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**THE IMPACT OF STRATEGIC HRM IN  
SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONAL  
PERFORMANCE IN THE ROYAL OMAN POLICE**

**Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
At the University of Northampton**

**Year 2011**

**KHALID SALIM AL-HAMADANI**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

| <b>ABBREVIATIONS</b> | <b>DEFINITIONS</b>                  |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>HRM</b>           | Human resource management           |
| <b>HRD</b>           | Human resource development          |
| <b>ROP</b>           | Royal Oman Police                   |
| <b>HPWS</b>          | High performance work system        |
| <b>RBV</b>           | Resource-based view of strategy     |
| <b>SHRM</b>          | Strategic human resource management |
| <b>HCM</b>           | High commitment management          |
| <b>HIM</b>           | High involvement management         |
| <b>HPWP</b>          | High performance work practice      |
| <b>TQM</b>           | Total quality management            |
| <b>GDP</b>           | Gross Domestic Product              |
| <b>DGHR</b>          | Directorate of human resources      |

## ABSTRACT

Over the past couple of decades or so, a number of developments in the field of HRM have been reported in the literature such as the strategic human resources management (SHRM) and the extent to which HRM helps to improve organisational performance. The vast majority of the literature on the HRM-performance link has focused on the private sector organisations.

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between HRM policies and practices and performance in the Royal Oman Police. This was done by using Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as an analytical model. This framework was utilised as a theoretical foundation to evaluate the HRM model currently used in the Royal Oman Police (ROP) and its contributions to strategic policing needs.

This study was based on qualitative approach. The data were obtained from two main resources that are the semi-structured and analysis of secondary data that are related to employees' surveys, auditing reports and publics' surveys. The employees' surveys, auditing reports and publics survey data that were produced from 2000 to 2009 were used for this study. This gave the study an advantage to explore the HRM-performance link longitudinally. Studying the perceptions of managerial and non-managerial employees allowed for multiple employee ratings regarding HRM-performance link within ROP. This gave the study a considerable strength comparatively with other studies that used a single manager's point of view.

This study has contributed significantly to the body of knowledge of SHRM and policing by investigating the effect of SHRM on the performance of one of the major security organisations in Oman. This context was unique because no research in Oman has combined these two fields (policing and SHRM). In particular, the findings will help policy makers in

ROP and Oman to evaluate and develop the HRM models. Overall, the study findings have shown a considerable support that the police organisation in Oman stimulated a stronger emphasis on HRM and used its policies and practices strategically to influence the policing performance.



## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is expressly dedicated to the memory of my father, my mother and my son, Mohammed. From a very early age, my parents encouraged me to strive to learn and to achieve my goals. I dedicate this dissertation to Dr. Hassan who while travelling along the same path, was always available for support and encouragement.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The impact of activities associated with the management of people in firms (HRM) on organisational performance has become one of the major topics (or even the dominant topic) in HR research (Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Boxall and Purcell, 2008; Guest, 1997b; Paauwe, 2004; Paauwe, 2009; Wright and Gardner, 2003). Starting with the groundbreaking study of Huselid (1995), which claimed that HRM has a substantial impact on financial performance, a large body of empirical research has shown that HRM has positively impacted organisational performance in the last 20 years.

Most of the theoretical perspectives have provided macro-frameworks, clarifying the determinants of HRM and their consequences at firm level, such as resource dependence theory, institutional theory, and resource-based view (Wright and Gardner, 2003). Guest (1997b: 29) stated that moving on to a possible broader framework linking HRM and outcomes, the starting point should be the recognition that the distinctive feature of HRM is its assumption that improved performance is achieved through the people in the organisation . Hence, a better understanding of the role of employees in linking HRM to firm performance is needed from both a theoretical and a practitioner point of view.

In this study, an attempt is made to understand the impact of HRM policies and practices on performance of the police organisation in Oman that is called Royal Oman Police (ROP). The main aim of this study is to explore the relationship between HRM practices and policies and organisational performance in the Royal Oman Police (ROP). This is achieved by examining perceptions of officers from different management levels in ROP (strategic, middle

management, and operational) on the nature of the HRM-performance link. Specifically this study explained the phenomena of the HRM-performance link through the development of specific areas to be investigated which are HRM practices, police organisational performance, and the processes by which HRM could affect performance. These are related to the four objectives of the study.

In this introductory chapter, the rationale and scope of the study are outlined. This is followed by a discussion on the main theoretical debates on the key literature areas relevant to HRM in this study. Next, the significance of the study is presented and finally, the structure of the thesis is outlined.

## **1.2 THE STUDY CONTEXT**

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between HRM policies and practices and performance in the Royal Oman Police. This was done by using the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as an analytical model. This study attempted to provide an example of how police organisations can gain insights in the causal processes that are taking place within the police force between the HRM model on one hand and the organisational performance on the other.

The existing police force is called the Royal Oman Police (ROP), which operates on the whole area of the Sultanate of Oman. The ROP has staff strength of about 23,000. All are full-time employees. The ROP has 42 units and departments that are divided into line and staff functionalities (Royal Oman Police History, 2005). The Omani policing model has been influenced by its UK counterpart-policing model. The Royal Oman Police's policing model have combined aspects from the Anglo-Saxon model that is applied in the UK policing, the Continental model and Community Policing model (Al-Harthy, 2006) (refer to section 4.2.1 for more details). However, ROP has a unique feature that makes it different from other counterpart police forces around the world in that it does not carry out the policing role only.

Additional functions and services have been allocated under ROP's model such as civil defence, customs, air-wing, immigration, civil registration and coast guard (ROP Annual Report, 2008).

The study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge in both HRM and policing by demonstrating the impact of HRM in improving performance in a police organisation. Similarly, this study confirms the capability of police organisations to implement SHRM to improve their services.

### **1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

The main rationale for undertaking this study is based on the premise that HRM improves organisational performance and competitive advantage (e.g. Boselie *et al.* 2005; Combs *et al.* 2006). Over the past couple of decades or so, a number of developments in the field of HRM have been reported in the literature such as the strategic human resources management (SHRM) and the extent to which HRM helps to improve organisational performance (Appelbaum *et al.* 2000; Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Nishii and Wright, 2008).

The vast majority of the literature on the HRM-performance link has focused on the private sector organisations. Therefore, it is important to understand how HRM policies and practices contribute to organisational performance in the public sector organisations. Several scholars have suggested that under such conditions, the organisational goals of the public sector are often best achieved by attracting, intrinsically motivated employees and by hiring employees who believe in the goals of the organisation (Leete, 2000; Reiss and Duan, 1999; Rose-Ackerman, 1996).

Many researchers have recognised that public sector organisations are structured along different motivating and operational dimensions than those for the private sector organisations. Leete (2000: 444) reported that the differences between public sector and

private sector organisations extends, to varying degrees, to their reasons for existence, their organisational goals and methods, the products they produce, and the service they provide.

This study chose the police organisation (ROP) in Oman, which is a public sector organisation to investigate the HRM-performance link. The Royal Oman Police has 23,000 officers in full time employment. This study will use the resource-based view (RBV) to understand the linkage between the organisational strategy and the force internal resources in ROP. Organisational performance depends upon the actions of officers inside the force, therefore it is critical to examine how HRM has developed and reinforced this performance.

Contemporary policing, which is substantially different from traditional policing, focuses on delivering quality services to the public through creating business strategies that aim to continue improvement, consolation, collaboration and total involvement (Coleman, 2004). The discussion presented in this study is grounded in the resource-based view (RBV) which argues that the central objective of HRM is to enhance the organisation's performance by creating high levels of human capital.

Specifically, this study has adopted the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as a conceptual and analytical framework. The main research question is "How HRM policies and practices impact policing performance in the Royal Oman Police?" In order to answer the main research question, a number of sub-objectives were delineated based upon the four pillars of Purcell's People Performance Model, namely:

1. To investigate the HRM policies adopted by the Royal Oman police in Oman.
2. To examine the impact of HR policies and practices in developing the areas of ability, motivation and opportunity which are considered as important components of the performance.

3. To determine the role of the leadership style fostered by managers and its effectiveness in creating a cultural vision for the organisation and in the effective application of HRM policies and practices.
4. To examine how organisational outcomes are measured.

## **1.4 THE MAIN THEORETICAL DEBATES**

In this section, the researcher will outline the main theoretical debates on which the research is based.

### **1.4.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF HRM**

The following arguments are discussed in more details in chapter two of the literature review, but are highlighted here in order to orientate the research. Human resource management is a new way of thinking about how people should be managed as employees in the workplace (Pinnington and Edwards, 2004). Human resource management has evolved from what used to be known as personnel management (Beaumont, 1992: 20). A distinguishing feature of personnel management was its functional, non-strategic nature. Influencing employee behaviour, especially by increasing productivity, was regarded as a technical capability to be improved through research (Delery and Shaw, 2001: 167). This focus on individual employee behaviour reflected the influence of the human relations school on management theory after the Second World War (Bamber, 1999).

Earlier literature theorising about the effects of firm performance on the way in which people were treated at work tended to be ignored, such as accounts of improved employee satisfaction in companies that practised 'welfare capitalism' as a union avoidance measure (Kaufman, 2001a). Kaufman (2001b: 356) believed that the surging interest in strategic management since the 1980s had a 'dramatic' impact on the development of HRM because it emphasised the importance of treating employees not as a homogeneous input to the

production process but as a resource whose quality and quantity of output was capable of deliberate manipulation.

#### **1.4.2 CONCEPTUALISING STRATEGIC HRM**

Over the recent years, most HRM scholars have, explicitly or otherwise, advocated a particular ‘strategic’ concept of HRM. The strategic element consists firstly of co-ordinating each separate HRM activity (recruitment, selection, rewards management, training, etc.) so that they complement each other, thus maximising the favourable employee behavioural outcomes such as commitment and job satisfaction (Becker and Huselid, 1998: 55). This is referred to as ‘internal’ or ‘horizontal’ ‘fit’. The second strategic requirement is to give HRM its proper place in overall enterprise management, so that other management decisions take account of HR implications (and desirably, are themselves partly shaped by HRM considerations). Over time, these propositions have gained a wide acceptance as ‘SHRM’.

A rational approach to strategy underpins SHRM, with its assumptions that strategy is something developed and implemented by a small group of senior managers. In the SHRM model, the HR manager is part of the senior management group. Employees should be managed in ways that match outcomes to the objectives driving corporate and business strategy (Becker and Huselid, 1998: 55). Consequently, HR practices are subordinate to broader enterprise strategic goals: “before specific HR plans can be developed ... corporate and business level plans must be developed” (Schuler *et al.* 2001: 118). As Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall noted (1988: 454), “traditional models of SHRM focus on matching people to strategy, but not on matching strategy to people.” According to Schuler *et al.* (2001: 121): the four main tasks of HR are: (1) managing employee assignments and opportunities; (2) managing employee competencies; (3) managing employee behaviours; and (4) managing employee motivation.



On this view, HRM depends on the direction of corporate strategy and is a ‘downstream’ activity (Legge, 1995: 97) which Boswell (2006: 1489) labels as ‘strategic alignment’. Garavan *et al.* (1998: 169) identified this subordinate role as one of three ‘core elements of HRM’ that ‘transcend national boundaries’. While Leopold *et al.* (1999: 25) referred to it as being ‘at the heart of mainstream’ of SHRM literature. Lundy and Cowling (1996: 49) called this concept ‘strategic integration’ and noted that despite the frequency with which the notion is espoused in the literature, “theoretical and applied perspectives on how to achieve it are in their infancy.” Other scholars have reservations, for example, Bamberger and Fiegenbaum (1996: 931, citing Bamberger and Phillips, 1991; Dyer and Holder, 1998; Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall, 1988) noted a potential ‘reciprocal influence’ between corporate strategy and HRM strategy.

Bechet and Walker (1993: 6) have also asserted the inter-dependence of business and HRM strategies, suggesting that the situation may be much more complex than a simple rank ordering of managerial activities. Beer and Eisenstat (2000: 29) asserted that organisations have long known that, to be competitive, they must develop a good strategy and then appropriately realign structure, systems, leadership behaviour, human resource policies, culture, values and management processes. According to this school of thought, enterprises need to develop and implement a set of procedures that best accommodate broader strategic goals (Becker and Huselid, 1998: 58).

Furthermore, Boselie *et al.* (2005), by analysing the literature over the last years on the HRM-performance relationship, reported wide disparities in the treatment of the components emphasising the ‘black box’ stage between HRM and performance. They indicated that the theoretical frameworks which dominated the field were the ‘contingent framework’ (i.e. HRM influences performance in relation to contingent factors such as business strategies) (Schuler and Jackson, 1987a; Schuler and Jackson, 1987b), the resource-based view (i.e. HRM

influences performance according to the human and social capital held by the organisation) (Barney, 1991) and the AMO theory (i.e. HRM influences performance in relation to employees' Ability, Motivation and Opportunity to participate) (Appelbaum *et al.* 2000).

The possibility that competitive advantage depends on doing things differently, rather than matching some prescriptive best practice, has given rise to a substantial body of literature in the field of general management strategy, generally called the 'resource-based view' (RBV). The RBV is not so much an alternative theory to other strategic management theories as a different perspective. Much of the RBV would not be a novel concept for practising managers; in particular, many of them would understand the value of possessing valuable resources that are also rare (Priem and Butler, 2001: 63). The RBV's point of departure from earlier approaches to strategy studies arises from its focus on the firm's internal resources as the source of its strategic thrust. Other perspectives regarded the firm's resources as things that could be acquired or modified at will to accommodate the external requirements of the environment in which the firm operated (Rouse and Daellenbach, 2002). To put it in another way, the RBV shifted the emphasis in strategic decision making from market positioning considerations to internal resources (Prahalad and Hamel, 1997). The RBV is "one of the most widely accepted theoretical perspectives in the strategic management field" (Newbert 2007: 121, citing Powell, 2001; Priem and Butler, 2001) and has played an increasingly important role in scholarly consideration of SHRM. The RBV is a perspective that regards employees very much as 'human assets' to be managed in a rational, top-down fashion.

### **1.4.3 HRM AND PERFORMANCE**

The body of research examining the relationship between HR practices and firm performance has grown exponentially over the past few years (Boselie *et al.* 2001; Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Carmeli and Schaubroeck, 2005; Delery and Doty, 1996; Guest, 1997; Huselid, 1995). The main findings of these studies were that effective human resource management practices

assist in developing human resources into a high quality and efficient workforce, thus the HRM practice lead organisations to obtain competitive advantage through their people.

While much of the research on the relationship between HR practices and performance has somewhat consistently revealed a significant relationship, some recent debates have emerged regarding the value of different approaches to studying this phenomenon. Debates have arisen regarding the proper sources for gaining the most valid reports of HR practice measures, the proper level of analysis and proximity of performance measures, and the timing of measurement.

There are different theoretical models that have focused on the HRM-firm performance (Robinson, 2006). These models are universalistic, contingency, configurational, high performance work practices, and resource-based views. This study was built on the resource-based view approach, which is considered by different scholars as the main theoretical model that can logically explain the SHRM and performance link (Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Youndt *et al.* 1996). The study will use the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as a conceptual and analytical framework to explore the HRM-performance link in the ROP in Oman. The resource-based view has prompted recent work on how HRM practices contribute to firm performance by leveraging human capital, discretionary effort, and desired attitudes and behaviours (e.g. Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Lado and Wilson, 1994; Wright *et al.* 2003).

The People Performance Model is derived from 12 in-depth case studies (Purcell *et al.* 2003) was built on two assumptions central to studying of HRM-performance link (Guthrie *et al.* 2004). The framework advances the concept of discretionary behaviour (Applebaum *et al.* 2000; Berg *et al.* 1996) by suggesting that virtually all employees have the capacity to engage in discretionary behaviour and it is the ability of the firm to trigger such useful behaviour, beyond meeting basic job requirements that leads to higher performance (Purcell *et al.* 2003). The framework places the discretionary behaviour exercised by the line managers at the

centre of analysis, as it is the front line managers who condition the extent of the gap between espoused and enacted policies (McGovern *et al.* 1997; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). The framework is based on four pillars namely:

Pillar 1: The HRM policies

Pillar 2: The impact of such policies on employees' ability, motivation and opportunity to perform

Pillar 3: To determine the role of the leadership style fostered by managers and its effectiveness in creating a cultural vision for the organisation and in the effective application of HRM policies and practices

Pillar 4: Measuring HRM and organisational outcomes

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study will use the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as a conceptual and analytical framework to explore the HRM-performance link in the ROP in Oman. This framework will be utilised as a theoretical foundation to evaluate the HRM model currently used in the Royal Oman Police and its contributions to strategic policing needs. This study will contribute significantly to the body of knowledge of SHRM and policing. It will investigate the effect of SHRM on the performance of one of the major security organisations in Oman. This context is unique because no research in Oman has combined these two fields (policing and SHRM). In particular, the findings will help policy makers in ROP and in Oman to evaluate and develop the HRM models. From a methodological perspective, this study has developed and tested an operational model that could be used for further HRM studies.

## **1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

The thesis consists of seven chapters. In chapter one, a brief outline of the justification for the present study and the main research aim are presented. Chapter 2 reviews the literature regarding the development in the field of HRM, starting with general discussion about human

resource management (HRM) and its definition. The linkage between organisational strategy and HRM will be introduced in this second stream. This part will discuss the definition of strategic human resource management (SHRM). It will also highlight the nature of the relationship between SHRM and organisational performance and different models that are related to this relationship will be discussed. The third part of this chapter will review the resource-based view (RBV). Finally, the study framework will be explained.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the development of HRM in Oman. Factors related to the development of HRM in Oman will be discussed including the national context of Oman, its political system, economic development, “Vision 2020” and Omanisation.

Chapter 4 discusses aspects related to the development of HRM in police organisations. It gives insights about the factors that help to shape this development such as policing models, policing leadership, policing culture and strategic management in police organisations. It also, investigates HRM in the public sector. Then, a contextual description of the police organisation in Oman will be given. Finally, this chapter describes how HRM in the Royal Oman Police has developed.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the methodological issues used in this study. The differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches will be presented. Then the rationale for the research will be discussed. Other methodological issues that will be dealt with in this chapter are: research design, semi-structured interviews, secondary data, reflection on the development of research tools, data analysis process and research ethics.

Chapter six discusses the findings from the case study that are related to the four research objectives that were based on the four pillars of the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

Chapter 7 gives a detailed discussion of the findings from chapter six with relation to the research objectives. Chapter 8 reports the conclusions drawn from this qualitative study. The contributions and limitations of this study will be acknowledged. Then the future directions for research and research recommendations will be given. Finally, the study conclusion will be provided.

## **1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter provides an overview of the rationale and scope of the study. This is followed by a discussion on the main theoretical debates on the key literature areas relevant to HRM in this study. Finally, the significance of the study and the structure of the thesis are presented.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will provide the background and theoretical framework upon which this study is based; three streams of the literature will be reviewed. First part will give a general discussion about human resource management (HRM) and its definition. The second stream will introduce the linkage between organisational strategy and HRM. This part will also discuss the definition of strategic human resource management (SHRM). It will also highlight the nature of the relationship between SHRM and organisational performance and different models that are related to this relationship. The third part of this chapter will review the resource-based view (RBV).

The literature review has been selected to develop a coherent theoretical argument that is related to the research question, which is “How does HRM policies and practices impact policing performance in the Royal Oman Police?” and the research objectives that are:

1. To investigate the HRM policies adopted by the Royal Oman police in Oman.
2. To examine the impact of HR policies and practices in developing the areas of ability, motivation, and opportunity which are considered important components of the performance.
3. To determine the role of the leadership style fostered by managers and its effectiveness in creating a cultural vision for the organisation and in the effective application of HRM policies and practices.
4. To examine how organisational outcomes are measured.

## **2.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF HRM**

It is important to note that within the broad field of business and management the various management movements or theories that have emerged throughout the years have focused mainly on the improvement of productivity, the reduction of cost, and the enhancement of employees' welfare within industrial organisations (Higgins, 1991). The roots of HRM go as far back as the 1960s when researchers like Drucker (1968) and McGregor (1960) stressed the need of visionary goal directed leadership and management of integration (Armstrong, 1987). Human resource management was derived from focus on employees' welfare and personnel and evolved into one of managing employees to obtain the highest productivity possible. This was achieved by using methods that would provide them with both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Torrington, 1994).

Human resource management evolved from what used to be known as personnel management (Beaumont, 1992). The distinguishing feature of personnel management was its functional non-strategic nature. Functions such as recruitment and training were administered independently. Influencing employee's behaviour, especially by increasing productivity, was regarded as a technical capability to be improved through research (Delery and Shaw, 2001). This focus on individual employee's behaviour reflected the influence of the human relations school on the management theory after the Second World War (Bamber, 1999).

Thus, while the various staff related activities emanated from personnel management, HRM was being practiced in terms of 'managerial behaviour' which incorporated two main streams of psychology: 'behaviourism' and 'humanism'. Behaviourism utilises strategies that are likely to provoke behaviours that are considered advantageous in a work place performance and the achievement of organisational goals (Schuler, 1989). Behaviourist techniques applied by leaders and line managers, have the potential to influence and modify human behaviour in



terms of higher motivation, increased satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, and increased productivity (Wright *et al.* 1994).

In the late 1990s, HRM practices moved away from the concepts of human relations towards the concept of humans as a 'resource' that are 'capable of providing sustained competitive advantage' (DeCieri *et al.* 2005; Storey, 2001). The rationale for HRM practices in organisations can be summarised as the means by which they are staffed effectively with the appropriate people whom possess motivation and skills for the tasks necessary to achieve the goals of the organisation.

The main principle of HRM indicates that people management can be a key resource to sustain competitive advantage. This belief is based on four core perspectives: firstly, people can 'make the difference'. The human capability and commitment distinguishes successful organisations from others, therefore people need to be treated as assets and not costs. Secondly, managing human resource is in fact an important 'strategic' matter. Thirdly, line management should engage in managing human resources. Fourthly, the key levers must be internally integrated with each other and externally integrated with the business strategy (Mabey *et al.* 1998).

The term 'human resource management' has been subjected to considerable debate, and its underlying philosophy and character is highly controversial. Much of this controversy stems from the absence of a precise formulation and agreement on its significance (Storey, 2001). The interpretation of the term changes varies because of the elasticity in the meaning of the term 'human resource management'. Clearly, it can be used in a restricted sense as an approach to labour management, which treats labour as a valued asset rather than a variable cost (Aragón-Sánchez *et al.* 2003; Boxall, 1996; Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Budhwar and Fadzil, 2000; Storey and Sisson, 1993).

Guest *et al.* (2003: 80) pointed out that HRM is a term that is now widely used but very loosely defined. It seems that scholars in various specialties tackle the definition of HRM from their particular field of interest. Brewster (1999: 214) argued that HRM should involve all the management decisions and actions that affect the nature of the relationship between the organisation and its employees.

Human resource management has been previously described as an evolving set of competing theories and a group of inter-related policies with an ideological and philosophical underpinning (Guest, 1991). Different scholars have developed diverse, yet complementary definitions of HRM.

Bratton and Gold (2007: 7) defined HRM as “a strategic approach to managing employment relations which emphasises that leveraging people’s capabilities is critical to achieving competitive advantage, this being achieved through a distinctive set of integrated employment policies, programmes and practices.” These scholars have argued that “HRM underlines a belief that people really make the difference because they have the capacity to generate value.” It follows from this premise that the human knowledge and skills are a strategic resource that needs to be adroitly managed. To grasp the nature and significance of HRM, it was necessary to understand the management process and the role of HRM within it.

Armstrong and Baron (2002b: 60) gave a different view claiming that HRM is about adopting a longer term perspective to the management of people in order to obtain added value from them and thus achieve competitive advantage. The above developments in the field of HRM highlight the contribution it can make towards business success and an emphasis on HRM to become an integral part of the business strategy (Schuler and Jackson, 2005). The next section discusses the link between organisational strategy and HRM.

## **2.3 UNDERSTANDING THE LINK BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY**

### **& HRM**

The emergence of the term ‘strategic human resource management’ (SHRM) is an outcome of the ‘integration’ of HRM into the business strategy and ‘adaptation’ of HRM at all levels of the organisation (Bamberger and Meshoulam, 2000). Kaufman (2001b: 356) believed that the surging interest in strategic management since the 1980s had a dramatic impact on the development of HRM because it emphasised the importance of treating employees not as a homogenous input to the production process but as a resource whose quality and quantity of output was capable of deliberate manipulation.

Over the last 20 years, two propositions have gained wide acceptance in the HRM literature. The first is that HRM should be managed strategically whereby HRM practices should complement an organisation’s overall strategy. The second is that a set of HRM practices can be described which collectively constitute SHRM (Grieves, 2003).

The desire to gain competitive advantage by integrating HRM with business strategy, and thus managing people more effectively, is the main rationale for strategic HRM thinking. Johnson *et al.* (2005: 10) emphasised the internal (resources) as well as external (environmental) factors affecting organisations as part of the process of strategic adaptation. The process of matching resources so that an organisation may be able to operate effectively in its ‘market place’ clearly suggests identifying and developing its resource capability to organisational competence. This approach to strategy, focusing on the internal resource capability of an organisation as well as the challenge that it faces in its external operating environment, has the potential to link the role of HR strategies to the organisation’s performance (Purcell, 1995).

Although an organisation’s human resources are considered as one aspect of its resource base, the strategic approach suggests that recognising and developing these resources will not only

help an organisation to match them to improve performance but also to create ‘distinctive capabilities’ to seek further competitive advantage (Ahmad and Schroeder, 2003). Strategic management involves making key HR decisions about the appointment, development and promotion of key individuals. This indicates that development of organisational strategy has clear implications about the need for appropriately designed HR strategy to explain HR systems and policies and the outcomes of chosen long-term directions. It can be either a conscious planned activity or a series of events, which lead to a desirable objective.

Thus, SHRM is concerned with ensuring a strategic ‘alignment’ or ‘fit’ between business and HRM strategies. It necessarily involves an evaluation of the likely impacts of both the external and internal organisational environment, the long term goals of the organisation, and the ways in which HRM strategy will enable the adaptation of human resources towards these goals.

Nankervis *et al.* (2000: 37) identified three types of linkages between HR and organisational strategies. There is the accommodative type where HR strategies simply follow organisational strategies by accommodating the staffing needs of already chosen business strategies. In this sense, ‘strategic’ indicates that HRM is to follow the organisation’s business strategy. Then, there is the interactive type, which is characterised as a two-way communication process between HRM and corporate planning, whereby HRM contributes to and then reacts to overall strategies. In this type, strategic HRM asserts that HRM is an active contributor to strategy development and execution. Lastly, is a type known as fully integrated where the HR specialist is intimately involved in the overall strategic process in both formal and informal interactions (a real reflection of strategic human resource management in practice) (Nankervis *et al.* 2000: 40). The degree of involvement will extend to HRM being fully represented at the senior management level and HR personnel actively participating in strategic decisions.

Bratton and Gold (2007: 48) made a useful distinction between senior managements' 'espoused' HR strategy and their 'emergent' strategy. The espoused HR strategy refers to the patterns of HR related decisions made but not necessarily implemented. Whereas, the emergent HR strategy refers to the pattern of HR related decisions that have been applied in the workplace.

Purcell had also portrayed HR strategy as 'emerging patterns of actions' that are likely to be much more 'intuitive' and only 'visible' after the event (Purcell, 2001). A range of business-HRM links have been classified in terms of a proactive-reactive continuum (Kydd and Oppenheim, 1990: 145) and in terms of environmental-HR-strategy-business-strategy linkages (Bamberger and Phillips, 1991). In the 'proactive' orientation, the HR professional has a seat at the strategic table and is actively engaged in strategy formulation. The 'reactive orientation' sees the HR function as being fully subservient to corporate and business level strategy, and organisational level strategy.

In this sense, the HR strategy is concerned with the challenge of matching the philosophy, policies, programmes, practices and processes in order to stimulate and reinforce the different employees' roles and behaviours appropriately for each competitive strategy (Boxall and Steeneveld, 1999).

The aim of SHRM is to manage people in an organisation in terms of the long-term planning of human resource management by aligning it with an organisation's overall strategic plan. With this understanding, SHRM can be considered in the police organisation as an overall process to deal with long-term human resources issues as part of the strategic management of the organisation. This includes comprehensive concerns about structures, values, culture, quality, commitment, performance and the development of the human resources through whom the goals of an organisation are accomplished (United State Office of Personnel

Management, 1998). Consequently, SHRM in police organisations can have the following two main perspectives:

1. Human resource management as an integral part of an organisational strategy, which is chiefly about ensuring that the organisation has the skilled, committed and well-motivated work force it needs to achieve its business objectives (Armstrong and Baron, 2002b).
2. Human resource management as a strategy in itself, which means developing staff in order to face the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Strategic human resource management is conceptualised in terms of carefully designed combinations of such practices geared towards improving organisational effectiveness and hence better performance outcomes (Boxall and Purcell, 2003).

The next section explains in detail different aspects related to strategic human resource management.

## **2.4 STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

Strategic human resource management is strategic because it is concerned with longer-term people issues as part of the strategic management processes of the business. Strategic human resource management is strategic also because it focuses on the alignment of HR practices with the firm's strategy as a means of gaining competitive advantage (McMahan *et al.* 1999). It is considered as an overall process to deal with long term human resources issues as part of the strategic management of the organisation.

The micro-approach examines the nature of HR policies and practices in different constellation with the strategy (Khatri, 2000). Two conceptions are particularly popular in the literature: Miles and Snow's (1984) and Schuler and Jackson's (1987a) typologies. Their

common theme is that for a certain business strategy there are only limited HRM choices (Mabey and Salaman, 1997).

Wright and McMahan (1992: 298) defined SHRM as: “The patterns of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable (an organisation) to achieve its goals.” Armstrong and Baron (2002a: 41) have regarded the concept of strategic human resources as “a general approach to the strategic management of human resources in accordance with the intentions of the organisation on the future direction it wants to take.”

Since the late 1990s, there has been a growing body of literature focused on creating sustained competitive advantage for organisations through the development of core competences, tacit knowledge and dynamic capabilities. One of the dominant theories in the debate on the added value of HRM is the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm (Boselie *et al.* 2005). The resource-based view is considered as one of the important developments in recent SHRM (Boselie *et al.* 2009). The resource-based view will be discussed in depth in section 2.5.5 of this chapter.

Becker and Gerhart (1996) believed that a properly designed HR system could be an invisible asset that creates value by being embedded in the organisational system, and is difficult to imitate because of causal ambiguity and path dependency. Causal ambiguity is reflected in policies that are easily understood in concept, but in practice require numerous and subtle inter-relationships that are not readily observed by those outside the organisation. An example of this is the challenge of aligning HR management practices with the firm’s strategy and their larger embedding in management practice (Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall, 1988).

Path dependency describes organisational practices that are developed over time and cannot be simply purchased in the market by competitors. A competitor can understand that a

practice is valuable and would like to do the same thing, but is precluded from immediate imitation by the time required to fully implement the strategy (Boselie and Paauwe, 2005).

On the other hand, Lynn (1998: 231) argued that some important considerations for the public sector at a macro level, in relation to human resource management and performance, and the intervening process connecting SHRM and organisational performance, remains unexplored. There are two perspectives of SHRM effectiveness that need theoretical and empirical attention:

1. The effectiveness with which HRM policies and practices are implemented; and
2. The effectiveness of these policies and practices in producing desired performance.

The contribution of HRM in improving a firm's performance and the overall success of any organisation (alongside other factors) is being highlighted in the literature (for example, Bae *et al.* 2003; Schuler and Jackson, 2005). As a contemporary management discipline, SHRM has increasingly attracted the interest and attention of many prominent researchers and practitioners and is currently at the forefront of research activity and business focus (Aragón-Sánchez *et al.* 2003). A consequence of this is a continual flow of literature addressing associated developments and new ideas related to this new field. Strategic human resource management helps organisations by achieving prominence through its ability to respond to the extraordinary developments that have come to characterise the massive changes that take place in the world of business and organisational life (MacDuffie, 1995). Fruitful theorising of SHRM can only proceed with a clear, consistent and robust definition and conceptualisation of what SHRM is and does.

Common themes in SHRM are the link between organisational strategy and HRM and the link between HRM and performance (Khatri, 2000). The strategy-HRM link can be subdivided into micro and macro approaches with the latter investigating the status and influence of the



HRM function in organisations (e.g. Hall and Torrington 1998; Kelly and Gernard 1996). Even though the necessity of strategic integration of HRM and organisational strategy is frequently stressed (Fisher *et al.* 1996; Hendry, 1995), there is disagreement about the interaction of HRM and strategy. Torrington and Hall (1998: 34) described the various degrees of such interactions, ranging from separation (as in un-strategic personnel management) to a reciprocal linkage (Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall, 1990) and from there to a conception of HRM crucial influence on business strategy (Butler *et al.* 2005).

The next section discusses the strategic human resource management and organisation performance.

## **2.5 SHRM AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

In the early 1980s, Peters and Waterman (1982) tried to trace back the roots of American companies that had been successful over time. Their book, which is named “In Search of Excellence”, has strongly influenced management thinking and behavioural science of organisations alike, despite serious methodological as well as conceptual weaknesses in their research (Guest *et al.* 2003). In a nutshell, Peters and Waterman (1982) identified eight elements most of which are soft people management related issues. Not much later, Walton (1985: 80) advocated a shift from control to commitment, arguing that commitment inducing work practices such as reducing internal hierarchies, use of teamwork and encouragement of worker participation led to commitment and thus to enhanced performance.

In a similar vein, Lawler (1986) proposed the use of high-involvement management (HIM). The essence of Walton’s (1985) and Lawler’s (1986) ideas are by no means new or revolutionary, but have in one form or another, turned up repeatedly in the social sciences, be it by proponents of the socio-technical system school or the human relations movement ( Al-Moamari, 2000). High-performance management in the form of high performance work system (HPWS) or high performing work practices (HPWP) often used synonymously to high

commitment management (HCM) has become increasingly popular, reflecting the increasing confidence in its ability to elicit enhanced economic performance (Wood, 1999). Indeed, many empirical studies mostly quantitative in research design show an association between HR practices and organisational performance (e.g. Arthur, 1994; Boselie *et al.* 2001; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995).

Strategic human resource management has gained popularity over the past decades, specifically with respect to the debate on HRM and performance (Boselie *et al.* 2001; Delery and Doty, 1996; Guest, 1997b). The 1990s saw a substantial amount of empirical research carried out attempting to confirm a link between sophisticated HRM and enhanced performance. Boxall and Steeneveld (1999: 443) suggested that the proposition that the quality of human resource management critically affects firm performance is self-evident truth. According to Paauwe and Boselie (2003: 56), the focus of empirical research on the relation of HRM to performance is a sign for increased maturity in the debate on HRM as “naive prescription and the potentially sterile definitional scholasticism” are left behind at last.

There has been a shift in the focus of HR from the micro-analytical research that had dominated the field in the past which focused on examining individual HRM functions (i.e. selection/recruitment, training and development, compensation, performance appraisal, job design, etc.) to a more macro-generic or strategic perspective and a firm level of analysis by adopting a system approach to HRM practices. This involves examining the entire system of HRM policies and practices as a whole, rather than examining individual sub-functional policy or practices in isolation. (Wright and McMahan, 1992).

Bowen and Ostroff (2004: 204) argued that “if the HR system is perceived as high in distinctiveness, consistency and consensus it will create a ‘strong situation’ and consistent employee behaviour and thereby improve organisational performance.” The popularity of the

HR system thinking has helped to develop different important approaches that aim to study the association between HRM and performance (Robinson, 2006).

Performance can be understood as both individual job performance and organisational, whereas earlier models of HRM emphasised the positive HRM effect on individual level. The diversity in organisational performance measures reflects, as mentioned, a lack of agreement between researchers about what organisational performance is and how it is operationalised. More importantly, the different measures also reflect a more serious disagreement on the adequate level of the analysis. Whereas, for example, Tobin's Q used by Huselid (Huselid, 1995; Huselid and Becker, 1996; Huselid *et al.* 1997) clearly is a firm-level measure of corporate financial performance. Productivity is usually a measure of operational efficiency as used by Kelley (1996) and Ichniowski *et al.* (1997) with relevance on an organisational unit or plant level, even though Huselid (1995) provided an operationalisation of the same concept adapted for use at the corporate level. Performance measures will be discussed in detail in section 2.6.

This study was built on the resource-based view approach, which is considered by different scholars as the main theoretical model that can logically explain the SHRM and performance link (Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Youndt *et al.* 1996). The resource-based view has prompted recent work on how HRM practices contribute to firm performance by leveraging human capital, discretionary effort, and desired attitudes and behaviours (e.g. Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Lado and Wilson, 1994; Wright *et al.* 2003).

