

The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Organizational Commitment: Investigating the Mediating Roles of Perceived Organizational Support and Procedural Justice

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One of the key elements in the design and implementation of human resource management (HRM) policies and programs is to develop employees that remain loyal and identify with organizational goals and objectives. In this study, we examined the mediating roles of perceived organizational support (POS) and procedural justice in the relationship between HRM practices and organizational commitment. Data were collected from 421 rank and file employees working in various departments from four manufacturing organizations in Metro Manila. Using structural equation modeling, we found support for the positive relationships between effective HRM practices and procedural justice perceptions, POS, and organizational commitment. Furthermore, POS mediated the relationship between effective HRM practices and organizational commitment. Implications for theory and practice are discussed.

Human resource management (HRM) is an organizational function that deals with the management of people aimed at optimizing the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of employees in developing positive employee attitudes and behaviors. More recently, senior managers have recognized that HRM is a key ingredient to achieve organizational competitiveness (Kochanski & Ruse, 1996) and a significant contributor in addressing the strategic interest of an organization in defining its competitive advantage (Treen, 2000). Managing human resources involves various activities such as staffing, motivating, appraising, compensating, training, and developing employees. In developing HRM policies and programs, it is essential that human resource professionals contribute to the long-term objective of the organization by designing activities that would create a sense of value among its employees (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997) and ensure consistent and equitable treatment of employees (Tsui, 1987).

The contribution of HRM to general employee attitudes, particularly organizational commitment, has been well emphasized in various textbooks specializing in the subject. For example, DeCenzo and Robbins (1999), and Dessler (2000) have stressed that HRM programs should contribute to overall organizational goals but at the same time develop commitment among its employees. As Kinicki, Carson, and Bohlander (1992, p.135) note, "such arguments have been made more on the basis of rationale appeal than on the basis of empirical finding." Given these assertions, it is necessary to empirically test variables that would link HRM practices to organizational commitment. Furthermore, this study also aims to examine the mediating roles of perceived organizational support (POS) and procedural justice in the relationship between HRM practices and organization commitment. Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Tapolnytsky (2002) stress the need to systematically investigate the mediating variables that contribute to organizational commitment. Previous meta-analytic research conducted by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) showed that POS has a strong

and positive relationship with organizational commitment. Similarly, among the various forms of organizational justice (i.e., distributive, procedural, and interactional justice), procedural justice was found to be a stronger predictor of organizational commitment as compared to distributive justice (Sweeny & McFarlin, 1993).

This study extends literature on HRM practices and its role in developing positive employee attitudes in two ways. First, this study contributes to the limited number of empirical studies linking HRM practices to employee attitudes, such as organizational commitment (e.g., Bartlett, 2001; Cementina, Pangan, & Yabut, 2005; Fletcher & Williams, 2001; Kinicki et al., 1992; Meyer & Smith, 2000; Ogilvie, 1987) and procedural justice (Dineen, Noe, & Wang, 2004; Posthuma, 2003). An examination of existing empirical studies on HRM practices found two streams of research. The first stream deals with the evaluation of the multi-functional areas of HRM. For example, Ogilvie found that merit system accuracy and fairness in promotions predicted organizational commitment. Furthermore, the study of Meyer and Smith found that career development and benefits predicted affective and normative commitment, respectively. The second line of research focuses on the relationship between organizational commitment and the individual facets of HRM such as, performance management (Fletcher & Williams, 2001), training (Bartlett, 2001), and employee development (Tansky & Cohen, 2001). In addition, perceptions of procedural justice were related to selection procedures (Dineen et al., 2004) and labor relations (Posthuma, 2003), and POS was associated with career development (Tansky & Cohen, 2001).

