Exploring the Impact of Employee Perceptions of HRM System Strength and Performance Appraisal Quality on Employee Performance: The Role of Non-Work Domain Factors in Cross-Country Settings

By

Sumbal Babar

(Registration No: 00000240684)

Department of Management & HR

NUST Business School (NBS)

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

Islamabad, Pakistan

(2023)

Exploring the Impact of Employee Perceptions of HRM System Strength and Performance Appraisal Quality on Employee Performance: The Role of Non-Work Domain Factors in Cross-Country Settings

By

Sumbal Babar

(Registration No: 00000240684)

A thesis submitted to the National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in
Business Administration

Supervisor: Dr. Asfia Obaid

Co-Supervisor: Prof. Karin Sanders

Department of Management & HR

NUST Business School (NBS)

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

Islamabad, Pakistan

(2023)

THESIS ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE

Certified that the final copy of PhD Thesis written by Ms. **Sumbal Babar,** Registration No. **00000240684,** of NUST BUSINESS SCHOOL (NBS), has been vetted by the undersigned, found complete in all respects as per NUST Statutes / Regulations / PhD Policy, is free of plagiarism, errors, and mistakes and is accepted as partial fulfillment for award of PhD degree. It is further certified that necessary amendments as pointed out by GEC members and foreign/local evaluators of the scholar have also been suitably incorporated in the said thesis.

Signature: _____

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Asfia Obaid_____

Date: _____ 21/3/23_____

Signature (HOD): _____

Date: _____ 21/3/23_____

Signature (Dean/Principal) _____

Date: _____21/03/23_____

National University of Sciences & Technology
REPORT OF DOCTORAL THESIS DEFENCE

Name: **Sumbal Babar**   NUST Regn No: **00000240684**

School/College/Centre: __NUST Business School (NBS)__

Title: **"Exploring the Impact of Employee Perceptions of HRM System Strength and Performance Appraisal Quality on Employee Performance: The Role of Non-Work Domain Factors in Cross-Country Settings"**

DOCTORAL DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Doctoral Defence held on **21st March 2023**

	QUALIFIED	NOT QUALIFIED	SIGNATURE
GEC Member-1: **Dr. Naukhez Sarwar**	✓		
GEC Member-2: **Dr. Hussain Tariq**	✓		
GEC Member (External): **Dr. Sadia Nadeem**	✓		
Supervisor: **Dr. Asfia Obaid**	✓		
Co Supervisor (if appointed): **Prof. Karin Sanders**	✓		
External Evaluator-1: **Dr. Khurram Shahzad** (Local Expert)	✓		
External Evaluator-2: **Dr. Samina Nawab** (Local Expert)	✓		
External Evaluator-3: **Dr. Rohani Salleh** (Foreign Expert)			
External Evaluator-4: **Dr. Sara Chaudhry** (Foreign Expert)			

FINAL RESULT OF THE DOCTORAL DEFENCE
(Appropriate box to be signed by HOD)

PASS	FAIL

The student **Sumbal Babar** Regn No. 00000240684 is / is NOT accepted for Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

Dated: _____   Dean/Commandant/Principal/DG   21/03/23

Distribution:
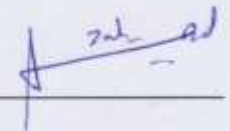01 x original copy each for PGP Dte, Exam Branch Main Office NUST and Student's dossier at the School/College/Centre.
01 x photocopy each for HoD, Supervisor, Co-Supervisor (if appointed), sponsoring agency (if any) and 05 copies for insertion in Dissertation.
Note: * Decision of External Evaluators (Foreign Experts) will be sought through video conference, if possible, on the same date and their decision will

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the research work presented in this thesis, titled "**Exploring the Impact of Employee Perceptions of HRM System Strength and Performance Appraisal Quality on Employee Performance: The Role of Non-Work Domain Factors in Cross-Country Settings**" was conducted by **Ms. Sumbal Babar** under the supervision of **Dr. Asfia Obaid,** and co-supervision of **Prof. Karin Sanders**. No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the **Department of Management & Human Resource, NUST Business School, National University of Sciences & Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in field of **Business Administration.** Department of **Management & Human Resource, NUST Business School, National University of Sciences & Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan.**

Student Name: Sumbal Babar   Signature _____

Examination Committee:

a. External Examiner 1: Dr. Samina Nawab   Signature _____
Professor, Comsats University Islamabad, Wah
campus

b. External Examiner 2: Khuram Shahzad   Signature _____
Professor & Dean, Faculty of Management
Sciences, Riphah International University,
Rawalpindi.
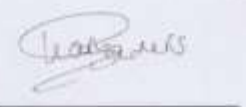
c. Internal Examiner 1: Dr. Naukhez Sarwar   Signature _____
NUST Business School (NBS)

Supervisor Name: Asfia Obaid   Signature _____

Co-Supervisor Name: Prof. Karin Sanders   Signature _____
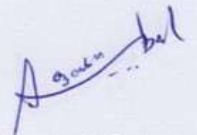
Author's Declaration

I, Sumbal Babar hereby state that my Ph.D. thesis titled: **"Exploring the Impact of Employee Perceptions of HRM System Strength and Performance Appraisal Quality on Employee Performance: The Role of Non-Work Domain Factors in Cross-Country Settings"** is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from **National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)** or anywhere else in the country/world.

At any time if my statement is found to be incorrect even after my Graduation, the university has the right to withdraw my degree.

Sumbal Babar

20 March, 2023

Plagiarism Undertaking

I solemnly declare that research work presented in the thesis titled: **"Exploring the Impact of Employee Perceptions of HRM System Strength and Performance Appraisal Quality on Employee Performance: The Role of Non-Work Domain Factors in Cross-Country Settings"** is solely my research work with no significant contribution from any other person. Small contribution/ help wherever taken has been duly acknowledged and that complete thesis has been written by me.

I understand the zero-tolerance policy of the HEC and University (**National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) Islamabad**) towards plagiarism. Therefore, I as an author of the above titled thesis declare that no portion of my thesis has been plagiarized and any material used as reference is properly referred/cited.

I undertake that if I am found guilty of any formal plagiarism in the above titled thesis even after award of PhD degree, the University reserves the rights to withdraw/revoke my PhD degree and that HEC and the University has the right to publish my name on the HEC/University website on which names of students are placed who submitted plagiarized thesis.

Student/Author Signature: _____ 21/03/2023

Name: Sumbal Babar

This dissertation is dedicated to my father-in-law,
Haji Muhammad Rafique, whose constant belief in my abilities and
endless encouragement pushed me to achieve academic excellence.
Also, to my dear children Maroosh, Abdullah, and Abbas, whose joy
and laughter reminded me of the importance of balance and
perspective in life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply humbled and grateful to Allah almighty for granting me the opportunity to complete my doctoral degree from one of the most esteemed university in Pakistan. The journey has been arduous, but the lessons learned have been invaluable, and for that, I am truly thankful.

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to my supervisor, mentor, and advisor, Dr. Asfia Obaid, whose unwavering support, feedback, and immense knowledge have been instrumental in shaping my research capabilities. Ma'am, I cannot thank you enough for your guidance, encouragement, and unwavering support throughout these years. You are a true inspiration to me, and I am proud to call you my role model.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Prof. Karin Sanders, my co-supervisor, whose guidance and support have been indispensable throughout my journey. Her approach to research and her ability to impart knowledge from multiple perspectives has enabled me to hone my research skills and develop a broader understanding of my field. I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with such a phenomenal supervisor.

Moreover, I would like to thank Dr. Naukhez Sarwar, the optimistic and supportive dean and advisor who has always been a beacon of encouragement and motivation. I am also indebted to Prof. Sadia Nadeem for her invaluable feedback and guidance that has helped me address gaps in my research. I am grateful to Dr. Hussain Tariq, whose contribution and efforts were essential in broadening my

perspective and making this research possible.

Aside from my esteemed advisors, I would like to express my gratitude to my father-in-law, who always had the unwavering desire to see me as a Ph.D. holder. I am grateful for his constant support and encouragement throughout this journey. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my mother-in-law, whose prayers and care have been a constant source of motivation for me and my children. My beloved husband, Dr. Zain Rafique, has been a source of inspiration, whose belief in me never wavered. I am also indebted to my family, friends, and my dear colleague Maria, whose constant support has been invaluable throughout this journey.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support of Dr. Wali ur Rehman and his wife Dr. Gohar Wali, whose time, effort, guidance, and support were instrumental in helping me achieve this significant milestone. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan for financing this research under Indigenous scholarship.

Finally, I express my heartfelt gratitude to all the individuals who have contributed to the successful completion of this dissertation. Each one of you has played an essential role in my academic journey, and I am forever grateful for your unwavering support, guidance, and encouragement.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to develop an understanding of HRM System Strength features in the context of Pakistan and China. This research has been conducted within Pakistani and Chinese telecommunication organizations to understand how perceptions of performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors enhance employee performance. To achieve this, a convergent parallel mixed methods approach was adopted involving two concurrent phases of data collection. For a qualitative strand, thematic analysis was undertaken on data collected from 26 (HR Directors, HR Senior managers, and HR Line managers) for developing an understanding of HRM System Strength features in improving employee performance. For a quantitative strand, the study adopted a survey method to test the theoretical model developed. For this, data were collected from (N=734 employees and 116 managers) in Pakistan and China. Overall, a deductive-inductive exploratory research technique was applied with a time-lagged (two-wave) and multi-actor data set.

The key findings of the thesis revolve around the importance of delivering high-quality performance appraisals, and the understanding of HRM System Strength features, keeping in view the importance of non-work domain factors. Findings from the qualitative strand of the study suggest that, in the Pakistani and Chinese contexts, when managers deliver feedback with aspects of clarity, regularity, and openness it makes the performance appraisal process significantly effective. Furthermore, the findings highlight that a few features of HRM System Strength such as visibility, relevance, validity, fairness, and agreement had similar meanings in Chinese and

Pakistani contexts. However, understandability, legitimacy of authority, instrumentality, and consistent HR messages were understood differently in these countries, both in terms of meaning and terminology. Moreover, the findings highlight that non-work domain factors of spirituality and family structure were identified as a personal resource of employees in both country contexts, while religiosity was considered a motivational resource in only Pakistan but not in China.

Furthermore, results from the quantitative strand of the study for two-way and three-way interactions were tested to examine the impact of performance appraisal quality among three non-work domain factors of spirituality, religiosity, and family structure in the presence of the HRM System Strength effect on employee performance. Findings suggest that (1) The PAQ-performance relationship was strengthened by the boundary condition effect of HRM System Strength, (2) Spirituality acted as an important resource for employees in the PAQ-performance relationship, especially at high levels of spirituality, and family structures acted as an important resource as a nuclear family structure and a demand as a joint family structure for employees (3) The performance of employees is enhanced significantly through three-way interaction effects, the two strongest effects are recognized with the conditions of high-HRM System Strength and with the nuclear effects of family structures, whereas (4) The three-way interaction between performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, religiosity, and spirituality were found to be unimportant factors in enhancing employee performance. Together, the present study highlights performance appraisal quality as an important HR practice that is particularly likely to enhance employee performance with higher (rather than lower)

HRM System Strength and differentially with the higher two-way effects of non-work domain factors. Based on the findings, insights are offered to guide policymakers to adequately train managers in technical skills of clarity, regularity, and openness, essential for delivering feedback to make the performance appraisal process effective and practically help HR managers by shifting their attention to the system's overarching message and intended purpose, instead of concentrating on the content of HRM.

Keywords: Performance appraisal quality; HRM System Strength; employee performance; non-work domain factors; Pakistan; China

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Page No.

LIST OF FIGURES

Page No.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGFI   Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index

CFI   Comparative Fit Index

CFA   Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CMIN/Df   Chi-square/Degree of Freedom

EP   Employee Performance

FS   Family Structures

HLM   Hierarchical Linear Modeling

HPWS   High Performance Work Systems

HRMp   Human Resource Management practices

HC   High commitment

HR   Human Resource

HRM   Human Resource Management

HRM SS   Human Resource Management System Strength

IFI   Incremental Fit index

ILM   Internal Labor Market

NFI   Normed fit Index

NWFD   Non-Work Domain Factors

TA   Teamwork Approach

TLI   Tucker-Lewis's index

T1	Time 1
T2	Time 2
TMT	Top Management
OC	Organizational Culture
PAQ	Performance Appraisal Quality
PM	Performance Management
REL	Religiosity
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SPI	Spirituality
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

CHAPTER 1:   INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the Human Resource Management (HRM) function, its relevance, and the importance of conducting research in this area. It discusses the problem statement, the research gaps, the aims and objectives of this study, and associated research questions. This is followed by definitions of the key terms and the probable contributions of this study. The chapter concludes by outlining the structure of the thesis.

1.1   Background of the study

Human Resource Management (HRM) has attracted a lot of attention from researchers and practitioners due to significant causal relationships that exist among HR practices, individual outcomes, and organizational outcomes (O'riordan, 2022; Boselie, Dietz, & Boon, 2005; Jiang, Takeuchi, & Lepak, 2013; Becker & Huselid, 2006; Huselid, 1995; Ulrich, 1998; Lengnick-Hall, Andrade, & Drake, 2009). One HRM practice that has gained considerable attention is performance management, which is crucial in leveraging human resources for enhanced employee attitudes and behaviors (Hewett, 2021; Guest et al., 2020; Lai, Saridakis, & Johnstone, 2017; Meijerink, Beijer, & Bos-Nehles, 2017).

Although prior studies have found the positive relationship between performance management and organizational & individual performance, statistical relationships are often considered weak due to the lack of understanding regarding specific mechanisms through which performance management impacts employee

performance (Boselie et al., 2005; Bos-Nehles, Trullen, & Valverde, 2021, pp. 102; Combs, Liu, Hall, & Ketchen, 2006; Armstrong, 2009; Julnes, 2008; Rubel, Rimi, & Walters, 2017). Although previous studies suggest that performance management has constructive impacts on organizational & individual performance, statistical correlation is considered weak (Paauwe, 2009). Thus, the mechanisms by which performance management impacts employees' performances have not been clear yet (Buller & McEvoy, 2012). The current lack of clarity has been due to differences in empirical studies concerning definitions, levels of analysis, theoretical foundations, measures of HR performance and practices (Paauwe, 2009; Guest, 2011), particularly across different countries (Moussa et al., 2022).

To assess the impact of HRM practices on organizational and employees' performance, as well as the efficacy of HRM systems, researchers have employed various approaches, including best-practice approach (Pfeffer, 1994), best fit approach (Gomez-Mejia, 1992), and best process approach (Cox, 2000). Against the discussed backdrop, the current study investigates the HRM System Strength perceptions, performance-appraisal quality (PAQ), and the moderating effects of HRM Systems Strengths and nonwork domain factors on employee's performance. The following section briefly explains the significance and rationale of the study which focuses on the perceptions of HRM System Strength, performance-appraisal quality (PAQ), and moderating effects of HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors on employee performance.

1.2 Significance and rationale of the research

Performance-appraisal quality (PAQ) is the proper system for measuring, assessing, and evaluating employees with clarity, regularity, and openness to improve individual employee performance (Bednall and Sanders, 2014). A study by Sanders et al., (2008) highlights that Performance-appraisal quality (PAQ) is not the most used employee performance management practice, even though it has far-reaching positive consequences on employees. In this regard, Baird et al., (2017) indicated that delivering high-quality performance appraisals is the challenging component of HRM. Despite some negative outcomes associated with performance appraisal, many managers still see it as an essential practice of HRM because it is considered to be the most consequential variable for measuring employees' reactions to appraisal feedback (Barbieri, Micacchi, Vidè, and Valotti, 2021; Othman, 2014).

Research has suggested that aspects of clarity, regularity, and openness of performance appraisal quality can lead to positive employee reactions which in turn encourage employees to improve their performance (Bednall et al., 2014; DeNisi and Pritchard 2016). In the past, research on the link between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices and organizational performance primarily focused on the employer's perspective. However, in recent years, there has been a growing interest in understanding the employee perspective (Sanders, 2022), especially their perceptions of HRM which affect their behaviors, attitudes, and performance (Purcell and Kinnie, 2007).

Moreover, prior research has focused on sets of interrelated HRM practices, their influence on organizational performance but recently the literature is inculcated

towards the process for development of these HRM practices and their communication and implementation by line managers (Li et al, 2011; Baluch, 2017; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Sanders, Dorenbosch, and de Reuver, 2008; Nishii, Lepak, and Schneider, 2008). This links with concepts of HRM System Strength which was first proposed in the study of Bowen and Ostroff (2004) and integrates the process and content approaches of HRM. They contended that for HRM to contribute to better organizational performance, the HRM system must be strong. The HRM System Strength has been characterized by high distinctiveness, consensus and consistency (Bednall et al, 2021; Delmotte et al, 2012; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Ostroff & Bowen, 2016) and results in unambiguous, consistent, and clear HRM messages related to behavior that is rewarded from the organizations and considered essential for the attainment of an organization's goals (Sanders, Bednall and Yang, 2021; Cafferkey, Heffernan, Harney, Dundon, and Townsend, 2018).

Many scholars (Ostorff, 2012; Guest, 2011; Farndale and Sanders, 2017) highlighted that studies show a correlation rather than a causal relationship which means that more theoretical and methodological improvement is required to comprehend how HRM systems and employee behavior are connected (Conway, Fu, Monks, Alfes, and Bailey, 2016; Hewett, 2021; Boselie, Dietz and Boon, 2005). These researchers contend that cross-sectional data and existing theories are insufficient for studying such a complicated relationship between HRM and employee behaviors (Farndale and Sanders, 2017; Indrayanti, 2019). Specifically, the recent literature calls for more research areas that integrate HR practices and HR processes (Hewett, 2021; Wang, Kim, Rafferty, and Sanders, 2020; Bednall et al.,

2021).

Bentzen (2018) suggests that there is a need for further exploration of HRM System Strength's role in organizations, particularly its influence on individual employee perceptions. The prior available studies regarding perceived HRM practices have focused on employees' perception, which have been found to be strongly correlated with attitudinal and behavioral outcomes that produce desirable organizational outcomes (Jiang et al., 2017; Liao et al., 2009). However, despite fruitful advances in this area of research, there is still room for developing a comprehensive understanding of measurement and the conceptualization of HRM perceptions (Wang et al., 2020; Beijer et al., 2019).

Research on HRM perception has taken three main directions: HRM attributions, HRM System Strength, and perceived HRM content (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Guzzo and Noonan, 1994; Lepak and Schneider, 2008). While there has been some research on HRM System Strength's influence on employee behavior, such as direct and indirect effects on innovative behavior (Sanders et al., 2019), well-being (Heffernan et al., 2022; Chacko and Conway, 2019), and overall organizational performance (Rodrigues Ribeiro et al., 2011), further studies are required to explore the role and impacts on employee perceptions as well as behavior.

While the existing research about HRM System Strength's perceptions about employees has yielded positive results, there is still a need to investigate the boundary conditions that may enhance or limit influence of HRM System Strength on employees behavioral outcome (Presbitero, Teng-Calleja and Farndale, 2021). Recently researchers (e.g., Chen, Fan, Zhang and Zhang, 2021; Cafferky et

5

al., 2019) has explored boundary condition effects of HRM System Strength and have used environmental characteristics as contingency variables for this purpose (Presbitero et al., 2021). Both moderators and mediators matter in HRM System Strength research (Bednall et al., 2021). Even so, research on the boundary condition effects of HRM System Strength remains relatively inadequate (Xiao and Cooke 2021). A boundary condition effect refers to the set of factors or circumstances that shape the effectiveness of a particular phenomenon, in this case, HRM practice. HRM system strength is considered as the boundary condition effect because it influences the effectiveness of HRM practices under specific conditions or constraints (Guest, 2011).

In order to contextualize HRM attribution theory, I propose and investigate the moderating role of HRM System Strength as a potential boundary condition for the association between PAQ-employee performance relationship. The impact of HRM systems on employee outcomes can differ across various countries because the effectiveness of HR practices is dependent on the cultural and legal context in which they are applied and the strength or weakness of HR systems can hinge be influenced by boundary conditions (Chadwick et al., 2013). Consequently, investigating boundary conditions (moderator) will complement recently published empirical investigations of the HR systems that can influence employee and organizational performance. Thus, there was a need to examine the boundary condition effects of HRM System Strength in the Chinese and Pakistani contexts.

The contextual aspect is now more important than ever because HRM practices vary throughout countries (Xiao and Cooke, 2022). Several researchers

argue that context has a significant impact on managing people, hence differences in perceptions of HR practices are expected in Pakistani and Chinese contexts, which needs further attention (Newman and Nollen, 1996; Milikic, 2009; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2004). Previous literature shows that more research is conducted in the Western context and thus there is a need to conduct studies in the Eastern context (Cooke, 2018). Therefore, there is a need to explore the dimensions of HRM System Strength in an Eastern context because much research on this construct is conducted within a Western context, which triggers a question of how HRM System Strength is perceived in different country settings. Thus, in response to research calls by (Cooke, 2018; Kaufman, 2015) for taking into account context in HRM research, there is a need to explore the dimensions of HRM System Strength as a culture-bound or culture-free construct across countries (Wang et al., 2020; Hewett et al., 2018; Beijer et al., 2019).

Studies by Muduli and Raval (2018) and Milikic, Janićijević, and Cerović (2012) indicate that not all human resource (HR) tools and procedures can be used uniformly across countries due to contextual differences in non-work domain factors. These non-work domain factors are embedded in a country's context and impact individuals' lives, including their traditions, beliefs, and customs (Kitt, 2021; Sarkar, 2019). Non-work domain factors refer to aspects of an individual's life outside the workplace, such as family structure, religious obligations, and leisure activities (Takeuchi et al., 2002). In contrast, workplace culture, job responsibilities, and relationships with managers and colleagues are considered part of the work domain (Greenhaus and Parasurman, 1987).

Research by Voydanoff (2001) has shown that non-work domain factors, such as family, religious, social and recreational involvements, can affect the way individuals perceive their world and understand HR in their organization (Kitt, 2021). Therefore, it is important for organizations to consider the cultural context and non-work domain factors when developing and implementing HRM practices to ensure they are effective in achieving desired outcomes across different countries and contexts. Thus, in this current study, I have paid attention to the effects of non-work domain factors of spirituality, religiosity, and family structure for assessing the relationship between PAQ, HRM System Strength, and employee performance.

This dissertation brings forward attention to three non-work domain factors because previous literature has mostly studied these factors as demographic characteristics or considered them as having negligible effect on employees' and organizational performance (Dumas and Sanchez-Burks, 2015; Hasbolah, Hamzah, Fazmi, Omar and Bhuiyan, 2021; Xian, Atkinson, and Meng-Lewis, 2021). Geurts and Demerouti (2003, pp. 280-281) argue that with the increasing overlap between work and non-work domains, it is no longer accurate to classify non-work as solely "personal" since the boundaries between the two are becoming increasingly blurred. Individuals normally have several responsibilities and commitments to a variety of other domains, both in their non-work domain (such as family commitments, religious/spiritual offerings, and leisure activities, etc.) and in their work domain (such as their manager-employee relationship, coworkers, etc.) (Takechi, Yun and Tesluk, 2002).

The first non-work domain factor of family structures refers to a family type

in which 'joint' family structures refers to a couple residing with their parents and extended family in the same household, while 'nuclear' family structures consisting of just the couple and their children (Anderson and Eswaran 2009, Sen et al. 2006). The second non-work domain factor of religiosity refers to an organized system of beliefs, practices, symbols, and rituals to the sacredness of God (Koenig et al. (2000, p. 18). Finally, the third non-work domain factor of spirituality refers to the inner consciousness, a particular type of work feeling that motivates actions (Guillory, 2000).

Recent research has identified several ways to evaluate non-work domain contextual influences on current HRM practices (Babar et al., 2022; Muduli, and Raval, 2018; Milikic, 2009). While previous research in this field has highlighted the importance of considering non-work domain factors in the HRM-performance relationship (Sarkar, 2019; Petersen and Youssef-Morgan, 2018; Avolio and Gardner, 2005), there are still research gaps that need to be addressed. These gaps call for a more nuanced understanding of the role of non-work domain factors in influencing HRM-performance, as they can impact employee motivation and make work more meaningful (Kitt and Sanders, 2022; Xiao and Cooke, 2020).

The context of this study is the telecom sector of Pakistan and China, which are both non-western countries. The telecom industry in Pakistan and China is considered very distinctive in a cultural, epistemological, conceptual, and institutional sense and it has secured the most priority for foreign investment (Mahmood and Absar, 2015). Despite a considerable volume of research on the relationship between HRM and performance, the exact nature of this link within the

Telecom sector remains vague across countries which makes it important to undertake this study (Wahid and Hyams-Ssekasi, 2018). Furthermore, Boxall and Huo (2019) suggest that the understanding of HRM processes differs across countries. Hence, studying HRM in the Telecom sector and its effect on performance has both practical and academic relevance (Riaz, Townsend, and Woods, 2020). Moreover, research on Pakistani and Chinese organizations is considered to be in the nascent stage because studies on HRM System Strength, PAQ-performance relationships were primarily limited to Western countries.

1.3 Problem statement

Employee performance is a complex issue that can be influenced by various factors, including the quality of performance appraisals, the strength of the HRM system, and non-work domain factors (Jiang, Lepak, Hu, & Baer, 2012; Sajjad, Ahmad, & Bashir, 2017; Wang et al., 2020). Poorly designed performance appraisals can result in inaccurate or unfair evaluations, which can demotivate employees and impact their performance. Thus, addressing these issues requires a comprehensive and proactive approach to performance management that considers both the individual and organizational factors which contribute to employee performance.

Moreover, weak HRM systems may lack the necessary policies, procedures, and resources to effectively manage employee performance, which can result in inconsistent and ineffective performance management practices (Bednall, Sanders, & Wang, 2021). When HR is unable to communicate consistent and unambiguous messages to employees, they tend to assign different meanings based on their

interpretations which results in different perceptions. Consequently, the unintended and divergent perceptions employees develop impact their own performance and ultimately that of the organization. As a result, employee perceptions determine the HRM system's strengths and weaknesses, making it crucial to research and comprehend how employees view an HR system and the factors that contribute to its success (Hewett et al., 2018).

Furthermore, employee performance issues can vary depending on the contextual factors of a specific country due to contextual variations and conflicts in employee perceptions (Cooke, 2020). In particular, these perceptions are strongly rooted in the country context, particularly with regard to the boundary condition effects of the strength of the HRM system and non-work domain factors of spirituality, religiosity, and family structures, which have been in some ways ignored until now and need to be further explored in cross-country settings (Xiao and Cooke, 2018; Hewett, 2021; Wang et al., 2020).

1.4   Research Aim

This research aims to study the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance. It also aims to examine and explore the moderating role of HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors (family structures, religiosity, and spirituality) in the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance.

1.4.1 Research Objectives

Following are the research objectives of this research.

RO 1: To understand the perceptions of HRM System Strength and performance appraisal quality in cross-country settings.

RO 2: To examine the moderating impact of employee perceptions of HRM System Strength on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance.

RO 3: To examine the moderating impact of non-work domain factors of family structures, spirituality, and religiosity on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance.

RO 4: To investigate the impact of the three-way interaction of performance appraisal quality, non-work domain factors, and HRM System Strength on employee performance.

1.4.2 Research Questions

This study has the following research questions to address the above research objectives.

RQ 1: Whether and if the perceptions of HRM System Strength and performance appraisal quality differ in cross-country settings and why?

RQ 2: What is the moderating impact of HRM System Strength perceptions on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance?

RQ 3: What is the moderating impact of non-work domain factors of family structures, religiosity, and spirituality on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance?

RQ 4: Is there a three-way impact of performance appraisal quality, non-work

domain factors, and HRM System Strength on employee performance?

1.5 Definitions of key terms

1.5.1 Performance appraisal quality

Bednall et al. (2014) define performance appraisal quality (PAQ) as comprising three key components: clarity, openness, and regularity. Clarity is concerned with the quality and accuracy of work, while openness pertains to the extent to which a supervisor provides feedback on performance appraisal. Regularity refers to the provision of feedback at regular intervals to assess performance and make necessary adjustments.

1.5.2 HRM System Strength

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) describes HRM System Strength as the content and communication of human resource practices to employees. These HR practices are considered to be strong when they are characterized as consistent, distinctive, and have a high level of consensus among employees and management.

1.5.3 The non-work domain factors

Non-work domain factors, as described by Takeuchi et al. (2002), pertain to the aspects of an employee's life outside of work. This may include their family structures, general living conditions, religious obligations, and leisure activities, among others, as noted by Geurts and Demerouti (2003). For the current study, three important non-work domain factors identified are family structures (i.e., nuclear vs joint), spirituality and religiosity (Kitt, 2021; Babar et al., 2022).

1.5.4 Employee performance

Employee task performance refers to the specific behaviors, actions, and activities that an employee engages in to complete their assigned job duties and responsibilities. This includes the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to perform the job effectively and efficiently. Employee task performance can be measured by various performance indicators such as productivity, quality of work, meeting deadlines, and fulfilling job requirements (Motowidlo, Borman, and Schmit, 1997; Griffin, Parker and Neal, 2007).

1.6 Theoretical contribution of the Study

This research has the potential to make a significant theoretical contributions and practitioner implications to the growing body of research on the performance appraisal, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors by investigating and examining their influence on employee performance. This study distinguishes itself in several ways and may make potential contribution to knowledge in understanding the importance in examining and exploring performance appraisal quality dimensions of clarity, regularity and openness in assessing the performance of employees. Furthermore, it can contribute conceptually to the holistic understanding of HRM System Strength features in the context of Pakistan and China.

This research can also contribute theoretically by identifying three important non-work domain factors of spirituality, family structures, and religiosity, which are the personal resources for an employee and may impact their performance. This study also theoretically extended the JD-R theory by considering non-work domain factors

of spirituality, religiosity and family strictures as personal resources for improving employee performance. Lastly, the methodological contribution of the present research was to design and test a multilevel theoretical model by adopting a time-lag study (multi-wave and multi-sources) with a mixed-method research design. The detailed contributions and practical implications are discussed in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

1.7 Structure of the study

This dissertation comprises of five chapters. This chapter presents the background of the main variables including performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors. In addition to the conceptual framework and research objectives, the chapter also presents the rationale and significance of the study. The study was conducted in Pakistan and China, and the chapter provides a brief explanation for why these countries were chosen as suitable contexts for the research.

Chapter 2

This chapter reviews the literature supporting the importance of HRM System Strength in organizations. It begins with a review of HRM and its linkage with HRM system, and HRM System Strength. This is followed by conceptualization of performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and its integration with non-work domain factors review of literature on the dependent variable (i.e., employee performance) of this study. The later sections of this chapter elaborate on theories and the double moderating role of variables in the proposed link between HRM System Strength, non-work domain factors

and the employee outcome. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework and hypotheses of the research.

Chapter 3

This chapter presents the methodology used in the research, which involved both interviews and surveys. The qualitative and quantitative strands of the study are discussed separately, with details provided on the sampling procedures, data collection methods, measures, and analysis techniques employed. The chapter also explains why telecommunication organizations from Pakistan and China were selected as the research context.

Chapter 4

This chapter is divided into two main sections. Section one presents the results of the qualitative strand of the study, which covers the in-depth understanding of HRM System Strength dimensions in Pakistani and Chinese organizations and its influence of HRM System Strength on performance appraisal quality. Lastly, the chapter explores the influence of non-work domain factors on HRM System Strength features in both countries. Section two focuses on the quantitative strand of the study and presents the descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), reliability and correlation, the goodness of fit, and HLM presents the regression analysis for the hypothesized relationships.

Chapter 5

This chapter discusses the findings of the research in the context of existing literature. It also includes the contributions of the study, practical implications, limitations,

and future research directions. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings and their implications for the field of Human Resource Management.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The current chapter has reviewed key concepts, theories, and imperatives that underpin the phenomenon of performance appraisal quality (PAQ), HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors in improving employee performance. Further, the chapter discusses the theoretical perspectives on PAQ, non-work domain factors, HRM System Strength and its importance in enhancement of the effectiveness of employee performance. This chapter also outlines the key theories i.e., (Kelley's attribution theory, signaling theory, and job demand resource theory), and in the last section of the chapter hypotheses development is presented.

2.1 Human Resource Management

The disagreement over the definitions of HRM have steadily abridged overtime (Anwar and Abdullah, 2021; Bach, 2005), efforts to provide a thorough and generally accepted definition of HRM still face challenges because of the various frameworks for comprehending the tasks involved in managing Human Resources (Farnharm, 2016). In a number of studies, definitions have been provided by different researchers on HRM (O'Riordan, 2022; Torrington et al, 2002; Armstrong, 2009; Beer, Spector, Lawrence, Quinn Mills, and Walton, 1984; Beardwell et al, 2004; Guest, 1987). HRM is viewed as a cogent approach to the various aspects of utilizing employees' talents and skills without sacrificing their well-being for achieving goals of organization (Armstrong, 2020; Armstrong &Taylor, 2014). A goal of HRM encompasses a variety of personnel characteristics in achieving company objectives

(Podgorodnichenko, Akmal, Edgar and Everett, 2020; Arshad et al, 2014). HRM encompasses a variety of rules, strategies, practices, and procedures that promote and enhance employee engagement through effective connection. While the HRM strategy and rules clearly define the path to achieving HRM goals, practices are thought to be an effective technique of outlining the essential behaviors of employees. Table 2.1 list the different pertinent definitions of HRM.

Table 2.1: Definitions of Human Resource Management (HRM)

Authors	Definitions
Beer et al (1984)	Management decisions that affect the relationships between employees & organizations.
Guest (1987)	Designed policies to gain maximum employee commitment, flexibility, and organizational integration.
Greenwood (2002)	The effectiveness of management in managing their employees, in order to achieve organizational goals.
Boxall and Purcell (2003:1)	Activities associated with the management of employment relationships in the organizations.
Marchington and Wilkinson (2008)	Management of employment.
Weerakoon (2016)	Best utilization of management practices, for instance recruitment & selection, training & development, performance appraisals etc.
O'riordan (2022)	Concerned aspects of Human Resource Management (HRM) of employee's management in organization.

Source: Compiled by the Author (2023)

Table 2.1 presents the definitions of Human Resource Management (HRM) as reviewed in the literature, highlights various significant factors that constitute HRM theory. These factors are primarily focused on managing employees within an organization, with the objective of creating value (Grant, Christianson, & Price, 2007)

and attaining organizational goals (Armstrong, 2016). Employee management is based on philosophies, policies, and practices (Harney and Collings, 2021; Beardwell and Claydon, 2010). It should be emphasized that the definitions considered multiple levels of the employee management spectrum, specifically the policies, strategy, philosophy, practices, programs, and processes (Jackson and Schuler, 1995). Even though these levels are connected to one another, they signify a variety of distinct elements of the HR architecture.

In recent years, HRM research has prioritized tactics and practices over HRM policies and ideologies (Chinmulgund, 2021; Abang, 2009; Ugheoke, 2015). Different HRM and SHRM and HRM contextual studies (Abang, 2009; Razouk & Bayad, 2009; Cooke, Xiao & Chen, 2021; Brand and Bax, 2002) stressed on evaluating employees' management practices in different organizations, where HR strategy has been typically reflected as the start point in studies related to the competitive strategies. The literature has long acknowledged the significant influence on a range of HRMp (HRM practices), therefore it is possible to see why practices that don't directly relate to HR strategy and HRM systems are being examined. The next section discusses HRM systems.

2.2 HRM Systems

HRM systems emerge when dynamic HRM methods are integrated with an organization's strategic environment, which ensures the highest level of organizational performance. The HRM system is made up of a number of procedures that work together to support consistency, information sharing, and HR culture. Its

foundation is grounded on the systems approach of organizational studies (Senge, 1990; Mariappanadar, 2020), which sees every component of the organization as a vibrant unit which functions as the system (Scully et all, 2013; Hauff, 2021). HRM system may well improve performance very fine, but if this is not properly cohesive with strategic contexts of the organization, it may limit organizational flexibility (Delery and Doty, 1996; Sekhar, Patwardhan, and Vyas, 2018) and create barriers for organizational change (Zeebaree, Shukur, and Hussan, 2019; Werbel and DeMarie, 2005).

Therefore, context influences the HRM system that an organization chooses to use. In order to successfully accomplish a predetermined organizational goal, the HRM system places focus on the careful appraisal of organizational context, aim, and strategy as well as the implementation of a number of HRM activities, each of which is related to the others. There are several types of HRM systems, according to a study of the HRM literature (Wei, Liu, and Herndon, 2011; Young, Bartram, Stanton, and Leggat, 2010). Among these are a high commitment (HC) HR system and an Internal Labour Market (ILM) HR system. High-performance work system (hereafter, HPWS) and High Involvement (HI) HRM system are the two more HR systems mentioned in research papers (Macky and Boxall, 2007; Lepak et al, 2006). In essence, HPWS, HI, and HC are three separate terms that describe the same characteristics of HRM systems.

For instance, HPWS suggests the collection of best practices of HRM that guarantee top employees' performance in a company. Macky and Boxall (2007) have stated that the HPWS is crucial to the strategic accomplishment of business strategies

and augmentation of organizations' performance. Maintaining the high level of commitment as well as communication is necessary to involve employees in decision-making and plan implementations where it has the greatest influence (Becker and Huselid, 2006; Young et al, 2010). Combining HR structures, HR strategies, HR practices and HR Policies with existing management styles, human resource, and corporate cultures entails mutual complementarities that are addressed by the HPWS (Maamari and Saheb, 2018; Boxall et al, 2007).

Other systems, such as the internal labour market systems, employ procedures like internal-staffing, employment securities, above the market compensations, and benefit systems (Shaw and Williams, 2009). If there is demand of competencies and skills which can be attained inside the company and internal networks of business, the ILM systems function well (Hom et al, 2009). Moreover, the HRM system of executives is commonly known as the "teamwork approach" (TA), which brings together the top management and workforce as a cohesive group to work actively towards achieving the organization's objectives (as illustrated in Lin and Shih, 2008). These aforementioned system—HC, ILM, HPWS, TA & HL—created a favourable environment for an improved organizational outcomes (Story and Castanheira, 2020; Chow, Teo and Chew, 2013; Garus et al, 2015).

However, identifying which system will ensure the desired HRM outcome is a vital component for adopting and deploying HRM systems for the business (Hauf, Alewell and Hanson, 2014). In light of this, Ostroff and Bowen (2000) and Bowen and Ostroff (2004) draw awareness of topic; how do HRM system ought to be created and managed for becoming successful. These researchers view HRM systems like

efficient communication channels which convey important info to company employees about strategic HRM goals and expected behavioral norms. As a result, these systems have an impact on the HRM climate through widespread employee perceptions of HRM. When compared to poor HRM systems, strong HRM systems assist in providing employees with uniform behavioral expectations and unambiguous signals. Consequently, Bowen and Ostroff have linked the notion of a robust HRM system with the psychological concept of strong situations. (Podolsky and Hackett, 2021; Cooper and Withey, 2009; Mischel, 1977). This psychological notion is what Bowen and Ostroff referred to as HRM System Strength.

This study has focused the Chinese and Pakistani contexts and have suggested that HRM emerged as a concept in China through collaborative teaching agreements between Chinese and foreign universities. Moreover, larger foreign-funded businesses from the United States, Japan, and Europe have been found to practice HRM in China, as opposed to the more basic personnel terminology (Cooke, Xiao, and Chen, 2021; Warner, 1993, 1995). The Chinese term for HRM is "renli ziyuan guanli," which translates to "labor force resources management" and uses the same Chinese characters as the Japanese equivalent.

Nonetheless, HRM is often erroneously used interchangeably with personnel management and is widely regarded as a well-established profession among managers, scholars, and students alike. The older style of personnel management is still prevalent in Chinese businesses, especially in SOEs, where personnel management has a traditional feel. Personnel management remains the standard in many joint ventures (JVs) and differs significantly from the original notion of HRM

in the international academic HRM community, except for its use in big JVs and wholly-owned MNCs in China (Pange, 1999; Goodall and Warner, 1997; Sanders and De Cieri, 2021; Verburg, 1996). China has embraced "best practices" in HRM and SHRM, as evidenced by their domestic MNCs or other MNCs operating in global corporations. While some adjustments may be necessary to suit Chinese conditions, this represents the most feasible form of HRM.

The local realities have been disregarded in the existing research on strategic human resource management in China. Hence, this research aims to fill this void by scrutinizing HRM systems that are based on the context of Chinese management. Meanwhile, in Pakistan, existing literature on HRM in emerging economies is growing, but there is still limited evidence on HR practices in indigenous workplaces and their outcomes. Ahtisham-ul-Haq, Rehman and Rehman (2021), Ali and Brandl (2017), Khilji (2001, 2003), and Siddiqui (1997) have found that most businesses in Pakistan (foreign and local) have transformed their personnel divisions into HR divisions. While HRM is in its infancy, it holds promise for Pakistani employees and has the potential to grow as the economy expands. However, the current uncertain political and economic climate may hinder development. The objective of this study is to address the significant research void in Pakistan. The subsequent section outlines the notion of HRM System Strength, including the Chinese and Pakistani contexts.

2.3 The Concept of HRM System Strength

Studies on the signaling impact of high-performance work practices indicate that employees do not merely accept them passively; rather, they form attributions

24

about the presence of specific HR practices (Chacko, Conway, Fu, Monks, Alfes and Bailey, 2019; Sanders and Yang, 2015; Nishii, Lepak, and Schneider, 2008; Presbitero, Teng-Calleja and Farndale, 2021). According to HRM System Strength theory, which emphasizes importance of conveying clear messages to employees, and it enables for creating the strong situations (Kelley, 1971; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004) where HR system is strong and elevated in consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus, that consequently encourages employees for assigning strong causal attribution about the relationships among different rewards and employee performance.

The three fundamental components of HRM System Strength, namely consensus, distinctiveness, and consistency, were incorporated into the conceptualization by Bowen and Ostroff in 2004. This was achieved by applying Kelley (1967)'s attribution theory & social cognitive theory. When employees can clearly see and understand event and effect relationship in the HRM system, distinctiveness is high. Consistency is considered to be very high if event and effect relationship is similar across various modality and over-time. This is similar for every employee in any organization. Meanwhile, consensus seems to be very high when a robust agreements amongst employees' point of view of event and effect relationships, for example, among employees, members of HRM departments and line managers.

Thus, the various aspects of an HRM system, such as visibility, clarity, administration consistency, administration effectiveness, and validity, are related to system strength. Therefore, under this conceptualization of strength, further

prerequisites to the system for being effective and strengthened in addition to conditions and constraints which employees need to be aware off, comprehend, and understand the systems and related signals. These attributes not only affect how HRM systems are seen, however they as well have the further effects on how well an HRM system functions, that is separate from impact on the employees.

Therefore, HRM System Strength's impact is closely linked to specific interactions. In particular, a challenging situation can enhance employee performance by effectively communicating the organization's objectives and the incentives it provides (Ostroff & Bowen, 2000; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Sanders et al., 2014; Katou et al., 2014). Moreover, a strong consensus among stakeholders indicates a robust situation that has a favorable impact on employees' attitudes and behavior. According to Bowen and Ostroff (2004, p. 213), "a robust HRM system process can enhance organizational and employee performance by fostering shared understandings that stimulate collective responses aligned with organizational strategic objectives."

Fritz Heider's (1958) scholarly investigation laid the groundwork for attribution approaches, which highlighted how employees form everyday explanations of the world to comprehend, predict, and control events. Kelley's theoretical papers (1967, 1973) further advanced Heider's theory by focusing on how people deduce causes from other people's conduct or events. This study adds to the literature by providing empirical evidence of the link between HRM system strength and performance, building on Kelley's attribution theory. Using Kelley's co-variation principle, this study demonstrates how employees' attributions alter the impact of a

potent HRM system on performance. According to Kelley's attribution theory (1967, 1973) and Kelley and Michela's research (1980), Bowen and Ostroff (2004) proposed that effective HRM systems are characterized by three vital features: distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus. According to Kelley's covariation theory, people ascribe behaviour to one of three sorts of causes: a person, object, or situation. This believed relationship between cause and effect is known as a causal attribution. In order to explain why individuals attribute behaviour to these factors, Kelley (1973, p. 120) proposed three conditions: a response is valid when there is consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus, which have been used by the current research framework to examine their impact on employees' performance.

According to Kelley (1967), when consensus, consistency, and distinctiveness are overall high-level, observers are more likely to link the events or behaviors to entities or a stimulus, like HR practices). Drawing on Kelley's findings, Bowen and Ostroff identified nine meta-features of the HR system that, when taken together, create a robust HR system. These characteristics are organized into 3 categories: consensus, distinctiveness, and consistency. Built on Kelley's attribution theory, the current research has further hypothesized that higher levels of practice understandability, visibility, authority legitimacy and strategic relevance have been suggestive of distinctiveness. The aspect of consistency is ensured through the effectiveness of practices, the coherence of messages, and the reliability of instruments. Moreover, consensus is attained when HR practices are perceived as equitable and just and when message senders are aligned in their views. Together, these features create the framework for an effective and strong HR system, which in

turn influences how well employees perform.

This study also postulated that employees were tilted more for assigning attributions to their performance, if consistency was higher with low consensus and distinctiveness, which is in line with Kelley's theory. Additionally, external attributions were predicted by poor consistency, and high consensus and distinctiveness respectively. The intricate nature of the process approach concerning research methods and theory, as well as the amount of resources required to study the multi-level linkages, as this study did, are two of the very apparent explanations why scarce studies till date explored it and focused only on employees' attribution (Beletskiy, 2011; Guest, 2011).

According to co-variation principles of attribution's theory, people should take into account information about the consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus of situation while attempting to comprehend the underlying causes of events. People may more confidently attribute cause-and-effect links and have a better understanding of a situation when they can perceive it as distinct, consistent, and consensual.

2.3.1 Features of HRM System Strength

As mentioned earlier, Bowen and Ostroff (2004) proposed that a strong HRM system consists of three distinct features, namely consensus, distinctiveness, and consistency. These features are explained below:

2.3.2a) Distinctiveness

An HRM system is deemed distinctive if it is easy to comprehend, legitimate, and pertinent to the objectives of its workers. According to research (Sanders et al., 2008; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Stanton et al., 2010), workers tend to associate HRM signals with strategic management when the HRM process is transparently visible. A highly distinctive HRM system is likely to result in employees having a better comprehension of HRM practices and being significantly influenced by the system's attributes. This assertion is made by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), who highlight that clarity, comprehensibility, legitimacy, and relevance to employees' objectives are essential feature of the distinctive HRM systems (Sanders et al., 2008; Stanton et al., 2010). Employee evaluations of the HRM system are necessary for effective HR. In order to perceive an HRM system as distinct, the event and effect relationships are clearly discernible (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

Further, Distinctiveness has been augmented to extent by which HRM system provides relevant, legitimate, clear and visible messages to the employees (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Delmotte et al., 2011). Visibility in complex HRM systems can be enhanced to allow the larger no. of employees which are expose to these practices (Wang et al., 2020; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). The second feature of distinctiveness is relevance, which requires such activities which are beneficial to employees. Employees may fulfill their own needs because of their relevancy to the HR practices that are substantial for both individual and organizational goals. Apart from this, the other significant feature od distinctiveness is the understandability. This can be understood in way that this is critical to communicate both the availability and the details of HR policies delivered to employees (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004).

Additionally, the concept of transparency can enhance the legitimacy of HR decision-making authority by preventing mistrust and misinformation among employees.

This aligns with the attribution theory and is supported by research conducted by Feldman (1981) and Kelley (1955). Therefore, HR policies are likely to be embraced since employees are likely to accept and acknowledge company's positive intentions. Additionally, according to Kelman and Hamilton (1989), the legitimacy of authority indicates that followers are willing to follow the norms set by someone who sets behavioral expectations. Senior management support and strategic prioritization can enhance the credibility of the HRM function, which is essential for its legitimacy, according to Bowen and Ostroff (2004). The communicator's credibility also plays a crucial role in the attribution and influencing processes, particularly in the unique context of HRM systems, as noted by Rousseau (1995). Therefore, distinctiveness is crucial in creating a distinguishing feature in the environment, emphasizing its significance, and prompting consistency in employee responses (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004).

2.3.2b) Consistency

Consistency is the second dimension, which is implied by firmness and steadiness of HRM system by itself. In general terms, consistency refers to event and effect relationship's coherence, that is consistent over-time irrespective of the subjects or circumstances (Katou et al., 2014). Meanwhile in another study, Sanders et al. (2008) suggest that when HRM practices are perceived as consistent, management can be perceived as a causal bundle with unique effects that can be attributed to it consistently across different contexts and over time. The authors argue that the

synergy of HRM practices reinforces each other, resulting in a distinctive effect that contributes to overall organizational performance. The consistency is referred to effective and internal consistent execution of HR processes and practices, that is coherent over context, time and people (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Sanders et al., 2012). Its features are instrumentality, consistent HR messages, and validity (Delmotte et al., 2011; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Instrumentality pertains to the establishment of clear cause-and-effect relationships, thereby enabling employees to understand the consequences of their actions. This ensures that an adequate system of incentives and rewards exists to encourage preferred behavioral patterns (Bowen and Ostroff, 2000).

As per expectancy theory by Vroom's (1964), valence, instrumentality, and anticipation all contribute to an individual's motivation. Accordingly, the instrumentality and relevance of HR policies could raise employees motivation' levels (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004), which will enhance and boost commitment to their respective companies and further behavior outside of their assigned roles (Lavelle et al., 2007). Employees have a higher sense of control when working in a predictable environment because of instrumentality since they can see and comprehend the effects of their actions. As a result, employees follow guidelines and rules for improved behavioral orientation and is to a lesser extent expected for experiencing disappointment or psychological contract ruptures, which reduces intentions to leave (Rousseau, 1995).

Coherence between the goals of HRM procedures and their actual results is another definition of consistency. Bowen and Ostroff (2004) referred to it as validity.

31

The particular consistency in behavior of HRM actors offers the integrity they need to affect employee behavior. To change the recipient's behavior, the issuer's credibility is a requirement (Rousseau, 1995). Consistency between various HR practices is the third aspect of consistency.

2.3.2c) Consensus

Consensus is the last dimension of the HRM system strength. The degree of consensus amongst the policymakers—like, line managers and human resource (HR)—in manner HRM practices have been put into effect can be called as consensus. The employees, thus, may probable to concur that the HRM policies and procedures originate from the management when decision-makers perceive such implementation as being very consensual. Consensus is the level of agreement among staff members regarding the actions and reactions that produce certain results, and it entails the fairness and the main decision-makers in HRM being on the same page (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Delmotte et al., 2011).

Employees, therefore, are probable to come on an agreement if they observe that the message senders concur with one another (Rousseau, 1995). When the senior executives provide their backing to both HR managers and line managers, having consensus among the decision-makers in HR can significantly enhance the effectiveness of the HRM (Human Resource Management) system. Employees, therefore, value the consistency among the multiple stakeholders, which facilitates the adoption and application of HRM policies (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Additionally, abilities of HRM systems for influencing employees' attitudes and behaviors is positively impacted by limit through which employees believe the

procedures to allocate resource (fairness in procedures) and outcomes of this distributions are fair (Waldman and Bowen, 1998). The rationale behind every decision must be clearly stated to seek justice in HR processes and procedures (Zbek et al., 2016). Fairness perception makes it easier for proposed HR policies to be adopted, enhancing the legitimacy and credibility of HR department.

HRM systems gives clear signal regarding which strategic objectives are significant and how employees' behavior is anticipated and thus compensated. According to Bowen and Ostroff's (2004) argument, if every employee judges HRM systems favorably in relation to these aforementioned meta-features, then HRM system would work as intended (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). This, therefore, results in improved employee performance on a group or a collective level. In their 2016 study, Ostroff and Bowen made a distinction between two perspectives on HRM System Strength, with a focus on the individual level of perception by employees. In contrast to previous research by Delmotte et al. (2012), Sanders et al. (2008), and Bednall, Sanders, and Runhaar (2014), which emphasized higher-level HRM system characteristics, this current research adopts a unique approach. It examines how employees perceive and respond to the everyday HRM events, thereby indicating the strength of the HRM System.

Instead of acting as a mediator between HR outcomes and content, this thesis considers the HR process to have a moderator impact or boundary condition effect. In order to examine how HR process affects HR content and performance, this study applies Kelley's attribution theory, which provides insights on how individuals behave in organizational contexts. Similar to Bowen and Ostroff's (2004) approach,

the HR process is assessed based on Kelley's attribution theory, specifically looking at the psychological traits of distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus. Attribution theory refers to how people perceive events and how this shapes their behavior and thinking (Kelley, 1973). This theory has been useful in explaining message-based persuasion and identifying key attributes to ensure consistent perception and interpretation of messages across all employees (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). The attribution process, as per Kelley (1973), is based on individual beliefs and understanding of reality, which may vary. It involves observing behavior, either of oneself or others, and then attributing causes based on the level of agreement, consistency, and distinctiveness. Distinctiveness pertains to how consistently a person behaves in a given situation or how unique the behavior is to a particular context (Kelley, 1973). High distinctiveness is shown when a person behaves in a distinctive manner in certain situations, while low distinctiveness is demonstrated by consistent behavior in all circumstances.

