance – An Empirical Study of Oil and Gas Industry in

Pakistan.' *European Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Sciences*. *24* pp. 158-175

Khilji, S. E., & Wang, X. (2006). "Intended" and "implemented" HRM: the missing linchpin in strategic human resource management research. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 17*(7), 1171–1189.

Khilji, S.E. and Wang, X. (2006) 'Intended' and 'implemented' HRM: the missing linchpin in strategic human resource management research.' *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 17* pp. 1171-1189.

Kinnie, N., Hutchinson, S., Purcell, J., Rayton, B., & Swart, J. (2005) 'Satisfaction with HR practices and commitment to the organisation: why one size does not fit all.' *Human Resource Management Journal*, *15*(4), 9-29.

Kinnie, N., Hutchinson, S., Purcell, J., Rayton, B., and Swart, J. (2005) 'Satisfaction with HR practices and commitment to the organisation: why one size does not fit all.' *Human Resource Management Journal*, *15* pp. 9-29.

Kirkman, B.L. and Shapiro, D.L. (2001) 'The Impact of Cultural Values on Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment in Self-Managing Work Teams: The Mediating Role of Employee Resistance.' *Academy of Management Journal, 44* pp. 557-569.

Klein, H.K. (2004) 'Seeking the new and the critical in critical realism: déjà vu?.'*Information and Organization*, *14*(2) pp. 123-144.

Ko, J.W., Price, J.L. and Mueller, C. W. (1997) 'Assessment of Meyer and Allen's three-component model of organizational commitment in South Korea.' *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *82*(6) pp. 961-973.

Koch, T. (2006) 'Establishing rigour in qualitative research: the decision trail.' *Journal of advanced nursing*, *53*(1) pp. 91-100.

Koch, T. and Harrington, A. (1998) 'Reconceptualizing rigour: the case for reflexivity.' *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *28*(4) pp. 882-890.

Kossivi, B., Xu, M. and Kalgora, B. (2016) 'Study on Determining Factors of Employee Retention.' *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 4, pp. 261-268.

Koys, D.J. (2001) 'The effects of employee satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior and turnover on organizational effectiveness: A unit-level, longitudinal study.' *Personnel Psychology 54*(1) pp. 101-114.

Kreitner, R. K. and Kinicki, A. (1999) *Organizational behaviour*, London:McGraw-Hill.

Kristensen J.K., Groszyk W. S., Buhler B., (2002) 'Outcome-focused management and budgeting.' *OECD Journal of Budgeting*, pp. 7-34.

Kroeber, A.L., and Kluckhohn, C. (1952) Culture: a critical review of concepts and definitions.' *Papers of the peabody Museum of American Archaeology*, *47*(1).

Kroon, B. and Freese, C. (2013) 'Can HR practices retain flexworkers with their agency?.' *International Journal of Manpower*, *34*(8) pp. 899-917.

Kroon, B. and Freese, C. (2013) 'Can HR Practices Retain Flexworkers with Their Agency?.' *International Journal of Manpower*, *34* pp. 899-917.

Kumasey, S.A., Delle, E. and Ofei, B.S. (2014) 'Occupational Stress and Organisational Commitment: Does Sex and Managerial Status Matter?.' *International Journal of Business and Social Research* (*IJBSR*), *4* pp. 173-182.

Kushman, J.W. (1992) ''The organizational dynamics of teacher workplace commitment: A study of urban elementary and middle schools.' *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *28*(1) pp. 5-42.

Lambert, E.G. and Paoline, E. A. (2008) 'The influence of individual, job, and organizational characteristics on correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.' *Criminal Justice Review*.

Lambooij, M., Sanders, K., Koster, F. and Zwiers, M. (2006) 'Human resource practices and organisational performance: can the HRM-performance linkage be explained by the cooperative behaviours of employees?.' *Management Revue, 17*(3) pp. 223-240.

Laschinger, H. K. S., Leiter, M., Day, A., and Gilin, D. (2009) 'Workplace empowerment, incivility, and burnout: Impact on staff nurse recruitment and retention outcomes.' *Journal of Nursing Management, 17* pp. 302-311.

Latif, K. F. (2012) 'An integrated model of training effectiveness and satisfaction with employee development interventions.' *Industrial and Commercial Training, 44*(4) pp. 211-222.

Lawler, E.E. (1973) *Motivation in work organizations*, Monterey, California:Books Cole.

Lawler, E.E. (1995) Strategic Human Resources Management: An Idea Whose Time Has Come. In B. Downie and M. L. Coates (eds.), Managing Human Resources in the 1990s and Beyond: Is the Workplace Being Transformed?.' Kingston, Canada: IRC Press, pp. 46-70.

Lawler, E.E., Mohrman, S. A. (2003) Creating a Strategic Human Resources Organization: An Assessment of Trends and New Directions. Palo Alto, CA. Stanford University Press.

Leat. M, and El-Kot. G, (2007) 'HRM Practices in Egypt: the influence of national context?.' *Int Journal of Human Resource Management*, *18*(1) pp. 147-158.

Lee, Y.K., Nam, F.H., Park, D.H., and Lee, K.A. (2006) 'What factors influence customer oriented prosocial behavior of customer-contact employees.' *Journal of Services Marketing, 20*(4) pp. 251-64.

Leeth, J. (2014) *Integrating Saudi Women into the Workforce Brings Challenges*, Virginia, USA: Society for Human Resource Management.

Leidner, S. and Simon, M.S. (2013) 'Keeping Potential Job-Hoppers' Feet on Ground.' *Human Resource Management International Digest*, *21*, pp. 31-33.

Leon, A. C. Davis, L. L. Kraemer, H. C. (2011) 'The role and interpretation of pilot studies in clinical research.' *Journal of Psychiatric Research 45*(5) pp. 626–629.

Lertxundi, A. and Landeta, J. (2011) 'The moderating effect of cultural context in the relation between HPWS and performance: an exploratory study in Spanish multinational companies.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *22*(18) pp. 3949-3967.

Leung, K., Bhagat, R.S., Buchan, N. R., Erez, M. and Gibson, C. B. (2005) 'Culture and International Business: Recent Advances and their Implications for Future Research.' *Journal of International Business Studies*, *36* pp. 357-378.

Levin, D.M. (1988) *The opening of vision: Nihilism and the postmodern situation*. London: Routledge.

Lew, T. (2009) Perceived Organizational Support: Linking Human Resource Management Practices with Affective Organizational Commitment,

Professional Commitment and Turnover Intention.' *Journal of International Management Studies. 4*(2) pp. 104-115

Lewis, R. E.and Heckman, R. J. (2006) 'Talent management: A critical review.' *Human Resource Management Review, 16*(2) pp. 139-154.

Lin, W.S. (2012) 'Perceived fit and satisfaction on web learning performance: IS continuance intention and task-technology fit perspectives.' *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, *70*(7) pp. 498-507.

Locke, E.A. and Latham, G.P. (1990) *A theory of goal setting and task performance. Englewood Cliffs*, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Lok, P. and Crawford, J. (2004) 'The effect of organisational culture and leadership style on job satisfaction and organisational commitment: A cross-national comparison.' *Journal of Management Development*, *23*(4), pp. 321-338.

Lomax, R.G. and Hahs-Vaughn, D. L. (2012) *An introduction to statistical concepts*, New York, NY: Routledge.

Lorange, P. (2006) 'A performance-based, minimalist human resource management approach in business schools.' *Human Resource Management*, *45*(4) pp. 649-658.

Lynch, D. (2007) *Can higher education manage talent* [online], Inside Higher Ed, available: http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2007/11/27/lynch# [accessed December 11th 2015].

Macky, K. and Boxall, P. (2007) 'The relationship between 'high-performance work practices' and employee attitudes: an investigation of additive and interaction effects.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *18*(4) pp. 537-567.

Madlock, P. E. and Horan, S. M. (2009) 'Predicted outcome value of organizational commitment.' *Communication Research Reports*, *26*(1) pp. 40-49.

Mahoney, T.A. and Deckop, J.R. (1986) 'Evolution of Concept and Practice in Personnel Administration/Human Resource Management (PA/HRM).' Journal of Management, 12(2) pp. 223-242.

Malik, N. (2011) 'Study of job satisfaction factors of faculty members at university of Baluchistan.' *International Journal of Academic Research, 3*(1) pp. 267-272.

Mapesela, M. and Hay, D.H. (2006) 'The effect of change and transformation on academic staff and job satisfaction: A case of a South African University.' *Higher Education*, *52*(4) pp. 711-747.

Marchiori, D.M. and Henkin, A. B. (2004) 'Organizational commitment of a health profession faculty: Dimensions, correlates and conditions.' *Medical Teacher*, *26*(4) pp. 353-358.

Marchiori, D.M. and Henkin, A.B. (2004) 'Organizational commitment of a health profession faculty: Dimensions, correlates and conditions.' Medical Teacher, *26*(4) pp. 353–358.

Marchiori, D.M. and Henkin, A.B. (2004) 'Organizational commitment of a health profession faculty: Dimensions, correlates and conditions.' *Med. Teacher, 26* pp. 353-358.

Marescaux, E., De Winne, S. and Sels, L. (2013) 'HR practices and affective organisational commitment: (when) does HR differentiation pay off?.'*Human Resource Management Journal*, *23*(4) pp. 329-345.

Marescaux, E., Winne, S. and Sels, L. (2012) 'HR practices and HRM outcomes: the role of basic need satisfaction.' *Personnel Review, 42*(1) pp. 4-27.

Martín-Alcazar, F., Romero-Fernández, P. and Sanchez-Gardey, G. (2005) 'Strategic human resource management: integrating the universalistic, contingent, configurational and contextual perspectives.' Int. J. Human Resource Management, 16(5) pp.633–659.

Masa'deh, R., Obeidat, B.Y. and Al-FDmour, R.H. (2015) 'Knowledge Management Strategies as Intermediary Variables between IT-Business Strategic Alignment and Firm Performance.' *European Scientific Journal*, *11*(7) pp. 344-368.

