

Perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment in Nepali Banking Sector: Mediating Role of Person-Organization Fit

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ABSTRACT

Organizational Commitment (OC) remains to be a variable of interest as it contributes to positive employee- and organizational-level outcomes. Among the antecedents of OC, studies on the perceived Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) have not been adequately explored particularly in the Nepali context. Moreover, limited research has taken Person-Organization Fit (P-O F) as a mediating variable in the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC. This study is conducted to fill this research gap by examining the impact of perceived HRMPs [including Good and Safe Working Conditions, Recruitment and Selection, Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO), and Training and Development Opportunities] on employees' OC in the Nepali banking sector. In addition, this study examines the mediating role of P-O F in the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC. A quantitative method based on survey questionnaires was employed for data collection. As a result, 269 usable samples were obtained for data analyses. This study's findings indicate that Good and Safe Working Conditions, EEO, Training and Development Opportunities have significantly positive impacts on employees' affective commitment. Furthermore, the impact of perceived HRMPs on OC is mediated by P-O F.

Keywords: HRM practices; Organization commitment; Person-organization fit; Nepali commercial banks.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational Commitment (OC) has been a subject of inquiry for both academicians and practitioners for a long time as it influences outcomes both at the individual and organizational levels. At the individual level, OC predicts positive employee behaviors such as in-role behaviors (Luchak, & Gellatly, 2007; Wright & Bonett, 2002; Keller, 1997), Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) (Schappe, 2010). At the organizational level it contributes to organizational performance (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnitsky, 2002) and organizational effectiveness (Angle, & Perry, 1981). Among the multitude of factors that affect employees' OC, Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) happen to be a significant one. Among the several antecedents of commitment, ranging from demographic, task, role, and supervisory styles variables, it would be fruitful to examine the impact of HRMPs on organizational and career commitment (Illes, Mabey, & Robertson, 1990).

HRMPs can be a practically applied approach to developing commitment in contrast to the more abstract and job-oriented concepts such as task identity and significance (Ogilvie, 1986) for management, HR professionals, and consultants. As per

the available literature, majority of the studies on HRMPs have examined their impact on organizational performance (Gautam, 2015; Akhtar, Ding, & GE, 2008; Sun, Aryee, & Law, 2007; Park, Mitsuhashi, Fey, & Bjorkman, 2007; Collins & Smith, 2006; Combs, Liu, Hall, & Ketchen, 2006; Katou & Budhwar, 2006; Williams G., 2003; Singh, 2000). Rather than focusing on firm-level outcomes, it would be useful and meaningful to study the impact of perceived HRMPs on employee-level outcomes (Wright & Kehoe, 2008; Paauwe, 2009) so as to assess the impact of the micro-level HRM interventions on individual employees (Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013). Their study has considered OC as the outcome variable because HRMPs and strategies have a critical role in developing and maintaining commitment (Sendogdu, Kocabacak, & Guven, 2013; Kipkebut, 2010; Buck & Watson, 2002). Plethora of studies (Suifan, 2015; Gantasala & Padmakumar, 2013; Paul & Anantharaman, 2004) has examined the direct relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC.

However, only a few studies have considered the mediating role of organizational justice (e.g., Simard, Doucet, & Bernard, 2005), perceived organizational support (e.g., Nasuridin, Hemdi, & Gyat, 2008; Meyer & Smith, 2000), public service motivation (e.g., Mostafa, Gould-Williams, & Bottomley, 2015), and engagement (e.g., Boon & Kalshoven, 2014) in the HRM-OC linkage. This study takes Person-Organization Fit (P-O F) as a mediator as related studies are limited in the past literature. In addition, this study also examines the moderating impact of employee age on the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC.

2. ORGANIZATION OF THIS ARTICLE

This article is organized in five Sections. **SECTION-I** commences with the background and provides the rationale for carrying out a study of this nature along with the problem statement, research objectives, and research significance. **SECTION-II** reviews the available and relevant empirical literature to identify the research gap and establish a conceptual framework for this study. It begins with defining the basic constructs used in this study such as OC, P-O F, and perceived HRMPs and sets the hypotheses derived from literature review. **SECTION-III** includes a detailed description of the methodological design and procedures used for conducting this study including the research approach, research design, instruments, research procedure, data analysis, and data processing techniques. **SECTION-IV** discusses the findings of this study based on a quantitative approach and statistical tools adopted from past studies such as descriptive statistics, correlations, regression, confirmatory factor analysis, and model specification and heteroscedasticity tests. Lastly, **SECTION-V** summarizes the findings from this study, discusses the findings in the light of the extant literature, and presents practical and research implications from the findings.

3. SECTION-I

3.1 Background of the Study

To the best knowledge of the researcher, there has been no studies taking into account how mediating and moderating variables can separately impact the extent to which perceived HRMPs impact OC. This study aims to fill this research gap by examining the mediating impact of P-O F and the moderating impact of employee age separately in the direct relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC. The domain of the present study covers the Nepali Public Sector Commercial Banks characterized by HRMPs that

are not usually witnessed in the Private Sector. The banking sector is characterized by its large size, consistency in governance, and relative business success (Gautam & Davis, 2007), and hence it provides an ideal avenue for this study. Attrition has been observed as a rampant issue in the Nepali banking sector compared to other sectors (Biswakarma, 2016; Gautam, 2016). This demands banking organizations to focus on enhancing the commitment level of employees in an attempt to retain them. However, the implementation of HRMPs will not lead to positive employee outcomes if the employees do not perceive the HRMPs as effective. While HRMPs are concrete and tangible HR programs, employees' perceptions of HRMPs reflect a sense of reciprocity and a level of concern that the organization appears to have for its employees (Ogilvie, 1986). Therefore, this study considers perceived HRMPs instead of actual HRMPs. By considering P-O F as a possible mediating variable in the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC, this study intends to establish the fact that such a relationship may not be direct as hypothesized in past studies. Moreover, this study investigates whether the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC is moderated by employee age.

3.2 Statement of the Problem

The Nepali banking sector has been facing severe competition with the increased number of banks and financial institutions (Thapa, 2010). Neupane (n.d.) found that the degree of competition is higher among commercial banks compared to other kinds of banks. Hence, commercial banks are always on the lookout for professional, dedicated, and committed manpower that can contribute by rendering the best possible services and beat market competition. Adhikari and Gautam (2011) suggest that both hard and soft HRMPs are important to enhancing the degree of commitment. Inter-organizational turnover or job switching is high in the Nepali banking sector due to the high competition and the shortage of professional and competent manpower (Bista, 2016), making employee retention a major issue in the sector. For this reason, organizations have to invest in HRMPs that ensure better commitment. Sthapit (2014) found that compensation and career/promotion (growth) are the biggest drivers for employees to switch jobs. Buck and Watson (2002) posited that employee retention is dependent on the level of commitment. Hence, it is necessary for banks to focus on the ways and means of implementing right HRMPs to ensure employees to stay committed to the organizations and to avoid turnover issues.

Job switching is seen as a general tendency among employees in the banking sector that demonstrating a low commitment level. This requires an inquiry into the fact that if the personality and values of the employees and organization are not in tandem, the HR efforts put in by the organization in terms of recruiting, selection, and training and development may not result in positive outcomes. To resolve this issue, organizations need to have better HRMPs that ensure better P-O F, which in turn increases employees' commitment. Employees who fit well with a larger organization have the potential to impact the extent to which HRMPs impact on employee-related outcomes (Boon, Hartog, Boselie, & Paauwe, 2011). Hence, this study intends to examine the mediating impact of P-O F on the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC. Research has shown that demographic variables have potentially impact the strength of the relationship between HRMPs and OC. Given this backdrop, the primary research questions this study are as follows:

- Does perceived HRM Practices impact Organizational Commitment?
- Does P-O F mediate the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment?