In this case, people credit their actions more to the situation than to themselves (Gilovich, Medvec, and Savitsky, 2000). Contrarily, when people consistently respond in the same way regardless of context or time, this is known as low distinctiveness, and individuals attribute the conduct to the same individuals for their behavior. According to Kelley (1973), the degree to which other people act similarly in similar situations is often what constitutes a consensus. The consensus is, in other words, the covariation of behavior among individuals. The strong consensus is attributable to a stimulus given to one or more persons. For instance, it indicates that there is a lot of agreement about someone's conduct in the environment if several

34

others share the same opinion of them. Contrarily, the low consensus is attributed to a person who viewed himself or herself differently from the majority of those around him or her. For instance, a low level of consensus would be indicated by only one or a small number of others around him/her communicating about the person's behavior. Consistency, on the other hand, is the degree to which a person behaves in every situation or the covariation of behavior over time (Kelley, 1973). High consistency is demonstrated when a person exhibits recurring behaviors that are consistent with who they are (they are, after all, the type of person that performs the particular act). Contrarily, when people only exhibit the same behavior on a single occasion or exhibit different behavior at various times and places, it indicates that there is a lack of consistency and that this is due to the context and environment that will best suit the individual's presentation of behavior.

In previous studies, researcher such as Kelley (1973) discussed different patterns of the co-variance model, which includes different combinations of consistency, consensus, and distinctiveness, depending upon personal attribution as reasons of behavior. The patterns of co-variance model have been explained in Table 2.2. This may be established if the employee probably makes a stimulus (i.e. external), personal (i.e. internal), or else situational attributions by evaluating the level of consistency, consensus, and distinctiveness in a certain context (Hewstone and Jaspars, 1987). In general, Kelley distinguished between attributions to cause which resides inside entity, surroundings and the person, to explain the pattern.

Pattern 1 indicates that cause of a behavior depends on something in the situation (entity) which means employee attribute his/her behavior to stimulus (i.e,

practice of HR is executed by the administration). Whereas the pattern 2 indicates attributes of employees in his/her behavior to personal attributes. Lastly, the pattern 3 indicates how employees attributes behavior against an ongoing circumstance in the organization. This implies that how an organization treats its employees affects their behavior. By evaluating three criteria in a given setting, it is possible to ascertain whether an employee would probably credit themselves for implementing HR practices (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004), as indicated in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Patterns in covariance model by Kelley (1973)

Patterns	Attributions	Distinctiveness	Consensus	Consistency
Pattern 1	Stimulus	(High)	(High)	(High)
Pattern 2	Circumstance	(Low)	(High)	(Low)
Pattern 3	Personal	(Low)	(Low)	(High)

Source: Kelley (1965, 1973)

However, there is a scarcity of research literature that has considered link up between perceived HRM System Strength and the non-work domain factors. For instance, this is a significant omission as factors of family structure, spirituality, and religiosity are important to triggering attributions, which underlie how the perceived strength of the HRM system is being conveyed by an event affects expectations and performance (Martinko, Douglas, and Harvey, 2006). Moreover, studies linking employee performance and human resource management suggest that sophisticated HR systems and practices enhance organizational and employee performance.

Sanders, Shipton, and Gomes (2014) suggested that HRM systems with greater effectiveness would have a more significant effect on outcome variables

because they send clear signals to employees about organizational expectations. This perspective is more nuanced than simply communicating a simplistic expectation of "high-performance," and provides valuable insights for HRM (Boxall and Huo, 2020). Ostroff and Bowen (2016) highlighted that the concept of HRM System Strength remains largely unexplored in their analysis of the decade award article published in the Academy of Management Review. They specifically argue that researchers have not sufficiently examined how the logic of system strength connects to various outcomes, such as innovative behavior, employee performance, and well-being, and that this should be a rationale for future research. Steffensen et al., (2019) highlighted in a recent review that "a crucial next step in properly understanding HRM" (p. 39) is to provide more clarification on the effectiveness of HRM systems and their connection to employee outcomes.

Despite the popularity of the notion of strength and the attention it has generated among scholars studying human resource management (HRM) (Bednall et al., 2014; Katou et al., 2014; Delmotte et al., 2012;), the scarcity of research literature is on how different dimensions interact to influence an employee's performance. In fact, Ostroff and Bowen (2016) stated different dimensions of consistency, consensus, and distinctiveness are dependent components and may impact each-other in significant examination of literature have been generated concerning the ideas of strengths. This thesis, therefore, focused on the characteristics of the strongest HRM systems as the collective attributions to the meaning of HRM processes, resulting in shared expectations, conjoint attitudes, and behaviors.

Besides, this is acknowledged that most of the research on the effectiveness

of HRM systems is conducted while applying the quantitative approach, drawing many questions regarding true findings for this type of research because there isn't enough exploratory research for the potential researchers to do comparison (Hewett, 2021). Simultaneously, Ostroff et al. (2021: 22) propose that the research is integrated into next generation of the HRM and suggests the thorough investigation of why and how the strengths of the HRM system affect employee outcomes. This study responds to the aforementioned recommendations by using a mixed methods approach and to produce a deeper knowledge of the underlying processes by which the effectiveness of the HRM system affects the performance of employees.

The current study has built on assumptions that a strong situation of HRM system is related with employee performance positively. By adopting Connelly et al., (2011)'s signaling theory this relationship is explained in-depth. Organizational systems are viewed as signals that employees perceive within the useful framework of signaling theory for evaluating HRM process (Guest et al., 2021). The way these signals are interpreted affects the attitudes and behaviors of employees (Spence, 2002, 1974). Thus, I contend that a strong HRM system can communicate with other organizational members (such as managers), improving employee performance towards the organization.

Drawing on signaling theory, this study extends the notion that affective performance is likely to be positively related to a strong context, i.e., an environment in which robust HRM systems are present. A solid HRM system is posited to increase the possibility of high employee performance in an organization (Connelly et al., 2011). The utility of signaling theory, which regards organizational systems as

signals that employees perceive, has been widely acknowledged in evaluating HRM processes (Guest et al., 2021). The perception of these signals, such as those conveyed through performance reviews, influences employee attitudes and behaviors (Spence, 2002). Therefore, this study assumes that HRM systems can transmit signals to organizational members that can have either positive or negative impacts on employee performance.

A unique perspective on how each of these influences the HRM process is provided by signaling theory. Additionally, it enhances attributional viewpoints on HRM. For instance, the researchers (for instance see, Nishii et al., 2008) are primarily bothered to receivers while how do they interpret and perceive different signals, the researchers (see, Bowen & Ostroff, 2004) mainly has addressed qualities and strengths of signals. Since neither strategy emphasizes each of the three components of the signaling process. thus, signaling theory offers a potentially beneficial and integrative framework. Thus, this study makes a contribution by addressing the roles of manager as the significant implementers and communicators of HR practices and the roles of employees as receivers and interpreters of these signals focusing on signaling theory, that focuses on the signal and signaler. In this way, the current research has demonstrated how signaling theory explains and explores 'innovative' while mainly ignores insight in the HRM process. The motivation behind the current research regarding HRM process is for enhancing the researchers' perception of the relationship between HRM and performance. The next section discusses performance appraisal.

2.4 Performance Appraisal

The use of performance appraisal (PA) is widespread in organizations due to its potential impact on both individual and organizational performance (DeNisi, 2000). PA is a structured, scheduled, and formal exchange between a subordinate and their supervisor that typically focuses on the employee's performance (Pichler, 2019; Pearce and Porter, 1986). According to Murphy and Cleveland (1995), the process of Performance Appraisal (PA) takes place within a clearly defined organizational context and is essentially a social and communicative process.

Although the concept of performance appraisal is not novel, its interpretation and implications have evolved over time, both in academic literature and practical applications. Traditionally, performance appraisal referred to an annual assessment of a subordinate's performance against a manager's objectives or standards. The traditional method of performance appraisal involves completing an annual report that is usually accompanied by a formal or informal discussion about the employee's performance during their appraisal interview (Islami, Mulolli, & Mustafa, 2018; Fletcher, 2001). The quality of performance appraisal is a significant concern because it is primarily a top-down approach, with the manager or supervisor evaluating performance, making it a one-way process that is "done" to the employee, rather than a two-way process. Nonetheless, PA is increasingly recognized as a critical component of Performance Management (PM) and is viewed as part of a more comprehensive approach. Nowadays, the term "performance appraisal" (PA) covers a broad range of activities, including staff evaluation and performance enhancement, and is no longer limited to its traditional meaning (Wilson and Western, 2000;

DeNisi, 2000; DeNisi and Murphy, 2017; Fletcher, 2001).

Although this thesis is focused especially on PA quality, it adopts a wider perspective on PA's objectives as an essential component of Performance Management (PM). This means that PA is a wider strategy that can encompass many aims, such as feedback and goal setting, managing, planning, rewarding, and increasing performance, rather than being utilized only as a system for evaluating prior performance (DeNisi and Murphy, 2017; Krausert, 2009; Ikramullah et al., 2016). Performance appraisal can refer not only to individuals but also to teams and groups, as acknowledged by Krausert (2009) and Scott and Einstein (2001). This perspective recognizes that there are various versions or methods of appraisal available.

Despite the numerous studies on performance appraisal from different perspectives, it remains a highly debated topic. For decades, researchers have investigated PA (DeNisi and Murphy, 2017; Krausert, 2009; Denisi and Smith, 2014). The significance of PA in terms of its influence on employee performance, both at the individual and organizational levels, highlights the need for continued research in this area. Furthermore, there are still many uncharted research territories, such as the quality of performance appraisal (DeNisi and Murphy, 2017; DeNisi and Smith, 2014; DeNisi and Pritchard, 2006; Kline and Sulsky, 2009).

In addition to individuals, the concept of performance appraisal can also be applied to teams and groups (Krausert, 2009; Scott and Einstein, 2001). A fundamental perspective on performance appraisal can also be studied, and the traditional stream of PA research focuses on the design of a specific performance

appraisal system and provides a more classic managerialist critique (Barbieri et al., 2021; Bach, 2013). While acknowledging the practical challenges of PA, this approach explores ways to minimize these difficulties for an efficient implementation of PA (Prowse and Prowse, 2009; Winstanley and Stuart-Smith, 1996). The distinction between PAs primarily concerned with evaluation and those primarily focused on staff development is another crucial aspect to consider. As there is an inherent conflict between these two goals, separating them is recommended to ensure the effectiveness of PA (Wilson and Western, 2000; Boswell and Boudreau, 2002). A summary of the important themes covered in performance appraisal literature is presented in table 2.3 below:

Table 2.3: Summary of important themes included in performance appraisal literature

	Key themes	Main References
1950s-1980s	**PSYCHOMETRIC RESEARCH** "Performance improvement instruments used in making performance ratings; types of rating scales"	Feldman (1981); Landy and Farr (1980, 1983)
1980s-1990s	**COGNITIVE RESEARCH** "Rater characteristics in performance appraisal; rating judgments of their subordinates' performance"	Ilgen et al. (1993); DeNisi (1997); Bretz, Mikovich, and Read (1992)
Since 1990s	**SOCIAL CONTEXT RESEARCH** "The rating environment; rating purpose; rater and ratee motivation, participation and reactions"	Murphy and Cleveland (1991); Ilgen et al. (1993); Levy and Williams (2004)
Since 2000s	**INCREMENAL BROADER FOCUS** Proximal and distal factors; "HPWP" and performance appraisal as part of performance management in public sector"	DeNisi and Kluger (2000); Levy and Williams (2004); DeNisi and Murphy (2017) Bach (2012); DeNisi and Smith (2014);

Source: Compiled by the Author (2023)

As seen in Table 2.3, cognitive and psychometric research has long predominated performance appraisal research, with many researchers questioning the overemphasis on rating and measurement issues (e.g., Haines III and St-Onge, 2012; Murphy and Cleveland, 1995; Whiting et al., 2008; DeNisi and Pritchard, 2006; Ferris and Treadway, 2012; Balzer and Sulsky, 1990).

Some scholars (e.g., Redman, 2001; Wright, 2002; Rowland and Hall, 2010; Deming, 1986; Bowman, 1994) have criticized PA, arguing that it has become obsolete and has unintended consequences (Scholtes, 1999), and is costly and ineffective in improving organizational performance (Redman, 2001). A number of studies (Piggot-Irvine, 2003; De Cenzo and Robbins, 1996; Kondrasuk, 2011) have also shown that inaccuracies in psychometric testing and poor quality of PA contribute to its ineffectiveness. Moreover, Gray (2002) and Appelbaum et al. (2011) have argued that PA may be counterproductive because managers are not adequately trained to understand and evaluate the complexity of employee performance. This view is consistent with McGregor's (1957) observation that managers may feel uncomfortable with the role of evaluating their subordinates. Despite the controversy surrounding PA, it remains an important research topic due to its potential impact on employee performance at both the individual and organizational levels.

The literature often highlights the lacking of managerial skills (Khoury and Analoui, 2004; Scribbins and Walton, 1987; Lawler, 1994), along with a deficiency in quality, which can lead to low acceptance and commitment of performance appraisal (Brown et al., 2010). In general, the PA system has failed to expand and

encourage workers, the way it was intended (Fletcher, 2001; Rowland and Hall, 2010). It is clear from the foregoing discussion, that PA systems do not always live up to their expectations (Grint,1993). These opinions may have become more pronounced or relevant in the past when a PA participated in a routine process involving a line manager's report on an employee's performance without any appropriate discussion or feedback. Despite significance of performance appraisal, it is seen as mostly disliked HRM task (Kondrasuk, 2011, p.61). The next section discusses performance appraisal quality which is the focus of the study.

2.4.1   *Performance Appraisal Quality*

In contrast to the more technical and process-focused components of appraisal, the social and motivational backdrop has recently occupied a central place in studies. This is understandable since, if appraisers and appraisees are dissatisfied and uncommitted to the appraisal, the quality of the appraisal methodology doesn't matter much (Chmiel 2008, 85). Researchers have shown how the quality of performance reviews is related to things like improved management trust, justice, job satisfaction, and employees' performance (USHAKOV, 2021). Employee views toward their supervisor, their job, and the assessment process itself are claimed to be significantly influenced by the procedure itself and how it is used (Boswell and Boudreau, 2000, 283).

The performance evaluation systems are unsatisfactory with about 80% of British organizations. Additionally, 15% of managers in the US have stated that they would rather visit the dentist than complete an evaluation (Ciancetta, and Roch,

2021). The conflict between the performance evaluation and the motivating parts of the appraisal process is a fundamental issue with performance appraisal, and it is also related to four other aspects of the situation: the accuracy of the assessment, communication, the implications for incentives, and the participants' individual goals. Employee impressions of an unfair or biased evaluator are referred to as the quality, while the appraiser's hesitation or difficulty in communicating a critical appraisal is referred to as the communication quality (Baird et al., 2017).

According to Brown et al. (2010), the quality of performance evaluation systems can be categorized into two areas. First, they discuss the effectiveness of techniques used to ensure clear performance expectations and sufficient communication within the organization. Second, they examine how employees are treated and whether they feel their performance is evaluated fairly by their managers. With performance appraisal systems becoming more subjective (Treadway et al., 2007), it is essential to understand the impact of performance appraisal quality (Brown et al., 2010, p. 376). Although several researchers have investigated the effect of performance management systems on employees' work-related attitudes (Ittner et al., 2003; Davis and Albright, 2004; Crabtree and DeBusk, 2008; Lee and Yang, 2011), only a few studies have explored the relationship between employees' performance and the quality of the performance appraisal process (Babar et al., 2022; Bednall et al., 2014).

The significance of the quality of performance appraisal is highlighted in this study for several reasons. Firstly, performance evaluation processes are a form of "performance management that encourages and manages employee performance"

(Baird, Su, and Nuhu, 2021; Fletcher 2001, 473). When employees perceive the quality of such systems, they are more likely to achieve desired performance goals, as a performance appraisal system provides role clarity, regular communication, and clear expectations. The effectiveness of the performance appraisal system is expected to be influenced by employee performance, indicating its significance. Moreover, the quality of performance appraisal as perceived by employees is expected to have a considerable impact on their work-related attitudes and performance (Bratton and Gold, 1999; Su and Baird, 2017; Taylor and Pierce, 1999). Thirdly, fostering an environment that promotes empowerment is crucial for organizations, as emphasized by Honold (1997), Foster-Fishman and Keys (1995), and House (1988). Hence, it is presumed that a positive relationship exists between the effectiveness of the performance appraisal system and individual performance.

Furthermore, there is some empirical evidence that suggests that high-quality PA will improve job satisfaction, which in turn will improve workers' performance (Fletcher and Williams, 1996; Masterson et al., 2000). Employees' sense of accomplishment, self-worth, attitudes toward their jobs, and perceptions of their standing within the company are all likely to be improved by a high-quality PA experience (Lind and Tyler, 1988). Additionally, it generates more confidence in the quality outcomes of the PA process (Hendrix et al., 1998). Therefore, having a high-quality PA experience is likely to result in increased levels of job performance and (Fried and Ferris, 1987). An unsatisfactory performance appraisal can potentially result in reduced employee job satisfaction, and subsequently, a decline in their performance. When employees feel powerless to influence the performance appraisal

process and lack clarity about the organization's performance objectives, they may perceive that their contributions are not appreciated.

Behrman et al. (1982) suggest that attempting to meet unclear performance objectives through trial-and-error can reduce an employee's sense of accomplishment and self-worth, ultimately decreasing their performance. Similarly, Campbell et al. (1998) found that a negative performance appraisal experience can lead to poorer performance. According to justice scholars, a positive experience, where feedback is transparent, can increase employees' trust in the system, resulting in improved organizational commitment and worker performance (Sweeney and McFarlin, 1993). The purpose of the performance appraisal process is to convey the company's goals and principles to its staff, in order to encourage their buy-in and support (Kuvaas, 2007, p. 381). An excellent PA experience raises employees' perceptions of the organization's credibility and, as a result, enhances their desire to support its objectives. Employees' assessments of their managers and companies are improved by high-quality PA experiences. The adoption of a high-quality performance appraisal (PA) process enhances the self-esteem of employees and indicates that their rights are valued and preserved by the organization and managers during decision-making (Taylor et al., 1995), promoting a sense of worth in the employees.

The current research has employed signaling theory to suggest that performance appraisals can serve as a measure of the communication climate in an organization, which includes the accuracy of information shared and the management's responsiveness to employees (Dillard et al., 1986, p. 87). As a result, signaling theory (Connelly et al., 2011) is included in this research as an

underlying approach for advancing the study of HRM processes by presenting managers as signalers of HR messages, such as through performance appraisals, and employees as receivers. Its primary concerns focus on the functions of the signal, the signal source, and the receiver. According to Showkat (2013), the effective appraisal focuses on the design of the performance appraisal system, its process, which involves the employer and a program evaluator organization to reinforce the achievement of the performance, the output of the process's function, the results of the performance evaluation, as well as other factors within the organization that affect satisfaction in the performance appraisal.

2.4.2 *Research gap regarding Performance Appraisal Quality*

Although the literature on proximal PA issues, such as PA quality, has advanced, little is known about how more distal elements affect appraisal approaches (DeNisi and Murphy, 2017; Levy and Williams, 2004; Djurdjevic and Wheeler, 2014). Specifically, there is limited knowledge regarding the broader elements that affect the excellence of the performance appraisal procedure and its effect on the character of performance appraisal. As the present study involves data from two different nations, there is a gap in both traditional and critical PA literature in terms of how the macro-level components of a national environment affect the experiences of PA at the local level, and whether similarities or differences exist between these countries. Many questions related to the PA process have remained unanswered because of the "decontextualized" nature of most PA research. This is because research has mainly focused on specific components of the PA process, separately and out of context, resulting in a lack of a comprehensive understanding (DeNisi and

Murphy, 2017, p.129). Thus, it is important to emphasize the significance of contextualizing PA research by examining the environment in which appraisals are introduced and practiced (DeNisi and Murphy, 2017). Comparative research is essential for providing context and understanding the impact of contextual elements on the phenomena under study (Johns, 2001, 2006; Rousseau and Fried, 2001). Critics of the PA literature argue that the research tends to be "decontextualized" and focuses only on specific aspects of the PA process, without considering the broader context in which it occurs. Therefore, it is recommended that the PA process be studied holistically, taking into account the larger context and considering the PA process as a whole (Festing and Knappert, 2014; Ikramullah et al., 2016). While some research has examined the impact of contextual factors on employees (e.g., Peretz and Fried, 2012), very little research has explored the influence of non-work domains on PA.

Previous studies indicate that performance appraisal has a considerable influence on work-related attitudes (Brown and Benson, 2005; Bednall et al., 2014; Su and Baird, 2017) and employee performance (Baird, Tung, and Su, 2020; Bratton and Gold, 1999). As few questions still remain on the consequences of the quality of performance appraisals which need further research. Therefore, this thesis has chosen this particular HR practice to assess managers' quality of feedback given to employees in evaluating their performance. Therefore, this study can be viewed as a theoretical contribution in response to the research demand for investigating the importance of HRM, and for examining the quality of performance appraisal as a vital HR practice in other research contexts (Bednall et al., 2014). In addition, Iqbal

et al. (2015) argue that the PAQ literature lacks an eastern perspective and advise eastern scholars to adopt western models. The current study establishes the relationship between employees' perceptions of fairness and satisfaction in the assessment process by examining the case of China and Pakistan. It also aims to address concerns for more research from eastern authors. It was also necessary to conduct this study because of the broad and extensive use of the assessment process, the significance of PA for performance management, the importance of PA for individual employees because rewards are dependent on PA outcomes, the value of PA for HRM and Development, and the need for a tool to evaluate PA efficacy.

As previously mentioned, this study has examined how the quality dimensions of regularity, clarity, and openness in performance appraisal systems affect employees' performance and their association with non-work domain factors and HRM system strength. Prior research has established a connection between the quality of performance appraisal dimensions and work-related attitudes (Brown and Benson, 2005; Su and Baird, 2017). However, this study focuses on the associations between these quality dimensions and employee performance. The subsequent section of the study examines the importance of non-work domain factors.

2.5   Non-work domain factors

For a long time, especially in Western history, the link between "work" and "non-work" has been a hot topic in intellectual, public, and political debate (Kabanoff, 1980). Work can conflict with a variety of non-work activities (Keeney, Boyd, Sinha, Westring, and Ryan, 2013). In her study on the spill over between non-work and work domains, Kirchmeyer (1992) examined three distinct non-work

domains: parenting/family, community involvement (such as engagement in moral and religious commitments), and recreational activities (such as social club and hobby association affiliations). The aspects crucial to the work-life balance were divided into three categories by Padma and Reddy (2013): personal care issues, family issues, and job issues. The time spent on non-work activities like hobbies, healthcare, entertainment, friends and attendance of social events was included in the category of personal care issues. This establishes a distinct line between personal activities that are not related to family obligations and concerns but yet contribute to maintaining a healthy work-life balance. According to Voydanoff (2001), scholars like Hart (1999), Greenhaus and Parasuraman (1987), Sekaran (1992) and Kirchmeyer (1992) have included the domains of health, religion, family structure, friendship, leisure, and recreational activities in non-work domains. Wickham and Parker (2007) identified 35 non-work roles that affected people's work-lives in some way. They were divided into five categories as: family, religion, educational, sporting, and social-based activities. To understand the effect on employees attitudes and behaviors, researchers (Wickham and Parker (2007), Sekaran (1992) and Kirchmeyer (1992) have distinguished the interaction between work roles and other non-work roles, which needs to be differentiated from each other.

Keeney et al., (2013) suggested that individuals typically have three main concerns in their non-work life, which include community service, family, and personal life. Additionally, Hall et al., (2013) argued that an individual's non-work domain is multidimensional and involves satisfying multiple personal concerns alongside their career, indicating that employees may have other significant personal

matters aside from family concerns. While studying the family dimensions of life, role of employment in work was studied by Warren (2004) and she proposed that extending the scope of the work-life debate beyond simply the immediate family will aid researchers in weighing the benefits and drawbacks of employment. The concept of work-life balance is described by Gurvis and Patterson (2005) as having a satisfactory amount of time devoted to various aspects of life, such as family, friends, career, community, religion, and leisure. Crooker, Smith, and Filiz (1999) proposed that an individual's experience of work-life balance is made up of different components, including their profession, family, community, employer, values, and religion. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate non-work domains to see how they relate to employees' performance.

2.5.1 Conceptualization of non-work domain in this study

Marchand, Demers and Durand (2005, 2006) categorized the characteristics of the non-work domain, such as meaningful work, rationality, mentoring, demography, family, perceptions, motivations, religion, rituals, spirituality, and attitudes, as essentially social in nature. As a result, they must be distinguished analytically from any particular qualities that are specific to individual employees. Intriguingly, recent systematic evaluations of work-specific variables have focused on a sizable corpus of work (Biswas, Makela and Anderson, 2022). However, it's interesting to note that less attention has been paid in the literature to understanding the mechanisms by which other crucial living settings could concurrently intervene with the work environment to increase employee performance in the organizations (Keeney et al., 2013). This research aims to address this gap by investigating how

non-work domain factors affect employee performance. Referring to how both allude to their network of social connections attainable outside of the workplace, which has the family at its roots, spirituality, and religion to follow (Kamoche, 1997; Webster et al, 2006), and how it affects their performance, it is possible to comprehend how both selected countries' employees (Pakistan and China) understand and make sense of the world around them.

Earlier work-life literature has mostly focused on family in the non-work domain, which is a limitation of the research (Fisher, 2001). However, it is important to consider an individual's various roles outside of work, such as being a spouse, parent, community member, or having spiritual beliefs, in order to fully understand their expectations and motivations at work (Kirchmeyer, 1992). Powell (2006) has suggested expanding this idea to include "work-life" enrichment. Therefore, it is necessary to broaden our understanding of work-life issues to include other non-work domains, as reflected in more recent theoretical concepts in the literature. While there is extensive literature on work-life issues affecting working parents, dual-income spouses, and working women (White et al., 2003; Aryee et al., 2005; Ensher et al., 2002; Greenhaus et al., 2003; Unger et al., 2014; Matthews et al., 2006), there is still a need to explore other non-work domains and how they relate to work and family roles.

The predominant attention to family responsibilities rather than broader "life" issues has led to this trend (Chang et al., 2010), which may overlook concerns relevant to singles, male caregivers, and cultures with diverse value systems (Crooker, Smith, and Flitz, 1999). A limited view of non-work activities that restricts

them to only family and care responsibilities disregards the wide range of life experiences (Eikhof, Warhurst, and Haunschild, 2007). As research in this field is limited and the study is focused on China and Pakistan's socioeconomic and national backgrounds, religiosity, spirituality, and family structure were chosen as non-work domains to examine their influence on the relationship between performance appraisal quality, HRM system strength, and employee performance. The following section provides an overview of these three non-work domains and their connections to performance appraisal quality, HRM system strength, and employee performance.

2.5.1a) Religiosity

Religiosity, classified as a non-work domain factor, is defined by Koenig et al., (2000, p. 18) as a structured system of symbols, practices, beliefs, and rituals intended to promote a connection with the divine. It demonstrates how adherent people are to the religious tenets and standards (Farrukh, Ghazzawi, Raza and Shahzad 2021). According to Park (2000), a person's religiosity can be shown through a range of actions that reflect the importance of their religion or faith. Holdcroft (2006) cites Lewis (1978) who identified a number of synonyms for religiosity, including orthodoxy, devotion, belief, faith, holiness, and piousness. Religion fosters social interaction (Patel and Selvaraj, 2015). Organizations should encourage employees to show up for work (Rust, 2011). Sometimes, employees will interpret and carry out their tasks in accordance with their religious affiliations and principles. Since religiosity has a major impact on managers' social responsiveness behavior, the virtues instilled in religions may be important for the management of changing organizations (Verma and Singh, 2016). An employee who practices their religion

diligently is ethical, respectful of others, and highly committed to their work.

Numerous religious practices have an impact on people's lives, sometimes as desired aspects of how they conduct their lives and other times as parts of the culture, news, and media that make up modern life (Fernando, 2006). However, religiosity is still a subject that is not fully explored in business studies. Cross-country differences, such as those between Pakistan and China, are important, according to academics and practitioners. In light of the fact that religiosity is one of the most pervasive and influential social institutions and has a profound impact on people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors both individually and collectively, this study will build on that and consider religion to be an essential non-work domain contextual factor to investigate (Mokhlis, 2009). Existing research has demonstrated a connection between religiosity and employees' performance (Kashif et al., 2016; Behr and Johnson, 1995). Religion and spirituality have a favorable impact on how employees behave in the workplace (Hassan et al., 2016; Farrukh, Ying and Ahmed, 201).

It has been highlighted that religion offers this social support. According to Amaliah's (2014) research, a person's attitude and behavior at work are influenced by their faith. According to management research, prayer meetings, religious/spiritual terminology, Bible studies, and requests for time off for religious responsibilities are all on the rise, and spiritual and religious symbols and activities are becoming more common and accepted in the workplace (Digh, 1998; Mitroff and Denton, 1999; Conlin, 1999; Gallup and Jones, 2000; Laabs, 1995; Garcia-Zamor, 2003). But since this is still a new phenomenon, more study is encouraged in this field. Measuring religiosity has been the subject of numerous studies. Numerous articles of trust

literature follow the traditional practice of measuring people's religiosity by looking at how often they attend religious services (see, for instance, Traunmüller, 2009). There are numerous additional metrics for different types of religious beliefs. While they do capture certain aspects of religiosity, this study contends that the proportion of respondents who claim that religion has a significant influence on their daily lives (RELIMP) is a valuable addition. The current study has adapted measures of religiosity from Berggren and Bjørnskov (2011) to explore it as a non-work domain factor.

Whereas, given the role that religion continues to play in contemporary nations, it is surprising that management researchers have not fully explored the intersection between religion and HRM in a more meaningful and determined way (Tracey, 2012). As religiosity appears to be complex, multifaceted, and context-related. Its impact seems to be positive on many dimensions of work-related outcomes but mostly researchers explored religious perspective in social support, optimism, meaningfulness at work, work life balance (e.g., Prakash, 2018; Lynn, 2009; Cohen, 2002; Steger and Frazier, 2005) but none has studied its effect on HRM System Strength. In the next section I will discuss another non-work domain factor as spirituality.

2.5.1b) Spirituality

Spirituality is considered as a non-work domain factor that provides an opportunity to explicitly express and encounter spirituality that is personal, internal, transcendent, subjective, and unstructured. Spirituality plays an important part in a majority of people's lives around the world. For the purpose of fostering the growth

in the numerous facets of life, spirituality has been abstracted. The literature has made a distinction between spirituality and religion (King, 2007). Despite the fact, that there are currently around 70 definitions of spirituality in use, however, none of them are universally accepted (Markow and Klenke, 2005). Spirituality is a complex and multifaceted concept with a wide range of definitions that are certainly possible. Various definitions of spirituality exist. For instance, Guillory (2000) views spirituality as our inner awareness, while Dehler and Welsh (1994) perceive it as a work feeling that spurs us into action. Barnett, Krell, and Sendry (1999, p. 563) consider it as a process of self-discovery, while Cavanagh et al. (2001, p. 6) see it as a worldview and a path. Nash and Mc (Delbecq, 1999, p.345) view spirituality as an avenue to sacred energy that drives life.

Some people associate spirituality with having faith in and reverence for God, while others show this through participation in ritualistic behaviors like attending services on a regular basis and being actively involved in a variety of communal events with their own fraternity (Adeyemo, 2008; Ntalianis, 2005). Within the community, spirituality gives people a sense of purpose (Ashmos, 2000; Pradhan and Jena, 2017). Although workplace spirituality has come to have a significant meaning, research on the subject is still debatable because they are still relatively new (Van de Klerk, 2014). It is worth noting that the correlation between spirituality, anticipated results, and job satisfaction is significant (Van der Walt and de Klerk, 2014). As a result, according to Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2010), the concept of workplace spirituality is becoming more widely acknowledged as a crucial component of the workplace and a way to boost productivity. Literature demonstrates that spirituality

boosts spirit, fosters trust and honesty, and improves how well workers carry out their duties (Leigh, 1997; Krishnakumar, 2002). According to Pandey et al. (2015), workers who exhibit spiritual qualities have a beneficial impact on co-workers.

It bestows an optimistic view on workers, boosts their level of dedication, and results in higher performance (Milliman, 1999). Suárez (2015) noticed that spirituality produces energized and passionate employees and delivers symphonic unanimity among workers, while Khari and Sinha (2017) stated that spirituality enhances employees' good attitudes. Spirituality provides people with sentiments and emotions, assistance, or affinity as an experience that provides clues or direction. The sense of connection may be with God or another everlasting force, with the world, with nature, with other people, or simply with oneself. As per Long and Driscoll (2015), spirituality has the potential to transform employees into aware and capable leaders who view their work as meaningful, purposeful, and socially responsible. Workers in an organization that prioritizes spirituality are likely to be intrinsically motivated (Kalagnanam and Venne, 2014).

It has been suggested that individuals with strong spiritual beliefs offer significant advantages to organizations. Research conducted by Harrington et al. (2001) found that employees who share the same values and spiritual aspirations as the organization are more likely to find meaning and purpose in their work. However, in order for companies to encourage the spiritual nature of their employees, a better understanding of spirituality and its components is necessary. Karakas (2009) reviewed 140 articles on the benefits of workplace spirituality for business performance and identified various perspectives on how it supports and benefits

employees and organizational performance, including providing a sense of purpose and meaning, promoting a sense of community, and enhancing intuitive skills through a deeper experience of consciousness (Vaughan, 1989, as cited in Agor, 1989).

Nur (2003) pointed out, based on several studies, that businesses that identify as Christian tend to have higher levels of satisfaction. East (2005) also discovered a substantial and positive association between workplace spirituality and employees' productivity. Polley et al. (2005) asserted that despite the inherent value of spirituality for employees and the possible organizational benefits, spirituality at work was highly problematic, costly, and had unfavorable outcomes. They noted a number of problems, including the implementation's overall net cost, the risk of worker exploitation, the possibility of competitive disadvantages, and growing groupthink. Despite the validity of their arguments, the researchers recommended that the inclusion of spirituality in the workplace could be the subject of more research and empirical evaluations. For instance, prayer is considered to be a crucial aspect of spirituality for everyone. While there is limited empirical evidence on the influence of workplace prayer, anecdotal accounts indicate a positive association with corporate spirituality (Benefiel, 2005; Biberman and Tischler, 2008; Cavanagh and Hazen, 2008 as cited in Biberman and Tischler, 2008).

Additionally, research has shown connections between spirituality, religiosity, job satisfaction, and workers' performance (Gupta, 2013; Amaliah, 2011). However, there is still a significant gap in understanding the relationship between some constructs, such as spirituality and religiosity, and variables that predict job satisfaction and employee performance. To date, no study has examined the

relationship among all three constructs—spirituality, religiosity, and employee performance—in the present literature, highlighting the need for further investigation. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the moderating impact of spirituality and religiosity on employee performance and defining the categories of spirituality, faith, and religiosity, as well as explaining how PAQ and employee performance are related in this process.

The issue of whether incorporating or accommodating spiritual practices in businesses results in increased productivity or profitability is a complicated and controversial one. In their work, Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) describe the difficulties associated with measuring and ensuring the reliability of the connection between spirituality and performance. Some researchers argue that there may be ethical and moral quandaries related to the investigation of whether embracing spirituality in the workplace enhances organizational performance or profitability, while others assert that spirituality can enhance employees' performance.

Concerns have been raised about the use of spirituality as a managerial strategy to influence personnel by some scholars (Fernando, 2005; Brown, 2003; Cavanagh and Bandsuch, 2002; Mirvis, 1997). They argue that spirituality should not be employed as a managerial tool to improve financial success in enterprises but should be viewed as a means to an end in itself. Meanwhile, other academics suggest that spirituality can be used to enhance workers' performance. Notable scholars challenge those who study this topic to methodically and objectively explain how spirituality improves performance.

Several studies in the past decade have found links between workplace

spirituality and improved productivity and performance. Further investigation demonstrates that businesses with optional spirituality programs have had greater success and revenues. Nonetheless, there have been many debates and misunderstandings about the purpose and validity of "spirituality at work" and its connection to performance. While research on the relationship between spirituality and employee performance is becoming increasingly important, it has not yet been integrated and thoroughly examined. The next sub-section discusses family structures as an important non-work domain factor.

2.5.1c) Family Structures

Family is the first group in our lives to have a substantial impact on our values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (Giddens, 1984). Anthropologists now acknowledge that families can differ fundamentally depending on the values they view as important in different ways. Sociologist Frédérik Le Play (1875) left behind a body of work that Todd (1985) expanded upon to create a highly acclaimed typology of families that has been beneficial in various studies (Ling, 2002). Todd (1985) distinguished four different family structures based on whether or not children continue to live with their parents after their marriage and whether or not the parental estate is distributed evenly. The ideal nuclear family is egalitarian and liberal. While the authoritarian nuclear family exhibits the ideals of inequality and authority, the egalitarian nuclear family is characterized by the concepts of liberty and equality. The principles of equality and authority define the community family. All brothers are given the same inheritance rights and live with their parents in extended households.

However, given the increased blending of cultures and the globalization of

people, notable exceptions are likely to emerge (Ohmae, 1990). This shows that family structure should be viewed as an important non-work domain factor. The fundamental premise of this research is that the family structure, being part of the non-work domain, will significantly affect the efficiency of performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and employee performance.

Members of a family grouping (such as a family, organization, or community) display a certain amount of devotion to the group and, as a result, anticipate the group's assistance. Organizational form refers to "the precise model or framework within which transactions are conducted" in terms of starting new businesses (Steier, 1998, p. 512). Organizational structure matters and has a significant impact on a venture's ability to survive and succeed (Coase, 1937; Bradach and Eccles, 1989; Powell, 1990; Williamson, 1975, 1985; Stinchcombe, 1965). Because the family has historically represented a key type of social structure, the current study has chosen family structure (nuclear vs joint family structures) as a characteristic of non-work domain. In spite of this, prosocial behavior and family structure have a significant impact on employees' performance at work (Menges et al., 2017; Brehm and Self, 1989).

Additionally, the importance of family and prosocial incentives strengthens employees' commitment to looking out for their family members (McNeely and Meglino, 1994; Grant, 2007). The effect of contextual background of employees on how they perceive and understand activities from HR can be explained and attributed in different ways (Kitt and Sanders, 2021). For instance, past studies have looked at some aspects of family structure as it relates to income, career success, career

advancement (Tharenou, 1999), marital status, parental status, sibling status and spousal employment status of family structures (Manchester, Leslie, and Dahm, 2019). Recent study by Manchester (2019) revealed that a greater number of dependents on a single breadwinner, badly impacts performance of employee. In recent years, there has been a shift from households with two earners to dual-breadwinner households where both partners possess comparable levels of human capital investment and earnings (Benson, 2015; Costa and Kahn, 2000).

Bear and Glick (2017) suggest similar logic apply for employees at individual level, whose number of dependents at home are more as compared to few, struggle more for performing better, as they are overburdened with responsibilities. Additionally, the neoclassical economics theory of the family (Becker 1981, 1985) implies that investments in human capital may differ depending on the breadwinner role. Those who serve as the primary breadwinner tend to have higher levels of human capital compared to dual-breadwinners, secondary-breadwinners, and unmarried workers. This is due to their longer career expectations and more available time for work, enabling them to make continued investments. Conversely, secondary-breadwinners are likely to invest less in human capital as they have shorter career expectations and fewer opportunities for ongoing investment. This may result in their relatively lower job performance compared to primary-breadwinners.

Despite the academic rationale, it is plausible to assume that family structure, being a highly personal factor, has the potential to impact employees' behaviors and outcomes (Grant and Berry, 2011). Nevertheless, the authors noted a lack of research in this domain, as only a few scholarly articles have been published on this subject

(Dumas and Sanchez-Burks, 2015; Menges et al., 2017).Further, the theoretical underpinning of non-work domain factors with HRM System Strength, HR content and employees' performance has been established through Job-demand resource theory. According to the JD-R assumptions, job demands, and resources can be used to understand, explain, and predict how well employees will perform on the job, with job demands being able to lead to burnout (or other undesirable outcomes) and job resources being able to inspire employees to engage in their work and affect performance and positive outcomes (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014).

Job demands are the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of a job that require continuous effort or skills and result in physiological and psychological costs (Demerouti and Bakker, 2011, p. 2). These demands are often associated with positive performance evaluations (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Job resources, on the other hand, are factors related to a job such as support or control that aid in achieving work goals, reduce the physiological and psychological costs of fulfilling job demands, foster personal growth and learning, and typically have positive connections with work engagement and performance. This is exemplified by vigor, dedication, and work absorption (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004), according to Demerouti and Bakker (2011).

Previous research has suggested a link between family structure, income, and employee career success (Schneer and Reitman, 1993), as well as career advancement (Tharenou, 1999). Additionally, some studies have highlighted the role of family structures in restricting success-enhancing experiences (Mayerhofer, Meyer, Schiffinger and Schmidt, 2008; Kirchmeyer, 2006; Eddleston, Baldridge and Veiga,

2004) that can have an impact on employee performance. More recently, gender differences and race are also studied, that impact family structure associated with different breadwinner roles that affect employee performance outcomes (Manchester, 2018). But interestingly I found no study that directly relate the performance appraisal quality, and the effect of family structures that is critical to be studied for understanding why and how employees' performance get impacted by appraisal ratings and how HR process play a role in this regard.

The aim of this study is to examine how non-work factors influence the correlation between performance appraisal and employee performance, consistent with previous research. Utilizing the JD-R theory, the research examines how individual job resources and demands, including family obligations, energy, and time resources, can impact job performance. Family responsibilities can deplete an employee's personal job resources and negatively impact their performance, while job resources like family support, religiosity, and spirituality can positively influence performance. The study found that demands from the workplace and home were more strongly linked to adverse interactions, while job and personal resources were more strongly associated with positive interaction. The presence of four different dimensions of work/non-work interaction was confirmed. The next section presents the research literature regarding employees' performance.

2.6   Employee performance

Work performance refers to a set of actions or behaviors that align with the goals of an organization, as stated by Campbell (1990). Robbins (2003) characterizes

work performance as the result of all work-related procedures and undertakings performed within a company.Whereas, performance, according to Dessler (2000), is a job achievement that involves comparing work results to a predetermined benchmark. Performance is correlated with quantity, quality, punctuality, attendance, efficiency, and effectiveness of work, suggested by Mathis and Jackson (2009). For all organizations, achieving a high level of performance is essential since it directly correlates with the development of an organization that can survive itself (Burney, Henle, and Widener, 2009).

According to several researchers (Hassan, 2016; Breuer, Ahmad, and Salzmann, 2018; Mira, Choong, and Thim, 2019) employee performance is a more general indicator that can encompass productivity, quality, consistency, and other factors. In contrast, performance measures might include outcomes, criterion-based behaviors, relative (Normative) metrics, education and training concepts and tools, such as management and leadership training, to develop the essential abilities and mindsets for performance management (Richard, 2002). Employee performance measures are the tools the company uses to monitor its operations and assess how well its objectives are being met (Cheng, 2008). According to Ricardo (2001), there are many different ways to measure performance, including employee and management behavior that is focused on achieving results, as well as metrics for training concepts and tools, education, as well as management and leadership development, which are the fundamental skills and mindsets required to boost performance within an organization. According to Salleh et al. (2011), productivity and time can be used to compare employee performance to organizational

performance standards. Measures including productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, quality, adherence to work ethics and rules, job satisfaction, and profitability can all be taken into account when evaluating an employee's performance (Nassazi, 2013).

Performance is a complicated concept to describe and conceptualize. Instead of using the term "performance," Guest (1997) prefers to use the term "outcomes." He makes a distinction between three types of outcomes, organizational outcomes, HRM outcomes including (employees' attitudes and behavior) and financial outcomes. Dyer and Reeves (1995) classified outcomes into four categories, namely, those linked with human resources (HR), organizational and financial results (Paauwe and Boselie, 2005; Boselie et al., 2005).

According to Wright et al. (2003), some HR results are more closely connected to HR practices, and the impact of HR practices on distant outcomes is accomplished by their effect on intermediate outcomes. Furthermore, Guest (1997) explained that particular HRM results are frequently utilized as mediating variables that fill the "black box" between HR practices and organizational outcomes. Therefore, employee performance is regarded as an intermediate outcome or HR-related outcome to clarify the "black box" area. The meaning of employee performance has broadened from a narrow emphasis on job responsibilities to a more comprehensive understanding of work obligations in response to changing organizational environments (Griffin et al., 2007).

According to Peters et al. (2014), job performance outcomes can be grouped into three categories: task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and counterproductive work behaviors. However, job performance is a complex

phenomenon that includes behavioral outcomes (Babin and Boles, 1996), as defined by Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, and Sager (1993). Williams and Anderson (1991) state that job performance refers to the behaviors necessary to fulfill work responsibilities. Alessandri and Vecchione (2012) and Borman and Motowidlo (1993) describe employee performance as the degree to which employees effectively perform the job activities listed in their job description (JD). Moreover, other studies (Griffin et al., 2007; Katz and Kahn, 1978; Jiang, Lepak, Han, Hong, Kim, and Winkler, 2012) have highlighted other terms, including "work attitude" (Edgar and Geare, 2005), "in-role behavior performance" (Tremblay, Cloutier, Simard, Chênevert, and Vandenberghe, 2010; Kehoe and Wright, 2013; Snape and Redman, 2010), and "work role performance" (Staufenbiel and König, 2010).

Katz and Kahn (1978) have placed emphasis on in-role performance as a concept of job performance in recent years. In-role performance refers to an employee's core task behavior, which is based on expected reactions that have a significant impact on the organization's effectiveness (Katz and Kahn, 1978; Thibaut and Kelley, 1986). The idea discussed here is closely connected to the concepts of task performance (Johnson, 2003) and job role behavior (Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez, 1998). Griffin et al. (2007) coined the term "work role performance" to refer to the critical behaviors that organizations prioritize to achieve effectiveness. The objective of this thesis is to investigate job performance as an HR-related outcome that encompasses in-role behavior performance, to offer evidence-based proximal outcomes.

The performance of an employee is defined by their in-role behavior, which

comprises the behavior necessary to complete fundamental tasks (Chughtai, 2008). This definition involves three forms of individual task responses: task proficiency, task adaptability, and task proactivity. However, in-role behavior has not been given the same level of attention as extra-role performance, which encompasses organizational citizenship behavior (Rai, Ghosh, Chauhan, and Singh, 2018). Griffin et al. (2007) identified task proficiency, task adaptability, and task proactivity as three job role characteristics that are linked to the performance construct. They argued that these three characteristics establish a system of interdependence within the social context, where an individual's behavior influences the effectiveness of others, including groups, teams, and the organization as a whole, and dynamically links the organizational behavioral processes.

The job of employees entails not only fulfilling the responsibilities specified in their job descriptions, but also exhibiting behaviors that are not mandatory but can benefit the organization. These behaviors can be categorized into three job-related aspects, as identified by Griffin et al. (2007). The initial factor is task proficiency that refers to fulfilling the required tasks or actions indicating an employee's adherence to their individual role's expectations and demands. This involves ensuring the precise execution of essential responsibilities. Fundamental task proficiency gauges the efficiency of individuals in performing their formal job responsibilities (Crant, 2000; Parker, Williams, and Turner, 2006), highlighting their effectiveness.

In addition, task performance appears to have a motivating effect on individuals, satisfying their need for competence and bolstering their confidence in their abilities and potential (Sackett and Dreher, 1982; Deci, 1971; Locke and

Latham, 2013). Task proficiency, according to Boon and Kalshoven (2014), also promotes teamwork behavior and enhances the ability to acquire additional resources (Stout, Salas, and Carson, 1994). Griffin, Parker, and Mason (2010) argued that effective task performance contributes to the accomplishment of expected work requirements, such as those outlined in job descriptions and within predictable environments. An individual must consider how well they perform the tasks they know they must undertake to succeed in their role within the organization. Second, the term "task-adaptability" pertains to the capacity to manage, adjust to, and facilitate change, including an employee's ability to adapt to new tools, processes, or procedures in critical activities (Griffin et al., 2007). Griffin et al. (2010) later observed that task-adaptability necessitates positive responses to unforeseen and unique circumstances, making it particularly effective when uncertainty is high and work requirements cannot be anticipated.

Task-adaptability, according to Griffin et al. (2007), lies at the core of task proficiency and task proactivity, effectively dealing with uncertainties arising from external changes. Under moderate uncertainty levels, employees display passive responses to changes in their environment. The third aspect, task proactivity, refers to the extent to which employees take self-directed and task-oriented actions to initiate or anticipate changes in their work environment, such as improving core activities (Griffin et al., 2007; Parker et al., 2006; Crant, 2000). Anticipatory action, according to Grant and Ashford (2008), refers to proactive behavior that aligns with predetermined procedures or goals to influence oneself and the surrounding environment. Task-proactivity emphasizes self-initiated change, as per Griffin et al.

70

(2010), which leads to better employee behavior in unexpected work scenarios. However, proactive workers tend to perform better than their counterparts only in their primary duties, such as pleasing immediate managers (DuBrin, 2013). In summary, this thesis posits that job performance consists of in-role behavior performance, which encompasses three job aspects, namely task proficiency, task adaptability, and task proactivity.

Employee performance, according to Guest (2017), is a crucial predictor of the effectiveness of HR practices that affect organizational performance. However, HRM theory and research models tend to prioritize measures to improve performance, with employee concerns taking a back seat. As such, researchers and practitioners must consider factors that influence employee performance, including their attitudes, beliefs, and actions, to understand how they contribute to achieving organizational goals (Atatsi, Stoffers, and Kil, 2019; Motyka, 2018). Grant, Parker, and Collins (2009) highlight the need to investigate supervisors' feedback and perceptions of employees to determine whether their proactive, adaptive, and proficient behavior, accompanied by self-serving values, is less valuable or whether it offers less constructive contributions.

Various earlier research has scrutinized the connection between performance measurement systems and organizational performance concerning employees' performance and performance appraisal quality. These studies have explored how performance management systems affect employees' performance (Leach-Lopez et al., 2008; Lawler, 2003; Appelbaum et al., 2013). However, there is inadequate literature on the link between employees' perception of performance appraisal quality

and their performance.

Past studies on the relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) system strength and employees' performance have mainly centered on the content perspective. They have focused on how individual HRM activities or sets of practices influence outcomes (Jackson et al., 2014; Jiang et al., 2012). Nevertheless, a few scholars have redirected their focus towards the process features of HRM systems and how their effectiveness affects outcomes and performance (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Ostroff and Bowen, 2000). Despite this shift, limited research has explored the correlation between HRM system effectiveness and employee performance.

The intersection of non-work domain factors and employee performance is a nascent area of research. While non-work domain factors are acknowledged as an explanatory construct in management, including international operations management (Prasad et al., 2001; Pagell et al., 2005; Erthal and Marques, 2018), their impact on employee performance is poorly understood. The literature highlights the contextual factors that contribute to successful management control and performance, including teamwork, leadership, and resource availability (de Waal and Counet, 2009; Bourne et al., 2000; Henri, 2006; Bititci et al., 2006; Franco-Santos and Bourne, 2005; Williams et al., 2019). However, there is a dearth of understanding regarding the impact of non-work domain factors, such as family structure, spirituality, and religiosity, on employee performance.

While some simplistic hypotheses can be drawn from the literature, the relationship between non-work domain factors and employee performance is

complex and not fully understood. Therefore, understanding the impact of these contextual factors is crucial to maintain relevance in this field. To improve comprehension of how contextual factors impact employee performance and contribute to the wider body of knowledge on management theory and practice, this study analyzes cases in two distinct country contexts. Previous research has investigated this issue (Pagell et al., 2005; Weingarten et al., 2011; Stiles, 2015; Lee Park and Paiva, 2018), but the current study aims to address the existing gap in research. The next section, 2.7, provides further elaboration on the study's context.

2.7 Asian context of the study

Boxall and Huo (2019) have suggested that the implementation of HRM processes varies across different international contexts. However, research on Pakistani and Chinese organizations is limited in the Western literature. Therefore, this study aims to provide a contextual contribution to the HRM process literature by conducting research within telecommunication organizations operating in Pakistan and China. The study will investigate the influence of HRM system strength, performance appraisal quality, and non-work domain factors on employee performance in both country contexts. Managing people in a global business context requires addressing disparities in cultural, social, and economic systems of interdependent regions and nations.

However, the majority of recent HRM studies have focused on the Western world, raising concerns about the applicability of this knowledge to other contexts. To address this gap, researchers have begun exploring how HR policies and practices

vary across countries in order to develop a truly international perspective on HRM. (Sanderson and Mujtaba, 2017; Adler and Gundersen, 2008; Scullion and Paauwe, 2004). Given the growing demand for taking context into account in HRM studies (Kaufman, 2013; Cooke 2018), this study, addresses this scarcity of research literature by undertaking research in a cross-country context, perspectives from Pakistan and China, to explore differences in employees' perceptions.

2.7.1 Pakistani context

The Telecommunication industry of Pakistan serves as the industry setting for the current study, which was selected through various brainstorming sessions. The sector has significantly contributed to the overall development of the economy and the service sector over the past twenty years. All working companies in the telecommunication sector of Pakistan were included in the research. PTCL was the first telecommunication company in Pakistan, providing telecom facilities to the population. Other cellular companies gradually initiated their businesses over time. The research selected the telecommunication organizations based on different rationales, including the sector's contribution to the country's gross domestic production and employment opportunities.

The telecommunication sector in Pakistan attracts a substantial amount of foreign direct investment, with over 6.5 billion dollars invested in the sector, as reported in the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority's Annual Report (2019-2020). The sector's revenues reached 488.7 billion Pakistani Rupees, showing a 3.96% growth in one year, as per the Economic Survey of Pakistan (EOP) 2019-2020 and PTA Annual Report (2019-2020).

Although the Telecommunication Industry of Pakistan encompasses Cellular operators, Fixed Local Loop (FLL) operators, and Wireless Local Loop (WLL) operators (PTA, 2012-2013), this study focused only on five cellular operators (Ali, Yilmaz, Safwan and Afzal, 2010). Since these organizations are overseen by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), the researcher presumed that their working conditions would be quite comparable due to 1) adhering to the same regulations, 2) offering similar products, 3) having similar cultures, 4) using comparable performance appraisal systems due to being in the same industry, 5) having competitive Employee Development (ED) measures, and 6) employing nearly identical compensation practices to withstand the intense competition (Imtiaz, Khan and Shakir, 2015).