Secondly, this paper extends current studies conducted by Chang (2005), and Meyer and Smith (2000). The current study examines perceptions of HRM effectiveness as a bundle from the perspective of rank and file employees. Previous research (e.g., Audea, Teo, & Crawford, 2005; Snell & Dean, 1992) have obtained data on HRM practices from the perspective of HR or

functional managers and treated HRM practices into separate or distinct areas or functions. Similar to the methodology used by Chang, this study clustered four HRM practices (i.e., compensation, training and development, career development, and performance appraisal) as one HR bundle. This can be explained by the information-processing approach proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) in the formation of attitudes and beliefs. They assert that formation of attitudes towards an object is affective and evaluative based on the collective belief about the object. Hence, it is possible that an employee's belief about certain practices may influence specific or general perceptions of other practices (Chang, 2005). Furthermore, the system view of HRM supports the aggregate measurement of HRM practices rather than individual practices (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Organizational Commitment

Organization commitment is the identification and involvement of employees to an organization where they adhere to its goals and values, exert effort on its behalf, and maintain a desire for organizational membership (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Two perspectives have been used to explain organizational commitment: psychological and social exchange approaches. The psychological approach proposes that individuals have a psychological identification with the organization and its values (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mowday et al., 1979). The exchange approach, on the other hand, suggests that individuals, over a period of time, make cognitive evaluations on "side bets"—the cost and benefits of maintaining organization membership (Becker, 1960). As Ogilvie (1987) notes, the two perspectives should be treated as complementary perspectives in evaluating commitment rather than being treated separately. In a meta-analysis conducted by Meyer and associates (2002), they found that work experience variables such as POS, organizational

justice, and transformational leadership are antecedents of affective organizational commitment. That is, organizations that convey a sense of value to its members, demonstrate fairness in the distribution and allocation of rewards, manifest fair treatment among its employees, and strong leadership contributed to a sense of loyalty and desire to maintain organizational membership. Furthermore, they also found that affective organizational commitment was negatively related to employee withdrawal behaviors (i.e., absenteeism and turnover) and positively related to employee in-role and extra-role performance.

Prior studies (e.g., Fletcher & Williams, 2001, Kinicki et al., 1992; Meyer & Smith, 2000) have shown that HRM practices are related to organizational commitment. For example, Bartlett (2001) found that training affects employee perceptions of organizational commitment. That is, favorable employee perceptions of training participation, access to training programs, and training support from senior staff and colleagues led to higher affective organizational commitment. Aguirre-Mateo and the Petron HRM Department (2005) also found that certain HRM practices under work-life balance programs, such as training and career development planning, showed a positive relationship with organizational commitment. In a relational exchange between the organization and employee, each party is expected to provide and contribute to the employment relationship (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). The organization is expected to develop policies and programs that should support the effective functioning of the company and its employees, such as employee development and recognition, while the employee is expect to maintain loyalty to the organization and contribute to the attainment of its objectives. Hence, it is predicted that:

Hypothesis 1: Perceptions of effective HRM practices are positively related to organizational commitment

Perceived organizational support

POS is generally understood as an employee's perception concerning the degree to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Grounded on the organization support theory (OST; Eisenberger et al., 1986), POS is developed when employees attribute human like characteristics to the organization based on the actions performed by its agents (e.g., managers, HR staff). This personification leads employees to assess whether organizational actions are positive or negative (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Following the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960), if employees perceive that the organization values and shows concern for its employees, employees reciprocate by manifesting positive attitudes and behaviors. In a meta-analysis, Rhodes and Eisenberger (2002) found that POS has a positive relationship with organizational commitment, job-related affect, job involvement, and performance.

Previous studies (Meyer & Smith, 2000; Tansky & Cohen, 2001) have shown a significant relationship between HRM practices and POS. For example, Tansky and Cohen found that career development opportunities indicated organizational support for the welfare and well-being of its employees. Using the OST (Eisenberger et al. 1986) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) as explanatory frameworks, if the underlying motives of favorable working conditions and rewards (e.g., pay, promotion, development received by employees) are attributed to the benevolence and concern of the organization rather than forced circumstance (e.g., union negotiations), this can be construed as favorable treatment. For example, if an organization provides the necessary mechanisms (i.e., HRM programs) in assisting employees in achieving organizational goals and rewarded them for their contributions, this leads to positive perceptions of organizational concern and value for its members. Therefore, this study hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 2: Perceptions of effective HRM practices are positively related to POS