- Does employee age moderate the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment?

3.3 Objectives of the Study

With reference to the issues brought out in the problem statement, the purpose of this study is to examine the direct impact of perceived HRMPs on employees' OC. The researcher contends that the impact of HRMPs on employees' attitudinal outcome such as OC is not always direct but through some mediating variable such as P-O F. Likewise, demographic variables tend to moderate the strength of the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC. More specifically, this study intends to have the following objectives:

1. To examine the impact of perceived HRM Practices on Organizational Commitment.
2. To examine the mediating impact of Person-Organization Fit on the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment.
3. To examine the moderating impact of age on the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment.

3.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study have both theoretical and practical implications. On the theoretical front, it will help expand the domain knowledge in the area of OC and how perceived HRMPs and P-O F can act as potential antecedents of OC. There is no consensus in what constitutes to HRMPs across the literature. This study helps to extend the concept of HRMPs generated in the developed and Western context and validate the measure/scale in the developing and Eastern nations. On the practical front, the findings will be useful in creating and sustaining better HRMPs that ensure a higher level of commitment of employees in the banking sector. Moreover, it will help HR managers to understand that HRMPs have the potential to impact on P-O F. Hence, rather than focusing only on pre-hire P-O F, they can focus on maintaining better HRMPs that lead to better P-O F that in turn can lead to greater commitment. As a result, practitioners get an insight as to how they can elevate the level of commitment by focusing on different aspects of HRMPs such as creating a better environment and providing training and developmental opportunities.

4. SECTION-II

4.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Commitment (OC) has been widely researched for over five decades as it is a potential variable that can impact both personal- and organizational-level outcomes. This section reviews perceived HRMP Practices (HRMPs) as a potential antecedent to OC. It also reviews P-O F as a mediating variable in the HRMPs-OC link. The moderating role of employee age in the direct relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC is also reviewed. This Section first reviews the empirical and theoretical literature relevant to the main constructs of this study and then builds a conceptual framework for designing and analyzing the research framework.

4.1.1 Organizational Commitment (OC)

In the fields of organizational psychology, industrial psychology, and organizational behavior, OC continues to be an important focus of research (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). Attention has been given to the study of OC to address turnover and retention

(Lambert, Hogan, & Jiang, 2008; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Emerging empirical research has suggested that OC has considerable implications for both positive and negative employee-level outcomes. Researchers have tried to define commitment in numerous ways notwithstanding the fact that OC is a multi-dimensional construct that certainly includes an affective component (Fields, 2002).

Of the several dimensions of commitment, the earliest one was given by Gouldner (1960) who distinguished “commitment” as a commitment to specific values of the organization and a commitment to the organization as a whole. Further, he studied other forms of commitment such as cosmopolitan integration — the degree to which an individual is active in and feels himself a part of the varying levels of a particular organization and is active in the organization as well. The other form is *organizational introjection* — the degree to which an individual’s ideal self-image includes a number of organizationally approved qualities and values.

Among the early researchers on OC were Mowday and Steers (1982) who characterized OC as a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. Reichers (1985) put forward his view of multiple foci to OC. According to this view, commitment is a process of identification with the goals of the organization’s multiple constituencies such as top management, customers, unions, and the public at large. Later on, Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed a three-component model of commitment. They posited that commitment is a psychological state that has three separate components reflecting: (a) *a desire* (affective commitment); (b) *a need* (continuance commitment), and; (c) *an obligation* (normative commitment) to maintain employment in the organization.

They argue that each component has its own antecedent and has different implications on the job behavior. Bar-Hayim and Berman (1992) added a new dimension to commitment by classifying it as active and passive commitments. Passive commitment refers to loyalty to the current organization whereas active commitment denotes identification with the organization and a readiness to exert effort on its behalf. In their meta-analytic studies, Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky (2002), found that all the three forms of commitment, namely, affective, normative, and continuance are related yet distinguishable from one another based on other similar constructs such as job satisfaction, job involvement, and occupational commitment. All the three forms of commitment are negatively related to withdrawal cognition and turnover while affective commitment had the strongest correlation with organizational relevant (attendance, performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors). Steers (1977) identified personal characteristics, job characteristics, and work experiences as antecedents of OC.

Personal characteristics include the need for achievement, age and education. Job characteristics include task identity, optional interaction, and feedback. Work experiences include group attitudes, organizational dependability, and personal import. Fu and Deshpande (2011) found that both caring and independence climate types and job satisfaction had significant impacts on OC. Myriad pieces of literature on OC suggests that it is a research-amenable construct as it is used as antecedent, dependent, mediating (Tabouli, Habtoor, & Nashief, 2016), and moderating variables (Franke, & Felfe, 2011). However, for the purpose of this research, we intend to examine OC only as a dependent variable.

4.1.2 Perceived HRM Practices (HRMPs)

Before discussing HRMPs, it is useful to define what constitutes human resource and what is meant by HRM. Human resource is only about the person physically hired but also the knowledge and expertise the person possesses. Hence, the use of the term “human resource” suggests that employees are part of the company’s stock which can be drawn on and developed for organizational ends (Inkson, 2008). Dessler and Varkkey (2011) define HRM as the process of acquiring, training, appraising, and compensating employees, and of attending to their labor relations, health and safety, and fairness concerns. HRM refers to a set of policies that are developed with the aim of maximizing organizational integration, employees’ commitment, flexibility, and quality (Tabouli, Habtoor, & Nashief, 2016).

Within that domain, the current interest is focused on HRM systems emphasizing all or most of the following Practices: sophisticated selection methods, appraisal, training, teamwork, communications, empowerment, performance-related pay, and employment security (Wall, & Wood, 2005). The concept of HRM has received widespread attention for more than four decades. Guest (1987), one of the early contributors to the domain of HRM, believed that the term has been loosely defined though being used for a long time. He presented HRM as a new approach to personnel management. Additionally, he cited factors that lead to growing interest in HRM such as the search for competitive advantage, the failure of personnel management, the decline in trade union pressure, changes in the workforce and nature of work, and the availability of new models derived from organizational behavior.

There appears to be no consensus with respect to the constituent parts of HRM, the “best practice” versus the “Best Fit” approach, the different Fits, coverage of different employee groups, and the need to consider how HRMPs are perceived (Paauwe, & Boselie, 2005). Hence, there is not a single agreed or a fixed list of HRMPs or systems of Practices that are used to define or measure HRM (Paauwe, 2008). Also, there is no consensus on what constitutes HRMPs across the globe. The notion of HRM was originated in the U.S.; this view though widely accepted has also been widely criticized (Brewster, 2007). Authors have described different combination of HRMPs. Absar, Nimalathan, and Mahmood (2012) mentioned about different models like Michigan/Columbia model, the Harvard Model, the Guest Model, and the Warwick Model. Boselie, Brewster, and Paauwe (2009) suggested that the Harvard model, also known as the soft HRM model, is in contrast to the Michigan approach (also called hard HRM). They stated that the soft model is geared towards employee development while the hard model is built upon employee incentive towards optimal performance.

Truss, Gratton, Hope-Hailey, McGovern, and Stiles (1997) reappraised the soft and hard models of HRM which were originally discussed by Guest in 1987. They differentiated between soft and hard models in terms of two criteria, namely, underlying perceptions of human nature and managerial control strategies. They asserted that the soft perspective is characterized by a *developmental-humanist* stance and the hard perspective by an *instrumental-utilitarian* stance. In simpler terms, the soft perspective implies that individuals are viewed as resources worthy of training and development, while the hard perspective implies that individuals are a cost to be minimized.