In light of the remarkable progress witnessed in Pakistan's telecom sector, telecom organizations have embraced competitiveness of HRM practices (Marwat, Qureshi, and Ramay, 2006). To comprehend the expansion of HRM departments and managers' inclination towards grasping HRM System Strength, organizations from the telecom sector were selected. This was done with the aim of adopting and executing it in their organizations, as a step towards progress and achieving maximum profit.

The telecom industry in Pakistan is highly competitive, surpassing other industries in its intensity (Shoaib et al., 2009). Employees are viewed as a valuable asset with knowledge, making employee retention a key issue faced by telecom companies (Shoaib et al., 2009). Consequently, human capital development and other HR practices are crucial for managing the companies' infrastructure (Agbebi, 2018).

Organizations need to invest in HR practices to develop, manage, and retain employees, given the sector's growth in size and the increase in the number of employees, through documentation and administrative processes (Kotey and Slade, 2005). The telecom companies compete intensely to remain in business.

To investigate the relationship between employer and employee regarding HRM System Strength features and performance appraisal quality, it was deemed necessary to obtain a sample from large organizations with established and updated HRM systems. Given the technology-based nature of the telecom sector, which typically attracts IT-skilled individuals, effective HRM is essential in managing a diverse workforce (Panayotopoulou et al., 2007). Therefore, selecting organizations from the telecom sector is appropriate for this study.

2.7.2 Chinese context

The Chinese government faces persistent challenges in keeping the country connected to the global market, facilitating business and satisfying consumers. These challenges include keeping up with technological advancements, commercial activities, consumer needs, and surveillance (Triolo, 2020). In the past 30 years, China's telecommunications sector has undergone multiple reforms that aimed to promote liberalization and privatization (Warner and Nankervis, 2012). As of today, China has emerged as a significant market for communications worldwide. In 2019, China had over 850 million internet users, accounting for over 20% of all internet users globally, and generated more than 100 billion yuan in revenue for the telecommunications industry each month.

The study focuses on three state-controlled telecommunications service

operators dominating the Chinese market. Among these, China Mobile stands as the third-largest global telecom operator generating revenue of over 745 billion yuan in 2019 (Jaisal, 2020, Triolo, 2020). As of 2018, China boasts of the highest global mobile-cellular user base with over 1.6 billion subscriptions. China has been one of the top players in the production and deployment of 5G technology since its inception in 2019, with an estimated highest number of 5G connections by 2025 compared to industrialized nations in North America, Asia-Pacific, and Western Europe combined (Jaisal, 2020).

Even though HRM practices have a uniform impact on organizational performance, their actual influence can differ based on the cultural context. This aspect is under investigation in the cases of China and Pakistan. Additionally, it is crucial to explore HRM System Strength from a cross-cultural perspective as it has not been extensively studied. Previous research from China and the Netherlands has indicated that HRM System Strength in a particular country can affect the connection between sets of HRM practices and employee outcomes differently (Li et al., 2011; Sanders, Dorenbosch, and de Reuver, 2008).

According to Sanders et al. (2015), variations in the effect of HRM System Strength on employees' innovative behavior across countries can be attributed to differences in context. This is due to the influence of non-work-related factors, goals, and emotions on employee attitudes and behaviors (Hofstede, 1980; Taras, Kirkman, and Steel, 2010). Due to individual differences, there may be a significant gap between what an organization intends to achieve with its HRM practices and how employees perceive them in the workplace, both in China and Pakistan (Wright and

Nishii, 2013).

Additionally, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor's historic inflow of USD 46 billion in foreign direct investment highlights the need of researching organizational effectiveness in Pakistan and China for the benefit of bilateral trade. In this highly competitive market, public sector organizations must look to their human resource departments to create a sustainable competitive advantage. Future researchers may also take a qualitative or mixed-method approach to investigate the topic more thoroughly by looking at higher professionals.

Based on the reviewed literature and above-mentioned theories, the study's theoretical framework is presented in Figure 2.1.
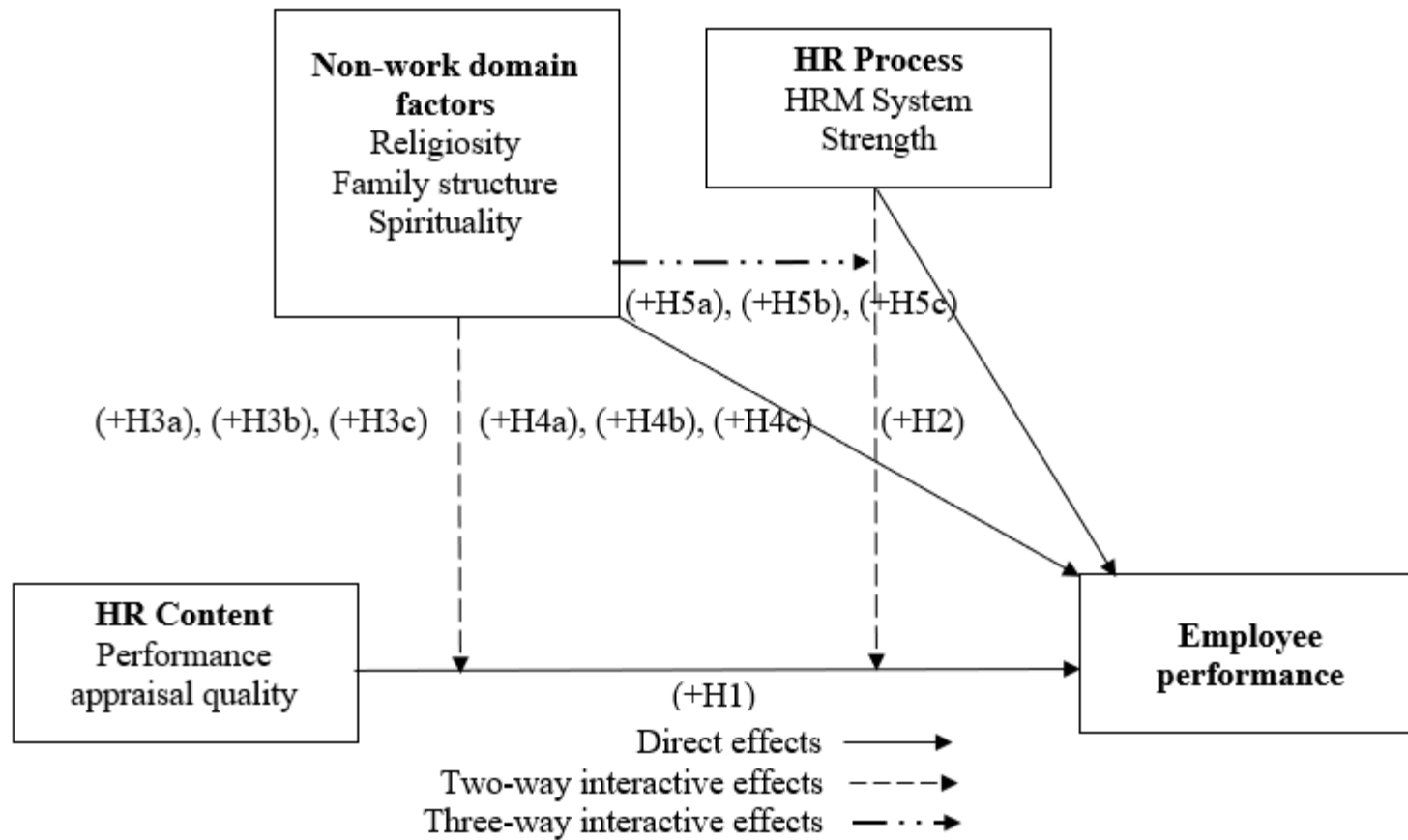
Figure 2.1: The theoretical framework of the study

2.8 Hypotheses Development

The relationships among the study variables that appear relevant to the current research is reflected in a conceptual framework demonstrated earlier in Figure 2.1. To test the relationships empirically, numerous hypotheses have been generated based on the review of pertinent literature. Based on research questions, subsequent hypotheses are proposed for this suggested research.

2.8.1   *Performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and employee performance*

The antecedent of improving employee performance, performance appraisal quality (PAQ), is defined by Bednall et al. (2014) in terms of openness, regularity, and clarity. It is an important HR practice that sets objectives and required behavior for achieving employee performance in terms of task efficiency, adaptability, and proactivity, as noted by DeNisi and Sonesh (2011) and DeNisi and Murphy (2017). As low-quality PA can lead to ineffectiveness, lower efficiency, and poorer performance, employees are more sensitive to the fairness and quality of PA (Curzi, Fabbri, and Pistoresi, 2020). Employees who perceive quality in their performance appraisal (PA) exhibit positive behaviors, such as increased job satisfaction, more innovative behavior, and improved work performance (Selvarajan, 2018; Bednall et al., 2014; Ikramullah et al., 2016). Encouraging an open feedback process (Selvarajan and Cloninger, 2012) can lead to the desired performance in terms of task efficiency, adaptability, and proactivity within the organization.

The quality of performance appraisal delivered by managers is significant in terms of HRM content (Macneil, 2001), as it has the potential to provide valuable

performance feedback to employees and help them perform more effectively. This is because managers implement the HR policies and procedures of the company and help the company achieve its strategic goals by overseeing the performance of specific team members, making them the primary point of contact between the company and its employees (Nankervis et al., 2005). One of the fundamental HR procedures is performance appraisal, which is typically done in a formal environment with the goals of improving employee performance, enabling better compensation and promotion decisions, and ultimately increasing organizational effectiveness (DeNisi and Sonesh, 2010). Managers may give regular informal feedback to workers outside of the office (Larson, 1989). However, the manner in which feedback is given will determine if performance appraisals are successful in accomplishing these goals (Hattie and Timperley, 2007).

Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) claimed that feedback is essential in promoting transparent communication and enhancing performance. According to Feys, Anseel, and Wille (2011), employees react positively to feedback when they understand the rating process. Participants in this study were asked to evaluate the quality of their managers' feedback based on the clarity, regularity, and openness of feedback, in accordance with the qualities of effective feedback (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Kluger and DeNisi, 1996), to examine the effect of high-quality performance appraisal on employee performance. Previous research has revealed that well-delivered feedback can boost performance. Furthermore, performance appraisal quality as perceived by employees can function as a vital signal from managers to employees, providing a clear and complete picture of

performance expectations (Bednall et al., 2014), in line with signaling theory (Connelly et al., 2011) and the HR process approach to HRM (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Ostroff and Bowen, 2016; Sanders and Yang, 2016). Therefore, it is argued that defining clear performance expectations will enhance employee performance.

Thus, our first hypothesis is formulated as:

H1: Performance appraisal quality is positively related to employee performance.

Furthermore, I contend that the HRM process influences how feedback is utilized to improve employee performance. Specifically, I propose that performance evaluation is most effective when it is integrated into a robust HRM system. Kelley's attribution theory (1967, 1973) identifies three elements of a "strong" HRM system: (1) the uniqueness of HR practices (i.e., they are visible, understandable, and perceived as legitimate), (2) the consistency of HR practices (i.e., they are presented in a consistent manner across different channels and over time), and (3) agreement on HR practices (i.e., policy makers agree on the necessity and purpose of the practices). According to Bowen and Ostroff (2004), employees' perceptions of these three elements contribute to a favorable organizational climate. This type of environment, akin to Mischel's (1973) strong situation, promotes a shared, clear understanding of the behaviors that are rewarded and supported by the organization.

Studies have utilized the covariation principle to explain that employees who perceive HRM systems as distinct, consistent, and consensual are more likely to comprehend what is expected of them, resulting in increased organizational commitment (Messersmith, Patel, and Lepak, 2011; Sanders et al., 2008) and job satisfaction (Nishii et al., 2008). Favorable attributions about HRM have been linked

to better employee performance outcomes (Nishii et al., 2008). However, it is unclear to what extent HRM affects employees' adaptive, efficient, and proactive behavior. Furthermore, the majority of HRM studies have been cross-sectional and evaluated within a single period, making it uncertain whether perceptions of an HRM system can transform attitudes and behavior over time.

My proposition is that comprehending HRM will lead employees to act on appraisals more willingly. I expect that high-quality performance appraisals will enhance employee performance, and the HRM system's effectiveness may indicate the company's appreciation for its personnel's proactivity, adaptability, and efficiency (Blandford, 2000). When HR procedures are distinctive, proactive activities may be recognized by employees. Similarly, if performance evaluations are closely integrated with other HRM practices, employees may be more likely to act on them (Rebore, 2004). Alternatively, when HRM policy makers and managers are in agreement about the necessity of continuous improvement, employees may focus on improving their skills to enhance job performance. Nevertheless, the question of whether perceptions of HRM systems can affect attitudes and behavior over time remains unclear due to the cross-sectional nature of most HRM studies, which only measure within a single time period.

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) suggest that moderation is the crucial mechanism through which HR strength affects outcomes. However, there is limited research exploring the role of employees' perceptions of HRM as a moderator in the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance (Kehoe and Wright, 2013). Thus, in this study, I propose a model that considers HR

system strength as a boundary condition or moderator in the relationship between HR content and employee performance.

To summarize, this thesis suggests that the effectiveness of performance appraisals in improving employee performance can be maximized by considering the moderation of HR process characteristics such as distinctiveness, consensus, and consistency. The interdependence between HR content and process emphasizes the importance of addressing both factors to achieve optimal employee performance (Katou and Budhwar, 2014). Therefore, I propose an additional hypothesis regarding the interaction between HRM system strength and performance appraisal quality as follows:

H2: HRM System Strength moderates the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when HRM System Strength is high rather than low.

2.8.2 *The moderating effect of non-work domain factors*

Khan and Jianguo (2018) in their work illustrate this by exemplifying that family values in both Chinese and Pakistani contexts are strong, but they are varied in many perspectives i.e., norms, family structure, customs and religion. The present study will expand research beyond commonly studied cultural dimensions of Hofstede by taking three non-work domain contextual factors as discussed earlier. Additionally, scholars like Farndale and Sanders (2017) suggest that there is a need to explore the construct of HRM System Strength from a cross-cultural perspective, as limited research has been conducted in this area. Despite this, some studies (Cafferkery et al., 2018; Bentzen, 2018; Ostroff and Bowen, 2016) indicate that HRM System Strength may be a crucial factor that warrants further investigation.

This proposed relationship has explored contextual aspects at individual level between two countries, i.e., Pakistan and China. Looking at the contextual differences of HR content-performance relationship, and how HR process will further intensify this relationship. In this regard, it is observed that with growing Chinese economic and political influence on the international forum and its close ties with Pakistan, there is a need for better understanding of Chinese workplace context. It is for this purpose that this study has examined how employees in these two countries at individual level perceive HRM System Strength and see how it influences performance of employees in an effective way. This study has taken the three factors of non-work domain as religiosity, spirituality and family structure.

The foundation of performance appraisal is based on signaling theory, which deals with communication both inside and outside organizations (Bergh, Connelly, Kitchen, and Shannon, 2014; Connelly et al., 2011; Highhouse, Thornberry, and Little, 2007). When managers provide feedback with clarity, regularity and openness it makes employees work more efficiently. Whereas further JD-R theory elaborates in conjunction how non-work domain factors play a substantial role in defining the way employees in their organization interpret communication flows and messages in their country context and how they perceive these factors as a resource for themselves. For example, as discussed in above sections, the purpose of appraisal practice is to provide feedback to employees. Now the perceptions of performance appraisal differ both in Pakistani and Chinese countries due to contextual effects of non-work domain factors.

For instance, appraisal ratings for Chinese employees are more based on

seeking grades for improvements while in Pakistan it solely depends on the rewards and bonuses they will get in return (Kashif et al., 2016). However, it could be subject to certain exceptions depending upon changing times and context bound scenarios (Fachrunnisa and Adhiatma, 2014). This research assumes that religiosity in this regard plays a significant role for improving employee's performance. Confucianism has an impact on the majority of Chinese people to some extent. Confucianism is not, strictly speaking, a religion (Rottman, Zhu, Wang, Schillaci, Clark, and Kelemen, 2017). But in China, where Confucianism achieves status as a religion with equal religious freedom and spirituality, it has evolved and controlled people's minds as an official concept for more than two thousand years.

This is where Confucianism transcends religion (Rottman et al, 2017). Thus, it is presumed that although religion is not openly practiced in China, but still, they consider it an ethical belief which could affect their moral values in performing their work positively. While in Pakistani context, religiosity is ingrained in Muslim employees, and they practice it as well as use in all matters of life and work prominently (Mohd Dali, Yousafzai, and Abdul Hamid, 2018). When employees do their work with a motivation which comes from their moral values, beliefs and rituals it becomes a resource for an employee, which make them perceive their appraisal feedback with more clarity will enhance their performance more effectively.

Weaver and Agle (2002) also asserted that religiosity influences on human attitudes and behavior, in fact it influences the potential of one's behavior about right and wrong. If I look at Pakistan, the most prominent religion followed is Islam. Islamic religiosity and spirituality worldviews encourage stewardship, support and

cooperation because for Muslims their religion significantly impacts their relationships at work (Farrukh et al., 2021; Machouche and Bensaid, 2015; Nurtjahjo, and Rusdi, 2018; Ancut, and Mahadevan, 2017; Possner, 2015). Contrarily, Chinese employees don't follow any religion mostly but still their ethical believes make them think to work more meaningfully and perceive their feedback as regular exercise which make them perform proactively. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H3a: Religiosity moderates the positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when religiosity is high rather than low.

The second factor being investigated is family structure, which is relevant to both China and Pakistan due to their collectivist cultural orientation. Shockley et al. (2017) noted that family demands are viewed as normal rather than burdensome in collectivist cultures, leading to a greater acceptance of tension between work and family. However, Oishi et al. (2015) suggested that collectivist cultures may experience greater family demands due to their focus on extended family, which could increase the likelihood of conflict. Thus, according to JDR theory family structure as a non-work domain factor could be act as a demand as well as a resource for an employee in the form of motivation as well as a responsibility (Babar et al., 2022). Studies have also established a connection between family structure and business outcomes, indicating that those with fewer family responsibilities tend to receive higher salaries and experience greater mobility (Stockley et al, 2017; Stroh, Brett, and Reilly, 1992). Accordingly, employees who belonged to nuclear FS tended to perform better because they had to support fewer family members. Further, using

signaling theory (Spence, 1973; Stiglitz, 2002), this research builds on the argument that the quality (i.e., clarity, regularity and openness) of feedback positively enhances performance of employees who belongs to nuclear family structure because psychologically they face less pressures from family as compared to employees who reside in joint family structure. Previous research by Schwartz et al., (2012) reported that employees who belonged to joint FS were more sensitive to the feedback they received than those who belonged to nuclear FS. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H3b: Family structure moderates the positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when family structure is nuclear rather than joint.

The third factor of spirituality is developed for a deeper understanding of how spirituality plays a role at the workplace as a non-work domain factor, and specifically how innate consciousness is used in practice and implications on overall employees and organizational performance (Osman- Gani, Hashim and Ismail, 2013). Spirituality at the workplaces has the potential to deal with undesirable issues that can have an effect on the wellbeing of employees (Mitroff, 2003) and always considered a personal matter. It has been asserted that any organization seeking to achieve a healthy balance between work and life must now include spirituality in the workplace (Cavanaugh, 1999; Mitroff and Denton, 1999a).

If the managers are able to deal with this workplace point of view in an acceptable manner, it could increase performance and productivity (Milliman et al., 2003). Confucianism has an impact on the majority of Chinese people to some extent (Rottman, Zhu, Wang, Schillaci, Clark, and Kelemen, 2017). The religious idea of Confucianism is a potential and strength during the process in which a person

transcends himself (Weiming, 1999). Furthermore, in Chinese society some other Confucian values have played an important role in managing people. For example, see Yuan (2013) loyalty (zhong), benevolence (ren), mianzi (face) and guanxi (personal connections). These values fundamentally affect social interaction within organizations.

On the other hand, Pakistani employees perceive that through a deeper experience of consciousness, spirituality can help people develop their intuitive skills (Vaughan, 1989, cited in Agor, 1989). Almost universally, prayer is a crucial aspect of spirituality that helps people feel as though they are making the correct choices. Spirituality also serves as a personal resource to help people make their work more meaningful. Even if there is a dearth of empirical data on the impact of prayer in workplaces, anecdotal evidence suggests that it has a good relationship with spirituality in corporate activities. (Biberman and Tischler, 2008; Cavanagh and Hazen, 2008; Benefiel, 2005). According to McGee and Delbecq (2003), they find prayer helpful as it enables them to utilize their mental and emotional abilities to the fullest potential. Thus, it can be argued when employees receive feedback from their managers with clarity, regularity and openness, spirituality strengthens this effect and ultimately enhances performance of employees. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H3c: Spirituality moderates the positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when spirituality is high rather than low.

2.8.3 Relationships between non-work domain factors, HRM System Strength and employee performance

The focus of this research is to examine the impact of non-work related factors

89

and the strength of the HRM system on the association between performance appraisal quality and employee performance. Theoretical foundations include Kelley's attribution theory and signaling theory, which explain why individuals attribute behavior to these factors and address communication within organizations. The JDR theory elaborates on how non-work domain factors shape employees' interpretation of communication flows related to HRM processes. Non-work domain factors are crucial for providing employees with a shared understanding of valued behaviors. This study examines how family structures, religiosity, and spirituality moderate the effects of HRM System Strength on employee performance and explores contextual differences between Pakistan and China.

Despite its recognized significance, cross-country differences remain under-explored in management and organization studies (Schwartz, 2014). Nadeem et.al (2018), Devinney and Hohberger (2017) and Kirkman et al. (2016) have argued that revisiting conceptualizations of context is helpful, not only to remind ourselves to focus on cultural definitions and measurement but also to look at East Asian/Confucian (China, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan) and Southeast Asian (Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand) countries to look for their contextual differences (Hofstede and Minkow, 2011). As, Farndale and Sanders, (2017) encouraged researchers to do research on for instance, countries high on collectivism and individualism.

But for this study, both collectivist countries to dig down individual level orientations as the basis of contextual differences. Unsurprisingly, Pakistani and Chinese country clusters are differentiated on the basis of communication barriers,

ideology, customs, rituals, religion and family structures (Yin and Zhu, 2017). For example, variations in family structures across different countries may act as either a job demand or a resource in their respective contexts. When HR practices are perceived as an investment in employees that enhances job performance, it sends a clear positive message. This is important in understanding the impact of HR practices, as different country contexts may influence the interpretation of these practices (Connelly et al., 2011; Stiglitz, 2002; DeNsi, 2017). According to Sanders et al (2018) in avoiding uncertainty, specific country contexts adopt rules for mitigating ambiguities inherent in their systems which might foster as a demand rather than a resource in developing new solutions (Xiao and Cooke, 2018).

Therefore, the situational strength perspective suggests that the employee's perceptions and comprehension of HRM System Strength can be impacted by non-work domain factors. When applied appropriately, these factors can improve employee outcomes (Farndale and Sanders, 2017). According to the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) theory, family structures can function both as a resource and a demand in reinforcing the link between HRM System Strength and employee performance. It could be argued that HRM System Strength is present to provide clarity of HR messages, and when family structure is nuclear than it seems like a motivation to do work for employee's family members with less responsibilities which positively enhances employee performance (Björkman and Welch, 2015; Li, Qin, Zhang, Jiang, and Gao, 2015). While on the other hand, when employees belong to a joint family structure it is kind of a pressurizing factor for employees and could affect the perceptions of HRM System Strength in terms of clarity of HR messages

when employee is psychologically faces a lot of challenges which could affect employee's proactivity, adaptivity and task efficiency. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H4a: Family structure moderates the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when family structure is nuclear rather than joint.

In the JD-R model, psychological factors play a vital role, but there is limited research on the significance of religion and spirituality in shaping employees' job motivation and purpose (Abu Bakar et al., 2016; Bakker and Dermotti 2007; Lin, Hong, Xiao and Lian 2020). Nevertheless, research suggests that religion and spirituality can imbue work with meaning and serve as a source of inspiration for employees (Lynn, Naughton and VanderVeen 2009). This aligns with Islamic teachings (Braam and Koeing 2019) and findings that Chinese employees find work meaningful and motivating (Chang, Rui, and Wu, 2021). Moreover, spirituality can contribute to a deeper understanding of work, positively impacting performance (Da Silva and Siqueira, 2010).

Several studies have investigated how spirituality affects management and performance. For example, Li et al. (2011) explored the moderating role of the yin yang philosophy, while Lane (2008) examined how four spiritual factors impact uncertainty management. Because non-work domain factors play a significant role in shaping employee perceptions and behavior (Babar et al., 2021; Kitt, 2021), this study aims to investigate how religiosity and spirituality moderate the relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance in China and Pakistan. Thus, this study builds on the argument in accordance with attribution theory and following signaling mechanisms when employees perceive their HR messages in distinctive,

consistent and consensual manner, spirituality further makes the relationship stronger for those employees who are spiritually motivated and find their work more meaningful, thus ultimately improving performance.

H4b: Spirituality moderates the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when spirituality is high rather than low.

The concept of religiosity has been found to empower individuals to discover purpose in their work (Kashif et al., 2017; Gallego-Alvarez et al., 2020; Hart and Brady, 2005; Nadeem and Mumtaz, 2018). This unique perspective enables employees to interpret their work experiences, which can influence their performance efficiency, proactivity, and adaptivity (Granqvist, Mikulincer, and Shaver, 2010; Obeidat et al., 2016; Kearns and Tyler, 2020; Bello-Pintado and Garces-Galdeano, 2019). However, monitoring innate dispositional factors can be difficult due to information uncertainty and asymmetry, which can signal to employees that their employer is trying to control or manipulate them (Lewchuk, Stewart, and Yates, 2001; Bergh et al., 2014; Appelbaum et al., 2000).

As a result, employees may interpret HR messages differently based on their individual contexts (Connelly et al., 2011; Stiglitz, 2002). Therefore, following Kelley's attribution theory and signaling mechanisms, the relationship between performance and HR messages is strengthened when employees perceive the messages consistently and collectively. Moreover, religiosity further enhances this relationship for employees who practice their religious values, beliefs, and customs, which ultimately improves their performance. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H4c: Religiosity moderates the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when

religiosity is high rather than low.

The literature suggests that non-work domain factors such as religiosity, spirituality, and family structure are likely to moderate the relationship between employee's individual level perceptions and HRM System Strength, which can further enhance the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance. Based on this prediction, the following section delves into the three-way interactive effects of PAQ, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors on employee performance.

2.8.4   Three-way interactive effects of PAQ, HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors

The potential impact of PAQ, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors on employees' performance is dependent on their interaction effects. While prior studies have focused on individual factors, this research examined the three-way interactive effects of religiosity, family structures, and spirituality to build on single antecedent models. According to the JD-R model proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2017), meaningful work is a psychological state that motivates employees. Thus, assuming responsibility for work-related outcomes from a religious perspective inspires employees and enhances self-awareness, both of which have a positive impact on performance. Although psychological factors are essential in the JD-R model, there is little scientific evidence to support the notion that religion affects how individuals perceive their job's meaning and motivation.

Nonetheless, it is argued that religiosity enhances the significance of work and motivates employees to perform well. Religious teachings promote inner strength

and personal identity formation that help individuals find meaning in their work. Religion provides a unique lens through which employees can interpret their daily work events, giving them significance. For example, employees who frequently demonstrate religious behaviors and attitudes at work also attend worship services more frequently, consistent with Islamic religious teachings in Pakistan. These religious convictions influence employees' pursuit of meaning and keep them motivated. Those who view their religiosity as a strength are more likely to find significance in their profession, allowing them to overcome workplace challenges. Employees' spiritual resources, such as spirituality, also drive them to understand open HR procedures. Therefore, it is anticipated that religion will show how perceived HRM System Strength affects PAQ and employee performance. Thus, following hypotheses are formulated as:

H5a: There is a three- way interactive relationship between performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and religiosity, on the one hand, and employee performance, on the other. The positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance will be stronger when both religiosity and HRM System Strength are high.

As per the JD-R model by Bakker and Demerouti (2017), meaningful work contributes to specific psychological states like job motivation and meaning. Hence, the notion that spiritual principles have a positive impact on individual well-being and job performance is intriguing (Milliman, 1994). According to Harrington et al. (2001), employees experience a sense of fulfillment at work when their spiritual values align with the organization's. To foster spirituality in the workplace,

understanding its components precisely is necessary. Despite the importance of psychological factors in the JD-R model, limited empirical evidence exists to support the role of spirituality in assessing work meaningfulness (Abu Bakar, Cooke, and Muenjohn, 2016; Lin, Hong, Xiao, and Lian, 2020).

As Lynn, Naughton, and VanderVeen (2009) suggest, spirituality can help individuals find meaning in their work and inspire them to perform well, based on their inherent values and ethics (Braam and Koeing, 2019). For example, spirituality enables individuals to express their unique personalities and give their work meaning (Hart and Brady, 2005; Kashif et al., 2017; Gallego-Alvarez et al., 2020). Religion can also have an impact on job performance as it provides a special perspective through which individuals can understand their daily work events (Granqvist, Mikulincer, and Shaver, 2010; Kearns and Tyler, 2020). In the Pakistani and Chinese contexts, these beliefs are practiced with unique contextual settings (Usman et al., 2017).

Hence, this research proposes that workers who perceive spirituality as a strength are more likely to seek meaning in their job, which enhances their motivation to comprehend HR communications, such as feedback with distinct, consistent, and consensual attributes. When employees perceive spirituality as a personal resource, it reinforces the mutual impact of PAQ and HRM System Strength in understanding transparent HR practices. As a result, spirituality is predicted to demonstrate the influence of perceived HRM System Strength in providing PAQ and improving employee performance. According to the situational strength perspective, it is hypothesized that spirituality can affect employee perceptions and understanding of

HRM System Strength, under appropriate conditions, and strengthen the relationship between PAQ and employee performance (Farndale and Sanders, 2017). Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H5b: There is a three‑ way interactive relationship between performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and spirituality, on the one hand, and employee performance, on the other. The positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance will be stronger when both spirituality and HRM System Strength are high.

Continuing the same line of reasoning of JD-R theory and signaling theory the underlying mechanisms which enhance employee's performance by considering the psychological aspects of job demands and resources. Managers when conduct performance appraisal by undertaking quality dimensions in conjunction with clarity of communication will positively influence their performance. Existing literature suggests that performance appraisal if not delivered with quality dimensions by managers will become the cause of exploiting employees and have the consequence of less effective performance (Sanders et al., 2008; DeNisi et al., 2017). Research has established that family is a central source of meaning in life in the Chinese cultural context (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2012; Ryff and Singer, 1998).

It is highlighted that in the Chinese cultural context, employees consider their nuclear family as a strong, cohesive group for whom they have to fulfil their needs happily, and they remain motivated to perform their work duties. While in the Pakistani culture, employees consider FS as a job demand (i.e., as responsibility) for fulfilling their family needs, and sometimes they consider it a job resource (i.e., a motivation) which makes the PAQ-performance relationship weaker in their practical lives. For the current study, family structure is considered as a personal resource, in

China and Pakistan, which is the type of the family structure as joint or nuclear (Rothbard, Phillips, and Dumas, 2005).

The evaluation of employee performance is a crucial practice to enhance organizational performance (Kundu and Gahlawat, 2018; Bello-Pintado and Garces-Galdeano, 2019; Vermeeren, 2017). However, employees may feel psychologically pressured when they consider their non-work domain factors as a demand. On the other hand, these factors can serve as a resource if they are used as a motivation to perform well. Thus, according to the situational strength perspective, the family structure effect can influence employee perceptions and understanding of HRM System Strength and amplify the relationship between HRM content and employee outcomes, provided that it is applied under appropriate conditions (Farndale and Sanders, 2017). Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H5c: There is a three‑ way interactive relationship between performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and family structures, on the one hand, and employee performance, on the other. The positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance will be strengthened when family structures are nuclear and HRM System Strength are high.

2.9   Chapter summary

This chapter drew the past results regarding the HRM System Strength, performance appraisal quality, non-work domain factors and employee performance. The Kelley's attribution theory, signalling theory and Job-demand Resource theory is considered as the underlying theoretical underpinning theories. Beyond the notion of the fundamental theoretical construct and the empirical evidence found in the literature, the existing study also establishes a theoretical framework for examination.

Research hypotheses are developed and formed as well. The next Chapter 3 comprises the research methodology used and analyses in this current research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this chapter is to discuss and justify the research methods employed in the current study. The chapter is divided into four sections for clear articulation of all research activities carried out during this study. Section one contains the research design and justification of the research paradigm. Whereas, section two is based on a qualitative approach that includes sampling techniques, data collection method, interview design, and data analysis procedure. Furthermore, section three encompasses a quantitative approach that includes the population of the study, sampling size, and techniques used for recruitment of participants for data collection. It contains the measurement of variables and research tools employed for data collection. It also presents the procedures undertaken to establish the reliability and validity of the research tools, including a pilot study for the survey questionnaire. The fourth section presents the ethical considerations of the study that were practiced during fieldwork. Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary.

3.1 Research Paradigm and Philosophical Foundations

In this section, a thorough rationale for the study is presented, and the ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological perspectives that influenced the selection of the study paradigms are explained, following Creswell's (2014) approach. The research questions are formulated based on the underlying philosophical assumptions (paradigms) that guide the choice of the most effective method to obtain accurate knowledge in a specific domain, as stated by Creswell

and Creswell (2017). According to Kuhn's (1962) definition, as cited in Antwi and Hamza (2015) on pages 131-132, a paradigm refers to a research culture that includes a standard set of beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions about the nature of research. It offers a useful conceptual framework or model for analyzing issues and finding solutions.

In the past, the acquisition of knowledge was divided into two paradigms: positivism and interpretivism (Babones, 2016; Iofrida, De Luca, Strano, & Gulisano, 2018; Guba & Lincoln, 1994), with the more recent addition of the pragmatist paradigm (Bryant, 2017; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Each of these paradigms has its own set of strengths and weaknesses. However, the study paradigms are dominated by the distinctions between the two orientations (Ryan, 2018). One research culture prioritizes "hard, generalizable data," while the other emphasizes the importance of "deep, rich observational data" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2004) argue that the third paradigm, "pragmatism," was selected for the present study to bridge the gap between positivist and interpretive research approaches. As described on pages 776-777 by Onwuegbuzie and Leech, the pragmatic paradigm combines elements of both positivism and interpretivism and aims to provide a practical and useful approach to research.

The pragmatic or logical reaction is the emphasis of the pragmatic method. The core tenet of pragmatism is that actions should be judged in light of results rather than abstract principles and that beliefs should serve as guides for those

101

actions (Bryant, 2017; Shusterman, 2016). Additionally, the pragmatism paradigm sought to build on their advantages while minimizing their drawbacks in both a single research study and throughout several investigations, rather than to completely replace either of these paradigms (Rahi, 2017; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Thus, the rationale for using pragmatism for this study ensured that the flaws of one method could be offset by the potency of the other (Bryman, 2017; Doyle et al., 2009). Therefore, applying pragmatism to the investigation resulted in the thorough understanding needed to achieve the research objectives of this study. Most importantly, it makes the results accurate and clear (Creswell and Clark, 2011). This study has adopted the convergent parallel design in line with the pragmatism paradigm. This design promotes the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand. To enhance authenticity and generalizability, the data is reported separately, but key conclusions from both methodologies are included in the discussion and findings sections.

The study's methodology and design are grounded in the pragmatic paradigm, which integrates elements of positivist and interpretive perspectives. The study's philosophical underpinnings, including its ontology, epistemology, and methodology, combine the contrasting viewpoints of positivism (which posits an objective reality) and interpretivism (which views reality as a product of social processes). At the ontological level, the researcher aims to establish the truth and

reality of the phenomenon being examined, which is the features of HRM System Strength and their impact on performance appraisal quality, national culture factors, and employee performance in diverse cultural contexts. The study focuses on the dimensions of distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus.

In addition, the study's epistemology involves considering the process by which the researcher uncovers the truth and reality related to the problem under investigation. Epistemology guides researcher in comprehending the processes involved in knowledge creation and standards for knowledge in a given topic (Bryman, 2017). In this aspect, pragmatists agree that it is best to employ the approach that is most appropriate for the research's aim. To "compensate for the shortcomings of a single method," it makes sense to use a variety of research methodologies and merge the findings (Wass and Wells, 1994: pp.9-10). The study's epistemological framework was informed by the research gap that highlights shortcomings and insufficiencies in understanding the impact of HRM System Strength perceptions on performance appraisal quality and the influence of national cultural factors (such as religiosity, spirituality, and family structure) on individual performance. Several studies, including Wang et al. (2021), Sarkar (2019), and Hewett et al. (2018), have identified this research gap.

Additionally, axiology plays a crucial role in determining the overall objective of the research. Axiology deals with how a researcher's values impact the entire research process (Saunders et al., 2016). It poses the question of whether the researcher aims to understand the world or to elucidate and forecast it (Creswell and

Clark, 2011). The primary aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of HRM System Strength dimensions (distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus) and how they matter in different cultural contexts with their influence on employee performance. Thus, the current study has applied the pre-existing theories and collected and analysed qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). The present research is a combination of inductive and deductive approaches, aimed at investigating and clarifying the effects of HRM System Strength on employee performance. The study draws upon Kelley's attribution theory, Job Demand Resource theory (JD-R), and Connelly's Signaling theory, which propose novel causal relationships in the association.

The chosen research methodology for this study is a convergent parallel mixed methodological design, which is deemed to be the most appropriate approach to achieve the research objectives. The study aims to comprehend the significance of HRM System Strength characteristics, including distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus, in different cultural contexts, and how HRM System Strength and national factors, such as religiosity, spirituality, and family structures, moderate the connection between specific HR practices, like performance appraisal quality, and employee performance. The convergent parallel mixed approach integrates positivist principles that focus on identifying and measuring variables and statistical patterns, with interpretive principles that value diverse perspectives and a deeper understanding of participants' ideas and experiences. This design is commonly used in mixed methods research, where data from both approaches are collected

concurrently and analyzed together in the study's analytic phase. Figure 3.1 gives an overview of the convergent parallel design below:
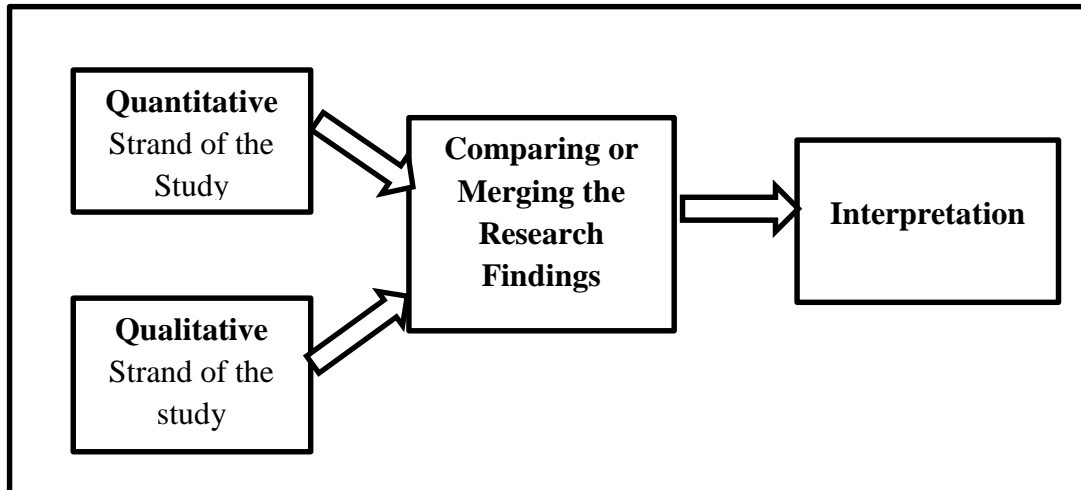
Figure 3.1: Convergent Parallel Design, Creswell (2014)

3.2 The Research Design and Methods of the Study

Research design is the course of an entire research process systematically (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). The research methodology comprises comprehensive guidelines that must be adhered to, based on the nature of the research questions (Creswell, 2014; Creswell and Clark, 2017; Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2009). There are two main types of research designs: process-driven qualitative methods and outcome-driven quantitative methods (Yin, 2013). Most scholars concur that the research objectives and nature should determine the selection of appropriate research methods (Kelaher et al., 2007; South, 2004).

This study attempts to explore whether and how HRM System Strength features (distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus) matter in a different culture and their impact on performance appraisal quality and employee performance. Therefore, a convergent parallel study design based on mixed methods (Bryman, 2017) was most appropriate because research questions need both quantitative and qualitative exploration of HRM System Strength features. Guion (2002) suggests that combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies through merging/corroborating techniques, which involve using various techniques such as statistical analysis, sampling, and research equipment, can be a powerful tool for improving the validity and reliability of the research design. The mixed-method design used in this study has the advantage of overcoming the limitations of both qualitative and quantitative approaches and providing strong support for interpreting results (Rocco et al., 2003). By utilizing both methods, the weaknesses of one can be compensated for by the strengths of the other (Doyle et al., 2009), resulting in a more comprehensive understanding. Given the research objectives and goals, both approaches are necessary.

The research design chosen for this study was the most appropriate method of inquiry to achieve its research objectives and provide clear and accurate results (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). The need to explore unknown or poorly articulated phenomena in the unique cultural contexts of China and Pakistan, as well as to examine the impact of HRM System Strength on specific HR practices and national culture factors, supported the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The

mixed methods research design used in this study is the convergent parallel design, which involves gathering and analyzing data from two distinct strands simultaneously, followed by combining the results to identify areas of agreement, discrepancy, contradictions, or correlations between the two sets of data (Creswell, 2014). This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the HRM System Strength, performance appraisal quality, and employee performance phenomena. Figure 3.2 provides a visual representation of the study design.

Figure 3.2 shows how the convergent parallel design used in this study combines quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2014). The ultimate goal of combining the results from both quantitative and qualitative data analysis was to achieve a detailed comprehension of the influence and significance of Strong HRM System Strength features on the HR practice of performance appraisal quality across various cultural settings. Qualitative research methods shared a common intention to understand participants' points of view which might positively influence the Human Resource Management field in ways that were not possible if using only quantitative means (Gilmore and Williams, 2012) qualitative strand of this study uses thematic analysis to understand the features of a strong HRM system and its influence on performance appraisal quality and national cultural factors from participants of two countries. At the same time, the quantitative strand of the study analyzed the data using Hierarchical Linear Modelling to evaluate survey data.

3.3 Qualitative Strand of the study

The following research objective weas answered by using qualitative research methods.

Research Objective 1: To understand whether the perceptions of HRM System Strength and performance appraisal quality differ in cross- country contexts.

Based on the above-mentioned research objective, the qualitative strand of the study was best suitable to analyze qualitative research questions (Patten and Newhart, 2017). Despite the large body of literature on HRM System Strength (For reviews, e.g., Wang et al., 2020; Hewett et al., 2018), understanding of the meaning of HRM System Strength perceptions in different country contexts has not been explored yet (Farndale and Sanders, 2017; Hewett et al., 2020). Qualitative interviews for this study focused on the exploration of manager's perceptions of the core features of an HRM System Strength (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004) under the unique country context of both countries and further explored whether HRM System Strength influence is culture-bound or culture-free on performance appraisal quality and non-work domain factors.

Moreover, to deal with the critical problems regarding phenomenological realities, a qualitative approach is most suitable (Yin, 2013). These approaches help in generating comprehensive and meaningful findings due to the flexibility of the method (Silverman, 2011). Thus, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with a deductive perspective to refine the understanding of the HRM System Strength

features, as there is limited literature on understanding the meaning of HRM System Strength features in different cultural contexts. The below subsections present the sampling strategies, the interview protocol design, and the utilization of techniques for analyzing the qualitative strand of the study.

3.3.1 Sampling Techniques and Strategies in Qualitative Strand

The sampling techniques in mixed methods research can be divided into two main groups: probability and purposive sampling (Saunders et al., 2016). Probability sampling involves using randomization to select the sample, where each participant, unit, or individual in the population being studied has an equal chance of being chosen. On the other hand, nonprobability sampling involves the subjective selection of elements to include in the sample (Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2016).

Quantitative Strand of the study
Data collection
Pakistan's Sample
Employees (n=401), 60 Managers
Chinese Sample
Employees (n=333), 56 Managers
Both country participants completed questionnaires

Qualitative Strand of the study
Data collection
Interview with Pakistani Managers (n= 16)
Interview with Chinese Managers (n=10)
Both country participants underwent semi-structured interviews focusing on HRM System Strength features

Quantitative Data analysis
Statistical testing to evaluate the reliability and validity using SPSS and HLM software's.

Qualitative Data analysis
Thematic analysis: Themes emerging from the data are identified using NVivo software.

Merge results
Compare and relate findings.

Interpretation
Developed understanding of PAQ, NWDF and HRM System Strength features in cross country settings.

Figure 3.2: Convergent parallel mixed methods design

The researcher employed purposive sampling to approach Managing Directors, Senior Managers, and Line Managers from the Telecom organizations in China and Pakistan. The researcher utilized purposive sampling, which allowed to select participants who could provide pertinent information relevant to the research objectives. This approach is particularly useful in qualitative research as it enables data to be collected from chosen participants. The selection criteria for the managers included holding a managerial-level position, possessing a university degree, and having sufficient experience in their respective fields.

Managing Directors were selected for their involvement in policymaking, Senior Managers for their knowledge of the strategic linkage between policies and practices, and Line Managers for their direct communication with employees about HR practices. This allowed the researcher to explore and investigate how the features of HRM System Strength were understood in meaning and terminology. The researcher accessed willing participants who fulfilled these characteristics (Patton, 2002). The data for the qualitative strand of the study were gathered between April and October 2019 from managers in both countries, with the individual managers serving as the unit of analysis (Saunders and Lewis, 2012).

3.3.2 Sample Size

Robinson (2014) recommends a flexible sample size range rather than a fixed number when planning a research project. Determining the sample size is crucial as it affects the validity and generalizability of the findings. Different

researchers have recommended varying numbers of interviews to be conducted for qualitative research (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). However, the common recommendation is to conduct between 20-30 interviews (Morse, 2000; Creswell, 2007) or 30-50 interviews (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005) as they have been found to yield satisfactory results.

Regarding face-to-face interviews, Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) recommended a minimum of 15 interviews as an appropriate sample size during the theoretical saturation process. Further, they suggested that respondents must be knowledge holders in the investigated area. On the contrary, Mason (2010) indicated that sampling must be continued until data saturation is reached. After twelve participants were interviewed from Pakistan and seven were interviewed from China, no new topics were raised, indicating that saturation had been reached. But researcher continued interviewing if some additional information could be gained.

Thus, a final number of interviews conducted was twenty-six HR managers (*Chinese n = 10, Pakistan n = 16*) from both countries, after which no new information was gained. Out of twenty-six (26) interviews, four (4) interviews were conducted with managing directors, fourteen (14) interviews were conducted with the senior managers, and eight (8) with line managers. They were asked how they perceived HRM System Strength features in their unique cultural contexts. Table 3.1 shows participants' designation, number of interviews conducted, and their respective countries. Specifically, they provided information on the mechanisms to ensure clarity of communication, agreement in decision making, and fairness of HR

practices with the perception of HRM System Strength. All three levels were interviewed because their perceptions were important to indicate the success or failure of an organization's HRM system.

Table 3.1: Participant's Data Collection Details

Key participants designation	No. of Interviews	China	Pakistan
Directors	4	2	2
Senior HR managers	14	6	8
HR Line managers	8	2	6
Total	**26**	**10**	**16**

Note: Compiled by Author (2023)

3.3.3 Sample characteristics

Table 3.2 below shows participants' ID and designation, departments, gender and experience of the participants, number of interviews conducted, and their respective country. The respondents comprised 18 male and 9 female participants, and respondents had a mean age of 34.05 years ($SD = 7.78$), with 9.33 years of work experience ($SD = 7.97$) on average. Table 3.2 presents the characteristics of participants, named through a coded sequence 'Country-*Participant ID Number-Designation-Gender'*. Thus*, 'PK01-SM -M'* means the first interviewee was Pakistani participant number 01, working as a senior manager was a male. The following section elaborates on how the data were collected.

3.3.4 Data Collection Technique and Semi-Structured Interview Design

As previously mentioned, the data for this study were obtained through in-person interviews, which are widely recognized as a common and reliable method of collecting qualitative data (Fontana and Frey, 2005: p.697). Researchers like Denzin and Lincoln (2009) highlighted that face-to-face interviews are always useful for picking up on oblique replies through the behavior, body language, and emotions of the respondents. It has remained the best and most practical method of collecting data when attempting to reduce nonresponse and increase the quality of the data gathered (Lavrakas, 2008; Charmaz, 2006: p. 25). The semi-structured interview is widely utilized as a qualitative data collection method due to its flexibility and ability to foster a reciprocal exchange between the interviewer and interviewee (Kallio et al., 2016).

Note: Compiled by Author (2023)

The use of semi-structured interviews in this study was deliberate for several reasons. First and foremost, the researcher required precise information from the participants to answer the research questions of the study. Secondly, semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility, enabling the interviewer to adjust the discussion's direction to align with the participants' thoughts (Charmaz, 2006; Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). Prior to the interviews, the research agenda was explained to the participants, and their consent to record the conversations was obtained to ensure

Table 3.2: *Characteristics of the participants of the qualitative study*

No.	Participant ID-Gender	Country	Current designation	Experience (years)	Recorded interviews (min)	No. of transcribed words
1	PK1- Male	Pakistan	HR Manager	15 years	33 minutes	2234
2	PK2-Female	Pakistan	HR Manager	5 years	25 minutes	3211
3	PK3-Male	Pakistan	HR Manager	7 years	29 minutes	2746
4	PK4-Male	Pakistan	HR Manager	6 years	27 minutes	3677
5	PK5-Male	Pakistan	HR Director	15 years	57 minutes	4542
6	PK6-Female	Pakistan	HR Manager	4 years	48 minutes	3293
7	PK7-Male	Pakistan	HR Director	10 years	28 minutes	3063
8	PK8-Female	Pakistan	HR Manager	5 years	23 minutes	3812
9	PK9-Male	Pakistan	HR Manager	10 years	20 minutes	1715
10	PK10-Male	Pakistan	HR Line Manager	1 year	58 minutes	5789
11	PK11-Male	Pakistan	HR Line Manager	3 years	37 minutes	4145
12	PK12-Female	Pakistan	HR Manager	3 years	22 minutes	2168
13	PK13-Male	Pakistan	HR Director	11 years	36 minutes	3849
14	PK14-Male	Pakistan	HR Director	27 years	20 minutes	1718
15	PK15-Male	Pakistan	HR Manager	5 years	27 minutes	2112
16	PK16-Female	Pakistan	HR Line Manager	3 years	21 minutes	1732
17	CH1-Male	China	HR Manager	3 years	20 minutes	1874
18	CH2-Female	China	HR Manager	3.5 years	21 minutes	1953
19	CH3-Male	China	HR Line Manager	2 years	24 minutes	2005
20	CH4-Male	China	HR Line Manager	4 years	19 minutes	1422
21	CH5-Female	China	HR Manager	2 years	18 minutes	1347
22	CH6-Female	China	HR Line Manager	1.5 years	22 minutes	1628

information accuracy (Peräkylä, 2011; Elmendorf and Luloff, 2001). The interview

23	CH7-Female	China	HR Manager	2 years	17 minutes	1465
24	CH8-Male	China	HR Manager	5 years	16 minutes	1346
25	CH9-Male	China	HR Manager	4 years	20 minutes	2022
26	CH10-Male	China	HR Line Manager	2 years	20 minutes	1900
	Average values				705 minutes	69000 words approximately

guide consisted of a series of open-ended questions that were tailored to elicit the required information for the study's research questions. To ensure participant confidentiality, specific measures were invoked. The lack of disclosure of pertinent information ensures the confidentiality of the interview. Thus, informants' names were changed to protect personal identities. Field notes were taken before and after each interview which were used throughout the research process.

To develop the interview guide, a set of key questions were formulated and refined to ensure openness and produce robust data. For instance, one question asked whether employee understanding of HR practices is critical. The semi-structured interviews aimed to explore Pakistani and Chinese managers' perceptions of HRM System Strength features and performance appraisal quality. The questions provided a guideline for the conversation while also allowing for flexibility to generate detailed descriptions rather than surface-level explanations. Additionally, follow-up questions were asked as needed.

The interview guide had two parts, and consent was obtained from each interviewee beforehand (see Appendix B). The first section included pre-screening and attribute queries to create a comfortable atmosphere. The second part focused

on managers' perspectives on HRM System Strength features, such as mechanisms for promoting clarity among employees and methods of observing HR practices, and the quality of performance appraisal in their organizations. The conversations sought to explore the influence of spirituality/religiosity on Chinese employee communication versus that of Pakistan's in their respective country contexts.

Another crucial factor was to write the guidelines and include all the necessary questions in a format that would enable the interview to be completed in a reasonable amount of time. With participants who were continually "busy," it was essential to make sure that all focus areas could be covered in the allotted time. It was accomplished by "pilot testing" the actual interview with Chinese and Pakistani volunteer participants in order to gauge the time needed to complete it and ensure that all the inquiries were reasonable, clear, and understandable. The interview ranged between 17 and 58 minutes in duration, with an average length time recorded as twenty-seven minutes per interview, depending on the detailed knowledge on the part of the interviewees (ef. Belal and Owen, 2007).