This paper also argues that POS will mediate the relationship between perceptions of effective HRM practices and organizational commitment. POS is developed based on the organization's readiness to address the socio-emotional needs of its employees and reward their contribution in attaining organizational goals (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vanderberghe, Sucharski, & Rhodes, 2002). HRM programs, such as training and compensation, provide the mechanism to address organizational and individual employee needs. For example, the goal of training and development is to update employee skill requirements, while merit pay systems reward employees who contribute to the attainment of organizational goals and objectives. These programs develop a sense of value that the organization cares for the well-being of its employees and reward those that contribute on its behalf. As Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997, p. 87) noted "for POS to be enhanced, the employee must view the organization's actions to him or her as discretionary and reflecting positive evaluations."

Furthermore, OST holds that an employee's valuation of organizational support is a function of a social exchange belief concerning the commitment the organization has for its employees (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Using the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), this positive valuation would lead employees to contribute to the organization since meeting organizational goals would be rewarded resulting to an affective emotional bond with the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This perception of value would then lead employees to have a feeling of commitment towards the organization. Previous studies (Shore & Wayne, 1993; Stinglhamber & Vanderberghe, 2003; Wayne et al., 1997) have shown that POS is associated with affective organizational commitment.

Using the OST, social exchange, and norm of reciprocity as theoretical foundations; if the organization provides the necessary

programs and mechanism to assist its employees in meeting their professional and personal needs (i.e., HRM practices), the employee develops a sense of value from the support it receives from the organization (i.e., POS). This, in turn, would lead employees to be more committed to the organization by believing in its goals and having a sense of loyalty towards the organization. Hence, this study posits that:

Hypothesis 3: POS will mediate the relationship between perceptions of effective HRM practices to organizational commitment

Procedural justice

Organizational justice refers to the employees' perception of fairness in the workplace (Moorman, 1991). Cropanzano and Greenberg (1997) explained that organizational justice is socially constructed. This means that an outcome or process can only be considered just or fair if most individuals perceive it to be fair (Colquitt, Colon, Ng, Porter, & Wesson, 2001). Folger and Cropanzano (1998) identified three types of fairness judgments. These are distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. Distributive justice is the perceived fairness of the outcome distributions an employee receives from the organization (Colquitt, 2001; Cropanzano & Ambrose, 2001). Procedural justice, on the other hand, is the fairness of means and procedures by which decisions are made in the organization (Moorman, 1991; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997), while interactional justice refers to an individual's evaluation of the quality of interpersonal treatment experienced when organizational procedures are enacted (Masterson, 2001).

Previous empirical studies (e.g., Dineen et al., 2004; Wooten & Cobb, 1999) have shown the relationship between HRM practices and procedural justice. For example, Erdogan, Kraimer, and Liden (2001) found that perceived validity and knowledge of the performance criteria in appraisal systems predicted procedural

justice. The study revealed that due process appraisal systems where employees are aware of the objectives and criteria for appraisal, given the opportunity to provide inputs during appraisal, and performance assessments are made based on objective information contributed to positive perceptions of procedural justice. In the development of HRM practices and procedures, it is essential that employees should view the system as being fair and just in terms of implementation and outcomes (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Similar to this argument, this study predicts that:

Hypothesis 4: Perceptions of effective HRM practices are positively related to procedural justice

We also contend that procedural justice will mediate the relationship between effective HRM practices and organizational commitment. Procedural and outcome information plays an essential role in an organization. When employees do not know the outcome of others, they may rely heavily on procedural justice to determine if fairness is present in the workplace (Moorman, 1991). Previous empirical findings have found that procedural justice perceptions is positively related to employee attitudes and behaviors such as job satisfaction (Fields, Pang, & Chiu, 2000), organizational commitment (Konovsky & Folger, 1987; Sweeny & McFarlin, 1993), and organizational citizenship behavior (Schappe, 1998).