Research has indicated clearly that the SHRM model is an important component that can help an organisation to become more effective and achieve competitive advantage (Becker and Huselid, 1998). The most important models that have emerged from the existing literature are universalistic, contingency, configurationally, high performance work practices and resource-

based view as the principal theoretical approaches in research on the HRM-firm performance relationship (Robinson, 2006). The next section will discuss these models.

### **2.5.1 THE UNIVERSALISTIC ‘BEST PRACTICES’ MODEL**

The universalistic model of HRM, as an ideal set of practices, suggests that a specified set of HR practices (the so called ‘best practices’) will always produce superior results whatever the accompanying circumstances. This model asserts that there is a simple direct relationship between several HRM practices and organisational performance (Delery and Doty, 1996).

Under a universalistic approach, ‘strategic HR practices’ are those found to consistently lead to higher organisational performance irrespective of an organisation’s strategy. The universalistic perspective is the simplest form of theoretical statement in SHRM literature because it implies that the relationship between a given independent variable and a dependent variable is universal in organisations.

Developing universalistic predictions requires two steps: first, important strategic HR practices are identified; second, arguments that relate the individual practices to organisational performance are presented (Delery and Doty, 1996). Many universalistic arguments seem reasonable, and universalistic predictions are supported by many scholars. For example, Delery and Doty (1996) found three HR practices: profit sharing, results oriented appraisal, and employment security. They have found positive effects across all firms that were included in their study of loan officers in the banking industry.

Other examples are the well-recognised high commitment model of labour management and high performance work practices. Pfeffer (1998: 25) summarised his study in 1994, of sixteen most effective practices for managing people (e.g. participation and empowerment, incentive pay, employment security, promotion from within, and training and skills development) into seven that resulted in higher productivity and profit across organisations. These were

employment security, selective hiring, self-managed teams or team working, high pay contingent on company performance, extensive training, reduction of status differences, and sharing information.

Paauwe and Boselie, (2003: 58) argued that a number of innovative work practices (e.g. teams, job rotation, quality circles, and total quality management) resulted in productivity gains for all American organisations. Geringer *et al.* (2002), in a project exploring international HRM practices, focused on hiring, training and development, performance appraisal, pay, leadership, and communication.

Bamberger *et al.* (1989: 350) argued that there are three mechanisms by which universal HR practices impact business performance; firstly, human capital base, or the collection of human resources (skills, knowledge, and potential) the organisation has to work with, which is affected by a variety of HR practices including recruitment, selection, training, and development processes directly affect the quality of this base. Secondly, motivation, which is affected by a variety of HR, practices including recognition, reward, and work systems. Thirdly, opportunity to contribute which is affected by a variety of HR practices including job design and involvement/empowerment strategies.

However, the obvious question that arises is: which HRM policies and/or practices are important to be included in a model that links HRM with organisational performance? Delery and Doty (1996: 810) argued that there are countless combinations of HR practices that result in identical organisational outcomes. Becker and Gerhart (1996) believed that much research has been focused solely on HR practices, although there is little agreement as to the exact HR practices that make up a coherent HRM system, but it may be equally important to focus on HRM policies.

Marchington and Grugulis (2000: 1114) stressed that lists of HR practices are developed on the basis of looking at what other researchers have used or by constructing groupings of practices on the basis of factor analysis, and then attempting to impose some theoretical justification for this *ex post facto*. Similarly, Paauwe and Boselie (2005: 987) indicated a number of practices and policies that are simply implemented due to legislation, collective bargaining agreement, fashion, imitation out of uncertainty, the selling capabilities of HR consultants and/or the wish to contribute to feelings and expectations of fairness/equity, etc.

Bowen and Ostroff (2004: 210) argued that it makes sense to assess systems of HR practices rather than focus on individual practices, because the logic behind this proposition is that the firm's performance will be enhanced by systems of practices that support each other and that have a mutually reinforcing effect on employee's contributions to organisational performance. Although there is a consensus that a wide range of HRM practices have positive effect in organisational performance, the different studies have not been able to agree on what exactly these practices are (Becker and Gerhart, 1996).

It is obvious that there is no consensus regarding universal HRM practices (Becker and Gerhart, 1996). Despite this finding, other scholars have suggested that there is now a growing consensus around a set of so-called 'high performance working practices' (Baird and Meshoulan, 1988; Butler, 1998; Wood, 1999).

### **2.5.2 THE CONTINGENCY MODEL**

In contrast with the universalistic thinking, contingency scholars argued that HR strategy would be more effective only when appropriately integrated with a specific organisational and environmental context. The contingency perspective goes beyond the simple, linear and causal relationships explored in universal theories. It allows interaction effects and varying relationships depending on the presence of a contingent variable, which is often a firm's strategy (Fombrun *et al.* 1984; Gomez-Mejia *et al.* 2000; Schuler and Jackson, 1987a).

This means that contingency theories posit that the relationship between the relevant independent variable and the dependent variable will be different for different levels of the critical contingency variable. The organisation's strategy is often considered as the primary contingency factor in the SHRM literature. This perspective requires a researcher to select a theory of a firm's strategy and then specify how the individual HR practices will interact with this strategy to result in organisational performance (Delery and Doty, 1996).

Contingency theorists have attempted to show how a number of HR practices are consistent with different strategic positions and how these practices relate to the firm performance (Schuler and Jackson, 1987a). Miles and Snow's (1978) theory of strategy, structure and process is one of the most cited both as contingency (Zajac *et al.* 2000) and configurationally perspectives (Delery and Doty, 1996; Doty *et al.* 1993).

In contingency predictions, the relationship between the use of specific employment practices and organisational performance is posited to be contingent on an organisation's strategy. Interpreting Miles and Snow's (1978) theory as a contingency theory requires a researcher to identify a single variable that differentiates the alternative strategies specified in the original theory.

Different typologies of business strategies have been developed, such as 'prospector vs. defender' and 'cost minimization vs. product differentiation'. Theorists have then sought to identify the HRM practices that most closely align with and support these alternative strategies (Arthur, 1994). For instance, Zajac *et al.* (2000) noted that the rate of product, service, and market innovation is the central contingency variable. Firms that are highly innovative are considered prospectors, firms that are moderately innovative are considered analysers, and firms that are rarely innovative are considered defenders. Thus, the strategic positioning of all firms can be characterised by a single contingency variable which is: innovation.

Robinson (2006: 38) argued that contingency approaches emphasise that there can be no one best universal way of organising and managing people because of the large number of variables or situational factors that influence organisational performance and that some degree of fit or integration with the company's environment, business strategy, history and other HR practices needs to be achieved. This means that contingency arguments imply interactions rather than the simple linear relationships incorporated in universalistic theories. In other words, a contingency perspective requires a researcher to select a theory of firm strategy that will interact with the firm HR strategy to result in organisational performance (Delery and Doty, 1996).

The contingency model has been criticised for its determinism because its underlying assumptions show that HR strategies can be selected depending on the organisation's business strategy but this school of theorising overlooks the problematic nature of the concept of strategy. Contingency and best fit approaches perceive strategy as a rational, linear, objective process in which senior managers make rational and well-judged decisions based on analysis of the environment in which their organisations is operating (Marchington *et al.* 2005). Robinson (2006: 46) focused on this limitation of contingent approach she argued that "contingent theorists tend to portray HR in a reactive way as concerned with the efficient implementation of preconceived and rational strategy which marginalises the potential HR contribution to strategy development."

### **2.5.3 THE CONFIGURATIONAL MODEL**

The configurational school in organisation studies differs from universalistic and traditional contingency theories by following a holistic principle of inquiry and concern on how patterns of multiple inter-dependent variables relate to a given dependent variable. The configurational perspective contributes to the explanation of SHRM with useful insights into the internal



aspects of the function, by means of the analysis of the synergic integration of the elements that build it.

In this sense, the HRM system is defined as a multi-dimensional set of elements that can be combined in different ways to obtain an infinite number of possible configurations. These configurations allow researchers to extract management patterns that represent different ideal possibilities for managing human resources (Delery and Doty, 1996). Thus, the system must not only be consistent with the environmental and organisational conditions, but also internally coherent (Doty and Delery, 1997).

One of the main contributions of the configurational perspective relies on the assumption that the relationship between the configurational patterns and organisational performance is not linear, since the inter-dependence of practices multiplies or divides the combined effect. Thus, the 'black box' of the universalistic and contingency model is opened, so that the HR function can be analysed as a complex and interactive system.

Although configurational models acknowledge the importance of contingency models, they are defined under the principle of equifinality, which entails the possibility of achieving the same business goals with different combinations of policies that may be equally efficient for the organisation (Becker and Gerhart, 1996), and also by rejecting the universalistic objective of definitively finding best practices.

The key point here is that the body of research related to the configurational model seeks to establish a statistically significant correlation between HR practices and organisational performance indicators. This is by relying mainly on methodologies that allow the definition of management patterns, such as cluster analysis (Arthur, 1994; MacDuffie, 1995) and factor analysis (MacDuffie, 1995).

For example, Delery and Doty (1996: 803) developed multiple equally effective combinations of HR practices and argued that different sets of practices are suited to different firm strategies. This approach tends to assume that individual practices can complement, substitute for, or even conflict with other practices. Therefore, to truly examine the impact of HR practices on any variable of interest, one must examine the entire system of HR practices overlap (Delery, 1998). The work of Huselid is considered as one of the significant contributions in this area (Huselid, 1995).

From the above discussion, it follows that there is a theoretical overlap between the configurational approach and high performance work system (HPWS) in how to combine HRM practices (e.g. indexes, scales, clusters, etc.) and examine their effect on performance as multiple rather than isolated practices (Delery and Doty, 1996; Huselid, 1995; Lepak and Snell, 1999).

#### **2.5.4 HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK PRACTICES MODEL (HPWP)**

Some progress has been made in conceptualising the content of HPWP system. This is demonstrated in the emerging agreement that a HPWP system should be formulated to guarantee that employees obtain high skills, competence, motivation and the prospect to add discretionary effort. The combined outcome should be value added performance (Appelbaum *et al.* 2000; Becker *et al.* 1997; Delery and Doty, 1996; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995).

Since each of these elements is essential, the HR system should consist of an appropriate combination of practices designed to elicit them. While most researchers have focused on a high performance system, a number have been more concerned with closely related concepts such as a high involvement system (Lawler *et al.* 1995) or a high commitment system (Wood, 1999). These variants highlight the importance of relating the conceptual analysis of the goals of an HR system to an appropriate set of practices. In so doing they identify one of the

potential sources of confusion about what constitutes an appropriately bounded HR system (Guest *et al.* 2004).

Besides the difficulties in conceiving the components of an HPWP system, there is also difficulty in combining multiple HR practices. The ability for researchers to find the most effective combination represents both theoretical and statistical challenges. Among a number of studies of HPWS, Huselid's landmark study examined the relationship between the use of HPWS and firm performance (Huselid, 1995). His main finding was that greater use of these types of HR practices was associated with decreased turnover and higher levels of productivity and profitability. Since then many studies have indicated a positive relationship between the adoption of an HPWS and firm level performance outcomes including productivity and innovation (CIPD, 2002; Datta *et al.* 2005; Flood *et al.* 1996; Guthrie, 2001).

Huselid studied thirteen HR practices in a 'High Performance Work System' on a large-scale cross-sectional study and found HPWS to be significantly related to turnover, productivity and financial performance (Huselid, 1995: 640). Delery and Doty, in a study of loan officers in the banking industry, tested the configurational perspective using 'market-type' and 'internal employment' systems and found a positive relationship between the market-type configuration and performance (Delery and Doty, 1996: 820). The market-type configuration included a higher level of use in results oriented appraisal, profit sharing, and participation.

Ichniowski *et al.* using data from 36 steel plants, found the impact of a set of 'innovative' work practices to have a positive and significant effect on organisational productivity (Ichniowski *et al.* 1997: 300). These innovative work practices included incentive pay, teams, flexible job assignment, employment security and training.

Berman *et al.* examined the use of performance measurement in human resource management in some U.S. counties (Berman *et al.* 2006: 89). This research found that performance

measurement is widely used but many measures reflect traditional concerns with compliance, but measures are also used to assess reforms in recruitment and compensation. Importantly from a public sector perspective this study also found that mission orientation and broad support affect the use of performance measures in HRM, as well as technical ability to gather such data.

In other work, Purcell *et al.* undertook a three-year study to assess the impact of people management on organisational performance (Purcell *et al.* 2003). These scholars noted, while some have been able to show an association between human resource (HR) policies used and performance outcomes, it was often hard to explain when, why and how this association existed and to identify the inter-connections. Purcell *et al.* (2003: 65) referred to this as the 'black box'. He concluded that the impact of people management on organisation performance is more obvious in the medium term than it is in the short term. As a result of that investigations of high commitment management are particularly relevant.

Hutchinson *et al.* reported on a longitudinal study investigating how and why people management practices affect business performance (Hutchinson *et al.* 2000: 36). In relation to the notions of people management and performance a number of aspects demonstrating the difficulty of demonstrating performance impact are identified. First, the relationship between HR practices and business performance can be identified at different levels ranging from the plant/establishment level through to the corporation level. Second, there is a lack of consensus on what constitutes a HR package and no agreement on the level of specificity or HR practices. Third, there is a different way of measuring HR practices and a limited use of performance measures. Fourth, in some cases sophisticated measurement techniques are used and these are hard to understand. Finally, few studies take into account the reaction of employees, therefore it is difficult to understand how the HR practices feed through to improve levels of performance and thus causality is an issue.

Huselid and Becker made a similar observation that “there is a need for a basis for comparison, either cross sectional or longitudinal, and also there is a need to understand the relationships between types of performance data” (Huselid and Becker, 1996: 410)

The applicability of SHRM and high-performance HR practices in Asia and how they diverge or converge from the West have been examined; however, no conclusive results have been reached (Bae *et al.* 2003). Several studies conducted in China have found a positive relationship between SHRM and firm performance (Lee, 1999; Wang and Gau, 2004).

Much of the research on human resource management and performance places an emphasis or assumes that organisational performance is conducted as though organisations are homogenous entities with clearly defined boundaries and similar contexts and characteristics (Datta, *et al.* 2005). However, it is very important to understand the boundaries and how these might impact organisations and the employment relationship. Implicit in this discussion is the changing nature of public sector as a result of reforms (Mallon, 1998).

Although improved financial management was a key strategy in public sector reform, financial management is not the only aspect of strategic management. Other resources at the disposal of the government are human resources; in particular employees’ expertise or knowledge management. Thus, public sector renewal has focused also on reforming human resource management (Teo, 2002).

So far, there is no agreement as to which individual practices should be included in a system, and researchers have used many different practices to represent the same type of HR system of practices (Becker and Gerhart, 1996). This may be the result of both a lack of solid theoretical framework to guide the selection of practices in a system and the fact that many HR practices may result in the same outcomes (Collins and Smith, 2006). Another problem with the study of HR practices as systems is the issue of whether the set of practices in a

system contain a multiplicative effect or an additive effect. Delaney and Huselid tested the complementarities among HR practices by analysing the interaction effect of all possible combinations of HR practices on perceived organisational performance (Delaney and Huselid, 1996: 950). They failed to find any positive effects that were derived from a specific combination of HR practices.

Analysing different studies that focused on HPWS it can be seen that there is diversity of opinions as to which practices are advanced. Table 1 illustrates the disagreement between researchers on which practices constitute HPWS, HMC or advanced HRM practices in 40 empirical studies through the relative frequencies with which these practices were referred to by the different scholars (i.e. Appelbaum *et al.* 2000; Arthur , 1992; Arthur, 1994; Bae and Lawler , 2000; Becker and Huselid, 1998; Boselie *et al.* 2001; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004; Breg, 1999; Breg *et al.* 2000; Carmeli and Schaubroeck ,2005;D’Arcimoles, 1997; Deery and Iverson, 1999; Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Dunlop and Weil, 1997; Fey *et al.* 2000; Guest, 1999; Guest and Hoque, 1994; Hoque, 1999; Huang, 2000; Huselid, 1995; Huselid and Becker, 1996; Ichniowski *et al.* 1997; Ichniowski and Shaw, 1999; Jayaram *et al.* 1999; Kalleberg and Moody, 1994; Kelley, 1996; Khatri, 2000; Koch and McGrath, 1996; Lahteenmaki *et al.* 1998; Lau and May, 1999;Lee and Miller, 1999;Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1996; Liouville and Bayad, 1998; MacDuffie, 1995; Meyer and Smith, 2000; Michie and Sheehan-QUINN, 2001; Patterson *et al.*1997, Patterson *et al.* 2005; Ramsay *et al.* 2000; Wang *et al.*1999). This table lists only the practices and the frequencies with which they are used in the literature.

| HR Area                                | Participate  | Frequencies |             |
|--|--|-------------|-------------|
|  |  | Absolute    | Relatives % |
| <b>Work Organisation /Design</b>       | Teamwork   | 10          | 25.0        |
|  | Self –managed/self-directed teams                      | 6           | 15.0        |
|  | Flexible/broad job design                              | 7           | 17.5        |
|  | Job rotation   | 5           | 12.5        |
|  | Formal job analysis                                    | 3           | 7.5         |
|  | Design to maximise skills utilising                    | 3           | 7.5         |
|  | Cross-functional teams                                 | 1           | 2.5         |
|  | Explicit job description                               | 1           | 2.5         |
|  | Flexible working practices                             | 1           | 2.5         |
| <b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>     | Valid recruitment & selection tests                    | 13          | 32.5        |
|  | Staffing selectivity                                   | 4           | 10.0        |
|  | Trainability as criteria                               | 4           | 10.0        |
|  | Realistic job previews                                 | 3           | 7.5         |
|  | Validation studies for selection methods               | 2           | 5.0         |
|  | Extensive screening                                    | 1           | 2.5         |
|  | Technical & problem-solving skills                     | 1           | 2.5         |
|  | Social skills as selection criteria                    | 1           | 2.5         |
|  | Teamwork skills as selection criteria                  | 1           | 2.5         |
|  | Varied sources of recruitment                          | 1           | 2.5         |
| <b>Participation &amp; involvement</b> | Quality circle/problem solving teams/off-line teams    | 13          | 32.5        |
|  | High involvement of employees                          | 12          | 30.0        |
|  | Decentralisation                                       | 11          | 27.5        |
|  | Quality responsibility                                 | 3           | 7.5         |
|  | Involvement in target setting                          | 3           | 7.5         |
|  | Team membership  | 2           | 5.0         |
|  | Involvement in change                                  | 2           | 5.0         |
|  | Management of materials                                | 1           | 2.5         |
| <b>Communication</b>                   | Management-worker/union meeting/committees             | 13          | 32.5        |
|  | Formal and regular communication efforts               | 11          | 27.0        |
|  | Formal due process/grievance procedures                | 9           | 22.5        |
|  | Information about organisational/financial performance | 9           | 22.5        |
|  | Regular attitude surveys                               | 7           | 17.5        |
|  | Regular communication inside and outside company       | 1           | 2.5         |

**Table 1** Distribution of Advanced HR Practices

| HR Area                                | Participate  | Frequencies        |             |
|--|--|--------------------|-------------|
|  |  | Absolute           | Relatives % |
| <b>Training &amp; Skills</b>           | Formal training and education                          | 23                 | 57.5        |
|  | Training for technical and problem solving skills      | 4                  | 10.0        |
|  | Cross-training/multi-skilling                          | 6                  | 15.0        |
|  | Informal training                                      | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | General skills training                                | 3                  | 7.5         |
|  | Training for old and for new employees                 | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | High training investment                               | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | Explicit policy for prescribed minimum training        | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | Deliberate development of the learning organisation    | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | Training needs analysis                                | 3                  | 7.5         |
|  | Training with long-term orientation                    | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | Cost benefit analysis                                  | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | Long- term orientation                                 | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | Off-site training for all                              | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Training for effective teamwork and leadership         | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Craft-apprenticeship programmes                        | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Training for career development                        | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Team-oriented training                                 | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Training evaluation                                    | 1                  | 2.5         |
| <b>Appraisal</b>                       | Formal and regular appraisals                          | 9                  | 22.5        |
|  | Evaluation based on work unit performance              | 2                  | 5.0         |
|  | Coherent and widely applied appraisal system           | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Appraisal based on objective criteria                  | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Long-term appraisal criteria                           | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Integration of appraisal with other HRM aspects        | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Behaviour based appraisal , development                | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Training for appraiser                                 | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | Monitoring system for correct application of appraisal | 1                  | 2.5         |
|  | <b>HR Planning &amp; Promotion</b>                     | Internal promotion | 19          |
| Career planning efforts                |  | 4                  | 10.0        |
| Merit promotion                        |  | 4                  | 15.0        |
| Formal planning activities             |  | 4                  | 5.0         |
| Long range HR and development planning |  | 2                  | 7.5         |
| Broad career paths                     |  | 1                  | 5.0         |
| Explicit promotion criteria            |  | 2                  | 5.0         |

**Table 1** Distribution of Advanced HR Practices



| HR Area   | Participate                           | Frequencies         |             |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
|   |                                       | Absolute            | Relatives % |
| Compensation & Benefit                                | Performance related pay/ merit pay    | 12                  | 30.0        |
|   | Incentive pay                         | 10                  | 25.0        |
|   | Competitive high wages                | 10                  | 25.0        |
|   | Profit or gain sharing plans          | 9                   | 22.5        |
|   | Stock ownership options               | 6                   | 15.0        |
|   | Salaried status for all/monthly pay   | 3                   | 7.5         |
|   | Team-based pay or incentive           | 3                   | 7.5         |
|   | Fair pay                              | 2                   | 5.0         |
|   | Hourly rate pay with or without bonus | 2                   | 5.0         |
|   | Pay determined by appraisal           | 2                   | 5.0         |
|   | Little wage inequity/internal equity  | 2                   | 5.0         |
|   | Fringe benefits and welfare programs  | 2                   | 5.0         |
|   | Flexible reward packages              | 2                   | 5.0         |
|   | Extensive benefits                    | 1                   | 2.5         |
|   | Combined job classes                  | 1                   | 2.5         |
|   | Unique or unusual benefits            | 1                   | 2.5         |
|   | Health retirement plans               | 1                   | 2.5         |
|   | Cashless pay                          | 1                   | 2.5         |
|   | Fast increasing wages                 | 1                   | 2.5         |
|   | Skills-based compensation             | 1                   | 2.5         |
|   | Seniority-based compensation          | 1                   | 2.5         |
|   | Other                                 | Employment security | 15          |
| High extent of harmonised terms and conditions        |                                       | 4                   | 10.0        |
| Induction and socialisation programs                  |                                       | 5                   | 12.5        |
| Singles status  |                                       | 5                   | 12.5        |
| Sensitivity for work and family needs                 |                                       | 4                   | 10.0        |
| Managerial involvement in HRM                         |                                       | 3                   | 7.5         |
| Integration of HRM and competitive strategy           |                                       | 3                   | 7.5         |
| High skills and flexibility requirements              |                                       | 2                   | 5.0         |
| Strategic quality of HR function                      |                                       | 2                   | 5.0         |
| Union recognition                                     |                                       | 2                   | 5.0         |
| TQM   |                                       | 2                   | 5.0         |
| Assistance to employees if dismissals are unavoidable |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| High social expenditures                              |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Opportunities for women and minorities                |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| No clocking in  |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Bullying and harassment policies                      |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Long-term orientation                                 |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Fair treatment  |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Low vertical hierarchy                                |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Concerns for employee well-being                      |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Comparatively high investment in HRM                  |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Internally consistent HR practices                    |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Improving working conditions                          |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Investor in people                                    |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |
| Diversity management                                  |                                       | 1                   | 2.5         |

**Table 1** Distribution of Advanced HR Practices

It is obvious that some scholars only used few imprecise proxies of such advanced HRM practices. For example, Patterson *et al.* (2005) examined interaction effects of integrated manufacturing and empowerment which contains many selections, team working, and appraisal related practices, but no compensation or communication practices. Scholars like Huselid (1995), Ramsay *et al.* (2000) and Khatri (2000), in contrast, used comprehensive and detailed lists up to 24 practices (Ramsay *et al.* 2000).

This study has used the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model which consists of 11 practices. The number of practices is not considered as an indicator of the effectiveness of the HRM model. The impact of HRM on performance depends on the notion of the internal or horizontal fit or alignment. This reflects the link between individual HR practices and is thought to be crucial for gaining success as well as the vertical fit with the business strategy. There is a general school of thought within HRM that is built on the idea of internal fit called HR system approach (Boselie *et al.* 2005). Guest (1997b: 265) explained this by arguing that the pattern of combinations among HR practices is additive rather than multiplicative, and that the sum of each HR practice is greater than its part.

| <b>HRM Policies in Purcell <i>et al.</i> (2003)<br/>People Performance Model</b> |
|--|
| 1. Careful/sophisticated recruitment and selection.                              |
| 2. Training and learning/development   |
| 3. Career opportunities  |
| 4. Information-sharing and extensive two-way communication                       |
| 5. Involvement in decision-making  |
| 6. Team working  |
| 7. Performance appraisal and management  |
| 8. Pay satisfaction  |
| 9. Job security  |
| 10. Job challenge/job autonomy   |
| 11. Work-life balance  |

**Table 2** HRM Policies in Purcell *et al.* (2003)  
People Performance Model

### **2.5.5 THE RESOURCE-BASED VIEW (RBV) MODEL**

The resource-based view (RBV) gains its credibility in studying SHRM because it is a theory connecting HRM with strategy (Barney, 1991; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). It is emphasised by the resource-based theorists that the internal firm resources can be the source of competitive advantage, and people are such kind of resources whom are strategically important to the firm (Barney and Wright, 1998).

More importantly, RBV not only provides an insight into human resources and the role of HRM in the organisation's implementation of its strategy but also theorises the contribution of HRM in generating strategic capability (Gerhart *et al.* 2000a; Gerhart *et al.* 2000b). This is because HRM practices and policies that are characterised as socially complex and historically sensitive may enable the firm more flexibility and coordination, compared with its competitors.

The assumption underlying the RBV about the SHRM paradigm lies in the role of HRM in the firm's strategic management (Wright *et al.* 2001a). It is argued that any particular firm strategy requires a unique set of behaviour from the employees, and certain HR policies and practices could produce a unique set of responses from employees, so as to utilise a stock of exceptional human talents (Boxall and Purcell, 2003).

Furthermore, organisations can take advantage of human process, which is a function of a set of casually ambiguous, socially complex, and historically evolved processes such as learning, cooperation and innovation (Boxall, 1998). Human process advantage can be derived from a set of dependent practices and systems, since the complementarities and inter-dependence among the set of practices would be impossible to imitate (Wright *et al.* 2001b). It is these HR practices that play an important role in developing human assets that provide competitive advantage for the firm (Barney, 1991). Boxall argued that the establishment of a firm's capabilities and core competencies rely on the combination of the development of human

skills (for exhibiting appropriate behaviour to respond to the strategic goals) and a supporting HRM system (to motivate employees to learn skills and communicate) (Boxall, 1998: 270). There is a growing body of research on RBV theoretically and practically that has contributed to develop this model. Therefore, the next two sections will discuss the theoretical and empirical work related to RBV.

#### **2.5.5.1 THE THEORETICAL WORK**

The RBV's model differs from other theories and models of SHRM that have been discussed in the previous sections of this chapter (Barney, 1991; Barney, 2001a; Barney, 2001b). The RBV of the firm refers to a movement of strategic analysis from the industrial sector to the company (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). The RBV regards the firm as a unit, with heterogeneous assets created, developed, renewed, evolved and improved over time (Bartel, 2004). The RBV of the firm tends to consider performance differences as a result of effectiveness differences rather than as a result of market power differences.

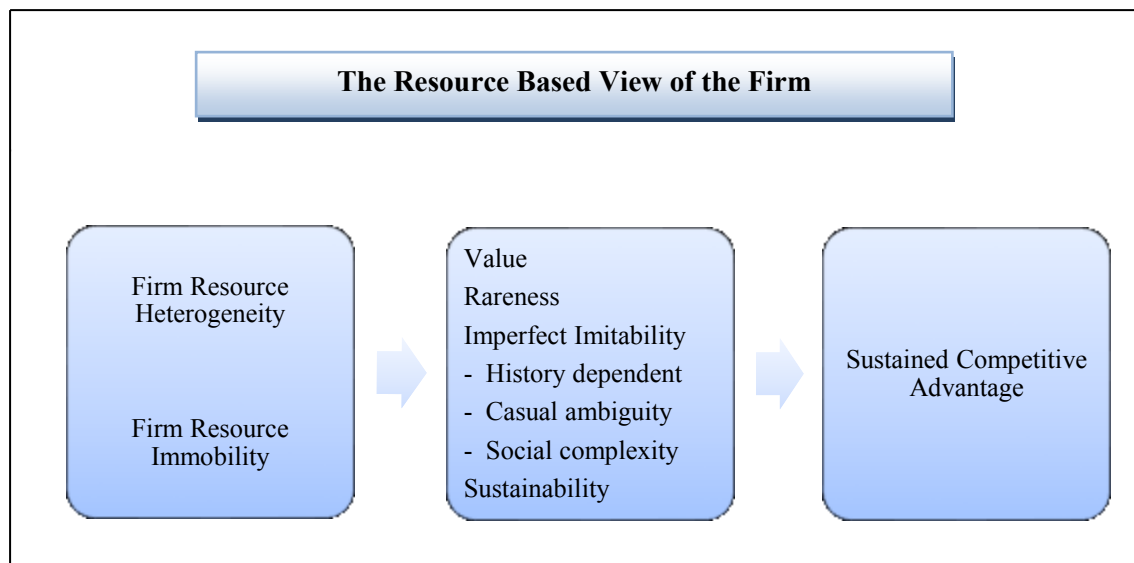
Organisational competitiveness then depends on the organisation's capacity to shape a unique set of resources that cannot be easily imitated by competitors, which is mobilised with the help of organisational and managerial systems development. This will provide the organisation with a series of distinctive capacities that allow it to generate long-term sustainable income (Rodríguez and Ventura, 2003).

When considering the main implications of the RBV of the firm within the field of SHRM, it is possible, on one hand, to highlight the acknowledged need to apply systems or sets of HR practices to improve the company's competitiveness. Thus, in the analysis of the relationship between HR and performance, we have gravitated from the study of isolated practices to that of practices systems, which are coherent in relation to one another. On the other hand, the determining importance of the human factor in organisational success has been acknowledged (Capelli and Singh, 1992).

The different HR policies (training, selection, post design, etc.) constitute tools that allow HR to fulfil the desirable characteristics of any resource from this theoretical viewpoint, with the aim of becoming a source of competitive advantage.

Finally, the dynamic approach to this theory has been justified considering intermediate variables within the relationship between HR and performance, such as the organisation's human capital (Purcell *et al.* 2003) or organisational culture (Chan *et al.* 2004) and interactions among different organisational dimensions (Purcell *et al.* 2003).

The genesis of the resource-based model can be traced back to Selznick (1957) who suggested that work organisations each possess 'distinctive competence' that enables them to outperform. Penrose (1959: 31) conceptualised the firm as an "an administrative organisation and a collection of productive resources." She distinguished between 'physical' and 'human resources', and drew attention to issues of learning including knowledge and experience of the management team. Barney (1991) specified the characteristics necessary for a sustained competitive advantage and these characteristics seemed to popularise the theory of RBV within the strategy and management literature (Wright *et al.* 2001a). Figure 1 represents Barney's RBV framework.



**Figure 1** The Resource-Based View of the Firm  
Source: Adapted from Barney (1991: 112)

Prior work on strategy focused on opportunities and threats facing firms assuming that firms are homogeneous, and that any heterogeneity would quickly be dissipated. Barney developed his resource-based argument using two alternative assumptions, that firms may be heterogeneous with respect to strategic resources and that those resources are not perfectly mobile (Barney, 1991). His definition of firm resources included all assets, capabilities, organisational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge, etc. controlled by a firm which enables a firm to conceive and implement strategies that improve its efficiency and effectiveness. These resources can be classified as physical capital resources, human capital resources, and organisational capital resources (Colbert, 2004). Barney (1991) further suggested that to be a potential source of competitive advantage resources must have the following four attributes which is known as (VRIS) framework:

1. A resource must be **Valuable**, and able to exploit opportunities or neutralise threats. When a resource is valuable, it allows a firm to conceive and implement strategies to improve efficiency and effectiveness. If a resource is not valuable, it is not a resource.
2. A resource must be **Rare** among current and potential competitors. If everyone has the resource, then no one can gain advantage from it. Valuable but common resources can help ensure survival but not competitive advantage.
3. A resource must be **Imperfectly Imitable**. Valuable and rare resources are only sources of sustained competitive advantage if other firms cannot obtain them. A resource can be imperfectly imitable for three reasons. Firstly, ability to obtain the resources depends on unique historical conditions. Secondly, the link between the resource and the sustained competitive advantage is causally ambiguous. Thirdly, is socially complex which refers to the chain of events and managerial choices over time in combination with the complexity of social interaction of the actors.
4. A resource must be **Un-substitutable**. In other words, there must be no strategically equivalent valuable resources that are either rare or not imitable. Strategically equivalent resources may be similar to another firm's resources (e.g. the top management team) or very different (e.g. substituting a charismatic leader for a systematic companywide planning system).

Since Barney's (1991) articulation of the (VRIS) framework, substantial efforts have been made in the last two decades to enhance the theoretical perspectives of RBV and empirically examine it in the SHRM-performance link (Purcell *et al.* 2003). The RBV provides a distinction between human capital advantage (according to which the firm's resource is the people it employs) and human process advantage (whereby it is the HRM system that constitutes the source of advantage) (Boxall, 1996). This distinction helped to clarify what can be uniquely and exceptionally valuable about human resources and how managers might obtain, develop and retain resources that are valuable (Boxall and Purcell, 2003).

Robinson (2006: 48) questioned the nature of this theoretical stand by arguing that it is the skills, abilities and capabilities of people that exist within an organisation at any given time (the stock of human capital) or it is the ways, systems and processes used to manage this stock of human capital that constitutes a source of competitive advantage.

In resource-based thinking, HRM can be valued not only for its role in implementing a given competitive scenario, but for its role in generating strategic capability, for its potential to create firms which are more intelligent and flexible than their competitors over the long haul, firms which exhibit superior levels of coordination and cooperation (Boxall, 1996: 463). Where an HR system achieves this, it is regarded as competence enhancing. In instances where the HR system actively inhibits the development of new competencies within the firm, then it is regarded as competence destroying (Lado and Wilson, 1994).

Human capital advantage can be squandered through, for example, opposing collective representation and diminishing employee trust, or failing to offer people opportunities to develop their talent (Boxall, 1996). Human process advantage has helped to explain the notion of actual link between processes that connect inputs (HR practices) and outputs (financial performance, quality of service). This is often referred to as the 'black box' or the nature of the connection between HR practices and organisational performance (Robinson, 2006).

The resource-based approach has been developed through the work of Purcell *et al.* (2003) who have focused on studying the impact of HRM on organisational performance by gathering empirical evidence on the processes that link HR practices to organisational performance (Purcell *et al.* 2003). The study was based on twelve case study organisations covering a range of sectors and industries including manufacturing, retail, finance, professional services, Information Technology, and the National Health Services, over a period of three years. The purpose of the study was to unlock the 'black box' in the HRM-



performance relationship by providing sound evidence for the link between HR practices and organisational performance (Robinson, 2006).

The work of Purcell *et al.* (2003) represented a significant step in HRM-performance relationship. It moved away from the input/output models and listed the important HR practices and provided insights into how and why HR practices influence organisational performance. Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model which is illustrated in Figure 2, identifies a distinctive set of HR practices (ranging from careful recruitment and selection, learning and development to team working and involvement activities) that feed into three generic practices which affect employees' attitudes and hence their discretionary efforts and performance.

This study will adopt the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model to explore the HRM-performance relationship in the police organisation in Oman. Therefore, different pillars of this model will be discussed thoroughly in section 2.7 that is related to the research framework in this chapter.

Purcell *et al.* (2003) have developed the **AMO** model to unlock the 'black box' in the HRM-performance relationship. It includes the **A**bility and skills of employees, their level of **M**otivation, and **O**pportunity to participate in decision-making (Robinson, 2006). This model focused on explaining how HRM policies encompass mediating changes in employees' abilities, motivations, and opportunities to participate and positively influence organisational performance. The logic of this framework is explained by Purcell *et al.* (2003: 6) as follows:

- The assumption in **Ability (A)**: is that people will want to apply for jobs in an organisation (recruitment), have their attributes recognised (selection) and be willing to learn new skills and behaviours (training and development).