Work systems have been characterized as high-commitment, high-involvement, and high-performance practices (Snape, & Redman, 2010). They state that information sharing is the key characteristic of high involvement practices. In contrast, high commitment signifies a work system that aims to encourage employees to identify the goals of the organization and motivate them to achieve those goals. They also bring forth the idea that the High Performance Work System (HPWS) approach has begun to

dominate HRM research. Way (2002) conceptualized HPWS as specific HRMPs linked to selecting, developing, retaining, and/or motivating (gaining access) to workforce that produces superior employee output. Guthrie (2001) emphasized on the fact that the extensive use of High-Involvement Work Practices (HIWPs) represent significant investment in human capital and firms are likely to utilize HIWPs when employees are deemed as critical.

Thus, the HIWPs strategy starts with management philosophies and core values that emphasize the significance of employees as a source of competitive advantage (Bae, & Lawler, 2000). Another concept of HRMPs is the strategic concept of HRM which emphasizes on four generic human resource activities of all organizations, namely, (i) selection/promotion/placement process, (ii) reward process, (iii) developmental process, and (iv) appraisal process (Tichy *et al.*, 1984 as cited in Edgar & Geare, 2005). Yet another construct similar to HRMPs, especially high performance practices is the HPWS, which constitutes a claim that there exists a system of work practices that leads in some way to superior organizational performance (Boxall & Macky, 2009).

They state that HPWS include three concepts, namely, performance, work practices, and systematic effects — a notion that combining practices into a bundle, rather than individual practices, which shapes the pattern of interactions between and among managers and employees. Several authors have taken different measures of HRMPs and there is not universally defined best HRMPs. Marchington and Grugulis (2000) argue that the best practice seems to be problematic as different sets of practices may be important in different organizations and that employees' perception of work are what really matter. Takeuchi and Takeuchi (2013) developed HRMPs measure covering four major dimensions of HRM functions, namely, appropriate staffing and recruitment, a fair performance appraisal system, comprehensive training and development, and competitive compensation due to lack of well-established HRMPs items to be surveyed for employees. Absar, Nimalathasan, and Mahmood (2012) used HRMPs comprising of recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, and perceived market performance in the Bangladeshi context. These items were adapted from previous studies (Bae & Lawler, 2000) used in Korean studies.

Meyer and Smith (2000) used HRMPs pertaining to performance appraisal, benefits, training, career development, and incentive pay. Akhtar, Ding, and Ge (2008) used strategic HRMPs comprising the following dimensions: training, participation, employment security, job descriptions, result-oriented appraisal, internal career opportunities, and stock/profit sharing. Pare and Tremblay (2007) used high involvement HRMPs consisting of recognition, empowerment, fair organizational rewards, competence development, and information sharing practices. Guchait and Cho (2010) examined a bundle of eight HRMPs including training, performance appraisal, staffing, rewards, benefits, working conditions, equal employment opportunities, and information sharing. Individuals' perceptions of reality are likely to influence their evaluation of their organizations practices (Meyer, & Allen, 1997). Therefore, many researchers (Gould-Williams, 2004; Boon, Hartog, Boselie, & Paauwe, 2011; Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013; Takeuchi, & Takeuchi, 2013) have started collecting individual perceptions of HRMPs. This research also takes into account employees' perception of HRMPs.

4.1.3 Person-Organization Fit (P-O F)

Interaction between a human and his/ her work environment is still a very popular stream of research in psychology (Merecz & Andysz, 2012). P-O F represents a specific facet of Person-Environment Fit (P-E Fit) and was studied within the P-E Fit paradigm

(Merecz-Kot & Andysz, 2017). Different types of Fits are discussed in the Fit literature such as person organization Fit, person job Fit, person group Fit, person-supervisor Fit (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Among different types of Fit, the most common are P-O F and Person-Job Fit (Carless, 2005). Researchers discussing about P-O F often discussed that as an organization matures over time, it becomes increasingly occupied by similar people (Cooman *et al.*, 2008) and over a period of time, an organization's members tend to become similar in terms of their personality, values, and interests. Cooman *et al.* (2008) used the socialization-attraction and selection-attrition (ASA) framework and examined the relationship between employees' work values and organization's values. They argue that among many aspects of organization and people, one enduring and fundamental characteristic is values.

O'Reilly III, Chatman, and Caldwell (1991) validated the Organizational Culture Profile (OCP), which examines the extent to which certain values characterize a target organization and an individual's preference for that particular configuration of values. With this validation, value congruence became the most widely accepted operationalization of P-O F (Kristof, 1996). Kristof (1996) presented a comprehensive definition and conceptual model of P-O F that incorporated supplementary and complementary perspectives on Fit. He also offered a second perspective on P-O F, known as needs-supplies and demands-abilities. From the former, P-O F occurs when an organization satisfies an individual's needs, desires and preferences. In contrast, the latter suggests that the Fit occurs when an individual has the abilities required to meet organizational demands. P-O F addresses the "compatibility between people and entire organizations" (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005, p. 285). Chatman (1989) prescribed a model of P-O F whereby they considered the impact that organizational membership has on people and the impact that people have on organizations. He defines P-O F as the congruence between the norms and values of the organizations and the values of the persons.

Similarly, Chan (1996) defines P-O F as the degree of congruence or compatibility between the attributes of an organization member and those of the organization. For individuals, these attributes may include personality traits, beliefs, values, and interests. For the organization, these characteristics traditionally include the culture, climate, values, goals, and norms. P-O F can be defined as an individual's goal congruence with organizational leaders and peers (Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991). Chan (1996) also developed and proposed cognitive misfit — the degree of mismatch between an individual's cognitive style of problem solving and style demands of the work context — as one viable facet of P-O F. Cognitive misfit refers to P-O F that has been found to work as an independent, dependent, mediating, and moderating variable. P-O F has been found to mediate the relationship between leader-member exchange and employee affective commitment (Tremblay, Hill, & Aube, 2017). Ruiz-Palomino and Martinez-Canas (2014) found that P-O F moderated the relationship between ethical climate and ethical intent, and the mediated the relationship between ethical climate and OCB.

4.1.4 Perceived HRM Practices (HRMPs) and Organizational Commitment (OC)

Multiple studies have found a positive relationship between HRMPs and OC (Nassar, 2017; Tabouli, Habtoor, & Nashief, 2016; Chaubey, Bisht, & Kothari, 2016; Cantasala & Padmakumar, 2013; Rahman, Uddin, & Mia, 2012; Marescaux, Winne, Sels, 2012; Agarwala, 2010; Guchait & Cho, 2010; Williams G & Davies, 2007; Green, Wu, Whitten, & Medlin, 2006; Shahnawaz & Juyal, 2006; Wright & Kehoe, 2006; Paul & Anantharaman, 2004; Williams-G, 2004; Williams-G, 2003; Ogilvie, 1986). Meyer and

Smith (2000) posited that employee perceptions of HRMPs predicted affective and normative commitments. Paul and Anantharaman (2004) found HRMPs such as employee-friendly work environment, career development, development-oriented appraisal, and comprehensive training significantly impacted OC. Similarly, employee perceptions of HRM were related to affective commitment (Sanders, Dorenbosch, & Reuver, 2008). Edgar and Geare (2005) found that HRMPs predicted OC but only when employee reports of strength of HRMPs were used to measure HRM.

Similarly, Agarwala (2003) found that only innovative HRMPs significantly predicted OC. HRMPs (P-O F, remuneration, and recognition) significantly impacted OC whereas, surprisingly, training and career development was not related to OC (Chew, & Chan, 2008). Herrbach, Mignonac, Vandenberghe, and Negrini (2009) found that among other HRMPs, provision of training opportunities was most significantly related to affective commitment.