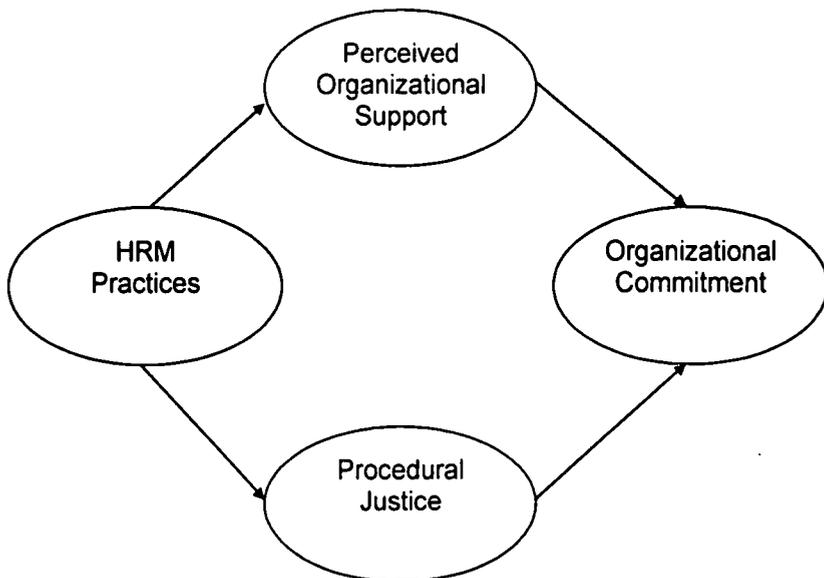
Cropanzano and Rupp (2003) suggest that organizational justice can create social exchanges. Social exchange relationships engender both parties to live up to their reciprocal obligations regardless of the obligations that were agreed upon (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). Non-fulfillment of the obligation by one party is viewed as unfair. Based on this argument, companies formulate HRM practices to address the organizational goals and reward employees for their contribution to the organization. If the procedures or implementation of these programs equally conform to all employees in an organization, these may be viewed as just

or fair (Tsui, 1987) leading employees to reciprocate by forming an emotional bond with the company (Sweeny & McFarlin, 1993). Hence, this study hypothesizes that:

Hypothesis 5: Procedural justice will mediate the relationship between perceptions of effective HRM practices and organizational commitment

In summary, this study intends to investigate the following: Perception of effective HRM practices will positively relate to organizational commitment (Hypothesis 1), POS (Hypothesis 2), and procedural justice (Hypothesis 4). Furthermore, POS (Hypothesis 3) and procedural justice (Hypothesis 5) will mediate the relationship between perceptions of effective HRM practices and organizational commitment. Figure 1 presents a schematic illustration of the variables examined in this study and their relationships.

Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Model



METHOD

Participants and procedure

A research proposal was forwarded to various manufacturing companies in Metro Manila indicating the objectives of the research project and a sample survey questionnaire. Four medium and large manufacturing organizations agreed to participate and gave permission to the third author to conduct the survey. Survey kits indicating the objectives of the study and a survey questionnaire were distributed to the employees of the participating firms during their regular work shift and were collected two to four weeks from the date of distribution. Out of the 600 surveys distributed, 463 (77.17%) were retrieved and 421 (70.17%) were deemed usable for the study. Among the 421 respondents, majority of the participants were males (62.50%). Average age and organizational tenure of the employees were 31.56 and 5.80 years, respectively.

Measures

The survey questionnaire was first prepared in English and was eventually translated into Filipino by a native speaker familiar with business jargons. A language teacher not associated with the study was requested to back-translate the items into English. Differences between the original English and the back-translation were discussed, and mutual agreements were made as to the most appropriate translation (Brislin, 1980). Each item in the final survey instrument was presented in English and Filipino. Unless otherwise specified, all study variables were measured using a 7-point Likert scale.

Human resource management practices. A self-developed survey was constructed to measure employee perceptions of HRM practices in the following areas: training, performance appraisal, compensation and benefits, and career development. Four items

were constructed to measure each of the four areas of HRM. Sample items include, "The pay employees receive from the organization is competitive against similar companies within the same industry" (compensation), "The organization ensures that most employees in the organization are well trained" (training), "The organization promotes employees who continuously perform beyond the level of expected standards" (career development), and "Employees are aware on how their performance will be evaluated" (performance appraisal). The inter-correlations among the different components of HRM practices ranged from .58 to .75, which suggests moderately high to high correlations. Based on this inter-correlations and in line with previous research (Chang, 2005; Delaney & Huselid, 1996), all the HRM components were collapsed to operate as a single measure of the construct. The HRM measure yielded a reliability coefficient of .90.