Mathieu, J. and Zajac, D. (1990) 'A review and meta-analysis of the antecedents, correlates and consequences of organizational commitment.' *Psychological Bulletin, 108* pp. 171-194.

Mathieu, J.E. and Zajac, D. M. (1990) 'A review and meta-analysis of the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of organizational commitment.' *Psychological Bulletin*, *108*(2) pp. 171.

Matsumoto, D. and Yoo, H. (2006) 'Toward a new generation of cross-cultural research.' *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 1* pp. 234–250

Mayo, E. (1933) The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization. New York: Macmillan. (republished by London: Routledge 2003).

Mazrui, A. A. (1997) *Islamic and Western values* [online], foreign affairs-new york-, available: https://www.foreignaffairs.org/articles/1997-09-01/islamic-and-western-values [accessed March 10 2016].

Mbugua, G.M., Waiganjo, E.W. and Njeru, A. (2015) 'Relationship between strategic recruitment and employee retention in commercial banks in Kenya.' *International journal of business administration. 6*(1) pp. 87-97.

McCallum, S., Forret, M. and Wolff, H.G., (2014) 'Internal and external networking behavior: An investigation of relationships with affective, continuance, and normative commitment.' *Career Development International*,*19*(5), 595-614.

McDowall, A. and Mabey, C. (2008) 'Developing a framework for assessing effective development activities.' *Personnel Review, 37*(6) pp. 629-646.

Mellahi, K. and Wood, G. T. (2001) 'Management in Saudi Arabia' in Budhwar, P. S. and A., D. Y., eds., *Human resource management in developing countries*, London: Routledge, pp. 135-52.

Mello, J.A. (2010) Compensation. In J.A. Mello (Ed.), *Strategic Human Resource Management*. 2nd ed., Mason, OH: Southwestern, pp. 493-507

Mendel, P.C. (1987) *An investigation of factors that influence teacher morale and satisfaction with work conditions*, unpublished thesis University of Oregon.

Mercurio, Z.A. (2015) 'Affective Commitment as a Core Essence of Organizational Commitment: An Integrative Literature Review.' *Human Resource Development Review*, *1*(1) pp. 1-26.

Metcalfe, B.D. (2006) 'Exploring cultural dimensions of gender and management in the Middle East.' *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *48*(1) pp. 93-107.

Metcalfe, B.D. (2007) 'Gender and human resource management in the Middle East.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *18*(1) 54-74.

Meyer, J. P. and Herscovitch, L. (2001) 'Commitment in the workplace: Toward a general model.' *Human Resource Management Review*, 11(3), pp. 299-326.

Meyer, J. P., Stanley, D. J., Herscovitch, L. and Topolnytsky, L. (2002) 'Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: A meta-analysis of antecedents, correlates, and consequences.' *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 61* pp. 20-52.

Meyer, J., Allen, N. and Smith, C. (1993) 'Commitment to organizations and occupations: an extension and test of the three-component conceptualization.' *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78* pp. 538-551.

Meyer, J.P. and Allen, N. J. (1991) 'A Three-Component Conceptualization of Organizational Commitment.' *Human Resource Management Review, 1* pp. 1-89.

Meyer, J.P. and Allen, N. J. (1991) 'A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment.' *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(1), 61-89.

Meyer, J.P. and Allen, N. J. (1997) *Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research and application*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Meyer, J.P. and Allen, N. J. (1997) *Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research, and Application.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Meyer, J.P. and Parfyonova, N. M. (2010) 'Normative commitment in the workplace: A theoretical analysis and re-conceptualization.' *Human Resource Management Review*, *20*(4) pp. 283-294.

Meyer, P.J. and Smith, A.C. (2000) 'HRM practices and organisational commitment: test of a mediation model.' Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, 17(4) pp. 319-31.

Miah, M.K. and Bird, A. (2007) 'The impact of culture on HRM styles and firm performance: evidence from Japanese parents, Japanese subsidiaries/joint ventures and South Asian local companies.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *18*(5) pp. 908-923.

Milikic, B. B. (2009) The influence of culture on human resource management processes and practices: the propositions for Serbia. Serbia: University of Belgrade.

Miller, J. (2005) The status of qualitative research in criminology. In*Proceedings from the National Science Foundation's Workshop on Interdisciplinary Standards*

for Systematic Qualitative Research. Retrieved from http://www. wjh. harvard. edu/nsfqual/Miller% 20Paper. pdf.

Miller, M., Jackson, J.C. and Pope, M.L. (2001) *Faculty Recruitment and Retention: A Case Study of the Chair's Role*,Internal San Jose State University Report, unpublished.

Miller, S. (2006) 'Mixed methods as methodological innovations: Problems and prospects.' *Methodological Innovations Online, 1*, pp. 1-7.

Mita, M., Aarti, K. and Ravneeta, D. (2014) 'Study on Employee Retention and Commitment.' *International Journal of Advance Research in Computer Science and Management Studies*, 2 pp. 154-164.

Monks, K. et al. (2013) 'Understanding how HR systems work: the role of HR philosophy and HR processes.' *Human Resource Management Journal. 23*(4) pp. 379–95.

Morgan, D. (2013) *Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Morgan, D.L. (2007) 'Paradigms lost and pragmatism regained methodological implications of combining qualitative and quantitative methods.'*Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *1*(1) pp. 48-76.

Morgan, D. (2013) *Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods*: *A pragmatic approach*.Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Morse, J.M. (1994) *Emerging from the data: The cognitive processes of analysis in qualitative inquiry*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Morse, N.C. (1953) *Satisfactions in the white-collar job*, Ann Arbor, MI:University of Michigan Press.

Mowday, R.T., Steers, R. M. and Porter, L. W. (1979) 'The measurement of organizational commitment.' *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 14*(2) pp. 224–247.

Mullins, L.J. (2007) Management and organisational behavior. 8th ed., London: Prentice Hall.

Naumann, E. (1993) 'Organizational Predictors of Expatriate Job Satisfaction.' *Journal of International Business Studies, 24*(1) pp. 61-81.

Neal, A., Griffin, M.A. and Hart, P.M., (2000) 'The impact of organizational climate on safety climate and individual behavior.' *Safety Science*, *34*(1) pp. 99-109.

Neininger, A., Lehmann-Willenbrock, N., Kauffeld, S. and Henschel, A., (2010) 'Effects of team and organizational commitment-A longitudinal study.' *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *76*(3) pp. 567-579.

Newby, L. and Howarth, C. (2012) 'How Specsavers attracts and nurtures outstanding talent.' *Strategic HR Review, 11*(4) pp. 193-198.

Nienhuis, R.W. (1994) Satisfied faculty and involved chairpersons: Keys to faculty retention. Paper presented at the meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Tucson, AZ. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED375735).

Nilsson, S. and Ellström, P-E. (2012) 'Employability and talent management: challenges for HRD Practices.' *European Journal of Training and Development, 36*(1) pp. 26-45.

Nishii, L.H., Lepak, D.P. and Schneider, B. (2008) 'Employee attributions of the "why" of HR practices: Their effects on employee attitudes and behaviors, and customer satisfaction.' *Personnel Psychology*, *61*(3) pp. 503-545.

Nishii, L.H., Lepak, D.P. and Schneider, B. (2008) *Employee Attributions of the "Why" of HR Practices: Their effects on employee attitudes and behaviors, and customer satisfaction* (CAHRS Working Paper #08-03). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies.

Noah, G. and Yong-Pin, Z. (2002) 'Managing learning and turnover in employee staffing.' *Operations Research*, *50*(6) 991-1006.

Noe, R.A. (2008) *Employee Training and Development*. 4th ed., New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

Noe, R.A., Hollenbeck, J.R., Gerhart, B. and Wright, P.M., (2003) *Gaining a competitive advantage*. Irwin: McGraw-Hill.

Noordin, F., and Jusoff, K. (2009) 'Levels of job satisfaction amongst Malaysian academic staff.' *Asian Social Science, 5*(5) pp. 122-128.

Ntiamoah, E.B., Abrokwah, E., Agyei-Sakyi, M., Siaw, A. and Opoku, B. (2014) 'An Empirical Analysis of Recruitment and Selection Practices In The Public

Sector.' *International Journal of Management Sciences and Business Research*, *3*(12).

Obeidat, B., Al-Sarayrah, S., Tarhini, A., Al-Dmour, R.H., Al-Salti, Z. and Sweis, R. (2016) 'Cultural Influence on Strategic Human Resource Management Practices: A Jordanian Case Study.' *International Business Research*, 9(10).

Ofori, D.F., Sekyere-Abankwa, V. and Borquaye, D.B. (2012) 'Perceptions of the Human Resource Management Function amongst Professionals: A Ghanaian Study.' *International Journal of Business Management, 7*(5) pp. 157-178.

Ogilvie, J.R. (1986) 'The Role of Human Resource Management Practices in Predicting Organizational Commitment.' Group and Organization Studies, 11(4) pp. 335-359.

Olorunjuwon, S.M. (2008) Using motivational strategy as panacea for employee retention and turnover in selected public and private sector organizationsin the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Master of Commerce Dissertation, University of Fort Hare, South Africa.

Olsen, D. and Near, J.P. (1994) 'Role conflict and faculty life satisfaction.' *The Review of Higher Education*, 17(2), 179.

Olsen, D., Maple, S.A. and Stage, F. K. (1995) 'Women and minority faculty job satisfaction: Professional role interests, professional satisfactions, and institutional fit.' *The Journal of Higher Education*, 66 pp. 267-293.

Oshagbemi, T. (1996) 'Overall job satisfaction: How good are single versus multiple-item measures.' *Journal of Managerial Psychology. 14*(5) pp. 388-403.

Ostroff, C. and Bowen, D.E. (2000) Moving HR to a higher level: HR Practices and organizational effectiveness. In K.J. Klein, S.W.J. Kozlowski, (Eds.), Multilevel Theory, Research, and Methods in Organizations: Foundations, Extensions, and New Directions. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. : 211-266.