- The assumption in **Motivation (M)**: the assumption is people can be motivated to use their ability in a productive manner because they will respond to various extrinsic rewards and stimuli.
- The assumption in **Opportunity (O)**: the assumption is people will provide good customer service or high quality work beyond the satisfactory level and will wish to engage in problem solving or wider involvement schemes, given the opportunities to do so. They need the opportunity both to use or practice their skills and to contribute to collective efforts at the team, section and organisational level.

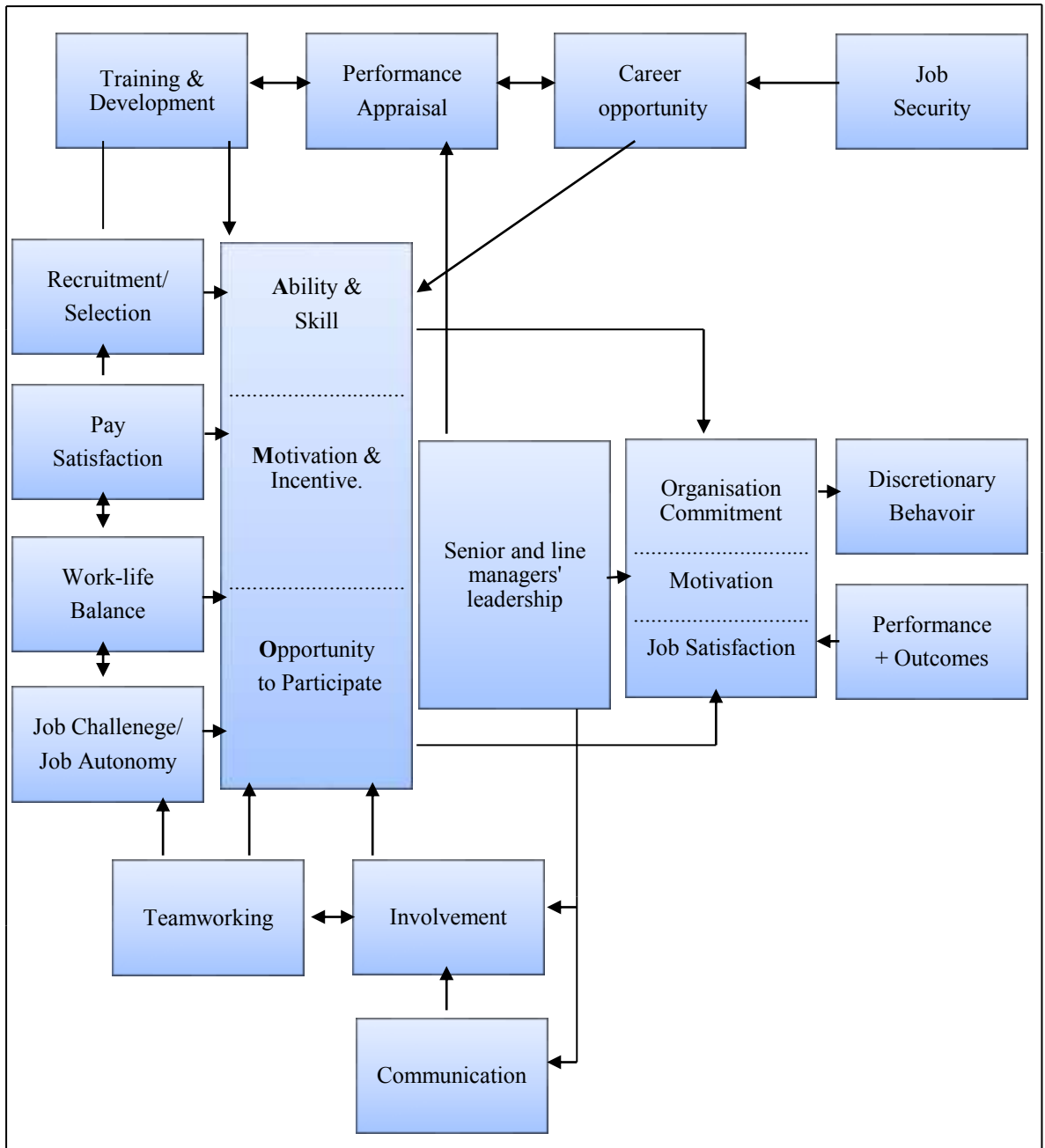
The AMO model enhances the role of HR policies as a factor that shapes employees' commitment, motivation and satisfaction which in turn influences discretionary behaviour and effort (Robinson, 2006). This conclusion is supported by Appelbaum *et al.* (2000: 201) study findings that the core characteristics of high performance working practice (HPWP) were positively related to employee commitment and job satisfaction.

Examples of these practices are employees' participation, skills enhancement and job satisfaction. Robinson (2006: 52) explained the nature of this correlation, she argued that "HPWP served to establish a greater level of trust between employees and managers and increased employee experience of their work as intrinsically rewarding, challenging and meaningful." However, the Purcell *et al.* (2003) study has argued that performance related HR policies were not enough to deliver superior performance. Such practices contributed to human capital advantage but this needed to be combined with human process advantage to lead to tangible competitive differentiation.

Robinson (2006: 53) argued that "there were two common and crucial ingredients in highly performing organisations: firstly, a strong, inclusive culture built around a 'big idea' which expressed what the organisation stood for and what it was trying to achieve, and its

relationship with its customers, employees and other stakeholders. Secondly, front-line management who were able to implement and bring policies to life”.

In a similar vein, Wright *et al.* (2001b: 710) pointed out that there are three important components of HRM that constitute a resource for the firm that are influenced by the HR practices or HR system. First, there is the human capital pool which is comprised of the stock of employee knowledge, skills, motivation and behaviours. HR practices can help build the knowledge and skill base as well as elicit relevant behaviour. Second, there is the flow of human capital through the firm. This reflects the movement of people (with their individual knowledge, skills and abilities) as well as knowledge itself. HR practices can certainly influence the movement of people. However, more importantly, the types of reward systems, culture, and other aspects of HRM influence the extent to which employees are willing to create, share, and apply knowledge internally. Third, the dynamic processes through which organisations change and/or renew themselves constitute the third area illustrating the link between HRM and the resource-based view of the firm. HR practices are the primary levers through which the firm can change the pool of human capital as well as attempt to change the employee’s behaviours that can lead to organisational success.



**Figure 2** The People Performance Model  
 Source: Purcell *et al.* (2003: 7)

### **2.5.5.2 THE EMPIRICAL WORK**

In addition to the many applications of the RBV to the theoretical developments within SHRM, this perspective also has emerged as one of the more popular foundations for exploring empirical relationships within SHRM. In fact, one is pressed hard to find any SHRM empirical studies conducted over the past few years that do not at least pay lip service to the RBV. This research will cover a sample of such studies that illustrate the application of RBV.

In an early application, Huselid argued at a general level that HR practices could help create a source of competitive advantage, particularly if they are aligned with the firm's competitive strategy (Huselid, 1995). His study revealed that there is a relationship between HR practices (or High Performance Work Systems) and employee turnover, gross rate of return on assets, and Tobin's Q. The study received considerable attention because it demonstrated that HR practices could have a profound impact on both accounting and market based measures of performance.

Koch and McGrath took a similar logic in their study of the relationship between HR planning, recruitment, and staffing practices and labour productivity (Koch and McGrath, 1996: 335). They argued that "a highly productive workforce is likely to have attributes that make it a particularly valuable strategic asset." They suggested that firms which develop effective routines for acquiring human assets develop a stock of talent that cannot be easily imitated. They found that these HR practices were related to labour productivity in a sample of business units, and that this relationship was stronger in capital-intensive organisations.

Boxall and Steeneveld conducted a longitudinal case study of participants in a New Zealand engineering consultancy industry (Boxall and Steeneveld, 1999). They suggested that one of the firms in the industry had achieved a superior competitive position due to its human resource advantage in 1994, but by 1997 two of the competitors had caught up in the

competitive marketplace. They posited that this could mean that either the two competitors had been able to successfully imitate the former leaders' human resource advantage, or that the former leader has developed an advantage about which there is presently uncertainty, but which will be exploited in the future.

In a follow-up study by Lepak *et al.* (2001) it indicated that a combination of knowledge work and contract labour was associated with higher firm performance. This finding not only raised some interesting ideas about the development of valuable human resources, but also highlighted the importance of combining various types used in conjunction with one another.

In another example of examining the human capital pool, Richard (2001) used resource-based logic to examine the impact of racial diversity on firm performance. He argued that diversity provided value through ensuring a variety of perspectives, which is rare in that very few firms have achieved significant levels of diversity, and that the socially complex dynamics inherent in diversity lead to its inimitability. He found in a sample of banks that diversity was positively related to productivity, return on equity, and market performance for firms engaged in a growth strategy, but negatively related for firms downsizing.

In an effort to look beyond human capital pool alone, Youndt and Snell (2001) studied the differential effects of HR practices on human capital, social capital, and organisational capital. They found that intensive/extensive staffing, competitive pay, intensive/extensive training and promotion from within policies were most important for distinguishing high levels of human capital in organisations. In contrast, broad banding, compressed wages, team structures, socialisation, mentoring, and group incentives distinguished those with high social capital (i.e. relationships that engender knowledge exchange) but had very little effect on human capital itself. Finally, organisational capital (i.e. knowledge embedded in the organisation's systems and processes) was established mostly through lesson learned databases and HR policies that reinforced knowledge capture and access.

Guest and Peccei conceptualised four different models of HRM integration and investigated the effects on different measures of organisational performance in the NHS (Guest and Peccei, 2001: 220). Organisational integration, the first model, is understood as the presence of a coherent HR strategy owned by the board of a company and readily accepted by the line manager. Policy integration instead refers to the integration of three types of policy priorities which can be the development and operation of routine administrative systems, professional competence in HRM mainstream activities, and finally HRM priority focusing on the development of coherent policies to achieve highly competent and committed employees. Functional integration refers to high quality of HR staff which is said to result in more effective management of human resources. Process integration is the final perspective it is concerned with the efficiency of HRM processes and the effective delivery of HRM activities to internal customers.

Carmeli and Schaubroeck tested the RBV's core concepts by distinguishing HR capital, its perceived distinctive value, and organisational performance through collecting two primary data sets from private and public sector organisations in Israel. They concluded that "there is contingency relationship may extend beyond the commercial organisations typically studied in RBV research to public sector organisations" (Carmeli and Schaubroeck, 2005: 409). In similar vein, this study explored the HRM-performance relationship in the Omani police force.

### **2.5.5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE RBV EMPIRICAL RESEARCH**

Scholars continue to raise serious questions regarding the resource based view, particularly in relation to its strong focus on the internal context of the business (Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Budhwar and Fadzil, 2000). Some have suggested that the effectiveness of the resource-based view approach is inextricably linked to the external context of the firm.

Mueller recognised that the resource-based view approach provides more added values when the external environment is less predictable (Mueller, 1996: 55). Others have noted that the tendency for advocates of the resource-based view to focus on differences between firms in the same sector as source of sustainable competitive advantage. Carmeli and Schaubroeck (2005: 392) argued that this focus ignores the value and the significance of common 'base-line' characteristics across industries, which accounts for their legitimacy in that particular industry. Although multiple theories have been put forth to explain how HR practice lead to higher firm performance by influencing firm resources or employee behaviours, for example behavioural theory and human capital theory (McMahan *et al.* 1994).

Researchers have increasingly relied on the resource-based view of the firm as a means of explaining why systems of HR practices lead to performance (Collins and Smith, 2006). However, applying resource-based view in SHRM empirical research has its limitations. In response to critics that the RBV does not generate testable hypothesis, Barney recognised that most researches applying the RBV have failed to test its fundamental concepts (Barney, 2001a; Barney, 2001b). He remarked that much of the existing research had used the RBV to establish the context of some empirical research and are not really direct tests of the theory developed (Barney, 2001a; Barney, 2001b). Although the underlying logic in most of SHRM empirical research studies is that HR activities lead to a competent motivated workforce forming sources of competitive advantage which generates higher performance is compelling.

Wright *et al.* recognised that most of the empirical studies assess only two variables: HR practices and performance (Wright *et al.* 2001a: 703). Wright *et al.* also pointed out the failure to adequately test the RBV: first, there is no attempt to empirically assess the validity of the proposition that HR practices are difficult to imitate (i.e. are path dependent or causally ambiguous); second, there have been no attempts to demonstrate the link between HR



practices and workforce characteristics, or that between the workforce characteristics and firm performance (Wright *et al.* 2001a: 709).

Based on these observations, these authors suggested SHRM researchers to move beyond simply applying the RBV's core concepts directly. This called for a more complex view of the relationship between HR and performance within the empirical literature, for example, recognising the black box in the causal link, specifying the role HR practices play in improving performance in firms.

Following the same stream, this study aimed at exploring empirically the 'black box' in HR-performance link by replicating the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as a conceptual and analytical framework to explore the HRM-performance link in the ROP in Oman. This model moved away from the input/output models and focused on counting HR practices and provided insight into how and why HR practices influence organisational performance. The model identified a range of HR policies and practices required to mobilise the AMO ingredients refer to section 2.7 for more details.

## **2.6 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

Another issue that is critical to fully understand the HRM-firm performance relationship pertains to the conceptualisation of performance (Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Rogers and Wright, 1998). As noted by Wright (1998), there seems to be a consensus within the realm of strategic HRM that maximising organisational performance, particularly financial performance, is the major goal to be achieved. This preference for financial measures of performance has been shown by Rogers and Wright (1998) who reviewed the literature and noted that out of 80 dependent variables included in the strategic HRM research, accounting measures such as return on asset, return on equity, profits, and sales and market measures such as stock price and Tobin's Q were used in more than half of the researches.

At the business unit level of analysis, perhaps the productivity of research and development personnel or their turnover rate may be more important for firms pursuing a differentiation strategy, whereas the productivity of a firm's production staff may be more critical for firms following cost leadership strategy. Further, "the focus should be on variables that have inherent meaning for a particular context" (Becker and Gerhart, 1996: 791). For example, efficiency based financial measures such as return on assets or return on equity may be more appropriate for firms pursuing cost leadership strategies in most of their business units. Whereas, sales growth (ratio) or revenue growth (ratio) may be more appropriate for firms pursuing product differentiation strategies for the majority of their business units. Thus, it may be more appropriate for strategic HRM research to include multiple indicators of firm performance and make differential predictions based on them.

Dyer and Reeves (1995) noted different types of performance measures that are most appropriate for strategic HRM research. They proposed four effectiveness measures (1) human resource outcomes such as absenteeism, turnover, job satisfaction, and individual or group performance, (2) organisational outcomes such as productivity, quality, and service, (3) financial or accounting outcomes such as profitability, return on assets, and return on invested capital, and (4) stock market performance (stock value or shareholder return). The determination of which performance measures to include may be affected by the specific context of the research. For instance, turnover or retention rate may be more important for information technology companies that are knowledge intensive than for manufacturing companies that produce standardised products. Or, turnover or retention rate may be more critical for firms that utilise team-based production.

Conventional financial measures of firm performance can have serious shortcomings and limited informational value (Neely *et al.* 2000). In addition, different performance objectives might have an adverse impact on each other (Bamberger and Meshoulam, 2000). According

to these authors, to assume that a given set of financial indicators reflects a consensus among all organisational constituencies regarding organisational goals is somewhat naive (Bamberger and Meshoulam, 2000: 181). Standard financial indicators might also lack validity as criterion measures and fail to indicate the real rent generated by the firm since different stakeholders can appropriate varying degrees of the generated rent (Coff, 1999).

Accordingly, the focus on financial performance alone in the HRM-performance debate does not reflect the current state of research and argument relating to the concept of performance (Wright *et al.* 2001b). Medori and Steeple argued that non-financial measures are timelier than financial ones, the measures are very measurable and precise, and the measures are meaningful to the workforce therefore aid continual improvements (Medori and Steeple, 2005: 521).

It is not surprising that the Kaplan and Norton's (1992) balanced scorecard approach including financial and non-financial concepts has influenced recent thinking (Warner and Hennell, 1998). Compared with a decade ago, the language of balance in measures of business performance has become widely accepted (Neely *et al.* 2000). The balanced scorecard provides a framework, which encourages the use of the financial and non-financial measures of performance, allowing the organisation to pinpoint its strategic objectives via balancing four perspectives (financial, customers, internal business processes, and learning and growth) to measure firm performance (Kaplan *et al.* 1992). The effectiveness of the balanced scorecards is based on its ability to translate a firm's mission and strategy into comprehensive set of performance measures (Kaplan *et al.* 2001a). The balanced scorecard approach involves identifying the key components of operations, setting goals for them, and then finding ways to measure progress towards achieving these goals. Taken together, the measures provide a holistic view of what is happening both inside and outside the

organisation, thus allowing each constituent of the organisation to see how their activities contribute to attainment of the organisation's overall mission (Kaplan *et al.* 2001b).

Performance auditing is also considered as an important tool to measure performance and services provided by the private or public sector organisations. Auditing can be defined as an independent approach from the matter being audited; technical work in the form of evidence gathering and the examination of documentation; the expression of a view based on the evidence; a clearly defined object of the process (Thompson, 2006: 450).

The aims of performance audits are to ensure that audited bodies have in place appropriate systems for achieving good performance. The intention of such audit is to identify examples of current good practice that is standards of performance which have been shown to be achievable. These standards are indicated by the use of a variety of performance indicators. The fine grain comparison of performance indicators may be used either as a diagnostic tool or to demonstrate competitiveness. Such an approach is being promoted by the 'best value' regime within which UK public services currently operate (Zajac *et al.* 2000).

This research followed this paradigm by including non-financial measures and focused on a level of analysis that allowed for the investigation of effects of relatively uniform HRM practice on performance of the Royal Oman Police. These measures are related to the police organisation outcomes such as productivity, quality, and service. The assessment of these three outcomes is based on the ability of each division in ROP to achieve the targets agreed between ROP's leadership and the division commander. These targets are assessed by the auditing approach which focuses on measuring the following elements of the police performance:

- Activity
- Competency and professionalism

- Community contact and responsiveness
- Internal control and resource management

The adoption of non-financial measures in ROP reflects the understanding of the force's leadership to the short-term emphasis of those measures (Medori and Steeple, 2005). Accordingly, the force has moved towards long term outcomes that are related to the service and quality of performance. This type of measures echoes with one of the four types of performance measures suggested by Dyer and Reeves (1995).

## **2.7 THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

So far, this chapter has examined existing literature relevant to the strategic human resource management. Studies in the areas of human resource management and strategic human resource management were used to provide the background to understand the relationship between HRM and performance. This theoretical ground has helped to develop the framework for this research's design. This study will adopt Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model to explore HRM-performance relationship in the police organisation in Oman.

The People Performance Model is derived from 12 in-depth case studies ( Purcell *et al.* 2003) which is built on two assumptions central to 'unlocking the black box' or 'peeling back the onion' (Guthrie *et al.* 2004) of the HRM-performance linkages. Firstly, the framework advances the concept of discretionary behaviour (Applebaum *et al.* 2000; Breg *et al.* 2000) by suggesting that virtually all employees have the capacity to engage in discretionary behaviour and it is the ability of the firm to trigger such useful behaviour, beyond meeting basic job requirements, that leads to higher performance (Purcell *et al.* 2003).

Secondly, because the line managers have discretion in the way that they apply HRM and the way they behave towards employees, they become the critical mechanism for improving the levels of employee job satisfaction and commitment which will in turn encourage employees

to exercise their discretion and act beyond their in-role behaviours (Currie and Proctor, 2001; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). Thus, the framework places the discretionary behaviour exercised by line managers at the centre of analysis as it is the front line managers who condition the extent of the gap between espoused and enacted policies (McGovern *et al.* 1997; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). The framework has the following key pillars:

#### **PILLAR 1: HRM POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

The accurate assessment of the relationship between HR practices and performance requires reliable and valid assessment of HR practices (Gardner and Wright, 2009). The HR policies derived from the framework are designed to feed into the three components of the ‘black box’. Purcell *et al.* (2003) suggested that the set of HR policies are not a specific set or ‘bundle’ of HR practices as implied by the best practice approach, instead they simply give an indication of what type of HR practices accommodate the conditions of the ‘black box’.

In general these tend to involve traditional generic HRM areas of recruitment and selection, training and development, appraisal and reward (Fombrun *et al.* 1984) coupled with policy choices concerning job security, work life balance, employee voice and work organisation. It is therefore understood that the HR intervention chosen by a firm will be contingent on its organisational context. Where studies typically fall short is by attempting to immediately link these practices to abstract performance measures (Gerhart, 2005).

#### **PILLAR 2: THE IMPACT OF HRM POLICIES & PRACTICES ON THE ABILITY, MOTIVATION, OPPORTUNITY (AMO)**

The People Performance Model makes the ‘black box’ transparent and highlights the important factors or ingredients that may represent valid causality in the HRM-performance link. This includes the role of line managers in ‘bringing HR policies to life’ and employees’ subsequent perceptions of enacted HRM policies (Purcell *et al.* 2003).

A series of authors have suggested conditions that are critical to satisfying the link necessary to foster appropriate line manager behaviour (Applebaum *et al.* 2000; Breg *et al.* 2000). Boxall and Purcell (2003: 20) extended this work to identify a formula for causality within the link. They suggested that a firm's performance is a function of employees' ability (they can do the job because they possess the necessary skills); motivation (they will do the job because they want to and are given adequate incentives to do so); and opportunity (the work environment provides the necessary support and avenues for expression).

The elegance of the AMO theoretical framework is that it encompasses mediating changes in employees' abilities (A), motivations (M) and opportunities to participate (O) thereby highlighting the skeletal structure of the typical best practice prescription (Boselie *et al.* 2005; Boxall and Purcell, 2003: 63). The core of the People Performance Model therefore links employee's attitudes (such as job satisfaction and commitment), discretionary behaviour and performance where the three AMO conditions are present.

### **PILLAR 3: THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP OF SENIOR AND LINE MANAGERS IN IMPLEMENTING HRM POLICIES & PRACTICES**

Typical studies examine the nature and extent of HR practices and their impact upon performance, yet in so doing they make the dangerous assumption that the line managers will simply act as 'robotic conformists' in enacting policies (Marchington and Grugulis, 2000). However, if front line managers vary significantly in how well they undertake their people management activities, then it follows that employee's experiences of HR practices will also vary.

Explanations of performance linkages, either value enhancing or value destroying, must therefore include front line managers (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). It has been historically noted that "different styles of leadership exert a variety of influences on workers" (Blau and Scott, 1963: 163). Such a focus is further necessitated given the tendencies of devolving HR

responsibilities to the line managers and the individualisation of the employment relationship (Gunnigle *et al.* 1998; McGovern *et al.* 1997).

Ultimately, in following this logic there is no such thing as the single HR practice of the firm. It is more accurate to imagine the HR practice of the firm as norms around which there is variation due to the idiosyncratic behaviour of the line managers (Boxall and Purcell, 2003: 198). People exhibit ‘local’ rather than ‘global’ commitment, in other words, people tend to commit more to individuals, team leaders, business units etc. rather than to the overall organisation (Becker *et al.* 1997). This suggests that future strategic HRM research should incorporate a wider notion of the HR architecture and in particular the role of line managers in implementing a workforce strategy (Becker and Huselid, 2006: 919). Further support for a more explicit recognition of the role of line managers in delivering HRM comes from recent organisational behaviour research which draws attention to the study of loyalty to supervisors as an important predictor of employee’s outcomes (Chang, 2005).

#### **PILLAR 4: MEASURING PERFORMANCE**

It has long been recognised that intermediate outcomes are central to a more complete understanding of how HR drives firm performance (Becker and Gerhart, 1996). The fact that employees’ voice and outcomes have largely remained dormant in research examining HRM-performance linkages is ironic as all the theoretical rationales of how HR affects performance rests on the assumption that it is through these employee’s outcomes (Legge, 1995).

Pillar 4 of the People Performance Model provides for immediate employee outcomes as opposed to abstract financial measures as a means to measure the impact and role of HRM. Thus, competitive advantage is believed to stem from the ability of organisations to elicit effort from their employees above and beyond the immediate requirements of the job at hand (Applebaum *et al.* 2000). Organisational commitment can generally be conceptualised as the



strength of an individual's identification with, involvement in, and attachment to the organisation (Mowday *et al.* 1982).

According to Beer *et al.* (1984: 19), "increased commitment can result not only in more loyalty but better performance for the organisation." A number of reviews of this literature found consistent negative relationships between high commitment and both employee intention to leave and actual turnover (Meyer and Allen, 1997). It is imperative to note, however, that there are various different dimensions to commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Dimensions of attitudinal commitment include affective, normative and continuance commitment. These have distinct policy implications for HRM. In particular, employees with strong affective commitment remain with the organisation because they feel they want to. And those with strong normative commitment remain because they feel they ought to. Finally, those with strong continuance commitment remain because they feel they need to (Meyer *et al.* 1993).

Further, an individual's commitment and work attitudes are important antecedents to absenteeism (Farrell and Stamm, 1998). Theoretical work suggests employees who are not satisfied with their work or working conditions can be expected to avoid coming to work (Rhodes and Steers, 1990).

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between HRM practices performance in the Royal Oman Police using Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as an analytical and conceptual framework. Therefore, the main research question is "How does HRM policies and practices impact policing performance in the Royal Oman Police?" In order to answer the main research question, a number of sub-objectives were delineated based upon the four pillars of the People Performance Model, namely:

1. To investigate the HRM policies adopted by the Royal Oman police in Oman. This objective demonstrates the HRM policies and practices in ROP and accordingly understands their applications in the force.
2. To examine the impact of HR policies and practices. This objective demonstrates the impact of HRM policies and practices used in ROP and accordingly understand their roles in shaping and developing the areas of ability, motivation and opportunity that are considered important components of the performance.
3. To determine the role of the leadership style fostered by managers and its effectiveness in creating a cultural vision for the organisation and in the effective application of HRM policies and practices. This objective demonstrates the role of leadership of senior officers in creating the culture of the big idea vision that prepares the ground to implement HRM. Also it demonstrates the importance of the leadership of the line managers in influencing successful implementation of HRM policies and practices in ROP.
4. To examine how organisational outcomes are measured. This objective demonstrates the roles of HRM policies and practices in improving organisational outcomes on areas related to productivity, quality, and service

## **2.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Chapter two introduced the background of HRM and provided an explanation of HRM. An overview of various theoretical positions regarding the nature of the relationship between SHRM and performance was given. The study's conceptual and analytical framework was also highlighted and explained.

**CHAPTER 3**  
**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN**  
**THE SULTANATE OF OMAN**

**3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the development of HRM in Oman. Factors related to the development of HRM in Oman will be discussed including the national context of Oman, its political system, economic development, “Vision 2020” and Omanisation. All these aspects, which make up the country’s overall perspectives, are relevant to this study as they have direct or indirect effect on the HRM policies and practices in Oman.

**3.2 THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN OMAN**

Until a decade ago or so, the focus of HRM research was primarily based on the Anglo-Saxon nations (for example, Legge, 1995; Schuler and Jackson, 1999). However, with the increased globalisation, the growth of emerging markets and increasing inter-dependence of global economy, there has been an increase in HRM research in other parts of the world including developing countries (Budhwar and Debrah, 2004).

Considering such developments, scholars in the field (Brewster *et al.* 1996; Hofstede, 1993) have called to examine HRM in an international and cross national context. In this regard, Schuler *et al.* (2002) proposed that meaningful HRM examinations can be carried out if they help to understand the ‘context specific’ nature of HRM. One of the best ways of understanding the context specific nature of HRM is by examining the influence of major factors on the same context.

Over the years, many scholars have identified the main factors which are known to influence HRM in a given national context. Broadly speaking such factors can be put under three categories, namely: national, contingent and organisational (Budhwar and Sparrow, 2002).

As indicated above, the majority of such investigations have been conducted in developed nations. In the present global set-up, managing in an international context seems to have become imperative. In line with this perspective, researchers (e.g. Budhwar and Debrah, 2004; Ghebregiorgis and Karsten, 2007) have highlighted the need to conduct research in developing nations.

At present, research findings are being reported both in management journals and books on emerging markets, such as China and India (e.g. Budhwar, 2004). Despite being an important region (for example, for oil and natural gas), the Middle East is left behind in terms of international and cross cultural management research (Robertson *et al.* 2002). This is attributed to the lack of resources allocated for research, funding difficulties, cultural limitations (i.e. in some countries access to the female population is difficult), and data gathering problems (such as obtaining access to organisations, developing contacts, obtaining reliable data) (Zeynep *et al.* 2007).

Oman is categorised by the United Nations as a developing country. According to this classification, a developing country has a low average income compared to the world average and has not achieved a significant degree of industrialisation. Development entails building a modern infrastructure (both physical and institutional), and movement away from low value added sectors such as natural resource extraction. In contrast, a developed country is one that has achieved (currently or historically) a high degree of industrialisation, and enjoys a standard of living where wealth and technology are combined effectively and productively. A developed country usually has an economic system based on continuous, self-sustaining economic growth (Al- Ansi, 1994).

The government has had a strong belief in the importance of human resources and human capital to achieve success in the development of the economic and political systems of Oman. With this belief, according to Rains and Stewart (2000), comes the will, the interest and the commitment required to take the necessary steps towards educating, training and developing all citizens so that they can contribute to the success of the economy, bring an improvement in the social well-being of the people, and contribute to building national prosperity (Al-Ansi, 1994).

Based on this, many scholars have researched the contribution of human resources to promoting national prosperity and accordingly, contemporary political and economical systems have relied heavily on investment in human resources in order to develop nations and maintain their political and social stability (Ranis *et al.* 2000).

The Sultanate of Oman has adopted the human capital theory in its strategic plan to develop citizens' skills and capabilities since 1970 and so far has achieved remarkable progress, both socially and economically (Al-Ansi, 1994). Crucially, political stability was established at the outset. According to Clements (1980), this was regarded as being the framework for supporting development and social changes.

Oman has aimed to achieve this transformation by implementing seven 'Five Years Development Plan' since 1970 to date (Ministry of Information, 2010). These plans sought the achievement of the long-term strategic plans, which were carefully prepared with defined objectives, policies, and mechanisms needed for its implementation (Ministry of Information, 2010). It is clear that the primary focus of these plans is to build Oman's economic and social development based on its human resource, focusing on education and the utilisation of human capital (Al-Ansi, 1994).

Rees *et al.* (2007: 36) stated that “the scene presented by this literature will remain rudimentary at least until such a time when the influence and impact of HRM and nationalisation strategies are better understood on the international stage and research on nationalisation and HRM in the Middle East cannot be expected to include extensive literature based analyses and is likely to contain methodologies that are untested in this region.” Nevertheless, some studies have contributed to shape the general understanding of HRM/HRD in Oman (Al-Hamadi and Budhwar, 2006; Al-Lamki, 2000; Budhwar *et al.* 2002; Mellahi, 2003).

Paauwe and Farndale (2005: 297) argued that “HRM policies and practices throughout the Middle East are changing fundamentally and rapidly, both in terms of contexts within which they operate, and in terms of the HRM function and role of HR managers.” This change in the HRM in Oman has been noted by different scholars such as Al-Ansi, 1994; Al-Hamadi and Budhwar 2006; and Al-Hinai, 1998.

Budhwar *et al.* (2002) produced two influential studies about HRD and HRM in Oman, they are considered as one of the most influential foundations for HRD/HRM research in Oman. In the first study, Budhwar *et al.* (2002) conducted a survey in 40 of the public and private sector organisations regarding HRD in Oman. They assessed the awareness and perceptions of top Omani managers regarding the role of HRD in their organisations and the dynamics of HRD policies and practices in Oman. Findings showed that 40 per cent of the sample units had HRD departments since their incorporation. In addition, most organisations tended to have sub-units of HRD such as training, coordination and legal procedures. The job titles of the respondents included HRD Manager (40%), HRD Head of Section (62%), Personnel Administrator (27 %) and General Director (11 %). Regarding the overall contribution of HRD in the management of change, in 42 per cent of the research organisations, HRD function was effectively contributing to the management of change. The findings also highlighted the

awareness and positive views that Omani managers hold on the importance of the strategic HRD function in their organisations. Generally, the level of that awareness was high and reflected the success of the government's attempts to push the training agenda to the force. Three quarters of the sample believed that training had become more proactive in Oman and there is an increasing interest in the development of mission statements and training strategies. This is an indication of the transformation or evolution of the HRD function in Oman from ad hoc training to more systematic one that is based on training needs analysis.

The second study aimed at investigating the influence of national culture and institutions on HRM in Oman (Al-Hamadi and Budhwar, 2006). This study examined the perception of employees regarding the relative influence of aspects of national culture and institutional factors on HRM policies and practices in their organisations. The study was based on a survey that was carried out in 2002 at the Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, Oman Telecommunications Company, Civil Service, Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Water resources and Environment, and Petroleum Development Oman LLC. One thousand five hundred questionnaires were distributed (250 questionnaires in each organisation). Seven hundred and twelve respondents working in six organisations (both semi-private and public sectors) in the Sultanate of Oman were surveyed in this regard. A response rate of 48 per cent was achieved. The main finding was that Omani employees emphasised the influence of religion on HRM. Religion plays a major role in the people's daily lives in this country. In an Islamic country like Oman when the government decides on designing HRM policies it has to take into consideration the effects of religion on top of other factors, such as national culture, political ideology, economic conditions and the legal system.

Mellahi and Wood gave a thorough explanation of the influence of Islam in HRM models in the Muslim world. They argued that "Islamic values put strong emphasis on obedience to the leader and a heavy emphasis is put on forgiveness and compassion" (Mellahi and Wood,

2001: 144). This makes the HRM model that is used in the Muslim world closer to the soft HRM model, which focused on communication, motivation and leadership (Legge, 1995).

Armstrong and Baron described the soft approach to HRM as “it emphasises the need to gain the commitment the ‘heart and mind’ of employees through involvement, communication and other methods of developing a high commitment, high trust organisation” (Armstrong and Baron, 2002a: 6).

Another study by Unnikammu *et al.* (2006) attempted to replicate the well-established relationship between the high involvement human resource management practices and organisational performance with a sample of organisations from the Sultanate of Oman. Results from the survey of 100 Omani organisations indicated that after controlling for size, type of firm (publicly traded or closely held), nature of business activity and human resource development practices (highly selective staffing, extensive training and performance management) were positively related to organisational performance. Empowerment practices were not related to organisational performance (Unnikammu *et al.* 2006: 61).

Al-Balushi (2008: 53) argued that the HRM model applied in the private sector is more strategic than the one applied in the public sector, although certain organisations in the public sector (e.g. like the police force) have shifted their HR practices towards the strategic role. This echoes with Boxall and Purcell (2003: 6), who stated that the role of sectoral or industrial and societal factors in influencing the HR strategies of firms.

Raftery (2005: 44) analysed the changes in HR models in the Gulf Countries region (these changes are discussed in more detail in Table 3 below). He argued that the consultancy firms have played an important role to develop both HRM and HRD models in the region by adopting the Anglo-Saxon models and adapting them to suit the region’s culture and needs.



Raftery *et al.* (2005: 46) findings gave a clear picture of the evolution of HRM in the region including that in Oman.

It is very clear that HRM in Oman has advanced to the strategic role. However, Paauwe and Farndale (2005: 56) have pointed out to the need for more empirical studies with regard to HRM policies and practices in Oman. They argued that the finding of such studies would be of particular importance for policy makers to achieve national strategy aimed for HRM and HRD (Paauwe and Farndale, 2005: 56). This study has responded to this call by investigating the HRM-performance link in the police force in Oman.

| <b>YEAR</b>   | <b>NATURE OF HR MODEL</b>  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>1970's</b> | Personnel purely administrative, dumping ground for poor staff.  |
| <b>1980's</b> | Still administrative but developing some system, particularly in the areas of grade and salary structures and training.                        |
| <b>1990's</b> | Becoming tactical, emphasis on performance and incentive. Management acknowledges some values in the people inside.                            |
| <b>2000's</b> | Strategic, using technology, some HR metrics and added value. Managers sceptical as to the value of HR and their people skills are still poor. |

**Table 3** The Development of HRM in the Gulf Countries  
Source: Raftery *et al.* (2005)

As can be seen from chapter two that HRM is inextricably influenced by the external environment and its different systems that exist in that environment, including political, economic and social and cultural systems. These systems can either influence or hinder the implementation of HRM (Fomburn, 1984).

The next sections will discuss the national context of Oman and factors that have played an important role in developing HRM policies and practices in Oman.

### **3.2.1 THE NATIONAL CONTEXT OF OMAN**

Oman is an unusual nation, taken either within the context of the Arabian Gulf States, or the wider Arabic speaking world. Its uniqueness needs to be highlighted if certain, perhaps stereotypical perceptions of Arab society are not to be taken for granted. Therefore, it is necessary to describe the location precisely to create a full picture of Oman. Contextual factors are of key importance in the interpretation of almost any data related to HRM, and have a particular relevance in this case. The next sections will highlight factors that have influenced the HRM policies and practices in the ROP and Oman.