3.3.5 Data Analysis Technique

Data collected were managed and analyzed methodologically to find out the answers to research questions (Treharne and Rigs, 2011). To ensure the reliability and validity of the results, several measures were taken (Tracy, 2010). Interviews were carried out in both English and Chinese languages. Thus, Chinese interview transcriptions were first translated from Chinese to English for analysis, following

the back-translation method (Brislin, 2000). To prevent any loss of meaning or research bias, this process was carried out with the assistance of two Chinese Ph.D. researchers who have excellent proficiency in English. I also acknowledge their contribution that they carried out the interviews following interview guide (designed by Author) and carried out them in China.

The researcher enlisted the help of two Chinese Ph.D. researchers who are proficient in English to prevent any loss of meaning or research bias. These researchers were tasked with translating the interview transcripts separately. The researcher then compared the two translations to identify any discrepancies. In cases where differences were identified, the two Ph.D. researchers discussed the issue and reached a consensus. This process ensured that the final translated scripts were accurate and free from cross-country problems. The verbatim transcripts of the interviews were then used for data coding to ensure objective results from both countries.

After that, the software utilized for the thematic data analysis approach, NVivo 12, was used to index and fill in the transcribed data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The systematic method of examining qualitative data is called thematic data analysis. It involves identifying themes or patterns, categorizing and coding textual data that is consistent with the themes, and evaluating the resulting thematic structure by looking for similarities, connections, and underlying patterns based on theoretical conceptions (King, 2012).

For the current study, thematic analysis was helpful in managing the

enormous volume of data, summarizing it without losing context, and organizing and analyzing the information gathered. Prior to conducting interviews, a coding structure based on the literature study for thematic analysis was created, which was then improved through a methodical evaluation of transcriptions and coding (King, 2004). NVivo is a specialized tool with theory-building capabilities for theme analyses of qualitative data. It is a system for managing databases with computer assistance and contains features like linking, coding, searching, and model building. Thus, with the help of NVivo software, an initial coding template was developed after reviewing thorough literature (King, Brooks, and Tabari, 2018).

The final coding structure comprised 51 nodes, based on six parents, 16 child nodes, and 28 grandchild nodes. The coding structure was based on Kelley's attributional framework, performance appraisal quality, and non-work domain factors literature, discussed in Chapter 2. HRM System Strength dimensions were based on distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus. Performance appraisal quality was based on openness, clarity, and regularity. Finally, non-work domain factors were comprised of family structures, religiosity, and spirituality, presented in Figure 3.2. For more clarity, Table 3.3 presents the descriptions of the codes to present true qualitative findings, as suggested in the literature (Hill, Thompson and Williams, 1997).

In addition, the coding structure was refined with the emergence of new themes from the data, following a detailed discussion with independent researchers (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This led to the inclusion of 11 new codes, which further

refined the final version of the coding structure, resulting in a total of 62 nodes as presented in Figure 3.2. Finally, key themes were presented using thick descriptions with narrative arrays.

3.3.6 Validity and Reliability

According to Cho and Trent (2006), "validity in qualitative research claims regarding knowledge corresponds to the reality or study participants' interpretations of reality." In this study, several procedures have been performed to support the claim and assertions regarding its validity (Atkinson, Delamont, and Coffey, 2004). Therefore, objectification from qualitative procedural approaches was considered to be verification and re-verification during transcription and thematic analysis in order to examine the validity and dependability of qualitative data. To improve the effectiveness of the data, the research was validated externally, internally, and in terms of content.

For this research, professionals (faculty members and HR practitioners from the field in Pakistan) who were well aware of the needs, requirements, and issues of HRM System Strength helped in establishing the content validity of the tool. Due to this, each of them was able to offer insightful feedback in the form of comments and suggestions on the questions listed in the interview guide. It was done to guarantee that the information acquired would be more generally applicable (Gray, 2013). The interview questions specifically addressed the issues raised by the participants in light of the study topics.

The employment of the two regional tongues, Urdu and Chinese, along with a third language, English, ensured a better comprehension of the topics at hand and assisted participants in giving suitable solutions. The stability and intra-judgment of the study served as the foundation for its dependability. In order to manage the study, interviews were conducted in the late afternoons, when most participants were either unoccupied or not overly busy with work. Due to convenience, some important informants consented to interviews in the evening. Some of the interviews were conducted at weekends, which was preferable for some participants. The study was undertaken continuously and consistently to avoid bias and intra-judgement unreliability.

3.3.7 Results of Thematic analysis

Finally, results were presented after a thorough reading of coded data compiled in coding structure, following the recommendation (King et al., 2004). In next Chapter 4, summarized results using detailed descriptions and narrative arrays were presented.

Figure 3.3 *Final coding structure*

- Features of HRM System
  - Distinctiveness
    - Visibility
      - Transparency
      - Ensuring clarity through
      - Visibility of HR practices
    - Understandability
      - Comprehending HR practices
      - Awareness sessions
    - Relevance
      - Goal alignment
      - Congruence between individual
    - Legitimacy of
      - Information spread from
      - Communicator's credibility/
  - Consistency
    - Validity
      - Stability of HR messages with
      - Trickling down approach
      - Communicate rightly and
    - Consistent HR
      - Clear communication channels
      - Understanding HRM messages and signaling them down
    - Instrumentality
      - Timely communication of
      - Cause and effect relationship
  - Consensus
    - Fairness
      - Regular feedback
      - Open procedural feedbacks
      - Evaluations of employees
    - Agreement
      - Unanimity
      - Difficulty in decision-making
      - Decision support at higher

122

Culture-bound perspective of non-work domain

Family structure

- Joint family structure
  - Single earner vs dual earner
  - Pressurizing factor
  - Responsibilities influence is
- Nuclear family
  - Childless parents
  - Fewer responsibilities

Religiosity and Spirituality

- Spiritual factors
  - Concepts of righteousness
  - Source of motivation
  - Innate meaningfulness
- Religious factors
  - Religious norms as moral
  - Religion being a personal
  - No religious perspective

Culture-Free perspective of HRM SS on PAQ

Performance appraisal quality

- Clarity
  - Clear linkage of performance
  - Two-way communication, fair
- Regularity
  - Clarity in appraisal process
  - Complete understanding of
- Openness
  - Regularity in mid-year reviews
  - Consistent feedback cycles

123

Table 3.3 *Descriptions of codes*

Codes	Description
HRM System Strength	HRM System Strength refers to a strong system that clarifies how HR practices are readily available and easy to understand (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004)
Distinctiveness	Distinctiveness refers to the ability to capture employees' attention to understand HRM practices distinctly and clearly (Fu et al., 2019).
Awareness sessions	Employees are provided with complete information about HR practices through various one-to-one sessions at work.
Comprehending HR practices	This term refers to as elaborating HR practices comprehensively for a deeper and clearer understanding (Kataou et al., 2014).
Visibility of HR practices	Visibility of HR practices refers to having salient and observable practices toward employees (Fu et al., 2019).
Ensuring clarity through different means	When employees are informed about HR practices, they are assured that they perceive a clear meaning. So, this clarity of HR practices is enhanced with different means of communication (Ostroff and Bowen, 2016).
Lack of unambiguity	Lack of unambiguity refers to having clarity in understanding HR practices so that employees will have a clear picture of their work.
The saliency of HR practices	The saliency of HR practices is a term that refers to providing an explanation related to the importance of HR practices regarding what is expected from employees (Sanders et al., 2016).
Transparency	Transparency is a term that refers to having observability of HR practices in a transparent manner.
Understandability	It refers to comprehending HR practices and understanding how to practice HR content (Fu et al., 2019).
Open communication	Communication is a vital management component in an organization. This term particularly refers to having clear and open communication among employees to ensure that they understand the purpose of the practice. (Li et al., 2011).

Ease of HR practices	HR managers play a role in elaborating HR practices to employees to avoid any difficulty in understanding and practicing those HR practices.
Legitimacy of authority	The legitimacy of authority refers to submitting to performance expatiations as formally sanctioned behavior among employees (Fu et al., 2019).
Authoritative approach	When employees are informed about HR-related messages, employees consider them more meaningful if they are trickled down from individuals in high-status and authoritative positions (Nishi and Paulch, 2018).
Communicator's credibility	Employees value the information more when it is disseminated from a credible source. So, communicators' credibility matters a lot in communicating the message.
Top manager communication	Top management communication refers to a message from a higher authority that matters to employees at all levels and aids them in understanding what is expected of them (Dorenbosch et al., 2006).
Relevance	The term relevance refers to a situation when employees consider their goals as relevant (Fu et al., 2019).
Goal alignment	Goal alignment refers to a situation where there is a congruence between individual goals and management goals.
Goal misalignment	This term refers to when employees find misalignment in achieving realistic goals in their cultural context.
Consistency	This term mainly refers to establishing consistent employee relationships (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). It comprises three additional features: instrumentality, consistent HR messages, and validity.
Difficulty in achieving consistency of HR messages	Some employees may experience difficulty in achieving consistency in their country context due to the inconsistency of HR messages.
Consistent HR messages	This term means that when HR messages are delivered, they must remain stable and consistent over some time (Fu et al., 2019).
Clear communication channels	While delivering HR-related messages among employees, there must be clarity in communication from the sender to the receiver.

Coordination and communication	While communicating HR-related practices, unambiguous communication and coordination among sender and receiver make HR messages more consistent.
Understanding HRM messages and signalling them down	This term means that it is the senders' responsibility to make things clear while communicating them among all levels and it should be consistent and understandable.
Same message across different hierarchies	This term means that the same information is consistently spread among all departments, so the message should remain the same (Meier-Barthold et al., 2021).
Stability of HR messages with back-and-forth communication	When HR messages are delivered, there must be back-and-forth communication between sender and receiver to get stable and clear information.
Validity	Validity is a term that refers to attempts that the sender and receiver make to validate the message and retain its meaning (Cafferky et al., 2019).
Following the lead and doing the work accordingly	It means that employees follow the leader, so managers must be proactive while communicating their HR-related messages (Nishi and Paulch, 2018).
Trickling down approach	When managers communicate the message among employees, it must remain the same and should be effectively communicated throughout the hierarchy from top to bottom.
Walk the talk, and talk the walk	Managers should act as they talk and implement HR practices intended.
Instrumentality	Instrumentality refers to establishing a clear causal relationship between time and reward (Sanders et al., 2020).
Cause and effect relationship	This term refers to an unambiguous relationship of HR-related expected behavior associated with the outcome of an employee.
Timely communication of rewards	When managers timely communicate about the intended behavior and reward associated with it, it motivates employees to work.

Consensus	This term refers to consensus on HR-related practices among employees, agreeing on intended targets (Fu et al., 2019).
Fairness Perceptions	This term refers to having combined fairness perceptions of the HRM system and HR practices that are by and adhere to principles of justice.
Agreement	Agreement refers to stakeholders agreeing upon HR-related messages to promote consensus (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004).
Decision support at higher levels	This term refers to higher management supporting a common vision and then unanimously making decisions.
Difficulty in unanimous decisions	This term refers to management decisions that are sometimes conflicting, so agreement on the same decision is difficult to achieve in one's cultural context.
Non-work domain factors	This term refers to factors that are ingrained in one's culture, i.e., family, religious and social involvement (Sarkar, 2019)
Family structure	Family structures refer to the family group to which employee belongs and is grouped into nuclear vs joint-family structure (Dumas and Perry - Smith, 2018)
Pressurising factor	It is a pressurising influence on an employee's mind and could impact their performance regardless of earning group.
Joint family structures	A joint family occurs when several sets of siblings, along with their spouses and children, live together, sharing resources and responsibilities.
Responsibilities influence	Employees have challenging responsibilities due to different earning levels In a joint family structure (Dumas and Sanchez-Burks, 2015).
Nuclear family structures	It refers to nuclear-family households, where employees have fewer family members to earn.
Religiosity and spirituality	It refers to 'the degree to which an individual's perceptions relate to their religious and spiritual beliefs and practices and can influence how they find meaning in their work (Lynn et al., 2011).'

Religion as a personal disposition	Employees consider their religious and spiritual activities as their innate dispositions.
Moral obligation	This term means that employees consider religious norms as moral obligations (Walker, 2012).
Concept of righteousness	Few employees consider their innate spiritualty in terms of righteousness and honesty, which positively impacts their work-related outcomes.
Source of motivation	This term refers to spirituality as a source of motivation that makes employees consider their work meaningful.
No religious/spiritual perspective	It refers to those Chinese employees who do not believe that religious or spiritual beliefs impact their work-related outcomes.
Performance appraisal quality	Performance appraisal quality is defined as providing clarity, regularity, and openness in employee feedback and acts as an antecedent of improvement in employee performance (Bednall et al., 2014).
Clear linkage of performance and reward	This term means that when employees have a clear vision of their performance and reward processes, they remain motivated throughout their appraisal process.
Regular mid-year reviews	This term means that employee appraisals are conducted regularly to judge performance and improvement. It is conducted biannually in most companies (DeNisi and murphy, 2006).
Two-way communication	This term refers to a back-and-forth communication process that provides clarity in the employees' appraisal process to strengthen their fairness perceptions (Curzi et al., 2020).
Open and visible process	This term refers to having more visibility and openness in the PAQ process through supervisor feedback (Ikramullah, 2016).

3.4 Quantitative Strand of the Study

The following research objectives were answered by using quantitative research methods.

Research Objective 2: To examine the moderating impact of employee perceptions of HRM System Strength on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance.

Research Objective 3: To examine the moderating impact of non-work domain factors of religiosity, spirituality, and family structure on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance.

Research Objective 4: To investigate the impact of three-way interaction of performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors on employee performance.

The nature of the research questions, which involved correlations, made the quantitative strand of the study the most suitable method for analysis (Patten and Newhart, 2017). As a result, the researcher gathered pertinent numerical data and examined the connections between the suggested variables in the quantitative aspect of the study (i.e., HRM System Strength, performance appraisal quality, non-work domain factors, and employee performance) developed in the theoretical framework presented in Figure 2.1 discussed in Section 2.7 (also see, Cooper and Schindler, 2008). Results may be generalized when quantitative research methods are applied

accurately to get unbiased results (Goertzen, 2017). Hypothesis 1 to Hypothesis 5c were tested with the help of survey data collected during the research conducted.

3.4.1 The Survey Design and Method

To complete this research, three steps were followed. Firstly, a panel of academic professionals and researchers assessed the questionnaire to confirm face and content validity by determining whether it measures what it intends to measure. Secondly, up to 60 participants were used in pilot testing to assess the scale reliability of the constructs' internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha, as recommended by Hertzog (2008) and Johnson and Brooks (2010). Finally, the revised questionnaire was used to collect data on variables such as performance appraisal quality, employee performance, and moderating variables like HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors. Direct hypothesized relationships were tested using quantitative research methods. In the following sections, information about units of analysis, population, sampling techniques, measurements, and data analysis procedures will be presented, which were used to examine the statistical relationships among variables. The survey included statements such as "employees receive regular information about HR department initiatives" and "HR practices in this organization aim to achieve their intended goals."

The questionnaire was originally developed in English, but since our study participants were from Pakistan and China, it was back-translated into Chinese by a

bilingual Chinese researcher, as recommended by Brislin (2000). The responses were then rated on a Likert-type scale, which is commonly used to measure attitudes and opinions at the ordinal level (Bryman, 2017). The response options ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). To address the cultural tendency of Chinese and Pakistani participants to avoid extreme responses, a 6-point Likert scale was used, as it allows for midpoints (Lee, Jones, Mineyama, and Zhang, 2002).

The introduction of the questionnaire gave a brief explanation of the purpose of the study and the value of the respondent's participation in attaining this purpose. Additionally, the introduction ensured the privacy of the data collected from the responders. The introduction of the questionnaire featured the logo of the National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, Pakistan, to enhance its credibility. The contact information was also provided, as detailed in Appendix C. The survey instrument, or questionnaire, was developed to collect data on the study variables. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part I gathered demographic information from the participants.

Furthermore, it also followed a time-lag research design in which data were gathered at two points of time at three months intervals apart (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). The time-lag data collection was undertaken to see whether there were any differences in employee performance after the quality provided on performance appraisal in their departments. A previous study conducted by Dorfman (1986) followed the same procedures of providing performance appraisal feedback at a one-month interval to assess the difference in new performance ratings.

3.4.1a) Pre-Testing and Survey Refinement

Reynolds and Diamantopoulos (1998) reported that pre-testing is an important part of questionnaire development. In fact, before starting data collection for the study, the instrument's sequencing and instruction must be assessed (Bloomberg, Cooper, and Schindler, 2011). Thus, pre-testing reduces the complications that arise from biases or unclear wording (Zikmund, 2003). Therefore, all these issues indicate the importance of pre-testing concerning surveys (Reynolds and Diamantopoulos, 1998). In this study, pre-testing was conducted using the debriefing method, as recommended by Hunt, Sparkman, and Wilcox (1982). This method involves the researcher observing and asking respondents about the clarity and applicability of the questionnaire items after they have completed it in a personal interview.

Identification and choice of the respondents is crucial for pre-testing (Hunt et al., 1982). Using convenience sampling, four academics from Pakistani universities and two subject experts from the field were chosen to take part in the discussion for pre-testing and survey refinement. The aforementioned group of participants was chosen so that the appropriateness, clarity, and duration of the questionnaire's completion could be evaluated. In this study, the target respondents were first met in person, and then an appointment was set up at a time and location that worked best for them. To evaluate each item, the respondents were given a single set of questionnaires to complete. Initially, the respondents were asked to rate the following: 1) the content and clarity of the words and sentences; 2) the format

and order of the questionnaire, and 3) the appropriateness of the questions that measure the actual information about the variables in this study.

3.4.1b) Data sources

There were two surveys handed out: one for managers and one for employees. Manager surveys included questions about employee performance, while each employee's key performance indicators were scored by them. The fact that there were two sets of surveys (multisource data) allowed for the common method variance problem to be solved. The research design used a multi-respondent (manager and employee) and time-lagged approach (i.e., one-month time interval) to reduce common method variance (CMV). To examine the potential impact of common method variance (CMV), a method proposed by Podsakoff et al. (2003) was employed to test unmeasured latent factors. The variations in the standardized regression weights were compared between models with and without the shared latent variable. A maximum difference of 17% was found, indicating a very low influence of CMV on the study variables. The threshold of 25 percent, as suggested by Carlson and Kacmar (2000) and Williams, Cote, and Buckley (1989), was not exceeded in this study.

3.4.2 Data Collection

The data were collected from both employees and managers in the Telecom sector from Pakistan and China. For gaining access to the organizations, the

researcher contacted senior managers of departments and requested them to engage their employees to participate in this research. The researcher explained the research aims, objectives and scope of participation regarding data collection procedure and confidentiality of data. The researcher gained access to all five telecom organizations in Pakistan and all four companies in China and achieved a response rate of 67% from both countries. Data were collected ethically. The researcher used the drop-off/pick-up (DOPU) approach to distribute the questionnaire after receiving authorization from the relevant authority.

The employment of the DOPU approach was made possible by its potential to decrease non-coverage error and potential sample bias without lowering response rates (Steele et al., 2001). Face-to-face interactions with respondents allowed the researcher to explain the study's goals and provide guidance on how to fill out the questionnaire (Clark and Finley, 2007). Increased survey response rates, less nonresponse bias, and improved researcher eligibility are all potential benefits of DOPU (Allred and Ross-Davis, 2011). In total, 700 questionnaires were distributed in China and 700 were distributed in Pakistan. Allowing respondents to finish the survey by themselves at a convenient time is another way that this method can lessen the impact of bias (Maclennan, Langley, and Kypri, 2011).

Additionally, the results of earlier studies have provided support for this approach (please see Allred and Ross-Davis, 2011; Jackson- Smith, Flint, Dolan, Trentelman, Holyoak, Thomas and Ma, 2016). Respondents were given a period of two weeks from the distribution date to complete and return the questionnaire. The

researcher also provided reminders via telephone as necessary. In order to obtain a representative sample, HR managers were asked to invite their team employees to participate in the study and rate their performance (Lepak et al., 2006; Collins and Smith, 2006). Copies of these questionnaires are available in Appendix C and D for English and Chinese versions.

3.4.2a) Unit of Analysis and data aggregation

The unit of analysis for this study was individual level. Data were collected from HR managers and employees working under their supervision in the telecom organizations in Pakistan and China. The present study considered the two-person groups, also known as dyads, HR managers and their respective HR employees working under them. The rationale for choosing the dyadic group was twofold. The most salient reason is that the role of the employees as an individual level of measurement, was suitable for the individual-level of constructs, such as performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, religiosity, spirituality, and family structures were individual self-rated constructs.

In contrast, the rating of employee performance was measured by items representing individual perceptions of employees towards their performance by their respective managers. Therefore, dyads were the unit of analysis for this research. Additionally, managerial experience includes a higher level of data aggregation with their unique rating style as a higher-level data aggregation (Hox, 2002). An individual-level data aggregation technique was employed for the current

study, as managers' data was matched with each employee. Data files were prepared (Snipes et al., 2005) by assigning a unique ID number to employees and managers. The final sample with matched data resulted in 734 entries with individual-level data aggregation.

3.4.2b) Population and determination of Sample Size

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the population being studied includes all HR employees of telecom organizations in China and Pakistan. Identifying the target population is essential to avoid mistakes in sample selection and generalize the results to the population of interest (Cavana et al., 2001). Several authors, such as Sekaran and Bougie (2010) and Hair et al. (2010), have provided guidelines on determining an adequate sample size. For this study, a minimum of 10 observations per variable was deemed acceptable, resulting in a total of 700 surveys administered to employees and managers in each country, yielding a total of 1400 matched questionnaires. The survey included a cover letter reassuring participants that their information would remain confidential and would only be used for research purposes.

To reduce method bias, a time-lagged approach was utilized in this study, and data were gathered independently from both employees and their managers through surveys. At Time 1, the managers evaluated employee performance, while at Time 2, one month later, the employees rated their performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors at Time 1. Then, the managers

re-evaluated their employees' job performance. Respondents were required to provide an ID number to match their responses with their manager's evaluation, but no personal identification was requested. The study obtained a response rate of 65.6%, with 734 employee-manager dyads matched. For the Pakistani sample, a simple random sampling technique was utilized, resulting in 401 employees and 60 managers. The sample reflected participants' age, gender, and experience characteristics. The mean age of participants was 35.7 years, with 60% male and an average work experience of 4.4 years. The Chinese sample had 333 employees and 56 managers, with a mean age of 32.3 years, 64% male, and an average work experience of 3.7 years. Chapter 4, Table 4.10 summarizes the demographic characteristics.

3.4.3 Measurement of Variables

The measurement tools used in this research were those that were adopted and modified as needed and appropriate from past studies. Performance appraisal quality was the independent variable of this study, while this study considered HRM System Strength as the first moderator and non-work domain factors of religiosity, spirituality, and family structures as the second moderator, and employee performance was the dependent variable of the study. The scales for measuring the variables were adapted from past literature. Participants marked the items on a 6-point Likert scale as (1 = "strongly agree"– 6 = "strongly disagree") for all the variables. The following section discusses the measurement of all these variables.

3.4.3a) Measurement of Employee Performance

For assessing employee performance at Time 1 and Time 2 by the managers, nine-item scale given by Griffin et al., (2007) was adapted with three sub-dimensions of Task proficiency: This employee ensured his/her tasks were correctly completed, Task adaptability: This employee coped with changes to the way she/he has to do the tasks, and Task proactivity: the extent to which this employee communicated effectively. The reliability of different sub-dimensions was high with Cronbach's αs of .90, .87, and .88, respectively. Whereas, three dimensions of employee performance, as a single measurement model showed best reliability (Cronbach's α = .92).

3.4.3b) HRM System Strength

For assessing employee understanding of HRM System Strength, seventeen items scale was adapted from Delmotte et al. (2012). Three dimensions measured HRM System Strength, namely 'distinctiveness;' its example item is "When one asks the HR department for help, they provide clear answers", with Cronbach Alpha=.90. Consistency dimension is measured with it's example item as "The HR instruments for staff appraisal succeed in reinforcing the desired behaviors", with Cronbach Alpha=.89, and consensus dimension is measured with example item as "Employees consider promotion as fair in this organization", with Cronbach Alpha=91. The overall reliability for HRM System Strength is.92.

3.4.3c) Measurement of Spirituality

The variable spirituality was measured by adapting the seven items scale of Lynn et al., (2009). Their example items were 'I pursue excellence in my work because of my faith. A subset of items was used to measure spiritual calling, coping, and meaningfulness. Seven items were selected out of fifteen items that assess the integration of an employee's spirituality at work. The other items in the scale differ conceptually from spiritual meaningfulness, coping, and calling items in the FWS scale, for example "I view my co-workers as made in the image of God," "I sacrificially love the people I work with," and "My co-workers know I am a person of faith," as these items were related to interactions with co-workers but not necessarily linked to meaningfulness, coping and calling to work items, so these items were not included.

3.4.3d) Measurement of Religiosity

Whereas the variable religiosity was measured by Berggren et al., (2009) scale with five items. Their example items were 'Religion is an important part of my life.' This additional religiosity factor was assessed from both countries' employees, because in Pakistan employees mostly believed in religion instead of having a spirituality.

3.4.3e) Measurement of Performance appraisal quality

A 3-item scale derived by Sanders et al. (2008) was used to assess

performance appraisal quality feedback openly, regularly, and clearly. A sample item is "My manager keeps open communication with me in the job".

3.4.3f) Measurement of Family structure

Family structure variable was coded to compare nuclear family structure with joint family structure, including extended/joint families, to all other family structures. The other category includes single, nuclear, divorced, married, and widowed respondents (Graves et al., 2007; Hammer et al., 2005). This variable was coded 1 for joint family structure and 0 for nuclear family structure.

3.4.4 Data preparation and Preliminary Analyses

Preliminary analyses of the data were conducted using completed questionnaires, which were compared to the data entered in the initial excel spreadsheet to ensure accuracy. In order to conduct analyses, Excel spreadsheet files were transformed into SPSS (Version 23) and HLM (Version 8.1). The data were cleaned up, prepared, and checked for normality tests (Treiblmaier and Filzmoser, 2011), as well as any underlying presumptions about the sample. Before undertaking reliability and validity testing, descriptive statistics were computed to offer details on participant characteristics.

3.4.4a) Dealing with missing values and outliers

To prepare for individual-level data for HLM analysis, data were initially

entered in the SPSS file to screen missing values and outliers. The screening procedure by Meade and Craig (2012) was followed for handling careless responses. If not handled properly, missing values in data can result in invalid analysis outcomes (i.e., data exaggeration or reduction) and biased estimates (Acock, 2005). Initially, 970 matched responses were collected at Time 1, and after Time 2, matched data resulted in 907 responses from managers for their respective employees. Each respondent in SPSS was considered as an individual case, and during data cleaning, 57 cases were found to have missing values. These missing values were classified as "missing completely at random," indicating that the missing values were randomly distributed among these 57 cases (Little and Rubin, 1987).

The researcher employed the case/pairwise deletion method as it is the simplest and most frequently used among the available options such as list-wise, imputation techniques, and case/pairwise deletion (Acuna and Rodriguez, 2004). In this technique, missing values were detected and excluded (Scheffer, 2002). Outliers were also screened out before proceeding with data analysis. As the presence of outliers can lead to opposing directions of results and is against the normality assumptions (Chu, Ilyas, Krishan and Wang, 2016). Thus, 120 cases were removed (as missing values and outliers in the dataset), resulting in a final sample size of 850. These 850 responses included 116 managers and 734 employees. Out of these 116 managers, 60 managers were from Pakistan, and 56 managers were from China, and out of 734 employees, 401 employees were from Pakistan, and 333 employees were

from China.

Aiken and West (1991) suggested that tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) are used to assess multi-collinearity among independent variables. To determine whether independent variables are related to each dependent variable in the model and to detect collinearity, it is essential to examine all sets of variables in the model. In Section 4.6 of Chapter 4, the test for multi-collinearity of independent variables was presented. The regression analysis was conducted to estimate the VIF and Tolerance values for all exogenous variables that were incorporated into the models. Firstly, the dependent variable model, i.e., employee performance, was evaluated through regression analysis in SPSS, and VIF and Tolerance values were estimated, where Tolerance equals 1/VIF. A VIF value greater than 10 and a Tolerance value less than 0.10 indicates a problem of multi-collinearity in the data, according to several authors (Camison and Villar-Lopez, 2012; Berman et al, 2002; Kline, 2011; Hair et al, 1995; Pallant, 2010; Petter et al, 2007; Peng, 2012). Results are shown in Chapter 4 in Table 4.11.

The internal consistency and reliability of scale items for the sample data were evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Inter-item consistency scores were used to determine the stability of the results, with values ranging between 0 and 1. Values above 0.7 indicate acceptable internal consistency reliability. The current study evaluated the reliability of all variables separately, including HRM System Strength, performance appraisal quality, religiosity, spirituality, and employee performance (Time 1 and 2). All reported reliability values were >0.7 and

142

can be found in Chapter 4's correlation Table 4.12. Pearson's correlation coefficient was utilized to assess the strength of the relationship between various variables such as HRM System Strength, performance appraisal quality, religiosity, spirituality, family structure, and employee performance. In Chapter 4, results are presented in the correlation table under section 4.7.

3.4.5 Data Analysis and Analytical Approach

AMOS software version 21 and HLM software version 8.1 were used for the statistical computation of results. The below subsections represent the analysis techniques used for a quantitative strand of the study.

3.4.5a) Confirmatory Factor Analysis – testing the factor structure

Assessing and establishing reliability and validity of constructs is a prerequisite for further analysis, and various tests have been suggested by Hair et al. (2014) to accomplish this. Before testing research hypotheses, the researcher used CFA to assess the model's fitness (Muthén and Muthén, 2012; Lewis, 2017). CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) is a statistical technique that evaluates predefined measurement models, in which the number of factors and their relationship with the indicators are explicitly defined (Kline, 2011, p. 112). The measurement model for CFA assumes that each item is exclusively related to its expected latent variable, and this assumption is evaluated during the analysis (Thompson, 2004).

For the constructs measured at the individual level (i.e., HRM System

Strength, spirituality, performance appraisal quality, employee performance and religiosity), CFA was performed to justify individual-level responses to a single score at the individual level. When a researcher has a clear, theoretically-driven model that specifies the number of components, whether these factors are associated, and which variables reflect which factors, CFA is regarded as an appropriate data analytic technique (Thompson, 2004). In other words, CFA is a technique that enables a researcher to accept or reject a proposed measurement model structure. CFA gives evidence of construct validity by indicating how well the assigned structure corresponds to reality. It is preferable to predetermine the way that variables will load on particular factors rather than assigning variables to factors (Hair et al., 2006).

The goodness of fit of the measurement models was evaluated using various measures, such as Akaike information criteria, root mean square error of approximation, Tucker-Lewis index, comparative fit index, and Tucker-Lewis index. SPSS software was used to conduct Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and a value of 0.90 or higher for CFI and TLI indicated a good fit. A value of 0.05 for RMSEA indicated a close fit, 0.08 indicated a proper fit, and 0.10 indicated a marginal fit. The AIC was also used to compare the different models, with lower values indicating better fit. CFI was used as the main technique for evaluating model fit due to its independence from model complexity and sample size. The CFA results for the measurement models of the current research are presented in Chapter 4.

3.4.5b) Multilevel Modeling Data Analysis

When multiple levels are involved, they form a hierarchical structure and need to be analyzed using multi-level modeling. Hence, multi-level modeling is best suitable when hierarchies are involved, and such a structure incorporates within and between level variations (Park and Lake, 2005). The objective of this study is to analyze the various factors at the employee-manager level, explore their associations with one another, and investigate their influence on employee performance. The study is derived from multiple levels, which makes it necessary to consider statistical techniques to cover a wide range of issues to be examined. Before conducting data analysis, the data were subjected to data preparation using the SPSS 27 version and (HLM) 8.1 statistical package for the development of the model's specification and analysis. To evaluate a multi-level model with a nested data structure, researchers describe the process of data analysis, which comprises significant methodological and conceptual challenges. (Hox et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2012).

In the current study, the researcher adopted a multi-level approach and used HLM for data analysis because employees were nested within managers, and managers were nested within companies. According to Hox et al. (2014: 663). Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) software was utilized to test the individual and cross-level hypotheses (i.e., Hypothesis 3a to 5c). For hierarchically nested data structures, there is a software package called HLM (Hofmann, Griffin, and Garvin, 2000). In order to examine individual behavior within companies, it is necessary to

measure both the environment in which they are operating and their own personal characteristics. The resulting data in this case consists of variables that are located at various levels of analysis (i.e., variables at the lower and the higher-level units) (Hofmann, 1997).

A maximum likelihood estimation (ML) technique was employed to test a multi-level model in HLM, which is commonly used in hierarchical data structures. As per Raudenbush and Bryk (2002), the ML technique involves averaging variances within and between levels, producing downward biased estimates of HLM's variance components. HLM software was used to examine the individual and cross-level hypotheses, as it is the most appropriate approach when dealing with hierarchically nested data structures. HLM models consider that members of one group may be more similar to each other than members of another group and that they may not offer independent observations. These models explicitly represent both lower-level and higher-level random-error components, acknowledging the partial interdependence of people within the same groupings. The HLM approach investigates model variances occurring at two levels of analysis, Level 1 and Level 2. At Level 1, the individual-level predictor and individual-level outcome are estimated separately for each group, while Level 2 models the variance in the Level 1 intercepts and slopes using the group-level variable. It is important to note that the Level 1 and Level 2 models are calculated simultaneously.

For the current study, data were organized into two levels, i.e., employee and manager levels. Level 1 data had the individual employees arranged into managers

groupings (i.e., managers ID in this study) and included employee-level variables. While level 2 data had the managers arranged into company groupings (i.e., managers ID) and included managers related variables. A common manager ID linked all the variables because it is necessary to line up columns according to their similar grouping ID. Although data were collected at the individual level, all managers had their rating style based on their experience, allowing HLM to do multi-level analysis at the individual level (Zhang et al., 2012).

For this study, I designed the data to be analyzed at two levels: employee and manager level. The first level (Level 1) includes data on employee performance, HRM system strength, and non-work domain factors within each company. The second level (Level 2) captures the variation in manager rating styles based on their experience between the nine organizations included in the study. Since some of the organizations were too small to be aggregated at a higher level, organizational level was not included. Therefore, an HLM2 approach (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002) was used to model effects at both the within- and between-company levels.

For this study, final data files were saved in two IBM files separately to be exported into HLM 8.1 to construct the MDM files. In the second step, the model was specified at two levels (i.e., HLM2), and variables were entered. Firstly, to specify whether HLM analyses were practically required, an examination of ICC (Intraclass correlation coefficient) was needed (Garson, 2013). Following (Bliese, 2000), I aggregated the values of ICC_1 and ICC_2 and calculated them for the different scales. For doing so, a null model was specified. This model contained no

predictor variable from any level to obtain deviance statistics, and the remaining coefficients were used as a baseline to compare final model estimates (Garson, 2013).

Raudenbush and Bryk (2002) pointed out that when reliability values were above 0.05, possibly a random effect for that coefficient may exist. Therefore, HLM analysis could be appropriately conducted. Contrarily, (Garson, 2013) stated that when the ICC approaches zero or negative, HLM analysis was not appropriate. The ICC1 values in this study ranged from .09 to .19, and all ICC2 values were above .70. Because there were a sufficient number of company managers included in the study, it was assumed that there was enough agreement within company managers to justify using HLM for further investigation of intra-company variance ($\tau 00/\tau 00+ \sigma 2$). The results of the linear regression and moderation analysis are presented in Table 4.13 in Section 4.6.8 of Chapter 4.

3.5 Ethical Consideration

The data collection process adhered to ethical guidelines at all times. The reason for collecting information with their voluntary participation was explained to the participants. Additionally, informed consent forms were prepared (see Appendix A for details), and participants' signatures were obtained to obtain their consent. To ensure the confidentiality and privacy of the respondents, pseudonyms were utilized, and all identifying information was removed. The researcher and supervisors were the only ones who had access to any personal information that could identify the participants. Ethical guidelines were followed throughout the

research process during data collection.

Additionally, the research obtained ethical approval from the NUST Business School Research Ethics Committee, as evidenced by the form provided in Appendix A. The NUST Business School Ethics Committee Guidelines guided the development of the research design and methods to ensure ethical requirements were met. Participants were informed of the research's objectives and their right to withdraw at any time without providing a reason. Measures were taken to ensure participants' privacy and confidentiality, such as using pseudonyms and eliminating any identifying information.

3.6 Integrating quantitative and qualitative findings

The researcher discusses the method employed for integrating two data sets in this study and explores data integration approaches in the following section. Integrating qualitative and quantitative findings has been a challenge for researchers in mixed-method studies. According to Bryman (2010), the difficulty in combining the two components in mixed-methods research has restricted their integration. One of the primary reasons for neglecting integration is the failure to consider the rationale for using mixed approaches in research. However, integration is crucial for mixed-method studies with numerous objectives and advantages. For example, qualitative data can confirm or reinforce validity of the quantitative findings (Bryman, 2007; Fetters, Curry, and Creswell, 2013).

In a similar vein, quantitative data can provide a qualitative sample or offer

an explanation for qualitative outcomes. Qualitative data can also aid in developing research hypotheses that can be tested in the quantitative component and in enhancing quantitative tools. Nonetheless, merging qualitative and quantitative findings can offer a deeper understanding that cannot be achieved otherwise (Bryman, 2007). Researchers must consider whether the results of the two data sets reveal intriguing contrasts or support each other's clarification. There are specific methods for integrating two types of data within the reporting levels of research that can be employed in research design, procedures, or interpretation (Clark and Creswell, 2004). As presented in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4: Level of integration in a mixed-methods research

Level of integration	Approaches
Design	Exploratory sequential design
	Explanatory sequential design
	Convergent parallel design (Adopted for this study)
Method	Transformative method
	Connection building
	Merging (Adopted for this study)
	Embedding (Qual in Quan/ Quan in Qual)
Interpretation and reporting	Data transformation (Quantify/Qualify)
	Joint display/ Matrix convergence,
	Contiguous, Staged, and **Narrative-Weaving (Adopted for this study)**

Note: Adopted from Cresswell and Clark (2013)

The integration of mixed methods research can be done at three different levels, including design, techniques, and interpretation, as shown in Table 3.4. There

are three main ways to integrate two data sets at the design level: convergent parallel design, explanatory sequential design, and exploratory sequential design. Sequential designs in mixed methods typically build on one aspect of the investigation or the other. The goal of the convergent parallel design is to combine the two investigations and compare the qualitative and quantitative findings (Cresswell and Clark, 2013; Fetters et al., 2013).

Integration takes place at the techniques level when findings from one study inform findings from another or when two datasets are combined for analysis and comparison. Following that, integration through interpretation and reporting takes place through the transformation of data, narrative weaving or joint matrix display. Notably, there are three types of integrations (narrative weaving, staged, and contiguous) for writing a discussion chapter. For this study, the researcher adopted the narrative weaving approach.

The presentation of quantitative and qualitative findings using the concept-by-concept or theme-by-theme method is part of this process. However, one or more of these methods can be used for data comparison and integration (Fetters et al., 2013). By using conceptual framework and concepts to explain key findings on HRM System Strength, PAQ, and non-work domain elements inside the Pakistani and Chinese telecom organizations, this study used a convergent parallel design to combine the results of two data sets. The findings of the two data sets have been corroborated, compared and merged to find out how both strands of study converge, or diverge from each other.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter's primary objective was to choose the best research design in order to address the study's research questions. In order to determine the types of techniques widely employed by earlier researchers, a review of the research methodology literature was carried out (Bryman, 2007; Bryman, 2017; Saunders and Lewis, 2017). This research used convergent parallel mixed method design with pragmatist philosophy and conducted two independent parallel studies. The objective of the qualitative strand of the study was to understand perceptions of HRM System Strength features in meaning and its influence on PAQ and non-work domain factors in both countries.

Thus 26 semi-structured interviews with Chinese and Pakistani managers were conducted and transcribed verbatim and analyzed using the thematic analysis technique. While, in a quantitative strand, the study objective was to develop a complete understanding of the three-way interaction between PAQ, HRM System Strength, and cultural factors on employee performance with participants of both countries in their unique cultural contexts. Thus, the quantitative strand of this study addresses these objectives via an empirical investigation of the survey results using a final sample of 116 managers and 734 employees as a time-lagged design.

Descriptive statistics, multi-collinearity tests, CFA, and HLM were employed to assess the hypothesized relationships and ensure the ethical considerations were met. It is important to note that the research methodology

chapter should not be viewed in isolation, as it was developed based on a comprehensive evaluation of the literature and analysis of various articles utilizing different research approaches. The qualitative and quantitative strands of the study are presented separately in Chapter 4 before drawing any final conclusions.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter is divided into two main parts, and the first four sections presents findings from the qualitative part of the study while the subsequent sections present findings from the quantitative study. The interview protocol was designed to understand the perceptions of HRM System Strength and its influence on performance appraisal quality. Additionally, the non-work domain factors influence on HRM System Strength was investigated in a cross-country setting. Data were analyzed through NVivo software based on thematic analysis. In theme one, the researcher has assessed how perceptions of HRM System Strength features vary in understanding in the context of Pakistan and China. The second theme explored the culture-free perspective of performance appraisal quality. Finally, the third theme discussed the culture-bound influence of non-work domain factors on HRM System Strength.

Further, the second section presents the results of the quantitative strand of the study. Survey data were collected to analyze the moderating impact of HRM System Strength and cultural factors on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, based on the hypothesis formulated in section 2.4. Results reported in this section are based on confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), reliability and correlational analysis, multicollinearity tests, and Hierarchal linear modeling (HLM) regression analysis to test the hypothesized relationships of this research.

4.1 Qualitative strand of the study: Understanding the perceptions of HRM System Strength, PAQ and non-work domain factors in Pakistan and China

This study presents perceptions of Pakistani and Chinese managers to understand whether the perceptions of HRM System Strength and performance appraisal quality matter in different country contexts.

Sub-objective 1: To understand the meaning of the HRM System Strength features in the Chinese and Pakistani contexts.

Sub-objective 2: To explore the influence of HRM System Strength on performance appraisal quality in the Chinese and Pakistani contexts.

Sub-objective 3: To explore whether and if non-work domain factors of family structures, religiosity, and spirituality influence the perceptions employees develop of HRM System Strength in the Chinese and Pakistani contexts.

As discussed in the methodology chapter, twenty-six (26) in-depth interviews were conducted to understand HRM System Strength perceptions from both country managers. The opinions of HR directors, senior HR managers, and HR line managers were investigated for the analysis. Data indicated that managerial employees from both countries were familiar with HRM System Strength features in their organizations. These dimensions were categorized into three sub-features: distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus.

Under this section three different sub-objectives are presented, which explored whether perceptions of Chinese and Pakistani managers varied in meaning and terminology of HRM System Strength features from the original operationalization of Bowen and Ostroff (2004) in different country context and how

155

it influenced perceptions of PAQ. Furthermore, non-work domain factors influence was explored on HRM System Strength features. Findings are presented below in sub-sections.

4.2 Sub-objective 1: Understanding of HRM System Strength features

4.2.1 Distinctiveness

I start with the findings of the distinctiveness dimension, operationalized as "the ability to capture employees' attention to understand HRM practices distinctly and clearly". The dimension includes understandability, visibility, relevance, and legitimacy of authority. As explained below, managers from both countries reported prior knowledge about these concepts in their unique cultural context.

4.2.1a) Understandability

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) define the concept of understandability as a lack of ambiguity and ease of comprehension of HRM practices. Findings indicated that Chinese and Pakistani managers used different terminologies for the understandability feature. Chinese managers used the term 'clarity' while the Pakistani managers used 'comprehension' of HR practices. Chinese managers reported that they were aware of HR practices clearly because informative sessions were arranged frequently with distinct modes of communication such as social media, etc. The findings suggested that social media enhanced understandability and made the process faster in China. They shared that clarity of HR practices provided more profound insights and enabled employees to perform more proficiently. However,

Pakistani managers linked understandability with the comprehensive and easy delivery of HR practices in their organizations. They shared that clear communication of HR practices enhanced employees' understandability of HR practices. The statements by Chinese and Pakistani respondents in their cultural contexts are given below:

"Fast communication and frequent informative sessions make the vision and culture of the organization easily understandable for employees". (CH22-SM-M)

"An example of clarity about HR practices is using strong communication mechanisms like social media to make employees aware of HR practices that affect their performance by helping employees be proactive". (CH24-SM-M)

"It's important to comprehend HR practices, for example, the employee should know what is going on and what sort of benefit he is getting from it, this will influence their job performance". (PK15-D-F)

"Understandability of performance management practices is that the whole process needs to be comprehensive, so employees don't have to ask, again and again, what are their responsibilities and what HR practices are meant to improve their productivity". (PK9-LM-M)

4.2.1b) Visibility

Bowen and Ostorff (2004) defined visibility as salience and observance of HR practices. From the findings, it was revealed that the terminology used by Chinese managers for visibility is the observability of HR practices, which was the same term used by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), while Pakistani managers used the term transparency of HR practices. Analysis from interviews indicated that HR policies

and procedures were visibly communicated to employees because the communication mechanisms were strong and distinctive. Chinese managers expressed that observability raises the sense of belongingness in the organization among employees. Pakistani managers reported employees should be aware of HR practices transparently to improve efficiency in their work. Pakistani managers commented that HR practices must be transparent to employees so that they should not face any difficulty accessing information about these practices. Some comments by Chinese and Pakistani HR managers highlight these aspects are given below:

"Observability of HR practices means a holistic approach to monitor, analyse, and trace events inside the organization" (CH22-SM-M).

"Observance means having visibility of HR practices because employees feel a sense of belonging with the organization". (CH26-D-M).

One of Pakistan's HR managers commented as:

"Transparency of HR practices means understanding HR practices, such as employee training plan, recruitment implementation, and assessment standards, which must have transparency so that employees improve their work performance". (PK7-SM-M)

"Visibility means that HR practices are transparent enough to be accessed easily by all employees at their discretion". (PK8-SM-F)

4.2.1c) Relevance

Another sub-feature that comes under distinctiveness is 'relevance'. The term relevance is defined by Bowen and Ostroff (2004) as "the degree to which employees successfully reach alignment between individual and organizational goals". The

findings revealed that the term relevance in both cultures was understood and perceived as the same in meaning and terminology as operationalized by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), which was the clarity of goal alignment. Most Chinese managers reported that it's very important to have precise goal alignment in their cultural context because rewards were attached to achieving goals. Moreover, their culture promoted clarity in achieving goal congruence. While Pakistani managers also emphasized that goal alignment was very important in their culture, creating a sense of motivation to work. Further, a few of them revealed that employees' goals should be aligned with the management's goals. One Chinese HR manager stated:

"Goal alignment means to set goals according to company's goals, to get financial benefits and rewards. In Chinese culture, employees need to achieve their goals because cultural norms define what is encouraged, discouraged, or accepted. So, it's only possible with clear goal alignment". (CH19-LM-F)

Pakistani participants stated that:

"Goal alignment *means accomplishing the set goal. Employees believe it is very important to align their goals for good prospects, which raises a sense of motivation". (PK02-SM-F)*

"Goal alignment *means that employees' goals should follow top management's goals. This effect should get trickled down to employees to have clarity in goal alignment". (PK06-SM-M)*

Complementing this point, another manager stated that:

"Alignment of goals means that every individual in the organization knows about their goals. When the objectives are clear, employees can perform well. So,

clear alignment of goals is observed in this organization". (PK04-SM-M)

A relatively large percentage of Pakistani managers revealed that they perceived relevance to be low in practice as employees' expectations differed from the organization's. Few of them reported that organizations' expectations were higher than the capacity of the employees. For instance, managers had to push employees to achieve the set goals. Therefore, it becomes harder to make employees willingly work on their own, and they resist working according to management's set goals. Employees think that management never gives them realistic targets, which causes a conflict between management and employee goals. When probed further, a manager stated,

"Goals assigned to employees are aligned with the organization's goals, but it is observed that employees sometimes resist in some cases because the targets are unrealistic and difficult for them to meet". (PK1-SM-M)

"Goal alignment seems to be misaligned when employees consider it difficult to achieve, so they resist". (PK6-SM-F)

Making this point clear, one of the HR managers stated as follows:

"Goal alignment means to align goals with management goals. But to be very honest, management never gives employees realistic goals, so there is always a conflict between management goals and employees' goals, which resultantly impacts employee performance." (PK03-SM-M)

Thus, the findings emerged that Chinese and Pakistani HR managers had the same understanding of relevance feature, as per the original definition by Bowen and Ostroff (2004). However, a large percentage of Pakistani managers reported that

employees had issues in achieving this goal alignment which appeared more a matter of perception and willingness of employees to exert effort. Further, a clear goal alignment was observed between employees' and organizational goals in the Chinese context.

4.2.1d) Legitimacy of Authority

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) defined the legitimacy of authority as submitting to performance expectations as formally sanctioned behaviour. Data indicated that Chinese and Pakistani managers had the same understanding of the term legitimacy of authority operationalized by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), but the terminology differed slightly in both cultures. Chinese managers perceived legitimacy as a credible authority and reported that effective communication promoted credibility among employees.

Chinese managers revealed that credibility strengthened the communication lines between HR leadership and employees. Few participants said that instructions by managers at positions of authority were considered more credible due to their influential status. They further related this credibility concept with the leader's sincerity (this point will be further elaborated in the discussion section) that influenced employees' performance. However, For Pakistani managers, the legitimacy of authority was perceived as a high-status authority or top management communication. They reported that messages from higher authority mattered to employees at all levels and helped them understand what was expected of them. Justifying points discussed above, one of the Chinese HR managers stated:

"Credible authority means communication from people in authority about HR

161

practices. The instructions of people at the authoritative position are more professional, broader, credible and considered more important by employees."
(CH26-D-M)

Another participant, supporting this view on events that happened in their organization stated:

"Credibility means communicated messages are from people in top authority. Of course, it is considered an important message. Like when our manager circulates a message, we can check it at our convenient time, but when the message is from the general manager, it is our priority to check". (CH17-LM-F)

"High-status authority means communication from top management. It is the lifeblood for employees at all levels, specifically high-status position matters in communication". (PK-07-SM-F)

Table 4.1: Supporting quotations for distinctiveness dimension

Features	Quotes from Chinese and Pakistani managers
Understandability	*"Understandability means **clear** instructions about the HR-related practices, for the benefit of employees. It provides a wholesome understanding of practices and resultantly provides proficiency"* (CH-19LM-F). *"Comprehensive HR practices make instructions understandable". (PK9-LM-F)*
Visibility	*"HR department has a wonderful opportunity to raise observability of its policies and practices, making processes more visible. Our HR department uses social media most of the time as a communication tool" (CH23-SM-M).* *"Visibility means to share HR policies with complete transparency with employees. They will work according to the company rules and improve themselves quickly" (PK21-SM-F).*

4.2.2 Consistency

Relevance	*"Alignment means setting higher goals so that employees can align their professional and personal goals with their organizational goals". (CH26-D-M).*
	"Goal alignment means the goal should be achievable. Therefore, if employees meet their targets, their motivation will be high to serve the organization effectively. Top management's goals are always higher than the goals employees can achieve". (PK10-LM-F)
Legitimacy of authority	*"Legitimacy of authority means sincerity of leader. If the leaders are sincere, then their subordinates try to work hard. Due to their credible position, communication from them is considered important". (CH22-SM-F)*
	"Authority means a respectful and reliable position of manager. Authority in the organization has a credible role for the employees. If the leadership is sincere, employees work hard and perceive their job as important. (CH21-SM-M)

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) defined consistency as establishing consistent relationships among employees, and it is comprised of three sub-features as validity, instrumentality, and consistent HR messages.

4.2.2a) Validity

Our finding related to the *consistency* dimension indicated that the feature of *validity* which is defined by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), as 'what managers intend to do and what they do', was perceived as the same in meaning, but the terminology used was different in both cultural contexts. Chinese managers perceived the validity feature as managers followed the same as they implemented, and ultimately employees followed their leaders. They elaborated that when an employee's manager practiced the same thing he implemented, it validated things. Thus, Chinese perceptions about validity exist when the management's words and actions are the same. Further, few of them revealed that back-and-forth communication about HR

practices with employees made things validated. Similarly, for Pakistani managers, validity is meant as communicating rightly and clearly, walk the talk and talk the walk. They explained clear communications validated things to a greater extent when managers walked the talk as it positively influenced the performance of employees.