4.1.5 Mediating Role of Person-Organization Fit (P-O F) in the Relationship between Perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment (OC)

P-O F partially mediated the relationship between HRMPs and OC (Boon *et.al*, 2011). They contend that one of the goals of HR is to ensure a Fit between individuals and organizations, and those organizations which perceive a Fit between them and their organization demonstrate positive work attitudes. Luthans, Baack, and Taylor (1987) established P-O F as an antecedent to OC. Turek and Wojtczuk-T (2015) found that P-O Fit partially mediated the relationship between HRMPs and OCB. Autry and Wheeler (2005) argue that organizational research has focused on how employees' perception of 'Fit' with their organization can be altered through HRMPs.

Jung and Takeuchi (2012) found that P-O F mediated the relationship between employees' perceived investment in employee development and OC. Previous research has pointed out positive relationships between HRMPs and P-O F (Mostafa & Gould-Williams, 2014; Lee & Bang, 2012; Boon, Hartog, Boselie, & Paauwe, 2011). This shows that P-O F can act as a potential mediator between HRMPs and employee level outcomes because there has to be a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables and also between independent and mediating variables for mediation to exist. Here, both the relationships have been tested in the previous literature. Building on this logic, this study proposes that P-O F mediates the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC.

4.1.6 Moderating Role of Age in the Relationship between Perceived HRM Practices (HRMPs) and Organizational Commitment (OC)

Age was found to moderate the relationship between maintenance and developmental HRMPs and affective commitment. This is so as the relationship between maintenance HRMPs and affective commitment strengthens with age and the relationship between developmental HRMPs and affective commitment weakens with age (Kooij, Jansen, Dijkers, & Lange, 2010). Based on the literatures above, it can now be safely argued that the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC is not direct. This study also attempts to investigate the mediating impact of P-O F in the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC as hypothesized and tested in earlier literature. Additionally, this study also attempts to test the moderating impact of age in the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC.

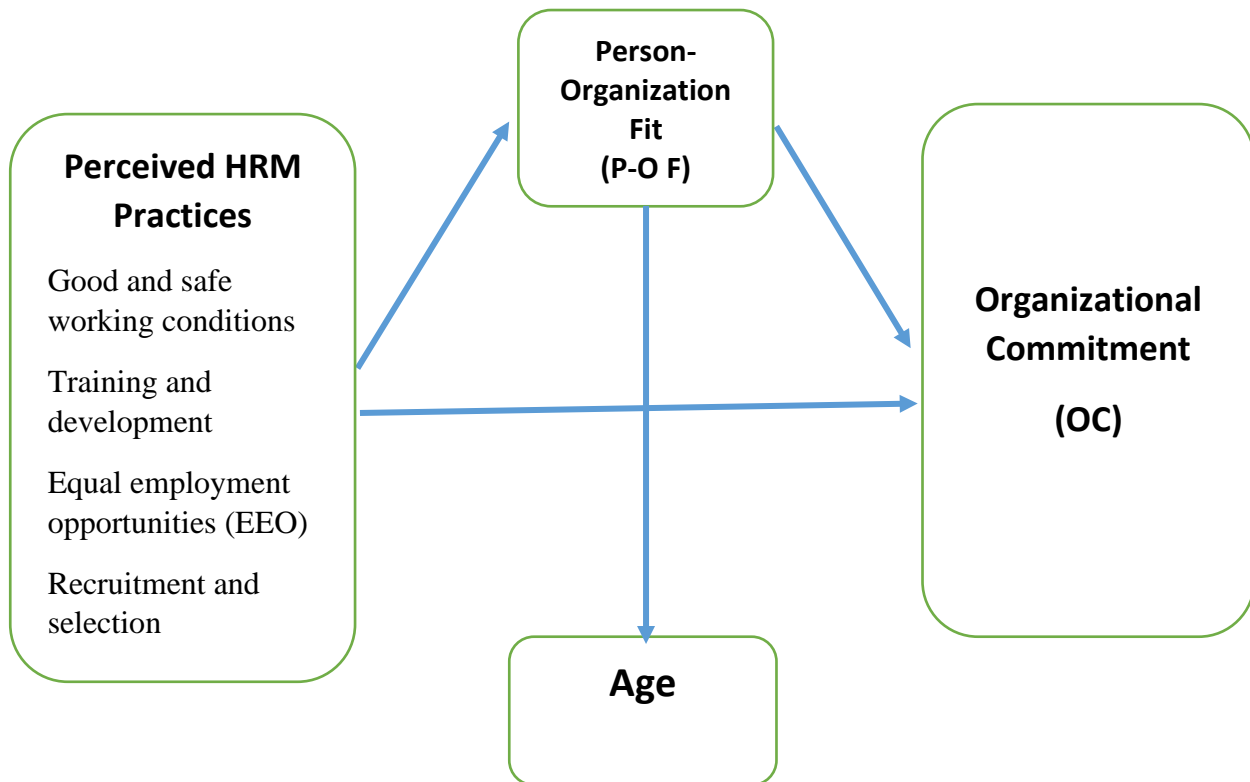


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

5. SECTION—III

5.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This Section describes the overall research approach and the specific research design guiding the research process used in carrying out this study. It then presents the detailed research activities, viz., hypotheses framing, operationalization of constructs, sampling design, instrumentation for data collection, and data analysis procedures.

5.1.1 Research Approach

The philosophical underpinning of this research is the positivist paradigm. The ontology of this study is objectivism and the epistemology is positivism. Positivism could be regarded as a research strategy and approach that is rooted on the ontological principle and doctrine that truth is free and independent of the viewer and observer (Aliyu, Bello, Kasim, & Martin, 2014). According to them, positivist investigator has an idea or notion that the universe or world conforms to permanent and unchanging laws and rules of causation and happenings. This epistemological approach of this study is based on positivist paradigm for the purpose of knowledge generation which requires systematic measurement of the relevant variables of the phenomenon of study and testing their relationships.

This study essentially focuses on establishing correlations among the proposed independent, mediating, and dependent variables and examines the impacts of the independent variables on the dependent variables.

5.1.2 Research Design

Within the framework of positivist ontology, this study was designed around a quantitative research methodology using a cross-sectional research method for data collection and analysis. The study was a co-relational investigation and carried out in a non-contrived work setting. The unit of analysis for the study was individual employees working in the banking sector of Nepal. The basic design combined the review of literature related to OC, perceived HRMPs and P-O F for constructing a conceptual framework which was then tested using questionnaire survey of employees in the Nepali commercial banks. Survey method was chosen as it is the most common method employed in examining the relationship between HRMPs and employees' attitude and behavior (Cully *et al.*, 2000 as cited in Edgar & Geare, 2005).

5.1.3 Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses can be defined as logically conjectured relationships between two or more variables expressed in the form of testable statements (Sekaran & Bougie, 2012). Zikmund (2003) state that hypothetical statements assert probable answers to research questions. To study the relationships and their strengths, the following hypotheses were framed for testing based on literature review:

1. **Hypothesis-1:** Perceived HRM Practices including (a) good and safe working conditions, (b) recruitment and selection, (c) equal employment opportunities (EEO), (d) training and development *affect* Organizational Commitment (OC).
2. **Hypothesis-2:** P-O F *mediates* the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment (OC).
3. **Hypothesis-3:** Age *moderates* the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and OC such that the relationship is strengthened for higher aged than for lower aged employee.

5.1.4 Population and Sample

The population for this study includes employees working in 'A-class' commercial banks. However, there is no precise data on the number of employees working in commercial banks available to decide the sampling frame.