#### **3.2.1.1 THE GEOGRAPHY**

The Sultanate of Oman is located on the Southeast of the Arabian Peninsula in an area of approximately 309,500 square kilometres. It has 1,700 kilometres of coastline from the Strait of Hormuz in the north to Yemen in the south, and overlooks three seas: the Arabian Gulf (Persian Gulf), Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. It borders Saudi Arabia in the west, the United Arab Emirates in the Northwest and Yemen in the Southwest Figure 3 (Ministry of Information, 2010).

It is a country of few roads outside the capital and major towns, and much difficult terrain. The desert interior is sparsely populated, and temperatures there can read over 50 degrees Celsius in the summer. In the north, there are fertile coastal fringes and an inhospitable and mountainous interior. In the central area, a considerable empty desert quarter, while in parts of the southerly Dhofar region, capital Salalah, Oman experiences a climate during the monsoon season not unlike parts of the Indian subcontinent, with flora and fauna to match (Ministry of Information, 2010). Finally, the geography provides, as elsewhere in the region, the defining economic fact of Oman: oil and natural gas. Fossil resources act as powerful economic and social motors, transporting and transforming societies (though it should be noted not always in a simplistic exponential development).



**Figure 3** Map of Oman

### 3.2.1.2 THE RENAISSANCE – 1970

In 1970 there were less than 30 kilometres of paved roads in the entire country no national airport, no health care, no media of any kind, and apart from very basic Koranic schools (religious schools based on the recitation of the Koran) no educational infrastructure. After the beginning of oil exports in 1967, important and irreversible changes began to affect the country (Ministry of Information, 2010).

Oman speeded up change when Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, the present head of state, took power on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1970. Before then, Oman had been through different phases of independence and power to decline, isolation, semi-colonialism and internal political conflicts that had many negative impacts on all aspects of life. One of the new Sultan’s first reforms was to set in motion the foundation of modern government structures. He launched major development

programmes to upgrade educational and health facilities in a country plagued with illness, illiteracy and poverty. His regime opened a new chapter of development, and social and economic growth (Ministry of Information, 2010).

It may seem strange to use a name, which, in European terms, suggests a revolutionary flowering of talent a 'Renaissance' yet this is exactly what has happened since 1970. The transformation of a feudal society into the beginnings of a modern one, and there has been "a gradual transformation from a traditional, subsistence, agrarian and barter economy to a cash driven, consumer oriented, semi-industrialised service economy" (UNESCO 1996).

### **3.2.1.3 THE OMANI SOCIETY**

The Omani society is deeply conservative, especially in the interior. The effect of Islam, the religion of the majority, is evident in many everyday details, and works as a cohesive and constructive force. Despite all the changes since 1970, Omanis continue to display a strong attachment to their Arab and Islamic culture.

The Omani society is patriarchal, with men making most of the decisions dominating political, economic, social and family life (Ministry of Information, 2010). Although there are now women in both the Majlis A'Shura and the Sultan's Consultative Council, the overall socio-political complexion remains male dominated. It should be noted, however, that women are far from powerless, even in such a context; not only have they entered many varied professions (apart from teaching and service industries) their domestic position should not be considered universally passive (though laws still fail to offer substantive rights for women).

The social fabric in Oman is unique, encompassing people from many different ethnic groups: Arabs, Baluchis, East Africans (Zanzibaris), South Asians (Indian, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis) and a small group of Europeans. As a result, there are different languages spoken apart from the official Arabic, such as Baluchi, Urdu, and Swahili. English is the language of business,

and is increasingly becoming a *lingua franca* (Ministry of Information, 2010). Geo-political and historical factors have contributed to such a racial and linguistic blend.

Oman's location at the end of the Arabian Peninsula facilitates trading access within and outside the Gulf. Oman is almost a natural meeting place geographically between the Persian north, Indian east, and African south and Arabian and European west. Nor should it be forgotten that, for a considerable period, Oman was a political and economic entity when the rest of the Arab world was still under the Ottoman emporium. It had a considerable presence on the East Africa Coast from the Seventeenth century until the end of the Nineteenth century in what is now Tanzania, and on the Makran coast in what is now Pakistan (Ministry of Information, 2010).

This presence was supported by a considerable sea power, and extensive diplomatic contacts (Oman was the first Arab state to establish diplomatic ties with the U.S.A.). Omanis left to develop trading infrastructure, and there was considerable miscegenation. Many descendants have returned to settle in Oman after 1970, either attracted by the better opportunities of a modernising state, or avoiding conflict and collapse elsewhere.

A major factor in the development of a racially mixed state has been the country's dependence, since 1970, on expatriate labour to build and maintain infrastructure. Although many expatriates have little or no legal status as Omani nationals, this diversity has had a great influence over the attitudes and outlook of the Omani people in general. Omanis are, in many ways, more tolerant of other cultures than in general in Arabia, yet adhere to their own traditions. Another effect of the dependence on such foreign labour is the dependency attitude some Omanis exhibit.

The Omani population is, globally, one of the most youthful, with more than 41 per cent under the age of 15 years. (Ministry of Development, 1997) This means that, out of a population of

2,496,438 (Census Report, 2010), more than one million are of school age. This has significant implications for police organisations like the ROP, which need to continuously improve its services and security measures to deal with different challenges that result from youth society.

Despite the growth in population, Oman is still a large country most of which is unoccupied or sparsely populated. The breakdown of age groups suggests that the dynamics of change in Oman will largely be driven by demographics, and that in many cases the most that policy can do is reflect this (Ministry of Information, 2010).

#### **3.2.1.4 THE ADMINISTRATIVE & POLITICAL SYSTEM**

Administratively, Oman is divided into three governorates and five regions, namely: Governorate of Muscat, Dhofar and Musandam, and the Region of Al-Batinah, Al-Dhahirah, Al-Dakhiliyah, Al-Sharqiyah, and Al-Wusta. Each of these governorates and regions are subdivided into Wilayates (states or towns), totalling to 61 in all (Ministry of Information, 2010).

The political system in Oman is based on the principle of active popular participation in the development process and close coordination and integration between the state's executive, parliamentary and judicial institutions (Al-Balushi, 2008). Hamoudi (2006: 217) described this participation process as “a reflection of the Omani government strategy to engage concerned governmental and public bodies in the feedback mechanism to assess and improve on the government performance.”

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said has been the Head of State since the July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1970. Rulings are issued and carried out in the name of His Majesty the Sultan through a Cabinet of Ministers. His Majesty the Sultan is the Head of the Cabinet, the responsibilities of which, as outlined in Article 44 of the Basic Statute of The State, include: “proposing draft laws and decrees, looking after citizens' interest, ensuring that citizens are provided with essential services, improving their economic, health and cultural standards, defining general economic,

social and administrative development goals and policies, proposing the means and measures required for their implementation in such a way as to ensure good use of the available financial, economic and human resources.”

In addition to the cabinet of ministers, the government’s political structure consists of the Council of Oman, which was formed in December 1997. The council consists of two chambers, the Majlis Al-Dawleh (Council of State), and the Majlis Al-Shura (Consultative Council). The council’s main responsibility is to offer advice to His Majesty and work closely in coordination with Majlis Al-Shura (Consultative Council), thus strengthening Oman’s consultative process and widening participation in the public life of the Sultanate (Ministry of Information, 2010).

The Basic Law of the State, promulgated under Royal Decree No. (101/96) on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1996, affirms the principles that have guided the state policy. The law lays down a legal framework from references that both governs the functions of the different authorities and also separates their powers. It contains provisions covering the Head of State, the Councils of Ministries and the Judiciary, and includes references to the specialised councils, financial affairs and the Council of State. At the same time it protects and guarantees the safeguards of freedom, dignity and the rights of the individuals (Al-Maskery, 1992). The Sultanate’s organisational framework is led by the Sultan Qaboos (The Head of State) and he represents the highest and final authority and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Royal Oman Police. He is the symbol of national unity as well as its guardian and defender (Ministry of Information, 2010).

The existing police force is called the Royal Oman Police (ROP). It has come to existence after his Majesty the Sultan Qaboos bin Said took over the government on 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 1970. Since its establishment, ROP services cover the whole area of the Sultanate, which constitutes

five geographical regions and three governorates. Different aspects of ROP that are related to the research scope will be discussed in chapter four.

### **3.2.1.5 THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The government's basic goal since the beginning of the 'Renaissance' has been to achieve growth and progress in the economic and social sectors. To achieve this, the government adopted a comprehensive development plan on the basis of a free market and competition to activate and stimulate the national economy, raise its efficiency and growth rate (Ministry of National Economy, 2010).

The design and implementation of these developmental plans has been affected widely by the oil revenue, which is considered as the major source of income. The oil and gas revenues represent 79 per cent of the total revenues (Ministry of Information, 2010). As a result of the sharp fluctuation in the oil prices worldwide, Oman has started a process of reducing its dependence on oil revenues and diversifying its economy.

Major projects have been launched in areas such as ports, telecommunication, minerals, fisheries, refinery, seawater extraction, polypropylene and tourism. The aim of these projects is to develop new economic capabilities and to create employment opportunities for the citizens. The economy has been reinforced by the Sultanate's policy of boosting domestic and foreign investment and creating an attractive investment climate, while increasing government spending (Ministry of National Economy, 2010).

The Ministry of National Economy is involved in a programme to create a 'friendly' legal framework for foreign investors and is signing reciprocal agreements with various global partners to help encourage and protect investment. The non-oil sector share in GDP increased from 31.6 per cent in 1970 to 59 per cent in 2009. The oil sector share in GDP retracted from 68 percent in 1970 to about 41 percent in 2009. Also, its share in government revenues



decreased to 66 per cent in 2009 in comparison with 100 per cent of total revenues in 1970. In 2009, foreign investment in the Sultanate rose to 51.6 per cent from 0 per cent in 1970. The United Kingdom was the leading player in this field with direct investments totalling to 835 million Omani Riyal (Ministry of National Economy, 2010).

The government has instituted policies and created greater opportunities for the citizens to participate in the economy and contribute to the prosperity of the country. Therefore, the success of these measures depends upon effective HRM/HRD policies that aim to develop a work force capable of supporting the efforts made by the government to succeed in today's modern globalisation, and highly competitive regional and international economies.

#### **3.2.1.6 “VISION 2020”**

To deal with the different challenges and to enhance the performance of the economy, Oman launched a long-term development plan called “Vision 2020”. Allen and Rigsbee state that “Vision 2020 is not merely a development plan, but a blueprint that will take Oman, according to the Omani authorities, two decades into the new millennium” (Allen and Rigsbee, 2000: 20)

Al-Harthy argued that “the achievement of all the dimensions of the “Vision 2020” relies on accomplishing economic equilibrium and sustainable growth, the diversification of income sources and private sector development” (Al-Harthy, 2000: 55) The vision's main objectives have been summarised by the Ministry of National Economy (2004b) as follows;

“Developing human resources and the capabilities of the Omani people to generate and manage technological changes efficiently, in addition to facing the continuously changing local and international conditions, in a way that ensures maintaining the Omani tradition.”

Thus, the purpose of the vision is to qualify Omanis by raising their skills, standards and abilities to face the Twenty First century. Therefore, “Vision 2020” has been translated into practical development plans that have attached significant importance to human resources development (Allen and Rigsbee, 2000).

### **3.2.1.7 OMANISATION**

Human resources are a precious resource to the country. This is especially true for developing countries, such as Oman, in their efforts towards development and modernisation programme. At the beginning of the 1970s, the entire work force in Oman’s civil service consisted of 1750 personnel at various levels, 93 per cent of whom were Omanis (Ministry of Information, 2006).

The policy of Omanisation is a national investment in the human capital to improve the country’s skills and knowledge. To enhance the economy, human capital must be developed and deployed to gain optimal national involvement and labour participation. Developing educational policies to meet the needs of current and emerging labour markets is a great challenge (Al-Yousif, 1995: 102).

Although the current programme is directed primarily to secondary school and trade skills, graduation places young Omanis in the workforce to undertake on-the-job training, with the aim of replacing skilled expatriates with an equally skilled national labour force. This policy is to be rigorously applied if it is to achieve its objective. Joyce (1995: 120) cites Oman’s Minister of Civil Service statement:

“It is not intended through the Omanisation policy to convert the government into a social security system, that is, a means of supporting citizens to passively gain work knowledge; that the purpose of the policy is improved productivity.”

Omanisation relies on a number of assumptions that are at risk of failing through the rapid growth and slower maturation of the nation. “Vision 2020” gave Oman 25 years to reach and establish equilibrium as a self-sustaining nation (Al-Lamki, 2000; Budhwar *et al.* 2002; Peterson, 2004).

Thus, all of Oman’s Five Year Plans to develop the country towards “Vision 2020” focused on employment and the latest Royal Decree No. 35 in 2003, supported Omanisation specifically for the private sector (Ministry of National Economy, 2004a). On the 26<sup>th</sup> National Day speech (18<sup>th</sup> November, 1996), the Sultan Qaboos bin Said emphasised the importance of Omanisation:

“The current Five Year Plan has specifically financially provided for education and vocational training in order to qualify the Omani workforce to progressively replace foreigners. It is vital that this education and training should continually improve in order to meet the needs of the labour market in both skilled and semi-skilled Omani personnel.”

As a result of the massive development plan started in 1970, more and more skilled manpower was required. Therefore, the government has included the Seven Year Development Plans that have been implemented since 1970 aimed to develop local work force and to create work opportunities for them. The reason for this is because Oman’s population has doubled twice between 1970 and 2009 (Ministry of Information, 2010).

Oman’s population was 2.694 million in 2010. The current rate of population growth in Oman is 2.3 per cent, which is considerably higher than the world average of 1.6 per cent and that of Middle East and North Africa (World Bank, 1998). The most noticeable feature of Oman’s indigenous population is that 40.4 per cent of them are under 15 years of age. This signifies that more than 738,903 nationals will enter the workforce within the next ten to eighteen

years. Oman is, therefore, predominantly a young population country (Ministry of Information, 2010).

This high growth rate of the indigenous population has led to rapid expansion of the working age population, which has been mainly absorbed to date by two main options of employment. The first is the government sector with more than 132,000 employees while the private sector employed only 98,500 employees (Ministry of National Economy, 2009). This heavy reliance on the public sector for employment has resulted in trapping human capital in unproductive jobs, thus limiting its contribution to the overall economic growth.

The second option for employment has been to gradually reduce the number of visiting workers from a peak level of 619,000 in 1995 to 425,000 in 2009, which represented a reduction of 31 per cent. However, both these avenues of employment have failed to absorb the growing workforce and the official (conservative) unemployment rate has now reached an estimated 15 per cent (Ministry of National Economy, 2009).

With regard to the population distribution by sex, Oman seems to be in a stable position at this stage as the ratio is 102 males for every 100 females as compared to 106 for the global average cent. This is primarily attributed to the dominance of male expatriates who outnumber female expatriates by a margin of roughly 3:1 (Ministry of National Economy, 2009).

This signifies a comfort zone for the government in the short term as Oman's total workforce is predominantly male in composition, accounting for 83 per cent of the workforce. The under representation of the local females in the domestic workforce can be attributed mainly to religious and cultural beliefs that favour house related activities for women (Al-Lamki, 2000). This situation is changing, however, as female participation in the workforce has been increasing over the past two decades or so. Recent figures indicate that female nationals

joining the government workforce have increased from 4 per cent in 1980 to more than 37 per cent in 2009 (Ministry of Information, 2010). Similarly, the private sector has registered an increasing trend as national female participation raised from 10 per cent in 1994 to 23 per cent in 2009. This increase in national female employment is related to the fact that the female enrolment ratio at tertiary education level (which qualifies them for better jobs) has increased from 0.8 per cent in 1984 to 12.9 per cent in 2005 (Al-Lamki, 2000).

Increasing social openness to modernity and the rising cost of living have also contributed to females playing a more active and productive role in the national workforce. No doubt, this gradual demographic development will add more pressure on the government's policy makers to accelerate their efforts in creating jobs. It is estimated that more than 53,000 new jobs must be created annually in the next thirteen years to keep up with the pace of new entrants to the workforce (Ministry of National Economy, 2009).

These projections suggest that more than 689,000 new jobs must be created by the year 2020 to accommodate the new labour force entrants and absorb those who are currently unemployed. Furthermore, long run forecasts suggest that the rates of labour growth will not ease until the year 2020 when they are expected to fall to more moderate levels allowing population growth to become reasonably controlled. It is clear from these figures that the demographic pressures will continue to present a major challenge for Oman's economy and society in the near future. It is equally clear that the country needs to implement new medium and long-term strategies urgently for economic diversification and a sustained period of high rates of economic growth to reap the demographic dividend (Ministry of National Economy, 2009).

Most of the private sector organisations preferred to employ expatriates because the wages paid to them is less than those paid to the Omani employees (Al-Khaburi 1998; Al-Maskery 1992; Rassekh 2003). As a result, the public sector has largely achieved the objective of

Omanisation, whereas this is not reflected in the private sector (Goodliffe, 2005). Omanisation is a strategy with some risk (Al-Balushi, 2008). In 2009, there were 1.01 million Omanis of working age. Three quarters of the Omani workers were under 36 years of age and each year another 50,000 enter the workforce. But Oman's total workforce was 658,000 comprising 467,000 known expatriates and a mere 191,000 Omanis. To absorb 50,000 Omanis per year, without addressing the existing shortfall of jobs and with no further expatriates employed, an economic growth rate of 7.5 per cent must be sustained.

### **3.2.1.7.1 OMANISATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

Although the public sector has largely achieved the objective of Omanisation, this is not reflected in the private sector, where private sector employers generally do not, or cannot, select Omanis for skilled work (Goodliffe, 2005). Studies and reports on the Omani job market indicate that expatriate workers are preferred by private sector employers (Al-Balushi, 2008; Al-Khaburi, 1998; Al-Maskery, 1992; Rassekh, 2003; Sajwani, 1997).

Oman's expatriate labour originates primarily (and historically) from the Indian sub-continent with menial workers at one end of the salary scale and professional and managerial positions at the other. The Omanisation policy includes incentives for private firms to hire locally, offering tax incentives and refunds for employers' training costs for Omanis, but demands employment of each trainee upon completion of training (UNESCO 2006).

The question of foreign workers' replacement by Omani nationals has become one of the most sensitive issues in the economic and political debate. There are calls to evaluate and assess the Omanisation policy in the private sector from a number of researchers (Al-Farsi, 1997; Al-Harthy, 2000; Sajwani, 1997; Valeri, 2005). Despite Omanisation of specific industries which receive financial and other policy incentives: oil (78 % Omani employment), gas (74 % Omani employment), banks (92 % Omani employment) and, arguably, insurance

(56%) the Omanisation policy has not reached its target (Ministry of National Economy, 2005).

Informed comment attributes the areas of non-Omanisation to, firstly, inadequate educational standards for certain occupations, and a more pervasive inability to instil work ready skills in Omani youth, that is, a deficiency in job application skills and lack of work experience. Secondly, there is a long-standing issue of insufficient communication between education institutions and organisations to integrate industry trends into coursework at an appropriate standard (Al-Lamki, 1998; Al-Lamki, 2000; Al-Maskery, 1992; Valeri, 2005). Al-Lamki (1998) confirmed graduates' preferences for the public sector because of remuneration, conditions and environment. Sixty five per cent of her respondents preferred to work in the public sector.

Graduates also lacked information (awareness) on private sector job opportunities and as a corollary, private sector employers discriminated against Omani graduates by stipulating considerable work experience (up to five years) and English language skills (Al-Lamki, 1998: 392; Rayan, 1998). Researchers continue to call for Omanisation reform, including issues of appropriate skills and knowledge (Al-Lamki, 2002: 83; Sajwani, 1997: 5).

A survey conducted by Ernst and Young (2003) indicated that the majority of large organisations had plans and well defined strategies to implement Omanisation, including training programs to enhance technical skills for Omani employees. In the private sector, opportunities for Omanisation lie in the service activity centres, where 187,000 jobs are taken by expatriates, and construction and manufacturing with 167,000 jobs.

#### **3.2.1.7.2 OMANISATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

Public sector employees in Oman consists of all persons employed by ministries, public authorities, institutions, councils, authorities and bodies with separate legal status (Hamoudi,

2006). Al-Balushi (2008: 120) argued that “the tendency for Omani school leavers to concentrate on government jobs may be attributed to the following assumptions: (a) government policy to provide employment to indigenous job seekers (Birks and Sinclair, 1987); and (b) the condition of employment such as: lifelong jobs, less working hours, single shift work, longer weekends, holidays and leave (Ali, 2002).”

The public sector first embraced Omanisation in 1988 and by 1999 the majority of the ministries and offices reached 86 per cent Omani employees. This percentage has increased to 90 per cent in 2009 (Ministry of National Economy, 2009). A statistical analysis characterises the Omani public service as male dominated (63,000 men vs. 36,000 women).

A preponderance of female Omani public sector workers in middle wage classifications is mirrored by statistics showing that more than nine out of ten Omani female public servants work for the Ministries of Education or Health. Again there is preponderance of qualified Omani women. Well over eight out of every ten Omani female public servants have post-secondary school qualifications, and despite their numbers, dominate all Omani public service qualifications of diploma, post-diploma and bachelors’ degrees.

Omani men, on the other hand, hold their job positions despite indifferent educational levels. In fact, they surpass women’s qualification strata only when Masters and PhD levels are reached. Al-Balushi (2008: 144) related this to two main factors: the tendency towards male domination in the Omani society and to the wrong implementation of the equal opportunities and gender discrimination policies. As education is a qualification for a government position, this tendency to employ men at similar or higher grades on grounds other than superior qualifications is one of the weaknesses in the application of human capital theory (Arrow, 1973; Caputo, 2002; Lundberg and Startz, 1983; Sunstein, 1997).



Omanisation in the Royal Oman Police has increased from 4 percent in 1970 to 95 percent in 2009. The police force in Oman is considered as one of leading public sector organisations that has set up HRM and HRD plan to localise different jobs (Royal Oman Police Annual Report, 2009). The HRM models in Royal Oman Police will be discussed thoroughly in chapter four of this research.

### **3.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter offered an overview of human resource management in Oman. Factors related to the development of HRM in Oman were discussed including the national context of Oman, its political system, economic development, “Vision 2020” and Omanisation. Although it should not be assumed that Oman is quite unlike developed countries in every way, there should be an awareness that, in HRM, there are variations in context, ideology and practice which are very important to the production and analysis of this research. In some ways Oman is a nation of old and traditional practices, with a complex perception of itself. In other words, the new Oman is growing up with the influences of global media and the huge demographic shift towards youth. All these aspects are relevant to this study design and data analysis as they have direct or indirect effect on HRM policies and practices in Oman.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN**  
**POLICE ORGANISATION**

**4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will discuss aspects related to the development of HRM in police organisations. It will give insights about the factors that help to shape this development such as policing models, policing leadership, policing culture and strategic management in police organisations. It will also investigate HRM in the public sector. Finally, a contextual description of the police organisation in Oman will be given.

**4.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF HRM IN POLICE ORGANISATION**

The conventional police organisation is a product of its historical military origins and more modern theories of bureaucratic structuring and organisation. In response to the persistent problems of coordination and control of the police work, the conventional police organisation became a centralised, specialised and formalised organisation, emphasising stability and operational autonomy (Chan, 2000).

The hierarchical and stratified nature of authority and power in the police organisations encouraged traditional approach to the organisation and management of police operations. Suspicious of change and protective of its autonomy, many police organisations have remained organised in a traditional bureaucratic manner, unchanged by either advances in organisational theory or a changing task environment (Moore and Braga, 2003).

In recent decades, crime has increased in sophistication and has taken on many new facets. The global nature of the trade in illicit drugs, the development of technology which enables

huge black markets in money and other negotiable securities, and the organisation of crime such that its exponents often command the resources of a small army all demonstrated this reality. Everywhere, societies have become more sophisticated as a consequence of better education, greater access to information and improved standards of living (Fleming and George, 2000; Shadmi, 1994).

The New Public Management (NPM) wave, which has swept across the public landscapes all across the world encouraged police organisations to reform their long established military model of policing, police organisation, management and operations (Godfrey, 2007; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004).

Loveday (2008: 363) argued that the workforce modernisation initiatives in the police organisation in the UK have been encouraged by the influence of four key factors: (1) pressures to improve the quality and efficiency of service delivery; (2) the need to secure flexibility over labour utilisation and pay arrangements; (3) the desirability of eroding professional and quasi-professional job controls; and (4) the purported shift to a more strategic approach to the management of people. Changes in other police organisations have been cited by different researchers, for example in Britain (Loveday, 1999), in Canada (McKenna and Evans, 1994) and in Oman (Al-Harthy, 2006).

Zhao *et al.* argued that successful police executives are driving organisational change through an on-going strategic management process that seeks opportunities to enhance operational efficiencies by identifying internal issues and external influences that hinder organisational sustainability (Zhao *et al.* 2002: 5). It focuses on the management's responsibility for implementation to create a customer focused, high performance-learning organisation.

The strategic management approach has helped police organisations to integrate HRM strategy with policing business strategy (Loveday, 2008). Police organisations have started to

realise the importance of the HRM model to improve their performance to cope with the stakeholders expectations (Ryan, 1996). Drummond *et al.* (2000: 571) argued that HRM has helped police forces become more professional, accessible and accountable to the public by providing a more cost effective and 'customer' responsive police service.

Police organisations like other public sector organisations have recognised that getting the right HR policy and management has to be at the core of any sustainable solution to policing performance (Carter, 2000). There are a growing number of studies providing evidence for the fact that the human resources of an organisation, when aligned to strategic business planning and organisational culture, can be a source of good performance (Boyne *et al.* 1999; Khatri, 2000). The role of HRM in developing policing model has been investigated by many scholars, for example, in the UK (Dick and Jankowicz, 2001), in Australia (McLaughlin, 2007), in Canada (Scripture, 1997), in Oman (Saif, 2004).

McLaughlin stated that police organisations around the world seem to use models that are related to two main streams in HRM: (1) the classical personnel models which focuses on traditional perspective of people management, and (2) the advanced SHRM model which has adopted a cross functional approach, extending beyond functional tasks like selection, training, compensation, and performance appraisal, into areas such as the strategic alignment of HRM with organisational business decision making, to maximise employees performance (McLaughlin, 2007: 118).

Bach (1999) argued that the NPM is held to embody a more purposive style of human resource management in the police force in the UK with the emphasis on generating increases in the employee flexibility and commitment, and thus enhancing organisational performance. The overall effect of NPM is that HRM is experiencing a development in its operating practices (Hays and Kearney, 2001).

A study by the United State Office of Personnel Management (1999: 2) called for HRM model in police organisations to demonstrate its business value and become more responsive to mission related needs.

In Oman, a report by the Directorate of Development and Scrutiny in the Royal Oman police, (1999: 3) showed that the new project to be launched is to revamp HR function in ROP to enhance its capability to play the strategic role.

Human resource management within police organisations have been developed not simply to justify their existence, but to demonstrate their critical importance to the police organisation (Lawday, 2000). However, Cope *et al.* (1997: 102) argued that it is possible for the HR function within police organisations to adopt a more proactive strategic role to build credibility, demonstrating an understanding of the policing business and keeping people issues at the heart of business decision making.

The literature portrays HRM systems to support the implementation of business strategy (Gollan, 2005; Huselid, 1995). Police forces in different countries such as the USA, the UK and Oman have their business and HR strategies. This research will study SHRM in the Royal Oman Police by exploring the relationship between HRM and performance using Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model (refer to chapter two for more details). This study is unique because the relationship between those two streams has not been investigated in a policing context before.

There are different factors that play important roles in the development of HRM in police organisations. These factors include model of policing, police leadership, police culture and HRM in the public sector organisation. The next sections, will explain these factors because of their importance in shaping and directing the HRM in police organisations and operational philosophies and practices.

### **4.2.1 MODELS OF POLICING**

The extent to which police systems in different societies vary is a subject of considerable debate (Mawby, 1999). Bayley and Sheering (1996: 590) argued that while differences between police systems remained, the modern police were distinct from their predecessors in terms of their specialisation, professionalism and state ownership. The reason for these differences is related to that the policing model underpins the police organisation in terms of (a) its legitimacy which implies that the police are granted some degree of monopoly within society by those with the power to authorise; (b) structure which implies that the police organisation are an organised force, with some degree of specialisation and with a code of practice; (c) function which implies that the role of the police is concentrated on the maintenance of law and order and the prevention and detection of crimes (Mawby, 1999).

These models represent the mental models and philosophy that direct and shape culture, practices, and roles. HRM is one of the areas that have been influenced by these models. In some police organisations HRM plays a maintenance role and is dismissed as a poor cost of doing business. While in others it is considered as an added value function playing strategic roles focusing effectively on managing and developing the right level of employees' performance (Al-Harthi, 2008). The next sections will discuss different policing models, which are the Anglo-Saxon, Continental, Colonial and Community-Policing.

#### **4.2.1.1 THE ANGLO-SAXON MODEL**

While the watershed moment for the English police is undoubtedly the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829, the roots of the Anglo-Saxon model pre-dated this legislation (Mawby, 1999). From the early stages of policing in England, the source of legitimacy for this model rested in the local communities and the civilian authorities. The Metropolitan Police Act of 1829 recognised that for the police force to operate successfully, that is to enforce the law and to

exert authority, it needed the citizens consent (Reiner, 2000). Without this source of power, the police would suffer public rejection.

The Anglo-Saxon model is also defined by its decentralised structure. In the early stages of this model, decentralisation was inherent to the local policing systems that developed within various parishes and provinces. Given the local nature of policing, the administrative structure tended to be relatively flat. Constables were under the supervision of local manors, justices of the peace, and the court and the watchman and beadle were accountable to parish vestries (Reynolds, 1998).

In the Anglo-Saxon model, the function of the police is centred on crime prevention. Corresponding with tradition, the Metropolitan Police Force was focused on crime prevention through consent and integration with neighbourhoods, not through heavy-handed coercion (Das and Verma, 1998).

This model is applied in other countries beside the UK, such as the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Manning, 2003). The current UK policing have drifted away from some aspects of the Anglo-Saxon model's principles such as decentralisation. The Home Office still controls policing standards and policies in the UK, although there are 52 separate forces or constabularies (Lawday, 2000).

Lawday (2000: 5) argued that there is a deep tension between the local force and the Home Office public security agenda because of the desire of the former to maintain independence. Recently the Home Office has moved towards creating national formations such as the National Crime Squad (NCS) and the National Criminal Intelligence Services (NCIS), to improve policing performance and capabilities. These agencies have transcended local constabularies' boundaries. However, the case for further rationalisation of policing services

by means of increased central control continues to raise difficult questions, particularly where policing is concerned with problems which are highly localised (Mawby and Wright, 2008).

The Conservative and the Labour Governments have tried to reform the police service in England and Wales. This was done through reforming pay arrangements, promotion of the government partnership based relations between management and unions, and a particular emphasis on the need to manage performance more effectively (Bach, 2002; Bach and Winchester, 2003). The transformation in the public sector in the UK towards the 'New Public Management' during the Thatcher government in the 1980s has influenced the police organisation to reform their structures (Savage, 2003).

The Audit Commission had questioned the two tiers divisional and sub-divisional structure operated by most forces, and had commended the concept of the single tier Basic Command Unit (BCU). Subsequently, the Home Office and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) had strongly encouraged forces down this route. Drummond *et al.* argued that in the UK, the Government's 'best value' initiatives and the adoption of consultation processes, within strategy formulation, have driven the police service closer to a market orientated approach (Drummond *et al.* 2000: 571). Such approaches aim to put the customer at the centre of the organisation's activities.

#### **4.2.1.2 THE CONTINENTAL MODEL**

The continental model is exemplified in France, Germany, Italy and Spain (Verma, 2005). This model has its developmental roots in a centralised, monarchy system of government (Mawby, 1999). It is this autocratic government that provides the primary source of power or legitimacy. In this model, the state gives direct legitimacy to the police, which are further broadened by the legal system.



The police system in a continental model is more highly centralised and hierarchical, much like a military organisation. For example, the French Gendarmerie is ultimately accountable to the Minister of War and its administrative system and uniform. Armed officers often make it difficult to discern between the police and the army. The function of the police in the continental model is more varied than within the Anglo-Saxon model because of the reliance on the Roman law rather than the Common Law (Hortorn, 1995).

In accordance with the Roman law, the police force is assumed to protect society, to ensure the welfare of the state and the citizens, and to improve society. In other words, it has criminal, social welfare and regulatory responsibilities (Mawby, 1999). Within the continental model, police tasks may include such responsibilities as law enforcement, overseeing public works, monitoring the registration of people and possessions (Verma, 2005).

#### **4.2.1.3 THE COLONIAL MODEL**

The colonial model originated in the British colonies such as India, most of the African countries and in Ireland (Das and Verma, 1998). Das and Verma (1998: 354) argued that “at the basic level, the colonial model was designed to police a foreign land to ensure security of the imperial elements and colonial interests.” Most colonial governments thought that political conditions in the colony eliminated the possibility of an Anglo-Saxon model. The idea that the police could be unarmed, decentralised, focused on crime prevention through persuasion, and intimately linked to local communities and authorities seemed antithetical to preserving the colonial government. Therefore, unlike the British model, colonial police are accountable to the rulers, not to local authorities. Thus, the source of legitimacy lies outside the country’s border and is in the hand of the colonising government.

The fact that this source of authority is not geographically or ethnically native, the police force also, tends to be centralised and coercive (Hortorn, 1995). Simply, the colonial police act as an instrument of control for the ruling government. Accordingly, their function is to

protect colonial interest politically and commercially, and to maintain public order both with the goal of preserving control of the ruling government (Das and Verma, 1998). The police force in Gubiltar is good example of the colonial model.

#### **4.2.1.4 THE COMMUNITY – POLICING MODEL**

A growing body of literature has increasingly demonstrated the superiority of the community policing, and hence advocated it as a replacement for traditional policing methods (Punch *et al.* 2002; Silverman, 1999; Trojanowicz *et al.* 1998; Zhao and Thurman, 1997).

This policing approach is deemed to be more advanced in the Anglo-Saxon culture; particularly in the UK and the USA because it reorients policing strategy from one of reactive crime control to proactive crime prevention through the active involvement of local communities. Zhao *et al.* argued that community policing has come to existence as a part of a reform that is considered as a breaking point throughout the history of American policing because it represents an overhaul of almost every facet of public safety mission including community mobilisation, innovative programs, and philosophical change (Zhao *et al.* 2006: 3).

The idea of community policing rests on building a partnership with the community for problem solving. For the police, this can be done in various ways for a variety of purposes, ranging from the maintenance of order to offering community services (Marenin, 2002). The most basic form is the improvement of relations between the police and the public to ease mutual tensions. A further step is to cultivate better community relations to control crime. A more superior form is the active pursuit of popular input and public collaboration to prevent crime and improve police services. The highest form is the forging of a strategic partnership between the police and the public in which the decision making power is shared between the two groups to work towards a crime free community with a high quality of life (Bayley and Sheering, 1996). Hawdon argued “there is also a consensus, that community policing, with its

emphasis on seeking resident input and ‘getting to know’ the community, increases perceptions of procedural justice more than traditional policing does” (Hawdon, 2008: 183).

Community policing has emerged as a new philosophy of policing that has completely changed the contours of policing in the modern society by shifting the policing strategy from that of passive crime control to active crime prevention and ultimately, changing the nature of policing from that of a police force to police services (Carter, 1995; Peak and Glensor, 1996). Through this policing strategy, the accountability of the police is enhanced as policing authority is decentralised to the local communities and the decision making power is shared between the police and citizens (Becker and Becker, 2002).

The success of community policing can best be measured in terms of its ability to effect a change in attitudes and behaviour on the part of both the police and the citizens, to promote mutual understanding, increase friendly interaction, and ultimately facilitate close co-operation (Lewis *et al.* 1999; Riley, 1999).

However, there is still a lack of consensus about a universal set of criteria for police performance in general and evaluation of the community policing model in particular (Cardarelli and McDevitt, 1995; Purpura, 2001). This study aims to close this gap by discussing different aspects related to the relationship between performance and HRM policies in a police organisation.

#### **4.2.2 THE POLICING LEADERSHIP**

Effective leadership is important for all organisations including the police. The significance of the leader-follower relationship for the police is similar to other organisations because it is imperative for the follower to be aware of the importance and value of the task outcomes (Alsabrook *et al.* 2001).