Paauwe, J. (2004) *HRM and performance: Achieving long-term viability*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Paillé, P. (2013) 'Organizational Citizenship Behaviour and Employee Retention: How Important Are Turnover Cognitions?.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *24* pp. 768-790.

Park, S., Henkin, A.B. and Egley, R. (2005) 'Teacher team commitment, teamwork and trust: Exploring associations.' *Journal of Educational Administration*, *43*(5) pp. 462-479.

Park, S.M. and Rainey, H.G. (2007) 'Antecedents, Mediators, and Consequences of Affective, Normative, and Continuance Commitment: Empirical Tests of Commitment Effects in Federal Agencies.' Review of Public Personnel Administration. *27*(3) pp. 197-226

Paul, E. P. and Phua, S. K. (2011) 'Lecturers' job satisfaction in a public tertiary institution in Singapore: ambivalent and non-ambivalent relationships between job satisfaction and demographic variables.' *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 33*(2) pp. 141-151.

Pellissier, R. (2007) *Business research made easy*, Cape Town:Juta and Company Ltd.

Perry, R.W. (2004) 'The relationship of affective organizational commitment with supervisory trust.' *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *24*(2) pp. 133-149.

Petrescu, A.I. and Simmons, R. (2008) 'Human Resource Management Practices and Workers' Job Satisfaction.' *International Journal of Manpower*, 29(7) pp. 651-667.

Piennar, C. and Bester, C. (2008) 'The retention of academics in the early career phase.' *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, *6*(2) pp. 32-41.

Pilbeam, S. and Corbridge, M. (2002) *People resourcing*. 2nd ed., London: Pearson

Pilbeam, S. and Corbridge, M. (2006) People Resourcing: Contemporary Human Resource Management in Practice, Third Edition, Prentice Hall/Financial Times: Harlow

Ponterotto, J.G. (2005) 'Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosophy of science.' *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *52*(2) pp. 126.

Poole, K. and Jones, A. (1996) 'A re-examination of the experimental design for nursing research.' *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *24*(1) pp. 108-114.

Porter, L.W., Steers, R. M., Mowday, R. T. and Boulian, P. V. (1974) 'Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover among psychiatric technicians.' *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *59*(5) pp. 603-609.

Porter, M.E. (2008) 'The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy.' *Harvard Business Review*, pp. 79–93.

Pourghaz, A., Tamini, K.B. and Karamad, A. (2011) 'Do Demographic Characteristics Make a Difference to Job Satis- faction, Organizational Commitment and Burnout among Travel Agency Drivers? (A Case Study in Iran).' *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research, 1* pp. 916-923.

Powell, D. M. and Meyer, J. P. (2004) 'Side-bet theory and the three-component model of organizational commitment.' *Journal of vocational behavior, 65*(1) pp. 157-177.

Rahim, M. A., Magner, N. R., Antonioni, D. and Rahman, S. (2001) 'Do justice relationships with organization-directed reactions differ across US and Bangladesh employees?.'*International Journal of Conflict Management*, *12*(4) pp. 333-349.

Rahman, W. and Nas, Z. (2013) 'Employee development and turnover intention: theory validation.' *European Journal of Training and Development, 37*(6) pp. 564-579.

Ramlall, S., Al-Amri, H. and Abdulghaffar, N. (2012) 'Human Resource Management in Saudi Arabia.' *International Business and Economic Research Journal*, *11*(10) pp. 1155-1162.

Rashid, Z.A., Sambasivan, M., and Johari, J. (2003) 'The influence of corporate culture and organisational commitment on performance.' *The Journal of Management Development, 22*(7/8) pp. 708–728.

Raub, S. and Streit E.M. (2006) 'Realistic recruitment: An empirical study of Cruise Industry.' *Int. J. Hosp. Manage*. *18*(4) 278: 289.

Rees, G. and French, R. (2010) Leading, managing and developing people. London: CIPD Publications.

Reichers, A.E. (1985) 'A review and reconceptualization of organizational commitment.' *Academy of Management Review*, *10*(3) pp. 465-476.

Reio, T. G., Sanders-Rejo, J. and Reio, T. (1999) 'Combating workplace ageism.' *Adult Learning, 11* pp. 10-13.

Rhoades, L., and Eisenberger, R. (2002) 'Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature.' *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87* pp. 698-714.

Rice, R.E. and Austin, A. E. (1988) ‘High Faculty Morale What Exemplary Colleges

Riketta, M. (2002) 'Attitudinal organizational commitment and job performance: A meta-analysis.’ *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23(3) pp. 257-266.

Rinehart, J.S. and Short, P.M. (1992) 'Teacher Empowerment and School Climate.’ *Education*, *114*(4) pp. 592.

Robbins, S. (1997) Managing Today. In Dubrin, A. J., Leadership: Research findings, Practice and Skills, Cengage Learning, South-Western, OH.

Robson, C. (1993) Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioners-researchers. *Massachusetts: Blackwell Pushers*.

Roethlisberger, F. J. & Dickson, W. J. (1939) Management and the Worker. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press (re-published 2003 by Routledge).

Rorty, R. (1999) *Philosophy and social hope.* London: Penguin Books.

Roscoe, J.T. (1975) *Fundamental research statistics for the behavioral sciences*, New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Rousseau, D.M., Greller, M.M. (1994). ‘Human resource practices: Administrative contract makers.’ *Human Resource Management, 33* pp. 385-402

Rubin, A. and Babbie, E. R. (2012) *Empowerment series: Essential research methods for social work.* 3rd ed., Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Rugh, W. (2002) ‘Arab education: tradition, growth and reform.’ *Middle East Journal, 56*, 397- 414.

Rutledge, E.J., Al Shamsi, F., Bassioni, Y., and Al Sheikh, H. (2011) ‘Women, labour market nationalization policies and human resource development in the Arab Gulf states.’ *Human Resource Development International, 14*(2) pp. 183-198.

Sa Abreu, M.C., Cunha, M.C. and Reboucas, S. M. P. (2013) ‘Effects of personal characteristics on organizational commitment: evidence from Brazil’s oil and gas industry.’ The International Journal of Human Resource Management. http://dx.doi.org/10.10.1080/09585192.2013.781527

Saari, L.M. and Judge, T.A., (2004) ‘Employee attitudes and job satisfaction.’ *Human resource management*, *43*(4) pp.395-407.

Sabharwal, M. and Corley, E. A. (2009) 'Faculty job satisfaction across gender and discipline.’ *The Social Science Journal*, *46*(3) pp. 539-556.

Sahai, S. and Srivastava, A. (2012) 'Goal/target setting and performance assessment as tool for talent management.' *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 37, pp. 241-246.

Salancik, G. (1977) Commitment and control in organizational behavior and belief. In B. Straw and G Salancik (Eds.) New directions in organizational behavior (pp.1-54). Chicargo: St Clair.

Salancik, G.R. (1977) Commitment and control of Organizational Behaviour belief In B.M. Straw and G.R. Salancik (Eds.). New Direction in Organizational Behaviour, Chicago. St. Clair Press.

Salancik, G.R. and Brindle, M. C. (1997) The social ideologies of power in organizational decisions. *Organizational Decision Making.* New York. pp. 111-132.

Santhapparaj, A.S. and Alam, S.S. (2005) 'Job satisfaction among academic staff in private universities in Malaysia.' *Journal of Social Sciences, 1*(2) pp. 72-76.

Sarantagos, S. (1998) *Social Research*. 2nd ed. London: McMillan Press.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2007) *Research Methods for Business Students*. 4th ed., Financial Times Prentice Hall, Edinburgh Gate, Harlow.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2012) *Research Methods for Business Students*, Harlow, England: Prentice Hall.

Sawalha, F. (2002, April 1). Study says "wasta" difficult to stamp out when advocates remain in power, Jordan Times.

Schuler, R. and Rogocsky, N. (1998) 'Understanding compensation practice variations across firms: The impact of national culture.' *Journal of International Business Studies, 29*(1) pp.159–177.

Schuler, R. S., and Rogocsky, N. (1998) 'Understanding Compensation Practice Variations across Firms: The Impact of National Culture.' *Journal of International Business Studies, 29*(1) pp. 1-14.

Schuler, R.S. and Rogocsky, N. (1998) 'Understanding compensation practice variations across firms: The impact of national culture.' *Journal of International Business Studies, 29* pp. 159-177.

Schultz, D. (1978) *Psychology and industry today: an introduction to industrial and organizational psychology*, Macmillan Publishing, New York.

Schuster, F.E. (1998) *A Strategy for High Commitment and Involvement: Employee Centred Management*, Quorum Books, Westport, CT.

Schuster, J.H. and Finkelstein, M. J. (2006) '*The American faculty: The restructuring of academic work and careers*.' Baltimore, MD:Johns Hopkins University Press.

Schwartz, S.H. (1999) 'A theory of cultural values and some implications for work.' *Applied Psychology*, *48*(1) pp. 23-47.

Scott, D. and Morrison, M. (2006) Key Ideas in Educational Research, London: Continuum.

Sekaran, U. (2003) 'Research methods for business: a skill building approach.' *Journal of Education for Business, 68*(5), pp. 316-317.

Sendogdu, A.A., Kocabacak, A. and Guven, S. (2013) 'The relationship between human resource management practices and organizational commitment: A field study. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 99* pp. 818-827.

Shafiq, M. Z., Ji, L., Liu, A. X., Pang, J., Venkataraman, S. and Wang, J. (2013) 'A first look at cellular network performance during crowded events.' *ACM SIGMETRICS Performance Evaluation Review, ACM, 41*(1) pp. 17-28.

Shahnawaz, M.G. and Juyal, R.C. (2006) 'Human Resource Management Practices and Organizational Commitment in Different Organizations.' *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 32*(3) pp. 171-178.

Sharma, S. (2009) *Human Resource Management: A Strategic Approach to Employment.* New Delhi: Global India Publications.