One of the senior Pakistani managers shared:

"Walk the talk means consistency between what managers claim to do and what they do in reality. If a leader's instructions are inconsistent and he does not communicate rightly and clearly, it will negatively impact the performance of employees. So, the leader must walk the talk". (PK01-SM-M)

"Talk the walk means that a manager has to prove himself by his clear actions". (PK10-LM-F)

Chinese manager supporting this view commented below:

"Following the leader means that employees get direction in their work, with back-and-forth communication. When managers do what they say, it increases their credibility." (CH19-LM-M)

"Employees follow their team leaders. So, when team leaders follow the same as they implemented, then communication becomes validated." (CH22-SM-F)

4.2.2b) Instrumentality

The instrumentality feature of consistency is defined as timely communication with employees about incentives to trigger desired outcomes. The findings highlighted the meaning of the instrumentality feature was perceived to be the same as operationalized by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), but the terminology used was different in Chinese and Pakistani contexts. Chinese managers expressed that

being instrumental meant cause and effect relationship. By cause and effect, they meant explicit rules about monetary benefits related to employees' work outcomes. At the same time, Pakistani managers termed 'instrumentality' as motivating employees by timely informing about benefits. Managers reported that employees' motivation levels came down if no monetary incentives were involved. The findings emerged that in both cultures, timely communication of rewards and bonuses was linked with better performance. So, timely communication about rewards was very important because if there was no consistency in compensation and its time, it could impact employee performance negatively (for example, frustration and disappointment etc.). Few Chinese managers reported that rewards and benefits made their work more charming. As one of the Chinese HR managers stated:

"Timely communication of rewards means that the HR department should build a clear link between rewards and outcomes so, employees can perform according to those rules and know their monetary benefits related to their work outcomes." (CH23-SM-M)

"Cause and effect mean a positive relationship between performance and reward. For instance, if an employee achieves the target earlier, he will be given a double bonus. But if he is not aware of rewards, there is no charm to work harder to do it earlier". (CH19-LM-F)

As commented by Pakistani participants:

"Timely communication of reward means to announce a reward timely, but if it is delayed, it will impact employee's performance negatively, such as disappointment and frustration. So, rewards should be given in a timely and

consistent manner". (PK10-LM-F)

"In our company, we give cash rewards to those who have good performances. Firstly, they get motivated by it, and secondly, other employees also benchmark the good performers". (PK09-LM-M)

4.2.2c) Consistent HR messages

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) defined consistent HR messages as communicating different HR messages that remain compatible and stable in the signals over time. Findings indicated that the feature of consistency was perceived as the same in meaning but the terminology used was different in both contexts. The Chinese managers perceived consistent HR messages as stability in HR messages over time. Managers expressed that sharing mechanism should be clear in communication, making it consistent and stable over time and building trust among employees. At the same time, Pakistani managers perceived consistent HR messages as coordination and communication of HR practices. They reported that if there was a strong communication mechanism, then all the HR practices would be perceived to have the same message. Further, they believed that consistency in HR messages was very important during coordination with each other. As one of the senior HR managers stated:

"Consistency means co-ordination and communication among executives and employees. The message from the sender to the receiver must be consistent with having a clear and smooth communication." (PK9-LM-M)

"We maintain consistency in our activities when we coordinate and communicate with each other". (PK03-SM-M)

166

"Information related to HR policies and practices mostly remains same over time. But when new policies and practices are implemented, it becomes challenging to ensure consistency. So, we try to send stable signals over time, by clear communication." (CH24-SM-F)

"By stability in HR messages means, we ensure that the information from sender to receiver is easily understood without errors over time." (CH18-LM-M)

Few managers from both countries reported that they use clear communication mechanisms to ensure clarity among employees. Different smart mobile apps, digitalized modes, and Facebook portals provided clarity in both cultures. As stated by both country's managers:

"We have a lot of apps and portals like employee self-service portal (ESS), and through different communication channels, we communicate with each other at the same time". (PK05-SM-M)

"We use emails and Facebook at the work portal, and make organization-wide announcements, so employees receive information." (CH17-LM-F)

Table 4.2: Supporting quotations for consistency dimension.

Features	Quotes from Chinese and Pakistani managers
Validity	*"If you say something else and do the opposite, employees will get confused, so right communication and walk the talk matters for consistency" (PK07-SM-F).* *"Leader's actions are valuable when he acts as implemented because employees have to follow their leaders" (CH17-LM-M)*
Instrumentality	*"If there is a clear definition of the relationship between remuneration and work, employees will do their tasks as soon as possible to get a higher remuneration." (PK07-SM-M)*

167

	"It will have a good impact on employee's work when they are informed about rewards and benefits timely" (CH26-D-M)
	"Inconsistency in communication affects the performance of the employees. As employees will not be able to find the direction in their work, they may withdraw because the situation may go against the original intention." (PK04-SM-F)
Consistent HR messages	*"The consistency of HR message builds trusts among employees and managers. It can be achieved when HR messages are uniformly delivered." (CH20-LM-F)*
	"Clear communication means to maintain consistency over time. We communicate messages through emails, on notice board, etc., so employees know what is expected from them and how much of the targets they have achieved". (CH17-LM-M)

4.2.3 Consensus

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) defined consensus as agreeing on HR-related practices by employees using fair means. It has two sub-features of fairness and agreement. Findings emerged that understanding in meaning was same about fairness and agreement features but the terminology used was different in Chinese and Pakistani culture.

4.2.3a) Fairness

Fairness means having combined fair perceptions of the HR practices that adhered to the principles of justice. Chinese managers perceived the meaning of fairness of HR practices as a feeling of justice. Managers reported that feeling of justice means establishing fair policies and practices as a fundamental requirement. Chinese managers reported that HR practices adhered to the principles of justice

because it was promoted in their organizations. While Pakistani managers perceived the meaning of fairness as fair evaluations of HR practices. Managers discussed that fair evaluation means fairness in different aspects; for instance, evaluations of HR practices and policy implementation in all departments should be fair and essential. Findings emerged that manager reported that if the process was perceived to be unfair, it would lead to demotivation among employees. One of the Chinese managers stated:

"Feeling of justice means that we always try to be fair enough while dealing with employees". (CH22-SM-M)

"Doing justice means to rate employees fairly according to the work they do. Our setup is based on equality where everyone is rated equally based on their performance." (CH18-LM-F)

"Fair evaluation means to develop a stronger perception of fairness. More specifically, fairness of performance appraisal is enhanced after robust discussions regarding employees work during board meetings". (PK15-D-M)

"If you look at the performance management system, it is about the fair evaluation of employees by their manager. If the manager does not evaluate employees fairly, it will cause demotivation and frustration among employees." (PK08-SM-F)

Few line managers commented on fairness in evaluations that a sense of inequality emerges when there is a policy change and inconsistencies in HR-related issues. As reported:

"Changing HR practices or not following the process can impact the

employee's sense of fairness. Because of the policy change, employees will be overwhelmed and feel unfair. (PK9-LM-M)

"The flaws and inconsistencies that surround various HRM aspects inhibit the sense of justice and fair treatment in the organization." (CH17-LM-M)

4.2.3b) Agreement

Bowen and Ostroff (2004) defined the agreement feature as stakeholders agreeing upon HR-related messages and helping in promoting consensuses. Both countries' managers assigned the same meaning to this feature, but the terminology used differed. The data emerged that for Chinese managers, the agreement meant supporting decisions. On the other hand, Pakistani managers reported that the meaning of agreement is unanimity in decision-making. Few managers commented that decision-making was critical in the company because many stakeholders were involved in the decision-making, which made it challenging to find common ground. An interesting finding emerged that a large percentage of the senior managers reported that they faced a lot of difficulty in reaching unanimous decisions due to conflicts reported in getting support from all departments. As stated by one of the HR Directors:

"Supporting decisions means to value each other's decisions and then make a common decision at the end for execution and implementation." (CH25-D-M)

"Our management supports the HR policies and practices of the organization. Specifically, the top management plays a significant role when policies are being discussed." (CH26-D-M)

Supporting this, senior managers also commented:

"Policy is not formed by HR department only, but there is full management agreement behind it, and it is then unanimously approved by everyone." (PK03-SM-M)

"Unanimous decision means agreeing on the same decision, but there are a lot of procedures to follow before forming a unanimous decision, for instance, discussions, team decisions, stakeholder views, etc., then a decision is formed." (PK05-SM-M)

Comment shared by one of the directors on the difficulty in decision making as below:

"Decision-making means getting support from higher authorities. It sometimes becomes tough for all top management to support the same HR-related decisions." (PK16-D-F).

Table 4.3: Supporting quotes for consensus dimension

Features	Quotes from Chinese and Pakistani managers
Fairness	*"Yes, the process is fair and justifiable because it is a visible process, and employees' performance are discussed during board meetings." (CH24-SM-F)*
	"In large organizations, you set targets and goals, and according to it, you evaluate employees. Otherwise, fair evaluation is not possible". (PK06-SM-F)
	"The normal practice in our organization is that we conduct meetings. We tell employees their strengths and weaknesses individually and evaluate them accordingly. The system is open to them, and in my view, it is fair enough". (PK03-SM-M)

"So far, I have seen many problems in getting management support for HR policies. There is a tug-of-war in decision-making regarding HR policies most of the time. So, in my view, the beginning is always very challenging for decision making but ends better." (PK05-SM-M)

Agreement *"The decision is supported unanimously, but there are always different opinions and views of policymakers at the back end. Few people can be in favor, and others can oppose the decision. But once the decision is made, things get refined, and the management is one unit". (PK04-SM-F)*

4.3 Sub-objective 2: Influence of HRM System Strength on performance appraisal quality

To evaluate the quality of the performance appraisal process, I utilized Sanders et al.'s (2008) three dimensions of quality: clarity, regularity, and openness. Clarity pertains to the degree of familiarity with the PAQ process and its purpose, while regularity refers to providing feedback regularly to assess performance and effectuate improvements. Openness, on the other hand, concerns the level of communication between the supervisor and the employee, particularly in providing feedback on the employee's performance. The results showed that embedding the performance appraisal within a strong HRM system had the most significant impact on its effectiveness. HR managers from both countries affirmed that the HRM system's strength affected the quality of the performance appraisal process. Specifically, they claimed that a highly distinctive, consistent, and consensual HRM system resulted in employees reporting higher levels of clarity, openness, and regularity in feedback.

4.3.1 Clarity

In the perceptions of HR managers of both countries, HRM System Strength influenced the clarity of the performance appraisal. The data revealed that, among all features of HRM System Strength, understandability and visibility features of distinctiveness played a vital role in enhancing the clarity provided in the feedback process. Chinese managers indicated that understandability and visibility features of distinctiveness made the feedback process clear in communication. For instance, when the communication process was visible and understandable, it gave employees a clear direction about the organization's vision and the expected outcomes. Thus, the employees had clarity about the expected reward behaviors leading towards the high quality of performance appraisals. Similarly, Pakistani managers revealed that providing transparency in feedback was unambiguous to employees because their perceptions were influenced by the understandability and visibility features of the distinctiveness of the HRM system. For example, employees were clearly informed about their targets, deadlines, and other basis of evaluations. As stated by one of the Chinese managers:

"When we conduct performance appraisal, our process is visible, as it provides clear direction and communication. So, every employee knows how much bonus he will get based on his performance and the feedback provided." (CH09-LM-M)

As reported by a Pakistani participant:

"We formally communicate appraisal process has started. This is our deliberate effort to inform employees clearly about their tasks, evaluations,

deadlines. Also, a certain percentage is distributed that is tied to an employee's performance, So, the process of providing feedback is very understandable and visible in communication." (PK03-SM-M)

4.3.2 Regularity

According to Chinese and Pakistani managers, HRM System Strength influenced the regularity in the performance appraisal process. Findings indicated that consistency played a vital role in delivering regularity in the performance appraisal process. Further, managers perceived that when HR messages were communicated consistently, they improved regularity in the performance appraisal process. Chinese managers reported that HR messages were communicated at regular intervals in a consistent manner. Due to consistency in communication of appraisal system, employees enabled themselves to achieve their monthly tasks. Similarly, Pakistani managers reported that the process of conducting feedback was easy to follow because consistent HR messages were delivered, which helped employees improve themselves regularly. As managers commented on this:

"Appraisal is consistently conducted every month. Our annual targets are divided into monthly targets and are trickled down to the lower level. These targets are considered as HR messages delivered consistently and in a regular manner, which helps them achieve their targets." (CH22-SM-M)

Similar views were gathered from Pakistani Managers as well:

"The process of conducting a performance appraisal in our organization is quite simple. We provide feedback to employees biannually, in a consistent manner. Employee's appraisal form is filled at regular intervals and based on that they

improve their performance." (PK11-LM-M)

"As far as our organization is concerned, we do mid-year review and final year review, so it is a regular process, and in this way, employees know where they are lacking and how they can improve themselves." (PK02-SM-F)

4.3.3 Openness

Lastly, managers from both countries indicated that the influence of the fairness feature of HRM System Strength played a vital role in providing openness in the performance appraisal process. Findings suggested that the influence of fairness in the process resulted in open communication in the feedback, which improved employees' performance. It was observed that open dialogue between the sender and receiver of feedback provided opportunities for improved performance and raised a sense of justice and fairness.

Chinese managers reported that employees communicated their final ratings openly if they performed well, but managers communicated personally to them if their performance ratings were low. So, the performance appraisal process was perceived as open, fair, and just. However, Pakistani managers reported that they try to be fair when they conduct performance appraisals. When the employees felt justice in appraisal ratings, it assured high quality in open feedback. This mechanism of the performance management process was openly published in guidelines provided to employees from the beginning. As stated by Chinese managers:

"We send an email about the final ratings to employees and don't let other team members know. If the employee has a low rating, managers communicate it personally, whereas good performing employees are announced in front of all".

175

(CH22-SM-M)

"Employees are communicated about their basic performance ratings, and once the cycle is closed, we email them about their grades and increment. This is an open system of appraisal, purely performance-based feedback". (CH17-LM-M)

Comments by Pakistani participants are given below:

"To be fair enough, we have to grade our employees openly on a performance rating criterion already shared with them. For instance, whenever my employee will be graded as C, I have to justify why I have graded him C, and which KPI's he did not accomplish, up to the expectations". (PK02-SM-F)

Table 4.4: Supporting quotes for performance appraisal quality

Dimensions	Quotes from Chinese and Pakistani Managers
Clarity	*"When HR is sending messages, in the form of emails, notifications, and texts, they are communicated clearly. We ask employees whether feedback was given or not". (CH10-LM-M)* *"We communicate HR messages clearly in the form of feedback on their performances." (PK04-SM-F)*
Regularity	*"Increment is given every year, bonuses are given every quarter, and we conduct appraisal at regular basis." (CH24-SM-M)* *"The annual performance evaluation is summarized in weekly, monthly, and annual reports that clarify the bonus calculation proportion. 360-degree evaluation of personal performance at regular intervals of individuals, colleagues, and leaders. Finally, the performance bonus is consistently determined according to the company's policy." (PK03-SM-M)*
Openness	*"When we announce the performance management process, we publish the guidelines very openly, which will be the highest and lowest grading criterion. Above all, it all depends upon employee's achievement of KPIs". (PK7-SM-M)*

4.4 Sub-objective 3: Influence of non-work domain factors on HRM System Strength features

Within the non-work domain factors, three important contextual factors were identified in the data that included family structures, religiosity, and spirituality, which were responsible for differences in the behavior of managers in both countries. The data indicated that perceptions of Pakistani and Chinese managers varied in understanding the influence of non-work domain factors on HRM System Strength features due to the unique contextual differences between them. Findings are reported below.

4.4.1 Family structures

While studying the non-work domain factor of family structures based on employees residing in nuclear and joint families influenced employee perceptions related to HRM System Strength. In Chinese culture, there is the dominance of the nuclear family structure comprised of parents and their children, while in Pakistan, there is the dominance of the joint family structures consisting of many nuclear families, i.e., grandparents, uncle(s), aunt(s), and their dependent children. The data indicated that in Pakistan, primarily employees resided in joint families. Hence, there was a need to meet the greater responsibility of the immediate and extended family for which employees seek more clarity in the performance requirements.

Particularly they seek more clarity on HR communication because they extensively relied on the rewards and bonuses for fulfilling their needs. Likewise, as they lived in a joint family and had more responsibilities, they needed more clarity in terms of the HR practices of the organization. Managers thought that the more they

were able to deliver well, the lesser the work stress they got due to the strong HRM system. Employees' performance does get impacted when communication and clarity are not there because employees had to fulfill many responsibilities, which put them psychologically under pressure. On the other hand, Chinese managers reported that in their cultural context, employees mainly resided in nuclear family structures and had to fulfil fewer responsibilities of their family members, which influenced perceptions of HRM System Strength in a way, that clarity of HR practices and linkages of rewards positively impacted employee's performance. Some quotes are given below:

"To some extent, those employees who had more family responsibilities, link it with a rewarding system and work harder to have clarity of HR practices to get good rewards to fulfill their family responsibilities." (PK03-SM-F)

"Family structure does influence HRM System Strength and employee's performance. For instance, an employee who lives in joint family structures has many dependents on him; psychologically, he might face problems, but when there is a clarity in communication of HR-related messages, he cannot get detract from work, and his performance remains good". (PK-LM-3)

"In China, the family structure influences employee's performance in a sense that parents are restricted towards their children's upbringing and small families have fewer responsibilities, so it has an influence which comes from their background, and clarity of practices promotes a good performance." (CH19-LM-M)

"Well, I think it depends upon personal experiences of employees like in our country mostly employees reside in a nuclear family system and had fewer

178

requirements to meet, so an employee might not be interested in monetary rewards,
but he seems more interested in seeking fairness in overall HR practices to secure
sense of justice." (CH18-LM-M)

4.4.2 Religiosity and spirituality

The cultural factor of spirituality is defined as the degree to which an individual's spirituality is based on perceptions of honesty and ethics, and religiosity which is defined as an individual's religious beliefs and practices keep them motivated in their work, may have an influence on the perceptions employees build related to HRM System Strength. In Chinese culture, there was the dominance of believing in spirituality in terms of honesty, ethics, and righteousness. In contrast, there was a dominance of believing in religiosity in terms of motivation, morality, and meaningfulness in Pakistani culture. The data indicated that, in the context of Pakistan, where most employees believe in religiosity, try to follow moral values, consider work a source of motivation, and seek meaningfulness in their work.

These factors were observed to enhance performance, due to which employees seek more clarity and fairness in the performance requirements. Moreover, managers also talked about the spirituality perspective, that it had an intrinsic impact on their performance, but the predominance of religiosity was observed in Pakistani country context. On the other hand, in China's context, managers reported that as it was a socialist country, no religious perspective was followed, and their work-related practices had no influence due to religiosity. But a few managers reported that employees believed in spirituality, and they believed that when they worked with honesty, righteousness, and followed work ethics, it enhanced

179

their performance. Specifically, employees seek more fairness and validation of HR practices to fulfill their performance requirements because they relate these with the goals they set to accomplish. Resultantly, it became important to set goals first, based on the principles of ethics, which provided clarity in guiding their work behavior and positively impacted employees' performance.

A few quotes are given below.

"If it's about religiosity, then I would say that maybe I see most employees link it with morality perspective and relating it with work. I have observed that following moral values increases clarity, fairness, and validation of HR practices, which enhances an employee's performance." (PK3-LM-M)

"One connection of religiosity with employee's performance work which I see is that it is a source of motivation for employee due to which he seeks clarity in his work." (PK8-SM-M)

"Yes, I believe that employees' spirituality is linked with his faith. Whereas faith relates to ethics, which are linked with righteousness and communicating rightly about HR practices, guiding them what goals are important to achieve will impact employee's performance." (CH18-LM-M)

"Yes, if it's about spiritual being, it could indirectly affect performance in terms of ethical means that employee follows. But at the end, employee consider the goal he set to accomplish by following ethical means to perform better, for which he needs fairness of HR practices" (CH21-LM-F)

Interestingly, all the respondents expressed that they don't follow any specific religion and commented as:

"No, I didn't think work and an individual's beliefs are related to spirituality or religion; moreover, there is no influence of religion because I don't follow any religion." (CH19-LM-M)

"China is a socialist country, and the influence of religion is not too much." (CH24-SM-M)

"In China, the religious perspective is not important, but in other countries, people have religious perspectives and belief systems, which may have a better influence on employee performance. Because they may think their God will punish them so they will avoid some mistakes, but they seek fairness at their work." (CH17-LM-M)

Table 4.5: Supporting quotes for non-work domain factors

Factors	Quotes from Chinese and Pakistani managers
Family structure	*"Yes, FS had a big impact. Because for few person families, pressure ought to be less." (CH17-LM-M)* *"Psychologically, employees face many problems because they have to meet a lot of family and work requirements, so they need to have clarity of HR practices for performing well". (PK04-SM-F)*
Religiosity and spirituality	*"Yes, our religion ISLAM says to do work with complete honesty, but it's linked with work in a way when an individual's beliefs are based on religiosity, then it could have an indirect effect in terms of seeking meaningfulness in work that requires certain aspects to be fair and clear, which influence their perceptions about work which make their performance good." (PK2-LM-F)* *"Having faith in religion is my disposition and, in my opinion, might be I thought to perform Umrah. So, this bonus is important for me, for which I need clarity in my goal. So, it all depends on what's going on in the background to make you work harder for the goal and remain motivated, making you perform better". (PK03-SM-M)* *"I don't think there is any religious perspective in China." (CH23-LM-M)* *"In our cultural context, it's about achieving our goals. It is more likely to be related to monetary terms, not related to the spirituality of an employee." (CH10-LM-M)*

4.5 Summary of the Qualitative strand of the study

The findings of the qualitative study suggested that HRM System Strength features like understandability, visibility, legitimacy of authority, validity, instrumentality, consistent HR messages, and fairness were perceived differently in terminologies and meanings as compared to the original operationalization of Bowen and Ostroff (2004) construct, while features of relevance and agreement were perceived as the same in terminology and meaning by both country managers. Consequently, the HRM System Strength was considered a culture-bound construct because situations or environments had a plethora of distinctiveness due to contextual differences.

Furthermore, findings revealed that HRM System Strength features like visibility, consistency, and fairness had a culture-free influence in providing Chinese and Pakistani managers quality (clarity, regularity, and openness) feedback. In particular, findings alluded to the importance of performance appraisal quality, which was perceived to be the same in enhancing the performance of employees. Lastly, based on this study results, non-work domain factors had a culture-bound influence on HRM System Strength features. Chinese managers who resided in nuclear family structures reported that fewer responsibilities made them seek fairness for fulfilling their performance requirements.

In contrast, Pakistani managers who lived in joint family structures said that clarity and rewards were more critical for fulfilling their performance requirements. On the other hand, Chinese managers did not believe in religiosity. Still, their

spirituality encourages them to accomplish set goals to perform better. In contrast, the religiosity factor was considered very important by Pakistani managers because it influenced the perception of clarity and fairness, making employees perform better.

4.6 Quantitative Strand of the Study

The quantitative strand of the study was based on examining moderating roles of HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors in the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance and to investigate the impact of three-way interaction among these variables. Quantitative techniques were used to answer the following research objectives developed for this research.

Research Objective 2: To examine the moderating impact of employee perceptions of HRM System Strength on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance.

Research Objective 3: To examine the moderating impact of non-work domain factors of religiosity, spirituality, and family structure on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance.

Research Objective 4: To investigate the impact of three-way interaction of performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors on employee performance.

Data were collected from Pakistani and Chinese managers and their employees (i.e., multisource data) through a time-lagged design (i.e., one-month interval). At Time 1, a total of 1400 questionaries were distributed to the managers and their employees in China and Pakistan in the Telecommunication sector. The final sample size after matched data with Time 1 and Time 2 responses comprised of

850 questionnaires. Among these 850 questionnaires, 734 were completed by employees, and 116 were completed by managers. At Time 1, the employee has to rate their performance appraisal quality, perceptions of HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors Whereas at Time 1 and Time 2, managers have to rate the performance of their respective employees.

4.6.1 Evaluation of the Measurement Models

4.6.1a) Confirmatory factor analysis

Before conducting any further analysis, it is necessary to assess and establish the reliability and validity of the constructs. In this regard, Hair et al. (2014) proposed various tests to evaluate the reliability and validity of the constructs. Before testing research hypotheses, the researcher conducted CFA to test the fitness of the obtained model (Muthén and Muthén, 2012). According to Kline (2011), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is a method that scrutinizes pre-defined measurement models, where the number of factors and their association with the indicators are distinctly identified. CFA is a useful technique to establish the measurement model and validates each item to be loaded on its expected latent variable (Thompson, 2004; Lewis, 2017). Thus, CFA measures the degree to which the assigned structure corresponds to reality, demonstrating construct validity (Hair et al., 2006).

For the constructs measured at the individual level (i.e., performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, spirituality, religiosity and employee performance), a CFA is performed to justify individual-level responses. When a researcher has a clear theoretically driven model that specifies the number of

elements and how these factors are associated with one another, CFA is regarded as an appropriate data analytic technique (Thompson, 2004). Multiple indices were used to evaluate the goodness of fit for the measurement models (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Specifically, the researcher relied on the overall model fitness indexes (discussed in Chapter 3). Below Table 4.6 shows the cutoff criterion of the test statistic and their respective obtained statistic values.

Table 4.6: Cutoff Criteria Guidelines for Model Fit

Test statistic/ index	Cutoff criteria	Obtained statistic
df	> 0	2.54
CMIN = Chi-square / df	$\leq$ df	1.04
GFI	$\geq .90$	0.91
TLI	$\geq .95$	0.92
NFI	$\geq .90$	0.93
CFI	$\geq .93$	0.93
RMSEA	$\leq .08$	0.04

Notes: N=734. df = degrees of freedom; χ 2 = chi-square; GFI = Goodness of Fit Index; NFI = Normed Fit Index; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker Lewis Index; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

To establish the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurements, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to test the measurement model. This model comprised items for the five latent variables, namely, performance appraisal quality, religiosity, spirituality, HRM System Strength, and employee performance. Sarstedt et al. (2019) recommended a two-stage process for validating the higher and lower order constructs, which involved (1) the measurement model of lower-order components, and (2) the measurement model of higher-order constructs that established connections between the lower and higher order constructs, in accordance with the guidelines provided by Hair et al. (2017) and Ramayah et al. (2016).

The study employed the formative indicator approach to establish the

convergent validity of lower-order constructs, examine collinearity between indicators, and determine the significance of outer weights. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were used to evaluate the internal consistency of lower order constructs, which represented indicators of the higher order constructs. Furthermore, the reliability of indicators and the average variance extracted (AVE) were assessed to establish the convergent and discriminant validity. Following the recommendations by Podsakoff et al., (2003) regarding reverse codding items, one reverse codded item (SS11) was removed, whose factor loading was below 0.40. Then, CFA was conducted by specifying the indicators only loading to their corresponding unique latent variables, with a baseline five-factor model [EP; PAQ; REL; SPI; SS].

First of all, a one-factor model was tested by collapsing all the variables into one factor as, in comparison to other three models resulted in (CMIN/df = 4.98, CFI = 0.73, GLI= 0.71, TLI = 0.69, RMSEA = 0.089). Then, another model was tested as two factor model where independent variable (i.e., PAQ) was collapsed with all the moderators (i.e., religiosity, spirituality and HRM System Strength) into two factors [EP; PAQ+ REL+ SPI+ SS], and resulted as (CMIN/df = 3.55, CFI = 0.8, GLI= 0.78, TLI = 0.79, RMSEA = 0.079). Furthermore, three-factor model was tested by combining religiosity, spirituality and HRM System Strength into three factors as [EP; PAQ; REL+ SPI+ SS] and resulted as (CMIN/df = 2.34, CFI = 0.83, GLI= 0.87, TLI = 0.86, RMSEA = 0.061). Finally, a five-factor model was tested with separate factors as [EP; PAQ; REL; SPI; SS], shown in Table 4.7 as (CMIN/df = 1.09, CFI = 0.93, GLI= 0.91, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.047) indicates the best reasonable fit of

186

the model. Thus resultantly, the five-factor model resulted best than the possible other three alternative models presented in Table 4.7. Thus, it demonstrates the distinctiveness of study variables.

The detailed assessment of the measurement models constructs as performance appraisal quality, religiosity, spirituality, HRM System Strength, and employee performance are provided in the section below. The section evaluates the model to justify the goodness of fit to assess construct validity, internal consistency reliability, and convergent validity.

Table 4.7*: Comparison of Different Models - Confirmatory Factor Analysis*

Model	Variables	CMIN	NFI	TLI	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	
One-factor model	All factors combined	5.01	0.761	0.745	0.755	0.766	0.091	
Two-factor model	EP; PAQ+REL+SPI+HRM SS	3.34	0.800	0.796	0.769	0.802	0.077	
Three-Factor model	EP; PAQ; REL+SPI+HRM SS	2.21	0.812	0.843	0.858	0.878	0.059	
Five-factor model	EP; PAQ; REL, SPI; HRM SS	1.11	0.927	0.923	0.915	0.927	0.048	**Baseline model**

Notes: Employee n=734. Tucker-Lewis's index (TLI), Incremental fit index (IFI), Comparative fit Index PAQ: Performance appraisal quality, HRM SS: HR strength, REL: Religiosity, SPI: Spirituality and EP: Employee performance. Family structure variable was not included as it was dichotomous variable, dummy codded (0 and 1).

4.6.2 Reliability and Convergent Validity

4.6.2a) Internal consistency reliability

The assessment of construct reliability via internal consistency is a crucial

criterion in research. Typically, Cronbach's alpha is used to measure the inter-correlations between the items of the construct and establish its internal consistency reliability, as suggested by Hair et al. (2010). However, Cronbach's alpha assumes that all indicators have equal loadings on the construct. Therefore, Composite reliability (CR) has been recommended as an alternative criterion for evaluating construct reliability by Hair, Anderson, Babin, and Black (2010) and Kline (2011). Unlike Cronbach's alpha, CR takes into account the outer loadings of all the indicators of the construct. Similar to Cronbach's alpha, the interpretation of composite reliability falls between 0 and 1. Values ranging from 0.7 to 0.9 are typically deemed acceptable, according to Nunally and Bernstein (1994). The composite reliability of the construct of PAQ is 0.90, HRM SS is 0.940, spirituality is 0.875 higher than expected in its original scale (please refer to Lynn, 2009), religiosity is 0.78, and employee performance is 0.93.

Table 4.8: Factor loading of constructs

Construct	Measurement items	Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability (CR)
Performance appraisal quality	PAQ1	.802	0.642	0.845
	PAQ2	.824		
	PAQ3	.785		
Religiosity	REL1	.653	0.502	0 .821
	REL2	.762		
	REL3	.737		
	REL4	.689		
	REL5	.697		
Spirituality	SPI1	.750	0.632	0.923
	SPI2	.734		
	SPI3	.803		
	SPI4	.793		

	SPI5	.837		
	SPI6	.816		
	SPI7	.827		
HRM System Strength	SS1	.703		
	SS1	.760		
	SS2	.724		
	SS3	.720		
	SS4	.713		
	SS5	.702		
	SS6	.703		
	SS7	.777		
	SS8	.748	0.528	0.947
	SS9	.744		
	SS10	.745		
	SS12	.697		
	SS13	.706		
	SS14	.721		
	SS15	.744		
	SS16	.742		
	SS17	.703		
Employee performance	EP1	.761		
	EP2	.750		
	EP3	.784		
	EP4	.788	0.610	0.925
	EP5	.778		
	EP6	.727		
	EP7	.812		
	EP8	.842		
	EP9	.787		

Notes: N=734. Values of the AVEs of the relevant constructs are greater than .50, hence establishing the convergent validity of the constructs.

4.6.2b) Convergent validity

Convergent validity pertains to the degree to which a measurement correlates

with other measurements of the same construct (Sekaran, 2003). To assess convergent

validity, both the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the measurement and the outer loadings of the indicators are analyzed (Hair et al., 2014). Indicators with higher loading values exceeding 0.708 confirm their reliability. The average value extracted (AVE) is calculated as the square of this number, which amounts to 0.50, indicating that the construct accounts for 50% of the variation in that particular indicator. Using this cutoff, the relevant construct must account for at least 50% of the variation. The fact that all of the HRM System Strength indicators are still in use and showed reasonably high levels of indicator loadings—higher than 0.628—proves the reliability of these indicators. As recommended by Hair et al., (2014) the average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs is more than the cutoff value of AVE = 0.50. Hence, the composite reliability of all the constructs is established (please see Table 4.8).

4.6.3 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed after conducting CFA, as presented in Table 4.9. The skewness and kurtosis were computed to check the normality of the data. According to Bai and Ng, (2005), the range lies between, +1 o -1 for skewness and +3 to -3 for kurtosis. According to the findings, all of the variables were distributed normally, as their skewness and kurtosis values were below the absolute threshold values of 1 and 3, respectively (Sekaran, 2003).

Table 4.9: Descriptive statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD		
Variable						Skewness Statistic	Kurtosis Statistic
PAQ	734	1	6	2.7	1.3	.752	-.70
HRM SS	734	1	6	3.2	0.8	1.04	.570
Spirituality	734	1	6	2.8	1.8	.293	-1.71
Religiosity	734	1	6	3.0	0.9	.064	-.031
FS	734	0	1	0.4	0.4	.393	-1.85
EP	116	1	6	3.3	1.1	.392	-1.36

Notes: Employees N=734, PAQ: Performance Appraisal Quality, HRM SS: HRM System Strength, REL: Religiosity, SPI: Spirituality, FS: Family structure (dummy coded as 0=nuclear FS and1=Joint FS) and EP: Employee Performance

4.6.4 Demographic characteristics

The demographic characteristics were computed separately for managers and their employees. Respondents were asked to indicate their age, gender, experience, and qualification. A total of 116 company's managing directors, senior managers, line managers, and 734 employees participated in this study. Out of the *participating* company managers, 54% were from Pakistan and 46% were from China. Among the managers, 71% of the participants were male, with an average experience of 5.3 years and an average age of 33 years. The most frequently reported education level was of master's degree as 49%, followed by a graduate degree 37%, and a higher degree 13%. Whereas among the sample of employees, 63% were male, with an average experience of 4.9 years and an average age of 32. Participants with graduate degrees were 60% and those with a master's degree were 32% while some 8% have a higher degree. Summaries of sample profiles and descriptive characteristics were presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Demographic characteristics

		(Employees N=734)		(Managers N=116)	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	462	63	83	71
	Female	271	37	33	29
Age	18-30	295	40.3	35	30.1
	31-40	222	30.2	46	39.3
	41-50	174	23.7	26	22.2
	51-60 and above	43	5.8	11	8.4
Experience (Years)	0-1	123	16.7	13	10.5
	2-5	227	30.9	71	61.2
	6-10	265	36.7	25	22.2
	Over 10	119	16.3	7	6.1
Education	Graduate	421	57.3	43	37.1
	Masters	236	32.1	57	49.2
	Highest degree	77	10.4	16	13.7
Country	Pakistan	401	54.6	60	53.4
	China	333	45.4	56	46.6

4.6.5 Multi-Collinearity Diagnostics

Table 4.11 presents the results of the multicollinearity diagnostics conducted to identify any issues with multicollinearity. The values of VIF for all the independent variables in the employee performance model were found to be within the acceptable range, which is below the threshold value of 5.00, as recommended by various researchers (Shrestha, 2020; Duxbury, 2021; Pallant, 2010; Peng, 2012; Aiken and West, 1991). This indicates that the independent variables for employee performance did not have issues with multicollinearity. The VIF values for the IV 'performance

appraisal quality (PAQ VIF = 1.538), spirituality (SPI VIF=1.107 with tolerance level .903), religiosity (REL VIF=1.003 with tolerance level .997) HRM System Strength (HRM SS VIF = 1.457 with tolerance level .686), and family structures' (FS VIF = 1.034 with tolerance level= .967) were below 5.00, hence there was no issue of multi-collinearity in the data.

Table 4.11: Multi-Collinearity VIF values of the Independent Variables

Independent variables	Dependent variable	
	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance level	VIF
Performance appraisal quality	.650	1.538
Spirituality	.903	1.107
Religiosity	.997	1.003
HRM System Strength	.686	1.457
Family structures	.967	1.034

Note. N= 734

4.6.6 Identification of control variables

For this study, to identify control variables, correlational analysis was carried out using demographical variables for employee and manager level data (Lam et al., 2017; Becker, 2005). To find out the effect of demographic variables on the employee performance (i.e., dependent variable), controlling for employee characteristics, level of education, gender, age in years, and experience were included in a similar vein to Ng and Feldman (2009, 2010), and Guan (2017). using correlational analysis. To account for the potential impact of slight demographic changes on the model, control variables were included when analyzing perception. This was done in an exploratory

sense. Dummy variables were used to control for country effects, specifically for Pakistan and China. In addition, the managerial level data included control variables such as the managers' gender, age, education, and experience. Similarly, the employee-level data included control variables such as employees' gender, age, education, and experience, which were examined using correlational analysis.

4.6.7 Correlation and Reliability

Before conducting moderation analysis, reliability and correlations were computed. Table 4.12 presented the correlations and internal reliabilities (i.e., Cronbach alpha) among all the variables of the study. The assessment of internal consistency for the variables was carried out by examining the values of Cronbach's alpha, which can range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating stronger internal consistency (Gliem and Gliem, 2003). Table 4.12 shows the Cronbach's alpha values for each variable in parentheses, with all values above .80, except religiosity (i.e., .78), which is still considered acceptable according to George and Mallery (2003). The Pearson correlation analysis in Table 4.11 provides information about the direction and strength of the relationships among the variables. As shown, performance appraisal quality (r = .49, p < .01) the HRM System Strength (r = .31, p < .01), spirituality (r= .24, p < .05), religiosity (r= .07, p < .10) and family structure (r= .05, p < .10) were positively correlated with outcome variable of employee performance.

Moreover, among all demographic variables, only subordinates age showed a positive correlation (r= .08, p < .01) with performance of employees, that means age increases, performance of employees consistently increases (Heenkam, 2016).

194

Furthermore, HRM System Strength showed positive relationship with the PAQ (r= .56, p < .05), spirituality of employee's (r= .13, p < .01) religiosity (r= .09, p < .01), and family structures (r= .09, p < .10). Performance appraisal quality was positively related to spirituality (r= .27, p < .01), religiosity (r= .07, p < .05) and family structures (r= .08, p < .05). It was also positively related to age of employee (r= .08, p < .01). Spirituality had positive correlation with religiosity (r= .10, p < .10), that means those employees who are spiritual are also considered religious. It also had a positively significant relationship with family structures (r= .17, p < .05), age (r= .22, p < .01) and gender (r= .10, p < .01) of the employee. Further details and support regarding how these variables were statistically linked to each other was provided in the regression analysis section 4.2.8 of this chapter.

Table 4.12: Correlation and Reliability Table

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1.	Manager age	35	8.6															
2.	Manager gender	0.7	0.5	.13**														
3.	Manager experience	4.9	3.3	.67**	.23**													
4.	Manager education	3.0	1.5	.05	-.021	.10**												
5.	Employee age	32	9.2	.33**	-.08*	.37**	.037											
6.	Employee gender	1.3	.48	-.05	.05	.06	.01	.06										
7.	Employee experience	3.3	1.1	.15**	-.10**	.12**	.06	.20**	.07*									
8.	Employee education	2.9	1.3	-.02	-.01	.01	.04	.03	.039	.06								
9.	PAQ	3.1	1.7	.01*	-.02	.03*	.09*	.07*	.01	.03	.03	(.80)						
10.	HRM SS	2.6	.82	.021	-.08*	.16**	.04*	.04*	-.04	.01	-.04	.56**	(.74)					
11.	Spirituality	2.7	1.8	.03	.05	.03	.01*	09*	.22**	.04	-.06	.26**	.13**	(.79)				
12.	FS	0.7	.58	-.15**	.08*	-.13**	.07*	-.13**	.01	-.06	-.06	.08*	.07*	.17*	(-)			
13.	Religiosity	.30	1.0	.10**	-.05	.11**	.06	.22**	-.04	.14**	.08*	.07*	.023*	.10*	.08*	(.70)		
14.	EP (Time 1)	2.6	.97	-.13**	.09**	-.13**	.05	-.12**	.02	-.03	-.02	.08*	.03*	.14*	.08*	.12	(.79)	
15.	EP (Time 2)	3.2	1.3	.08*	.06	.06*	-.00	.07*	.02*	.06	.02	.49**	.31**	.24*	.07*	.05*	.11*	(.78)

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*
Notes: Employees N=734 and managers N=116. PAQ: Performance appraisal quality, HRM SS: HR strength, REL: Religiosity, SPI: Spirituality, FS: Family structures, and EP: Employee performance. In diagonal, parenthesis showing the square root of AVE's. These AVE values are greater than intercorrelations, that is why the discriminant validity is established.
All variables are measured at Time 1, and employee performance was again rated by managers at Time 2.
Dummy coded variables as: Gender: female = 0, male = 1; Family structures: nuclear family structures = 0, Joint family structures =1

4.6.8 Test of hypotheses

To investigate the effect of HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors on the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, this study employed a hypothesized model based on multilevel data. The individual-level data comprised the independent variable of performance appraisal quality, moderators such as HRM System Strength, non-work domain factors, ten interaction terms, and a dependent variable of employee performance. The level 2 variables consisted of individual managers' characteristics like age, gender, education, and experience in years. Because of the nested data structure, Hierarchical Linear Modelling (HLM) was used to estimate multi-level hypotheses (Bryk and Raudenbush, 1992; Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002; Snijders and Bosker, 2012).

To estimate the hypothesized relationships, mean values were calculated. For better accuracy, the maximum likelihood technique, as recommended by Boedeker (2017), was used to estimate the hypothesis results. The outcomes are presented in Table 4.13. The findings revealed that the dependent variable (i.e., employee performance, Time 2) had between-managers variance of approximately 19%, indicating the need for using HLM to investigate the study's proposed cross-level relationships. The intra-company variance ($\tau 00/\tau 00+ \sigma 2$) was measured using the null model.

Following Zhang, Zyphur, and Preacher's (2009) recommendations, for the estimation of the moderation hypothesis, a 1-1-1 model was employed. This model

197

included both individual and manager-level predictors (i.e., both Level 1 and Level 2 predictors at the individual level). In this model, measures of aggregated employee performance, as well as managers' age, gender, education, and experience as Level 2 predictors, were included to control for potential method effects. I centered the Level 1 predictors at group means (i.e., group-mean centering) to isolate Level 1 effects *within* (within-workgroup variance) and *between* (between-group variance) components (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002; Shin and Raudenbush, 2010; Snijdervs and Bosker, 2012).

The reason for utilizing group-mean centering is to avoid confounding raw or grand-mean-centered lower-level scores, which may include both individual- and group-level variances (Zhang et al., 2009). The application of group-mean centering can help to distinguish between individual- and group-level effects. Table 4.13 summarizes the analysis testing of the hypothesized influence of managerial rating style (level 2) on employee performance (level 1). Furthermore, on the recommendations of previous literature (Gang and Ravichandran, 2015), a significance level of less than 10% was used for supporting or rejecting the hypothesis.

Specifically, employees' and managers' age, gender, education, and experience were centered around the group mean, employee performance (Time 1), and the country variable was centered around the grand means as recommended by (Raudenbush et al., 2011; Snijder:s and Bosker, 2012). Employee performance (Time 2) was regressed on all control variables to the empty model, results are presented in model 1 of Table 4.13. Results showed that, employee gender (β= .18, p < .01),

country (β= 0.07, p < .05), employee performance (Time 1) (β= 0.09, p < .01) and manager's experience (β= 0.10, p < .01) was positively related to employee performance (Time 2). Whereas the manager's gender, employee and manager's age, and education level were not significantly related to employee performance (Time 2). Thus, it shows that male managers have a higher perception of job performance than female managers (Kotur and Anbazhagan, 2014), along with that, the effect of country controlling for Pakistani employees and managers (β= .07, p < .05) influenced employees' performance. Manager's experience also showed a significant and positive influence on employees' performance.

Hypothesis 1 presented the positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance. As shown in model 2 of Table 4.13, performance appraisal quality was positively related (β= .43, p < .01) to employee performance. Hence, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Model 2 evaluates the direct effect model, which examines the direct effects and moderators. The results indicate that HRM System Strength is a significant predictor of employee performance (β= .10, p < .01, as shown in model 2). Hypothesis 2 proposed that the positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance is moderated by HRM System Strength. Model 3 (presented in Table 4.13) shows that the two-way interaction (i.e., HRM SS* PAQ) is positively significant (β= .18, p < .05), supporting Hypothesis 2. The findings reveal that the positive association between performance appraisal quality and employee performance is significant when HRM System Strength is highly distinctive, consistent, and consensual. The graph is presented in Figure 4.1.

The interaction graph results revealed that a positive association exists between PAQ and employee performance for both high and low HRM System Strength. However, the positive slope was more pronounced for high HRM SS (β= .48**) as compared to low HRM SS, as shown in Figure 4.1. To illustrate the moderation graphs of the significant interactions, graphs were created using the excel sheets developed by Jamie DeCoster and Anne-Marie Iselinsheets. Graphs for the significant interactions with HRM SS, family structures, and spirituality were presented in Figures 4.1 to 4.5.
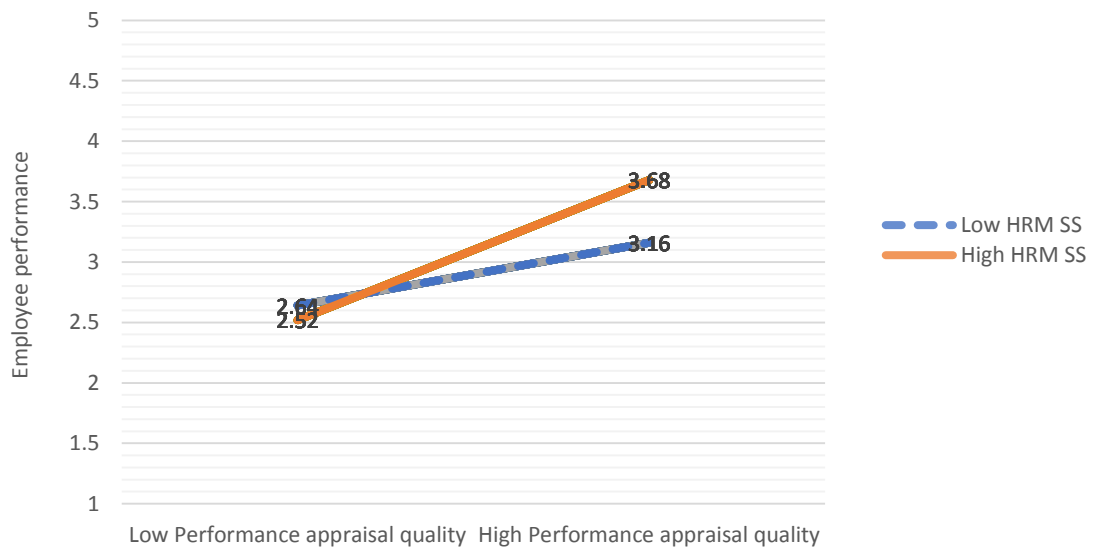
FIGURE 4.1: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and HRM SS with employee performance as a DV.

In Hypothesis 3a, I hypothesized spirituality will strengthen the positive relationship between *performance* appraisal quality and employee performance. The findings suggested that spirituality was a significant predictor of employee

performance (β= .18, p < .01, see model 2). Hence, model 3 in Table 4.13 indicates, that two-way interaction (i.e., PAQ* SPI) was positively significant (β= .11, p < .05), thus Hypothesis 3a was supported. Findings showed the positive association between performance appraisal quality and employee performance is significant when spirituality is high. The graph is presented in Figure 4.2. The results of the interaction graph demonstrated a positive correlation between performance appraisal quality (PAQ) and employee performance for both high and low levels of spirituality. The positive slope was stronger for employees who have a high spirituality (β= .09*) than low spirituality, as presented in Figure 4.2.
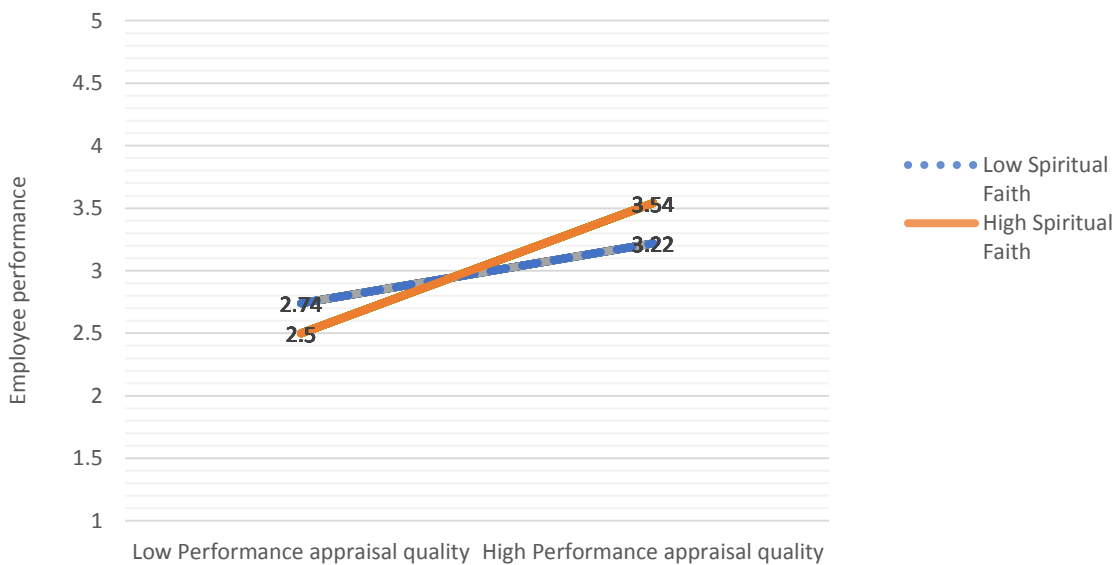
FIGURE 4.2: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and spirituality with employee performance as a DV.

In Hypothesis 3b, I hypothesized family structures will dampen the positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance. The findings suggested that family structure was a significant predictor of employee

performance (β= .07, p < .01, see model 2). Hence, model 3 in Table 4.13 indicates, two-way interaction (i.e., PAQ* FS) was significant (β= .11, p < .05), thus Hypothesis 3b was supported. Findings showed the positive association between performance appraisal quality and employee performance is significant when family structure is low. The graph is presented in Figure 4.3. The results of the interaction graph revealed a positive association between performance appraisal quality (PAQ) and employee performance for individuals with both high (joint) and low (nuclear) family structures. The positive slope was stronger for employees who have a low (nuclear) family structure (β= .08*), rather than a high (joint) family structure, as presented in Figure 4.3. These findings are deliberated further in the discussion chapter.

Table 4.13: Hierarchiral regression analysis

	Employee Performance Time 2			
Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Control variables (Level 1)				
Employee gender; 1 if male	0.18***	0.16*	0.15**	0.15**
Employee age	-0.01	-0.00	-0.02	-0.02
Employee education	-0.01	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03
Country; 1 if Pakistan	0.07***	0.11*	0.07	0.10*
Employee performance (Time 1)	0.09***	0.08***	0.09**	0.09**
Control variables (Level 2)				
Manager gender	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.04
Manager age; 1 if male	0.02	0.04	0.05	0.04
Manager experience	0.10*	0.09*	0.08*	0.09*
Manager education	0.02	0.04	0.05	0.04
Main effects				
HRM SS		0.10***	0.12***	0.16***
Performance appraisal quality (H1)		0.40***	0.43***	0.38***
Spirituality		0.18***	0.19***	0.18***
Family structure		0.07*	0.06*	0.04***
Religiosity		0.08*	0.07*	0.06*
Two-way interactions				
PAQ*HRM SS (H2)			0.18**	0.15*
PAQ* Spirituality (H3a)			0.11**	0.12*
PAQ* Family structure (H3b)			0.13**	0.11*
PAQ* Religiosity (H3c)			-0.09	-0.03
HRM SS*Spirituality (H4a)			0.06	0.04
HRM SS*Family structure (H4b)			-0.07	-0.03
HRM SS*Religiosity (H4c)			0.09*	0.06*
Three-way Interactions				
PAQ X Spirituality X HRM SS (H5a)				0.04
PAQ X Family structure X HRMSS (H5b)				0.19**
PAQ X Religiosity X HRMSS (H5c)				0.09
Model fit				
Deviance in model fit	2085.13	1809.522	1799.28	1796.76
R2	0.51	0.55	0.58	0.60
HLM = Hierarchical linear modeling. *p<.10, **p < .05; ***p < .01				

 Notes: Employee N=734 and Manager N=116. Manager age and experience in years; employee age in years; gender: female = 0, male = 1, Country=0 for China and 1 for Pakistan. PAQ: Performance appraisal quality, HRM SS: HRM System Strength, FS: Family structure, REL: Religiosity, SPI: Spirituality, and EP: Employee performance

In Hypothesis 3c, I hypothesized religiosity will strengthen the positive

relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance. The findings suggested that religiosity was a significant predictor of employee performance (β= .08, p < .05, see model 2). But model 3 in Table 4.13 indicates, that two-way interaction (i.e., PAQ* REL) was not significant (β= -.07, n.s), thus Hypothesis 3c was not supported. The findings suggested that religiosity (PAQ*REL) did not explain any change in the relationship between PAQ and employee performance.
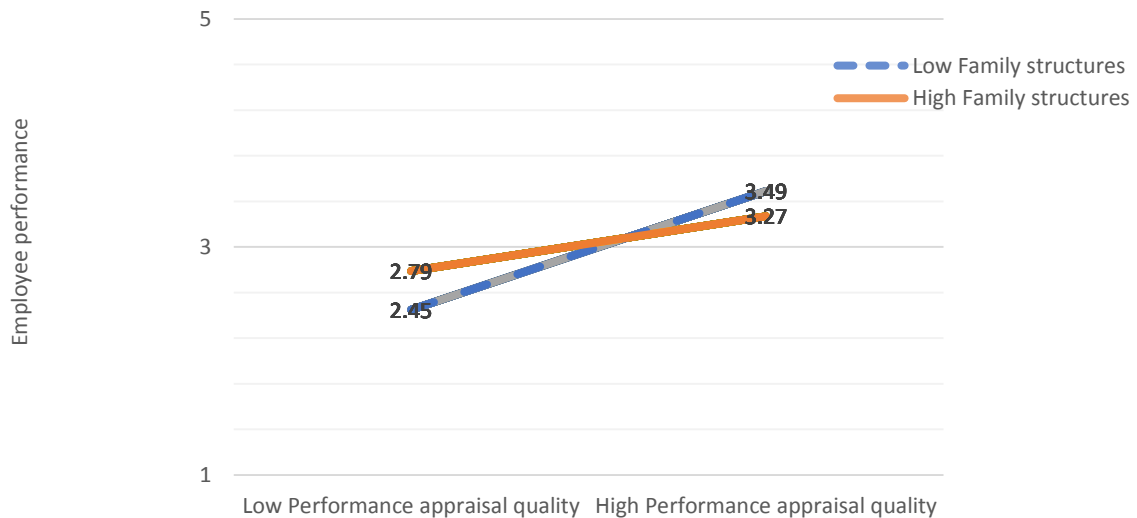
Figure 4.3: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and family structure with employee performance as a DV.