Leadership involves the assumption that one person exerts intentional influence over another. The leader guides, provides structure, and facilitates activities and relationships within a group (Yukl, 2006). Yukl stated that leadership has been defined as “the art of influencing, directing, guiding, and controlling others in such a way as to obtain their willing obedience, confidence, respect, and total cooperation in the accomplishment of an objective” (Yukl, 2006: 43) This renders the police leadership as largely indistinguishable from any other type of leadership. However, the significance of the large degree of discretion in police decision making, which cannot be delegated a wide range of responsibilities and various other factors including instant decision making, the emotional demands of policing and reliance on individual’s skill, judgment and initiative, justifies the view that policing is indeed unique (Adlam and Villiers, 2003).

Bradley (2009: 216) explained this view, as they argued that police leadership combines both generic and sector specific demands and functions, constituting a distinct form of practice. While recognising that police leadership skills are in part generic, Bradley identified three distinctive areas which they argued impose distinctive demands on the police leadership, namely: (a) the constitutional and legal context (including the issue of the exercise of discretion inherent in the office of constable); (b) the variety and complexity of the nature of the police work; (c) the psychological and ethical pressure imposed on practitioners and the need for senior leadership to take them into account (Bradley, 2009: 7).

There are many models, theories, and types of leadership which lend themselves more towards success and influence than others. According to Choi (2006: 55), charismatic leadership has three core competencies: vision, empathy, and empowerment. It is argued that charismatic leadership is a powerful model for influencing followers. However, even this style can have a negative influence if the leaders’ motives are exploitative, non-egalitarian, and self-aggrandising (Northouse, 2001).

Blanchard and Hersey (1996) discussed situational leadership. They stated that effective leaders must be able to identify the demands of their situation and adjust their leadership style to fit. Alternatively, the leader must change some or all of the variables. These variables include the leader's organisation, supervisors, peers, and the job demands (Blanchard and Hersey, 1996: 44).

There are two types of leadership styles often described these are transactional and transformational. Tucker and Russell (2004: 99) stated that transformational leaders are innovative in nature and are more concerned with the quality of life of their followers. Transformational leaders provide energy producing characteristics. Transformational leaders motivate followers to create new and greater change. On the other hand, transactional leaders use power and authority that already exists. (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Dessler, 2001; Northouse, 2001; Stone *et al.* 2004).

In general, transformational leadership have been found to be more effective in both the long and the short term than the transactional leadership. This is because it leads to greater effort and commitment by the staff through providing for self-confidence, development of learning and communicating a vision which develops into new ways of thinking (Dobby *et al.* 2004). Transformational leadership has five types of behaviour, which are: idealised influence (attribute), idealised influence (behaviour), individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation. These types of leadership behaviour instil pride, faith, respect, and a sense of mission (Kearney and Gebert, 2009; Tucker and Russell, 2004).

A specific research on police leadership was undertaken in the UK in 2004 to inform the Police Leadership Development Board on ways in which police leadership needed to be changed (Dobby *et al.* 2004). The conclusion of this research was that leadership behaviours described as transformational should be provided by every police leader who has direct line

management responsibilities for other staff, on the basis that it is more likely to result in higher performing and better motivated teams (Dobby *et al.* 2004: 25)

The transformation leadership may be explained by understanding the pre-requisites of the resource based SHRM model (Agashae and Barton, 2001). In the discourse of the new economy and the resource-based perspective, the prime task of the leadership is to top, organise and transform individuals and collective knowledge into profit (Holmberg and Strannegard, 2005). This style of leadership will develop the firm's human endowment and cultivate commitment, flexibility, innovation and quality performance (Bratton *et al.* 2004).

There are a number of scholars (e.g. Agashae and Bratton, 2001; Groves, 2005; Kotter, 1996; Purcell *et al.* 2003) whom have made an explicit link between learning, leadership and organisational performance and change. The Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model considers leadership as one of the important pillars that impact the relationship between HRM and organisational performance. This study will investigate this part to determine its effect in the HRM-performance link in the Royal Oman Police.

#### **4.2.3 THE POLICING CULTURE**

There are multiple definitions of organisational culture. Hofstede defined organisational culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one organisation from another” (Hofstede, 2001: 238). Several scholars defined organisational culture as a wide range of social phenomena, including a collective sum of beliefs, values, symbols, meanings, behaviour, and assumptions held by organisational members or a social group (Ogbonna and Harris, 1998b; Scott *et al.* 2003).

Hofstede emphasised that there is no consensus in the definition of organisational culture. However, Hofstede stated that most scholars would probably agree that the concept referred to is (a) ‘holistic’ (describing a whole which is more than the sum of its part); (b) historically

determined (reflecting the history of the organisation); (c) related to things anthropologists study (like rituals and symbols); (d) socially constructed (created and preserved by the group of people who together form the organisation); and (e) soft and difficult to change (Hofstede, 2001: 238).

The police culture is variously described in police studies as a set of shared values, group attitudes, agreed upon behavioural norms, informal 'craft' rules, a set of common understandings and informal guides for action (Gratton, 2005; Skolnick, 1994). Nickels and Verma (2008: 187) stated that the police culture has the following characteristics:

1. Rank-based authority structure: authority resides solely in rank assigned position power.
2. Highly centralised administration and authority structure: all important decisions are made at the top.
3. Command and control management philosophy: reliance on rank based authority, use of formal orders, reward rule following, punishment rule violation.
4. Hierarchical decision-making structure that controls and directs police operations from the top (pyramid shaped organisational structure; top down management).
5. Formalised: with a heavy reliance on formal, written communication: rules, procedures, policies, etc.
6. Specialisation of many police administrative and operational functions.
7. Emphasis on technology and technique: generally rigid and inflexible organisational structure; resistant to change.
8. Insular and closed: organisation resistant to outside political or community influence.

Understanding of these characteristics has helped the researcher in choosing the design and methodology of this research as it is explained in section 5.4 in chapter five.

There are a number of implicit assumptions about organisational cultures. First, although cultures may be resistant to change, they are to some extent flexible and manageable (Scott *et al.* 2003). According to Ogbonna and Harris (1998a: 275), this assumption resulted in a stream of research on the manageability of organisational culture. There are three different views pertaining to managing organisational culture: (a) organisational culture can be controlled by management, (b) cultural changes can occur only under particular organisational condition (e.g. leadership crisis), and (c) conscious management of culture is unlikely.

In a different publication, Ogbonna and Harris (1998b: 770) concluded that the process of organisational culture change can be influenced and that a number of contemporary organisational culture researchers are increasingly adopting this perspective. The second assumption is that organisation possesses distinct cultures that are related to business performance. Ogbonna and Harris (1998b: 772) speculated that the most compelling rationale for the interest in managing cultures is based on this assumption. Third, it is possible to identify particular culture attributes that facilitate or inhibit good performance; therefore, it should be feasible for managers to design strategies for cultural change (Scott *et al.* 2003).

The resource-based view of firms suggests that organisational culture can lead to a competitive advantage and enhance business performance. Barney developed a theoretical framework linking the relationship between organisational culture and sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1995: 660). In this framework, sustained competitive advantage is a source of financial performance. Other studies have investigated the relationship between HRM and culture (Khatri, 2000; Rogg *et al.* 2001).

Chan *et al.* surveyed senior executives and HR managers representing 82 companies in a firm level field study of multiple industries in Hong Kong (Chan *et al.* 2004: 20). The broad purpose of the study was to understand how organisations sustain a competition through effective HRM. Thus, the objectives were (a) to assess the direct link between HR practices



and firm performance and between organisational culture and firm performance, and (b) to examine the notion of resource co-specialisation by testing the potential interactive effects of HR practices and organisational culture on firm performance. The research findings did not support the expected direct effect of HR practices on organisational performance.

Zerbe *et al.* (1998), in a study of major North America Airline employees, examined the relationship between HRM practices and organisational outcomes and specifically examined employee perceptions of HRM practices and employee performance. The study found that service culture had a direct effect on self-reported service behaviour and that HRM practice's perceptions had both a direct effect on self-reported service behaviour and an indirect effect through service culture. The study also demonstrated that HRM practices contributed to the creation of a service-oriented culture and that HRM practices and service culture independently and additively contributed to employees' service behaviour.

Al-Hamadi and Budhwar conducted a study linking HRM and culture in Oman. They found that "HRM in organisations in Oman are influenced by different factors such as the religion, socialisation, cultural beliefs, values, norms, customs and rituals (Al-Hamadi and Budhwar, 2006: 45).

In a subsequent study of HRM in Oman, Al-Harthi (2008: 77) argued that the Omani employees did not show a strong preference for HRM policies and practices that were group and hierarchy oriented and informal. They seemed to favour a 'professional' approach in managing people and organisations in which there would be less reliance on informal networks, nepotism, and authority hierarchy. He concluded that Oman's vision to transform the society to meet the demands of globalisation seemed to be reflected in changing values by placing more emphasis on achievement, planning and control (Al-Harthi, 2008: 89).

The Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model argued that culture is an important factor in shaping the 'big idea'. This is a clear sense of mission underpinned by values and a culture expressing what the organisation is and its relationship with its customers and employees (Purcell *et al.* 2003: 13). This study will highlight the role of the culture in reinforcing the relationship between HRM and performance in the Royal Oman Police.

In summary, researchers are interested in the concept of organisational culture and how it is related to HRM practices and organisational outcomes. The most probable explanation for this is the claim that organisational culture effects organisational performance (Harris and Ogbonna, 2001; Lado and Wilson 1994; Rogg *et al.* 2001).

#### **4.2.4 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN POLICE ORGANISATION**

The modern policing mandate has evolved rapidly in the last two decades. Many police organisations have gone through extensive organisational change processes (Chan, 1996). Dupont argued that "there has been a significant amount of activity aimed at bringing police organisations to a point where they can function within the new public management (NPM) context as well as other guiding processes taken from several disciplines, including strategic management principles, organisational theory, public, information technology, among others" (Dupont, 2005: 77)

Police organisations have adopted strategic management practices and model to improve their management, operational, tactical and strategic efficacy (Leuprecht, 2007). Strategic management in police organisation has called upon police organisations to be performance led. This new strategic approach has been expressed through the restructuring of business processes and the development of performance measurements of police activities.

Hawdon argued that "police forces have well established strategic and contingency plans to deal with its different challenges such as in public order, traffic, anti-terrorism, human

resources, training, disaster, community policing” (Hawdon, 2008: 183) This shows that strategy in a policing context represents a problem solving and decision making approach and senior police officers have the discretion to implement them.

Police organisations also have to deal with unplanned situations as they emerge and to create strategies for those new challenges, for example, the new strategies that have been designed in the USA and the UK to deal with anti-terrorism. There is a major division between theories that see strategy as deliberate (i.e. the planned approach and performance designed by senior management) and those that see strategy as evolving actions arising from discourse and networks of individuals within the organisation (Conger, 2000).

Police organisations follow both approaches of strategy development, the deliberate (planned) and emergent (Drummond *et al.* 2000). This led to the understanding that the notion of strategy is not value neutral. How it is defined and used in organisations will impact the conceptualisation of human resource management (Ahmad and Schroeder, 2003).

The body of knowledge around strategic human resource management has grown immensely over the last three decades. These studies have focused on different themes and concepts. Among those is the relationship between HRM and organisational performance (Barney, 2001a; Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004).

Studies related to police performance show that emerging performance assessment regimes and the increasing expectations of citizens will result in exacting performance standards and clear league tables, with every force and command unit labelled according to its performance record and its capacity to improve (Langworthy and Travis, 1999).

LeLandaïs and Bodson argued that police services, as well as other criminal justice actors are searching for a police model that is financially affordable, accountable, durable, and compliant with ethical standards (LeLandaïs and Bodson, 2007: 34). It can be said that police

performance is now measured within the context of applying business management principles; it is associated with the emergence of new demands placed on the police and subsequent interventions and models, such as problem oriented policing and community policing (i.e. community police, or even local police). In addition, the development of information technologies (IT) has also led to significant changes in the police crime recording practice. Police organisations are expected to be able to justify, demonstrate and assess not only their activities, but also the impact of these activities on crime reduction and prevention. LeLandais and Bodson (2007) stated that different countries have developed different methods, procedures and indicators to measure police performance, for example:

- In the USA, a computerised data recording system COMPSTAT (Computer Statistics) was created with its primary emphasis on measuring performance and planning resources and its police work a standard of accountability.
- In Australia, a common system has been used which is based on specific indicators established according to the principles of equity, effectiveness and efficiency.
- In England and Wales, since 1999, police services have been subject to the new demands of 'Best Value', which involves a focus on reassessing methods used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Since 2004, the performance measurement system has been examined to better understand the demands of citizens.
- In Sweden and Finland, the balance scorecard has been used to measure and improve performance.

In Oman, the Royal Oman Police force uses the performance auditing approach. Al-Harthy (2006: 88) argued that the auditing teams in ROP have helped senior officers to diagnose and solve problems that are related to performance. Along with this stream of research, this study will include an important dimension related to measuring the impact of HRM policies and

practices on performance outcomes such as productivity, quality, and service (refer to chapter two for more details).

#### **4.2.5 HRM IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

Although there is a growing body of research on HRM effectiveness (Carsten, 2006; Kim and Mauborgne, 2005; Wright *et al.* 2001c), these studies do not fully address the status and influence of the public sector HRM models under contemporary new public management (NPM) pressures. This new movement may be viewed as a concept, inspired by various theoretical perspectives to develop modernity, change, and efficiency and improve quality in the public sector organisations (Pichault, 2007). Among the various modalities that have been adopted by NPM are the various initiatives of ‘modernisation’ based on a renewal of human resources (HR) policies (Shim, 2001).

There are some differences in implementing HRM practices between the public and private sectors. Harel and Tzafrir (1999: 185) defined three environmental factors shaping the differences between the practices of these two sectors. The most important factor is the profit motive. They argued that organisations, in the private sector, are concerned mostly about their profit margins and bottom line performance whilst most public organisations are non-profit organisations. Therefore, managers in the private sector are judged by the percentage of the profit at the end of the year while the public sector managers are judged by the quality of services which they provided and the number of problems they solved. The second factor, as they stated is the legal and constitutional framework which makes the public employment relationship fundamentally different from that in the private sector. To explain this, Mellahi and Wood (2001: 164) described the HRM model applied in the public sector in Saudi Arabia as it is characterised by: lifetime employment, seniority wages, and social cohesiveness rather than competence.

The third factor is the diffusion of authority. Unlike private sector where there is only one boss to be followed, in the public sector, employees must respond to executive and legislative political superiors. It seems that the fragmentation of authority makes public employees focus on achieving their organisation's goals and how they can deal with political agendas.

As an evidence of the importance of HRM role in the public sector, the United Nation (UN) issued its annual series of World Public Sector Report in 2005 (WPSR 2009) to focus on human resource management. The main objective of that report is "to discuss the critical role of people and human resource management (HRM) in effective public administration, with a particular focus on developing countries and transition economies" (WPSR 2005). The report highlighted the most significant areas in HRM practices around the world in recent decades such as HRM models, recruitment, remuneration and leadership. Then the report referred to the challenges that face HRM and opportunities and suggestions which could be taken. Kim and Hong (2006) stated that in a rapidly changing society, governments could use the HRM reform measures provided in the World Public Sector Report 2005 as important guidelines for realising continuous innovation and recovering trust in the public administration.

The role of the people management function in both the public and private sector is changing by moving away from the traditional model of personnel management to strategic HRM (Bowen *et al.* 2002). A strategic approach to HRM has a "pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable a firm to achieve its goals" (Wright and McMahan, 1992: 298). When managed effectively, the HRM adds value by ensuring that it has the characteristics of a strategic resource (Barney and Wright, 1998). Many public sector HR departments have been urged to be effective by integrating with strategic management (Klingner and Lynn, 1997; Perry, 1993; Thompson, 2006; U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), 1999).

Teo and Rowed (2007: 267) argued that “HRM guidelines in other Western countries, such as the Australian state and federal public sectors, have emphasised the link between corporate plans, key public service values and HRM principles.” Hays and Kearney elaborated this further, as they describe the new HRM role to focus on (a) enhancing management discretion in personnel management; (b) increasing the flexibility and responsiveness of PPM (public personnel management) systems; (c) improving public sector performance; and (d) adopting private sector staffing techniques (Hays and Kearney, 2001: 586).

These new roles reflect the need for HRM to be strategic and consistent with the philosophy of strategic HRM identified in the literature (e.g. Schuler, 1992; Ulrich, 1997). In an effort to be more strategic, HR managers have been urged to focus less on operational personnel activities and to emphasise on becoming strategic business partners to line managers (e.g. Ulrich, 1997). That is, there are two facets of HR’s changing role: HR’s involvement in strategy and the transfer of HR activities to the line management.

The consideration of HR as a strategic business partner and resource depends on the centrality of the HRM department in achieving the link between the HRM function and the strategic management process (Eisenstat, 1996; Ulrich, 1997). Achieving this link between the people management function and the strategic management process is critical to the status and influence of the HR department (Galang and Ferris, 1997; Ulrich, 1997).

The centrality of the HRM function also depends on how HR managers use influential and symbolic actions (such as participation in strategic planning processes and HR’s presence at the board level) to enhance its power, status, and influence (Galang and Ferris, 1997; O’Byrne, 2001).

A second feature of a more strategic approach to people’s management is the transfer of HRM activities to line managers (Budhwar, 2000; Hall and Torrington, 1998). From the public

sector management literature, scholars such as Mesch *et al.* (1995) have noted that the transfer of HR activities is a major feature of HRM in the public sector. The transfer of operational HR activities to line managers is part of the HRM function's transition from personnel management to strategic partner because it releases HR practitioners from day to day functional roles to allow them to concentrate on value adding strategic and change management roles (e.g. Caldwell, 2003; Hall and Torrington, 1998; Ulrich, 1997). Empirical evidence confirms that the transfer of operational HRM responsibilities to line managers allows HR practitioners to focus more on becoming strategic business partners (Conner and Ulrich, 1996; Galang, 1999).

However, the other aspect of the strategic role of HRM in the public sector is to create a business case for the impact of HRM on the public sector organisations (Godard, 2001a; Godard, 2001b). The growing empirical evidence concerning the links between firm performance and 'innovative' HRM practices in the private sectors have led more and more government agencies to adopt such practices within public organisations, expecting similar positive effects (Soni, 2004).

Carmelli and Schaubroeck (2005) have tested the value of SHRM in one of the public sector organisation in Israel using the RBV as a conceptual model. They collected two primary data sets from private and public sector organisations in Israel. The multiplicative interaction between perceived human resources capital and distinctive value derived from that HR capital was significantly related to various measures of perceived and objective organisational performance. Having higher levels of human resources capital was strongly associated with performance only when top managers perceived that these resources provided distinctive value in terms of being highly valuable, inimitable, rare, and non-substitutable. Their study discussed the implications of these findings for research on strategic human resource management and the resource based view of competitive advantage, as well as for practical



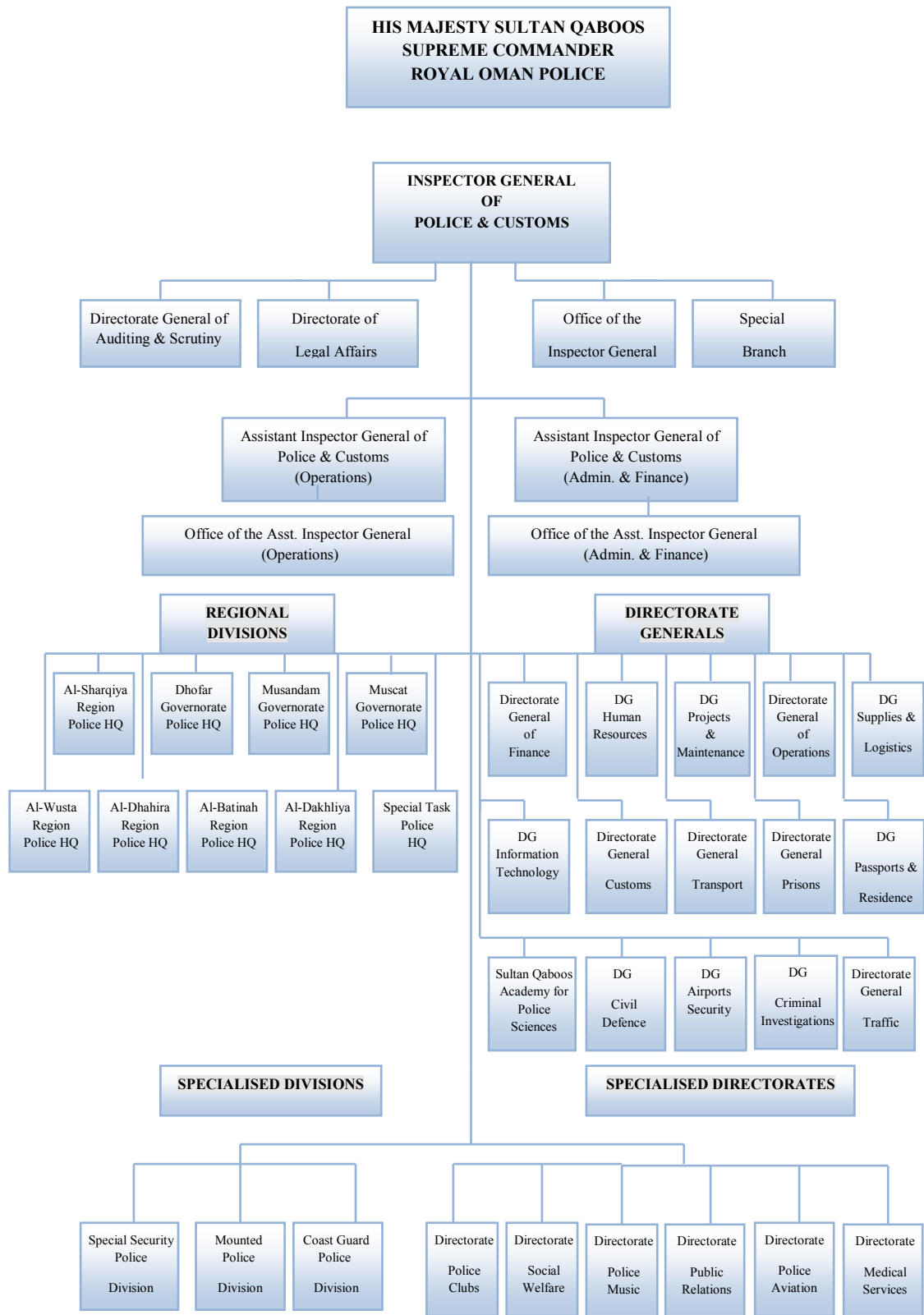
efforts to develop firm specific human resource capital that is inherently distinctive. Their study found that the contingency between the RBV and performance may extend beyond the commercial organisations typically studied RBV research to public sector organisation.

Bartram *et al.* (2006: 21) conducted a survey in public healthcare organisations in Victoria in Australia. The data was collected from 132 Victorian public health facilities to investigate the links between HRM and performance in healthcare settings and the extent to which healthcare organisations are monitoring HRM. The study found support to the potential benefits of strategic HRM in healthcare in Australia.

On the same vein, this study aims to explore the impact of HRM on performance in one of the public sector organisations in Oman which is the Royal Oman Police.

#### **4.3 THE POLICE ORGANISATION IN OMAN**

The Royal Oman Police (ROP) covers the whole area of Sultanate of Oman, which constitutes of five geographical regions and three governorates. The ROP has staff strength of about 23,000. All are full-time employees. The ROP has 42 units and departments which are divided into line and staff functionalities (Royal Oman History Book, 2005). Figure 4 refers to the organisation structure of the Royal Oman Police.



**Figure 4** Organisation Chart of the Royal Oman Police

The ROP derives its policing powers from different doctrines such as the Police Law, Criminal Law and Procedure Law, Customs Law, Anti-narcotics Law, and other legislative codes (Police Magazine, 2002). The Omani policing model has been influenced by its UK counterpart-policing model. Oman has built its police force with help from the UK, taking advantage of the historical bilateral treaty signed between the two countries (Royal Oman Police History, 2005). From 1970 to 1984, many English officers worked as a senior police officers and consultants in ROP in Oman (Royal Oman Police History, 2005).

Those officers have helped to build a modern police force in Oman. Therefore, ROP's policing model are an eclectic. It has combined aspects from the Anglo-Saxon model that is applied in the UK policing, the Continental model and community-policing model (Al-Harthy, 2006).

However, ROP has a unique feature that makes it different from other counterpart police forces around the world in that it does not carry out the policing role only. Additional functions and services have been allocated under ROP's model such as civil defence, customs, air-wing, immigration, civil registration and coast guard (ROP Annual Report, 2008).

The development and popularity of 'community-based policing' in the early eighties in the United States, England and Canada has influenced other police organisations to change the traditional military bureaucratic model of policing. Among these organisations was the Royal Oman Police (Saif, 2004).

Royal Oman Police (ROP) has gone through extensive organisational change to improve their management, operational, tactical and strategic efficacy (Saif, 2004). As a result, the ROP leadership aggressively promoted and supported new policing model that is based on community policing philosophy and strategic management. Building modern policing strategy

required ROP to understand different challenges that stem from the socio-economic development in Oman which was discussed in section 3.2.1 of this study. These challenges can be summarised as follows:

- The impact of the fluctuations in the oil price on the ROP’s budget
- The ability of the force to meet the targets of the omanisation policy
- The security consequences related to the increase of the unemployment of young Omanis
- The security consequences of the increase in the number of expatriates in Oman

Therefore, it was necessary that the policing strategy enables ROP to respond to the above-mentioned socio-economic challenges by focusing on three strategic thrusts:

- Enhancing operational capability,
- Strengthening community partnership, and
- Building organisational resilience (Royal Oman Police Annual Report, 2008).

On the same vein, the policing strategy was based on six themes as listed in Table 4 below:

| <b>POLICING STRATEGY<br/>IN ROP</b>  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Control crime</li> <li>2. Making the most of ROP’s staff through implementation of the force’s human resource strategy</li> <li>3. Attract the local community (citizens and expatriates) to participate with the police</li> <li>4. Maintaining the safety and security of Oman</li> <li>5. Apply modern strategy to make the roads safer</li> <li>6. To provide all police services effectively and efficiently</li> </ol> |

**Table 4** Policing Strategy in ROP

Al-Harthy (2006) argued that “the policing strategy endeavours to foster continual improvement in security, peace and order in society, resource efficiency and the quality of policing services via commitment to the principles of accountability, contestability, continuous improvement and the application of international best practices in policing.” It is encouraging to note that the Royal Oman Police is aware of the above challenges and has actively put in place various mechanisms in its policing strategy, such as the human resource strategy, which is the focus of this study. HRM in the Royal Oman Police will be discussed in detail in chapter 6.

#### **4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed aspects related to the development of HRM in police organisations. It provided an overview of the factors that help to shape this development such as policing models, policing leadership, policing culture and strategic management in police organisations. Then this chapter highlighted the development of HRM in the public sector and gave a detailed view of the context of the fieldwork of an organisation which was the Royal Oman Police.

## CHAPTER 5

### METHODOLOGY & RESEARCH DESIGN

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between HRM practices and firm performance in the Royal Oman Police in Oman using Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as a conceptual and analytical framework. The main research question is “How does HRM practices impact policing performance in the Royal Oman Police in Oman?” In order to answer the main research question, a number of sub-objectives were delineated based upon the four pillars of Purcell’s “People Performance Model”, namely:

1. To investigate the HRM policies adopted by the Royal Oman police in Oman.
2. To examine the impact of HR policies and practices in developing the areas of ability, motivation and opportunity that are considered as important components of the performance.
3. To determine the role of the leadership style fostered by managers and its effectiveness in creating a cultural vision for the organisation and in the effective application of HRM policies and practices.
4. To examine how organisational outcomes are measured.

This chapter will discuss the methodological issues used in this study. The differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches will be presented. Then the rationale for the research will be discussed. Other methodological issues that will be dealt with in this chapter are: research design, semi-structured interviews, secondary data, reflection on the development of research tools, data analysis process and research ethics.

## **5.2 QUANTITATIVE OR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH?**

Recent years have witnessed a change from emphasis on empirical and quantitative scientific studies to the acknowledgement of qualitative research in education, such as ethnography and life history (Anderson, 2008; Silverman, 2001). As a result, qualitative research methods were finally recognised as worthy research devices that can and do provide in-depth information, which are not possible to derive from purely quantitative methods.

Cohen and Sotro (2007: 51) argued that research methods act as ‘filters’ through which the environment is selectively experienced and exclusive reliance on one method, therefore may bias or distort the researcher’s picture of the particular slice of reality that they are investigating. By employing more than one method, this study seeks to achieve methodological triangulation. Neuman (2003) stated that the “best research often combines the features of both qualitative and quantitative research methods.” Different methodologies can be used in complementary ways. Bell (2001) even argued that it may be unwise to try and draw a hard-and-fast distinction between qualitative and quantitative studies. The difference is not absolute; rather it is one of emphasis. It is important to explain such complementariness.

The key features common to all qualitative methods can be seen when they are contrasted with quantitative methods. Most quantitative data techniques are data condensers. They condense data in order to see the big picture. Qualitative methods, by contrast, are best understood as data enhancers. When data are enhanced, it is possible to see key aspects of the cases more clearly (Neuman, 2003).

A multi method approach can be used to cross validate data from different research instruments and can strengthen validity (Patton, 1999). The topic of the research is a key determinant of the research methodology and the tools employed. Collis and Hussey (2003) stated that “it’s not the superiority of one method over another, but the appropriateness of a method of investigation for a particular research problem.” From this perspective, the present

study employs both methodologies to benefit from the advantages of each and compensate for any drawbacks each inevitably contains.

Qualitative research makes little use of numbers and statistics, but instead relies on verbal data and subjective analysis. Gall *et al.* (1996: 13) also called it the ‘interpretivism approach’; it relies on an interpretive epistemology which believes that “scientific inquiry should focus on the different social realities those individuals in a social situation construct as they participate in it.”

Differences between qualitative and quantitative methods have often been debated. However, there are some similarities between the two methods (Neuman, 2003). For example, researchers whom have used both methods have to ensure that their data are collected and analysed systematically, and examined carefully to understand and explain their findings, instead of using the differences between the two methods as the weakness for the other (Blaxter *et al.* 2001). It is more beneficial to understand the strengths of each method and to understand their relevance to different types and fields of the study. These differences are clearly illustrated by Neuman (2003) as presented in Table 5.



| <b>Quantitative</b>  | <b>Qualitative</b>  |
|--|---|
| Concepts are in the form of distinct variable.   | Concepts are in the form of themes, motives, generalisations, and taxonomies.   |
| Measures are systematically created before data collection is standardised.  | Measures are created in an ad hoc manner and are often specific to the individual setting or researcher.                              |
| Data are in the form of numbers from precise measurement.  | Data are in the form of words and images from documents, observations, and transcripts.   |
| Theory is largely causal and is deductive.   | Theory can be causal or non-causal and can be inductive or deductive.   |
| Research procedures are standards, and replication is assumed.   | Research procedures are particular, and replication is rare.  |
| Analysis proceeds by using statistics, tables or charts and discussing how and what they show relates to hypothesis. | Analysis proceeds by extracting themes or generalisation from evidence and organising data to present a coherent, consistent picture. |

**Table 5** Differences between Qualitative and Quantitative Research  
Source: Neuman W. (2003:45)

### **5.3 RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH**

In investigating the processes through which HRM contributes to organisational performance, most researches have adopted a positivist methodology. Such positivist analytical-nomological research, often referred to as quantitative, usually starts with the establishment of hypotheses which make assumptions about the properties of the real world, and continues by subjecting these to empirical tests which can be either supported or refuted.

Interpretive or phenomenological research, in contrast commonly labelled qualitative does not usually start with precisely specified hypotheses, but by generation of authentic experiences in the field of inquiry about which empirical evidence is sought and focuses on subjective meanings as experienced by relevant social actors (Wengraf, 2001). Proponents of qualitative research often aim to be guided by the principle of openness which is described by Glaser and

Struass (1967) as the grounded theory approach. In this approach, one should not start the field of inquiry with preconceived ideas in particular by hypotheses which might be the result of the inquiry for a research with orientation and the beginning of a theory building activity. Patton (2002) offered an overview of key features often associated with the positivist and phenomenological paradigm as it is shown in Table 6.

|                          | <b>Positivist</b>                                      | <b>Phenomenological</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Basic Belief</b>      | The world is external and objective                    | The world is socially constructed and subjective                 |
|                          | Observer is part of what is observed                   | Observer is independent  |
|                          | Science is value free                                  | Science is driven by human interests                             |
| <b>Researcher Should</b> | Focus on facts   | Focus on meanings  |
|                          | Look for causality and fundamental laws                | Try to understand what is Happening                              |
|                          | Reduce phenomena to simplest elements                  | Look at the totality of each situation                           |
|                          | Formulate hypotheses and test them                     | Develop ideas through induction from data                        |
| <b>Preferred Methods</b> | Operationalising concepts so that they can be measured | Using multiple methods to establish different views of phenomena |
|                          | Taking large samples                                   | Small samples investigated in depth over time                    |

**Table 6** Key Characteristics of Positivist and Phenomenological Approaches

However, this crude equalisation of a structured positivist orientation and quantitative research on the one hand and of interpretive paradigms with qualitative research on the other hand is by no means cogent. Researchers using an interpretive paradigm can well use quantitative methods and analytical-nomological researchers can well resort to qualitative

methods of data generation. Increasingly, the sharp distinction between the two opposite poles is replaced by a research perspective which pragmatically incorporates elements of both poles, thereby adding to a better understanding of the phenomena studied (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The body of theory explaining HRM-performance relationship has subsequently depended on the usage of theoretically derived mostly cross-sectional surveys which have limited theoretical scope, low response rates and relying mostly on single respondents. The vast amount of quantitative survey based empirical investigations have established a body of knowledge about the HRM-organisational performance question, but failed to penetrate deeply beyond the surface of the research phenomena, particularly the question of how HRM contributes to performance.

Research in HRM has witnessed a change in emphasis from largely empirical and quantitative scientific studies to the acknowledgement of qualitative research (Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Guest, 1997a). Although quantitative methods of research that are based largely on questionnaires or surveys are beneficial, their ability to reach a large number of subjects is offset by a lack of profound insight: focus on quantity of the respondents, and the uniformity sought from their responses might ignore important details.

As a result, qualitative research methods were finally recognised as worthy research devices that can and do provide in-depth information, which is not possible to derive from purely quantitative methods. Wright *et al.* (2001b: 875) argued that “a strict concern with bottom line analysis in SHRM falters on epistemological grounds because the intangible nature of the value of human resources and human resource outcomes does not easily lend itself to quantitative analysis.” This gives a good reason for researchers to use more qualitative methods.

In similar vein, Anderson (2008: 13) argued that the less quantifiable and the subjective interpretations, reasoning and feelings of people (qualitative data), are seen as a more relevant line of inquiry in order to understand and explain the realities of HR situations.

The theoretical positions dominant in the area of HRM and organisational performance are characterised by a widespread lack of discussion on how decisions about the design and implementation of advanced employment practices are made and by whom, and by an implicit assumption of rationality in the adoption and implementation of such practices which was discussed in chapter two of this study. As it was discussed in chapter one, this study aims at exploring the HRM-performance link in ROP. Therefore, data were obtained from two main resources that are the semi-structured interviews conducted with officers from different managerial levels and analysis of documents that are related to employees' surveys, auditing reports and public surveys. The employees' surveys, auditing reports and public survey data which were produced from 2000 to 2009 were used for this study. This gave the study an advantage to explore the HRM-performance link longitudinally. Studying the perceptions of managerial and non-managerial employees allowed for multiple employee ratings regarding HRM-performance link within ROP. This gave the study a considerable strength comparatively with other studies that used a single manager's point of view.

#### **5.4 THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study embraces qualitative approach because it provides flexibility and gives the researcher the ability to conduct an in depth research. However, there are many ways which a researcher can choose to conduct qualitative research. The motive behind the use of a qualitative approach is because such methods emphasise "the importance of understanding the meaning of human behaviour and the social-cultural context of social interaction" (Patton, 2002).

This approach allows the study of selected issues, cases and events in depth and detail, unconstrained by predetermined categories of analysis. The research is oriented towards exploration, discovery and inductive logic. Researchers who use qualitative methods “stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003).

The success of a research project depends largely on the research design. Saunders *et al.* 2003 argued that the success of management studies depends upon the appropriateness and rigour of the research methods chosen. Therefore, the strategies or tactics chosen to carry out a research project must be appropriate to the research questions that need to be answered (Bell and Opie, 2002).