Sharma, U.R. (2012) Human Resources Planning and Recruitment. Available at: http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/3482/8/08_chapter%203.pdf

Sheldon, M.E. (1971) 'Investments and involvements as mechanisms producing commitment to organisation.' *Administrative Science Quarterly, 16*(2) 143-150.

Sheldon, M.E. (1971) 'Investments and involvements as mechanisms producing commitment to the organization.' *Administrative Science Quarterly, 16*(2), pp. 143-150.

Shneiderman, S.B., and Plaisant, C. (2005) Designing the user interface. 4th ed.. USA: Pearson Addison Wesley.

Shuck, B., Twyford, D., Reio Jr., T. G. and Shuck, A. (2014) 'Human Resource Development Practices and Employee Engagement: Examining the Connection with Employee Turnover Intentions.' *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 25*(2) pp. 239-270.

Sidani, Y. and Al Ariss, A. (2014) 'Institutional and corporate drivers of global talent management: Evidence from the Arab Gulf region.' *Journal of World Business*, *49*(2) pp. 215-224.

Siikaniemi, L. (2012) 'Information pathways for the competence foresight mechanism in talent management framework.' *European Journal of Training and Development, 36*(1) pp. 46-65.

Sinclair, A. (2004) *Workforce planning: A literature review*, Institute for Employment Studies.

Sinclair, R.R., Tucker, J.S., Cullen, J.C. and Wright, C. (2005) 'Performance differences among four organizational commitment profiles.' J*ournal of Applied Psychology, 90*(6) pp. 1280.

Sirat, M. (2005) 'Transnational higher education in Malaysia: balancing benefits and concerns through regulations.' working paper, National Higher Education Research Institute (NaHERI), available at: www.portal.mohe.gov.my/portal/page/portal/ExtPortal/.../1b.pdf (accessed May 4th, 2017).

Smeenk, S.G., Eisinga, R.N., Teelken, J. and Doorewaard, J. (2006) 'The effects of HRM practices and antecedents on organizational commitment among university employees.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *17*(12) pp. 2035-2054.

Smith, J.K. (1983) 'Quantitative versus qualitative research: An attempt to clarify the issue.' *Educational Researcher*, *12*(3), pp. 6-13

Smith, L. and Abouammoh, A. (2013) *Higher Education in Saudi Arabia: Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities*. The Netherlands: Springer.

Snell, S. and Bohlander, G., (2010) Principles of Human Resource Management. South-Western Cengage Learning.

Solinger, O., Olffen, W. and Roe, R. 2008. Beyond the three component model of organizational commitment.' Journal of Applied Psychology, 93 (1): 70-83.

Solinger, O.N., Van Olffen, W. and Roe, R. A. 2008 'Beyond the three-component model of organizational commitment.' *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*(1) pp. 70.

Somech, A. and Bogler, R. (2002) 'Antecedents and consequences of teacher organizational and professional commitment.' *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *38*(4) pp. 555-577.

Sousa-Poza, A. and Sousa-Poza, A., 2000. Well-being at work: a cross-national analysis of the levels and determinants of job satisfaction.' Journal of Socio-economics 29, 517-538.

Spector, P. (1997) *Job Satisfaction*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Spencer-Oatey, H. (2012) What is culture? A compilation of quotations. Global PAD Core Concepts. Available in: http://bit.ly/28IUDTg. [Accessed 23 June 2017].

Spreitzer, G.M. (1995) 'Psychological empowerment in the workplace: Dimensions, measurement, and validation.*' Academy of management Journal, 38*(5) pp. 1442-1465.

Sseganga, K. and Garrett, R. M. (2005) 'Job satisfaction of university academics: Perspectives from Uganda.' *Higher Education, 50* pp. 33-56.

Ssesanga, K. and Garrett, R. M. (2005) 'Job satisfaction of university academics: Perspectives from Uganda.' *Higher Education*, *50*(1) pp. 33-56.

Statt, D. (2004) *The Routledge Dictionary of Business Management,* 3 ed., Detroit: Routledge Publishing.

Steers, R.M. (1977) 'Antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment.' *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *22*, 46-56.

Stites, J.P. and Michael, J. H. (2011) 'Organizational commitment in manufacturing employees: Relationships with corporate social performance.' *Business and Society, 50* pp. 50-70.

Streubert, H. and Carpenter, D. (1999) *Qualitative Research in Nursing: Advancing the Humanistic Imperative*, Philadelphia: Lippincott.

Suifan, T. S. (2015) 'The Effect of Human Resources Practices on Organizational Commitment: A Jordanian Study.' Journal of Management Research, 7(4).

Swart, J. and Kinnie, N. (2010) 'Organisational learning, knowledge assets and HR practices in professional service firms.' *Human Resource Management Journal*, *20*(1) pp. 64-79.

Tack, M.W. and Patitu, C. L. (1992) Faculty job satisfaction: Women and minorities in peril. *ASHE-ERIC higher education report no. 4.* Washington, DC: Association for the study of higher education.

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (1998) *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Tayeb, M. (1995) 'The Competitive Advantage of Nations: The Role of HRM and its Sociocultural Context.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 6,* 588– 605.

Tayeb, M.H. (1997) 'Islamic revival in Asia and human resource management.' *Employee Relations, 19*(4), pp. 352-364

Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. (2009) *Foundations of mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Tessema, M. and Soeters, J. (2006) 'Challenges and prospects of HRM in developing countries: testing the HRM-performance link in Eritrean civil service.' *Intl. J. Hum. Res. Manag., 17*(1) pp. 86-105.

Thibaut, J.W. and Kelley, H.H., (1959) *The social psychology of groups.* Oxford, England: John Wiley.

Thomas, S. (2010) Ethnografie. In Günter Mey and Katja Mruck (Eds.), *Handbuch Qualitative Forschung in der Psychologie*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag/Springer. pp. 462-475.

Thunnissen, M., Boselie, P. and Fruytier, B. (2013) 'A review of talent management: 'Infancy or adolescence?.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 24*(9) pp. 1744-1761.

Ting, Y. (1997) 'Determinants of job satisfaction of federal government employees.' *Public Personnel Management, 26* pp. 313-334.

Tooksoon, H.M.P. (2011) Conceptual framework on the relationship between human resource management practices, job satisfaction, and turnover. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, *2*(2) pp. 41-49.

Triandis, H. C. (1994) 'Cross-cultural industrial and organizational psychology.' In: Dunnette, M. D. and Hough, L. M. (Eds.), Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Trompenaars, A. and Hampden-Turner, C. (1998) *Riding the waves of culture: Understanding cultural diversity in global business*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Trompenaars, F. and Hampden-Turner, C. (1998) *Riding the Waves of Culture*, New York: McGraw-Hill.

Truss, C. (2001) Complexities and Controversies in Linking HRM with Organizational Outcomes. *Journal of Management Studies, 38*(8), 1121–1149.

Tsui, A.S., Pearce, J.L., Porter, L.W. and Tripoli, A.M. (1997) 'Alternative approaches to the employee-organization relationship: Does investment in employees pay off?.' *Academy of Management Journal, 40* 1089-1121.

Tsui, K.T., and Cheng, Y.C. (1999) 'School organizational health and teachercommitment: A contingency study with multi-level analysis.' *Educational Research and Evaluation,* 5 pp. 249-268.

Tufail, M. and Farooq, N. (2012) 'Component Wise Comparison of the Degree of Organizational Commitment.' *International Review of Management and Business Research*, *1*(1), 47.

Turban, D.B., Forret, M.L. and Hendrickson, C. L. (1998) 'Applicant Attraction to Firms: Influences of Organization Reputation, Job and Organizational Attributes, and Recruiter Behaviors.' *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, *52* pp. 24–44.

Tzafrir, S.S. (2005) 'A universalistic perspective for explaining the relationship between HRM practices and firm performance at different points in time.' *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 21*(2) pp. 109-130, 2006.

Ulrich, D. (1997) *Human Resources Champions*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Ulrich, D. and Dulebohn, J.H. (2015) 'Are we there yet? What's next for HR?.' *Human Resource Management Review, 25*(2) pp. 188–204.

Ulrich, D., Younger, J and Brockbank, W (2008) 'The Twenty First Century HR Organization.' *Human Resource Management, 47* pp. 829-850.

Van Den Bergh, B.R. (2011) ‘Developmental programming of early brain and behaviour development and mental health: a conceptual framework.’ *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, *53*(4) pp. 19-23.

Van den Brink, M., Fruytier, B. and Thunnissen, M. (2013) 'Talent management in academia: performance systems and HRM policies.’ *Human Resource Management Journal*, *23*(2) pp. 180-195.

Van der Putten, J. and Wimsatt, L. (1999) Cross-national faculty departure: Development of a new model. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, San Antonio, TX.

Van Oudenhoven, J. P. (2001) ‘Do Organizations Reflect National Cultures? A 10-Nation Study.’International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 25(1) pp. 89-107.

Vandenberg, R.J. and Self, R.M. (1993) ‘Assessing newcomers' changing commitments to the organization during the first 6 months of work.’ *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *78*(4) pp. 557.

Vandenberghe, R., Gitelman D.R., Parrish T.B. and Mesulam, M.M. (2001) ‘Location- or feature-based targeting of peripheral attention.’ *Neuroimage 14* pp. 37–47.

Vermeeren, B., Steijn, B., Tummers, L., Lankhaar, M., Poerstamper, R.J. and van Beek, S. (2014) ‘HRM and its effect on employee, organizational and financial outcomes in health care organizations.’ *Human Resources for Health, 12*, 35.

Vroom, V. H. (1964) *Work and motivation*. New York: Wiley.

Waldman, J. and Arora S. (2004) ‘Measuring retention rather than turnover: A different and

Walker, J.W. (1980) Human resource planning. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Walker, J.W. (2001) ‘Zero defections?.’ *Human Resource Planning*, *24*(1) pp. 6–8.