Perceived organizational support. We used a 6-item version of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support developed by Eisenberger and associates (1986). As Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002, p. 699) reports, "Because the original (36-item) scale is unidimensional and has high internal reliability, the use of shorter versions does not appear problematic." A sample item is, "This organization really cares about my well-being." This scale yielded an internal reliability estimate of .83.

Procedural justice. We measured perceptions of procedural justice using the 6-items developed by Moorman (1991). A sample item is, "In general, the department's procedures allow for request for clarification or additional information about a decision." This scale yielded a reliability coefficient of .86.

Organizational commitment. We used the 9-item Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday et al., (1979). A sample item is, "I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that is normally expected in order to help this organization be successful." This scale yielded a reliability coefficient of .82.

RESULTS

The means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations are depicted in Table 1. The correlations were moderate to high in size. Perception of HRM practices was found to positively relate to procedural justice ($r=.60, p<.001$), POS ($r=.76, p<.001$), and organizational commitment ($r=.64, p<.001$). Furthermore, procedural justice ($r=.64, p<.001$) and POS ($r=.49, p<.001$) were also positively related to organizational commitment. The pattern of correlations also provided some preliminary support for the hypothesized relationships depicted in Figure 1. The internal consistency alphas for all scales were above .70 as prescribed by Nunally (1978).

In line with the guidelines prescribed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), we conducted a two-step procedure in examining the hypothesized relationships. In the first step, we estimated a full measurement model with the manifest indicators to establish the distinctiveness of the study variables. Analysis of Moment Structures Program (AMOS) with maximum likelihood estimation was used to conduct the confirmatory factor analysis. The recommended approach to judging the adequacy of a model is to use several fit indices (Hui & Bentler, 1995; Kline, 1998). A model can be considered to have adequate fit if most or all fit indices are acceptable. In this study, the adequacy of the model was assessed by the following indices: χ^2 , χ^2/df , Tucker-Lewis

Table 1. Means, standard deviations (S.D.), and inter-correlations

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3
1. HRM Practices	5.12	.73			
2. Procedural Justice	4.73	.65	.60***		
3. Perceived Organizational Support	5.29	.73	.76***	.55***	
4. Organizational Commitment	5.25	.59	.64***	.49***	.61***

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Index (TLI: Bentler & Bonett, 1980), Comparative Fit Index (CFI: Bentler, 1990), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI: Tanaka & Huba, 1984), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA; Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

The chi-square test examines the differences between the obtained covariance matrix and the predicted covariance matrix. A significant chi-square indicates that the predicted data are different from the obtained data and that the model should be rejected. A limitation of the chi-square test, however, is that it is highly sensitive to the sample size and rejects almost all null models with large sample sizes. The sensitivity of the chi-square to sample size can be reduced by dividing it by the degrees of freedom (χ^2/df). A χ^2/df ratio of less than 3 is indicative of acceptable fit (Kline, 1998). Values for the TLI, CFI and GFI can range from zero to 1.00, with values close to 1.00 are indicative of good fit. Scores of more than .90 are judged as a good-fitting model (Hui & Bentler, 1995; Kline, 1998). Finally, a RMSEA value of .08 or less is indicative of adequate fit (Kline, 1998).