Exploratory research seeks to find out what is happening and get new insights into the areas of the study by utilising appropriate methods (Blaxter *et al.* 2001). The purpose of an exploratory research is to ask questions and explore a certain phenomenon in a new light. Hence, as this research focuses on exploring important phenomena in the field of HRM by discussing the relationship between HRM practices and performance in the Royal Oman Police using Purcell *et al.* People Performance Model as a conceptual framework, it is justifiable to conduct an exploratory study (Yin, 2009).

The next sections explain the research methodology choice and the triangulation as two important aspects that are related to the research design process.

#### **5.4.1 CHOICE OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: A CASE STUDY**

Yin, (2009: 3) defined the case study method “as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence

are used.” Bell and Opie (2002: 34) argued that a case study is a research project that takes into account the variety of elements that are present in the context of a study.

A case study may concentrate on individuals, groups or a community and at the same time employ other data collection methods such as participant observation, secondary data or in-depth interviews (Berg, 2001).

Robson (1993: 147) summarised different definitions of case study by arguing that it is a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence. For this study, the ‘phenomenon’ being investigated is the link between HRM and performance within a real life context, which is the police organisation in Oman using interviews as a source of evidence.

According to Yin (2009: 6), case studies rather than conventional questionnaire surveys dominating the research are more appropriate for researching causal phenomena. Consequently, researchers within the area of HRM and performance increasingly regard qualitative case studies as the method of choice for investigations trying to progress research in this area (Becker and Gerhart 1996; Becker *et al.* 1997; Purcell 1999).

Therefore, choosing a case study approach has allowed this research to pursue an in-depth analysis of different aspects related to the HRM-performance link in ROP and to find the reasons behind each of those. Yin (2009: 25) suggested that the methodology might actually be more powerful for explanatory purposes in its ability to answer questions on how and why. This methodology therefore required the inclusion of participants who can present the characteristics of HRM and performance in the ROP.

However, one of the disadvantages of case studies is that a single case study does not provide enough bases for scientific generalisation (Yin, 2003a; Yin, 2003b). It was questioned

whether it is appropriate for a researcher to generalise findings from a single case study (Patton, 2002). To prevent this, Yin (2009: 40) suggested that single case studies should be used to compare findings with existing theory, rather than presenting new findings on a subject matter. For example, this case study is used to expand on current body of knowledge related to HRM, rather than presenting a new subject matter. This study used triangulation to mitigate the limitations that may occur from using the case study as a single methodological choice to ensure that the research would provide the answer to the research question (Patton, 2002). The next section will discuss triangulation.

#### **5.4.2 TRIANGULATION**

The term triangulation is very common in management research. Originally, triangulation is a measurement used as a locator to measure distances between objects (Neuman, 2003). “Triangulation techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data” (Cohen and Sotro, 2003).

There are many types of triangulation but methodological triangulation is perhaps the best known. It is, according to Cohen and Sotro (2003: 112) “the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour.” Triangulation of research methods may help in overcoming the problem of ‘method-boundedness’ and in establishing the validity of the study. Neill (2007) distinguished two types: ‘within methods’ which is the replication of a study to check reliability and confirm theory; and ‘between methods’ which is the use of more than one method to achieve objectives. It has been argued that to overcome the deficiencies of any one method they can be combined and thus capitalise on their individual strengths (Neuman, 2003). For the purpose of this case study data triangulation was used. This is because data from different sources can be used to corroborate, elaborate or

illuminate the research's question (Anderson, 2008). In addition to the literature review done during the earlier stage of the case study, semi-structured interviews and secondary data were used to collect the data. The following sections will explain these two sources of data collection.

## **5.5 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

There are different methods available to gather data for a research project. The methods chosen are largely dependent on the type of research to be conducted (Neuman, 2003). Furthermore, the appropriate data collection strategies will assist in the organising and analysing of the data (Yin, 2009).

This research explores the HRM-performance link in ROP in Oman, which requires qualitative research methodology. Therefore, the data collection through semi-structured interviews was considered to be the appropriate technique to answer the research question and meet this study's aims. The use of semi-structured interviews within a case study allowed this study to explore the police officers' perceptions regarding the HRM-performance link in the Royal Oman Police in Oman (Patton, 2002; Wengraf, 2001).

This choice of methodology was also based on a cultural factor. The police officers in Oman seem to welcome participating in interviews rather than filling up questionnaires because they think that by giving something in writing they are violating the confidentiality code in the force. Conducting an interview is one of the preferred techniques for data collection in qualitative research. An interview is "a conversation where one person, the interviewer, is seeking responses for a particular purpose from the other person, the interviewee" (Gillham, 2000). It is regarded as a cyclic and interactive process, involving talking and listening (Powney and Watts, 1987).

Creswell (2003) more specifically defined research interviews as "encounters between a



researcher and a respondent in which the latter is asked a series of questions relevant to the subject of the research. The respondent's answers constitute the raw data, which is analysed at a later point in time by the researcher." Interviewing is an art and a science; it requires "skill, sensitivity, concentration, interpersonal understanding, insight, mental activity, and discipline" (Patton, 2002). Clearly, then, an interview is not just a conversation, but it is processes and techniques that include all those used in a conversation. It is a specialised form of communication, designed for the specific and generative purposes of the research.

There are different types of interviews based on the extent to which questions are structured, and how much the interviewee is given the freedom to 'lead' (Gillham, 2000). Interview types range on a continuum from a very structured, to a semi-structured, to an unstructured interview. Interviews may be characterised by a quantitative/qualitative dimension (Berg, 2001).

This qualitative study will use a semi-structured interviewing technique to obtain in-depth data (Wengraf, 2001). Typically, the semi-structured interview lists the wording and sequence of questions in advance. This has the effect of encountering responses to issues that could be compared during later analysis, producing rich data on each issue and facilitating the organisation and analysis of the data (Patton, 2002). Patton (2002: 344) stated that the semi-structured interview is also called the interview guide. The interview guide in this study will be based on the four pillars of the conceptual framework of Purcell's People Performance Model. These pillars are:

Pillar 1: What are the HRM policies adopted by the Royal Oman police?

Pillar 2: What is the impact of such policies on employees' ability, motivation and opportunity to perform?

Pillar 3: How the leadership style fostered by line manager's impact the HRM policies?

Pillar 4: What is the impact of HRM policies on employee outcomes?

However, the above-mentioned guide will provide a basic framework for acquiring information in a consistent format, but also allows for some spontaneous questioning through probe questions. Probe questions deepen the level of responses and adds richness to them especially when more explanation is required (Patton, 2002). The interview guide shown in Table 7 will be developed into different questions that will seek to answer the main research question and to get more details to tell the research story. These questions are shown in Appendix 1.

| <b>Interview Guide</b>  |
|---|
| What are the HRM policies adopted by the Royal Oman Police?                                       |
| What is the impact of such policies on employees' ability, motivation and opportunity to perform? |
| How the leadership style fostered by line manager's impact the HRM policies?                      |
| What is the impact of HRM policies on employees' outcomes?  |

**Table 7** Interview Guide adopted from Purcell *et al.* (2003)  
People Performance Model

There are three main ways of documenting interviews: the use of a tape recorder to record the interview, taking notes during the course of the interview or taking mental notes during the interview and writing them down immediately afterwards (Guest and Peccei, 2001). Each of these ways has drawbacks. For example, taking notes during an interview may distract the interviewer and interviewee. While using a tape (or other) recorder may raise the anxiety of the interviewee.

Nevertheless, recording an interview is the best way to document an interview in its entirety. The researcher tape-recorded the interviews and permission of all of the participants was taken to audiotape the interviews. The researcher then transcribed the interview tapes and translated the transcriptions from Arabic to English.

### **5.5.1 PILOT INTERVIEWS**

Pilot interviews were conducted with one sample from the four categories of participants that will be discussed in section 5.5.2. The aim of the pilot interviews was to test that the methodology would yield viable data, and to identify and rectify any inconsistencies before embarking on the main study data collection. In particular, it was important to discover any shortcomings in the design and administration of the interview questions and to assess the clarity of them. This has helped to rephrase and develop some of the questions that are listed in Appendix 1. The pilot interviews were also helpful to decide the time required for each one of the official interviews. One hour was found to be sufficient for each respondent to answer all the interview questions.

Based on the four pillars of the conceptual framework of this study, the pilot interviews had trialled open-ended questions from the interview guide. These interviews identified how and when supplementary questions or prompts were required to ensure the depth, range and quality of the information. As the case study focuses on the Royal Oman Police, different participants (officers) from all levels of the management were included in this case study. The next section will explain the sampling strategy and the selection for interviews.

### **5.5.2 THE SAMPLING STRATEGY & SELECTION FOR INTERVIEWS**

One of the most important parts of the research process is the decision on the people or places to study and ways to gain access to good data (Anderson, 2008). Miles and Huberman's (1994) purposeful sampling provided researchers with suggestions on ways to identify the specific strategies which suited their research.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) argued that many qualitative researchers employ purposive and not random sampling methods. They sought out groups, setting and individuals where the processes being studied are most likely to occur. The uniqueness of this research comes from its participants' background differentiation and their well-informed ability to address the research questions.

There are a majority of studies on SHRM which have focused on top management level because SHRM is seen as a responsibility of top management (Gerhart *et al.* 2000b; Ichniowski *et al.* 1996; Purcell, 1999). Therefore, to provide a balanced view for this research, it was decided to include various officers from operational and strategic levels in ROP. Different scholars have realised the importance of selecting samples from different management levels in the organisation (Batt, 1999; Guest and Peccei, 2001).

In Table 8 below the interview categories and participants shows the four categories of participants necessary for the diversity in opinion and experiences required to answer the research questions included in Appendix 1. The objective behind this extensive and varied qualitative research sampling is to select rich information, informative participants who can provide descriptive detail about the SHRM and policing performance, and raise issues that contribute to the research questions and provide insight and views to enrich the study. Inclusion of participants such as these, the researcher anticipates that it will open up previously unexplored perspectives on the outcomes of police performance in Oman.

| <b>Category Type</b>           | <b>Number Interviewed</b> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Senior officers                | 10                        |
| Middle management officers     | 10                        |
| Officers from DGHR             | 10                        |
| HR officers in ROP's divisions | 10                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                   | <b>40</b>                 |

**Table 8** Interview Categories and Participants

The breakdown of the participants chosen is as follows:

1. Senior Officers

Ten senior police officers were selected from the strategic level in ROP because of their important roles in policymaking. These officers are members of the police committee which is responsible to suggest and oversee different strategies and policies related to HRM and other core policing issues. Their views are very important because they give the study a good reading of how the strategic level in ROP perceives and evaluates the HRM and performance link. These ten senior officers were:

- The Assistant Inspector General of Police and Customs
- Commander of Muscat Governorate Police Headquarter
- Commander of Al-Batinah Governorate Police Headquarter
- Commander of Sultan Qaboos Police Academy for Police Sciences
- Director General of Human Resources
- Director General of Finance
- Director General of Auditing and Scrutiny
- Director General of Operations
- Director General of Criminal Investigations
- Assistant Director General of Human Resources

## 2. Middle Management Officers

Ten police officers were selected from the middle management level in ROP. The middle management is considered as the linking layer between the strategic and operational levels. These officers are responsible for managing day-to-day operations in their divisions and to deal with different HRM policies and practice. Therefore, their view can give useful insights on the HRM-performance link in ROP. These officers represent different specialisations and divisions. These ten officers were as follows:

- The Directorate of Police Officers’ Training Institute
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in the Directorate General of Finance
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in the Directorate General of Passports and Residence
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in the Directorate General of Criminal Investigations
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in the Directorate General of Information Technology
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in the Directorate General of Projects and Maintenance
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in the Directorate General of Traffic
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in Muscat Governorate Police Headquarter
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in Al-Batinah Governorate Police Headquarter
- The Directorate of Administration and Finance in Dhofar Governorate Police Headquarter

## 3. Officers from DGHR

Ten police officers were selected from the middle management and operational levels from the Directorate General of Human Resources (DGHR) in ROP. These officers

are responsible to manage the HRM model in ROP. They oversee the implementation of HRM policies and practices in ROP's divisions. At the same time, they are responsible to coordinate and manage day-to-day HRM policies and practices with other stakeholders. Therefore, their views can demonstrate the features of the HRM-performance link in ROP. These officers represent different sections in DGHRM as follows:

- Directorate of Administration and Finance in the Directorate General of Human Resources
- The Directorate of Personnel Affairs
- The Directorate of Recruitment
- The Directorate of HR Development
- The Directorate of Training
- The Head of Promotion Section
- The Head of Planning Section
- The Head of Performance Management section
- The Head of Overseas Training

#### 4. HR Officers in ROP's Divisions

Ten police HR officers were selected from the operational levels in ROP. These officers are responsible to manage day-to-day HRM policies and practices in ROP's divisions. These officers' views assess the decentralised HRM model that is applied in ROP. Therefore, their views provide important inputs on the HRM-performance link in ROP. These officers represent different specialisations and divisions as follows:

- HR officer in the Directorate General of Finance
- HR officer in the Directorate General of Passport and Residence
- HR officer in the Directorate General of Criminal Investigations
- HR officer in the Directorate General of Information Technology
- HR officer in Directorate General of Projects and Maintenance
- HR officer in Directorate General of Traffic
- HR officer in Muscat Governorate Police Headquarter
- HR officer in Al-Batinah Governorate Police Headquarter

- HR officer in Dhofar Governorate Police Headquarter
- HR officer in Sultan Qaboos Police Academy for Police Sciences

In summary, the sampling strategy chosen for this study intends to provide the researcher with the data required to answer the research question that is related to the HRM-performance link in ROP. The selection and choice of sample are one of the most critical decisions that researchers need to make for a study to achieve its goals. With careful thought and plan, the appropriate sampling strategy will increase the viability of the whole study. Having discussed the first source of data collection which is the semi-structured interview, the next section will explain the secondary data which is the other source of data collection in this research.

## **5.6 SECONDARY DATA**

In addition to interviews, secondary data was another source of data to be used for this research. There are two different sources for the secondary data: (1) internal and proprietary data which are internal to the organisation, and (2) external data which is external to the organisation (Anderson, 2008). In this section, these two sources are briefly explained to show their relevance to this study.

### **5.6.1 INTERNAL DATA**

Most organisations routinely gather records and store internal data for a variety of purposes (Blaxter *et al.* 2001). These data could be used for the purpose of assisting the organisation in their future decisions making, or in larger organisations is used for the purpose of internal communication (Anderson, 2008).

Throughout this research, various internal publications, internal reports, decrees and working orders, meeting memos and consultancy reports were collected and used. The researcher also had access to the electronic archive database in DGHRM in ROP which has all the documents and studies related to HRM such as employees' survey, auditing reports and public's survey.



These documents have rich data about the measurement process in ROP and can be useful to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources, especially for case studies (Yin, 2009).

Although these documents are useful sources for the research, it should be noted that these documents were originally created for the purpose of communication within the organisation and not specifically for this research. Therefore, it is important to use the data which are only relevant to this research (Harris, 2001). The use of secondary data also forced the researcher to think more closely about the theoretical aims and substantive issues of the study design so that it is less likely to be missed or wrongly analyse the documents collected (Blaxter *et al.* 2001).

The information collected from the internal publications, internal reports, decrees and working orders, meeting memos and consultancy reports helped the researcher in the data analysis stage. They helped the researcher to generate and develop useful themes from the semi-structure interviews related to the development of the new HRM model in ROP and its impact on the performance.

### **5.6.2 EXTERNAL DATA**

External data were created, recorded or generated by an entity other than the researcher's organisation (Silverman, 2001). Zikmund (1997: 150) classified these external sources into books and periodicals, government sources, trade association sources, media courses and commercial sources. For the purpose of this research, a literature review was conducted using different sources such as books, periodicals and government sources obtained from the library and the electronic databases on the internet.

The literature review has given this case study a strong base. It presented different approaches that other scholars and authors had on the study of SHRM and highlighted the gaps and needs

for more research to be undertaken in this area of study that are related to the type of organisation to be studied and the research methodology to be used.

The benefit of using secondary data is that it is a quick and inexpensive way to answer some of the questions that may arise from the research to complement the case study (Silverman, 2001). Harris (2001: 1192) argued that secondary data also provides evidence of what was done at the time, whereas interviews are a recollection of intention after the event. Secondary data can also be used to provide triangulation, increasing the credibility of the research findings (Blaxter *et al.* 2001; Harris, 2001).

### **5.7 THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH TOOLS**

This section discusses the development of the research tools used to measure the research phenomena of interest namely, HRM practices, police organisational performance, and the processes by which HRM could affect performance (i.e. the black box). These ontological phenomena were operationalised through the development of specific areas to be investigated in the case study that are related to the four objectives of the study.

Within the case study, data collection was based on semi-structured interviews and analysis of documents related to measurement of HRM and performance such as employees' surveys, auditing reports and public surveys. For the semi-structured interviews, four types of respondents (senior officers, middle management officers, officers from DGHR, HR officers in ROP's divisions) were chosen to generate data on the four research areas to gather evidence related to the research objectives.

These categories were deemed essential to question all respondents on issues related to the interview questions in Appendix 1 to elicit their understanding of the HRM practices, police organisational performance, and the processes by which HRM could affect performance within their immediate domain to ensure a high validity of responses.

For all respondents, interviews rather than questionnaires were regarded as the preferred method to obtain detailed and in-depth data on the research pillars. As data on HRM policies and practices were of a very factual nature (i.e. the existence of a particular practice within the organisation), it was decided to use semi-structured interviews for two reasons. Firstly, the interview in a social situation could be used to reinforce any promises about confidentiality and sensitivity of the policing context. It could also progress the research further by increasing the awareness of the interviewees of the purpose of the research and the importance of their contribution to gather meaningful data. Secondly, the data to be gathered is aimed to assess extensive HRM policies and practices and their impact on performance in ROP. The fact that different respondents might have different understanding to those phenomena, any data matrix or questionnaire trying to capture this complexity would by default is too complex and voluminous to inspire the required motivation and commitment to participate in the research. For these reasons the semi-structured interviews approach was preferred.

It had been anticipated that senior officers would have limited time available. However, the interviews were a good strategy to explain the purpose of the research to them directly and it allowed the researcher better probing and clarification than a questionnaire would have. The decision to conduct the interview with the senior officers was thus not only based on methodological consideration, but also on the social and cultural components of the policing organisation in Oman.

The police officers were reluctant to give any information in writing therefore they welcomed to participate in the interviews which provided them with more friendly and interactive situation without forcing them to give any written information.

Interviews with the line managers were deemed particularly important because it is the police divisions and units where particular business problems are encountered, specific objectives

established and where officers are employed to achieve these objectives. Based on the review of literature on HRM, the line managers are expected to be the key actors with regard to delivering HRM policies. In this study, the officers' views will help to understand the relationship between HRM and organisational performance in different divisions and units of ROP.

The choice of ten officers from each category as explained in Table 8 necessitated the usage of the interviews as a data generation method because it provided the opportunity to probe, clarify and become aware of contextual issues relevant to the respondents. Based on the interview protocol, 40 interviews were conducted with participants representing different management levels in ROP.

At the beginning of the interview, the participants were asked whether they would agree to tape record the interview which would help the researcher to analyse the data later. No concerns or objections were raised. Initially, one hour of the officer time was requested for the interview. This was based on the time required for the pilot interview. In some cases the time was exceeded by the respondents, some of which is attributed to introductions, further explanations of research objectives, closure and discussion of different issues related to the HRM-performance link.

To gain a better understanding of the HRM-performance link, documents that are related to employees' surveys, auditing reports and public surveys, were analysed. These surveys were conducted to measure the relationship between HRM and performance before and after the implementation of the new HRM policies and practices in 2002. Employees' surveys, auditing reports and public's survey data which were produced from 2000 to 2009 were used and this gave the study an advantage to explore the HRM-performance link longitudinally. Using different data collection methods enabled this study to capture two views regarding HRM-performance link (a) the managerial views through the semi-structured interviews and (b)

other employees' views through the data generated from employees' surveys. Using data from employees surveys have allowed for multiple employee ratings regarding HRM-performance link within ROP than is common in studies using a single manager's point of view.

## **5.8 THE DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS**

This study gathered data from two sources. The first source was from semi-structured interviews conducted with officers representing different managerial levels in ROP (strategic, middle management, and operational). The second source was from the analysis of documents that are related to employees' surveys, auditing reports and public surveys. Employee surveys, auditing reports and public's survey data which were produced from 2000 to 2009. Therefore, this study elicited the information and experiences stored within the cognition of those managers who participated in the research.

Over the recent decades there has been a growing interest and research in the area of cognition in the social sciences, which was received in organisational discipline seeking alternatives to the traditional economic model of organisational behaviour whose limits had become apparent (Wengraf, 2001). Central to this approach is the premise that individuals represent stimuli cognitively and that it is the cognition which in turn influences behaviour (Holiday, 1994). This perspective investigates the nature of these mental models, their origins and the effect on behaviour and decisions by which these actors construct their environment (Taris, 2000). This approach, referred to as 'constructionism', which questions the view of the world in which the environment imposes itself on passive perceivers and is regarded as increasingly legitimate within organisational sciences (Wengraf, 2001). This view was based to a large extent on Bryman and Bell (2003) that emphasised the social construction of reality. Social phenomena are social products which are themselves objectives and thus in turn affect human actions so that individuals accept this reality as their own. This position thus implies

that in order to understand the world, researcher's need to focus on the actors who construct their reality and analyse the way reality is constructed (Bryman and Bell, 2003).

As managers make decisions affecting the use of organisational resources including human resource there is a strong implication for the relevance of a managerial cognition approach within the area of HRM and organisational performance. The line and HR managers evaluate and interpret the potential relevance and benefit of HRM policies and make decisions about the planning of manpower and the employment policies under which the workforce is employed. Therefore, the cognitive processes influence the manager's evaluation of the HRM policies potential effect on employees' performance.

Traditionally, data analysis stage occurred after all of the data had been gathered (Robson, 1993). However, in qualitative studies, analysis and interpretation of data could start during the data collection process (Silverman, 2001). It is advisable to analyse data and write up as one proceeds because the final analysis stage could be a formidable task (Davis, 2005). This is because qualitative data is exceedingly complex, and is not readily convertible into standard measurable units of objects seen and heard (James *et al.* 2006).

Due to the qualitative nature of the data obtained, it is impossible to establish a step-by-step data analysis process for the research (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, qualitative data analysis should be done based on the nature of the research and will depend on the type of data available.

Berg (1998: 91) advised that although qualitative data analysis cannot be done quickly, neatly or lightly, this should not be viewed as a limitation. Instead when qualitative analysis is done, certain priorities must be established, assumptions made during the design and data collection phases must be clarified, and a particular research course must be set (Berg, 1998: 93).

Guercini (2004) believed that this unique characteristic of analysing qualitative data conforms to a general contour and calls this the data analysis spiral.

To maximise the rigour of the process and the quality of the findings, the analysis phase of the research received considerable attention. Qualitative data analysis has many implications that need to be taken into consideration by the researcher. Firstly, interpretation of the interviews' transcripts involved analysis of the text in order to answer the research question (Breg, 1998). Second, the way the researcher categorised and organised his data might have deflected his attention away from uncategorised text. Thus, in developing themes or codes of analysis, there was potential to diminish or de-value some of the text that did not fit comfortably within any particular category (Silverman, 2001). Effective data collection accompanied with good analysis led to valuable findings grounded in carefully selected and dependable views and perceptions of the research question by the study participants.

The following sections explain the process undertaken in this research to ensure a sound analysis for the information gathered from the semi-structured interviews.

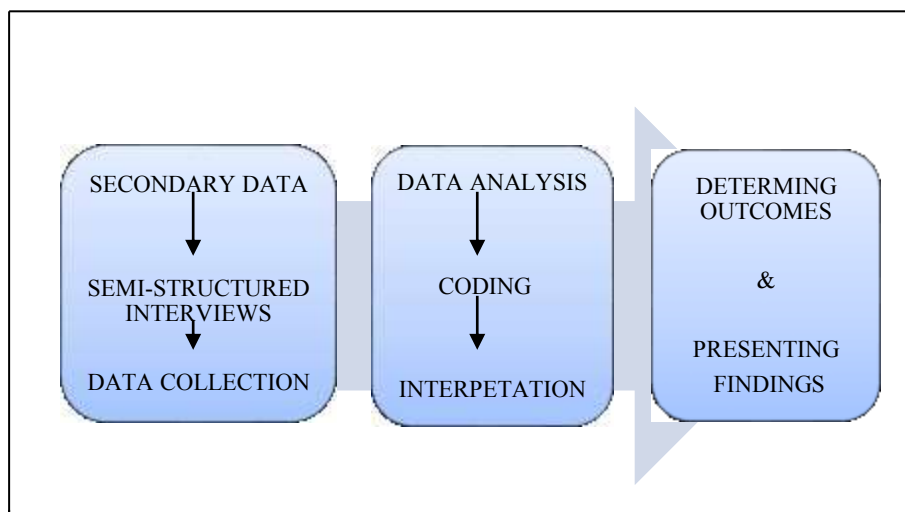
### **5.8.1 THE DATA ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK**

Prior to the data analysis process, it is important for the researcher to start the analysis processes by organising their data (Guercini, 2004). Data management is important to ensure: (a) high quality accessible data; (b) documentation of the analysis that has been carried out; and (c) retention of data and associated analysis after the study is complete (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

As Patton (2002: 10) explained that data obtained from qualitative research are voluminous. Therefore, it was very important to establish a system to sort the data obtained from the research into appropriate categories and sections, and then converting these into the themes or codes identified in the research (Breg, 1998). The ability to retain and record information

from interviews was as important as collecting them. Hence, all of the 40 interviews that were conducted for this case study were recorded with an audio recorder.

Data analysis was determined inductively through multiple readings of the interview transcripts and employees surveys, auditing reports and public surveys which were produced from 2000 to 2009. The findings thereby had risen from multiple interpretations and crosschecking of the raw data. As a result different themes were generated. The relationships and links on causal basis were also discovered between the responses from participants in different categories. These multiple layers of analysis strengthened the research's dependability. Figure 5 below shows the data analysis framework of this research.



**Figure 5** Data Analysis Framework  
Source Miles & Huberman (1994), Thomas (2003)



Following the transcription and translation of the interviews from Arabic into English, the rich text file version of the transcripts was merged with NVivo software. Prior to this, a hard copy was made of all the transcripts and saved via a back-up digital copy as a safety precaution against any unforeseen circumstances. Using a word program to analyse the interviews, the data were first examined by topic selection. At this stage, core classifications emerged from the data, which required several scans to detect patterns, variations, and similarities in perceptions between groups of participants and within each group. Using NVivo software, data analysis management was facilitated through the interview guide (that is, asking all respondents the same four questions and adding probes). Codes related to key themes and issues generated from the interviews and the secondary data were grouped and clustered. This was followed by cross comparison between all the data.

Preliminary drafts of related results were prepared and interviewee quotations were selected. The participants' responses not only provided positive or negative evidence for issues being investigated in related to HRM-performance link. It also gave insights and explanations for other information generated from the secondary data. Drafts of the analysis were reviewed and verified and, thus there was a high degree of confidence in the data analysis and its interpretation. The analysis process was based on the thematic analysis which will be described in the next section.

### **5.8.2 THEMATIC ANALYSIS**

Findings that are obtained from secondary data, interviews and various types of unobtrusive data are often not amenable to analysis until the information has been condensed and made systematically comparable (Silverman, 2001). Using a word program to analyse the interviews, the data was first examined by concept selection which was derived from the four pillars of the analytical framework of the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

At this stage, core classifications emerged from the data, which required several scans to detect patterns, variations, and similarities in perceptions between groups of participants and within each group. This process of analysis also led to greater familiarity with the data, initiating a constant comparison process. Themes were presented in three stages:

1. Initial impact stage: to determine issue or issues creating an impact among participants as a whole, and also within each category of participants.
2. Conflict stage: to identify contrary issues occurring in the group and/or inter-group.
3. Resolution stage: where the researcher established statements, suggestions or views regarding solutions pertaining to the research question.

The researcher had to get a sense of all the interviews and secondary data obtained before breaking these into specific themes or codes. The analysis process was built on the analytical framework of the study that was Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model. The analysis process was based on the four pillars of the model.

This process enabled the development of classifications from the raw data to capture key themes. Data analysis was determined inductively through multiple readings and interpretation of interview transcripts and secondary data taken into consideration both the research objectives and the conceptual framework. Relationships and links on a causal basis (HRM and performance) were also discovered from the responses of the participants in different categories. The next section explains in more details how the data for this thesis will be interpreted.

### **5.8.3 INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA**

Data interpretation was based on the research objectives outlined at the beginning of this chapter. A thorough literature review was carried out to assist in determining themes which were useful from the data gained from the interviews (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009: 3) stated that

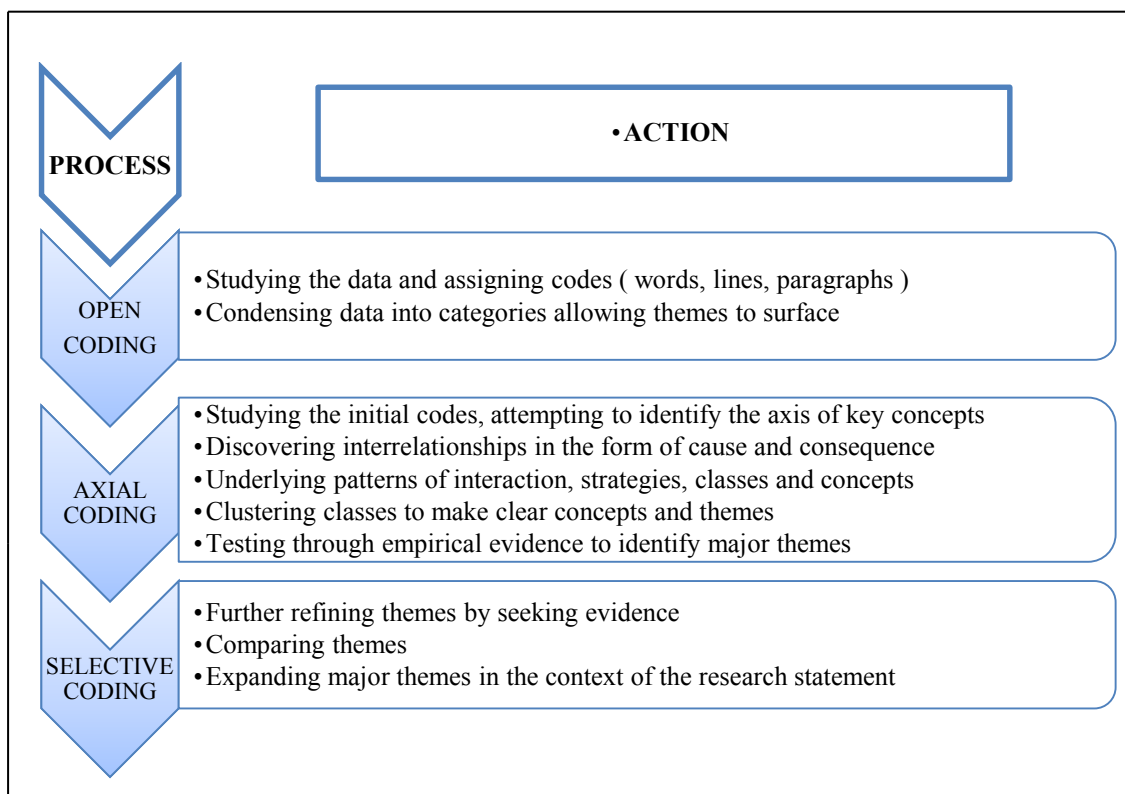
“without guidance from the preliminary theoretical concepts, all these choices may be extremely difficult and hamper the development of a rigorous case study.” Therefore, the researcher started by classifying the information into four main categories that are based on the four pillars of the conceptual framework of this study which was Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

The development process was continued by identifying themes under each pillar, comparing themes across samples, and creating codes for each theme. In detail, this meant that relevant raw information was first selected and then marked and coded for sentence and paragraph, which reduced the raw information to a shortened ‘outline’ form easier for comparison across samples.

The conceptualisation of the code was not generated until all themes in the groups had been gathered into clustering themes. Once the results of abstracted themes and codes of the first set of sub-samples (the senior officers) were obtained, they were then applied to the other set of sub-samples of the officers (middle management officers, operational level officer, and HR officers). The researcher’s recorded notes from the employees’ surveys, public’s survey and auditing reports were helpful in the process of analysis in order to further understand different insights related to the phenomena being studied. This was an iterative process-involving going back and forth between the ‘picture’ and the ‘data’ carried out to achieve a reasonable approximation of the data and articulate the logic underlying the linkage between clusters and codes (Hoskisson *et al.* 1999).

The inductive coding technique recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994) was applied, which is open coding, axial coding and finally selective coding. Figure 6 below describes the Coding Procedures. The three procedures were used in the analysis of the interview transcripts. Using this coding technique has helped the researcher to develop ideas and assumptions about the data through induction and comparison with the theories and concepts

related to the HRM-performance link mentioned in the literature review and those incorporated in the study's analytical framework.



**Figure 6** Coding Procedures  
Source: Miles and Huberman (1984: 44)

The research was an interactive experience between the researcher and participants in a police organisation context. The research context was very sensitive and required great awareness of an important aspect of the research protocol that is related to ethical code and practices. The next section discusses this part in detail.

## **5.9 THE RESEARCH ETHICS**

Zikmund (1997: 64) stated that most research situations involve three parties: the researcher, the sponsoring client (user), and the respondent (subject). The method or type of interaction

between any of the parties requires consideration into ethical issues that may arise. The term ethics stands for rules of behaviour or conformity to a code or set of principles (Harris, 2001).

This research adhered strictly to the Code of Practice for Research Ethics applied in the

University of Northampton as well as ethical considerations relevant to the Omani context.

The four principles of ethical issues in qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003) were respected during the data collection, analysis, and the result writing process. There was mutual respect, non-coercion and non-manipulation, the support of democratic values, and the belief that every research act implies moral and ethical decisions.

The researcher ensured that the research strategy chosen did not violate the participants' privacy or disrupt their day-to-day actions at work as a result of the research outcomes. The anonymity and privacy of the participants was observed and guaranteed. Their personal information was kept confidential and secure. Although an informed consent form is an important feature of ethical considerations in any research involving human subjects, however this aspect is interpreted differently in the Omani culture. Participants did not welcome the idea of signing a consent form. They showed their willingness to cooperate and participate in the research without any consent forms.

The researcher still maintained elements of informed consent by taking verbal consent. Participants were assured that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time. They were also assured that all data obtained from them is confidential and would be used for research purposes only and reassured that their identity would not be revealed at any stage of the research.

It was clear that the research context was sensitive as the researcher is one of ROP's officers and is aiming to study the HRM-performance link in the force. Working at ROP has given the

researcher many advantages such as (a) the ability to access different documents and reports related to HRM function in ROP; (b) the ability to conduct all the interviews with officers from different management levels, and (c) marketing the value of the research for ROP's leadership and other senior officers in the force to gain their support to the project.

In fact, these advantages have helped the researcher to solve potential problems throughout the fieldwork phase, such as finishing the interviews with the senior officers on time. This understanding has reinforced the researcher's awareness on how to investigate the research's problems in ROP's context and to neutralise his potential biases. Accordingly different data collection methods were used within the case study to eliminate these biases. For example, the researcher had decided not to use observation in order to maintain the objectivity in the research process. Although observation is a sound research tool, especially for a researcher who is conducting research in an organisation that he/she work in. Also, the researcher had avoided using surveys because officers in ROP are reluctant to give information in writing and this indicated that the researcher understood the conservative nature of the police context (Al-Harathi, 2008).

#### **5.10 QUALITY OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN & DATA**

For the research to have the potential to make a contribution, the methodology by which the results are obtained must be reliable and valid (Anderson, 2008). Reliability refers to the research instruments and methods which yield consistent results by the following factors:

- a) Irrespective of time (i.e. measurement at different points in time yield the same results, consistency of the variable value assumed),
- b) Irrespective of the researcher applying the methods and instruments (i.e. the research results do not vary across researchers using the same methods), and
- c) Irrespective of the instruments themselves (i.e. different instruments such as questionnaire survey or interviews yield the same results).

In other words, reliability is concerned with the possibility to replicate a study with similar results. The second criterion is validity i.e. the construct intended to be measured is in fact measured. Thirdly, the research is representative, if there is congruence between elements in the sample and a theoretically defined population of elements.

Usually, these criteria are referred to when discussing the reliability and validity of psychometric tests or quantitative surveys. Such tests or instruments whose statistical properties can be measured, studied and compared with similar ones claiming to measure the same construct can therefore be subjected to thorough and critical examination.