Out of the twenty-eight commercial banks in Nepal (Nepal Rastra Bank, 2017, January 15), the researcher chose nine banks with the largest number of staffs in their corporate headquarters. The researcher ensured that the headquarters had a minimum of 200 staff members approached. The reason for choosing head offices was that employees at head offices are relatively more familiar with the HRMPs of the organizations compared to those working in branch offices. Out of these selected sample, questionnaires were distributed on a proportionate basis to all the banks on the convenience basis.

5.2 Measures/ Instruments

5.2.1 Variables and their Operationalization

The independent variable for this study was perceived HRMPs while the dependent variable was OC. P-O F was taken as a mediating variable in the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC.

5.2.2 Perceived HRM Practices (HRMPs)

As was suggested earlier, a number of positive employee attitudes are the outcomes of using appropriate HRMPs (Edgar, & Geare, 2005). Perceived HRMPs have been used by various researchers because rather than taking into account the HRMPs as listed in policy documents, it would be beneficial to study how employees experience those Practices (Nishii, Lepak, & Schneider, 2008). They further state that the attributions employees make about the HRMPs are likely to have consequences on their attitudes and behaviors.

Among the various ranges and types of HRMPs, this study has made perceived HRMPs operational as comprising four different types viz., (i) good and safe working conditions, (ii) training and development, (iii) Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO), (iv) recruitment and selection. These areas have been selected as they have been found to have greatest impact on employee attitudes and behavior (Guest, 2001 as cited in Edgar & Geare, 2005).

5.2.3 Organizational Commitment (OC)

The literature on different components of OC sees them as distinctive. This represents the shortened version of the 15-item OC Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday *et al.*, (1982) and hence represents only the affective or attitudinal commitment. This measure has also been used to describe commitment to a profession by inserting the profession name in place of organization in each item (Vandenberg & Scarpello, 1994, as cited in Fields, 2002).

5.2.4 Person-Organization Fit (P-O F)

Research studies available in the literature on P-O F have defined it in numerous ways. Some have looked into pre-hire P-O F while others have looked into post-hire P-O F. Cable and Judge (1996) defined P-O F as the “degree of job seekers’ subjective perceptions of the Fit between their values and their organization’s values.”

5.2.5 Organizational Commitment (OC)

OC is measured using a nine-item shortened version of the 15-item OC Questionnaire (OCQ) given by Mowday *et al.*, 1982 (as cited in Fields, 2002). Responses are obtained on a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1= strongly disagree, 2=moderately disagree, 3= slightly disagree, 4= neither disagree nor agree, 5= slightly agree, 6= moderately agree and 7=strongly agree. Coefficient alpha values ranged from 0.74 to 0.92 (Aryee, Luk, & Stone, 1998; Cohen, 1995, 1996 as cited in Fields, 2002).

The sample item is “I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful”, “I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for”.

5.2.6 Perceived HRM Practices (HRMPs)

The scale for perceived HRMPs is taken from Edgar & Geare (2005). It consisted of a total of 20 items spread over four sub-categories viz., good and safe working conditions, recruitment and selection, equal employment opportunity, and training and development. Coefficient alpha values ranged from 0.83 to 0.88 for all 5-item measures

relating to each of the four areas under HRMPs. Responses were obtained using a 5-point Likert scale where 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree. The sample item included is “my working conditions here are good”.

5.2.7 Person- Organization Fit (P-O F)

P-O F was measured with a three-item, 5-point Likert type scale where 1= not at all and 5= completely. This measure was developed by Cable and Judge (1996).

An example of item was “To what degree do you feel your values “match” of Fit this organization and the current employees in this organization? Coefficient alpha was .87.

5.3 Data Collection Procedure

5.3.1 Administration of the Questionnaire

Out of a total of 450 questionnaires, 50 questionnaires were distributed evenly among employees of nine commercial banks. Paper questionnaires were circulated as email surveys have very low response in our social context. Also, online surveys are not found to be fruitful compared to paper questionnaires due to the low response rate (Sax, Gilmartin, & Bryant, 2003). This justifies the use of paper questionnaires in our context as well. Prior approval and consent were taken from the respondents before approaching them. The questionnaire consisted total of total of 37 items. Socio-demographic variables included gender, age, the level in organization, tenure, and academic qualification. Given that the respondents of the survey were working in banks, they were expected to understand the English version of the questionnaire with ease. Hence, no translation of questionnaire was made.

The questionnaire was prepared using standard scales and distributed among 450 respondents identified suitable for the study. 50 questionnaires were distributed in nine commercial banks proportionately. Out of 450 questionnaires only 285 questionnaires were returned. Out these 285 questionnaires, only 269 questionnaires were considered as final sample after considering missing values and unusable responses. This yielded a response rate of 59%. Personally administered questionnaires are considered more effective than mail questionnaires in our context as email surveys have very low response rate in our social context. Among the respondents, 55.4 % were male and 44.6 % were female. The average age of the respondents was about 32 years with a maximum age of 43 and a minimum age of 21. 63.2% of the employees were found to be working in the middle level followed by 29.7% in the lower level and 7.1% at the top level. The average tenure of the respondents was found to be 6.3 years. 76.2% of the respondents had a graduate degree and 22.3% of them had a undergraduate degree.

5.3.2 Data Processing

Each returned questionnaire was allotted a unique number for data entry in SPSS. Then, manual screening was used to detect missing data. Missing data were also found through a frequency count in SPSS. The coding and data entry of the responses were conducted using SPSS 21 and Stata 12.

5.3.3 Data Analysis

In order to check the reliability of the data, Cronbach alpha of each measure was calculated. To determine the model-Fit, Confirmatory Factor analysis (CFA) was conducted. To ensure that the minimum reliability is reached, a standardized path coefficient was computed using CFA. If the path coefficient was found to be too small,

the items would be dropped to ensure a better reliability of the scale. CFA was carried out using SPSS Amos 21 for each of the independent, dependent and mediating constructs separately. Model specification and heteroscedasticity tests were conducted. A remedial test for heteroscedasticity was also performed. Descriptive statistics and scale reliabilities were conducted. A hierarchical regression analysis was run to test the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Mediation analysis was carried out using the four-step approach proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) which requires that the relationship between the independent variables to be significant. Also, the direct relationship between the independent and mediating variables has to be significant. Once this is derived in the analysis, a mediation procedure can be carried out. A moderation analysis was carried out using Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR), which is a commonly used statistical tool for estimating the interaction effects in organizational sciences (Aguinis & Gottfredson, 2010).

6. SECTION IV

6.1 RESULTS

This Section reports and interprets the results of hypothesis testing. Data collected by means of survey using questionnaires were subject to a number of tests such as confirmatory factor analysis, reliability analysis, descriptive statistics and correlations. A hierarchical regression was carried out to test the impact of the predictor variables on the dependent variable. Tests of mediation and moderation were carried out separately. Also, a test of model specification and heteroscedasticity was conducted.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is a confirmatory technique in which the researcher uses a hypothesized model to estimate a population covariance matrix, which is then compared with the observed covariance matrix to minimize the difference between the estimated and observed matrices (Schreiber, Stage, King, Nora, & Barlow, 2006). CFA was run to test the validity of the constructs and scales used in the research. CFA also allows us to check the model Fit of the data used. In order to run CFA, 269 data without any missing observations were entered into AMOS. Also, CFA was carried out on the data set to detect and control for the common method bias through statistical remedies (Alfes *et al.*, 2013). CFA was run separately for independent, mediating and dependent variables and also for all three variables in a single model. This study's sample size is qualified for carrying out CFA. A model tends to be unfit if the sample sizes is smaller than 200 under the normality assumption (Dogan, Ozaydin, & Yilmaz, 2015).