Walsham, G. (1993) *Interpretivism in IS research: Past, present and future*. Judge Institute of Management Studies.

Walter, U., Edvardsson, B. and Öström, Å. (2010) ‘Drivers of customers' service experiences: a study in the restaurant industry.’ *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal, 20*(3), pp. 236–258.

Ward, M. E. and Sloane, P. J. (2000) 'Non-pecuniary advantages vs. pecuniary disadvantages: job satisfaction among male and female academics in Scottish universities.' *Scottish Journal of Political Economy, 47* pp. 273-303.

Ward, M.E. and Sloane, P.J. (2000) 'Non-pecuniary advantages vs. pecuniary disadvantages: job satisfaction among male and female academics in Scottish universities.' *Scottish Journal of Political Economy, 47* pp. 273 – 303.

Ward, M.E. and Sloane, P.J., (2000) 'Non-Pecuniary Advantages versus Pecuniary Disadvantages: Job Satisfaction among Male and Female Academics in Scottish Universities.' *Scottish Journal of Political Economy, 47*(3) pp. 273-303.

Wasti, S.A. (2005) 'Commitment profiles: Combinations of organizational commitment forms and job outcomes.' *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 67*(2) pp. 290-308.

Watson, G.W. and Papamarcos, S.D. (2002) 'Social capital and organizational commitment.' *Journal of Business and Psychology, 16*(4) pp. 537-552.

Weeratunga, L. (2003) Human Resource Management, Dhaka: Bangladesh Open University.

Weir, D. and Hutchings, K. (2005) 'Cultural embeddedness and contextual constraints: Knowledge sharing in Chinese and Arab cultures.' *Knowledge and Process Management, 12*(2) pp. 88-98.

Weiss, H. M. (2002) 'Deconstructing job satisfaction: Separating evaluations, beliefs, and affective experiences.' *Human Resource Management Review, 12* pp.173 –194.

Wellington, J. (*2000*) Educational Research: Contemporary Issues and Practical Approaches. *London: Continuum.*

Wender, J. (2004) 'Phenomenology, cultural criminology and the return to astonishment.' *Cultural criminology unleashed*, pp. 49-60.

Whitehill, A.M. (1991) *Japanese Management: Tradition and Transition*. London: Routledge,

Whitener, E.M. (2001) 'Do "high commitment" human resource practices affect employee commitment? A cross-level analysis using hierarchical linear modeling.' *Journal of management*, *27*(5) pp. 515-535.

Whittington, J.L., Goodwin, V.L. and Murray, B., 2004. Transformational leadership, goal difficulty, and job design: Independent and interactive effects on employee outcomes.' *The Leadership Quarterly*, *15*(5) pp. 593-606.

Wiener, Y. (1982) 'Commitment in organizations: A normative view.' *Academy of Management Review*, *7*(3) pp. 418-428.

Wilkins, S. (2001) International briefing 9: Training and development in the United Arab Emirates.' *International Journal of Training and Development, 5*(2) pp. 153-165.

Wolverton, M., Wolverton, M.L. and Gmelch, W.H., (1999) 'The impact of role conflict and ambiguity on academic deans.' *Journal of Higher Education*, 80-106.

Wright T (2014) 'Gender, sexuality and male-dominated work: the intersection of long-hours working and domestic life.' *Work, employment and society*, *28*(6) pp. 985-1002.

Wright, P. M. and Kehoe, R. R. (2008) 'Human resource practices and organizational commitment: A deeper examination.' *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, 46*(1) pp. 1- 22.

Wright, P. M. and Snell, S. A. (2005) 'Partner or guardian? HR's challenge in balancing value and values.' *Human Resource Management, 44*(2) pp. 177–182.

Wright, P. M., McCormick, B., Sherman, W. S. and McMahan, G. C. (1999) 'The role of human resources practices in petro-chemical refinery performance.' The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 10 pp. 551–571.

Wright, P.M. and Nishii, L.H. (2007) *Strategic HRM and organizational behavior: Integrating multiple levels of analysis* (CAHRS Working Paper #07-03). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies. http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cahrswp/468

Wright, P.M., & Nishii, L.H. (2006) Strategic HRM and Organizational Behavior: Integrating Multiple Levels of Analysis, CAHRS Working Paper 06-05, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, Center for Advanced Human Resource Studies.

Xian, H., Atkinson, C., & Meng-Lewis, Y. (2017) 'Guanxi and high performance work systems in China: evidence from a state-owned enterprise.' *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, pp. 1-20.

Yammarino. F.J. and Avolio, B.J. (2013) Transformational and charismatic leadership: Introduction to the 10th anniversary issue. In Avolio, B.J., and Yammarino, F.J. (Eds.), *Transformational and charismatic leadership: The road ahead*. 2nd ed., Bingley, UK: Emerald/JAI, pp. xvii-xxiii.

Yeh, C.W. (2009) 'Service climate, professional commitment and job performance offlight attendants in Taiwan.' *Journal of Air Transport Management*, *15*(5) pp. 259-260.

Yousef, D.A. (2000) 'Organizational commitment: A mediator of the relationships of leadership behavior with job satisfaction and performance in a non-western country.' *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *15*(1) pp. 6-24.

Yvonne F. M. (2010) 'Doing mixed methods research pragmatically: Implications for the rediscovery of pragmatism as a research paradigm.' *Journal of mixed methods research*, *4*(1), 6-16.

Zayas-Ortiz, M., Rosario, E., Marquez, E. and Colón Gruñeiro, P. (2015) 'Relationship between organizational commitments and organizational citizenship behaviour in a sample of private banking employees.' *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, *35*(1/2) pp. 91-106.

Zia, Y, A., and Tufail, M. (2011) 'The Comparative Analysis of Organizational Commitment Among the Faculty Members of Public and Private Sectors Universities in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. *Journal of Managerial Sciences, 5*(1), pp. 37-52.

Zikmund, W.G. (2003) 'Sample designs and sampling procedures.' *Business research methods*, *7* pp. 368-400.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Descriptive and inferential tables of HR practice, commitment and satisfaction

Table A: Descriptive statistic of HR planning

		S.D	D	N	A	S.A	TA	M	SD	Rank
The university's management determines the tasks and job descriptions of all employees.	N	150	205	112	42	25	67.0	2.22	1.08	3
	%	28.1	38.4	21.0	7.9	4.7	12.5			
The university's management develops action plans to meet the anticipated needs of human resources.	N	109	218	145	53	9	62.0	2.31	.96	2
	%	20.4	40.8	27.2	9.9	1.7	11.6			
The university's management tries to find appropriate mechanisms to work.	N	151	218	90	56	19	75.0	2.20	1.07	4
	%	28.3	40.8	16.9	10.5	3.6	14.0			
The university's management attempts to bridge the gap between the demand for employees and the available supply.	N	104	219	128	59	24	83.0	2.40	1.05	1
	%	19.5	41.0	24.0	11.0	4.5	15.5			

(S.D) strongly disagree (D) Disagree N(neither) (A) Agree (S.A) strongly agree (TA) Totally agree (M)Mean (SD) Std. Deviation

Table B: Descriptive statistics for HR attraction

		S.D	D	N	A	S.A	TA	M	SD	Rank
The university's management uses different advertising means that are appropriate to attract employees.	N	119	181	126	76	32	108.0	2.47	1.15	1
	%	22.3	33.9	23.6	14.2	6.0	20.2			
The university's management sorts out job applications and focuses on those who are qualified.	N	128	187	142	61	16	77.0	2.34	1.05	4
	%	24.0	35.0	26.6	11.4	3.0	14.4			
The university's management attracts and recruits the best talent from both inside and outside the university.	N	122	188	131	85	8	93.0	2.38	1.05	2
	%	22.8	35.2	24.5	15.9	1.5	17.4			
The university's management assesses candidates to fill jobs within the university.	N	122	198	116	86	12	98.0	2.37	1.07	3
	%	22.8	37.1	21.7	16.1	2.2	18.4			
The university's management attracts and appoints employees with creative skills.	N	139	187	122	70	16	86.0	2.32	1.08	5
	%	26.0	35.0	22.8	13.1	3.0	16.1			

(S.D) Strongly disagree (D) Disagree N (neither) (A) Agree (S.A) Strongly agree (TA) Totally agree (M) Mean (SD) Std. Deviation

Table C: Descriptive statistics for HR retention

		S.D	D	N	A	S.A	TA	M	SD	Rank
The university's management focuses on employee talents that contribute to the success of the university.	N	110	189	152	56	27	83.0	2.44	1.08	4
	%	20.6	35.4	28.5	10.5	5.1	15.5			
The university's management develops regulations and laws that improve the talent management system.	N	99	191	147	68	29	97.0	2.50	1.09	2
	%	18.5	35.8	27.5	12.7	5.4	18.2			
The university's management ensures the positive contribution of talents to serve the university.	N	104	181	149	85	15	100.0	2.48	1.06	3
	%	19.5	33.9	27.9	15.9	2.8	18.7			
The university's management applies a rewarding and just rewards system.	N	107	163	158	78	28	106.0	2.54	1.12	1
	%	20.0	30.5	29.6	14.6	5.2	19.9			

(S.D) Strongly disagree (D) Disagree N (neither) (A) Agree (S.A) Strongly agree (TA) Totally agree (M) Mean (SD) Std. Deviation