Preliminary analysis indicated that in this sample, the hypothesized model had a poor fit with the observed data, χ^2 (269, $N=431$)=843.26, $p<.001$, $\chi^2/df=3.14$. Similarly, other indices of model fit also suggested a poor fit of the hypothesized model, $GFI=.86$, $TLI=.88$, $CFI=.89$, and $RMSEA=.07$. However, some of the items had high correlated error terms indicating cross-loadings. In order to establish unidimensionality of measurement (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), two items each from organizational commitment ("I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that is normally expected in order to help this organization be successful" and "I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for") and POS ("My organization is willing to help me if I need a special favor" and "Help is available from my organization when I have a problem") were dropped. The removal of these items led to an improvement of the measurement model as indicated by the various fit indices, χ^2 (165, $N=421$)=464.47, $p<.001$, $\chi^2/df=2.82$, $GFI=.90$, $TLI=.92$,

CFI=.93, and RMSEA=.07. The standardized path estimates for each of the items are displayed in Table 2. As the table shows, all the manifest indicators have moderate to high path estimates from their latent construct.

We also sought to establish that the four-factor structure had a better fit than a one, two, and three-factor model, which would further support that the study constructs are distinct from one another. To achieve this, we compared the fit of the four-factor structure with several alternative models (see Notes in Table 3). As shown in Table 3, the four-factor model yielded the best fitting model in comparison with the other alternative models.

The second step involved testing the hypothesized structural model. Following Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) and Kelloway's (1995) recommendations for mediation models, we compared two competing models, a fully-mediated model and a partially mediated model. The hypothesized fully mediated model had good overall fit with the obtained co-variance matrix ($\chi^2=467.28$, $df=166$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.82$, GFI=.90, TLI=.92, CFI=.93, RMSEA=.07). All the paths were significant in the predicted direction, except from the path from procedural justice to organizational commitment (*path estimate*=.06, *n.s.*). In order to examine the partially mediated structural model, we added a path linking HRM practices and organizational commitment. This direct path from HRM practices to organizational commitment was not significant (*path estimate*=-.11, *n.s.*). Thus, the partially mediated structural model was not supported. After the removal of the non-significant path (path from procedural justice to organizational commitment and path from HRM practices to organizational commitment), the model had adequate overall fit and was accepted as the final model ($\chi^2=469.35$, $df=168$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.79$, GFI=.90, TLI=.92, CFI=.93, RMSEA=.07). Figure 2 presents this model with the standardized path coefficients. All individual paths were statistically significant in the predicted direction.

Table 2. Standardized path coefficients from the confirmatory factor analysis of HRM practices, POS, procedural justice, and organizational commitment

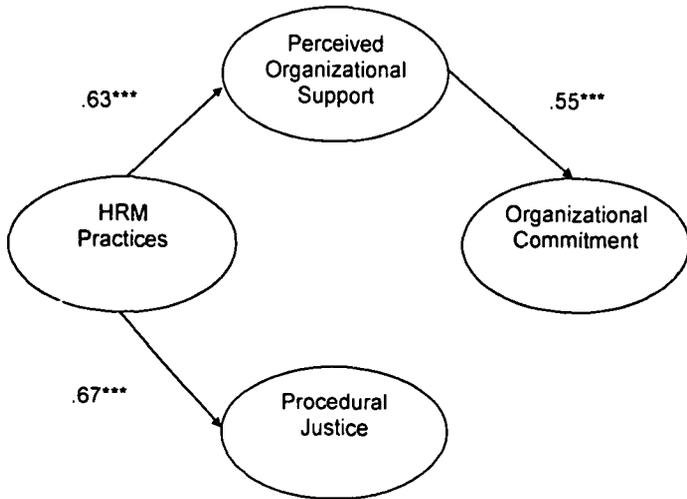
Manifest indicators	Path Estimates
<i>Human Resource Management Practices</i>	
Items pertaining to career development	.91
Items pertaining to performance appraisal	.80
Items pertaining to training and development	.80
Items pertaining to compensation and benefits	.77
<i>Perceived Organizational Support</i>	
My organization really cares about my well being	.76
My organization strongly considers my goals and values	.76
My organization cares about my opinion	.74
My organization would forgive an honest mistake on my part	.48
<i>Procedural Justice</i>	
In general, the department's procedures are constructed so as to hear the concerns of all affected by a decision	.78
In general, the department's procedures generate standards so that decisions can be made with decisions	.74
In general, the department's procedures provide useful information regarding a decision and its implementation	.71
In general, the department's procedures collect accurate information for making decisions	.70
In general, the department's procedures allow for request for clarification or additional information about a decision	.66
In general, the department's procedures provide opportunity to appeal or challenge a decision	.66
<i>Organizational commitment</i>	
For me, this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work for	.72
This organization inspires the very best in me the way of job performance	.68
I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined	.67
I find that my values and the organization's values are similar	.66
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization	.64
I really care about the fate of this organization	.35