6.1.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Variables and Measurement Scales

6.1.1.1 CFA (*Perceived Human Resource Management*)

The factor loading of all the items under the four specific sub-dimensions of perceived HRM Practices was above 0.30. The lowest factor loading was found to be 0.39 for the item "This organization does not need to pay more attention to the way it recruits people". The initial model Fit of the perceived HRMPs construct was not acceptable as the p-value was significant at 0.000. Other indicators include the normed chi-square (CMIN/df)=3.003, GFI=0.839, AGFI=0.794, CFI=0.832, and RMSEA=0.086. To improve model Fit, the covariance between errors was calculated between the items that have the highest value of modification index. A revised version of perceived HRMPs displayed that the CMIN/df= 3.003 which did not exceed 5, and that GFI=0.839, AGFI=0.794, CFI=0.832, and RMSEA=.0086. The CFI value is greater than 0.90 and the

RMSEA value is less than 0.80, which represent a good Fit (Tabouli *et al.*, 2016). Hence, to ensure a goodness of Fit for the construct, the covariance was calculated for the error terms in items that represented the highest modification index value, namely, “favoritism is not evident in any of the recruitment decisions made here” and “interview panels are used during the recruitment and selection process in the organization”, “EEO is promoted within the organization”, and “I get the opportunity to discuss my training and development requirements with my employer.

A multiple times covariance was calculated to achieve acceptable levels of RMSEA and CFA. The final version of perceived HRMPs have CMIN/df=2.23 GFI=0.882 AGFI= 0.841, CFI=0.902, and RMSEA=0.068. The final values are reported in the table below. For, OC and P-O F, factor loading for individual items were computed. The final model Fit was computed for the independent, dependent and mediating variables. For OC, all the factor loadings of the nine items were larger than 0.30. Hence, no item needs to be removed. The initial model Fit was not satisfactory with the normed chi-square (CMIN/df)=3.776, GFI=0.922, AGFI=0.794, CFI=0.832, and RMSEA= 0.8. Due to high value of RMSEA and the low values of AGFI and CFI, the covariance was calculated for the items with the highest modification index value. After that. the model improved slightly with CMIN/df= 2.34, GFI=0.955, AGFI=0.915, CFI=0.972, and RMSEA= 0.71. Once again the covariance was run to ensure a better Fit with CMIN/df=2.15, GFI=0.962, AGFI=0.922, CFI=0.978, and RMSEA= 0.66. Since the chi-square/df= $47.49/22 = 2.15$ which is smaller than 2.5, this indicates a good Fit (Arbuckle, 2006 as cited in Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013). Finally, for P-O F, the factor loadings of all the three items were larger than 0.30. After that, CFA was run for the entire model consisting of Perceived HRMP, OC, and P-O F.

Perceived HRMPs consisted of 20 items in total, OC consists of nine items in total, and P-O F consisted of three items in total. Results of CFA initially indicated that the model was not Fit with CMIN/df=2.36, GFI=0.793, AGFI=0.757, CFI=0.831, and RMSEA=0.071. Hence, the covariance between the error terms was run several times for items whose modification indices were the largest such as that between “Expenses related to training and development paid and organization’s commitment to the training and development needs”, “Management’s support for cultural differences”, and “Organization spends on EEO awareness and training and among other five pair of error terms”. Then the model Fit was improved with CMIN/df=2.034, GFI=0.822, AGFI=0.800, CFI=0.886, and RMSEA=0.64. Subsequently, again the covariance was run among error terms; successive results yielded CMIN/df=1.702, GFI=0.857, AGFI=0.882, CFI=0.917, and RMSEA=0.51. Thus, after running the covariance multiple times among the covariance, the results yielded a satisfactory model Fit with CMIN/df=1.581, GFI=0.87, AGFI=0.897, CFI=0.933, and RMSEA=0.47. We consider the model Fit as satisfactory because the RMSEA value is smaller than 0.05 and the CFI is larger than 0.9. GFI and AGFI are close to 0.90, which suggests an acceptable model Fit.

6.2 Descriptive Statistics, Correlations and Scale Reliabilities for scale variables

Cronbach alpha is the most widely used index of the reliability of a scale (Streiner, 2003; Cortina, 1993). Cronbach alpha or internal consistency measures the extent to which items in a questionnaire (sub) scales are correlated (homogenous), thus measuring the same concept (Terwee *et al.*, 2007). Scale reliability, means, and standard deviations of individual scales were computed in this study. The correlations show that the expected association between the variables are significant at $p < 0.01$. Since the correlation

coefficients are below 0.70, there is no issue of multicollinearity in this study (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996 as cited in Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Correlations and Scale Reliabilities (N=269)

	Alpha	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
HRM1	0.74	3.64	0.66					
HRM2	0.72	3.48	0.68	0.46**				
HRM3	0.72	3.67	0.65	0.38**	0.52**			
HRM4	0.84	3.55	0.80	0.38**	0.44**	0.65**		
POFit	0.61	3.66	0.61	0.31**	0.29**	0.38**	0.43**	
OC	0.88	5.47	0.95	0.47**	0.36**	0.41**	0.40**	0.57**

Note: **p <0.01. HRM1 is Good and safe working conditions, HRM2 is recruitment and selection Practices, HRM3 is Equal Employment Opportunities, HRM4 is Training and Development, P-O F is Person Organization Fit, and OC is Organizational Commitment

As seen in the table, the Cronbach alpha for all items measuring the independent variable, perceived HRMPs and the dependent variable, OC was higher than the suggested threshold of 0.70. A rule of thumb states that an alpha levels higher than 0.70 indicates internal consistency among the items of the scale (Dunn, Seaker, & Waller, 1994). However, the Cronbach alpha for the construct of P-O F was 0.61 as it consisted of only three items. It also shows a small correlation among the items in the construct. As Cronbach alpha is also dependent on a number of items in the scale (Terwee et al., 2007), this has resulted in a lower internal consistency. Despite the low alpha value, the researcher did not drop any items from the P-O construct because deleting any items from the construct may affect the test validity (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994 as cited in Wibowo, 2016). Also, the low internal consistency might be due to the possibility that the items are culturally irrelevant to the respondents.

The mean of all the sub-dimensions of perceived HRMPs, such as good and safe working conditions, recruitment and selection Practices, equal employment opportunities, and training and development were higher than the average value, indicating that these items are practiced in our context and relevant. Also, OC measured with a 7-point Likert scale has a mean value higher than the average. The high average value could be due to the social desirability bias that led the respondents to rank their own selves higher in self-reporting surveys. Many researchers ignore the potential issue of social desirability bias which potentially impacts scale validity (King & Bruner, 2000). The P-O F value was also found to be higher than the mean value, indicating a Fit of employees' values and personality with that of the organizations in the banking sector.

6.3 Model Specification Test

Model specification error may occur due to the omission of relevant variables, inclusion of unnecessary variables, adaption of a wrong functional form, errors in measurement, an incorrect specification of the stochastic error term, and an incorrect assumption that the error term is normally distributed (Gujrati, Porter & Gunasekar, 2009). The Ramsey RESET test and the Link Test were carried out to check if this study's model is correctly

specified. The Ramsey RESET Test is chosen as there is only one independent variable i.e., Perceived HRMPs, to measure its impact on the dependent variable, OC.

There could be other potential variables impacting OC that might have been missed out in our study. This mandates a check for the model specification using the two tests. The tests are also used for linear regression model. The Ramsey RESET test checks whether the linear combination of the fitted values helps explain the regression. It also tests for the model's explanatory power and omitted variables.