Table D: Descriptive statistics of items with the HR development scale

		S.D	D	N	A	S.A	TA	M	SD	Rank
The university's management invests in and develops the human talents of their employees.	N	119	172	141	80	22	102.0	2.46	1.11	8
	%	22.3	32.2	26.4	15.0	4.1	19.1			
The university's management develops programs for the development of employee creativity.	N	84	159	161	91	39	130.0	2.70	1.14	1
	%	15.7	29.8	30.1	17.0	7.3	24.3			
The university's management encourages innovation among employees and supports them.	N	96	179	136	90	33	123.0	2.59	1.14	3
	%	18.0	33.5	25.5	16.9	6.2	23.0			
The university's management develops the creative capabilities of employees.	N	102	174	156	71	31	102.0	2.54	1.11	5
	%	19.1	32.6	29.2	13.3	5.8	19.1			
The university's management helps individuals plan their career paths.	N	92	173	152	81	36	117.0	2.61	1.13	2
	%	17.2	32.4	28.5	15.2	6.7	21.9			
The university's management provides effective training opportunities appropriate for the needs of employees.	N	97	199	130	76	32	108.0	2.52	1.12	6
	%	18.2	37.3	24.3	14.2	6.0	20.2			
The university's management prepares new & talented employees well to start working in the university.	N	120	200	128	66	20	86.0	2.37	1.07	9
	%	22.5	37.5	24.0	12.4	3.7	16.1			
The university's management supports	N	96	168	157	95	18	113.0	2.57	1.07	4
	%	18.0	31.5	29.4	17.8	3.4	21.2			

talented employees by providing them with an appropriate environment.										
The university's management provides an appropriate climate for talented employees to work in.	N	100	193	134	86	21	107.0	2.50	1.08	7
	%	18.7	36.1	25.1	16.1	3.9	20.0			
The university's management predicts the human resource needs of the university.	N	126	198	124	58	28	86.0	2.37	1.11	10
	%	23.6	37.1	23.2	10.9	5.2	16.1			

(S.D) Strongly disagree (D) Disagree N neither) (A) Agree (S.A) Strongly agree (TA) Totally agree (M) Mean (SD) Std. Deviation

Table E: Descriptive statistics of items with the affective commitment scale

		S.D	D	N	A	S.A	TA	M	SD	Rank
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this university.	N	31	62	151	169	121	290	3.54	1.13	7
	%	5.8	11.6	28.3	31.6	22.7	54.3			
I enjoy discussing my university with people outside it.	N	21	48	136	201	128	329	3.69	1.05	3
	%	3.9	9.0	25.5	37.6	24.0	61.6			
I really feel as if this university's problems are my own.	N	19	58	155	184	118	302	3.61	1.05	6
	%	3.6	10.9	29.0	34.5	22.1	56.6			
I think that I could not easily become as attached to another university as I am to this one.	N	34	71	136	178	115	293	3.50	1.15	8
	%	6.4	13.3	25.5	33.3	21.5	54.9			
I do feel like 'part of the family' at my university.	N	14	46	137	199	138	337	3.75	1.01	2
	%	2.6	8.6	25.7	37.3	25.8	63.1			
I do feel 'emotionally attached' to my university.	N	16	64	144	190	120	310	3.63	1.05	5
	%	3.0	12.0	27.0	35.6	22.5	58.1			
My department has a great deal of personal meaning to me.	N	17	50	140	211	116	327.0	3.67	1.0	4
	%	3.2	9.4	26.2	39.5	21.7	61.2			
I do feel a strong sense of belonging to my department.	N	13	42	128	222	129	351	3.77	.98	1
	%	2.4	7.9	24.0	41.6	24.2	65.7			

(S.D) Strongly disagree (D) Disagree N (neither) (A) Agree (S.A) Strongly agree (TA) Totally agree (M)Mean (SD) Std. Deviation

Table F: Descriptive statistics of items with the continuance commitment scale

		S.D	D	N	A	S.A	TA	M	SD	Rank
I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up.	N	40	76	163	149	106	255	3.38	1.17	1
	%	7.5	14.2	30.5	27.9	19.9	47.8			
It would be very hard for me to leave my university right now, even if I wanted to.	N	32	87	147	183	85	268	3.38	1.11	1
	%	6.0	16.3	27.5	34.3	15.9	50.2			
Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my university now.	N	46	116	153	140	79	219	3.17	1.17	5
	%	8.6	21.7	28.7	26.2	14.8	41.0			
It would be too costly for me to leave my university now.	N	56	94	156	150	78	228	3.19	1.19	4
	%	10.5	17.6	29.2	28.1	14.6	42.7			
Right now, staying with my university is a matter of necessity as much as desire.	N	39	66	178	163	88	251	3.37	1.11	2
	%	7.3	12.4	33.3	30.5	16.5	47			
I feel there are very few options available if I want it to transfer to another department.	N	56	80	165	152	81	233	3.23	1.18	3
	%	10.5	15.0	30.9	28.5	15.2	43.6			
One of the few serious consequences of leaving my university would be the scarcity of available alternatives.	N	59	108	147	161	59	220	3.10	1.17	6
	%	11.0	20.2	27.5	30.1	11.0	41.2			
Leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice and another university may not match the overall benefits I have now.	N	54	103	158	138	81	219	3.17	1.19	5
	%	10.1	19.3	29.6	25.8	15.2	41.0			

(S.D) strongly disagree (D) Disagree N(neither) (A) agree (S.A) strongly agree (TA) Totally agree (M) Mean (SD) Std. Deviation

Table G: Descriptive statistics of items with the normative commitment scale

		S.D	D	N	A	S.A	TA	M	SD	Rank
I think people these days do not move often from university to university.	N	39	92	150	187	66	253.0	3.28	1.11	5
	%	7.3	17.2	28.1	35.0	12.4	47.4			
I do believe that a person must always be loyal to his/her university.	N	25	48	152	180	129	309.0	3.64	1.08	1
	%	4.7	9.0	28.5	33.7	24.2	57.9			
Jumping from university to university seems unethical to me.	N	50	131	144	146	63	209.0	3.08	1.16	8
	%	9.4	24.5	27.0	27.3	11.8	39.1			
One of the major reasons I continue to work in my university is that I believe loyalty is important.	N	28	71	153	195	87	282.0	3.45	1.07	3
	%	5.2	13.3	28.7	36.5	16.3	52.8			
If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere, I would not feel right leaving my university.	N	51	96	155	150	82	232.0	3.22	1.18	7
	%	9.6	18.0	29.0	28.1	15.4	43.4			
I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one university.	N	34	77	203	150	70	220.0	3.27	1.06	6
	%	6.4	14.4	38.0	28.1	13.1	41.2			
Things were better in the days when people stayed in one university for most of their careers.	N	30	82	192	159	71	230.0	3.30	1.05	4
	%	5.6	15.4	36.0	29.8	13.3	43.1			
I do think that being a ‘university man’ or ‘university woman’ is sensible.	N	21	40	201	188	84	272.0	3.51	.97	2
	%	3.9	7.5	37.6	35.2	15.7	50.9			

(S.D) Strongly disagree (D) Disagree N (neither) (A) Agree (S.A) Strongly agree (TA) Totally agree (M) Mean (SD) Std. Deviation

Table H: Descriptive statistics of items within the satisfaction subscales

	Item		S.D	D	M	S	S.S	T.S	M	SD	Rank
Pay	The amount of pay (basic salary) and fringe benefits I receive.	N	39	75	183	170.0	67	237	3.28	1.08	1
		%	7.3	14	34.3	31.8	12.5	44.4			
	The degree to which I am paid fairly for what I contribute to my organisation.	N	40.0	82	192	157.0	63	220	3.23	1.08	2
		%	7.5	15.4	36	29.4	11.8	41.2			
Job security	The amount of job security I have	N	38	47	194	177.0	78	255	3.39	1.06	1
		%	7.1	8.8	36.3	33.1	14.6	47.8			
	How secure things look for me in the future in my organisation	N	34	62	185	186.0	67	253	3.36	1.04	2
		%	6.4	11.6	34.6	34.8	12.5	47.4			
Social	The people I talk to and work with in my job.	N	21	49	177	193.0	94	287	3.54	1.01	3
		%	3.9	9.2	33.1	36.1	17.6	53.7			
	The chance to get to know	N	15	40	180	212.0	87	299	3.59	.94	2

	other people while on the job.	%	2.8	7.5	33.7	39.7	16.3	56.0			
	The chance to help other people while at work.	N	11	34	143	237.0	109	346	3.75	.92	1
		%	2.1	6.4	26.8	44.4	20.4	64.8			
Supervisory	The degree of respect and fair treatment I receive from my supervisor(s).	N	17	45	150	198.0	124	322	3.69	1.02	1
		%	3.2	8.4	28.1	37.1	23.2	60.3			
	The amount of support and guidance I receive from my supervisor (s).	N	21	50	175	158.0	130	288	3.61	1.07	2
		%	3.9	9.4	32.8	29.6	24.3	53.9			
	The overall quality of the supervision I receive in my work.	N	23	42	180	183.0	106	289	3.57	1.02	3
		%	4.3	7.9	33.7	34.3	19.9	54.1			
Growth	The amount of personal growth and development achieve in doing my job.	N	17	62	162.0	211.0	82	293.0	3.52	.99	3
		%	3.2	11.6	30.3	39.5	15.4	54.9			
	The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment I get from doing my job.	N	16	5	153	215.0	98	313	3.61	.99	2
		%	3.0	9.7	28.7	40.3	18.4	58.6			
	The amount of independent thought and action I can exercise in my job.	N	22	58	170	188.0	96	284	3.52	1.03	3
		%	4.1	10.9	31.8	35.2	18.0	53.2			
		N	19.0	40	161.0	216.0	98.0	314	3.63	.98	1

	The amount of challenges in my job.	%	3.6	7.5	30.1	40.4	18.4	58.8

(S.D) Strongly dissatisfied (D) Dissatisfied (M) Medium (S) Satisfied (S.S) Strongly satisfied (T.S) Total satisfied (M) Mean (SD) Std. Deviation

Table I: Results of the ANOVA test for age effect

		DF	SS	MS	F	P
Planning	Between Groups	3	.92	.309	.587	.623
	Within Groups	530	279.11	.527		
	Total	533	280.03			
Attraction	Between Groups	3	.50	.167	.288	.834
	Within Groups	530	307.24	.580		
	Total	533	307.75			
Retention	Between Groups	3	3.98	1.328	1.717	.162
	Within Groups	530	409.93	.773		
	Total	533	413.92			
Development	Between Groups	3	1.68	.562	.839	.473
	Within Groups	530	355.17	.670		
	Total	533	356.85			
Affective commitment	Between Groups	3	4.37	1.458	2.545	.055
	Within Groups	530	303.62	.573		

	Total	533	308.00			
Continuance commitment	Between Groups	3	9.77	3.259	5.708	.001
	Within Groups	530	302.65	.571		
	Total	533	312.43			
Normative commitment	Between Groups	3	3.478	1.159	2.774	.041
	Within Groups	530	221.481	.418		
	Total	533	224.959			
Pay	Between Groups	3	2.357	.786	.823	.482
	Within Groups	530	506.006	.955		
	Total	533	508.363			
Job security	Between Groups	3	8.911	2.970	3.556	.014
	Within Groups	530	442.682	.835		
	Total	533	451.594			
Social	Between Groups	3	.151	.050	.092	.965
	Within Groups	530	291.134	.549		
	Total	533	291.285			
Supervisory	Between Groups	3	.611	.204	.264	.851
	Within Groups	530	409.094	.772		
	Total	533	409.705			
Growth satisfaction	Between Groups	3	1.511	.504	.776	.508
	Within Groups	530	344.105	.649		
	Total	533	345.617			

DF: Degrees of Freedom, SS: Sum of Squares, MS, Mean Square, F:F value, P: Probability (Sig.)