In Hypothesis 4a, I hypothesized spirituality will strengthen the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance. The findings suggested that spirituality was a significant predictor of employee performance (β= .18, p < .01, see model 2). But model 3 in Table 4.13 indicates, that two-way interaction (i.e., SPI* HRM SS) was not significant (β= .04, n.s), thus Hypothesis 4a was not supported. The findings suggested that spirituality (SPI*HRM

SS) did not explain any change in the relationship between HRM SS and employee performance.

In Hypothesis 4b, I hypothesized family structure will strengthen the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance. The findings suggested that family structure was a significant predictor of employee performance (β= .08, p < .01, see model 2). But model 3 in Table 4.13 indicates, that two-way interaction (i.e., FS* HRM SS) was not significant (β= -.07, n.s), thus Hypothesis 4b was not supported. The findings suggested that family structures (FS*HRM SS) did not explain any change in the relationship between HRM SS and employee performance.

In Hypothesis 4c, I hypothesized religiosity will strengthen the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance. The findings suggested that religiosity was a significant predictor of employee performance (β= .08, p < .01, see model 2). Whereas model 3 in Table 4.13 indicates, that two-way interaction (i.e., REL* HRM SS) was significant (β= .09, p<.10), thus Hypothesis 4c was supported. Findings showed the positive association between HRM SS, and employee performance is significant when religiosity is high. The graph is presented in Figure 4.4. The findings of the interaction graph indicated a positive relationship between HRM SS and employee performance for both high and low religiosity. The positive slope was stronger for employees who have a high religiosity (β= .13*) than low religiosity, as presented in Figure 4. 4.
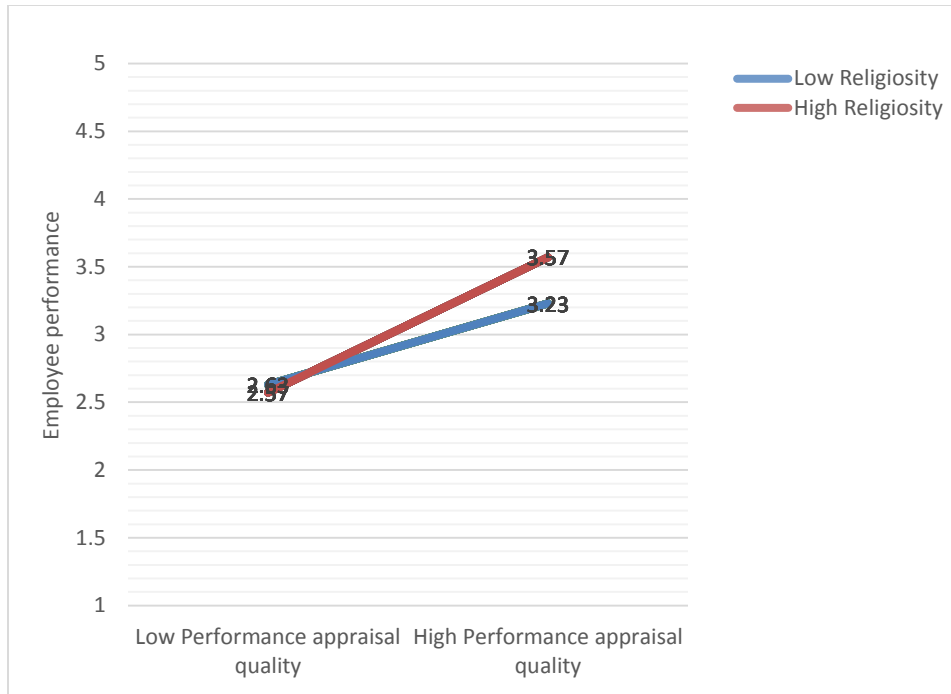
Figure 4.4: Two-way interaction between HRM SS and religiosity with employee performance as a DV.

Hypothesis 5a predicts a three-way interactive relationship, such that performance appraisal quality, HRM SS and spirituality would jointly strengthen employee performance. Results in Table 4.13 show the three-way interactive relationship of PAQ, HRM SS, and SPI was not significant with employee performance, after taking into consideration all main effects and two-way interactions (see Model 4, β= 0.04, n.s). Therefore, hypothesis 5a was not supported.

Hypothesis 5b predicts a three-way interactive relationship, such that performance appraisal quality, HRM SS, and family structures jointly relate to employee performance. Table 4.13 shows the three-way interactive relationship of PAQ, HRM SS, and FS was significant with employee performance, after taking into consideration all main effects and two-way interactions to Model 3 (see Model 4, β= 0.19, p < .05). Therefore, Hypothesis 5b was supported. To see the 3-way interaction

effect of these variables, the interactions were drawn graphically and presented in Figure-4.5. For example, for hypothesis 5b, the effect of PAQ on performance is highest when the HRM SS is high and the family structure is nuclear (i.e., for nuclear FS). Similarly, the effect of the PAQ on the performance is lowest when the HRM SS is low, and family structure is joint.

Our Hypothesis 5c predicts a three-way interactive relationship, such that performance appraisal quality, HRM SS, and religiosity jointly relate to employee performance. Results in Table 4.13 show that the three-way interactive relationship was not significant with employee performance, after taking into consideration all main effects and two-way interactions to Model 3 (see Model 4, β= 0.09, n.s). Therefore, Hypothesis 5c was not supported.
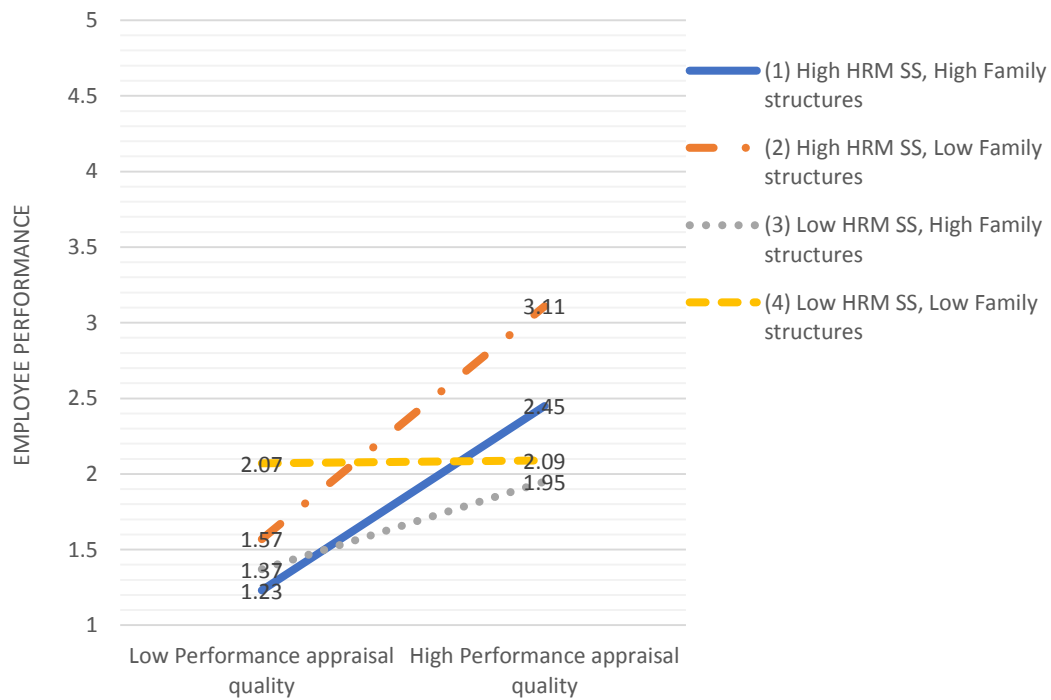
FIGURE 4.5: Three-way interaction between performance appraisal quality, HRM SS, and family structure with Employee performance as a DV.

Table 4.14: Summary of hypotheses

Hypothesis	Paths	Results
H1: *Performance appraisal quality is positively related to employee performance.*	PAQ→EP	***Supported***
H2: *HRM System Strength moderates the relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when HRM System Strength is high rather than low.*	PAQ* HRMSS→EP	***Supported***
H3a: *Spirituality moderates the positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when spirituality is high rather than low.*	PAQ *SPI→EP	***Supported***
H3b: *Family structure moderates the positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when family structure is nuclear rather than joint.*	PAQ *FS→EP	***Supported***
H3c*: Religiosity moderates the positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when religiosity is high rather than low.*	PAQ *REL→EP	Not Supported
H4a: *Spirituality moderates the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when spirituality is high rather than low.*	HRMSS*SPI→EP	Not Supported
H4b: *Family structure moderates the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when family structure is nuclear rather than joint.*	HRMSS*FS→EP	Not Supported
H4c: *Religiosity moderates the positive relationship between HRM System Strength and employee performance, such that the relationship is stronger when religiosity is high rather than low.*	HRMSS*REL→EP	***Supported`***
H5a: *There is a three- way interactive relationship between performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and spirituality, on the one hand, and employee performance, on the other. The positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance will be stronger when both spirituality and HRM System Strength are high.*	PAQ* SPI *HRM SS →EP	Not Supported

H5b: *There is a three‑way interactive relationship between performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and family structure, on the one hand, and employee performance, on the other. The positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance will be strengthen when family structure is nuclear and HRM System Strength are high.*	PAQ* FS *HRM SS →EP	*Supported*
H5c: *There is a three‑way interactive relationship between performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and religiosity, on the one hand, and employee performance, on the other. The positive relationship between performance appraisal quality and employee performance will be stronger when both religiosity and HRM System Strength are high.*	PAQ* REL *H RM SS→EP	Not Supported

Note: Compiled by Author, 2023

4.7 Additional analysis

Additional analyses were also performed on both country data sets independently using hierarchical linear regression. Results in Table 4.15 showed a comparative analysis of both counties. The effects of HRM System Strength, PAQ, religiosity, spirituality, and family structures were examined on employee performance in order to see how these results were reported in both countries separately. First, the main effects were examined, and it was witnessed that the HRM System Strength effect was statistically stronger in China (β= 0.33, p < .01) as compared to Pakistan (β= 0.26, p < .05), which means that both countries' employees had clear perceptions of HRM System Strength when there is distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus (Kelley, 1973). Furthermore, the effect of performance appraisal quality was examined on employee performance, and the effect was shown more or less the same in both countries, reported as (β= 0.46, p < .01) in Pakistan and

in China (β= 0.52, p < .01), which explains that PAQ was perceived as the same by both countries' employees and had a significant positive impact in both countries, no significant and statistical differences were observed regarding performance appraisal quality impact on employee performance.

Further, the effect of family structures was examined on the PAQ-performance relationship which showed a striking difference in its values, as for China (β= 0.14, p < .05) the value was positively significant, and for Pakistan (β= -0.09, p < .10) it was negatively significant. A possible explanation is that due to the predominance of nuclear family structures in China employees experience fewer family pressures which positively impacted their performance, as compared to Pakistan where due to the predominance of joint family structures, it acted as a pressurizing effect and a demand and negatively impacted performance of employees.

Further, the effect of spirituality was examined, which showed no striking differences in beta values, as the effect for China (β= 0.36, p < .05) and for Pakistan (β= 0.12, p < .01) was positively significant for both countries' employees. It explains that employees from China and from Pakistan were both considered spiritual and had a positive impact on their performances. Further, the effect of religiosity was examined, which showed a difference in beta values, reported as for China (β= 0.06, n.s) the beta value was insignificant, and for Pakistan (β= 0.18, p < .10) it was positively significant. It explains that employees from China do not consider themselves as religious, whereas employees from Pakistan had firm religious obligations to follow which positively impacted their performance.

Furthermore, two-way interaction effects between all variables were examined. The results showed that performance appraisal quality and HRM System Strength two-way interaction effect had positive significant effects in both countries, Pakistani employees' results showed (β= 0.23, p < .10), and the Chinese employee's results showed (β= 0.16, p < .05). No significant differences were reported between both countries. Whereas for the interaction of performance appraisal quality with family structures, positive interaction was found for both countries as results showed in Pakistan (β= 0.12, p< 0.10) and results showed in China (β= 0.08, p< 0.05). It shows that in both countries' family structure and performance appraisal quality had a positive impact on employee performance. Then the further two-way impact of performance appraisal quality on spirituality and religiosity was analyzed, and positive interactions were reported for employees of Pakistan as shown in Table 4.15 (β= 0.11 and 0.09, p < .10), but no significant results were found in China (β= 0.02 and 0.03, n.s). It shows that religiosity and spirituality were not seen as significant factors in improving employee performance in China.

Whereas two-way interaction effects of HRM System Strength with family structures and religiosity were not significant in both countries. But HRM System Strength with spirituality had a positive effect in Pakistan (β= 0.08, p < .10), and no effect in China (β= 0.08, p < .10) was reported, which shows that HRM System Strength and spirituality jointly impacted the performance of Pakistani employees positively as compared to Chinese employees where this effect was not significant.

Thirdly, the three-way interactive effects for performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and family structures were examined. No three-way

interactive effects in Pakistan ($\beta= 0.05$, n.s) and China as well ($\beta= 0.08$, n.s) were reported as significant predictors for improving the performance of employees. Further, by examining the performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and spirituality, a significant positive interaction was found in Pakistan ($\beta= 0.11$, $p < .10$), but no significant interaction in China was found ($\beta= -0.12$, n.s). Lastly, the three-way interaction effect of performance appraisal quality, HRM System Strength, and religiosity was examined, results showed a positive effect was found in Pakistan ($\beta= 0.15$, $p < .05$), and no effect was found in China ($\beta= 0.07$, n.s). Graphs of these interactions are plotted in Figures from 4.6 to 4.15 below.

Table 4.15: Hierarchical Linear Modeling (Comparative results of Pakistan and China)

Variables	Employee performance (Time 2)	
	Main Model	Main model
	Pakistan	**China**
Main effects		
HRM System Strength	0.26**	0.33***
Performance appraisal quality	0.46***	0.52***
Family Structures	-0.09*	0.14*
Spirituality	0.12**	0.36**
Religiosity	0.18*	0.06
Two-way interactions		
PAQ*HRMSS	0.23*	0.16**
PAQ* Family Structures	0.12*	0.08**
PAQ*Religiosity	0.11*	0.02
PAQ* Spirituality	0.09*	0.03
HRM SS* Spirituality	0.08*	0.13
HRMSS* Family Structures	-0.07	0.08
HRM SS* Religiosity	0.06	0.03
Three-way interactions		
PAQ * Family Structures * HRM SS	0.05	0.08
PAQ * Spirituality * HRM SS	0.11*	-0.12
PAQ * Religiosity * HRM SS	0.15**	0.07
Model fit		
Deviance in model fit	1073.20	1246.76
R2	0.48	0.53
Total	**401**	**333**

*Notes: Managers (N= 116), employees (N=734). *p<.10, **p < .05; ***p < .01*
PAQ: Performance appraisal quality, HRM SS: HRM System Strength, REL: Religiosity,
SPI: Spirituality, FS: Family structures (dummy coded as o and 1), and EP: Employee
performance

4.7.1 Additional analysis graphs for Pakistani employees

The findings of the interaction graph presented in Figure 4.6 indicated a positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance for both high and low HRM System Strength. The positive slope was stronger for employees who have a high HRM SS than low HRM SS.
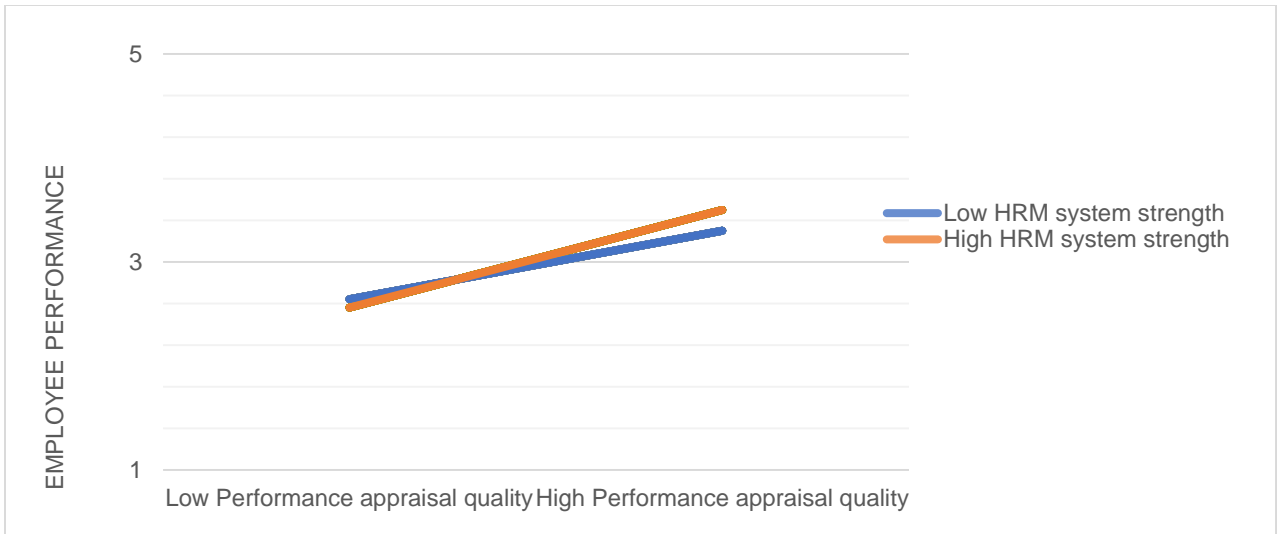
Figure 4.6: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and HRM System Strength with employee performance as a DV.

The findings of the interaction graph presented in Figure 4.7 indicated a positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance for both high and low spirituality. The positive slope was stronger for employees who have a high spirituality than low spirituality.
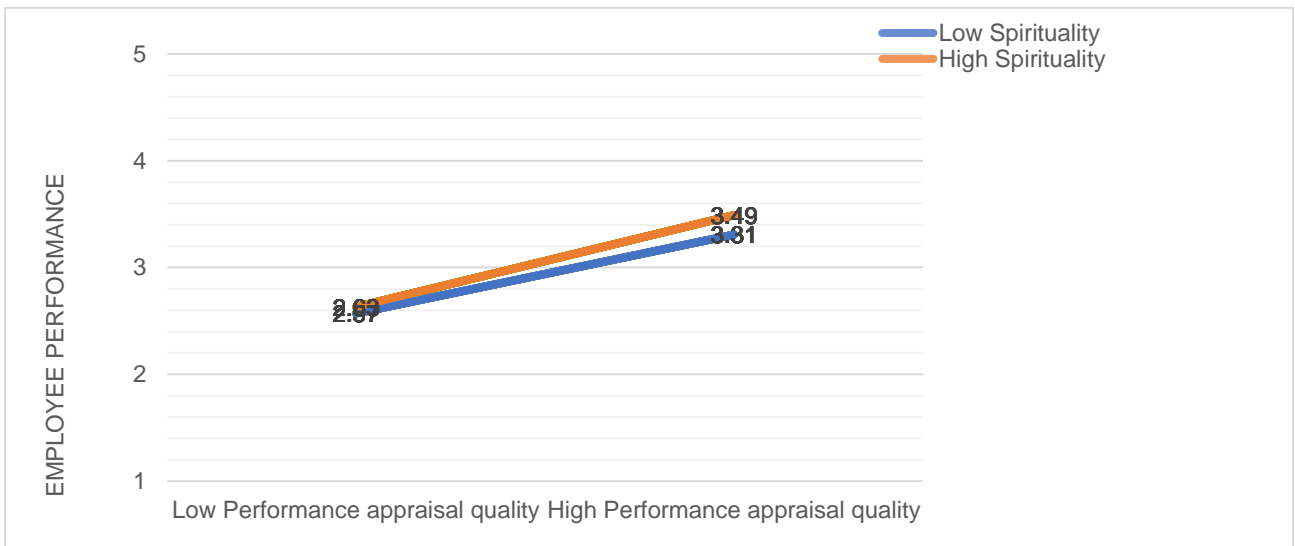
Figure 4.7: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and spirituality with employee performance as a DV

The findings of the interaction graph presented in Figure 4.8 indicated a positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance for both high and low religiosity. The positive slope was stronger for employees who have a high religiosity than low religiosity.

Figure 4.8: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and religiosity with employee performance as a DV.

The findings of the interaction graph presented in Figure 4.9 indicated a positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance for both high and low family structures. The positive slope was stronger for employees who belonged to nuclear family structures than joint family structures.

Figure 4.9: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and family structures with employee performance as a DV

The findings of the interaction graph presented in Figure 4.10 indicated a positive relationship between HRM SS and employee performance for both high and low spirituality. The positive slope was stronger for employees who have a high spirituality than low spirituality.

Figure 4.10: Two-way interaction between HRM System Strength and spirituality with employee performance as a DV

The findings of the 3-way interaction graph presented in Figure 4.11 indicated the effect of PAQ on performance is highest when the HRM SS is high, and the religiosity is high. Similarly, the effect of the PAQ on performance is lowest when the HRM SS is low, and religiosity is low.

Figure 4.11: Three-way interaction between performance appraisal quality, HRM SS, and religiosity with Employee performance as a DV.

The findings of the 3-way interaction graph presented in Figure 4.12 indicated the effect of PAQ on performance is highest when the HRM SS is high, and the spirituality is high. Similarly, the effect of the PAQ on performance is lowest when the HRM SS is low, and spirituality is low.
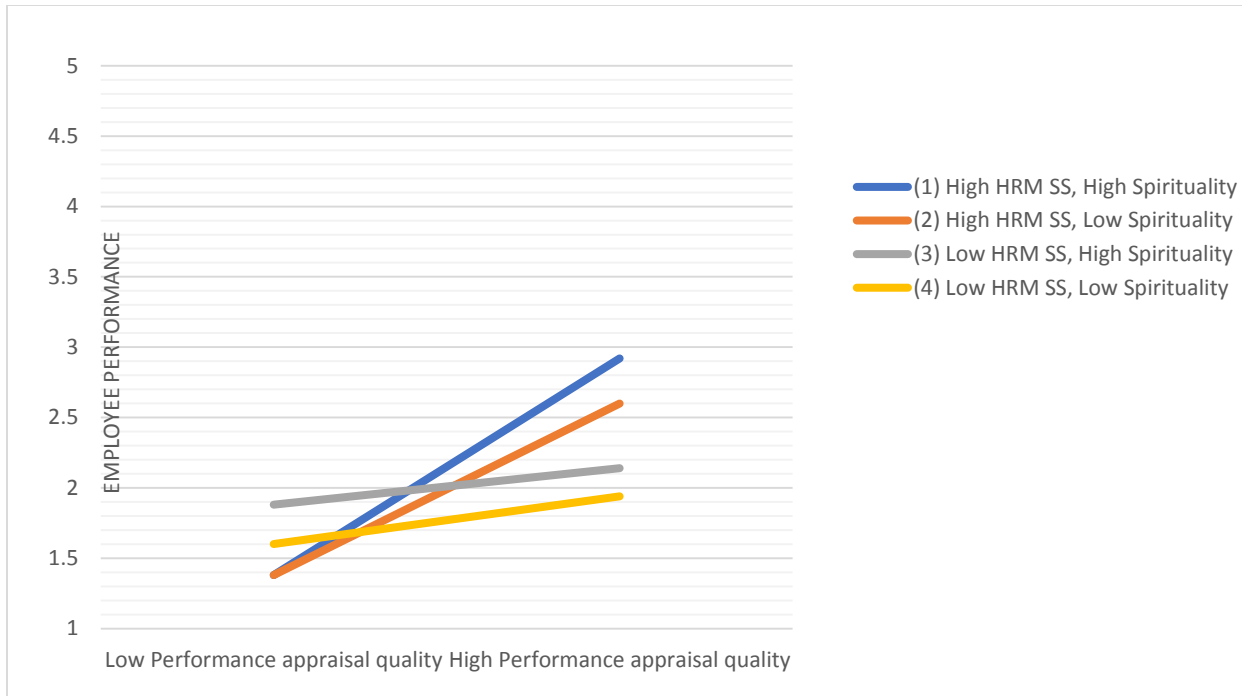
Figure 4.12: Three-way interaction between performance appraisal quality, HRM SS, and spirituality with Employee performance as a DV.

4.7.2 Graphs for Chinese employees

The findings of the interaction graph presented in Figure 4.13 indicated a positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance for both high and low HRM System Strength. The positive slope was stronger for employees who have a high HRM SS than low HRM SS.
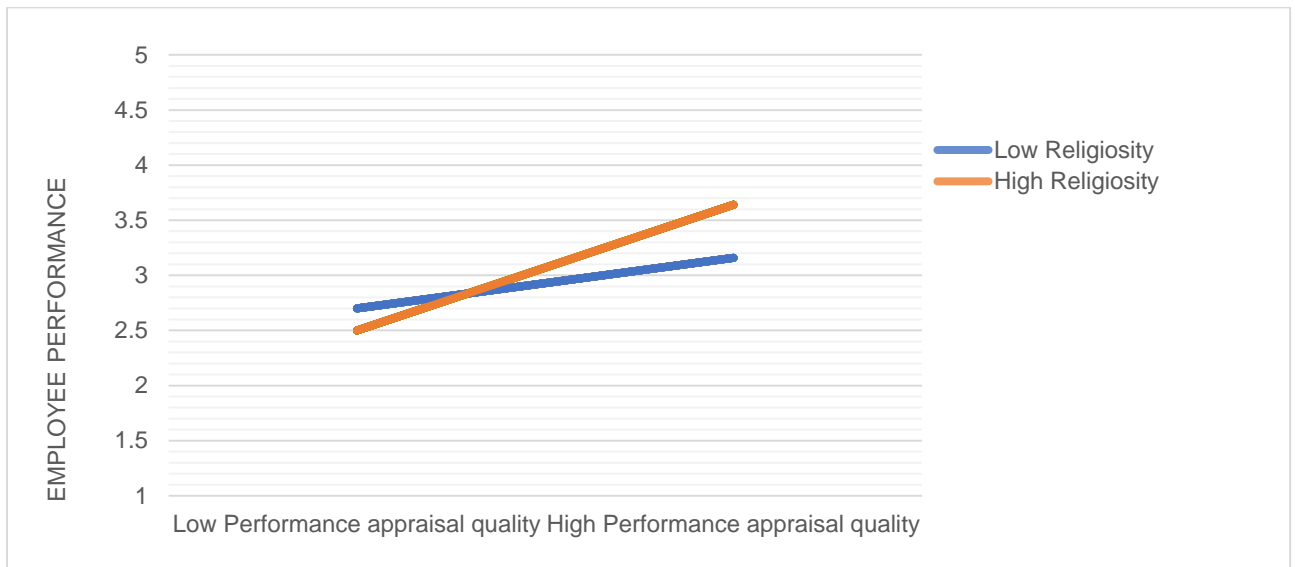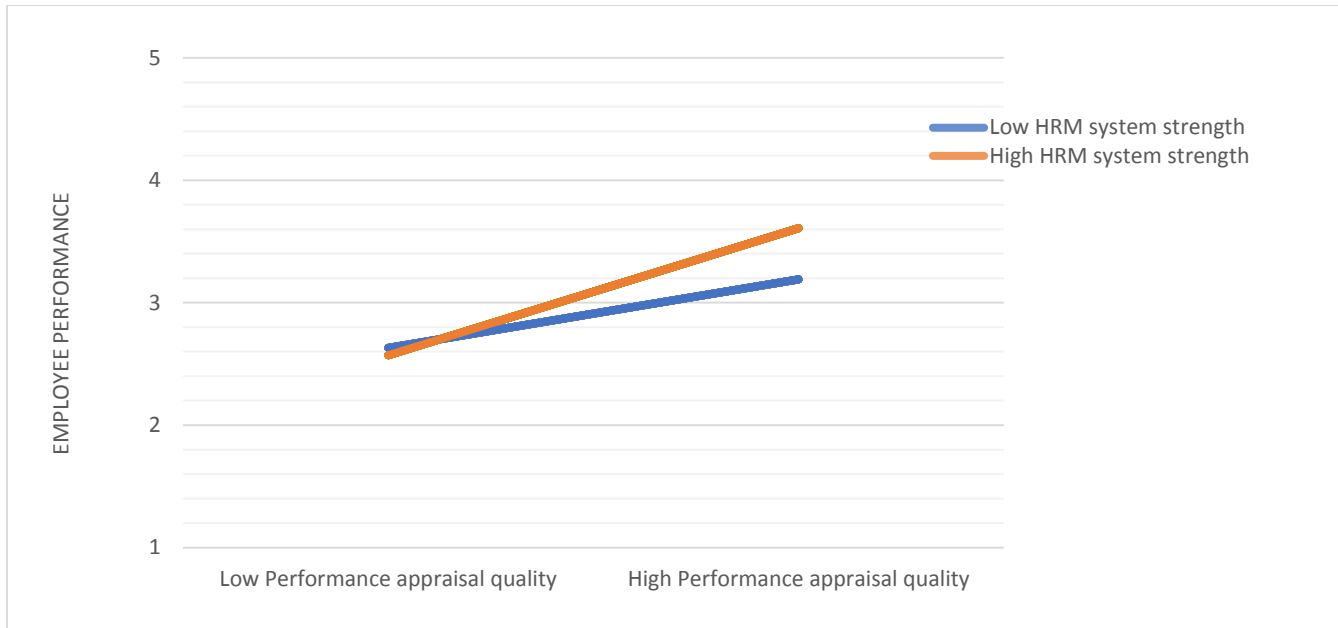
Figure 4.13: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and HRM System Strength with employee performance as a DV

The findings of the interaction graph presented in Figure 4.14 indicated a positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance for both high and low family structures. The positive slope was stronger for employees who belonged to nuclear family structures than joint family structures.
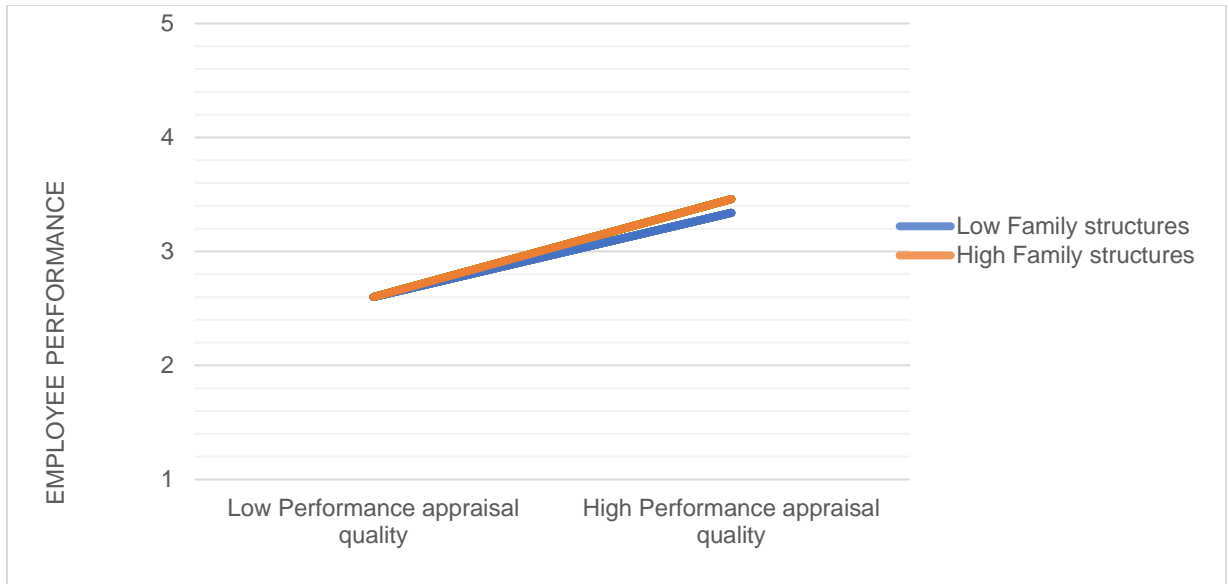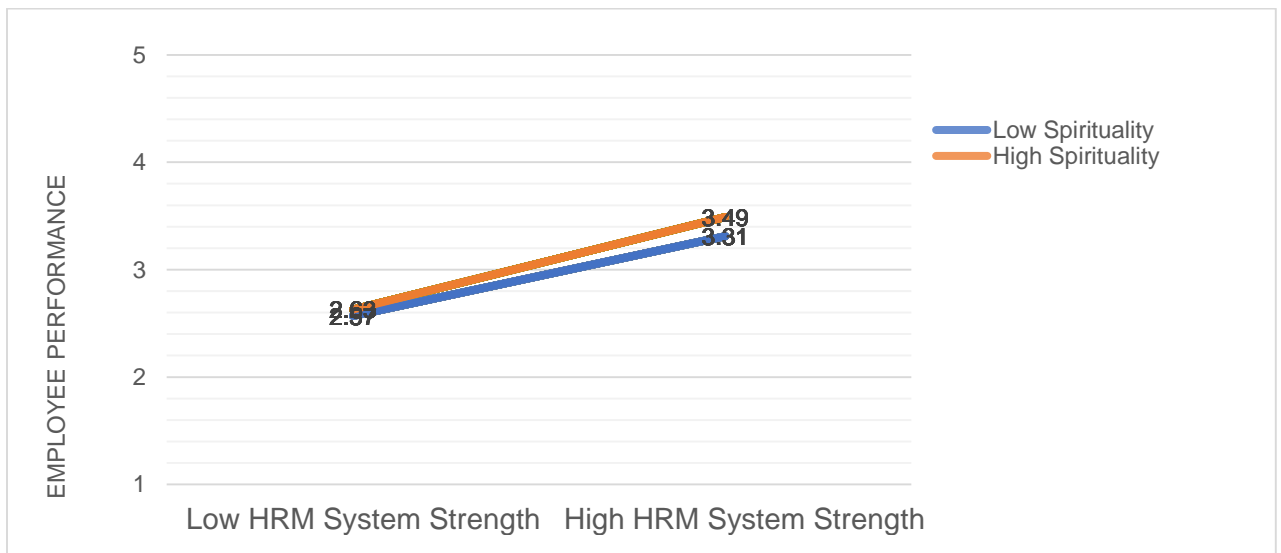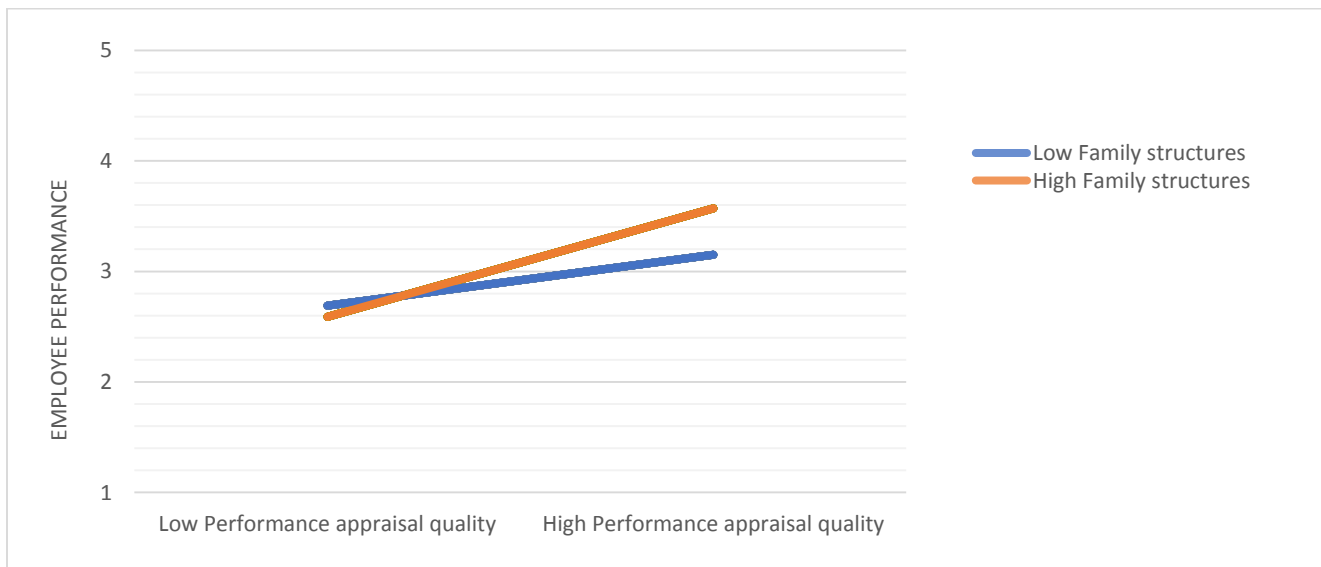

Figure 4.14: Two-way interaction between performance appraisal quality and family

structures with employee performance as a DV

The findings of the 3-way interaction graph presented in Figure 4.15 indicated the effect of PAQ on performance is highest when the HRM SS is high, and the family structure is nuclear. Similarly, the effect of the PAQ on performance is lowest when the HRM SS is low, and the family structure is joint.
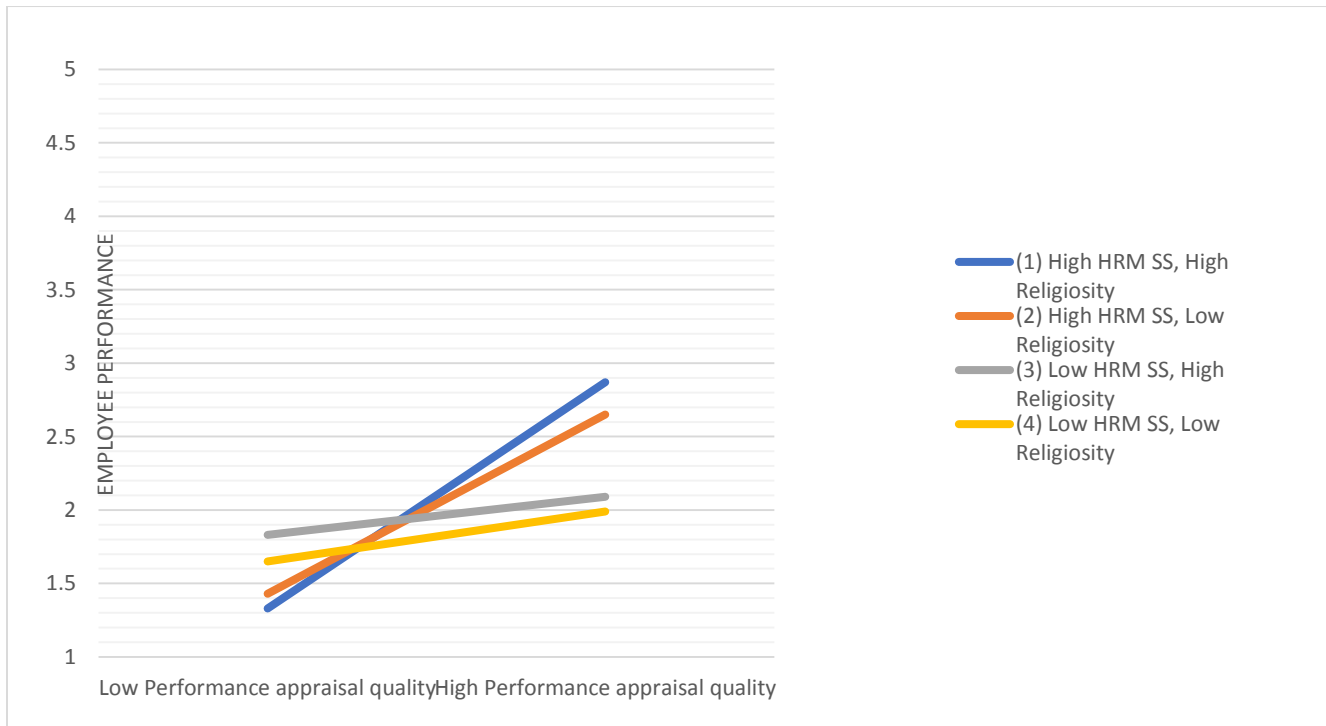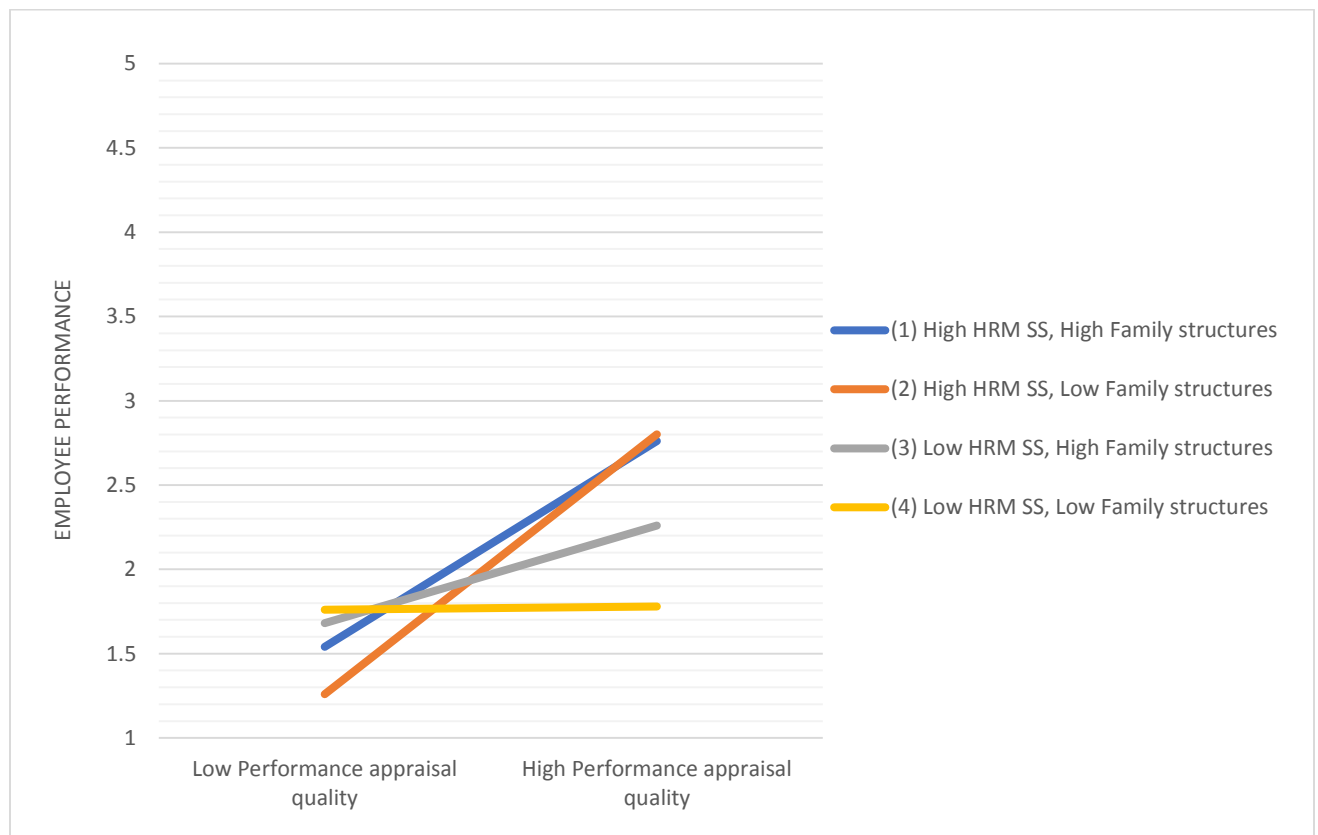

Figure 4.15: Three-way interaction between performance appraisal quality, HRM SS, and family structure with Employee performance as a DV.

4.8 Summary of the quantitative analysis

This chapter starts with the descriptive statistics of the respondents of the study. The evaluation of the measurement model is provided which established the reliability and validity of the constructs of the study. It also highlighted the convergent validity and reliability of the constructs through different statistics. Multi-collinearity diagnostics were also conducted to ensure that there were no multi-collinearity problems. These diagnostics showed good results and there were no problems of multicollinearity, therefore hierarchical regression analysis was performed.

Moderation analyses were performed to test the relevant moderation hypotheses of the study. The results of the hypotheses testing are provided in Table 4.13. This table shows that out of five total hypotheses, two hypotheses were supported fully, however, out of the remaining three hypotheses 3,4, and 5, sub-hypotheses 3a, 3b, 4c, and 4b were supported, and all the other hypothesized relationships were not supported.

The performance appraisal quality had a strong positive impact on the employee performance (H1) accepted, which shows that the employees performed well as a result of the clear perception of performance appraisal quality. Moreover, HRM System Strength moderated this relationship positively (H2) accepted. This shows that the HRM System Strength has strengthened this relationship when

employees perceive distinctive, consistent, and consensual HR practices. Two-way interactive relationships of non-work domain factor of spirituality also had a positive significant impact on the employee performance, (H3a) supported. The employee's spirituality makes their work more meaningful, which enhances their performance. Another non-work domain factor of family structure had a significant positive impact on the employee's performance, (H3b) accepted. That shows that employees who belongs to joint/nuclear family structure face more responsibilities and pressures from their family, makes employees more motivated which impacts their performance positively. But religiosity as a non-work domain factor did not establish this proposed relationship (H3c) and hence, not supported.

Moreover, it was expected in Hypothesis 4, to have a two-way interaction effect of non-work domain factors with HRM System Strength, but only two-way interaction was significant with religiosity, (H4c) was supported, and the other two H4a and H4b were not supported. Furthermore, it was expected in Hypothesis 5, that there will be a three-way interactive relationship between the PAQ, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors, but only three-way interaction with family structures was significant, (H5b) supported and the other two (H5a) and (H5c) were not supported. Additional analysis was also conducted for both country data sets separately and results are reported.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The previous chapters presented a detailed analysis and findings of both the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the study. This chapter presents the discussion and conclusion of this thesis, summarizing the research objectives, findings, contributions, limitations of this research, and providing future research suggestions for this avenue of HRM.

This mixed-method study examined and investigated how particular HR practice and processes contribute to employee performance, acknowledging the importance of their non-work domain factors within Pakistani and Chinese organizations. This research adopted a convergent parallel research design to develop a comprehensive picture of the study. The effect of merging data sets occurs through the results and discussion sections (Clark and Creswell, 2011).

5.1 HRM System Strength: Culture-bound or culture-free perspective

The first-dimension distinctiveness comprises of understandability, visibility, relevance, and legitimacy of authority. Findings indicated that terminology was used differently depending on how employees perceived its meaning in the context of China and Pakistan. In the Chinese cultural context, understandability was perceived as clarity of HR practices which provided them profound insights to perform proficiently. One possible explanation for seeking clarity is the strong influence of Chinese work culture, which keeps them motivated to seek clarity to perform well (Chapel, 2002: pp. 169). At the same time, in the Pakistani cultural context, understandability was perceived as comprehension of HR practices because

employees were keen to have a detailed and elaborate understanding of HR practices.

It is emphasized that differences in understanding could be the contextual perception of Chinese and Pakistani managers in prioritizing clarity over comprehensiveness. The empirical evidence was found in Bari et al. (2019), in which Chinese employees were keen to seek clarity about practices and procedures of mergers and acquisitions (M&A), while Pakistani employees were interested in the comprehension of (M&A) practices and policies. Thus, our study findings conform to the Bari et al. (2019) study findings. In contrast, based on evidence provided by Riaz et al. (2020), Pakistani employees primarily focused on having clarity in the HRM messages that positively influenced their perceptions, because participants of their study belong to a younger age group.

Thus, it is highlighted that Pakistani employees also focused on clarity as well as comprehension of HR practices. However, Bednall et al. (2014) suggested employees are more likely to perform well if there is a clear and comprehensive understanding of HR practices (such as PAQ, rewards, bonuses, etc.). The finding is also supported by Fu et al. (2018), who discussed that clarity in work and managing practices in a timely manner make employees work efficiently. Thus, we conclude that both clarity and comprehension of HR practices are important, as proposed by Bowen and Ostroff (2004), but due to differences in the context of the country, the terminology was perceived differently.

Further, employees of both cultures perceived the visibility feature to be the same in meaning, i.e., observability and transparency of HR practices as also shown in Table 5.1. It is interpreted that employees in both cultures are more likely to have

visibility of HR practices because stronger signals were observed, and communication mechanisms tended to be stronger and more visible in both cultures, making HR practices transparently observable to employees. Especially for Chinese employees, the focus on communication competence seems to be a crucial component of success in Chinese workplaces (Chapel, 2002, pp. 181). It aligns with the literature on signaling theory (Connelly et al., 2011), which suggests that organizations with a strong HR system strength produce high-quality signals, which improves employee's understanding of the performance expectations and the HR practices in their organizations (Ehrnrooth and Björkman, 2012; Farndale et al., 2019).

At the same time, in the Pakistani cultural context, employees demand to have transparency in delivering HR practices. The Pakistani employees illustrate that clarity in HR messages improves employee performance because transparency in HR practices makes information easily accessible. For example, Sciriha and Debono (2017) explained that clarity of communication by all stakeholders makes successful integration and implementation of the HR system, which enhances performance. These findings are consistent with the researchers (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Sumelius, 2014; Cafferky et al., 2018; Sanders et al., 2016), who have perceived visibility as the observance of HR practices.

Furthermore, findings revealed that relevance was perceived to be the same in meaning and terminology, as originally operationalized by Bowen and Ostroff (2004). Interestingly the finding indicated that the clarity of goal alignment was perceived necessary in both country contexts. In the Chinese cultural context, goal alignment was ensured because employees do task-related discussions, arrange goal-

setting sessions, and involve members with conflicting organizational information (Manata, Garcia, Mollaoglu and Miller, 2021; Alin, Taylor, and Smeds, 2011). These findings were consistent with the researchers (Fu et al., 2018; Sanders et al., 2008; Cafferky et al., 2021), who perceived that clear goal alignment establishes a sense of achievement.

Contrarily in the Pakistani cultural context, employees directly attached the alignment of goals to rewards and bonuses, which keep them motivated to understand the goal alignment. The findings revealed that a larger percentage of Pakistani participants shared that they had issues in achieving goal alignment. I contend that the reason behind this finding appears to be the willingness of employees to exert extra efforts because if they set goals according to management expectations, they would have to work harder. Thus, our findings support the evidence from the previous literature (Mukhtar et al., 2022), which state that Chinese employees were observed as higher goal setters and workaholics than Pakistani employees. In line with these differences, it is interpreted that Pakistani employees showed reluctance in doing work on their own to achieve goal alignment. However, it has been observed that work goals and commitment are the major priorities in China (Mumtaz and Nadeem, 2020; Xiao and Cooke, 2012). The findings indicate that employees are considered more workaholic in the management field than in other areas.

Table 5.1: Terminology and meaning of HRM System Strength features

No	Features	Original meaning and terminology	Terminology and meaning used in both countries	Pakistan	China
1.	*Understandability*	Lack of ambiguity	Clarity/Comprehension	×	√
2	*Visibility*	Salience and observance	Observance/Transparency	√	√
3.	*Relevance*	Goal alignment	Goal alignment	√	√
4.	*Legitimacy of authority*	Submitting to formally sanctioned behavior	High-status authority/ Credible authority	×	×
5.	*Validity*	Managers intend to do what they purport to do.	Followed the same as they implemented, follow their leaders/ communicate rightly and clearly, walk the talk and talk the walk	√	√
6.	*Instrumentality*	Timely communication about rewards	Cause and effect relationship/ timely informing about benefits	√	×
7.	*Consistent HR messages*	Compatible and stable HR messages	Stability in HR messages/coordination and communication	×	√
8.	*Fairness*	Adhering to the principles of justice	Fairness in policies and practices/ fair evaluations	√	√
9.	*Agreement*	Stakeholders agreeing upon HR-related messages	Supporting decisions/ unanimity in decision-making	√	√

Note: Compiled by Author (2023). (√) depicts that HRM System Strength features are observed in particular culture and (×) depicts that feature is not observed in that culture.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that the legitimacy of authority was understood as the same in meaning in both China and Pakistan as operationalized by Bowen and Ostroff (2004). However, there was a difference observed in the terminology used from managers of both countries as shown in Table 5.1. In the Pakistani cultural context, the term high-status authority was used because when HR messages are communicated from higher authorities, that task is completed on priority. Evidence was found in the literature by Kousar, Rehman, Zafar, Ali and

Nasir (2018) that the culture of giving strict orders to push employees to do work was prevalent in Pakistan. Due to the authoritative influence of top management, it is interpreted that employees try to complete their tasks quickly. In contrast, in the Chinese cultural context, the focus was on strengthening the communication lines between managers and employees because legitimacy meant the credible authority of a manager. It is highlighted that the Chinese employees prioritized their work assignments and completed their work without getting strict orders.

A possible explanation is that people have to accept the authority's decisions and behaviors in the Chinese cultural context, no matter whether they are right or wrong and where they are coming from. Hence, employees submit to authority unconditionally due to powerlessness in the external environment (e.g., authorities, social hierarchies). Evidence was found in the literature by Wang, Hackett, Cui and Zhang (2012) and Yang et al. (1989) that the Chinese people tend to keep themselves away from incurring troubles. In line with these differences, it is interpreted that Pakistanis follow a personality-oriented approach, i.e., following the supervisory orders, and comparatively, the Chinese employees follow their work ethics (Mukhtar et al., 2022). These findings support the contention of Nadeem and Mumtaz (2018), who discussed that Pakistani HCNs were observed as authoritative leaders and command givers, and Chinese were observed as controlling behaviors due to their unique management styles (Wang and Varma, 2017; Effin and Hopper, 2007).