6.4 Ramsey RESET Test for model specification:

Table 2: Ramsey RESET test for model specification

Ramsey RESET test using powers of the independent variables

Ho: model has no omitted variables

$F(15, 248) = 3.37$

Prob > F = 0.0000

The result shows that the model is significant at 5%. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the model has omitted variables. However, this is not the only way to test for model specification. We then proceed to the link test so as to further confirm the findings.

6.5 Link Test for model specification:

Table 3: Link Test for model specification

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs =	269
Model	109.000584	2	54.5002921	F(2, 266) =	105.69
Residual	137.169869	266	.515676199	Prob > F	= 0.0000
Total	246.170453	268	.918546466	R-squared	= 0.4428
				Adj R-squared	= 0.4386
				Root MSE	= .71811

OC	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
_hat	1.206455	.8901179	1.36	0.176	-.5461182 2.959028
_hatsq	-.0188008	.0808159	-0.23	0.816	-.177921 .1403195
_cons	-.5591575	2.433253	-0.23	0.818	-5.350043 4.231728

The p-value shows that the model is incorrectly specified at 5%. Also, the t and p-values are insignificant. Hence, we can assume that the model has some issues caused by omitted variables.

6.6 Test of Heteroscedasticity

Heteroskedasticity test is carried out to check whether the variability of the variables is constant or varying across a range of values. Since a constant variance is a basic assumption to of OLS, we proceed to test for heteroscedasticity in the data.

Heteroskedasticity can be tested in several ways. The Breusch Pagan test is conducted to see if the estimated variance of the residuals from a regression is dependent on the independent variables. This test helps to identify heteroscedasticity issues based on the chi-square statistic.

6.7 Test of Heteroscedasticity using Breusch-Pagan Test

Table 4: Test of Heteroscedasticity using Breusch-Pagan Test

Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity

Ho: Constant variance

Variables: fitted values of OC

chi2(1) = 53.07

Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

The result shows that the p-value is significant at the 5% level. This suggests that we can reject the null and conclude that the variance is non-constant, which means that our data suffers the heteroscedasticity problem, which is common for a cross-sectional dataset based on convenience sampling. To further confirm this finding, the White test is conducted. While the Breusch-Pagan test considers only a linear form of heteroscedasticity, the White test examines other forms as well and thus is considered to be a stronger tool.

6.8 Test of Heteroscedasticity using White Test:

The results reported in Table 5 show that the p-value is significant at the 5% significance level, which means that heteroscedasticity exists in the data. This suggests that the model is not completely robust and may suffer from a non-constant error variance and heteroscedasticity in data.

Table 5: Test of Heteroscedasticity using White Test

White's test for Ho: homoskedasticity
against Ha: unrestricted heteroskedasticity

chi2(20) = 79.41
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

Lameron & Trivedi's decomposition of IM-test

Source	chi2	df	p
Heteroskedasticity	79.41	20	0.0000
Skewness	11.44	5	0.0433
Kurtosis	4.32	1	0.0377
Total	95.17	26	0.0000

6.9 Hypothesis Testing

Hierarchical multiple regressions were utilized to test the hypotheses. A regression was run to test the predictive power of the independent variable, i.e. Perceived HRMPs (good and safe working condition, recruitment and selection, equal employment opportunities, and training and development) on the affective OC of employees. A mediation analysis was carried out to test the indirect impact of P-O F on the relationship between perceived HRMPs and affective OC. Additionally, the moderating role of age on the relationship between perceived HRMPs and affective OC was also examined.

Table 6: Linear Regression to examine the relationship between Perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment

Predictors	Standardized Beta Coefficient
HRM¹	0.33 **
HRM²	0.06
HRM³	0.15*
HRM⁴	0.14*
R²	0.30
F	28.4

Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment.

Note: **p <0.01, *p <0.05, HRM¹ is Good and Safe working conditions, HRM² is recruitment and selection Practices, HRM³ is Equal Employment Opportunities, HRM⁴ is Training and Development, P-O Fit is P-O F, and OC is Organizational Commitment.

As seen in the Table 7, the regression model predicting the impact of perceived HRMPs on OC is significant (F=28.4, p=0.000). All the four sub-dimensions of perceived HRMPs explained 30 percent of the variance in OC as given by the R-square value. Among the four sub-dimensions, good and safe working conditions explained 33

percent of the variance in OC and is the most powerful predictor among other HRMPs in the Nepali banking sector ($p < 0.01$). Equal Employment Opportunities and Training and Development Practices also predicted OC ($p < 0.05$). On the contrary, recruitment and selection Practices did not predict OC in our context. Based on the results above, Hypotheses 1(a), 1 (c) and 1(d) are supported while Hypothesis 1(b) is rejected.

To measure the mediating impact of P-O F on the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC, all the 20 items of HRMPs were combined into one single variable. The mediating impact of P-O F on the relationship between HRMPs and OC were examined in four stages as suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The general test of mediation involves examining the relationship between the predictors and the criterion variables, the relation between the predictor and the mediator variables, and the relation between the mediator and the criterion variables. All of these relationships should be significant to have a mediating impact (Guchait & Cho, 2010). The relationship between the predictor and the criterion should be reduced after controlling for the relationship between the mediator and the criterion variables (Baron & Kenny, 1996 as cited in Guchait & Cho, 1996). The result of the mediating analysis as shown in Table 8 shows that once a linear regression was conducted between the predictor (Perceived HRMPs) and the criterion (Organizational Commitment), they explained 27% of the variance in OC and the regression coefficient was significant at 1% significance level ($F = 102.3$, $p = 0.000$) supporting the first step in the mediation analysis.

Table 7: Regression Results of the mediating impact of P-O F in the relationship between Perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3		Step 4	
	OC		POFit		OC		OC	
Variables	b	t	b	t	b	t	b	t
HRMP	0.52**	10.11	0.46**	8.53			0.33**	6.25
POFit					0.57**	11.52	*0.42**	8.02
R square		0.27		0.21		0.33		0.41
F		102.3		72.9		132.8		95.5

Note: **HRMP**: Perceived HRM Practices; **P-O Fit**: Person Organization Fit; **OC**: Organizational Commitment; b is standardized beta coefficient; t is t-value.

In the second stage, a regression was run to examine the relationship between the predictor (perceived HMR Practices) and the mediator (P-O F). HRMPs explained 21% of the variance in P-O F and the regression model was found to be significant ($F = 72.9$, $p = 0.000$). In the third step, a regression was run between OC and P-O F. P-O F explained 33% of the variance in Organizational Commitment. This model was also significant ($F = 132.8$, $p = 0.000$). Finally, in the fourth step, the relationship between the predictor (perceived HRMPs) and the criterion variables (Organizational Commitment), after controlling for the mediating variable (P-O F), was tested by running a regression. The coefficient of perceived HRMPs decreased after controlling for P-O F. The reduced values are given by standardized beta coefficient and t-values in the table. This indicates that P-O F had a significant partial mediating effect on the relationship between perceived HRMPs and Organizational Commitment. This supports Hypothesis 2.

Results from the moderation analysis suggest that in the first stage when perceived human resource management Practices entered the regression, the estimate was significant.

But as age and the interaction effect (HRMP* Age) entered the regression, the result became insignificant (standardized beta coefficient $b=-0.75$ and t -value is smaller than 2). This suggests that age did not moderate the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment. As a result, Hypothesis 3 is rejected.

Table 8: Regression Results for testing moderation of Age on the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and Organizational Commitment

Variables	OC			
	b	t	R ²	F
HRMP	0.52**	10.1	0.27	44.72
Age	0.8	2.5		
HRMP* Age	-0.75	-1.8	0.33	87.5

Dependent variable: Organizational Commitment.