There is on-going debate on the nature and applicability of such criteria for qualitative research with some researchers even questioning whether goodness criteria can be applied at all (Miles and Huberman, 1994). However, Miles and Huberman (1994: 36) suggested that the criteria do and should apply because research findings can have concrete implications for people's lives, people do have views of what happened in situations, and researchers rendering accounts of these can do so well or badly.

Mason and Griffin (2002: 271) also suggested that qualitative research should be judged on the criteria, reliability, and validity. Acknowledging that these areas somewhat overlap and are not easily tested and demonstrated (Mason and Griffin, 2002).

This research aimed to measure both the organisational performance and HRM in ROP. The measurement of HRM and organisational performance was based on Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

Due to time limitation of the respondents, there was only one opportunity per respondent to gather the required data. Different instruments applied by different researchers over various points in time could realistically not have been employed and would certainly not have been welcomed by the respondents. Thus, a relatively structured approach (semi-structured

interviews) with questions derived from the People Performance Model limited the scope for researcher's subjectivity. Within the semi-structured interviews, the respondents had the freedom to express their views and go beyond the immediate questions. The researcher was cautious to avoid influencing certain answers to the questions or other behaviours suggesting the desirability of particular responses in favour for or against certain concepts. As respondents of different levels and positions were chosen to elicit information most closely related to their immediate realm, the error introduced by single respondents answering quick question was eliminated (Purcell, 1999). In this research, officers from different management levels (strategic, middle management, and operational) were asked about their understanding of HRM practices, police organisational performance, the processes by which HRM could affect performance. This approach ensured validity by asking the same questions to the relevant informants. The adoption of the research protocol ensured consistency of the method across respondents and thereby promoting rigour.

Using semi-structured interviews allowed a degree of openness between the researcher and the participants. This was deemed necessary as the epistemological position which incorporated to a large degree (by nature subjective) managerial cognition required enough room for such cognition to be expressed rather than the researcher imposing too tight a structure on the respondents preventing them to share their cognition. In other words, validity would have been impaired, had too tight a structure been adopted resulting in limited opportunities for respondents to share their subjective views.

The relatively structured approach of collecting data from the two main resources which are the semi-structured interview conducted with officers from different managerial levels and the analysis of documents that are related to employees' surveys, auditing reports and public's surveys from 2000 to 2009 have helped to contribute to reliability and validity by allowing for multiple employee ratings regarding HRM-performance link within ROP longitudinally.



Overall rooting the questions in the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model helped ask questions yielding information from respondents which were accurate and relevant to the issues being studied, an important element in judging the validity of a study (Mason and Griffin, 2002).

On an interpretive level, the adoption of a coding process based on thematic analysis approach attempted to continue this comparison between structure and openness also in the data analysis phase. Core classifications emerged from the data, which required several scans to detect patterns, variations, and similarities in perceptions between groups of participants and within each group. The researcher had to get a sense of all the interviews and obtain the secondary data before breaking these into specific themes or codes. The analysis process was built on the analytical framework of Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model. This process enabled the development of classifications from the raw data to capture key themes, which, further increased potential reliability of the data analysis and reduced subjective bias of the data interpretation.

## **5.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

As described by the research design, the nature of this study is purely qualitative; it used semi-structured interviews and secondary data (employees' surveys, auditing reports and public's surveys) as its data collection strategy. This research is unique in that it investigated HRM-performance link within ROP longitudinally by analysing data from employees' surveys, auditing reports and public surveys from 2000 to 2009. This chapter has drawn out valuable theoretical concepts from using the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as a conceptual and analytical framework in a unique context of the Omani police organisation. This framework has helped to design and structure the research methodology to understand the relationship between HRM and performance in ROP.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **FINDINGS & ANALYSIS**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter gives a description of the case study by discussing the development of HRM and performance measures in the Royal Oman Police. The findings will then be presented from the data collected. The findings from this case study will be divided into two main sections. The first section will discuss the findings from the semi-structured interviews, which represents the managers' perception of HRM in the Royal Oman Police. The second section will discuss the analysis of the secondary data that were taken from different resources such as the results of successive employees' surveys, audit reports and the surveys of the general public's perception of the quality of policing in Oman from 2000 to 2009. The data obtained from the employees' surveys will represent the non-managers' perception of HRM. The secondary data analysis will also explain the measurement of HRM and policing performance in ROP.

#### **6.2 HRM IN THE ROYAL OMAN POLICE**

As can be seen from section 4.3, the Royal Oman Police has incorporated HRM within its new policing model and strategy. This endeavor demonstrated the belief of the force leadership on the importance of HRM to improve the performance and service delivery (Saif, 2004). Changes in the HRM model has shifted the highly centralised decision and policy making process through regionalisation, improved internal communications, decreased policy formalisation, recruitment of more diverse police officers, development of new approaches and models for recruit training, introduced a merit based promotion system, encouraged

strategic planning, and coordinated and integrated these various different initiatives in the police strategy (Consultancy Report: DGHR Development Project, 2004).

The Directorate General of Human Resource (DGHR) is responsible for dealing with all the HR matters related to all divisions and units in ROP centrally. The DGHR used to carry out administrative roles ranging from recruitment, promotion, and related matters to a wide group of welfare and recreational services (Consultancy Report: DGHR Development Project, 2002). The Royal Oman Police Annual Report stated that “DGHR has continued to carry out the administrative role only; it became a storehouse of people’ files. The DGHR’s staff was perceived as ‘regulators’ rather than ‘developers’. Senior and middle management officers in DGHR saw themselves as implementers of the Inspector General’s wishes and instructions” (Royal Oman Police Annual Report, 1999:13).

As a result of that, ROP launched a project to restructure the HRM function and a team was formed to carry out the development plan. An HR consultant was hired from the UK to help the project team on the change process and he was also responsible to monitor the development of the restructuring project. There were four main objectives for this project:

1. Developing a new structure to the DGHR
2. Decentralising the existing DGHR model and in so doing, it hoped to boost or enhance the role of local OC’s and DG’s in HR activities through locally based HR staff
3. Measuring HRM policies and practices
4. Building up, at the centre of the organisation (in DGHR), a strategic HRM function

The project plan was implemented for two years (2000-2002) under the direct supervision of the Inspector General. The main outcomes of the restructuring project were:

- A new structure of DGHR was approved by the Inspector General and a new Directorate General was appointed for it, along with two assistances; one for development and another one for HR.
- Decentralisation of the HRM model by giving the local Divisions' Commanders the right discretion to manage HR activities through locally based HR staff.
- Measuring HRM policies and practices by using employees' survey as a tool to assess employees' attitudinal outcomes towards the HRM policies and practices.
- Building up, at the centre of the organisation (in DGHR), a strategic HRM function that is responsible for implementing the following ten HRM polices listed in Table 9. Section 6.2.1 discusses these policies in detail.

| <b>HRM POLICIES</b> |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1.                  | Competency-based recruitment                        |
| 2.                  | HR planning   |
| 3.                  | Professional and technical training                 |
| 4.                  | Management development                              |
| 5.                  | Performance appraisal and management                |
| 6.                  | Promotion/Management succession planning capability |
| 7.                  | Career planning capability                          |
| 8.                  | Communication                                       |
| 9.                  | Team working  |
| 10.                 | Pay satisfaction                                    |

**Table 9**      HRM Policies in ROP

This model has enhanced the HRM ability to provide machinery to recruit, train and develop the organisation's manpower requirement through the development of sound equitable policies, mechanisms and practices (most of which ought to be managed and handled by local managers).

Chan (1996) argued that “any organisation can construct its own HRM approach, depending on its mission, business objectives, resources, and customer’s requirements.” Therefore, this model was built to fulfill the Royal Oman Police needs. The model included ten policies that are strategically integrated with both HR and policing strategy (Consultancy Report: DGHR Development Project, 2004). It covered four areas of HRM (a) resourcing, (b) training and development, (c) performance management, and (d) reward. The model was designed to focus primarily on achieving organisational success and ensuring employees’ quality and commitment (Consultancy Report: DGHR Development Project, 2004).

Zairi (1998: 50) argued that “the challenges faced by organisations were no longer who has got the biggest and most effective technological power, but rather who has got the right HRM that focuses on effectively managing and developing the right level of employees’ skills and expertise.”

One of the aims of restructuring HRM in the ROP was to enable the DGHR to be more strategic. The Consultancy Report in 2000 suggested that ROP can realise the advantages that will come with SHRM and accordingly HRM policies will help the force to move forward (Consultancy Report: DGHR Development Project, 2000: 12). Section 2.5 of this study, showed that a substantial amount of research in the field of SHRM has focused on the relationship that exists between HRM practices and performance (Arthur, 1994; Brewster, 1999; Claus and Collison, 2004; Huselid, 1995; Ichniowski *et al.* 1997; Pfeffer, 1994). Different SHRM models have been discussed in chapter two of this study.

The Consultancy Report in 2009 pointed out that the new HRM model has incorporated a useful measurement mechanism that can prove the relationship between HRM and performance (Consultancy Report: DGHR Development Project, 2000: 20). This was done through the employee attitudinal survey, which generated data that helped to assess the impact of HRM policies and practices on the performance. The results of the survey have

demonstrated that employees in ROP have different perception and understanding of the impact of HRM policies and practices on areas that are related to performance such as ability, motivation, job satisfaction and commitment before and after the implementation of the new HRM model. This is discussed in detail in this chapter.

Purcell *et al.* (2003: 53) argued that the People Performance Model has focused on solving the gap that existed between espoused and operational policies, which can be attributed to the exercise of discretionary behaviour by managers. This in turn has an impact on the discretionary behaviour of employee, which is critical to performance. This study has used the same model aiming at understanding how HRM influences performance in the ROP. The findings related to this part will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

The SHRM model in ROP has followed the contingency approach. This approach is based on the belief that organisational performance will be improved when the best fit between business strategy and HR practices is achieved. In other words, this approach does not accept the notion of universal prescription for HRM policies and practices; rather, it is all contingent on the organisation's context and culture and its business strategy (Armstrong, 2006). This contingency approach of SHRM in ROP, demonstrates that what is good for one organisation may not be good for another. Therefore, organisations should choose systems and strategies that best fit their specific situation taking into account the organisation type, the strategies in place, and the operating environment (Antony *et al.* 2002; Sission and Story, 2000).

The DGHR exists to create the climate and conditions (through policies, systems, and evaluation) to help ROP to (a) develop capabilities and core competencies of officers; (b) enhance learning both at individual and organisational levels; and (c) enable the creation of new processes to respond to changing external conditions (Consultancy Report: DGHR Development Project, 2002). This is congruent with the rationale of the resource-based view (Zollo and Winter, 2002).

Paauwe and Boselie (2003: 56) concluded that the RBV has become the dominant theory in the debates on strategic HRM and on how human resources and related HR practices can have an effect on firm performance. If one adopts RBV, HRM is not so much an agglomeration of administrative tasks as a way of linking employees to each other and to the enterprise. Its effect is not limited to employees' skills and behaviour, but also weaves those HRM outcomes within the broader fabric of organisational processes, systems and ultimately, competencies (Wright *et al.* 2001a).

This understanding underpins the design of this study. This is reflected through the usage of Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as an analytical and conceptual framework to explore the relationship between HRM and performance in the Royal Oman Police. The research attempts to demonstrate the role of the ability (A), the motivation (M) and opportunity (O) on improving performance (refer to section 2.5.5 for more detail).

### **6.3 PERFORMANCE MEASURES IN THE ROP**

As it was explained in chapter 4 that the Royal Oman Police (ROP) has gone through extensive organisational change to improve their management, operational, tactical and strategic efficacy. As a result, a new policing model that is based on community policing philosophy and strategic management has been promoted and supported the ROP leadership. This model was translated into a policing strategy, which included six themes as discussed in section 4.3, and shown in Table 4.

An auditing process was established as a performance measurement mechanism. Table 10 below explains the auditing framework and includes the key performance indicators (KPI) that are considered acceptable to performance in ROP. This new measurement technique aims at demonstrating that ROP is managed in such a way that services are provided at specified standards of quality which is achieved in the most effective and efficient way possible. Accordingly, it is the policy of ROP to ensure that every area of service and all key areas of

activity in which resources are utilised should be subjected to regular and detailed performance review (Performance Measurement Policy Report, 2000: 45).

The measurement process focuses on four elements of the policing performance: (1) activity, (2) competency and professionalism, (3) community contact and responsiveness, and (4) internal control and resource management. This performance measurement is also used to integrate different functional areas and decisions related to the policing strategy into linked processes. The performance is evaluated using key performance indicators (KPI) which are set annually at corporate level (based on the three-year plan) initially (Performance Measurement Policy Report, 2000: 46).

The whole planning process is managed by the corporate planning department, which develops the corporate plan (which runs from November to October), after consultation with all divisional commanders and the Inspector General. Then, each division develops its own plan which is measured against the KPI of the four performance elements explained in Table 10 below. All division plans are documented and progress is assessed using a traffic light system consisting of red, orange and green indicators. Progress of all division plans are monitored by the corporate planning department and each divisional commander must maintain a regular and detailed focus of the elements of the policing performance (Performance Measurement Policy Report, 2000: 48).

The performance is assessed by using the auditing approach. The auditing is done by trained teams who have an understanding of performance in comparative context (the current and the ideal performance) against which they are able to attribute meaning and significance to their findings. The results of the auditing evaluations are submitted to the ROP's leadership so that the findings can be appraised and tested within the policing strategy context (Performance Measurement Policy Report, 2000: 47).



Public surveys from 2000 to 2009 have demonstrated that the public have been satisfied by the quality of the police force performance and services after the completion of the change project in 2002. The public think ROP's performance has improved on areas such as speed of responses to 999 calls, reduction of total amount of crimes, rate of deduction, number of officers available for operational duty, police services (issuing of passport and ID cards, issuing of driving license and car registration cards).

The auditing reports from 2000 to 2009 have also demonstrated changes in officers' attitude, job satisfaction and commitment towards the force after the DGHRM development project was completed in 2002. The findings related to this part will be discussed in detail (Performance Measurement Policy Report, 2000: 55).

| <b>PERFORMANCE ELEMENT</b>              | <b>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)</b>   |
|---|--|
| <b>Activity</b>                         | The level of activity by category (type) and frequency, so that the activity profile of any one division is able to be validated, compared and contrasted with that of other divisions.  |
|   | The percentage of that activity which is demand led (e.g. criminal incidents, accidents, request for information or help... etc.) as opposed to the percentage which is initiated from within the police organisation (e.g. patrols, community initiatives, liaison meeting... etc.).  |
|   | The inputs (including fixed and variable overheads) consumed in each key activity area; how these are estimated, what records are kept.  |
|   | The results (outcomes) achieved in each key activity area (including speed of responsiveness, arrests, successful prosecutions, crime reduction... etc.); how these are estimated and what records are kept.   |
|   | The frequency with which information is gathered and used in identifying trends and patterns. Identification of any discernible effects (if any) of that information on the way tasks are designed, priorities set and resources allocated.  |
|   | The degree to which there is awareness at each level of the organisation of how the activities undertaken by each level are related (or not related) to particular policies, strategies, objectives/targets. How these are communicated and built into day-to-day work task.   |
|   | The degree to which plans and target setting, target review and performance measurement are part of management/supervisory activity in the region, and how management organise itself to develop and keep on top of these, in other words (what evidence is there, at any level, that the direction of activity is related to plans or governed by policy and measurement).  |
|   | In how many instances over the last twelve months did the divisions request support? For what and why?   |
| <b>Competency &amp; Professionalism</b> | To what extent and with what regularity does management ensures all staff is competent and up to date in the knowledge and skills needed to do each job? The degree to which there is evidence of a managed induction process to enable individuals taking up posts to perform to objectives, standards, and competency (what percentage of staff received such initiation). |
|   | The degree to which there is evidence of any provision for on the job refresher learning and case experience review? In what ways (if at all) is the supervisory process used in establishing and reaffirming specific standards of performance required in all key aspects of work for constables and junior ranks at all lengths of experience?                            |
|   | How, if at all, does the Divisional Commander ensures effective accountability for the fulfilment of role responsibilities at each level? What evidence is there of the role of differentiation and awareness?   |
|   | The average lengths of tenure in specific posts, and the effect this has on the performance in the post and the development of the individual as a resource. The degree to which there are any real competency criteria applied in the postings process within the divisions.  |

**Table 10** Auditing Framework in ROP

| <b>PERFORMANCE ELEMENT</b>                        | <b>KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)</b>  |
|---|---|
| <b>Community Contact &amp; Responsiveness</b>     | The ways in which the Division Commander communicates with the communities that he serves. What data is collected, how frequently, timely and how is it used in the process of decision making when identifying needs, making plans, developing community relationship and allocating resources.  |
|   | The percentage of time overall spent by staff inside and outside the station; in other words, at any one time what percentage of the total human resource for the division is on the ground, available for direct contact with the community  |
|   | The degree to which senior officers make sure that they are accurately informed about the impact, behaviour and standards of the policing experienced by the community, and how do they do this?  |
|   | The degree to which their recognised (explicit) standards are governing all key aspects of service. Within those standards, to what degree are there specific benchmarks to cover the speed and quality of responsiveness to incidents? In effect, to what degree is there a service or control mentality in the perception of role and objectives as held by those police who have contact with the public? What level of consciousness exists at different levels (top to bottom) about the specifics of these standards; how well are they known, understood, communicated, and in the minds of those delivering services? |
|   | The degree to which there is evident policy and practice with regard to the victims of crime? To what degree is there follow up (on a range of sampled cases) of the speed and frequency and quality of contact? What is the quality of information given to victims that enables them to be reassured and track the progress on their cases?   |
| <b>Internal Control &amp; Resource Management</b> | The degree to which there is mentoring of progress and quality in case and incident management; the systems used and the percentage of files checked, registers examined, test samples of time taken, delays, files returned.   |
|   | The degree to which the Commander utilises all his police resources (uniforms, CID, Traffic, Crime Prevention... etc.) in an integrated strategy to secure the policing goals of the division. Problems of internal communication and co-operation; degree of information sharing and joint problem solving.  |
|   | The degree to which the allocation of resources reflects an intelligent appraisal of need and priority.   |
|   | The degree to which efficiency is a consistent part of management, through which savings are identified through better utilisation, reductions in waste and duplication and consideration of values for money in the choices made.  |
|   | The levels of utilisation of key transport and equipment resources, particularly in those areas where there are request for more.   |
|   | The degree, to which there is effective anticipation of future maintenance and capital development needs, based on a sound analysis of trend and predictable changes in the pattern of demand.  |
|   | The degree to which the work of the division is governed by realistic planning rather than ad hoc reaction; what evidence, if at all, is there that operational improvements is being achieved through a coherent strategic evaluation.   |

**Table 10**

**Auditing Framework in ROP**

## **6.4 FINDINGS FROM THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

As it was thoroughly discussed in chapter 5, the nature of this study is purely qualitative. Forty officers from different management levels (strategic/ middle management/ operational) participated to give a variety and rich information about their understanding of HRM practices, police organisational performance and the processes by which HRM could affect performance (see interview question in Appendix 1). Using a sound theoretical framework of Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model in the context of the Omani policing organisation has helped to compare and contrast responses by interviewees to reach a maximum understanding of the phenomena under investigation. To illustrate the agreement of participants regarding different issues that were mention in the analysis, they researcher has decided to provide quotations extracted from those participants regardless of their management levels. In fact, this slice or segment of data is actually integral to the research argument. These quotations present commentary and internal argument that help to remove the researcher's personal perspective and authorial presence. Gilham (2000:89) makes similar distinction between the 'logical' and 'rhetorical' data, and how different quotations might be used to develop the researcher's explanation.

This process has helped the researcher to inductively develop ideas and assumptions about the data and accordingly construct a meaningful story to explain the HRM-performance link in the Royal Oman Police based on dimensions related to the research objectives and the four pillars of Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

### **6.4.1 HRM POLICIES IN THE ROYAL OMAN POLICE**

As mentioned in chapter five, participants from different managerial levels of the organisation were included in this case study. The reason for including those participants was to investigate whether employees at various levels of an organisation had the same perception of the impact of HRM in policing performance.

The overall responses from the participants showed strong understanding of the role that the HRM model has to function in a sector with unique characteristics such as the Royal Oman Police. The participants were aware of the main strategic objectives to the DGHR's revamp project. One of the senior officers explained this by saying:

“The force wanted to develop strategic function in DGHR to enhance its ability to provide machinery to recruit, train and develop the organisation's manpower through the development of sound equitable policies, mechanisms and practices most of which ought to be managed and handled by local managers.”

The new decentralised HRM model in ROP aims to enhance the role of the division's commanders in managing HR activities locally in their formations. New HR departments have been established within every division in ROP and they are managed by well-qualified HR staff. The new structure enables the central HRM function (DGHR) to carry out a different strategic role. One of the senior officers stated:

“The new decentralised HRM model gives local commanders more autonomy and discretion to manage HRM issues in their divisions and this helps them to understand the importance of HRM in improving performance.”

In a police organisation HR strategy needs to take into account a range of different stakeholders perspectives and to be focused at a national as well as lower organisational tiers. This complexity reduces the scope for autonomous management actions and if these realities are ignored, unrealistic and naive HR strategy may be formulated. This can be understood from the following comments made by one of the middle management officers:

“The new DGHR in ROP can be considered as a vehicle to change the whole ROP to a modernised force. DGHR exists to create the climate and conditions through policies, systems, records and evaluation to manage people.”

The new HRM model has been designed to incorporate policies that serve the following key strategic areas, which are essential for the force:

#### **6.4.1.1 COMPETENCY BASED RECRUITMENT**

Recruitment is defined as a practice or activity carried out by the organisation with the purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees (DeCieri *et al.* 2005: 66). Selection is the process by which an organisation attempts to identify applicants with the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics that will help it achieve its goals (DeCieri *et al.* 2005: 66)

Competency based recruitment policies and practices have been developed to meet the force's strategic needs. The new competency framework consists of 10 competencies as they are explained in Table 11 below.

Competency modelling places more emphasis on determining the knowledge, skills, abilities and other attributes needed throughout ROP. The recruitment and selection process comprises a number of steps that are designed to match the competencies framework for different jobs and roles in the force, which emanate from the identification of staffing needs. Once identified, other steps are carried out by the recruitment teams which include: deciding the advertising strategy, short listing criteria for interview, interview panel composition, interview process and questions, conducting aptitude and psychological tests, background checking and medical check-up. The selection decision is based on the extent to which candidates meet the specifications as set out in the competency terms.

The competency based recruitment meets the organisation's future needs rather than focusing on the details of specific jobs as they are carried out at the present. In consistence with this, one of the senior officers said:

“The new competency model has helped the force to select the right candidates who

can recognise the force’s goals which depends on total quality, innovation and customer service. And those candidates are willing to strive for the same goals on the organisation’s behalf.”

Another middle management officer said:

“The advantage of the competency framework is that it facilitates a closer match between the person’s attributes and the demands of the job. Therefore, it underpins the whole range of recruitment techniques in ROP.”

| <b>COMPETENCIES</b>   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Integrity and honesty</li> <li>– Analytical thinking</li> <li>– Continuous improvement</li> <li>– Flexibility and adaptability</li> <li>– Initiative</li> <li>– Impact and influence</li> <li>– Interpersonal understanding</li> <li>– Self-confidence</li> <li>– Teamwork</li> <li>– Self-discipline</li> </ul> |

**Table 11** ROP’s Competency-Based Recruitment Framework

#### **6.4.1.2 HR PLANNING**

Human resource planning policies and practices exist to provide the executive with informed projections about the type and number of people required to fulfil ROP’s mission in the future. Human resource planning is described as a systematic process and continuous process of analysing the force’s human resources needs under changing conditions (Armstrong, 2000). It is an integral part of the force’s corporate planning and budgeting procedures since HR costs and forecast both affect and are affected by long-term corporate plans. The principle

aims of HR planning policies in ROP are:

- To obtain and retain the quantity and quality of people the force requires
- To make the best use of the force's human resources
- To anticipate the problems of potential surpluses or deficits of people
- To develop a well-trained and flexible workforce that is both able and flexible to meet the needs of changing circumstances and conditions

Human resource planning ensures that the right numbers of employees with the appropriate skills are available to cover the anticipated workload and ensuring the right balance between employees and their workloads and life quality. This tool helps the ROP to assess how various manpower policies (made now and in the future) may impact the resource position and viability of the organisation in the medium to long term. In line with this, one of the senior officers said:

“We need to have a forecasting means of predicting what the best balance of service for the future may need to be. This is based on having appropriately skilled, flexible and organised workforce in terms of: numbers, distribution, qualities, and competencies capable of dealing with policing challenges as they arise.”

#### **6.4.1.3 PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL TRAINING**

The main principle of the training philosophy in ROP is that training aims to help the force to achieve its purpose by adding value to its human resources to enable them to perform better and to empower them to make the best use of their abilities and skills. Professional and technical training policies and practices enable different divisions to equip their officers with the relevant skills and competencies to improve their performance. The training policy supports officer development by allowing line managers and training officers to work together to identify the training needs of officers and accordingly provide them with the training



required. The training policies are built on the following principles:

- To provide the appropriate support and value for money from resource investment
- Training courses are tailored to fit the requirement and resources of internal customers
- Training is designed and developed to minimise abstractions from operational duty and to be conducted near to the workplace
- Standards are maintained through systematic training evaluation and updating of trainers and the monitoring of training performance

One of the operational officer's comments was:

“The ROP's focus is to provide all around training for its officers, with emphasis on personal and professional development.”

Under the new training framework, education and training development needs are determined through a top-down and bottom-up approach. The top-down approach is aligned to the annual corporate planning process where strategic education, training and development needs are identified and converted to the force's national annual training plan. This plan is managed centrally by the DGHR in collaboration with divisions. For the bottom-up approach, divisions also adopt learning needs analysis process to ensure that individual training is aligned to the division's annual training plan. This plan is managed locally by the local HR department in each division.

#### **6.4.1.4 MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT**

The management development policies and practices are based on a programmed approach consisting of a training path that is designed so that each officer has to complete a wide range of training and developmental courses. This is supported by close monitoring and assessment to officers' potential to progress at each stage of their career. These policies provide ROP with a supply of equipped managers to perform a range of managerial roles at different levels

of the organisation. It also prepares them with a range of experiences and competencies appropriate for succession to higher levels of responsibilities. One of the middle management officers said:

“The main features of the officers’ development processes in ROP are that it is anticipatory so that officers can contribute to long-term objectives and it is motivational by gearing it to officer’s career aspiration.”

Another operational officer said:

“The new management development policy aims to improve the leadership skills of the officers and at the same time prepare a new pool of officers who are ready to be promoted to senior management to fulfil the force’s succession plan.”

#### **6.4.1.5 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Performance management policies and practices are necessary to ensure individual accountability and to spot those who have potential for future responsibility. Performance management policies and practices were designed as a mean of getting better results from the force, teams and individuals by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and competence requirements. It is a process for establishing shared understanding about what is to be achieved, and an approach to manage and develop officers in order to improve their performance. This is owned and driven in the ROP by the line managers whom are responsible to evaluate and monitor their officers’ performance and to help them to achieve their personal and professional objectives.

The clear criteria for assessment helps the executive to ensure that decisions about the advancement and promotion of officers are being undertaken on a rational basis without bias, and correlated with the specific needs of the organisation. It allows the concept of a ‘human resource’ to be practiced systematically and people are managed wisely as an asset to the

force and benefiting every officer who aspires to achieve. One of the senior officers said:

“Officers are assessed through the Staff Appraisal Report system and ranked within and across units and departments to enforce greater rigour in the performance appraisal process. The units and departments are assessed on their abilities to meet Key Performance Indicators. The new appraisal processes have helped to create the required performance culture and the officers understand the importance of the assessment process for their career progress and growth.”

#### **6.4.1.6 PROMOTION / MANAGEMENT SUCCESSION PLANNING**

The promotion/management succession planning policies and practices ensure that predictable and unpredictable management replacement requirements of the organisation are met by having properly prepared staff available at all times. These policies are based on the following core elements:

- Determination of the conditions that must be achieved to meet ROP’s needs from the policy
- Determination of the conditions that must be achieved to meet the officers needs from the policy
- Clear jobs profile and person specification
- The outcomes of management development and succession plans
- The outcomes of performance appraisal
- The outcomes of the assessment of the promotion boards

The aim of promotion/ management succession planning policies and practices is to enable the management to obtain the best talent available within the force to advance to more senior posts and to provide officers with the opportunities to advance in their careers within ROP. Additionally, those promotions are not based only on the clear criteria specific to the

competency and personality requirement for the post available but by utilising the performance appraisal data to ensure that the most suitable match is chosen. Sufficient plans have been developed with a purpose to meet the succession requirement in ROP. One of the strategic officers said:

“The new promotion scheme is based on merit and objective evaluation. This has helped the force to promote competent officers and accordingly there are more talented candidates that can be advanced to key positions in the ROP.”

#### **6.4.1.7 CAREER PLANNING**

Career planning policies and practices aim to balance the needs of the ROP with the aspiration of officers. These policies and practices help to match posting and training opportunities to the aspiration of individuals who wish to have experience that stretches them and takes them into an area of work to which they have a particular motivation. The aims of these policies and practices are:

- To help officers at all levels, identify the skills and qualities that are required for both their present job and future position they may seek
- To align and integrate the aspirations of individuals with the objectives or requirements of the force
- To help and identify career paths and plans that enable employees to consider every option open to them, both vertically and horizontally
- To help revitalise officers who may have become stationary in their career

These policies and practices provide a career path for every officer based on merits and objective assessment of their potential. One of the senior officers said:

“The new career planning policies and practices is considered as an important tool to plan for the officers’ career by integrating inputs related to development, promotion

and succession plan.”

#### **6.4.1.8 COMMUNICATION**

The new HRM model in ROP includes communication policy. This policy was built to create a two-way communication so that the management can keep officers informed on the policies and plans affecting them and the other officers. The communication policy is based on analysis of (a) what management wants to say, (b) what officers want to hear, and (c) the problems being met in conveying or receiving information. These analyses helped ROP to design the training programmes required to support the systems of communication. The communication systems in ROP include intranet, newsletters, police magazine, meetings, briefing and debriefing. One of the operational officers said:

“The new communication policy has enhanced understanding between management and officers and this has reinforced mutuality and commitment in the force.”

#### **6.4.1.9 TEAMWORKING**

Team working is considered as the essence of the police duties. Officers in teams enjoy greater autonomy, flexibility and discretion. They have more opportunity to use their skills which enhances their job satisfaction resulting in teams out-performing traditionally supervised work groups. One of the middle management officers said:

“Team working is the essence of policing work in different functional areas in ROP. Police duties and tasks are organised to be carried out by teams. Human resource management policies and practices have been designed around the team working principle and this has helped to create the collective thinking in the force.”

#### **6.4.1.10 PAY SATISFACTION**

The pay system in ROP is considered as one of features that attract people to join the force. The pay system was developed within the framework of the force’s reward philosophy,

strategies and policies. The levels of pay for jobs in ROP is reflected both by internal and external relativities. The internal relativities were measured by job evaluation which placed jobs in a hierarchy. The external relativities were assessed by tracking market rates. As a result the pay scheme is reviewed and modified from time to time to match the organisational objectives. The remuneration system in ROP allows the top performers to be rewarded for their outcomes. The new HRM model has helped the force to direct the reward system towards individuals and team performance. One of the senior officers said:

“The level of compensation sends a clear message to the officers that they are regarded as truly valued and valuable assets to the firm.”

#### **6.4.2 THE IMPACT OF SENIOR OFFICERS’ LEADERSHIP ON HRM POLICIES & PRACTICES**

The overall responses from the participants showed strong understanding of the role of senior officer leadership in helping the force to find a way of dealing with the present and the future. The strategic process in ROP answers basic questions: “Where do we, as a force, stand today?” “Where do we want to be in the future?” “How do we get there?” Police leadership in ROP is ultimately about ensuring that individuals, the community and the state get the best that is reasonably possible from the human and other resources which are available to pursue the goals of policing. Hence, the question of what is the most appropriate form of police leadership has to be answered by discovering which form of police leadership has the greatest positive impact on police performance. This, in turn, means that the leadership question is closely tied up with the question of “what is police performance and how should it be measured?”

The force leadership has initiated an intensive strategic change to build the force capacity and effectiveness. As a result, indicators have demonstrated that the force’s performance has

improved and that the public satisfaction with ROP's services has increased as it is explained in section 6.5.2.

The ROP have based its policing strategy on six themes including human resource strategy. These themes include: (1) control crime, (2) making the most of ROP's staff through implementation of the force's human resource strategy, (3) attract the local community (citizens and expatriates) to participate with the police, (4) maintaining the safety and security of Oman, (5) apply modern strategy to make the roads safer, and (6) to provide all police services effectively and efficiently.

The role of senior officers has played an important role to create the right atmosphere that put HR into the strategic route. Broadly speaking, the senior officers have utilised the HRM model to develop performance in their divisions. The decentralised HRM model has helped the senior officers and their officers to take decisions related to people management locally in their divisions. This new people management approach has linked the HRM with policing challenges and business. More specifically, HRM has become more integrated with other strategies. One of the strategic officers stated:

“Our senior officers’ support has enabled HRM to play strategic roles and build essential plans and programmes that address and solve fundamental strategic issues related to the management of human resources in the organisation.”

The senior officers' leadership is important in building the big idea and to find a clear sense of mission underpinned by values and a culture expressing what the force is and its relationship with its customers and employees. Table 12 below shows ROP's values that are embedded into the force's daily behaviour and practices and how the work routine is done in the force. These values indicate what sort of relationships the ROP sought to have with the

public. These values are reflected in the community policing approach that is applied in the force.

| DIMENSION        | VALUES  |
|------------------|---|
| <b>EMPLOYEES</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Confidence in and respect for</li> <li>- Depending upon people to do their job right without constant directives</li> <li>- Emphasis on working together and sharing rewards, teamwork and partnership</li> <li>- Recognition is based on contribution to results, sense of achievement and self-esteem</li> <li>- Develop and promote from within, lifetime training, education, career development and planning</li> </ul> |
| <b>PUBLIC</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing safety and tranquillity</li> <li>- Providing quality services</li> <li>- Working together to police the society</li> </ul>   |

**Table 12** ROP’s People Value Framework

These values are meant to provide sound foundation on which different initiatives and policies can be built on within ROP. They provide the base for both the management of performance and the achievement of change. One of the strategic officers said:

“Our core values have helped the force to maintain its solidarity throughout the times of change, it has given a clear message that ROP cares about its employees and the public.”

Another middle management officer said:

“Our policing values have helped the force to send a consistent message to our customers that the employees and public remain the heart of our intervention and policing services.”

The role of senior officers leadership was important in creating a culture that have set the fundamentals and principles on how employees should be managed, and their responsibilities



towards each other, and towards the public. This positive culture has helped the HRM strategy in ROP to increase the levels of satisfaction among officers.

Another important aspect of the senior officer leadership lies in the collectivism that underpinned the policing culture in ROP. This collectivism has helped bind people and processes together. Most of the HR policies focus on the employee (selection, appraisal, pay, training and development and communication).

There are four important attributes that have helped ROP to succeed in creating its collective culture. These are:

1. The big idea is not necessarily captured in a formal mission statement agreed at the broad level but exists rather as values that are spread throughout the organisation.
2. There are values which indicate what sort of relationship the force sought to be interconnected with customers and the organisational culture and behaviour, and thus set the fundamentals on how employees should be managed, and their responsibilities to each other, and to customers.
3. These values at their best are enduring and provide a stable base on which different initiatives and policies could be built and changed as circumstances alter. Strong, enduring values, historically derived (known as path dependency), provided the basis for both the management and performance and the achievement of change.
4. The big idea has the attributes of strong cultures where the organisational culture is a sort of glue binding people and processes together. It is thus, a collective endeavour and differs from HR policies in its effect in linking people management to performance.

The new HRM model in ROP has resulted in new policies and practices that aim to increase the human capital pool and provide the human resource advantage. Boxall (1996: 463) has

expressed this distinction between human capital advantage and human process advantage, “Firms have the possibility of generating human capital advantage through recruiting and retaining outstanding people, through capturing a stock of exceptional human talent, latent with productive possibilities.”

The human process advantage, on the other hand, may be understood as a function of causally ambiguous, socially complex, historically evolved processes such as learning, cooperation and innovation which are thus very difficult to imitate. Human process advantage in ROP has enabled the force create an effective approach and processes of people management (Boxall, 1996: 464).

The senior officers’ leadership has given the HR strategy its appropriate weighting as a means of integrating different functional areas and decisions within processes in the ROP. Human resource management is integrated with policing strategies across different functional areas such as the traffic, public order and community policing. The leadership has played a key role in linking HRM policies and practices to the force’s values. This linkage has helped the HRM model to reinforce officers’ commitment, motivation and job satisfaction. One of the senior officers said:

“The fit between HRM and policing strategy has enabled officers to work together to achieve common strategic goals. This is reinforced by the underlying values and purpose of the organisation, which influences the way customers and employees are treated.