Table 3. Confirmatory factor analyses of final measurement model and four alternative models

Measure	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
One-factor model (M_1)	1,062.17	170	6.25	.75	.77	.79	.11
Two-factor model (M_2)	958.34	170	5.64	.77	.79	.81	.10
Three-factor model (M_3)	840.82	168	5.01	.79	.82	.84	.10
Three-factor model (M_4)	783.52	168	4.66	.81	.84	.86	.09
Three-factor model (M_5)	569.82	168	3.39	.88	.89	.91	.08
Four-factor model (M_6)	464.47	165	2.82	.90	.92	.93	.07

Note: $N=421$. M_1 incorporates all four constructs into one factor; M_2 combines POS, procedural justice, and organizational commitment into Factor 1 and HRM practices into Factor 2; M_3 combines organizational commitment and procedural justice into Factor 1, POS into Factor 2, and HRM practices into Factor 3; M_4 combines POS and procedural justice into Factor 1, HRM into Factor 2, and organizational commitment into Factor 3; M_5 combines POS and organizational commitment into Factor 1, HRM practices into Factor 2, and procedural justice into Factor 3; M_6 consists of all four factors individually, Factors 1, 2, 3, and 4. GFI=Goodness-of-fit index; TLI=Tucker-Lewis index; CFI=Comparative fit index; RMSEA=Root mean square error of approximation.

Figure 2. Final Structural Model



Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

DISCUSSION

The contribution of HRM practices in the development of positive employee attitudes have been acknowledged in management text and empirical studies (e.g., Chang, 2005; Dessler, 2000; Meyer & Smith, 2000). The present study supported the argument that perceptions of effective HRM practices were positively related to organizational commitment, POS, and procedural justice. This shows that employees with favorable perceptions on the effectiveness of HRM practices demonstrate higher commitment, POS, and procedural justice. These findings are consistent with previous empirical studies showing the relationships among HRM practices, organizational commitment (Fletcher & Williams, 2001; Meyer & Smith, 2000), POS (Meyer & Smith, 2000; Tansky & Cohen, 2001), and procedural justice (Dineen et al., 2004; Wooten & Cobb, 1999). Using the social exchange perspective, the positive attitudes formed by employees towards the organization is a function of how the organization treats its employees (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Organizations providing HRM programs that consider the development and reward of performing employees will be reciprocated with positive attitudes leading employees to feel a sense of fair treatment, commitment, and value.

In testing the mediating role of POS and procedural justice, results were in line with expectations that POS mediated the relationship between perceptions of effective HRM practices and organizational commitment. This is consistent with previous empirical findings (Meyer & Smith, 2000) that HRM practices address the socio-emotional concerns of employees and reinforces contribution towards the attainment of organizational goals. These organizational policies and actions are viewed as positive evaluations made by the organization towards its employees (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002). For example, Eisenberger and associates (1997) stated that favorable job conditions as reflected in promotion policies, reward systems, benefits, and training opportunities are instruments that organizations can express their support towards employees. When employees perceive that these conditions are present in the organization, they are more likely to stay and remain committed to their organization. Using the OST (Eisenberger et al., 1986) and norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), this shows that POS produces a felt obligation on the part of employees to care for the organization and establish emotional bonds if the organization provides people oriented policies that are aimed in developing and rewarding human resources. However, results also revealed that procedural justice did not mediate the relationship between perceived effectiveness of HRM practices and organizational commitment. One plausible explanation for results not supporting the mediating role of procedural justice is that the effect of procedural justice is strongest in the short-term immediately after a decision has been made (Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003). In a longitudinal study conducted by Ambrose and Cropanzano on the role of procedural and distributive justice on tenure and promotion decisions over three time periods, they found that the

role of procedural justice is stronger before (Time 1) and after (Time 2) decisions are made. This is attributed to the acquisition of information and direct experience an individual undertakes in going through the process. This is further supported by Chang's (2005, p. 538) assertion that "the mediation degree of procedural justice may vary with the time the data is collected."