Table J: Results of ANOVA test for academic ranking

		DF	SS	MS	F	P
Planning	Between Groups	3	.103	.034	.065	.978
	Within Groups	530	279.935	.528		
	Total	533	280.038			
Attraction	Between Groups	3	.678	.226	.390	.760
	Within Groups	530	307.072	.579		
	Total	533	307.750			
Retention	Between Groups	3	1.298	.433	.556	.644
	Within Groups	530	412.625	.779		
	Total	533	413.923			
Development	Between Groups	3	.637	.212	.316	.814
	Within Groups	530	356.220	.672		
	Total	533	356.856			

Affective commitment	Between Groups	3	5.683	1.894	3.321	.020
	Within Groups	530	302.319	.570		
	Total	533	308.002			
Continuance commitment	Between Groups	3	8.544	2.848	4.967	.002
	Within Groups	530	303.890	.573		
	Total	533	312.433			
Normative commitment	Between Groups	3	9.006	3.002	7.368	.000
	Within Groups	530	215.953	.407		
	Total	533	224.959			
Pay	Between Groups	3	15.294	5.098	5.480	.001
	Within Groups	530	493.070	.930		
	Total	533	508.363			
Job security	Between Groups	3	5.280	1.760	2.090	.101
	Within Groups	530	446.313	.842		
	Total	533	451.594			
Social	Between Groups	3	2.392	.797	1.462	.224
	Within Groups	530	288.894	.545		
	Total	533	291.285			
Supervisory	Between Groups	3	1.228	.409	.531	.661
	Within Groups	530	408.477	.771		

	Total	533	409.705			
Growth satisfaction	Between Groups	3	9.214	3.071	4.839	.002
	Within Groups	530	336.403	.635		
	Total	533	345.617			

DF: Degrees of Freedom, SS: Sum of Squares, MS, Mean Square, F:F value, P: Probability (Sig.)

Table K: ANOVA results for experience effect

		DF	SS	MS	F	P
Planning	Between Groups	3	.818	.273	.518	.670
	Within Groups	530	279.219	.527		
	Total	533	280.038			
Attraction	Between Groups	3	3.512	1.171	2.039	.107
	Within Groups	530	304.238	.574		
	Total	533	307.750			
Retention	Between Groups	3	4.331	1.444	1.868	.134
	Within Groups	530	409.592	.773		
	Total	533	413.923			
Development	Between Groups	3	1.917	.639	.954	.414
	Within Groups	530	354.940	.670		
	Total	533	356.856			
Affective Commitment	Between Groups	3	1.111	.370	.640	.590
	Within Groups	530	306.891	.579		

	Total	533	308.002			
Continuance Commitment	Between Groups	3	6.233	2.078	3.596	.014
	Within Groups	530	306.200	.578		
	Total	533	312.433			
Normative Commitment	Between Groups	3	4.617	1.539	3.702	.012
	Within Groups	530	220.342	.416		
	Total	533	224.959			
Pay	Between Groups	3	1.039	.346	.362	.781
	Within Groups	530	507.325	.957		
	Total	533	508.363			
Job Security	Between Groups	3	4.219	1.406	1.666	.173
	Within Groups	530	447.375	.844		
	Total	533	451.594			
Social	Between Groups	3	3.927	1.309	2.414	.066
	Within Groups	530	287.359	.542		
	Total	533	291.285			
Supervisory	Between Groups	3	1.143	.381	.494	.686
	Within Groups	530	408.562	.771		
	Total	533	409.705			
Growth Satisfaction	Between Groups	3	2.011	.670	1.034	.377
	Within Groups	530	343.605	.648		
	Total	533	345.617			

DF: Degrees of Freedom, SS: Sum of Squares, MS, Mean Square, F:F value, P: Probability (Sig.)

Appendix 2 - The questionnaire and the cover page:

Dear Participant,

You are being invited to take part in a research study on human resources. The main interest of this research is to investigate your viewpoints regarding the human resource practices at your university and the potential impact it has on your commitment to your job and level of satisfaction. The research focuses specifically on academic staff at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Universities, and thus the reason you were selected as a valuable faculty at your institution. In addition, I am also interested in exploring the potential influence of the Saudi Context and/or its culture on existing practices and the attitudes of faculty and hence I look forward to your feedback on this. The research is being conducted by Doaa Hassan Mirah, PhD Candidate in the PhD Programme, under the guidance and direction of Dr. Andrew Rowe, Associate Professor, at Manchester Metropolitan University Business School.

Taking part in this study is voluntary. If you decide to take part in this research study, you will be asked to participate in a survey. This research survey will require about 10-15 minutes of your time. There are no expected risks or discomforts related to this research. All information you provide is considered completely private.

Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study. However, only aggregated quantifiable data will be used. At no time any identifying information revealed.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like more information please contact me at 0504385897 or by email at: doaa.h.mirah@stu.mmu.ac.uk

You can also contact my supervisor, Associate Professor, Dr. Andrew Rowe at his email: a.rowe@mmu.ac.uk

If you have any other questions, comments or concerns regarding this research, you may also contact the Office of Research Services at Manchester Metropolitan University at their email address: ribm-research-degrees@mmu.ac.uk

I thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Yours sincerely,
Doaa Mirah
PhD Candidate

Please tell us about yourself and your background.

Gender: Male Female

Age: 20- less than 30 30- less than 40
40- less than 50 More than 50

Academic ranking: Lecturer Assistant professor
Associate professor Professor

Years of experience: Less than 5 Years 5 to10 Years
10 to15 Years More than 15 Years

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements by marking (√) at the appropriate answer. The scale can be interpreted as:
(1) Strongly disagree (2) Disagree (3) Medium (4) Agree (5) strongly agree

Perceived Human Resources Practices						
#	**HR Planning**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1	The University's management determines the tasks and job descriptions for all employees.					
2	The University's management develops action plans to meet the anticipated needs of human resources.					
3	The University's management tries to find appropriate mechanisms to work.					
4	The Univrsity's management attempts to bridge the gap between the demand for employees and the available supply.					

5	The University's management predicts the human resource needs of the university.					
	Attraction	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
6	The University's management uses different advertising means that are appropriate to attract employees.					
7	The University's management sorts out job applications and focuses on those who are qualified.					
8	The University's management attracts and recruits the best talent from both inside and outside the university.					
9	The University's management assesses candidates to fill jobs within the university.					
10	The University's management attracts and appoints employees with creative skills.					
	Retention	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
11	The University's management focuses on employee talents that contribute to the success of the university.					
12	The University's management develops regulations and laws that improve the talent management system.					
13	The University's management ensures the positive contribution of talents to serve the university.					
14	The University's management applies a rewarding and just rewards system.					
15	The University's management supports talented employees by providing them with an appropriate environment.					
16	The Universty's management provides an appropriate climate for talented employees to work in.					
	Development	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
17	The University's management invests in and develops the human talents of their employees.					

18	The University's management develops programmes for the development of employees' creativity.					
19	The University's management encourages innovation among employees and supports them.					
20	The University's management develops the creative capabilities of employees.					
21	The University's management helps individuals plan their career paths.					
22	The University's management provides effective training opportunities appropriate for the needs of employees.					
23	The University's managements prepares new talented employees well to start working in the university.					

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements by marking (√) at the appropriate answer. The scale can be interpreted as:
(1) Strongly disagree (2) Disagree (3) Medium (4) Agree (5) strongly agree

Organisational Commitment						
	Affective Commitment	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
23	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this university.					
24	I enjoy discussing about my university with people outside it.					
25	I really feel as if this university's problems are my own.					
26	I think that I could not easily become as attached to another university as I am to this one.					
27	I do feel like 'part of the family' at my university.					
28	I do feel 'emotionally attached' to my university.					
29	My department has a great deal of personal meaning to me.					
30	I do feel a strong sense of belonging to my department.					

	Continuance Commitment	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
31	I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up.					
32	It would be very hard for me to leave my university right now, even if I wanted to.					
33	Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my university now.					
34	It would be too costly for me to leave my university now.					
35	Right now, staying with my university is a matter of necessity as much as desire.					
36	I feel there are very few options available if I want it to transfer to another department.					
37	One of the few serious consequences of leaving my university would be the scarcity of available alternatives.					
38	A couple of main reasons I continue to work for my university is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice another university may not match the overall benefits I have now.					
	Normative Commitment	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
39	I think people these days do not move from university to university often.					
40	I do believe that a person must always be loyal to his/ her university.					
41	Jumping from university to university seems unethical to me.					
42	One of the major reasons I continue to work in my university is that I believe loyalty is important.					
43	If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel right leaving my university.					
44	I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one university.					