The second dimension is consistency, which is comprised of validity, instrumentality and consistent HR messages. The findings indicated that the meaning

of validity was perceived to be the same in both countries, but the terminology used was different. The Pakistani employees used the term communicating rightly and clearly because employees preferred a direct communication style in the Pakistani cultural context. While in the Chinese cultural context, employees prefer an indirect style of communication and their actions subtly manifest in everyday behaviors rather than explicit words (Xiao and Cooke, 2018). In line with these differences, it is interpreted that Pakistanis employees were more focused on walking the talk, while the Chinese employees believed in following their leaders, which validated their communication process. In other words, individual employees might not perform up to expectations if an HRM system is not implemented as intended or if the manager does not practice it themselves (García et al., 2013). These findings align with the researchers (Fu et al., 2018; Hauf et al., 2016) who discussed in their studies that message recipients attempt to determine the validity of a message if it is clearly communicated and acted on the same by the managers (senders) as well.

The feature of instrumentality was perceived as the same in meaning as operationalized by Bowen and Ostrof (2004). From the findings, it is highlighted that the terminology used by the Chinese employees was cause and effect relationship because monetary benefits are quite important for them. Especially, Chinese people consider work and money related attitudes as a virtue in their Chinese value system (Randy, Chiu, Luk, and Tang, 2002; Redding, 1990). Particularly, cash- related compensation was important in retaining and motivating employees. Jesca (2014) found that workers valued different rewards as they positively impact their performance outcomes. At the same time, the term timely informing about benefits

was used in the Pakistani country context because Pakistani employees ultimately focused on timely communication of rewards and bonuses, which was linked with efficient performance. Based on some evidence from previous literature by (Fu et al., 2018; Eisenberger and Armeli, 1997), researchers identified that employees remain motivated when they are acknowledged and rewarded for their achieved outcomes in a timely manner.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that the feature of consistent HR messages was perceived as the same in meaning, but the terminology used was different in both cultures. In the Chinese cultural context, stability in HR messages, over time, was considered very important because it builds trust among employees, which is possible with strong sharing mechanisms. Li, Sanders and Frenkel (2012) found that when employees perceived consistent messages concerning the purpose of HR practices (HRM consistency), the stronger LMX (leader member exchange) influences on work engagement and employee job performance were observed. In the Pakistani cultural setting, employees aim to convey clear messages, leading to effective signaling due to reduced information asymmetry through open communication between the sender and receiver (Connelly et al., 2011).

To illustrate, Nadeem and Rahat's (2021) investigation uncovered that HR practices in opportunity enhancing bundles (OEB), such as information sharing and increased employee engagement, can translate some unique signals from motivation enhancing bundles (MEB) into favorable signals by providing a clear organizational viewpoint (Bello-Pintado and Garces-Galdeano, 2019; Vermeeren, 2017). Thus, HR messages will automatically remain stable over time and are perceived clearly if

messages remain consistent over time (Ostroff and Bowen, 2016). These findings are interpreted given the cultural differences observed among both countries' employees. Thus, our findings conform to the prior literature by (Sanders et al., 2008; Van Waeyenberg, Peccei, and Decramer, 2020) which observed that strong communication will lead to a positive impact on employees' job performance. It is also interpreted that in both cultural contexts if signals are not communicated properly, it will lead to miscommunication among senders and receivers (Vertinsky and Zhang, 2004).

The third and last dimension studied was consensus which comprised of the features of fairness and agreement. Results indicated that the terminology used was different, but both county employees understood the meaning on common grounds for these features. The findings revealed that in the Chinese country context, employees adhered to principles of justice, promoted a sense of dignity, and treated employees fairly. The data provided support to form fairness perceptions among Chinese employees because managers practiced values of equality, fairness, freedom, independence and self-orientation in Chinese society. Consistent with past literature by Jia, Yan, Cai, and Liu (2018), which discussed in their study that Chinese leaders' communication was reported to be sincere and open, with high distributive, procedural and interactional fairness towards their employees. Moorman and Byrne, p. 361 (2005) said that "if employees believe they are treated fairly, they will feel that their interests will generally be supported, without legal protection".

Moreover, reciprocity norms suggest that employees tend to reciprocate when they perceive fair treatment. Therefore, when employees are treated with respect,

fairness, and dignity, it fosters mutual trust and a sense of ownership. In comparison, in the Pakistani cultural context, managers emphasized that the process of evaluation should be fair because it would lead to demotivation among employees if HR practices were not implemented fairly. Data indicated that Pakistani managers tried to evaluate and implement HR policies and practices fairly. As previous research noted, when individuals get fair treatment from their supervisors, they repaid the organization as an obligation (Hameed, Khan, Sheikh, Islam, Rasheed, Naeem, 2019). These inferences were also supported and aligned with interactional justice (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). Consistent with the study by Hassan, Ahmad, Ali, Khan and Zafar (2020), participants from their study revealed that a non-favourable rating gets negative reactions from applicants in job knowledge tests, which observed the unfairness in procedure's followed. Thus, it could be concluded that the fairness feature has vital importance, as suggested by (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004), especially when it is interpreted rightly, it has a significant and positive influence on employee performance.

The last feature discussed was agreement, which was perceived as the same in meaning, but the terminology used was different by managers from both countries. The findings suggest that in the Pakistani country context, the agreement was perceived as unanimity in decisions, but it was very challenging in the Pakistani context to make decision-making smooth. The findings highlighted that higher authorities faced many difficulties in reaching unanimous decisions due to reported conflicts among stakeholders. A similar finding was reported by Khilji and Wang (2006), where a lack of consensus was reported regarding HR policy implementation

due to the identified gap between the intended and actual implementation of HR practices. Contrarily, the findings revealed that the Chinese employees perceived the agreement as supporting decisions because smooth decision-making among higher authorities was promoted in their cultural context.

In Chinese work environments where power distance is relatively high, it is of particular significance. Chinese employees exhibit a strong sense of loyalty towards their senior managers (Farh, Hackett, and Liang, 2007; Xiao and Cooke, 2020). Burt (1992) suggested that agreement among key leaders and HR professionals encourages managers to convey consistent messages regarding HR practices, which ensures uniform implementation of such practices across units (Xiao and Cooke, 2020). In line with Kelley's attribution theory (1967, 1973), uniform implementation of HR practices makes them visible, comprehensible, legitimate, and applicable to all employees. Thus, based on the above findings, it is interpreted that differences exist in employee's perceptions due to cultural differences among both country participants, and our findings conforms the prior study findings by (Xiao and Cooke, 2020; Farh et al., 2007; Burt, 1992).

5.2 Performance appraisal quality (The HR content)

In Chinese workplaces where power distance is relatively high, this holds particular importance. The second research objective of this investigation was to examine the moderating effect of HRM System Strength on the relationship between PAQ and employee performance. Our results suggested that both the content (performance appraisal quality) and process of HRM (HRM System Strength) influenced employee willingness to perform well. Concerning content, our study

concentrated on performance appraisal as a primary HR practice because high-quality performance appraisal (i.e., clear, regular, and open) appeared to enhance employee performance. The favorable impact of high-quality PA on employee performance was in line with prior research indicating that informative feedback enhances performance (Bednall et al., 2014; Kluger and DeNisi, 1996). The findings suggested that employees felt more confident in doing work proactively and efficiently when they received accurate information about their performance. This finding was supported by previous research by Baird et al. (2017), which reported that managers give quality feedback, provide suggestions in work, and clarify goals, resulting in more efficient employee performance. Therefore, the quantitative results of this study emphasized the importance of delivering high-quality performance appraisals by supervisor/ managers (Macneil, 2001) in encouraging employees to perform well.

To gain an in-depth understanding, the researcher also conducted a qualitative strand to explore the HR content (i.e., perceptions of performance appraisal quality) to investigate how clarity, openness, and regularity in communication were important in enhancing employee performance. The findings highlighted that when the procedure employed was clear and adequately communicated (i.e., clarity), discussions were open (i.e., openness), and HR messages were delivered at regular intervals (i.e., regularity), it enhanced employee performance. Consequently, these findings imply that in evaluating the effectiveness of employee performance, PAQ played an important role. Moreover, the findings from the quantitative strand appeared to support the general findings derived from the qualitative interviews, particularly the effectiveness of the quality provided in the appraisal process,

supported by the interview quotes from Chapter 4 (please see section 4.2).

In addition, findings from the qualitative and quantitative strands indicated that the performance appraisal quality was essential in delivering clear performance matrices among employees. It was further supported by quantitative results from survey questionnaires, in which the majority of the employees were fully satisfied with the quality of performance appraisal provided by their managers, wherein the mean scores were 3.47 ($\pm$1.019) and 3.47 ($\pm$0.997) for Chinese and Pakistani employees respectively. These findings are consistent with previous studies by Brown et al. (2010) and Baird et al. (2020), who discussed that clear performance expectations and adequate communication were important between employees and their managers.

5.3 The moderating role of HRM System Strength (The HR process)

Kelley's attribution theory (1967, 1973) proposes that observers attribute an event to an entity when all three characteristics (distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus) are present. Previous research has found that the HR process strengthens the relationship between HR practices and job performance (Li et al., 2011; Pereira and Gomes, 2012; Sanders et al., 2008; Sridhar, 2015). Regarding the HRM process (i.e., HRM System Strength), this study examined its moderating effect on the relationship between PAQ and employee performance, which can be explained by the findings. The combination of high-quality performance appraisal and a robust HRM system sends a signal to employees that the organization highly values ongoing improvement, resulting in proactive, adaptable, and efficient employee performance. Moreover, a strong and closely integrated HRM system provides complementary

employee development services to enhance employee performance (Evers, Van der Heijden, Kreijns, and Gerrichhauzen, 2011).

In addition, the research's quantitative results are in line with previous studies by Bednall and Sanders (2017), Bednall, Sanders, and Runhaar (2014), Li, Frenkel, and Sanders (2011), and Sanders and Yang (2016), who discovered that perceived HR strength had a moderating influence on the relationship between HR practices and employee outcomes. Furthermore, Hu, Stein, Mao, and Yan (2021) provided additional support for the more significant moderating effect of HRM System Strength between implemented and perceived HRM systems in the Chinese cultural context. Thus, the study's quantitative findings underscore the importance of moderating the effect of HRM System Strength (Kelley, 1973) in encouraging employees to perform well.

The findings suggested that the moderation effect of HRM System Strength (i.e., distinctiveness, consistency and consensus) enhances employee performance in both countries. In support of this hypothesis, this research offered the following possible explanations. Firstly, the perceived HR strength signified employees' awareness of the availability of HR practices and their intended purpose. It means if HR practices (such as rewards, bonuses, or promotions) were well communicated, employees were likely to take more advantage of them. Secondly, findings suggested that stronger HR strength reflects how effectively HR practices work together to achieve a common purpose. Finally, it is believed that the strength of HR practices reflects the clarity of managerial intentions, enabling employees and managers to implement them more effectively. This is supported by previous studies such as

Bednall et al. (2014), Li et al. (2011), and Sanders et al. (2008), who examined the three meta-features (distinctiveness, consistency, and consensus), and is consistent with the findings of our study. Therefore, this study provides additional empirical evidence on the implementation of HR practices (specifically performance appraisal quality) with the moderating effect of HRM System Strength in improving employee performance in both country contexts.

5.4 The moderating role of non-work domain factors

The third research objective of the study was based on examining the effect of work domain factors of spirituality, family structures and religiosity on the relationship between PAQ and employee performance. The job demand resource theory (JD-R) was conceptualized to answer the above research objective and test how non-work domain factors impacted this relationship. As per previous research, an individual's performance at work is affected by their non-work life, including their cultural values, beliefs, and norms, as well as indirectly influencing organizational HRM practices (Delaney and Hussield, 1996). In the context of this study, both China and Pakistan are considered collectivist societies with conservative cultures and high power distance (Hofstede, 2011). Aligned with this study's findings, the behavior of employees in Pakistan and China was different since Pakistanis focused on work-life balance, family prioritization, and followed religious norms (Nadeem and De Luque, 2018; Khilji, 2002). Contrastingly, in Chinese culture, work goals and commitments were a priority at work. They (Chinese employees) tend to loosely-knit social framework in which employees are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only (Xiao and Cooke, 2012; Mumtaz, 2022). Therefore, in an

increasingly global context, our finding highlighted that manager need to recognize and understand the impact of non-work domain factors which impacts employee outcomes (Mullins, 2010). One of the purposes of this study was to examine the impact of non-work domain factors of spirituality, family structures, and religiosity in strengthening the relationship between PAQ and employee performance. It was hypothesized that non-work domain factors would enhance this relationship, as discussed below.

Now I will discuss the non-work domain factor of a spirituality, findings from the research suggested that perceptions of PAQ impacted employee performance positively when the employee's spirituality was stronger. The positive effect of the spirituality from the findings is interpreted in the light of JD-R theory. Employees who considered their spirituality a personal resource remain motivated and perceived PAQ as meaningful which enhanced their performance (Abu Bakar et al., 2018). Results from the quantitative strand of the study supported this relationship and suggested that employee's spirituality strengthened this relationship because it was considered a motivational factor (i.e., motivational calling at work makes individuals spiritually fresh and confident) which improved their performance.

Further, this study found a statistically positive and significant effect of spirituality in the Pakistani cultural context on the PAQ-performance relationship. Findings confirm those from prior studies by Adeel et al. (2019) confirmed this study's findings, who discussed that spirituality motivated line managers to integrate their values into organizational values and served as a base for improving employee performance. Findings from the study by Milliman, Gatling, and Kim (2018) also

supports our study results, who highlighted in their research that spirituality amongst individuals inculcates performance motivation and minimizes negative perceptions developed during work. Overall, from the findings of this research, it is concluded that spirituality positively affects employee's performance in both cultural contexts.

Now I will discuss another non-work domain factor as a family structure, the findings suggested that PAQ led to improved performance of employees in the presence of family structures (i.e., there was a positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance), considering the relationship weaker when family structures were joint. The significant effect is interpreted based on several differences in the values of both countries. More precisely, family structure was identified as a job resource based on the individual employee's self-reported status and perceptions. It is highlighted that Pakistani employees who resided in joint family structures mostly had a lot of responsibilities. But at the same time, these responsibilities and psychological challenges become a motivation, which positively impacted their performance. These differences interpreted in light of the JD-R theory. The JD-R theory posits that personal factors affect individuals and organizations (Bakker and Demerouti, 2018). It explains how job demands can impact job health, well-being, organizational behavior, and job performance (Bakker et al., 2017). Research shows that contextual job factors affect an employee's psychological state level, which is a personality attribute that can be shaped. As such, it is reasonable to assume that JD-R has an indirect effect on all types of family-work outcomes. Also aligned with literature by (Menges, Tussing, Wihler, Grant, 2016; Morrison and Phelps, 1999; Weiner, 1985), who reported that when the beneficiary is the family, then spouses

and children are dependent on employees, which makes them feel fulfilling their personal responsibilities as a motivational effort. Pearce and Gregersen (1991) reported that when family members are dependent on employees, they consider it an honor to work, which makes them satisfied to perform well. Thus, I assert that a joint family structure can be regarded as a motivational resource. At the same time, our findings contradicts with the research by Poelmans et al. (2005), which reported that it is likely to perceive a negative spillover between work and family.

In another study, Khan, Khan, Shoukat, and Naz (2011) reported that in traditional Pakistani society, the sole male breadwinner has to take care of the extended family, which causes employees to get under pressure while performing work. Sumera et al. (2012) reported that Pakistani females living in a joint family system which posed many challenges, making their work performance less efficient. Contrastingly, the findings from China revealed that most employees resided in a nuclear family structure, and they reported that they had to take care of themselves and their immediate family, which motivated them to perform well. Motowidlo (2003) suggested that family member roles can influence job performance as it pertains to the effectiveness of employee contributions towards organizational goals. This aligns with the idea that job performance is not solely based on personal experiences, but also involves fulfilling the important responsibility of supporting dependents. Consequently, there may be varied relationships between work performance and work-family interference. I will now discuss non-work domain factor as a religiosity, this study hypothesized that there would be a positive relationship between PAQ and employee performance, with a stronger effect of

240

religiosity. However, the findings suggested that PAQ did not lead to improved employee performance in the presence of religiosity. The results revealed that the moderating effect of religiosity was not significant. This finding was striking and opposed to the hypothesized relationship of the study. A possible explanation is that, in the Pakistani cultural context, religiosity was considered a fundamental attribute for every employee (Gani et al., 2013) but findings of the study revealed that religious employees in their daily lives did not find religiosity to influence their performance practically because employees considered religiosity to be an innate dispositional factor.

This finding is inconsistent with previous studies by Hassan et al. (2016) and Kashif et al. (2016), who reported that the participants in their study had reported that religious activities increase employee morale and productivity and decrease employee turnover. One possible reason can be that Pakistan is an Islamic country, and religiosity is considered to be important, but when it comes to the integration of work and personal resources, employees intentionally maneuver the impact of religiosity in real life and hide its impact on their performance, because they consider religion their personal matter.

In contrast, religion was not commonly recognized and understood in China, and the majority of the population did not follow any religion, which was reported in the results. In general, Chinese employees did not believe in religiosity. Evidence was found from this study results that religiosity had no impact on the PAQ-performance relationship as expected in overall and additional results. Contrarily, evidence from previous research showed that this study finding was inconsistent with studies

conducted in China by Lu and Wu (2020), who found that entrepreneurs with religious beliefs showed higher accounting performance and reported that the impact of religiosity complements the political and social status of the entrepreneurs.

5.5 The three-way impact of PAQ, HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors

The fourth research objective examined the three-way impact of PAQ, HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors on employee performance. Additionally, the first research objective also explored how non-work domain factors influenced HRM System Strength in China and Pakistan. The mixed methods research strengthened this study's findings by answering the above-mentioned objectives, which justified undertaking a pragmatist approach. For examining the three-way impact, this study included ten interaction terms i.e., PAQ x HRM SS, PAQ x SPI, PAQ x FS, PAQ x REL, HRM SS x SPI, HRM SS x FS and HRM SS x REL, PAQ x HRM SS x SPI, PAQ x HRM SS x FS, and PAQ x HRM SS x REL. Results indicated that out of ten interactions, five interaction terms were significant. In the following paragraphs I will discuss these interactions one by one as follows.

In terms of three-way impact of PAQ, HRM SS and spirituality, this study hypothesized that there would be a three-way positive relationship between PAQ, HRM SS, and spirituality on employee performance. However, the findings revealed that the three-way interaction effect of PAQ, HRM SS and spirituality was reported as insignificant on employee performance. Results suggest that PAQ and HRM SS jointly provide unambiguous communication, but their interaction with employee's spirituality did not make any difference to this joint effect on employee performance.

242

It can be interpreted that employee's spirituality positively impacted the perception of PAQ (i.e., PAQ x SPI), but it did not provide meaningful insight on the perception of distinctiveness, consistency and consensus in improving employee performance (HRM SS* SPI, n.s). However, perceived quality with clarity, regularity and openness in feedback positively impacted employees with high spirituality. It is aligned with the basic assumptions of Kelley's attribution theory (1967, 1973), which explained that spiritual employees find their work more meaningful when HRM System Strength is perceived to be high on distinctiveness, consistency and consensus. But overall, the three-way interactive effect of PAQ, HRM SS and spirituality was reported as insignificant. Thus, it is interpreted that when quality in performance is perceived to be high and HRM System Strength provides clarity of communication, the employee's spirituality does not impact this relationship in any way.

Additionally, qualitative strand of the study was conducted to explore the influence of spirituality on HRM System Strength. The mixed findings were reported in contrast to quantitative results for both country employees. Findings from the interview quotes revealed that only a few employees believed in spirituality, which was the influence of honesty and righteousness in terms of work ethics in turn positively influencing their work performance. A possible explanation is that when Chinese employees seek more fairness and validation of HR practices to fulfill their performance requirements, they relate these (fairness perceptions) with the goals they set to accomplish. Resultantly, it became important to set goals first, based on the principles of ethics, which provides clarity in guiding work behavior and positively

243

impacts employee performance. However, these qualitative findings contradicted with quantitative strand of the study results, in which no effect of spirituality on HRM System Strength was found because the Chinese employees relates their spirituality in following work ethics.

On the other hand, in the Pakistani cultural context, spirituality was found as an intrinsic motivational influence on the performance of employees. It can be interpreted that in Pakistani culture, employees live their religion and consider themselves intrinsically oriented individuals who fully embrace and internalizes a spiritual creed. Prior literature by Baloch et al. (2021) also supported our study finding, who highlighted that spirituality is the inner spring of wisdom that is mirrored in human-oriented ethics and performance-oriented behaviors. Another study by Hassan, Nadeem, and Akhter (2016) conforms our study findings, who reported that spirituality striving was dominant in all words and actions for Muslim employees, providing them job satisfaction. Thus, our findings diverged (i.e., quantitative and qualitative results contradicted) in examining and investigating three-way interaction effect of PAQ, spirituality and HRM System Strength on employee performance.

In terms of three-way impact of PAQ, HRM SS and family structures, this study hypothesized that there would be a positive three-way interactive relationship between PAQ, HRM SS, and family structures on employee performance. Moreover, the results highlighted that the three-way interaction effect of PAQ, HRM SS and family structures was supported. It is interpreted that the positive interaction between PAQ and HRM System Strength provides an unambiguous communication towards

employees who belonged to a nuclear family structure. Accordingly, employees who belonged to nuclear FS tended to perform better because they had to support fewer family members.

Further from the findings it is interpreted that the quality (i.e., clarity, regularity and openness) of feedback was stronger for highly distinctive, consistent and consensual HRM system (Bowen and Ostroff, 2016; Sander et al., 2019). These findings supported Schwartz et al., (2012) who urged that employees who belonged to joint FS were more sensitive to the feedback they received than those who belonged to nuclear FS. In addition, the present research findings aligned with the basic assumptions of Kelley's attribution theory (1967, 1973) which postulates that the perceptions of HRM System Strength appeared to encourage employees to perform well when quality of feedback was present. Therefore, combinations of a strong HRM system, quality of feedback, and employees who belonged to nuclear family structures positively impacted their performance.

Additionally, qualitative strand of study was conducted to explore the influence of family structure's on HRM System Strength. In Chinese cultural context employees reported that they had to fulfil fewer responsibilities of their family members and belonged to nuclear family structures, which made them focus on clarity of HR practices with a high distinctiveness, consistent and consensual system. These findings are also supported by prior literature by (Wanting, 2021), who discussed that Chinese employees mostly resided in nuclear family systems faced less work demands. Contrarily, Pakistani employees highlighted that there was a salient need to meet greater responsibility of the immediate and extended families as they

resided in joint family structures, and they (employees) posed they had to sought more clarity in the performance requirements.

Particularly joint family structures influenced their perceptions to seek more clarity in HR communication because they greatly relied on the rewards and bonuses, and these rewards would fulfill their family needs. I contend, when there is a clarity of HR practices with a highly distinct, consistent and consensual system, employees deliver well, which make employees psychologically less under pressure and perform better. However, these findings are opposed to our quantitative findings of the FS* HRM SS relationship, which was reported insignificant and does not support Hypothesis 4b. Thus, it is highlighted that our findings from both strands diverged (i.e., quantitative and qualitative results contradicted) in examining and investigating the three-way interaction effect of PAQ, family structures and HRM System Strength on employee performance.

Lastly, in terms of three-way impact of PAQ, HRM SS and religiosity, this study hypothesized that there would be a three-way interactive relationship between PAQ, HRM SS, and religiosity on employee performance. However, the findings revealed that the three-way interaction effect of PAQ, HRM SS and religiosity was found to be insignificant on employee performance. It is interpreted that although the interaction of PAQ and HRM SS was significant which provides unambiguous communication among employees, but the effect of religiosity does not make any difference to this joint effect in enhancing performance of employees. The two-way interactive effect of religiosity and HRM SS was positive and significant suggesting that high religiosity makes employees motivated and clarifies communication and

positively enhances their performance. It supports Hypothesis 4c. However, perceived quality with clarity, regularity and openness in feedback did not affect employees with high religiosity. It can be interpreted that religious employees feel more motivated to perform well when HRM System Strength was perceived to be high on distinctiveness, consistency and consensus, which is aligned with the basic assumptions of Kelley's attribution theory (1967, 1973). But the three-way interactive effect of PAQ, HRM SS and religiosity was reported as insignificant. Thus, it is interpreted that when quality in performance is perceived to be high and HRM System Strength provides clarity of communication, the employee's religiosity does not impact this relationship in any way. Hence, Hypothesis 5a was not supported.

Additionally, a qualitative strand of study was conducted to explore the influence of religiosity on HRM System Strength. Mixed findings were reported in contrast to quantitative results for both country employees. Employees from China straightforwardly revealed that they do not follow any religious perspectives. Also, few employees responded that they do not understand the concept of religiosity, possible explanation is that due to the upsurgence of religion in China in most parts and because of the suppression of religion by the government by imposing Communist ideology (Yang, 2010), employees in Chinese culture does not understand the concept of religion. Prior literature also supported these findings (Madsen, 2010; Li, Tang, Zhang Li, 2014), who responded that no effect of religiosity was observed on performance and customer loyalty.

In contrast, Pakistani employees revealed that religiosity was very important because they considered the religiosity factor as a motivation to do work. They

asserted that clarity in performance appraisal feedback and (distinctive, consistent and consensual) information has a positive relationship with religiosity on employee's performance. In fact, they reported that religiosity was regarded as a meaningfulness factor which enhances clarity in communication and feedback. These findings are also supported by prior literature by Hassan et al. (2016) who discussed that religious activities increase employee morale and productivity and decrease employee turnover. Thus, it is highlighted that our findings from both strands diverged (i.e., quantitative and qualitative results contradicted) in examining and investigating the three-way interaction effect of PAQ, religiosity and HRM System Strength on employee performance.

5.6 Theoretical contributions

This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions. It contributes to the expanding theoretical and empirical research on employee performance by examining the effects of performance appraisal, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors. The findings can have implications for practitioners in improving the design and implementation of HRM practices to enhance employee performance. This study distinguishes itself in several ways and makes significant contributions to knowledge in the following ways: Firstly, understanding the importance of the specific HR practice of performance appraisal quality fills a gap in the literature on the importance to examine and explore quality dimensions of clarity, regularity and openness in assessing the performance of employees (Babar et al., 2022; Sanders et al., 2008; Bednall et al., 2014).

Previous research has primarily examined the direct impact of performance

appraisal quality, with limited understanding of the boundary conditions that may moderate its effects on employee outcomes. However, it is crucial to investigate these boundary conditions as high-quality performance appraisals offer greater potential for enhancing employee performance and efficiency. Secondly, this research contributes conceptually to the holistic understanding of HRM System Strength features in the context of Pakistan and China. It suggests the applicability of features explored in meaning and terminologies used by both country managers within the unique context of their countries. HRM System Strength construct needs to be unfolded with its culture-bound or culture free perspective in Eastern world. The idea that language and its classification into descriptive terminologies and meanings can impose limited and exclusive definitions of HRM System Strength aspects served as the motivation for this study and served as a theoretical contribution of this research.

Thirdly, this research contributes theoretically by identifying three important non-work domain factors of spirituality, family structures, and religiosity, which are considered a personal resource for an employee and can impact their performance. The perceptions of employees related to spirituality and religiosity, are important to study as they are believed to enhance the employee's commitment with work and hence their performance. In terms of family structure, for employees who belonged to nuclear as well as joint family structure it becomes a source of motivation to perform better to earn well for fulfilling family responsibilities. Thus, this study contributes to the existing knowledge of research by identifying an additional set of unique personal resources of religiosity, spirituality and family structures in Eastern context that contribute to the positive performance at work.

249

Prior research has commonly grouped religious and spiritual employees with other HR-related factors when exploring the relationships between contexts and outcomes (Cooke, 2017). However, this study aims to extend the literature by investigating the importance of religiosity, spirituality, and family structure as valuable resources, and by expanding the JD-R theory to assess their impact on employee performance. This approach can account for various job and personal characteristics that can explain work performance and support the extension of the JD-R model. The results suggest that spiritual resources are a unique set of individual differences, distinct from personality traits, and contribute significantly to the motivation process within the JD-R model among religious workers. This theoretical finding proposes that spiritual resources should be considered a significant subcategory of personal resources within the JD-R model, especially for religious workers.

Fourthly, this study was conducted with rigorous methodology. Data was collected from multiple sources, including employees and managers, at different time points using a multi-wave approach. This research provides a methodological contribution by utilizing a mixed-method approach, which is a novel approach in the area of HRM System Strength research in China and Pakistan. Previous research has primarily relied on surveys and quantitative data, whereas this study also incorporates a qualitative aspect. The researcher conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with multiple stakeholders, providing unique insights into HRM System Strength, employee perceptions of HRM System Strength, performance appraisal quality, and non-work domain variables.

Lastly, another contribution of the present research was being able to design and test a multilevel theoretical model. The multilevel theory has been identified as an important because it often results in "a deeper, richer portrait of organizational life" (Klein, Tosi, and Cannella, 1999, p. 243). Advancements in data analytic techniques allowed researcher to test a multilevel model, and the use of such techniques (HLM, CFA) represents another strength of this dissertation. The researcher specifically used HLM to assess the hierarchical moderated moderation hypotheses proposed in the dissertation research model. HLM has been identified as one that can be superior to multiple linear regression when using clustered data, such as when employees were nested within managers and managers were nested within companies (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). To analyze qualitative data, NVivo software was used to do thematic coding and analysis. Thus, it was another strength of this dissertation to use advanced techniques and software.

5.7 Practical Implications

Findings of this study offer several practical implications for practitioners and policy makers. Firstly, the findings highlight the importance of delivering high-quality performance appraisals. Managers should primarily focus on providing quality feedback, which previous studies have ignored. In the Pakistani and Chinese contexts, dimensions of clarity, regularity and openness need to be set by top managers and policymakers and followed by line managers to make the performance appraisal process effective. More importantly, line managers must be adequately trained in technical and people management skills, essential for delivering feedback.

Secondly, HRM cannot be viewed in isolation, and must be integrated with

251

other internal processes to ensure consistency and distinctiveness in the HRM system. Therefore, local authorities and managers are advised to prioritize employees' understanding of management processes, especially within the context of their own country. When employees have a deeper understanding of HRM practices and procedures in their country, it can have a positive impact on their job performance. Understanding the native terminologies and meanings of HRM System Strength features has important implications. It can assist HRM practitioners in making informed decisions when developing theories and conducting research, by taking into account cultural and contextual factors that may impact employee perceptions. Moreover, this knowledge can benefit policy makers and managers when their employees collaborate on cross-cultural projects, by facilitating effective communication, minimizing misunderstandings, and increasing the chances of successful outcomes.

The Bowen and Ostroff (2004) framework for the HRM system, which the findings support, should be given considerable attention by management in order to ensure a clear, distinct, and consensus-driven message. It is important to note that variations in HRM signaling might cause employee interpretations to divergence of opinion and may adversely affect performance. Instead of concentrating on the administration and content of HRM, management would be better served by shifting their attention to the system's overarching message and intended purpose. It would make sure that managerial intentions are not mistranslated when HR practices are applied.

Thirdly, managers should pay particular attention to non-work domain factors

(i.e., personal human resources) because these factors make them motivated in pursuing their work when they have to fulfill greater responsibilities as well as spiritual/ religious employees consider it as a personal faith commitment which make their work-related responsibilities more meaningful to enhance their performance. PAQ and HRM systems strength should not be the only reason why employees work harder at their jobs. Based on the findings of moderating role of the non-work domain factors between PAQ-performance relationships, immediate motivation and meaningfulness comes from these factors which enhances employee's performance. Therefore, organizations importantly consider personal resources of spirituality, religiosity and family structure an important motivational indicator to ensure PAQ, which positively influence performance of employees.

Lastly, the workforce in Pakistan is multireligious, and China is deemed as multicultural, making it crucial to acknowledge diversity in the workplace and respect individual differences. Furthermore, it would be useful for organizational managers to consider which job resources are beneficial for an employee's perception of meaningfulness at work and to create conditions that foster an individual's performance. Based on our study results, managers may wish to ensure that employees perceive the value of their work. In particular, job resources imply meaningfulness at work when examined as a moderator between PAQ and employee performance.

5.8 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Like any research, this study has potential limitations that should be treated with caution (Katou and Budhwar, 2007; Takeuchi et al., 2007). Firstly, the study's

sample was limited to the telecom industry, despite employing the mixed methods approach for more in-depth results, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Hence, future research should focus on other sectors or collect data from manufacturing industries to enhance the study's external validity..

The study has a second limitation related to the use of convenience sampling. In the quantitative portion of the study, HR managers and employees who were available to complete the surveys were approached to fill out questionnaires. Despite the fact that respondents represented a broad range of departments across both countries and multiple organizations, it cannot be guaranteed that employees from all departments were equally represented.

The third limitation of this study is related to the sample sizes used to aggregate data from managers and employees, which were relatively small. Therefore, future research should consider using larger sample sizes for this purpose. Additionally, the study's findings may not be generalizable to countries that do not have an Islamic or socialist context. This highlights the importance of conducting similar research in other cultural contexts to determine the generalizability of the findings. Future research should consider including other countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia etc., in other Asia regions. It is recommended that future research explore a broader range of contextual characteristics that could account for variance in HR perceptions of HRM System Strength across different countries and sectors. This could include factors such as cultural values, legal and regulatory frameworks, industry-specific norms, and organizational structures, among others. A more comprehensive understanding of these contextual factors could provide valuable

insights into the factors that contribute to HR perceptions and could inform the development of effective HRM strategies across different settings.

An additional area of investigation that could be explored in our study is the content of performance appraisals and how employees and managers follow up on them. While I asked employees to evaluate the quality of their performance appraisals based on factors such as clarity, frequency, and transparency, there may be other aspects of the appraisal process that could contribute to improving employee performance. For example, features of trust and fairness may be included in performance appraisal practice where they are designed, in impacting performance at various levels. Thus, managers should also look to enhance their level of fairness and trustworthiness, to focus on enhancing employees' opinion of their ability and integrity (Davis et al. 2000; Baird et al., 2020). Teckchandani and Pichler (2015) recommend that managers should enhance employees' trust in them by emphasizing common ground and attempting to better understand their employees.

Additionally, by examining the combined impacts of performance appraisal quality and HRM system strength on employee performance, it is suggested that further exploration is necessary to uncover the mechanisms linking specific HR practices to organizational performance (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). The quality of performance appraisals may promote individual performance by encouraging task interdependence and practice, which can eventually contribute to increased organizational performance. Although the outcomes of this study may apply to other telecom sectors, industries, and professions, conducting a replication study in other settings could enhance the credibility of the findings.

255

Although one of the most obvious contingencies can be the national context that plays a role in influencing employees' perceptions of situations (Sanders et al. 2014; Farndale and Sanders, 2017), only a few studies include the effect of the context in their research. Social norms, as defined by Cialdini and Goldstein (2004), can play a vital role in shaping how employees perceive communication, information, and messages regarding HR within their work environment. These contextual factors can greatly influence the interpretation of such aspects in the workplace. Future research on HR strength should add a cross-cultural lens and demonstrate how the function of HR strength may differ across cultures (see also Farndale and Sanders, 2017; see also Wang et al., 2020; Sanders chapter, 2021). In order to better understand the differences in HR perceptions across countries, it is recommended that future research investigate the influence of contextual factors. Additionally, there is a need for continued exploration of effective methods for motivating employees to enhance both the quantity and quality of their performance. Furthermore, I encourage employees of both countries who will work together on various projects in future to use these features terminologies and meanings explored (in this research) which could assist in understanding the HRM System Strength dimensions for practitioners and management in implementing HR practices within each country contextual settings.

Finally, the three-way interactive effects of PAQ, HRM System Strength, and non-work domain factors can also be examined on other attitudinal and behavioral outcomes, such as innovative work behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, work engagement, job satisfaction and turnover.

5.9 Conclusion

This study analyzed the qualitative and the quantitative data sets within the Pakistani and Chinese organizations through the guiding principles of Kelley's attribution theory, signaling theory, JD-R model, and Bowen and Ostroff's (2004) framework. The data were compared and integrated using a convergent parallel mixed-method approach. This research identified that PAQ practice is very important in improving employees' proficiency, adaptiveness, and proactiveness. As a result, the performance appraisal process is considered incomplete when it does not offer clarity, openness, and regularity given to employees in improving employee performance. Furthermore, findings showed that the PAQ-performance relationship was strengthened by the moderating role of HRM System Strength. HRM System Strength plays a vital role in the PAQ-performance relationship, as observed in the extant literature. The findings for each feature of the HRM System Strength construct ascertained that the meaning and terminologies of some features varied due to unique contextual differences within Pakistan and China. This study identified that non-work domain factors acted as an important personal job resource, along with a key moderating variable that strengthened the performance of employees. This study also explored the three-way interactive relationship between PAQ, HRM System Strength and non-work domain factors on employee performance. This unique interplay offers valuable insights to foster performance of employees that will help new researchers and HR consultants explore more on linking personal and work-related factors to enhance employee performance. Based on the findings, insights are offered to guide policymakers to adequately train managers in technical skills (clarity, regularity, and

openness) essential for delivering feedback to make the performance appraisal process effective and practically help HR managers by shifting their attention to the system's overarching message and intended purpose, instead of concentrating on the content of HRM.

REFERENCES

Abang Ekhsan, A. O. (2009). Strategic HRM practices: barriers and implications. *Lex Et Scientia International Journal, Annals of University of Bucharest, Economic and Administrative Series*, (3), 51-71.

Abu Bakar, R., Cooke, F. L., & Muenjohn, N. (2018). Religiosity as a source of influence on work engagement: a study of the Malaysian Finance industry. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *29*(18), 2632-2658.

Aiken, L. S., West, S. G., & Reno, R. R. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. sage.

Aït Razouk, A., Bayad, M., & Wannenmacher, D. (2009). Strategic human resource management and tacit knowledge transfer: A case study. *Human Systems Management*, *28*(1-2), 77-82.

Alfes, K., Shantz, A. D., Bailey, C., Conway, E., Monks, K., & Fu, N. (2019). Perceived human resource system strength and employee reactions toward change: Revisiting human resource's remit as a change agent. *Human Resource Management*, *58*(3), 239–252. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21948

Alin, P., Taylor, J. E., & Smeds, R. (2011). Knowledge transformation in project networks: A speech act level cross-boundary analysis. *Project Management Journal*, *42*(4), 58-75.

Anderson, G. (2006). Assuring quality/resisting quality assurance: Academics' responses to 'quality' in some Australian universities. *Quality in higher education*, *12*(2), 161-173.

Antwi, S. K., & Hamza, K. (2015). Qualitative and quantitative research paradigms in business research: A philosophical reflection. *European journal of business and Management*, *7*(3), 217-225.

Anwar, G., & Abdullah, N. N. (2021). The impact of Human resource management practice on Organizational performance. *International journal of Engineering,*

Business and Management (IJEBM), *5*.

Armstrong, M. (2009). Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice 11th edition.

Armstrong, M., & Taylor, S. (2020). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Arshad, A., Azhar, S. M., & Khawaja, K. (2014). Dynamics of HRM practices and organizational performance: Quest for strategic effectiveness in Pakistani organizations. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, *5*(9), 69-80.

Ashford, S. J., & Black, J. S. (1996). Proactivity during organizational entry: The role of desire for control. *Journal of Applied psychology*, *81*(2), 199.

Atatsi, E. A., Stoffers, J., & Kil, A. (2019). Factors affecting employee performance: a systematic literature review. *Journal of Advances in Management Research*. 16(3), 329-351.

Audenaert, M., Decramer, A., George, B., Verschuere, B., & Van Waeyenberg, T. (2019). When employee performance management affects individual innovation in public organizations: The role of consistency and LMX. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *30*(5), 815-834.

Babar, S., Obaid, A., & Tariq, H. (2020). HR Strength and Performance Appraisal Quality: The Impact of Non-Work Domain Influence. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2020, No. 1, p. 16567). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.

Babar, S., Obaid, A., Sanders, K., & Tariq, H. (2022). Performance appraisal quality and employee performance: the boundary conditions of human resource strength and religiosity. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*.

Bach, S. (2005). Personnel management in transition. *Managing Human Resources: Personnel Management in Transition*, 3-44.

Baird, K., Su, S. X., & Nuhu, N. (2021). The mediating role of fairness on the effectiveness of strategic performance measurement systems. *Personnel Review*, *51*(5), 1491-1517.

Baird, K., Tung, A., & Su, S. (2020). Employee empowerment, performance appraisal quality and performance. *Journal of Management Control*, *31*(4), 451-474.

Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands- resources model: State of the art. *Journal of managerial psychology*. 22(3), 309-328

Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands–resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, *22*(3), 273.

Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E. & Euwema, M. C. (2005). Job resources buffer the impact of job demands on burnout. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology,* 10(2), 170-186.

Bal, Y., & Kökalan, Ö. (2021). The moderating effect of religiosity on the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*.

Baluch, A. M. (2017). Employee perceptions of HRM and well-being in non-profit organizations: Unpacking the unintended. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*(14), 1912–1937.

Barbieri, M., Micacchi, L., Vidè, F., & Valotti, G. (2021). The Performance of Performance Appraisal Systems: A Theoretical Framework for Public Organizations. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 0734371X211043560.

Bari, M. W., Abrar, M., Bashir, M., Baig, S. A., & Fanchen, M. (2019). Soft issues during cross-border mergers and acquisitions and industry performance, China–Pakistan economic corridor-based view. *Sage Open*, *9*(2), 215-234.

Barrick, M. R., Mount, M. K., & Li, N. (2013). The theory of purposeful work behavior: The role of personality, higher-order goals, and job characteristics. *Academy of management review*, *38*(1), 132-153.

Beardwell, I., Holden, L., & Claydon, T. (2004). Human resource management A contemporary approach 4th edition.

Bednall, T. C., Sanders, K., & Runhaar, P. (2014). Stimulating informal learning activities through perceptions of performance appraisal quality and human resource management system strength: A two-wave study. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, *13*(1), 45-61.

Bednall, T. C., Sanders, K., & Yang, H. (2022). A meta- analysis on employee perceptions of human resource strength: Examining the mediating versus moderating hypotheses. *Human Resource Management*, *61*(1), 5-20.

Beer, M., Spector, B., Lawrence, P.R., Quinn Mills, D. & Walton, R.E. (1984). Managing Human Assets. New York: Free Press.

Belal, A. R., & Owen, D. L. (2007). The views of corporate managers on the current state of, and future prospects for, social reporting in Bangladesh: An engagement- based study. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, 20 (3), 472-494.

Bentzen, L. (2018) HRM System Strength, Attribution, Engagement and Burnout. Is context important (*Unpublished master's thesis*) Tilburg University

Berggren, N., & Bjørnskov, C. (2011). Is the importance of religion in daily life related to social trust? Cross-country and cross-state comparisons. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, *80*(3), 459-480.

Bickerton, G. R., Miner, M. H., Dowson, M., & Griffin, B. (2014). Spiritual resources and work engagement among religious workers: A three- wave longitudinal study. *Journal of occupational and organizational psychology*, *87*(2), 370-391.

Birnbaum, P. H., Farh, J. L., & Wong, G. Y. (1986). The job characteristics model in Hong Kong. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*(4), 598.

Boon, C., & Kalshoven, K. (2014). How high- commitment HRM relates to engagement and commitment: The moderating role of task

proficiency. *Human Resource Management*, *53*(3), 403-420.

Boselie, P., Dietz, G., & Boon, C. (2005). Commonalities and contradictions in HRM and performance research. *Human resource management journal*, *15*(3), 67-94.

Bos-Nehles, A., Trullen, J., & Valverde, M. (2021). HRM System Strength implementation: a multi-actor process perspective. In *Handbook on HR Process Research* (pp. 99-114). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Bowen, D. E., & Ostroff, C. (2004). Understanding HRM–firm performance linkages: The role of the "strength" of the HRM system. *Academy of Management Review, 29*(2), 203–221.

Boxall, P. F., Purcell, J., & Wright, P. M. (Eds.). (2007). *The Oxford handbook of human resource management*. Oxford Handbooks.

Braam, A. W., & Koenig, H. G. (2019). Religion, spirituality and depression in prospective studies: A systematic review. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, *57(2)*, 428-438.

Brand, M. J., & Bax, E. H. (2002). Strategic HRM for SMEs: Implications for firms and policy. *Education+ Training*.

Bratton, J. & Gold, J. (1999), *Human Resource Management: Theory and Practice*, Macmillan, Basingstoke.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Brislin, R. W. (2000). Back-translation. Washington, DC, US/New York, NY, US: American Psychological Association.

Brown, M., & Benson, J. (2005). Managing to overload? Work overload and performance appraisal processes. *Group and Organization Management*, *30*(1), 99-124.

Brown, M., Hyatt, D., & Benson, J. (2010). Consequences of the performance appraisal experience. *Personnel Review*.

Bryant, A. (2017). *Grounded theory and grounded theorizing: Pragmatism in research practice*. Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (2007). Barriers to integrating quantitative and qualitative research. *Journal of mixed methods research*, *1*(1), 8-22.

Bryman, A. (2010). Quantitative vs. qualitative methods. *Sociology: introductory readings*, *47*.

Bryman, A. (2017). Quantitative and qualitative research: further reflections on their integration. In *Mixing methods: Qualitative and quantitative research* (pp. 57-78). Routledge.

Budhwar, P. S., & Debrah, Y. A. (Eds.). (2013). *Human resource management in developing countries*. Routledge.

Budhwar, P. S., & Sparrow, P. R. (2002). An integrative framework for understanding cross-national human resource management practices. *Human Resource Management Review*, *12*(3), 377-403.

Budhwar, P., Pereira, V., Mellahi, K., & Singh, S. K. (2019). The state of HRM in the Middle East: Challenges and future research agenda. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, *36*(4), 905-933.

Cafferkey, K., Heffernan, M., Harney, B., Dundon, T., & Townsend, K. (2019). Perceptions of HRM System Strength and affective commitment: The role of human relations and internal process climate. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *30*(21), 3026–3048.

Chacko, S., and Conway, N. (2019). Employee experiences of HRM through daily affective events and their effects on perceived event- signaled HRM System Strength, expectancy perceptions, and daily work engagement. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *29*(3), 433-450.

Chapel, W. B. (2002). Effective management communication for China. In *International Management in China* (pp. 185-198). Routledge.

Chinmulgund, A. (2021). Study of HRM practices and organizational culture. *International journal of modern agriculture*, *10*(2), 707-714.

Chow, I. H. S., Teo, S. T., & Chew, I. K. (2013). HRM systems and firm performance: The mediation role of strategic orientation. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, *30*(1), 53-72.

Chughtai, A. A. (2008). Impact of job involvement on in-role job performance and organizational citizenship behaviour. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management*, *9*(2), 169-183.

Claus, L., & Briscoe, D. (2009). Employee performance management across borders: A review of relevant academic literature. *International journal of management reviews*, *11*(2), 175-196.

Conway, E., Fu, N., Monks, K., Alfes, K., & Bailey, C. (2016). Demands or resources? The relationship between HR practices, employee engagement, and emotional exhaustion within a hybrid model of employment relations. *Human Resource Management*, *55*(5), 901-917.

Cook, J., & Crossman, A. (2004). Satisfaction with performance appraisal systems: A study of role perceptions. *Journal of managerial psychology*.

Cooke FL (2018) Concepts, contexts, & mindsets: putting human resource management research in perspectives. *Human Resource Management Journal* 28(1), 1–13.

Cooke, F. L., Xiao, M., & Chen, Y. (2021). Still in search of strategic human resource management? A review & suggestions for future research with China as an example. *Human Resource Management*, *60*(1), 89-118.

Cooke, F. L., Xiao, Q., & Xiao, M. (2020). Extending the frontier of research on (strategic) human resource management in China: A review of David Lepak and colleagues' influence and future research direction. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *32*(1), 183-224.

Cooper, B., Wang, J., Bartram, T., & Cooke, F. L. (2019). Well- being- oriented human resource management practices and employee performance in the Chinese banking sector: The role of social climate and resilience. *Human Resource Management*, *58*(1), 85-97.

Cooper, B., Wang, J., Bartram, T., & Cooke, F. L. (2019). Well- being- oriented human resource management practices and employee performance in the Chinese banking sector: The role of social climate and resilience. *Human Resource Management*, *58*(1), 85–97.

Cooper, D., & Schindler, P. (2008). Business Research Methods (10th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Cooper, W. H., & Withey, M. J. (2009). The strong situation hypothesis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *13*(1), 62-72.

Crant, J. M. (2000). Proactive behavior in organizations. *Journal of management*, *26*(3), 435-462.

Cresswell, J. & Plano Clark, V. (2011). Designing and conducting mixed methods research (second edition). USA: SAGE publication. From: www.googlebooks.com.

265

Cresswell, J. W., & V. L. Plano Clark. (2007). Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

Creswell, J. W., Klassen, A. C., Plano Clark, V. L., & Smith, K. C. (2011). Best practices for mixed methods research in the health sciences. *Bethesda (Maryland): National Institutes of Health*, *2013*, 541-545.

Curzi, Y., Fabbri, T., Scapolan, A. C., & Boscolo S. (2019). Performance Appraisal and Innovative Behavior in the Digital Era. *Frontiers in Psychology.* 10, 1659.

Dal Corso, L., De Carlo, A., Carluccio, F., Girardi, D., & Falco, A. (2019). An opportunity to grow or a label? Performance appraisal justice and performance appraisal satisfaction to increase teachers' well-being. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*, 2361.

David, I., & Iliescu, D. (2020). The influence of religiosity and meaning making on work outcomes: A path analysis. *Current Psychology*, 1-14.

Delery, J. E., & Doty, D. H. (1996). Modes of theorizing in strategic human resource management: Tests of universalistic, contingency, and configurational performance predictions. *Academy of management Journal*, *39*(4), 802-835.

Delmotte, J., De Winne, S., & Sels, L. (2012). Toward an assessment of perceived HRM System Strength: scale development and validation. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 23*(7), 1481–1506.

Den Hartog, D. N., Boselie, P., & Paauwe, J. (2004). Performance management: A model and research agenda. *Applied psychology*, *53*(4), 556-569.

DeNisi, A. S., & Kluger, A. N. (2000). Feedback effectiveness: Can 360-degree appraisals be improved?. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *14*(1), 129-139.

DeNisi, A. S., & Murphy, K. R. (2017). Performance appraisal and performance management: 100 years of progress?. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *102*(3), 421.

DeNisi, A. S., & Pritchard, R. D. (2006). Performance appraisal, performance management and improving individual performance: A motivational framework. *Management and Organization Review*, *2*(2), 253–277.

DeNisi, A. S., & Sonesh, S. 2010. The appraisal and management of performance at work. In S. Zedeck (Ed.), *APA handbook of industrial and organizational psychology:*

Selecting and developing members for the organization (Vol. 2, pp. 255–279). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

DeNisi, Angelo, & Smith, Caitlin E. (2014). Performance appraisal, performance management, and firm-level performance: A review, a proposed model, and new directions for future research. *Academy of Management Annals, 8*(1), 127–179.

Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S., & Giardina, M. D. (2006). Disciplining qualitative research. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, *19*(6), 769-782.

DeVaro, J., Li, R., & Brookshire, D. (2007). Analyzing the job characteristics model: New support from a cross-section of establishments. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 18*(6), 986–1003.

Djurdjevic, E., & Wheeler, A. R. (2014). A dynamic multilevel model of performance rating. In *Research in personnel and human resources management*, 32(2), 147-176.

Doyle, L., Brady, A. M., & Byrne, G. (2009). An overview of mixed methods research. *Journal of research in nursing*, *14*(2), 175-185.

DuBrin, A. J. (2013). *Fundamentals of organizational behavior: An applied perspective*. Elsevier.

Dulebohn, J. H., Bommer, W. H., Liden, R. C., Brouer, R. L., & Ferris, G. R. (2012). A meta-analysis of antecedents and consequences of leader-member exchange: Integrating the past with an eye toward the future. *Journal of management*, *38*(6), 1715-1759.

Dumas, T. L., & Perry-Smith, J. E. (2018). The paradox of family structure and plans after work: Why single childless employees may be the least absorbed at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, *61*(4), 1231-1252.

Dumas, T. L., & Sanchez-Burks, J. (2015). The professional, the personal, and the ideal worker: Pressures and objectives shaping the boundary between life domains. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *9*(1), 803-843.

Duxbury, S. W. (2021). Diagnosing multicollinearity in exponential random graph models. *Sociological Methods & Research*, *50*(2), 491-530.

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American journal of theoretical and applied statistics*, *5*(1), 1-4.

Fachrunnisa, O., & Adhiatma, A. (2014). The role of workplace spirituality and employee engagement to enhance job satisfaction and performance. *International Journal of Organizational Innovation (Online)*, *7*(1), 15.

Farndale, E., & Sanders, K. (2017). Conceptualizing HRM System Strength through a cross-cultural lens. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*(1), 132–148.

Farnham, D. (2016). Context. In *Encyclopedia of Human Resource Management*. Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Farrukh M, C Wei Ying & NO Abdallah Ahmed (2016) Organizational commitment: does religiosity matter? *Cogent Business and Management* 3(1), 1-10.

Farrukh M, I Ghazzawi, A Raza & IA Shahzad (2021) Can religiosity foster intrapreneurial behaviors? The mediating role of perceived organizational support. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development* 3(1), 1–10.

Fernet, C., Trépanier, S. G., Austin, S., Gagné, M., & Forest, J. (2015). Transformational leadership and optimal functioning at work: On the mediating role of employees' perceived job characteristics and motivation. *Work and Stress*, *29*(1), 11-31.

Fletcher, C. (2001). Performance appraisal and management: The developing research agenda. *Journal of Occupational and organizational Psychology*, *74*(4), 473-487.

Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2005). The interview. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, *3*, 695-727.

Fu, N., Bosak, J., Flood, P. C., & Ma, Q. (2019). Chinese and Irish professional service firms compared: Linking HPWS, organizational coordination, and firm performance. *Journal of Business Research*, *95*, 266-276.