Note: ** $p < 0.05$, HRMP- Human Resource Management Practices.

Summary of Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	IDV	DV	Hypothesized Relationship	Findings
H1a, b, c, d	HRMP	OC	Direct and positive	1a) 1 c) 1d) Supported 1b) Rejected
H2	POFit	OC	Mediation and positive	Supported
H3	HRMP	OC	Moderation	Rejected

Note: IDV- Independent Variable, DV- Dependent Variable, HRMP- Perceived HRM Practices, OC-Organizational Commitment, PO Fit-P-O F.

7. SECTION V

7.1 Summary, Discussion, and Implications

This Section integrates the major findings of this study and sheds light on those findings. Findings are discussed in light of the empirical support from previous literature. Contextual reasons for findings are explored. Lastly, implications of the findings and limitations of this study are discussed.

The major findings suggest that the dependent, independent, and mediating variables are all slightly above the mean scores. Perceived HRMPs and P-O F were measured by 5- point Likert scales while OC was measured by a 7-point Likert scale. The higher mean value of the construct suggests that the existence of HR Practices has implications on employees' commitment levels and thus has managerial and theoretical implications. That is to say, Banks need to consider that HRMPs do matter in enhancing the commitment levels of their employees. Also, the mean value of P-O F is higher than the overall mean, suggesting that employees working in the banking sector find that their values and personalities match with those of the organizations. Since the mean values of HRMPs and P-O F are above average, the existence of HRMPs does lead to better P-O F. In the regression analysis, the impact of perceived HRMPs on P-O F and OC is statistically significant, which establishes HRMPs and P-O F as predictors of OC in our social context. The high mean value of commitment suggests that the average score might have been inflated as it is a self-report measure. For a self-report measure,

the respondents tend to project a higher image of themselves, which is known as social desirability bias (Van de Mortel, 2008). Findings also reveal that the average tenure of the sample respondents was above six years, suggesting that the commitment level of employees increase with their tenure. It has been found that tenure is positively correlated with and has an impact on employee commitment (Smeenk, Eisinga, Teelken, & Doorewaard, 2006). Regarding hypotheses testing, it is found that out of the four sub-dimensions, three of them including HRM Practices (good and safe working conditions, equal employment opportunities, and training and development) have some impacts on employees' commitment level, whereas recruitment and selection Practices has no any significant effect.

It is also found that P-O F mediates the relationship between perceived HRM Practices and OC as hypothesized. This finding is in line with those from previous literature. Additionally, it is found that age does not moderate the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC, which is inconsistent with findings from past research.

7.2 Discussions

Findings from this study show that perceived HRMPs impact on employees' affective commitment. Previous studies have provided evidence showing the impacts of HRMPs on affective commitment (Gould-Williams & Bottomley, 2015; Scheible & Bastos, 2013; Yu & Egri, 2005). Based on the social exchange theory, HRMPs have been taken as a practical approach to elevating the commitment levels of employees (Guchait & Cho, 2010), which is confirmed by study through establishing a significant relationship between HRMPs and employee commitment. Social exchange is based on the norms of reciprocity; organizations can achieve a higher level of employee commitment by focusing on HRMPs in employee exchanges (Giauque, Resenterra, & Siggen, 2010). The finding that recruitment and selection Practices do not impact employee commitment is in line with the findings from Williams-Gould (2004) but is in contrast with earlier findings positing that selection and recruitment Practices have an impact on employee commitment (Chaubey, Bisht, Kothari, 2016; Scheible & Bastos, 2013; Iles, Mabey, & Robertson, 1990). Possible reasons could be that employees are concerned with the Practices within the organization after joining the organizations rather than during the staffing process (recruitment and selection). In other words, what matters the most is the HR Practices instituted in the organizations after the employees have started working in the organizations rather than during the hiring process. Also, the mean value of the recruitment and selection process is higher, which ensures that the recruitment process is fair and transparent. Therefore, in general an organization does not need to focus on the way in which it hires employees, and thus these Practices seem to have an insignificant impact on commitment. This supports the fact that most Nepali banks follow a standard hiring and recruitment process.

This study finds that P-O F partially and significantly mediates the relationship between perceived HRMPs and Organizational Commitment. This finding is in line with those from previous studies where P-O F mediated the relationship between HRMPs and employee outcomes (Boon *et al.*, 2011). Hence, this study confirms the fact that the relationship between HRMPs and OC are not always direct and unconditional but through some mediating mechanism (Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2013). Also, this research reinforces the fact that the Fit between individuals and organizations can be achieved by aligning the HR Practices. Hence, HR managers in the Nepali banking sector can focus their attention in this direction. This study also finds that employee age does not moderate the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC. This study assumes that a higher age increases the impact of HRMPs on OC as hypothesized in past literature.

It can be argued that the intention to remain with the organization increases with the employee's age.

Employee age is taken as a moderating variable because younger employees tend to switch employers more often for better career options and prospects. Age has also been found to impact affective commitment in past studies (Meyer & Allen, 1984). However, it is found in the present study that age does not moderate the relationship between perceived HRMPs and OC, i.e., the impact of HRMPs on OC is significant even for younger employees. This implies that, as long as the HR Practices are supportive, both young and old employees remain to be committed.

7.3 Implications

Findings from the study have some practical implications to HR managers. The results corroborate the fact that not all HRMPs boost value and enhance positive employee outcomes (Warech & Tracey, 2004). Hence, Nepali HR managers in the banking sector may focus on creating good and safe working conditions as this seems to be having the highest impact on Organizational Commitment. Similarly, equal employment opportunities and training and development opportunities also create an impact on commitment. Since recruitment and selection Practices do not impact HRM according to this study's findings, what we can infer is that post hire-HRMPs are more significant in creating an impact on commitment levels than pre-hire HRMPs. These factors to be experienced by employees become more significant after the employees have joined the organizations. Therefore, HR managers in the banking sector should focus on creating better a environment in the organization in terms of providing safe working conditions, equal opportunities for employment, and better training and development opportunities. Overall, this study advocates for the establishing better HRMPs which contribute to creating better P-O F and eventually enhance Organizational Commitment. The underlying philosophy of HRM should be focused on congruence and commitment rather than compliance and control (Shahnawaz & Juyal, 2006). For these reasons, Nepali HR managers in the banking sector should focus on the HR Practices suggested by this study for higher employee commitment that will help to retain employees.

7.4 Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted based on the convenience sampling method. The absence of an accurate sampling frame renders the use of the probability sampling method impossible. To collect the sample data, the researcher contacted employees working at the head offices of commercial banks, which means that the sample is geographically confined to the Kathmandu valley. Similarly, the use of self-report measures by the respondents might lead to social desirability bias and common method bias. Due to the time constraint, the research did not visit HR professionals in the banking sector to establish content validity for the construct and the related items.

The researcher believes that the mixed method of data collection would be suitable for further research of this nature because HRMPs are vast and diverse in dimensions. Hence, it would be useful to supplement the study by a qualitative inquiry into the nature of HRMPs in the Eastern context because such qualitative inquiry in our social and cultural context, followed by quantitative inquiry for establishing the relationships among various attitudinal and behavioral outcomes, will enhance the reliability and contribution of this study.

Finally, this study has conducted a confirmatory factor analysis on the established scales and constructs adopted from past studies. Future research may design another set of constructs and conduct exploratory factor analyses. This study has tested

the mediating and moderating effects separately, but future research can test the mediating and moderating effect in a single model such as a mediated moderation model and a moderated mediation model, which facilitates the examination of the mediation and moderation effects simultaneously (Preacher *et al.*, 2007).

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