Even though the study provided support for most of its predictions, there are limitations that need to be recognized. First, this study is cross-sectional in design. Hence, we were unable to determine causal relationships among the study variables. It is suggested that future research adopt a longitudinal research design in order to establish causality among variables. Another limitation is related to the use of self-report data which may have contributed to common method variance (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). To examine whether common method variance was a threat in our study, a Harman's one factor test was performed (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). All the variables were entered into a principal components factor analysis using oblimin rotation. If a single factor emerges from the factor analysis or one "general" factor accounts for most of the variance, then common method variance is deemed present. However, the results of our analysis suggested four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. The first factor accounted for only 34.58% of the variance. Given that one single factor did not substantially explain the majority of the variance and four distinct factors emerged, common method variance may not be a serious concern in this study. Third, the sample was limited to one business industry that may limit the generalizability of the results. Fourth, data for HRM practices were taken from an individual level. Future research should consider examining HRM practices at different levels of analysis. For example, the development of a multi-level model of HRM practices would be a useful endeavor (e.g., measuring HRM practices at a work unit or departmental level). Multi-level analysis allows data that is hierarchical in structure (e.g., employees working within work units or

departments) to be fitted to models with several levels that attempt to explain variation in the examined constructs (Snijders & Bosker, 1999). The application of multi-level modeling would enable future research to examine a more complex model of HRM practices within work units which takes into account the group differences in HRM perceptions.

Despite these limitations, this study contributes to literature in the following ways: First, it examined HRM practices as a bundle in line with the suggestions of Huselid (1995) that strategic HRM should view HRM practices in one bundle instead of individual functions. Second, this study contributed to a small but growing interest in human resource research that examines HRM practices on an individual level. And lastly, the sample of the study was conducted in a non-western and developing economy where cultural norms and values are different (Hofstede, 1997; Restubog & Bordia, in press a, in press b). Despite the strong American management influence, it is important to note that the Philippines has its own distinct system of organizational governance based on a strong familial orientation (Quisumbing, 1964; Restubog & Bordia, in press a, in press b).

Future research should continue to empirically examine HRM practices as a bundle. As argued in this paper, other components of HRM should be included (e.g., employee and labor relations) due to the fact that employees use information processing (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) in forming collective beliefs and attitudes from various organizational practices. Furthermore, other employee outcomes, such as in-role and extra-role performance, should also be examined to determine how individual level perceptions of HRM contribute to employee behaviors since the main objective of HRM policies and programs is to bolster positive employee behaviors. Finally, an examination of other contextual variables (e.g., interactional justice, leader-member exchange) could be used to examine its mediational role in the HRM practices and organizational commitment relationship.

The findings of this study also have practical implications. Our results suggest that organizations need to form favorable perceptions on HRM practices to elicit positive employee attitudes. HRM practices, such as training and performance appraisal, can convey a positive evaluation that the organization is concerned with the short and long term development of its employees. For example, offering employees an opportunity to participate in training and development programs imparts an organization's investment in improving organizational productivity, but at the same time, building employee competencies. Since meta-analytic studies on organizational justice (Colquitt et al., 2001), POS (Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002), and organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 2002) have shown an increase in employee in-role and extra-role behaviors, HRM professionals could use these empirical findings to proposed HRM programs that improve employee attitudes could lead to positive behaviors. Furthermore, the study supported the systems view of HRM. This perspective holds that HRM programs should complement each other to develop a competitive advantage for the organization (Bowen & Ostroff; 2004; Huselid, 1995). For example, performance appraisal should not only serve as inputs to determine employee rewards for above average performance, but should also be used in the long term development of employee competencies and career development. HRM practices should be developed to address specific individual needs to convey a sense of organizational benevolence in order for employees to manifest positive employee attitudes and behaviors.

AUTHORS' NOTES

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