Fu, N., Flood, P. C., Bosak, J., Rousseau, D. M., Morris, T., & O'Regan, P. (2017). High-Performance work systems in professional service firms: Examining the practices-resources- uses- performance linkage. *Human Resource Management*, *56*(2), 329-352.

Gallego- Alvarez, I., Rodríguez- Domínguez, L., & Martín Vallejo, J. (2020). An analysis of business ethics in the cultural contexts of different religions. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, *29*(3), 570–586.

Giles, W. F., & Mossholder, K. W. (1990). Employee reactions to contextual and session components of performance appraisal. *Journal of applied Psychology*, *75*(4), 371.

Gillet, N., & Vandenberghe, C. (2014). Transformational leadership and organizational commitment: The mediating role of job characteristics. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *25*(3), 321-347.

Gilmore, S., & Williams, S. (Eds.). (2012). *Human resource management*. Oxford University Press.

Goertzen, M. J. (2017). Introduction to quantitative research and data. *Library Technology Reports*, *53*(4), 12-18.

Granqvist, P., Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2010). Religion as an attachment: Normative processes and individual differences. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *14*(1), 49–59.

Grant, A. M., Christianson, M. K., & Price, R. H. (2007). Happiness, health, or relationships? Managerial practices and employee well-being tradeoffs. *Academy of management perspectives*, *21*(3), 51-63.

Greenhaus, J. H., & Parasuraman, S. (1987). A work-nonwork interactive perspective of stress and its consequences. *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management*, *8*(2), 37–60.

Greenhaus, J. H., & Powell, G. N. (2006). When Work and Family Are Allies: A Theory of Work-Family Enrichment. *Academy of Management Review, 31*(1), 72–92.

Griffin, M. A., Neal, A., and Parker, S. K. (2007). A new model of work role performance: Positive behavior in uncertain and interdependent contexts. *Academy of Management Journal*, *50*(2), 327–347.

Guest, D. (1987) 'Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations', Journal of Management Studies, 24: 503-21.

Guest, David E. (2011). Human resource management and performance: still searching for some answers. *Human Resource Management Journal, 21*(1), 3–13.

Guest, David E. (2017). Human resource management and employee well- being: Towards a new analytic framework. *Human Resource Management Journal, 27*(1), 22–38.

Guzzo, R. A., & Noonan, K. A. (1994). Human resource practices as communications and the psychological contract. *Human Resource Management, 33(2)*, 447–462.

Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, *16*(2), 250-279.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., and Tatham, R. (2010). Multivariate data analysis (7th edition). *Harlow: Pearson Education Limited*.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., and Tatham, R. L. (2014). Pearson new international edition. *Multivariate data analysis, Seventh Edition. Pearson Education Limited Harlow, Essex*.

Hall, R. (2013). Mixed methods: In search of a paradigm. *Conducting research in a changing and challenging world*, 71-78.

Han, S. H., & Oh, E. G. (2020). The link between transformational leadership and work-related performance: moderated-mediating roles of meaningfulness and job characteristics. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, *41*(4), 519–533.

Harney, B., & Collings, D. G. (2021). Navigating the shifting landscapes of HRM Author links open overlay panel Brian Harney David G. Collings. *Human Resource Management Review*, *18(3)* 1-1.

Hart, D., & Brady, N. (2005). Spirituality and archetype in organizational life. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 15*(3), 409–428.

Hasbolah, F., Hamzah, H., Fazmi, K. N. M., Omar, S. A., & Bhuiyan, A. B. (2021). Conceptual review on religiosity, work-life balance (wlb) and employee performance in the higher education institutions (HEIs). *American International Journal of Social Science Research*, *10*(1), 15-27.

Hassan, S. (2016). Impact of HRM practices on employee's performance. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences*, *6*(1), 15-22.

Hauff, S. (2021). Analytical strategies in HRM systems research: a comparative analysis and some recommendations. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *32*(9), 1923-1952.

Hauff, S., Alewell, D., & Hansen, N. K. (2014). HRM systems between control and commitment: Occurrence, characteristics and effects on HRM outcomes and firm performance. *Human resource management journal*, *24*(4), 424-441.

Hertzog, M. A. (2008). Considerations in determining sample size for pilot studies. *Research in nursing and health*, *31*(2), 180-191.

Hewett, R., & Shantz, A. (2021). A theory of HR co-creation. *Human Resource Management Review*, *31*(4), 100823.

Hewett, R., Shantz, A., Mundy, J., and Alfes, K. (2018). Attribution theories in Human Management Research: A Review and Research Agenda. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 29* (1), 87–126.

Hofstede, Geert. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online readings in psychology and culture, 2*(1), 8.

Hwang, A., & Francesco, A. M. (2010). The influence of individualism–collectivism and power distance on use of feedback channels and consequences for learning. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, *9*(2), 243-257.

Ikramullah, M., Van Prooijen, J. W., Iqbal, M. Z., and Ul-Hassan, F. S. (2016). Effectiveness of performance appraisal: Developing a conceptual framework using competing values approach. *Personnel Review*.

Jackson, S. E., & Schuler, R. S. (1995). Understanding human resource management in the context of organizations and their environments. *Human Resource Management: Critical Perspectives on Business and Management*, 2(1), 45-74.

Jackson, S. E., Schuler, R. S., & Jiang, K. (2014). An aspirational framework for strategic human resource management. *Academy of Management Annals, 8*, 1–56.

Jiang, K., Lepak, D. P., Han, K., Hong, Y., Kim, A., & Winkler, A. L. (2012). Clarifying the construct of human resource systems: Relating human resource management to employee performance. *Human Resource Management Review*, 22, 73–85.

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. E., Rosen, C. C., & Djurdjevic, E. (2011). Assessing the impact of common method variance on higher-order multidimensional constructs. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *96*(4), 744.

Kallio, H., Pietilä, A. M., Johnson, M., & Kangasniemi, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi- structured interview guide. *Journal of advanced nursing*, *72*(12), 2954-2965.

Kamoche, K. (1997). Knowledge creation and learning in international HRM. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *8*(2), 213-225.

Katou, A. A., Budhwar, P. S., & Patel, C. (2014). Content vs. process in the HRM- performance relationship: An empirical examination. *Human Resource Management, 53*(4), 527–544.

Kaufman, B. E. (2013). The economic organization of employment: systems in human resource management and industrial relations. In A. Grandori (Ed.), *Handbook of economic organization: Integrating economic and organization theory* (pp. 289–311). Cheltenham, England: Edward Elgar.

Kearns, P. O., & Tyler, J. M. (2020). Examining the relationship between awe, spirituality, and religiosity. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*.

Keeping, L. M., & Levy, P. E. (2000). Performance appraisal reactions: Measurement, modeling, and method bias. *Journal of applied psychology*, *85*(5), 708.

Kehoe, R. R., & Wright, P. M. (2013). The impact of high-performance human resource practices on employees' attitudes and behaviors. *Journal of management*, *39*(2), 366-391.

Kelley, H. H. (1967). Attribution theory in social psychology. In D. Levine (Ed.), Nebraska symposium on motivation (Vol. 15, pp. 192–240). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Kelley, H. H. (1973). The process of causal attributions. *American Psychologist*, *28*, 107–128.

Kelley, H. H., & Michela, J. L. (1980). Attribution theory and research. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *31*(1), 457–501.

Khilji, S. E. (1999). *An Empirical Study of Human Resource Management in Pakistan: The Case of Pakistan*. [Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis]. *The* University of Cambridge.

Khilji, S. E. (2003). To Adapt or Not to Adapt' Exploring the Role of National Culture in HRM-A Study of Pakistan. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, *3*(1), 109–132.

Khoury, G. C., & Analoui, F. (2004). Innovative management model for performance appraisal: the case of the Palestinian public universities. *Management Research News*.

Kim, P., Kim, R., & Im, T. (2022). Which Combinations of Human Resource Management and National Culture Optimize Government Effectiveness?. *Journal of Policy Studies*, *37*(1), 27-43.

King, N. (2004). Using templates in the thematic analysis of text. In C. Cassell and G. Symon (Eds.), Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research. London: Sage.

King, N. (2012). Doing template analysis. *Qualitative organizational research: Core methods and current challenges*, *426*(10.4135), 9781526435620.

King, N., Brooks, J., & Tabari, S. (2018). Template analysis in business and management research. In *Qualitative methodologies in organization studies* (pp. 179-206). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

King, N., Cassell, C., & Symon, G. (2004). Using templates in the thematic analysis of texts. In Cassell, C., and Symon, G. (Eds.), Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research (pp. 256–270). Sage.

Kirkman, B. L., Chen, G., Farh, J. L., Chen, Z. X., & Lowe, K. B. (2009). Individual power distance orientation and follower reactions to transformational leaders: A cross-level, cross-cultural examination. *Academy of Management Journal, 52*(4), 744–764.

Kitt, A. (2021) *Imprinting antecedents of the Human Resource Management process: Towards a multi-level model*. Nottingham Trent University.

Kluger, A. N., & DeNisi, A. (1996). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: A historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, *119*(2), 254.

Kousar, S., Rehman, A., Zafar, M., Ali, K., & Nasir, N. (2018). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: a gateway to sustainable economic development. *International Journal of Social Economics*.

Kousar, S., Rehman, A., Zafar, M., Ali, K., & Nasir, N. (2018). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: a gateway to sustainable economic development. *International Journal of Social Economics*.

Krauss, S. E., Hamzah, A. H., Sandi, T., Noah, S. M., Juhari, R., Manap, J. H., ... & Mahmood, A. (2006). Exploring regional differences in religiosity among Muslim youth in Malaysia. *Review of religious research*, 238–252.

Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2009). A typology of mixed methods research designs. *Quality and quantity*, *43*(2), 265-275.

Lepak, D. P., & Snell, S. A. (2002). Examining the human resource architecture: The relationships among human capital, employment, and human resource configurations. *Journal of management*, *28*(4), 517-543.

Lepak, D. P., Liao, H., Chung, Y., & Harden, E. E. (2006). A conceptual review of human resource management systems in strategic human resource management research. *Research in personnel and human resources management*.

LePine, M. A., Zhang, Y., Crawford, E. R., & Rich, B. L. (2016). Turning their pain to gain: Charismatic leader influence on follower stress appraisal and job performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, *59*(3), 1036-1059.

Levy, P. E., & Williams, J. R. (2004). The social context of performance appraisal: A review and framework for the future. *Journal of management*, *30*(6), 881-905.

Li, X., Frenkel, S. J., & Sanders, K. (2011). Strategic HRM as process: how HR system and organizational climate strength influence Chinese employee attitudes. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 22*, 1825–1842.

Lockhart, P., Shahani, N. K., & Bhanugopan, R. (2020). Do organizational culture and national culture mediate the relationship between high-performance human resource management practices and organizational citizenship behavior?. *International Journal of Manpower*.

Łowicki, P., & Zajenkowski, M. (2020). Empathy and exposure to credible religious acts during childhood independently predict religiosity. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, *30*(2), 128–141.

Lynn, M. L., Naughton, M. J., & VanderVeen, S. (2009). Faith in religion scale (FWS): Justification, development, and validation of a measure of Judaeo-Christian religion in the workplace. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *85*(2), 227–243.

Lynn, M. L., Naughton, M. J., & VanderVeen, S. (2011). Connecting religion and work: Patterns and influences of work-faith integration. *Human Relations*, *64*(5), 675-701.

Lysova, E. I., Allan, B. A., Dik, B. J., Duffy, R. D., & Steger, M. F. (2019). Fostering meaningful work in organizations: A multi-level review and integration. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *110*, 374-389.

Macky, K., & 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), 537-567.

Maley, J. F., Marina, D., & Moeller, M. (2020). Employee performance management: charting the field from 1998 to 2018. *International Journal of Manpower*.

Malmi, T., Bedford, D. S., Brühl, R., Dergård, J., Hoozée, S., Janschek, O., & Willert, J. (2022). The use of management controls in different cultural regions: an empirical study of Anglo-Saxon, Germanic and Nordic practices. *Journal of Management Control*, 1-62.

Manata, B., Garcia, A. J., Mollaoglu, S., & Miller, V. D. (2021). The effect of commitment differentiation on integrated project delivery team dynamics: The critical roles of goal alignment, communication behaviors, and decision quality. *International Journal of Project Management*, *39*(3), 259-269.

Marchington, M. (2015). The role of institutional and intermediary forces in shaping patterns of employee involvement and participation (EIP) in Anglo-American

countries. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *26*(20), 2594-2616.

Mariappanadar, S. (2020). Do HRM systems impose restrictions on employee quality of life? Evidence from a sustainable HRM perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, *118*, 38-48.

Marshall, B., Cardon, P., Poddar, A., & Fontenot, R. (2013). Does sample size matter in qualitative research?: A review of qualitative interviews in IS research. *Journal of computer information systems*, *54*(1), 11-22.

Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family practice*, *13*(6), 522-526.

Maurya, R. S., & Chatterjee, A. (2018). Standard HRM Practices: A Review and Theoratical Framework. *Researchers World*, *9*(1), 28-35.

Maxwell, J. A. (2008). *Designing a qualitative study* (Vol. 2, pp. 214-253). The SAGE handbook of applied social research methods.

Messersmith, J. G., Patel, P. C., Lepak, D. P., & Gould-Williams, J. 2011. Unlocking the black box: Exploring the link between high-performance work systems and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 96*, 1105–1118.

Meyer, R. D., Dalal, R. S., & Hermida, R. (2010). A review and synthesis of situational strength in the organizational sciences. *Journal of Management, 36*(1), 121–140.

Milikić, B. B. (2009). The influence of culture on human resource management processes and practices: the propositions for serbia. *Ekonomski Anali/Economic Annals*, *54*(181).

Milikić, B. B., Janićijević, N., & Cerović, B. (2012). Two decades of post-socialism in Serbia: Lessons learned and emerging issues in human resource management. *Journal for East European Management Studies*, 445-463.

Mira, M., Choong, Y., & Thim, C. (2019). The effect of HRM practices and employees' job satisfaction on employee performance. *Management Science Letters*, *9*(6), 771-786.

Mischel, W. (1977). The interaction of person and situation. In D. Magnusson and N. S. Endler (Eds.), *Personality at the crossroads: Current issues in interactional psychology* (pp. 333–352). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Mohan, G., & Aswathy, A. A. (2019). Organ donation in India—A social marketing perspective. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, *24*(2), e1637.

Moon, T. W., Youn, N., Hur, W. M., & Kim, K. M. (2018). Does employees' spirituality enhance job performance? The mediating roles of intrinsic motivation and job crafting. *Current Psychology*, 1–17.

Morse, J. M. (2000). Determining sample size. *Qualitative health research*, *10*(1), 3-5.

Motyka, B. (2018). Employee engagement and performance: a systematic literature review. *International Journal of Management and Economics*, *54*(3), 227-244.

Moussa, M., Doumani, T., McMurray, A., Muenjohn, N., & Deng, L. (2022). Cross-Cultural Performance Management. *Springer Books. Pp 1-21*

Muduli, A., & Raval, D. (2018). Examining the role of work context, transfer design and transfer motivation on training transfer: Perspective from an Indian insurance industry. *European Journal of Training and Development*.

Mukhtar, A., Zhu, Y., Lee, Y. I., Bambacas, M., & Cavusgil, S. T. (2022). Challenges confronting the 'One Belt One Road'initiative: Social networks and cross-cultural adjustment in CPEC projects. *International Business Review*, *31*(1), 101902.

Mumtaz, S., & Nadeem, S. (2020). When too much adjustment is bad: A curvilinear relationship between expatriates' adjustment and social changes in HCNs. *Cogent Business and Management*, *7*(1), 1857064.

Nadeem, S., & de Luque, M. F. S. (2020). Developing an understanding of the human resource (HR) complexities in Pakistan with a GLOBE cultural lens. *Journal of Management and Organization*, *26*(4), 483-501.

Nadeem, S., & Mumtaz, S. (2018). Expatriates adjustment through the transformation of the social identity of Chinese expatriates working in Pakistan. *Cross-Cultural and Strategic Management*.

Nadeem, S., & Rahat, H. (2021). Examining the synergetic impact of ability-motivation-opportunity-enhancing high performance work practices. *Human Performance*, *34*(3), 168-188.

Naseer, S., Donia, M. B. L., Syed, F., & Bashir, F. (2020). Too much of a good thing: The interactive effects of cultural values and core job characteristics on hindrance stressors and employee performance outcomes. *Human Resource Management*, *59*(3), 271–289.

Nassazi, A. (2013). Effects of training on employee performance.: Evidence from Uganda.

Newman, K. L., & Nollen, S. D. (1996). Culture and congruence: The fit between management practices and national culture. *Journal of international business studies*, *27*(4), 753-779.

Nikku, B. R., & Rafique, Z. (2019). Empowering people: Role for political social work in South Asia. *International Social Work*, *62*(2), 877–891.

Nishii, L.H., Lepak D.P., & Schneider, B. 2008. Employee attributions of the "why" of HR practices: Their effects on employee attitudes and behaviors, and customer satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology, 61*, 503–545.

O'riordan, J. (2022). The practice of human resource management.

Obaid, A. (2013). *Changes in the play structures and systems in the banking sector of Pakistan: Implications for a differentiated workforce and the employee psychological contract*. The University of Manchester (United Kingdom).

Oldham, G. R., & Fried, Y. (2016). Job design research and theory: Past, present, and future. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *136*, 20-35.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2004). Enhancing the interpretation of "significant" findings: The role of mixed methods research. *The qualitative report*, *9*(4), 770-792.

Onyemah, V., Rouziès, D., & Iacobucci, D. (2018). Impact of religiosity and culture on salesperson job satisfaction and performance. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, *18*(2), 191–219.

Osman-Gani, A. M., Hashim, J., & Ismail, Y. (2013). Establishing linkages between religiosity and spirituality on employee performance. *Employee Relations*, *35*(4), 360–376.

Ostroff, C, & Bowen, D. E. (2000). Moving HR to a higher level: HR practices and organizational effectiveness. In K. J. K. S. W. J. Kozlowski (Eds.), *Multilevel theory, research, and methods in organizations: Foundations, extensions, and new directions* (pp. 211–266). San Francisco, CA, US: Jossey-Bass.

Ostroff, C., & Bowen, D. E. (2016). Reflections on the 2014 decade award: Is there strength in the construct of HR system strength? *Academy of Management Review, 41(2),* 196–214.

Othman, N. (2014). *Employee performance appraisal satisfaction: the case evidence from Brunei's Civil Service* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Manchester).

Paauwe, Jaap. (2009). HRM and performance: Achievements, methodological issues, and prospects. *Journal of Management Studies, 46*(1), 129–142.

Pak, J., & Kim, S. (2018). Team manager's implementation, high-performance work systems intensity, and performance: a multilevel investigation. *Journal of Management, 44(7),* 2690–2715.

Pandey, J. & Singh, M. (2019): Positive Religious Coping as a Mechanism for Enhancing Job Satisfaction and Reducing Work-family Conflict: A Moderated Mediation Analysis, *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, 16*(3), 314–338.

Parker, S. K., Williams, H. M., & Turner, N. (2006). Modeling the antecedents of proactive behavior at work. *Journal of applied psychology*, *91*(3), 636.

Patten, M. L., and Newhart, M. (2017). *Understanding research methods: An overview of the essentials*. Routledge.

Peräkylä, A. (2011). Validity in research on naturally occurring social interaction. *Qualitative research*, *365*, 382.

Piccolo, R. F., & Colquitt, J. A. (2006). Transformational leadership and job behaviors: The mediating role of core job characteristics. *Academy of Management Journal*, *49*(2), 327-340.

Podgorodnichenko, N., Akmal, A., Edgar, F., & Everett, A. M. (2020). Sustainable HRM: Toward addressing diverse employee roles. *Employee Relations: The International Journal*.

Podolsky, M., & Hackett, R. D. (2021). HRM system situational strength in support of strategy: its effects on employee attitudes and business unit performance. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1-34.

Podsakoff, P.M. & Organ, D.W. (1986). Self-reports in organizational research: problems and prospects. *Journal of Management*, *12*, 531–44.

Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2004). *Nursing research: Principles and methods*. Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.

Population by religion. (n.d.). retrieved January 9, 2020, from Pakistan bureau of statistics website; http://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/population-religion

Prakash, V. (2018). Work-life balance: Perceptions of the non-work domain. *IIM Kozhikode Society and Management Review*, *7*(2), 97-108.

Rahi, S. (2017). Research design and methods: A systematic review of research paradigms, sampling issues and instruments development. *International Journal of Economics and Management Sciences*, *6*(2), 1-5.

Rai, A., Ghosh, P., Chauhan, R., & Singh, R. (2018). Improving in-role and extra-role performances with rewards and recognition: does engagement mediate the process?. *Management Research Review*.

Rasheed, M. I., Yousaf, H. D. A. S., & Noor, A. (2011). A critical analysis of performance appraisal system for teachers in public sector universities of Pakistan: A case study

of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB). *African journal of business management*, *5*(9), 3735-3744.

Riaz, S., Townsend, K., & Woods, P. (2020). Understanding HRM philosophy for HPWS and employees' perceptions. *Personnel Review*.

Ribeiro, R. T., Pinto Coelho, J., & Gomes, J. F. S. (2011). HRM strength, situation strength, and improvisation behavior. Management Research: *The Journal of the Iberoamerican Academy of Management*, 9, 118–136.

Robinson, O. C. (2014). Sampling in interview-based qualitative research: A theoretical and practical guide. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *11*(1), 25-41.

Rothbard, N. P., Phillips, K. W., and Dumas, T. L. (2005). Managing multiple roles: Work-family policies and individuals' desires for segmentation. *Organization Science*, *16*(3), 243-258.

Ryan, G. (2018). Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. *Nurse researcher*, *25*(4), 41-49.

Sanders K (2022) The human resource management—outcomes relationship: an attributional HR process perspective. In PD Scherer (ed) A research agenda for strategic human resource management: bringing variety in forms, theory, processes and outcomes Chapter 8. Cheltenham, UK.

Sanders, K., & De Cieri, H. (2021). Similarities and differences in international and comparative human resource management: A review of 60 years of research. *Human Resource Management*, *60*(1), 55-88.

Sanders, K., & Yang, H. (2016). The HRM process approach: The influence of employees' attribution to explain the HRM- performance relationship. *Human Resource Management, 55*(2), 201–217.

Sanders, K., Bednall, T. C., & Yang, H. (2021). HR strength: Past, current, and future research. In *Handbook on HR Process Research*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Sanders, K., Dorenbosch, L., & de Reuver, R. (2008). The impact of individual and shared employee perceptions of HRM on affective commitment: Considering climate strength. *Personnel Review*, 37, 412–425.

Sanders, K., Jorgensen, F., Shipton, H., Van Rossenberg, Y., Cunha, R., Li, X., ... Dysvik, A. (2018). Performance- based rewards and innovative behaviors. *Human Resource Management, 57*(6), 1455–1468.

Sanders, K., Shipton, H., & Gomes, J. F. (2014). Guest editors' introduction: Is the HRM process important? Past, current, and future challenges. *Human Resource Management, 53*(4), 489–503.

Sanderson, I. J., & Mujtaba, B. G. (2017). Applying HRM policies and principles in the subsidiary: A comparison between Anglo-American and Chinese cultural contexts. *International Journal of Contemporary Applied Sciences*, *4*(4), 48-60.

Sarkar, A. (2019). Authentic leadership: the influence of work and non-work domain contextual factors. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, *40*(4), 520–531.

Saunders, M. N., & Townsend, K. (2016). Reporting and justifying the number of interview participants in organization and workplace research. *British Journal of Management*, *27*(4), 836-852.

Saunders, M., & Lewis, P. (2017). *Doing research in business and management*. Pearson.

Sciriha, I., & Debono, M. (2017). The effects and management of cultural differences during the integration process of mergers and acquisitions.

Scully, J. W., Buttigieg, S. C., Fullard, A., Shaw, D., & Gregson, M. (2013). The role of SHRM in turning tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge: a cross-national study of the UK and Malta. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *24*(12), 2299-2320.

Sekaran, U., & Hall, D. T. (1989). Asynchronism in dual-career and family linkages. *Handbook of career theory*, *159*, 180.

Sekhar, C., Patwardhan, M., & Vyas, V. (2018). Linking work engagement to job performance through flexible human resource management. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *20*(1), 72-87.

Selvarajan, T. T., & Cloninger, P. A. (2012). Can performance appraisals motivate employees to improve performance? A Mexican study. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *23*(15), 3063–3084.

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The art and practice of the learning organization* (Vol. 1). New York: Doubleday.

Shachar, R., Erdem, T., Cutright, K. M., & Fitzsimons, G. J. (2011). Brands: The opiate of the nonreligious masses? *Marketing Science, 30*(1), 92–110.

Shrestha, N. (2020). Detecting multicollinearity in regression analysis. *American Journal of Applied Mathematics and Statistics*, *8*(2), 39-42.

Shaw, G., & Williams, A. (2009). Knowledge transfer and management in tourism organizations: An emerging research agenda. *Tourism management*, *30*(3), 325-335.

Shusterman, R. (2016). *Practicing philosophy: Pragmatism and the philosophical life*. Routledge.

ŠIKÝŘ, M., Sekerin, V., & Gorokhova, A. (2018). Managing Human Resources Using the Best Practice. Best Fit Approach. *Journal of Applied Economic Sciences*, *13*(1).

Story, J., & Castanheira, F. (2020). How hybrid HR systems affect performance in call centers. *Personnel Review*.

Su, S., & Baird, K. (2017). The association between performance appraisal systems, work-related attitudes and academic performance. *Financial Accountability and Management*, *33*(4), 356-372.

Suhail, K., & Chaudhry, H. R. (2004). Predictors of subjective well-being in an Eastern Muslim culture. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, *23*(3), 359–376.

Taylor, B. (2007). Surfing into spirituality and new, aquatic nature religion. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, *75*(4), 923-951.

Taylor, M. A. S. (2014). *Armstrongs Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. Kogan Page Limited.

Taylor, P. J., & Pierce, J. L. (1999). Effects of introducing a performance management system on employees' subsequent attitudes and effort. *Public personnel management*, *28*(3), 423-452.

Torrington, D., Hall, L., Atkinson, C., & Taylor, S. (2020). *Human resource management*. Pearson UK.

Trompenaars, F., and Hampden-Turner, C. (2004). *Managing people across cultures*. Chichester: Capstone.

Tuckey, M., Brewer, N., & Williamson, P. (2002). The influence of motives and goal orientation on feedback-seeking. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *75*(2), 195-216.

Usman, H., Tjiptoherijanto, P., Balqiah, T. E., & Agung, I. G. N. (2017). The role of religious norms, trust, the importance of attributes, and information sources in the relationship between religiosity and selection of the Islamic bank. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*.

Voydanoff, P. (2001). Incorporating community into work and family research: A review of basic relationships. *Human Relations*, *54*(12), 1609–1637.

Walker, A. G., Smither, J. W., & DeBode, J. (2012). The effects of religiosity on ethical judgments. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *106*(4), 437–452.

Wang, Q., Hackett, R. D., Cui, X., & Zhang, Y. (2012). Cultural differences and applicants' procedural fairness perceptions: A test of a Chinese culture- based model. *Chinese Management Studies*.

Wang, Y., Kim, S., Rafferty, A., & Sanders, K. (2020). Employee perceptions of HR practices: A critical review and future directions. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1–46.

Warner, M. (1993). Human resource management 'with Chinese characteristics'. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *4*(1), 45-65.

Wass, V. J., & Wells, P. E. (Eds.). (1994). *Principles and practice in business and management research*. Dartmouth.

Wei, L. Q., Liu, J., & Herndon, N. C. (2011). SHRM and product innovation: Testing the moderating effects of organizational culture and structure in Chinese firms. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *22*(01), 19-33.

Werbel, J. D., & DeMarie, S. M. (2005). Aligning strategic human resource management and person–environment fit. *Human resource management review*, *15*(4), 247-262.

Wright, P. & Nishii, L. (2013), "*Strategic HRM and organizational behavior: integrating multiple levels of Analysis*", in Paauwe, J. , Guest and Wright, P. (Eds), *HRM and Performance. Achievements and Challenges* , Wiley, Chichester, pp. 97-110.

Xian, H., Atkinson, C., & Meng-Lewis, Y. (2021). How work–life conflict affects employee outcomes of Chinese only-children academics: the moderating roles of gender and family structure. *Personnel Review*.

Xiao, Y., & Cooke, F. L. (2012). Work–life balance in China? Social policy, employer strategy and individual coping mechanisms. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, *50*(1), 6-22.

Yin, R. K. (2013). Validity and generalization in future case study evaluations. *Evaluation*, *19*(3), 321-332.

Zeebaree, S. R., Shukur, H. M., & Hussan, B. K. (2019). Human resource management systems for enterprise organizations: A review. *Periodicals of Engineering and Natural Sciences (PEN)*, *7*(2), 660-669.

Zhang, M., Di Fan, D., & Zhu, C. J. (2014). High-performance work systems, corporate social performance and employee outcomes: Exploring the missing links. *Journal of business ethics*, *120*(3), 423-435.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. CONSENT FORM FOR AN INTERVIEW

CONSENT FORM FOR AN INTERVIEW
NUST Business School (NBS)
PH. D Thesis Research

Dear participant,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study on the exploration of employee perceptions of HRM System Strength and their influence on employee performance of HR managers working in Pakistan and China in telecommunication sector. I feel that your experience as a manager can contribute much to our understanding your work perceptions. I am currently enrolled in the PhD program in NUST Business School of Management, National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan, and this research will help me in completing my Ph.D. thesis.

Your participation in this thesis research is completely voluntary. I will ensure complete anonymity when it comes to the information that you share with us. There is no risk of participating in this research. If you agree to participate in this research, I will take 30-50 minutes interview. The entire interview will be recorded on a recording device or the transcript. Neither your name nor any other identifying information will be mentioned. Overall, your responses will be remained confidential and anonymous.

If you have any query about this research, feel free to contact me at the below mentioned email id: sumbalbabr89@gmail.com

Thank you for your input in this research.

Participant Name: _____   Researcher Name: _____

Signature: _____   Signature: _____

Date: _____   Date: _____

INTERVIEW GUIDE

HR MANAGERS

I would like to ask questions related to Features of a Strong HRM system, as it will provide understanding of how features of HRM System Strength (distinctiveness, consistency and consensus) matter in different country contexts.

1. Is it important in an organization for employees to be able to observe or have visibility of HR practices? (**Visibility**)
   Prompt: Can you give me some examples that what observability or visibility means to you with regards to HR practice of performance appraisal?

   Prompt: In our context how important is it that HR practices are visible and observable to employees? (V) Any example related to PA.

2. Does **informing employees** about HR practices influence their performance? How? (V)
   Prompt: Is it important for employees to have **clarity** about the HR practices? Why? (**Understandability**)

   Prompt: What mechanisms do you use to ensure this clarity?

3. Does **communication** about HR practices from people who are sitting in a position of authority have any influence on how employees perceive their importance? Why? Why not? Any example? (**Legitimacy of authority**)
   Prompt: Do you think that there is any religious/ spiritual perspective to why employees may perceive a communication from a person sitting in a position of authority to be more important?

   Prompt: Do you think there is any role of family structure that is prevalent in our country on the way people perceive messages coming from a person in a position of authority?

4. How often do you think there is alignment in the goals the management expects employees to achieve and the goals they are aiming to achieve? Why? Why not? (**Relevance**)
5. In our cultural context to what extent employees consider the attainment of defined goals to be important and why? (**R**)
   Prompt: Do you think that there is any bearing of an individual's religious values or beliefs, on the level of importance they assign to goal achievement?

6. Does establishing a clear relationship between performance and its reward on a timely and consistent schedule influence employee performance? How? (**Instrumentality**)
   Prompt: Do you think there could be any religious or cultural factors that could influence this relationship in any way? If so, how? (**I**)

7. How does consistency between what managers purport to do and what they actually do influence employee performance? Why?
   Prompt: How important is it for the message to remain consistent across the sender and receiver?

   Prompt: Can you share any mechanisms how this can be managed**?** (**Validity**)

8. How important do you think it is that messages pertaining to HR policies and practices remain consistent over a period of time? (**Consistent HRM messages)**
   Prompt: Do you think in our cultural context it is possible to achieve consistency over a period of time?

   Prompt: How does consistency in HRM messages influence employee performance? (**CHM**)

9. When and how do the employees get to know the basis for grant of increment and bonus? Why? (Principles of equality, equity or both?) (**Fairness-Distributive**)
   Prompt: Are the principles on which your performance practice is designed, influenced by the culture of Pakistan or by any religious norms? If so, how?

10. What is the process of conducting performance appraisal in your organization, and how and when is it communicated to employees? (**Fairness-Procedural**)
11. Do you think that if the process is changed or not followed, there can any implication on employee perceptions of fairness? Why? How?
12. How is the final rating approval communicated to employees and ensure quality feedback?
13. Do you think if any other process was followed, employees could develop a stronger perception of fairness in the PA system and why? (**Fairness-Interactional**)
14. Do you think management unanimously supports HR policy in this organization? (**Agreement**)

Appendix C

Appendix C

(Survey for Employees)

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are asked to participate in a study that is a part of a Ph.D. research. Your participation is appreciated to complete this research and will be highly appreciated. The information provided by you will be kept secret and for academic purpose only. The purpose of this study is to find out "EXPLORING EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF HRM SYSTEM STRENGTH AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN CROSS-CULTURAL SETTINGS: A MIXED METHOD STUDY". Please spare your precious time and try to answer the questions logically and on-ground footing. This entire survey will take only 15 minutes. If you have any questions related to this research. Please feel free to contact me at Sumbal.phd17nbs@student.nust.edu.pk.

Thanks and Regards,

Sumbal Babar

Ph.D. Scholar

NUST Business School,

National University of Science and Technology

<u>Instructions to complete the Questionnaire:</u>
   i)   *Please fill out all the questions and do not leave anything blank.*

Section A

About you

The first set of questions asks about your background. **Please note that all answers will be treated as strictly confidential. That is, no one at this organization will be able to identify any individual survey** <u>responses</u>

1. Your Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Your Age: 20-30 ☐ **31-40** ☐ **41-50** ☐ **51-60** ☐ **61 and above** ☐

3. Your Education: ☐ Junior School and below ☐ High School/Vocational Education ☐ Diploma

☐ Bachelor ☐ Master and above

4. Which type of contract have you signed? Probationary ☐ Permanent ☐ <u>Non-permanent</u> ☐

5. How long have you been with this organization_____ **Years**_____ **Months**

6. How long have you been with your current supervisor? _____ **Years**_____ **Months**

7.   What is your religious affiliation?   Islam   ☐ Confucianism ☐   Buddhism ☐   Taoism ☐ Christian ☐   Other

8. What is your family structure? Joint/extended ☐ **family nuclear** ☐ **family single** ☐ **divorced** ☐

9. What is your marital status? Single ☐ married ☐ divorced ☐ widowed ☐ <u>partner</u>

10. What is your monthly salary? 10000-20000 ☐ 21000-30000 ☐ 31000-40000 ☐ 41-50000 ☐ 51000 above ☐

Section B

About your organization

Human Resource management practice

In the section, I am interested in your opinions about the management practice that might be used in your organization.

How much do you agree or disagree on the following items about HR practice in your organization.

No.	Sanders et al. (2008)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	My supervisor regularly holds performance appraisal conversation with me	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	In performance appraisal I get feedback on my performance	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Supervisors keep open communication with me in the job.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Considering the above HR practice, how much do you agree with the following statements?

Considering the above HR practice, how much do you agree with the following statements?

No.	Delmotte (2012)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
n	**Items of distinctiveness**						
11	The HR department undertakes exactly those actions that meet our needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	When one asks the HR department for help, they provide clear answers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	The employees in this organization experience implemented HR practices as relevant.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	The procedures and practices developed by HR are easy to understand	1	2	3	4	5	6
55	Employees are regularly informed about the initiatives taken by the HR department	1	2	3	4	5	6
66	In this organization, it is clear what belongs to the tasks and what's outside the field of the HR department	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	In general, the HR employees is met with much appreciation in this organization	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Items on consistency						
18	The HR instruments for employee appraisal succeed in encouraging the desired behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	The suggestions, procedures and practices that HR comes up with actually contribute to the better functioning of this organization	1	2	3	4	5	6

One can have faith that the HR practices realize the intended purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6
HR practices in this organization achieve their intended goals	1	2	3	4	5	6
In this organization, HR policy changes every other minute. (R)	1	2	3	4	5	6
In this organization, there is clear consistency of HRM messages between words and deeds	1	2	3	4	5	6
Items on consensus						
In this organization, employees consider promotions as fair	1	2	3	4	5	6
In this organization, rewards are clearly related to performance	1	2	3	4	5	6
The people in this organization responsible for HR have a mutual agreement about how to deal with employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6
The HR department makes decisions in an impartial way in this organization	1	2	3	4	5	6

In this section, I am interested in your opinions regarding the religious faith and its link at your workplace.

No	Religiosity						
	Items on Religiosity (Berggren and Bjørnskov, 2011)						
1.	I consider myself to be a religious person	Extremely religious	Very religious	Religious	Somewhat religious	Somewhat not religious	Not at all religious
2.	I frequently attend mosque/church	Very frequently	Somewhat frequently	frequently	Somewhat not frequently	Not very frequently	Not at all frequently
3.	Religion is an important part of my life	One of the most important	Very important	Somewhat important	Somewhat not important	Not too important	Not at all important
5.	Importance of believing in God without doubt	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Importance of having faith in religion.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Items on Spirituality (Lynn, Naughton and VanderVeen, 2009)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
7.	I pursue excellence in my work because of my faith	1	2	3	4	5	6

8	There is a sense that God empowers me to do good things at work	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	I see a connection between worship and work	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	My faith helps me deal with difficult work relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	I think of my work as having eternal significance	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	I view my work as a mission from God	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	I sense God's presence while I work	1	2	3	4	5	6

In this section, I a interested in your opinions regarding the family structures and their link at your workplace						
No.	Family structure					
1.	What is your family structure?	Nuclear family	Joint/ Extended family	Childless parents	Single/un married	Divorced

Section C

About Subordinates (Time 1 and Time 2 (By Managers))

Directions: Please answer the following set of questions for the employees that you supervise. **For each employee**, write in his or her name in the space provided and then answer the following questions about this person.

Note that this information is confidential – I will only use their names to link your answers to their survey responses.

1. **Your Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. **Your Age:** 20-30 ☐ **31-40** ☐ **41-50** ☐ **51-60** ☐ **61 and above** ☐

3. **Your Education:** ☐ Junior School and below ☐ High School/Vocational Education ☐ Diploma

☐ Bachelor ☐ Master and above

4. **What is your marital status?** Single ☐ married ☐ divorced ☐ widowed ☐ partner

5. **What is your religious affiliation?**   Islam   ☐ Confucianism ☐   Buddhism ☐   Taoism ☐ Christian ☐   Other

6. **What is your family structure? Joint/extended** ☐ **family nuclear** ☐ **family single** ☐ **divorced** ☐

7. **Which type of contract have you signed?** Probationary ☐ Permanent ☐ Non-permanent ☐

8. **What is your monthly salary?** 10000-20000 ☐ 21000-30000 ☐ 31000-40000 ☐ 41-50000 ☐ 51000 above ☐

9. **Name of employee:** Surname: _____ First Name: _____

10. **How long have you supervised him/her?** _____ Years_____ Months

11. **Tenure with the subordinate and organization_____**

294

Please circle the number that indicates the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the performance of the employee.

No.	Griffins et al., (2007)	Strongly Disagree	Disa gree	Somewh at disagree	some what agree	Agree	Strong ly agree
	Task proficiency						
1	This employee carried out the core parts of his/her job well.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	This employee completed his/her core tasks well using the standard procedure	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	This employee ensured his/her tasks were completed properly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Task adaptability						
4	This employee adapted well to changes in core tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	This employee coped with changes to the way she/he has to do the core tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	This employee learned new skills to help him/her adapt to changes in the core tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Task proactivity						
7	This employee made changes to the way his/her core tasks are done	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	This employee initiated better ways of doing his/her core tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	This employee come up with ideas to improve the way in which his/her core tasks are done.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Appendix E (CHINESE VERSION INTERVIEW GUIDE)

Chinese Interview guide

HR MANAGERS

1.在组织中，员工能够观察或了解HR做法是否重要？（能见度）

提示：您能给我一些例子吗，关于力资源实践，可观察性或可见性对您意味着什么？

提示：在我们看来，人力资源实践对员工可见和可观察有多重要？（V）与PA有关的任何例子

2.告知员工有关人力资源实践的信息是否会影响他们的绩效？怎么样？（五）

提示：对员工来说，弄清楚人力资源管理做法是否重要？为什么？（易懂）

提示：您使用什么机制来确保这种清晰度？

3.与处于权威地位的人进行的有关HR实践的交流是否对员工如何看待自己的重要性有影响？为什么？为什么不？有什么例子吗？（权威的合法性）

提示：您认为出于什么宗教原因，为什么员工可能会认为来自处于权威位置的人的沟通更为重要？你认为有没有宗教的观点来解释为什么员工会认为一个身居要职的人的交流更重要?

提示：您认为在人们感知权威人士的信息的方式上，家庭结构在我国很普遍吗？

4.您认为管理层多久期望员工实现的目标与他们要实现的目标保持一致？为什么？为什么不？（关联）

5.在我们的文化背景下，员工在多大程度上认为实现既定目标很重要，为什么？（右）

提示：您认为个人对目标实现的重视程度与他们的宗教价值观或信仰有任何关系吗？

6.在绩效和其报酬之间按及时一致的时间表建立清晰的关系是否会影响员工的绩效？怎么样？（仪表性）工具性

提示：您认为可能有任何宗教或文化因素以任何方式影响这种关系吗？如果可以，怎么办？（一世）

7.管理者声称要做的事情与他们实际所做的事情之间的一致性如何影响员工绩效？为什么？

提示：消息在发送者和接收者之间保持一致有多重要？

提示：您可以分享任何机制进行管理的机制吗？（有效期）

8.您认为与人力资源政策和实践相关的信息在一段时间内保持一致有多重要？（一致的HRM消息）

提示：您认为在我们的文化背景下，一段时间内能否实现一致性？

提示：HRM消息中的一致性如何影响员工绩效？（CHM）

9.员工何时，如何了解加薪和奖金授予的依据？为什么？（平等，公平或两者兼有的原则？）（公平分配）

提示：您的表现练习的设计原则是否受到巴基斯坦文化或任何宗教规范的影响？如果是这样，怎么办？

10.在您的组织中进行绩效评估的过程是什么，以及如何以及何时将其传达给员工？（公平程序）

11.您是否认为如果更改或不遵循流程，是否会对员工的公平感有所影响？为什么？怎么样？

12.最终评级批准如何传达给员工？

13.您是否认为如果遵循其他任何程序，员工会在PA制度中建立更强的公平意识，为什么？（公平互动）

14.您认为管理层是否一致支持该组织的人力资源政策？（协议）

Appendix F (CHINESE VERSION QUESTIONNAIRE)

尊敬的先生/女士，

您被要求參加一項研究這是博士學位的一部分。研究。感謝您的參與以完成這項研究，我們將不勝感激。您提供的信息將被保密並僅用於學術目的。本研究的目的是找出"在跨文化環境中探索員工對 HRM 系統強度的看法及其對員工績效的影響：一項混合方法研究"。請您抽出寶貴的時間，盡量從邏輯和立足點上回答問題。整個調查僅需 15 分鐘。如果您對本研究有任何疑問。請隨時通過 Sumbal.phd17nbs@student.nust.edu.pk 與我聯繫。   感謝和問候，

松巴爾巴巴爾

博士 學者

 NUST商學院，

國立科技大學

填寫問卷的說明：

i)   *請填寫所有問題，不要留下任何空白。*

附錄1調查（員工）

關於你

第一組問題詢問您的背景。請注意，所有答案都將被嚴格保密。也就是說，該組織中的任何人都無法識別任何個人調查響應

1. **您的性別：**□ 男 □ 女

2. **您的年齡：20**-30□ 31-40 □ 41-50 □ 51-60 □ 61 及以上 □

3. **你的教育：**□ 初中及以下 □ 高中/職業教育 □ 文憑

□ 學士 □ 碩士及以上

4. **您簽了哪種類型的合同？**試用 □ 永久 □ 非永久 □

5. **您在這個組織工作多久了** _____ 年 _____ 個月

6. **您與現任主管在一起多久了？** _____ 年 _____ 月

7.你的宗教信仰是什麼？   伊斯蘭教   □ 儒學 □   佛教□ 道教□ 克里斯蒂安 □ 其他

8. **你的家庭結構是什麼？聯合/延伸**□ 家庭核心 □ 家庭單身 □ 離婚 □

9. 你的婚姻狀況如何？單身 - 已婚 - 離婚 - 喪偶 - 伴侶

10. **你的月薪是多少？**10000-20000 □ 21000-30000 □ 31000-40000 □ 41-50000 □ 51000 以上

關於您的組織

人力資源管理實踐

在本節中，我們對您對可能在您的組織中使用的管理實踐的意見感興趣。

對於以下有關貴組織人力資源實踐的項目，您同意或不同意的程度有多大。

不。	桑德斯等人。(2008)	強烈反對	不同意	不太同意	有點同意	同意	非常同意
1.	我的主管定期與我進行績效評估對話	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	在績效評估中，我會得到關於我的績效的反饋	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	主管在工作中與我保持開放的溝通。	1	2	3	4	5	6

考慮到上述人力資源實踐，您對以下陳述的認同程度如何？

不。	德爾莫特 (2012)	強烈反對	不同意	不太同意	有點同意	同意	非常同意
1	**顯著性項目**						
2	人力資源部門會執行那些滿足我們需求的行動。	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	當有人向人力資源部門尋求幫助時，他們會給出明確的答案。	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	該組織經驗中的員工實施了相關的人力資源實踐。	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	人力資源部製定的程序和做法很容易理解	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	定期向員工通報人力資源部門採取的舉措	1	2	3	4	5	6

7	在這個組織中，什麼屬於任務，什麼是人力資源部門之外的任務一目了然	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	總的來說，人力資源員工在這個組織中得到了很多讚賞	1	2	3	4	5	6
	一致性項目						
9	用於員工評估的人力資源工具成功地鼓勵了期望的行為	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	人力資源部提出的建議、程序和實踐實際上有助於該組織更好地運作	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	人們可以相信人力資源實踐實現了預期目的	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	該組織的人力資源實踐實現了他們的預期目標	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	在這個組織中，人力資源政策每隔一分鐘就會改變一次。(右)	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	在這個組織中，HRM 信息在言行之間具有明顯的一致性	1	2	3	4	5	6
	共識項目						
14	在這個組織中，員工認為晉升是公平的	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	在這個組織中，獎勵顯然與績效相關	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	該組織中負責 HR 的人員就如何與員工打交道達成共識。	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	人力資源部門在這個組織中以公正的方式做出決定	1	2	3	4	5	6

	宗教項目（伯格倫和比約恩斯科夫，2011）						
1.	我認為自己是一個宗教人士	極虔宗教	非常虔誠	宗教的	有點宗教	有點不虔誠	一點都不宗教
2.	我經常去清真寺/教堂	非常頻繁	有點頻繁	頻繁的	有點不經常	不是很頻繁	一點也不經常
3.	宗教是我生活中很重要的一部分	最重要的之一	很重要	有一些重要	有點不重要	不太重要	一點都不重要
5.	毫無疑問地相信上帝的重要性	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	信仰宗教的重要性。	1	2	3	4	5	6
	靈性項目（林恩、諾頓和范德維恩，2008年）	非常不同意e	不同意	不太同意	有點同意	同意	非常同意
7.	因為我的信念，我在工作中追求卓越	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	有一種感覺，上帝授權我在工作中做好事	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	我看到敬拜和工作之間的聯繫	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	我的信仰幫助我處理困難的工作關係	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	我認為我的工作具有永恆的意義	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	我認為我的工作是來自上帝的使命	1	2	3	4	5	6

| 13. | 我工作時感覺到上帝的存在 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

在本節中，我們對您對家庭結構及其與您工作場所的聯繫的看法感興趣						
不。	家庭結構					
1.	你的家庭結構是什麼？	核心家庭	聯合/大家庭	沒有孩子的父母	單身/未婚	離婚

關於下屬（時間 1 和時間 2（由經理））

方向：請為您監督的員工回答以下一組問題。對於每位員工，在提供的空白處寫上他或她的名字，然後回答以下關於此人的問題。

請注意，此信息是機密信息——我們只會使用他們的姓名將您的答案鍵接到他們的調查回复。

1. 您的性別：□ 男 □ 女

2.您的年齡： 20-30□ 31-40 □ 41-50 □ 51-60 □ 61 及以上 □

3. 你的教育：□ 初中及以下 □ 高中/職業教育 □ 文憑

□ 學士 □ 碩士及以上

4. 你的婚姻狀況如何？單身 - 已婚 - 離婚 - 喪偶 - 伴侶

5. 你的宗教信仰是什麼？　　伊斯蘭教　　□ 儒學 □　　　佛教□　道教□ 克里斯蒂安 □　其他

6. 你的家庭結構是什麼？聯合/延伸□ 家庭核心 □ 家庭單身 □ 離婚 □

7. 您簽訂了哪種類型的合同？試用 □ 永久 □ 非永久 □

8. 你的月薪是多少？ 10000-20000 □ 21000-30000 □ 31000-40000 □ 41-50000 □ 51000 以上

9.員工姓名：姓：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿　名：＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

10.你監督他/她多久了？＿＿＿＿＿ 年＿＿＿＿＿＿ 月

11.在下屬和組織任職＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

請圈出表示您同意以下關於員工績效的陳述的程度的數字。

不。n	格里芬斯 (2007)	強烈反對	不同意	不大同意	有點同意	同意	非常同意
	任務熟練度						
11	這名員工很好地完成了他/她工作的核心部分。	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	該員工使用標準程序很好地完成了他/她的核心任務	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	該員工確保他/她的任務得到妥善完成。	1	2	3	4	5	6
	任務適應性						
44	該員工很好地適應了核心任務的變化。	1	2	3	4	5	6

5	該員工應對了她/他必須完成核心任務的方式的變化。	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	該員工學習了新技能，以幫助他/她適應核心任務的變化。	1	2	3	4	5	6
	任務主動性						
7	該員工改變了他/她完成核心任務的方式	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	該員工提出了更好的方式來完成他/她的核心任務。	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	該員工提出了改進其核心任務完成方式的想法。	1	2	3	4	5	6

再次感謝您參與這項研究。我們非常感謝！

Appendix F
CFA FOR CHINA

Model	Variables	$\chi^{2/}$df	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	
One-factor model	EP; PAQ+REL+SPI+HRM SS	6.12	0.622	0.611	0.621	0.102	
Two-factor model	EP; PAQ; REL+SPI+HRM SS	4.13	0.738	0.762	0.788	0.092	
Three-Factor model	EP; PAQ; REL, SPI; HRM SS	2.89	0.803	0.814	0.822	0.076	
Four-factor model	EP; PAQ+REL+SPI+HRM SS	1.56	0.910	0.901	0.912	0.060	Baseline model

Notes: Employee n=333. Tucker-Lewis's index (TLI), Incremental fit index (IFI), Comparative fit Index PAQ: Performance appraisal quality, HRM SS: HR strength, REL: Religiosity, SPI: Spirituality and EP: Employee performance. Family structure variable was not included as it was dichotomous variable, dummy codded (0 and 1).

Model	Variables	$\chi^{2/}$df	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	
One-factor model	EP; PAQ+REL+SPI+HRM SS	4.45	0.713	0.701	0.704	0.092	
Two-factor model	EP; PAQ; REL+SPI+HRM SS	3.88	0.767	0.745	0.780	0.081	
Three-Factor model	EP; PAQ; REL, SPI; HRM SS	2.78	0.831	0.834	0.841	0.069	
Four-factor model	EP; PAQ+REL+SPI+HRM SS	1.32	0.920	0.916	0.909	0.051	Baseline model

Notes: Employee n=401. Tucker-Lewis's index (TLI), Incremental fit index (IFI), Comparative fit Index PAQ: Performance appraisal quality, HRM SS: HR strength, REL: Religiosity, SPI: Spirituality and EP: Employee performance. Family structure variable was not included as it was dichotomous variable, dummy codded (0 and 1).

MODEL VALIDITY MEASURES

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	PAQ	REL	SPI	HRM SS	EP
PAQ	0.845	0.642	0.313	0.904	**0.801**				
REL	0.821	0.502	0.051	0.782	0.07**	**0.7**			
SPI	0.923	0.632	0.057	0.966	0.26**	0.10**	**0.798**		
HRM SS	0.947	0.528	0.096	0.955	0.51***	0.23***	0.13**	**0.749**	
EP	0.925	0.612	0.147	0.946	0.49**	0.05*	0.24***	0.31***	**0.781**

Validity Concerns

Convergent Validity: the AVE for RELa is at the threshold of 0.50. Try removing REL1 to improve AVE.

References
Significance of Correlations:
† $p < 0.100$
* $p < 0.050$
** $p < 0.010$
*** $p < 0.001$

Thresholds From:
Hu, L., Bentler, P.M. (1999), "Cutoff Criteria for Fit Indexes in Covariance Structure Analysis: Conventional Criteria Versus New Alternatives" SEM vol. 6(1), pp. 1-55.
[1] Malhotra N. K., Dash S. argue that AVE is often too strict, and reliability can be established through CR alone.
Malhotra N. K., Dash S. (2011). Marketing Research an Applied Orientation. London: Pearson Publishing.
--If you would like to cite this tool directly, please use the following: Gaskin, J. & Lim, J. (2016), "Master Validity Tool", AMOS Plugin. Gaskination's StatWiki.