45	Things were better in the days when people stayed in one university for most of their careers.					
46	I do think that to be a 'university man' or 'university woman' is sensible.					

Please indicate to what extent you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the following statements by marking (√) at the appropriate answer. The scale can be interpreted as:

(1) Strongly dissatisfied (2) Dissatisfied (3) Medium (4) Satisfied (5) Strongly satisfied

Job Satisfaction						
	Pay	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
47	The amount of pay (basic salary) and fringe benefits I receive.					
48	The degree to which I am fairly paid for what I contribute to my organisation.					
	Job Security	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
49	The amount of job security I have.					
50	How secure things look for me in the future in my organisation.					
	Social	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
51	The people I talk to and work with in my job.					
52	The chance to get to know other people while on the job.					
53	The chance to help other people while at work.					
	Supervisory	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
54	The degree of respect and fair treatment I receive from my supervisor(s).					
55	The amount of support and guidance I receive from my supervisor (s).					
56	The overall quality of the supervision I receive in my work.					
	Growth Satisfaction	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

57	The amount of personal growth and development achieve in doing my job.					
58	The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment I get from doing my job.					
59	The amount of independent thought and action I can exercise in my job.					
60	The amount of challenge in my job.					

Appendix 3 - Interview Questions Cover Sheet:

Dear Participant,

You are being invited to take part in a research study on human resources. The main interest of this research is to investigate your viewpoints regarding the human resource practices at your university and the potential impact it has on your commitment to your job and level of satisfaction. The research focuses specifically on academic staff at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Universities, and thus the reason you were selected as a valuable faculty at your institution. In addition, I am also interested in exploring the potential influence of the Saudi Context and/or its culture on existing practices and the attitudes of faculty and hence I look forward to your feedback on this. The research is being conducted by Doaa Hassan Mirah, PhD Candidate in the PhD Programme, under the guidance and direction of Dr. Andrew Rowe, Associate Professor, at Manchester Metropolitan University Business School.

You are advised that taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time without giving reason. If you decide to take part in this research study, you will be interviewed one-to-one by Ms. Mirah and/or an experienced colleague. The interview may take approximately 40-50 minutes of your time. There are no expected risks or discomforts related to this research. Furthermore, all information you provide is considered completely private. It is possible that the findings of the research may be subsequently published; however, participant name and personal details would not be disclosed under any circumstances. Pseudonyms (fake names) would be used at all times if participant data is used to provide insight for readers. If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like more information please contact me at 0504385897 or by email at: doaa.h.mirah@stu.mmu.ac.uk .If necessary, you can also contact my supervisor, Associate Professor, Dr. Andrew Rowe at his email: a.rowe@mmu.ac.uk . Finally, if you have any other questions, comments or concerns regarding this research, you may also contact the Office of Research Services at Manchester Metropolitan University at the following email address: ribm-research-degrees@mmu.ac.uk . I thank you in advance for your assistance in this research project.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Doaa Mirah ,PhD Candidate

Appendix 4 - Admins Interview Questions:

Interview Protocol: Semi-Structured Interview

Brief:

Thank you once again for agreeing to take part in this research study. Before we proceed I wish to advise you that there are no right or wrong answers. I am simply seeking your personal opinion or perceptions on human resource practices at your university. Feel free to pause and take your time to respond to any questions, or ask for clarification if you do not understand.

Note: Question in bullet points are Supplementary questions

A. Background information:

1. Could you tell me briefly about your role? Experience? Nationality?
2. What are the current applied HR practices in the university/college?

- Is HR in-house or outsourced? If yes which practices are outsourced and which are in sourced and why?

B. Perceived HR Practice

Planning

3. Can you describe how the university engages in formal HR planning?

- What criteria does the university rely on in HR planning?
- How does the university plan for future HR needs? And what methods are followed?
- In a scale of 1 to 10 how would you measure the effectiveness of HR planning in anticipating and achieving the university/college annual plans?

Employee Attraction & Selection

4. What strategies does the university use to attract suitable candidates for academic employment?

- How does the university advertise for vacant jobs?
- How does the university determine suitable candidates? What are the criteria?
- What is the Saudisation ratio among your faculty and is there any challenges with attracting and employing Saudi nationals? why
- How does the HR determine compensation packages? And based on what?
- Are there different recruitment polices, and on what basis?

Employee Retention

5. What are the main strategies/methods that the university uses to retain staff at the university? Is there a criteria?

- How does HR assess employees' performance? And how is promotion/demotion is decided?
- What motivates employees to continue working for the university?

Employee Development

6. How does the university develop and train its faculty? What are the delivery methods?

- What types of training do new recruits receive at this university?
- How does HR select candidates for training and development? What are the influential factors?

C. Organisational Commitment

Affective commitment

7. How would you asses the faculty emotional commitment to the university or staff at this university? Do you think the university offers long career ahead? Explain why or why not?

Continuous Commitment

8. How would you evaluate the possibility of the faculty considering to leave the university? Is it an easy decision for employees to leave this university if another opportunity arises? Explain why?

Normative Commitment

9. How would you explain faculties' obligation towards the university? And how does loyalty determined such obligation?

D. Job Satisfaction

10. How satisfied/dissatisfied are current employees at the university? And why? And what are the main reasons behind that (current salary, security, social environment, supervision, contribution)?
11. Can you think of a time when you became aware an employee was not very satisfied with their management? How was it handled?
    - In your opinion to what extent there is a relationship between the perception of HR practices and employees' commitment and job satisfaction? Please explain?

E. Saudi Context and Culture

12. On a scale of 1 to 10 how effectives HR practices in ensuring that all employees are treated fair in terms of gender, background and status? Can you share some examples you have observed.
13. On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you evaluate the impact of HR practices and programme on establishing a great workplace culture? Explain why?
14. What kind of impact do you think the clearly defined gender roles have on HR practices in this university?
15. How would you describe the managerial style in this university? And how effective is it in HR practices?
16. Overall, what are your thoughts about Saudisation, its pros and cons?

17. What are the influences of *Wasta* (Social connections) in HR practice in general?
18. What are the current challenges or problems facing HR practices in the university sitting and what are your recommendations to overcome these challenges?

Appendix 5- Faculty Interview Questions:

Interview Protocol: Semi-Structured Interview

Brief:

Thank you once again for agreeing to take part in this research study. Before we proceed I wish to advise you that there are no right or wrong answers. I am simply seeking your personal opinion or perceptions on human resource practices at your university. Feel free to pause and take your time to respond to any questions, or ask for clarification if you do not understand.

Note: Question in bullet points are Supplementary questions

A. Background information:

1. Could you tell me briefly about your role? Experience? Nationality?
2. Are you aware about the current applied HR practices in the university/college?

B. Perceived HR Practice

Employee Attraction & Selection

3. What strategies does the university use to attract you to the academic position?

- How did you hear about the university job vacancy?
- How did they selected you? What was the criteria?
- Do you have Saudi colleague in your department? If yes, in your opinion, what makes them attracted to the job?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 how competitive is your compensation and rewards? Why? Please explain?

Employee Retention

4. What are the main strategies/methods that the university uses to retain you at the university? Is there a criteria?

- Who asses your performance and how? And how is promotion/demotion is decided?
- What motivates you to continue working for the university?

Employee Development

5. What strategies does the university use to develop and train you? And how are they delivered?

- What types of training did you receive when you were a new recruit and joined the university?
- How does HR select candidates for training and development? What are the influential factors?

C. Organisational Commitment

Affective commitment

6. On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you assess your commitment to the university/college? Why?

- Do you think the university offers long career ahead? Explain why or why not?

Continuous Commitment

7. On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you evaluate the probability of leaving the university? Is it an easy decision for you? Explain why?

Normative Commitment

8. Explain your obligation towards the university? And how does loyalty determined such obligation?

D. Job Satisfaction

9. On a scale of 1 to 10 explain how satisfied/dissatisfied are you at the university? And why? And what are the main reasons behind that?
   - Can you think of a time when you became not very satisfied with your management? How was it handled?
   - In your opinion to what extent there is relationship between your perception of HR practices and your organisational commitment and job satisfaction? Please explain?

E. Saudi Context and Culture

10. How would you describe the managerial style in this university?
11. What are the influences of *Wasta* (Social connections) in HR practice in general?
12. Overall, what are your thoughts about Saudisation, its pros and cons?

Appendix 6: Consent Form:

Dear,
I am Doaa Mirah, a PhD student at Manchester Metropolitan University. Working in a PhD research titled "The impact of HR practices on faculty Organisational Commitment and Job Satisfaction at Saudi Universities," under the guidance and direction of Dr. Andrew Rowe, Associate Professor, at Manchester Metropolitan University Business School (UK).

My research is focusing on exploring the potential influence of the Saudi Context and/or its culture on existing Human Resources practices and the attitudes. The selected sample is composed of academic staff working at KSA universities. Thus, you are selected as a valuable staff at this steamed university. As a fact finding technique, interview will be conducted to gather the following information;

1. HR practices applied in Saudi Universities (Public & Private).
2. Organisational Commitment of the faculty.
3. Faculty Job Satisfaction.
4. Saudi Context.

The interview will be conducted by myself in one to one meeting at your convenient time and location. It will take around 40-50 minutes of your time and it will be recorded manually. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. There are no expected risks or discomforts related to this research. Furthermore, all gathered information is considered completely Confidential.
It is expected to publish the findings of the research; however, participant names and personal details would be not disclosed under any circumstances and Job positions would be used instead.

For any further information or additional questions regarding this study, please contact me at 0504385897 or by email at:doaa.h.mirah@stu.mmu.ac.uk or contact my supervisor, Associate Professor, Dr. Andrew Rowe at his email: a.rowe@mmu.ac.uk.

Please select the appropriate:

☐I am happy to take part in this study

☐I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided regarding the above study.

☐I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

☐I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

☐I do not wish to take part in the study (interview)

Signature _____
Thank you in advance for your assistance in this research.
Kind regards,
Doaa Mirah