Therefore, the senior officers’ leadership is one of the keys factors to reinforce the desired HR-performance link. Interviewees were convinced that the senior officers’ leadership and values-led and managed culture in ROP have boosted HRM to influence performance. It means that not only is the HRM policies and practices important but that the way they are put into operation also contributes to the ‘HR advantage’. One of the senior officers said:

“Working with senior officers who connect policing priorities to people management activities has helped our officer to engage in positive discretionary behaviour and that the direction of causation goes from performance to attitudes via discretionary behaviour.”

#### **6.4.3 THE IMPACT OF HRM POLICIES ON EMPLOYEES’ ABILITY, MOTIVATION & OPPORTUNITY TO PERFORM**

It was evident from the interviews conducted, that officers from different management levels thought that the policing culture in Oman has always been a powerful form of internal institutional governance. As a result of that its members have a sense of institutional pride and a feeling of being special and distinctive which perhaps is the reason for better performance in comparison to other governmental organisations in Oman.

The interviewees believed that the new HRM model has helped the officers to exhibit professionalism and loyalty to the force. This was achieved by the positive impact of HRM on areas that shape the good performance such as commitment, motivation and job satisfaction.

The majority of the participants understood that the individual’s performance is a function of ability, motivation and opportunity. The ability is where officers will want to apply their capabilities to the force, have their attributes recognised and are willing to learn new skills. Most of the participants agreed that the key policies and practices that influence levels of ability were as follows:

- Professional and technical training
- Promotion/management succession planning
- Performance appraisal and management
- Management development

Motivation is the assumption that officers are motivated to use their ability in a productive manner because they respond to various rewards and stimuli. And in order for officers to provide high quality of work (beyond the satisfactory level) and wish to engage in extra activities such as problem solving, they need to be given the Opportunity to do so. Most of the participants agreed that the key policies and practices that influence levels of motivation are as follows:

- Professional and technical training
- Promotion/management succession planning
- Communication
- Pay satisfaction
- Career planning

The ten HR policies discussed in section 6.2.1 are considered by different participants to improve the force's performance through the causal routes of increasing employees' skills and abilities, promoting positive attitude and increasing motivation. Participants pointed out that the attraction and fostering of relevant human ability is clearly vital for a force that wants to improve and develop. Once people are recruited, however, the line manager and supervisors should act as if motivation is everything. One of the middle management officers said:

“ROP invests in staffing through selectivity and inducement - this is in order to help the new officers to gain better internal development. This will help them to perform better when they are on the beat to deal with different policing problems independently.”

Officers made it clear that the ROP has maintained faith in the rationality of the reward system and this has helped the force to maintain job satisfaction among officers and improve retention of high performers. It was clear from the interviews that the new HRM has provided

officers with opportunities to grow through training and learning. This has helped the force to match individual skills and potentials to the level of skills required in different jobs in ROP's formation. One operational officer expressed this by saying:

“Our HRM model has geared the training policy to serve the performance needs and this has developed the human's capital pool in the force.”

Most of the participants agreed that the key policies and practices that influence levels of job satisfaction were as follows:

- Professional and technical training
- Promotion/management succession planning
- Communication
- Pay satisfaction
- Promotion/management succession planning
- Career planning

The three components (ability, motivation, opportunity) have led to discretionary behaviour which is the key to understanding the links between HR practices and organisational performance. Participants were aware that every job in a police organisation like ROP contains both prescribed and discretionary elements. The discretionary elements are very dependent on the occupant of the role and their judgement and feeling. Most of the participants agreed that the key policies and practices that influence levels of commitment are as follows:

- ❖ Competency-based recruitment
- ❖ Professional and technical training
- ❖ Promotion/management succession planning
- ❖ Communication

- ❖ Pay satisfaction
- ❖ Career planning

The majority of respondents agreed that the HRM policies and practices have helped to reduce officer turnover by providing more promotion and training opportunities and improving the pay scheme. One of the senior officers expressed this:

“The new HRM model has positively reduced officers’ turnover from 13 per cent to less than 3 per cent.”

The majority of respondents showed their understanding to the policy and practice related to professional and technical training as the one of the most important factor in influencing officer performance by developing their motivation, ability and attitude.

Most of the respondents thought that the key link with performance is to get officers not just to do their job in a particular shift or situation but act beyond their job descriptions and do more than they are formally required. This depends on improvements in job satisfaction and organisational commitment and motivation. It is also strongly influenced by the way supervisory officers exercise their own discretion and how they put HR practices into operation.

#### **6.4.4 THE IMPACT OF LINE MANAGERS’ LEADERSHIP ON IMPLEMENTATION OF HRM POLICIES & PRACTICES**

The interviewees believed that it is the line manager’s job to take responsibility for HRM policies as they are closer to reality. The new decentralised HRM model in ROP has given the local commanders the responsibility to manage HR activities locally in their formations. The exercise of employee discretion is crucially affected by the way in which manager exercise their own discretion, especially in managing people. It is the interplay between managers and employee discretionary behaviour. Managers’ behaviour includes communication, involving,

counselling and guiding. Front line management includes implementing, enacting, leading, and controlling.

The new HR departments have been established within every division in ROP and they are managed by well-qualified HR staff. Development of HRM to line managers requires officers with good leadership skills to practice and integrate the HRM practices into the performance culture that will fit in the force's specific context and its unfolding strategies.

The role of line managers is also critical because the way HR policies are implemented is related to the interplay between managerial and employee discretion. One of the senior officers said:

“Officers in different management levels play a vital role in making involvement happen, in communicating, in being open to allow employee concerns to be raised and discussed, to empower people to influence how they do their job, and in coaching, guiding and recognising performance and providing help for the future.”

The HRM model in ROP has helped to develop the skills of the line managers in the field of people management. The development programmes were built on two main pillars: firstly, making the connection between business strategies, organisation and management development. Secondly, managing the learning by getting the implementation right. This deliberate action to strengthen the skills of the line managers had helped them to play a vital role in making involvement happen, in communicating, in being open to allow employee concerns to be raised and discussed, in allowing people space to influence how they do their job, and in coaching, guiding and recognising performance.

Participants thought that if officers were satisfied with their supervisors, they also felt satisfied with their level of involvement and accordingly showed high levels of commitment to the force. One of the operational officers said:

“Managers play an important role in making involvement happen, by communicating, allowing concerns to be raised and discussed, and in guiding them and recognising their performance.”

Another middle management officer said:

“The leadership skills of our line managers have helped to improve the climate of employment and to reinforce the culture and values of our force’s lives. Also it has a great impact in raising the attitude of our officers towards the HR policies. We believe that the role of the line manger becomes central in the success of the strategic intergradations in ROP.”

#### **6.4.5 MEASURING HRM AND PERFORMANCE**

The participants pointed out that the main drive behind the change project in ROP was the dissatisfaction of the government with ROP’s performance. The force leadership set the plan to improve the performance and created a mechanism to measure policing performance. An auditing process was used as a performance measurement mechanism technique. One of the operational officers said:

“The measurement process focuses on four elements of the policing performance: (1) activity, (2) competency and professionalism, (3) community contact and responsiveness, and (4) internal control and resource management.”

Measuring these four elements in each of ROP’s divisions is done by specialised auditing teams. The total scores of the auditing process are 400 marks and each element is assessed out of 100. This measurement process has enabled ROP leadership to understand how these divisions carry out the policing services. The performance is evaluated using key performance indicators (KPI) which are set annually at corporate level (based on the three-year plan) initially.



The participants pointed out that the public survey is used as a tool for measuring performance in ROP. The public have been satisfied by the quality of the police force performance and services. One of the officers said:

“Results of the public surveys showed that the public have been satisfied by the quality of the police force performance and services after the completion of the change project in 2002. The public think ROP’s performance has improved on areas such operational effectiveness, relationship with the community, police services (issuing of passport and ID cards, issuing of driving license and car registration cards) and crime reduction.”

The participants pointed out that the series of employees’ surveys were conducted to measure the relationship between HRM and performance from 2000 to 2009. The findings of the employees’ surveys have given clear indicators to the force’s leadership that the HRM policies and practices have a great impact on performance. Performance in ROP’s formations was improved through officers who were encouraged by the new HRM model to contribute more effectively by triggering discretionary behaviour which made a difference to outcomes (Auditing Report, 2008). One senior officer said:

“As a commander I have been very happy with the auditing results and it was obvious that HRM policies have improved performance. This is due to officers finding their job satisfying which resulted in them being motivated and committed to the force.”

The participants explained that the auditing reports from 2002 until 2009 showed that there is clear evidence of the impact of HR policies and practices in the increase of positive attitude and motivation among officers. As a result their operational performance has been improved and appreciated by the public.

The participants pointed out that it is not only the HRM policies and practices by themselves that were important but the way they were put into operation. The majority of the participants discussed the importance of the value-led and managed strategic management in the force that helped to connect HRM to the policing strategy.

The results of the employee survey from 2000 to 2009 showed that there is a steady change in the officers' attitude towards the force (Auditing Report, 2002-2009). Officers have expressed their satisfaction with different HRM policies and practices and they think these new policies have increased their commitment to the force (Auditing Report, 2002-2009).

Overall, at ROP the HRM model was deployed to support organisational strategy. Changes in the HRM model were introduced to improve the people management approach and to develop the performance of different divisions/units. All respondents agreed that the HRM policies and practices have played a significant role in improving officer performance through positively affecting factors related to performance such as officer commitment, motivation and job satisfaction. One senior officer said:

“Officer turnover was reduced by the HRM practice, for example interesting work organisation, good staff treatment, internal promotion opportunities, training and development, and good communication policy.”

## **6.5 FINDINGS FROM THE SECONDARY DATA (HRM MEASURES)**

The previous section reported the findings of the semi-structured interviews of the officers who represented different managerial levels in ROP. The purpose of this section is to introduce the results of the measurement of the HRM-performance. The results of the HRM measurement will be analysed from the employees' surveys. As for the performance measurement, it will be analysed from the audit reports and the public survey.

The employee surveys have allowed for multiple employee ratings regarding implemented

HRM practices within a division comparatively with studies using a single manager’s point of view (Gerhart, 2007). A series of employee surveys were conducted to measure the relationship between HRM and performance before and after the implementation of the new HRM policies and practices in 2002. The employee survey data from 2000 to 2009 were used and this gave this study an advantage to explore the HRM-performance link longitudinally.

Each year 3000 employees from different ROP divisions were selected randomly to participate in the annual employee survey (from 2000 to 2009). Although participation in the survey is voluntary, the division commanders strongly promoted participation. The annual response rate is shown in Table 13 below.

| <b>YEARS</b> | <b>RESPONS RATE</b> |
|--------------|---------------------|
| 2000-2001    | 95%                 |
| 2001-2002    | 95%                 |
| 2002-2003    | 96%                 |
| 2003-2004    | 97%                 |
| 2004-2005    | 96%                 |
| 2005-2006    | 96%                 |
| 2006-2207    | 96%                 |
| 2007-2008    | 97%                 |
| 2008-2009    | 96%                 |

**Table 13** Employees’ Survey Response Rate (2000-2009)

Koehn (1990) found that to measure the impact of management on the organisation and to support management decision-making, organisational effectiveness surveys were developed. The surveys were designed by the development team in DGHR to measure the HRM

performance link. The design of the surveys and their dimensions were chosen primarily because they are evaluative of the intended HRM policies and practices. Although the selection of dimensions might seem organisation or police specific, these dimensions reflect some of the underlying processes of HRM as described by Boxall and Purcell (2008). Boxall and Purcell (2008) distinguished two processes. The first process is where the management implements HR policies aimed at building ability, motivation and opportunity to perform at the individual level, and at the collective level workforce capabilities, work organisation and work attitudes. The second process the management articulates values to influence employee perceptions.

Moreover, the selected HR dimensions are very commonly used in current HR research (Boselie *et al.* 2005). Each of the survey dimensions is discussed below in more detail. The most important emphasis of the renewed HRM policy was on the values articulated by the management. Values articulated by the management refer to a desired way of working with employees, customers and suppliers related to the organisation's mission and values (Boxall and Purcell, 2008).

A dedicated cross-functional team was formed to conduct the surveys. The team worked under the supervision of the DGHRM development project consultant. The survey team had taken great care that the items were referenced against the objectives of the measurement process, and that the wording of questions did not 'lead' respondents. The original design of the surveys was in Arabic. The questions were in themed groups and organised chronologically, with different parts focusing on eliciting different views from the respondents. The introduction of the surveys aimed at gathering background information about the respondents. It includes questions about age, gender, position, and department

Appendix 2.

The survey consisted of twelve main headings which are organisational fit, remuneration and recognition, training and career development, challenging employment assignments and opportunities, the impact of HRM policies and practices (on motivation, job satisfaction and commitment), leadership practices (organisational and line manager level), organisational policies, communication, work environment, organisational commitment, and finally turnover intention. Each had several questions related to the specific heading. Respondents answers were rated on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Appendix 2).

### **6.5.1 EMPLOYEE SURVEYS RESULTS**

This study focused on how HRM impacts policing performance in ROP. Longitudinal relationships between employee surveys data and performance were explored. This study used data generated from employee surveys that were conducted over the period from 2000 to 2009. In this study, the employee surveys data were used as an indicator of the relationship between HRM and performance. Employee perceptions, attitudes and behaviours are conceptualised as linking mechanisms in the relationship between HRM activities and outcomes (Boxall and Purcell, 2008; Nishii and Wright, 2008). Hence, a research which takes a workers' perspective can contribute to gaining a deeper insight into the HRM-performance relationship (Guest, 1999).

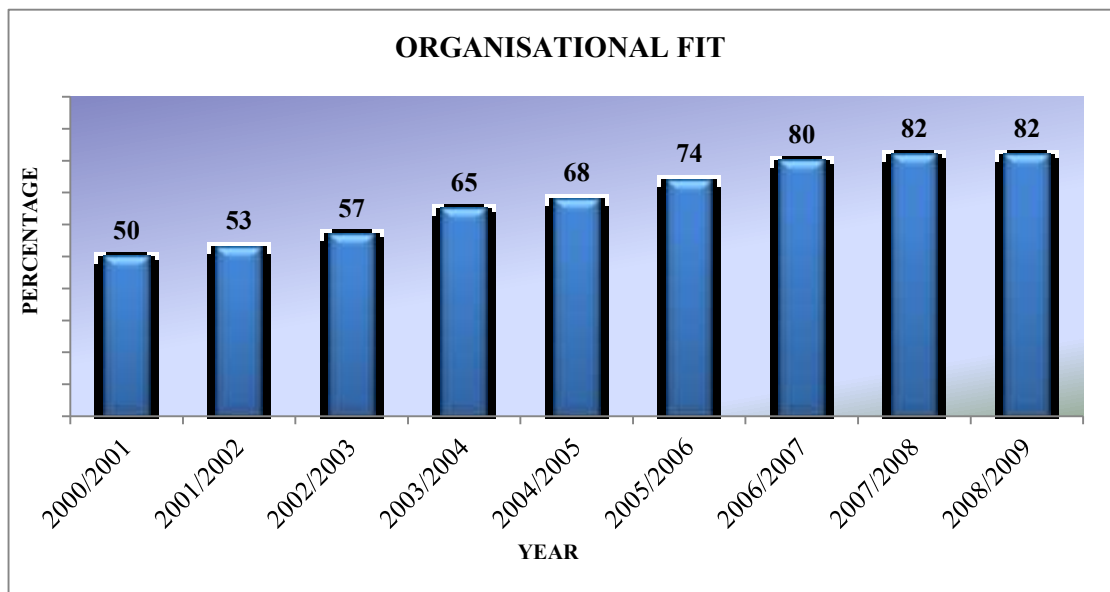
Nicol and Pexman (2003: 2) noted that figures can be extremely helpful to a reader, and can be used to simplify complex information and can summarise or emphasise certain findings, illustrate complicated results, and show patterns of data. Therefore, summary of the most important findings from employee surveys will be discussed along with figures to describe these results.

### **6.5.1.1 FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE**

Factors such as organisational fit, remuneration and recognition, training and career development, challenging employment assignments and opportunities, organisational policies, communication, working environment, organisational commitment, and turnover intention were associated with an improvement in performance over the period from 2002 to 2009 Figures 7 to 15. These figures show the significance of these different factors on employee performance in ROP. The results were obtained from the employee surveys that were conducted in ROP during the period from 2000 to 2009.

### 6.5.1.1.1 ORGANISATIONAL FIT

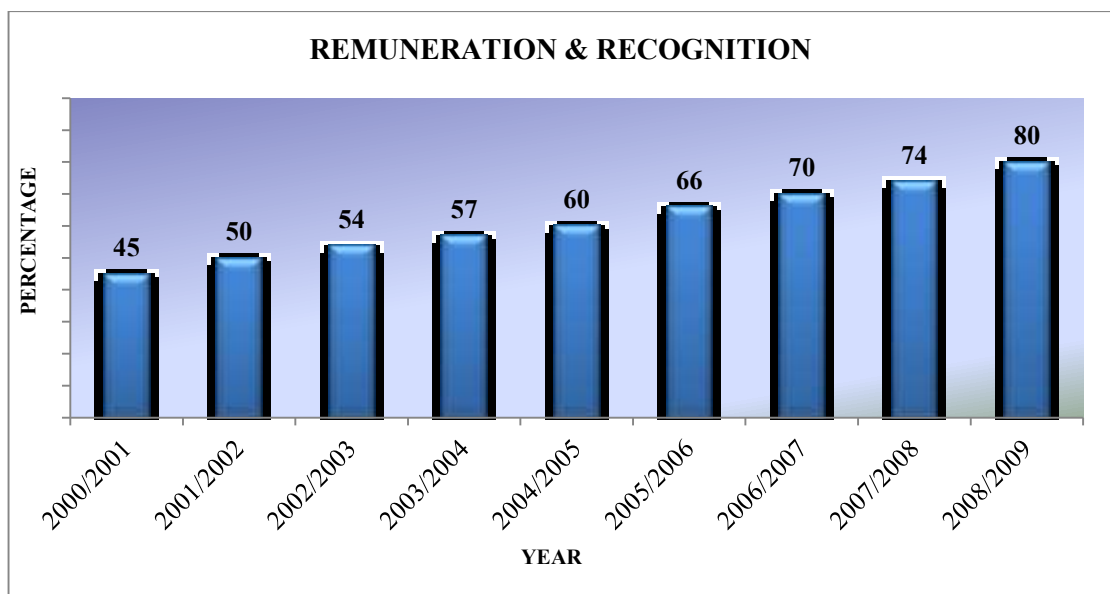
This area explains the image that officers have developed about the ROP and the quality of its management throughout their services. It indicates how officers perceive and feel about their alignment with the force mission and values in the force. This factor also gives a clear idea about the success of ROP's leadership to gain the hearts and minds of the officers and to what degree these officers think this organisation is their employer of choice. As can be seen from Figure 7 below, there was a gradual increase in the officers' views about this factor from 2000 until 2007. On the other hand, there was a plateau in 2008-2009 which, indicates that this policy has been developed well in the force and it has become appreciated by the officers.



**Figure 7** Significance of Organisational Fit in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

### 6.5.1.1.2 REMUNERATION AND RECOGNITION

This area explains how officers perceive and feel about the pay practice in the force. It also gives a clear idea about the success of ROP to provide an equitable method for appraising and compensating the workforce. As can be seen from Figure 8 below, there was a gradual increase in the officers' views about this factor from 2000 until 2009. It seems that the increase was caused by the continuous changes and developments in the design of the remuneration policy. This reflects the desire of the ROP's leadership to make the remuneration policy more competitive and flexible to reward the high performance and quality of service.



**Figure 8** Significance of Remuneration & Recognition in ROP  
Source: Employees' survey (2000-2009)



### 6.5.1.1.3 TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

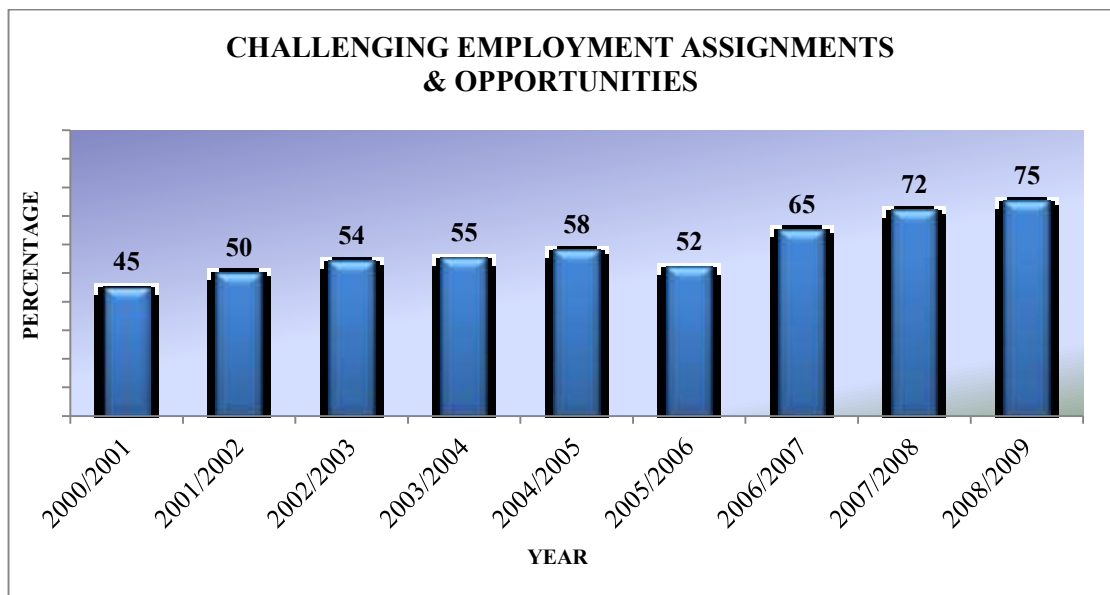
This area explains how officers perceive and feel about the career progression management practice in the force. It also gives a clear idea about the success of ROP to design a clear career path and training opportunities for officers. As can be seen from Figure 9 below, there was a steady increase in the officers' views about this factor from 2000 until 2009.



**Figure 9** Significance of Training & Career Development in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

#### 6.5.1.1.4 CHALLENGING EMPLOYMENT ASSIGNMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This area explains how officers perceive and feel about individual job assignments and position responsibilities that contribute to accomplishing the mission and goals of the force. It also gives a clear idea about the success of ROP to design a performance management system that focuses on performance measurement and development. As can be seen from Figure 10 below, there was a steady increase in the officers' views about this factor from 2000 until 2009.



**Figure 10** Significance of Challenging Employment Assignments & Opportunities in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

### 6.5.1.1.5 ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES

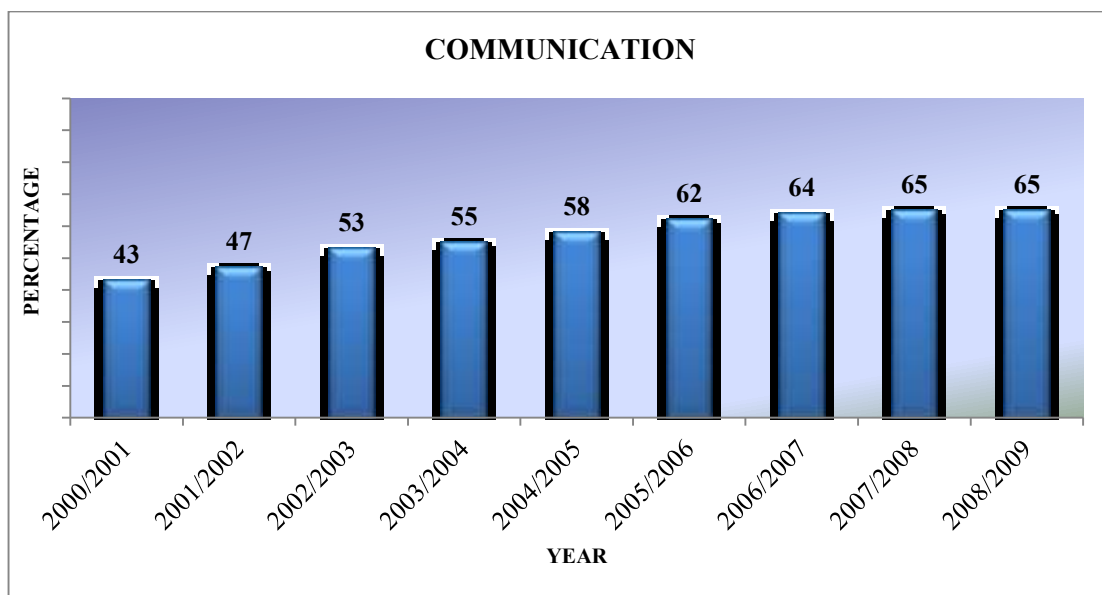
This area explains how officers perceive and feel about the existence of policies for different area of services and activities in the force. It also gives a clear idea about the success of ROP to prepare essential policy guidance and manuals that specify a programme of action and describe what will be required from the officers when dealing with those policies. As can be seen from Figure 11 below, there was a steady increase in the officers' views about this factor from 2000 until 2009. It seems that the increase was caused by the level of expertise and competence that the force has gained throughout the years of the change project in the area of reviewing and designing policies.



**Figure 11** Significance of Organisational Policies in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

### 6.5.1.1.6 COMMUNICATION

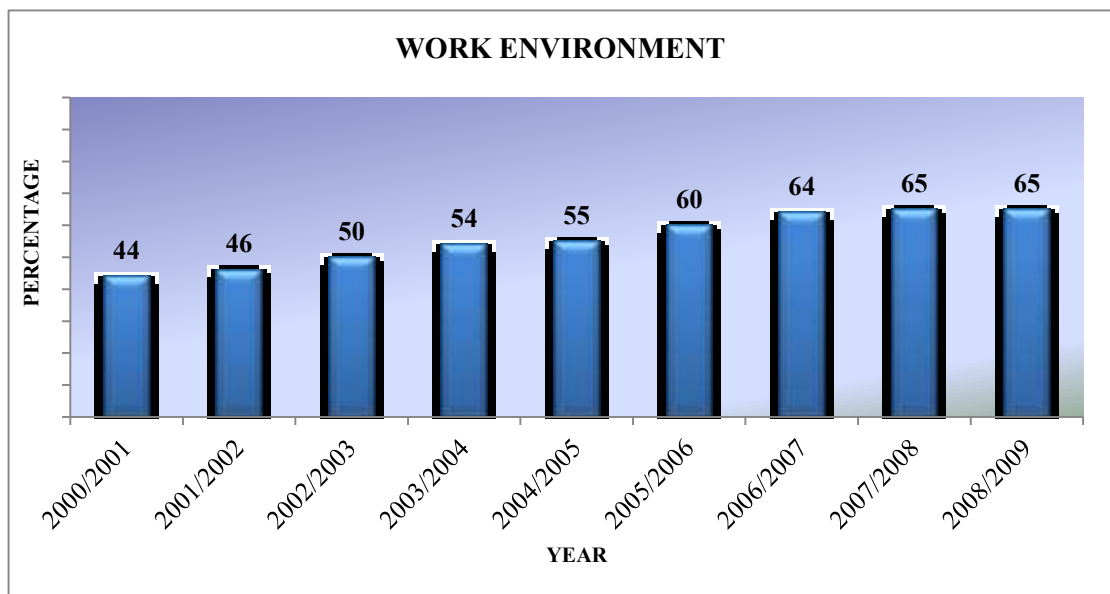
This area explains how officers perceive and feel about the way that the receipt and dissemination of information is done in the force. It also gives a clear idea about (1) how downward communication flows from top management to the rest of the organisation to inform officers about what is and will be happening in the force, and what the force leadership expectation and goals are; (2) how upward communication flows from bottom so that senior officers know about the ideas, concerns, and information needs of the other officers. As can be seen from Figure 12 below, there was a gradual increase in the officers views about this factor from 2000 until 2007. On the other hand, there was a plateau in 2008-2009 which, indicates that this policy has been instilled well in the force and it has become understood and appreciated by officers.



**Figure 12** Significance of Communication in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

### 6.5.1.1.7 WORK ENVIRONMENT

This area explains how officers perceive and feel about the existence of a strong spirit of corporation and harassment-free work environment in the force. It also gives a clear idea about the success of ROP to create a culture that appreciates diversity, equity and fairness. As can be seen from Figure 13 below, there was a steady increase in the officers' views about this factor from 2000 until 2009. On the other hand, there was a plateau in 2008-2009 which, indicates that officers appreciated and valued their work environment.



**Figure 13** Significance of Work Environment in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

### 6.5.1.1.8 ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

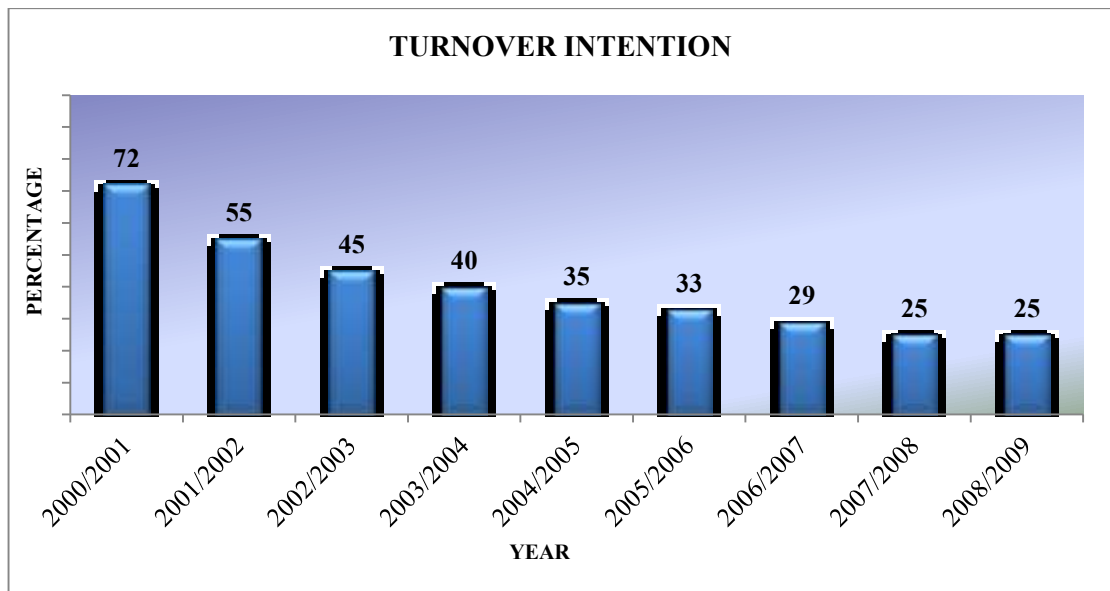
This area explains the attachment and loyalty of officers. It also gives a clear idea about the readiness of the officer to (1) be identified with the goals and values of the force; (2) have a desire to belong to the force; (3) display their efforts willingly on behalf of the force. As can be seen from Figure 14 below, there was a steady increase in the officers' views about this factor from 2000 until 2009 which indicates that ROP has succeeded in increasing and harnessing its officer's commitment towards the force ends and interests.



**Figure 14** Significance of Organisational Commitment in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

### 6.5.1.1.9 TURNOVER INTENTION

This area explains officers' intention to leave the force as a result of dissatisfaction with certain factors such as (pay, poor relationship with managers, bad working conditions, lack of career progression, etc.). As can be seen from Figure 15 below, there was a sharp decline in the officers' views about their intention to leave the force from 2000 until 2009. It seems that ROP has succeeded in developing its officer commitment and loyalty.



**Figure 15** Significance of Turnover Intention in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

### 6.5.1.2 IMPACT OF HRM POLICIES & PRACTICES

Results have demonstrated changes in officers' attitude towards the force after the DGHRM development project was completed in 2002. There was an obvious impact of the HRM policies and practices on areas that were related to performance such as ability, motivation, job satisfaction and commitment. This is described as follows:

1. The key policies and practices that influence levels of ability are :

- Professional and technical training
- Promotion/management succession planning
- Performance appraisal and management
- Management development

Table 14 below shows the influence of these key policies and practices on the level of ability of employees in ROP. These results were obtained from the employees' surveys that were conducted in ROP from 2000 to 2009.

|           | <b>ABILITY</b>                    |  |                                    |                        |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------------------|
|           | Professional & Technical Training | Promotion/Management Succession Planning | Performance Appraisal & Management | Management Development |
| 2000-2001 | 45%                               | 32%                                      | 34%                                | 35%                    |
| 2001-2002 | 47%                               | 35%                                      | 37%                                | 40%                    |
| 2002-2003 | 53%                               | 40%                                      | 42%                                | 46%                    |
| 2003-2004 | 57%                               | 45%                                      | 47%                                | 50%                    |
| 2004-2005 | 63%                               | 50%                                      | 50%                                | 55%                    |
| 2005-2006 | 66%                               | 55%                                      | 54%                                | 60%                    |
| 2006-2007 | 70%                               | 57%                                      | 60%                                | 64%                    |
| 2007-2008 | 72%                               | 62%                                      | 66%                                | 66%                    |
| 2008-2009 | 73%                               | 69%                                      | 70%                                | 70%                    |

**Table 14** HRM Policies & Practices that Influence Ability in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)



2. The key policies and practices that influence levels of motivation are :

- Professional and technical training
- Promotion/management succession planning
- Communication
- Pay satisfaction
- Career planning

Table 15 below shows the influence these key policies and practices on the level of motivation of employees in ROP. These results were obtained from the employees' surveys that were conducted in ROP from 2000 to 2009.

|           | <b>MOTIVATION</b>                 |   |               |                  |                 |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
|           | Professional & Technical Training | Promotion/ Management Succession Planning | Communication | Pay Satisfaction | Career Planning |
| 2000-2001 | 45%                               | 32%                                       | 31%           | 31%              | 30%             |
| 2001-2002 | 47%                               | 35%                                       | 35%           | 33%              | 37%             |
| 2002-2003 | 53%                               | 40%                                       | 42%           | 40%              | 41%             |
| 2003-2004 | 57%                               | 45%                                       | 47%           | 45%              | 47%             |
| 2004-2005 | 63%                               | 50%                                       | 50%           | 47%              | 50%             |
| 2005-2006 | 66%                               | 55%                                       | 50%           | 50%              | 53%             |
| 2006-2007 | 70%                               | 57%                                       | 54%           | 50%              | 57%             |
| 2007-2008 | 72%                               | 62%                                       | 60%           | 55%              | 57%             |
| 2008-2009 | 73%                               | 69%                                       | 62%           | 60%              | 60%             |

**Table 15** HRM Policies & Practices that Influence Motivation in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

3. The key policies and practices that influence levels of job satisfaction are :

- Professional and technical training
- Promotion/management succession planning
- Communication
- Pay satisfaction
- Career planning

Table 16 below shows the influence of these key policies and practices on the level of job satisfaction of employees in ROP. These results were obtained from the employees' surveys that were conducted in ROP from 2000 to 2009.

|           | <b>JOB SATISFACTION</b>           |   |               |                  |                 |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
|           | Professional & Technical Training | Promotion/ Management Succession Planning | Communication | Pay Satisfaction | Career Planning |
| 2000-2001 | 45%                               | 32%                                       | 31%           | 31%              | 30%             |
| 2001-2002 | 47%                               | 35%                                       | 35%           | 33%              | 37%             |
| 2002-2003 | 53%                               | 40%                                       | 42%           | 40%              | 41%             |
| 2003-2004 | 57%                               | 45%                                       | 47%           | 45%              | 47%             |
| 2004-2005 | 63%                               | 50%                                       | 50%           | 47%              | 50%             |
| 2005-2006 | 66%                               | 55%                                       | 50%           | 50%              | 53%             |
| 2006-2007 | 70%                               | 57%                                       | 54%           | 50%              | 57%             |
| 2007-2008 | 72%                               | 62%                                       | 60%           | 55%              | 57%             |
| 2008-2009 | 73%                               | 69%                                       | 62%           | 60%              | 59%             |

**Table 16** HRM Policies & Practices that Influence Job Satisfaction in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

4. The key policies and practices that influence levels of commitment are :

- ❖ Competency-based recruitment
- ❖ Professional and technical training
- ❖ Promotion/management succession planning
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Pay satisfaction
- ❖ Career planning

Table 17 below shows the influence of these key policies and practices on the level of commitment of employees in ROP. These results were obtained from the employees' surveys that were conducted in ROP from 2000 to 2009.

|           | <b>COMMITMENT</b>            |                                   |   |               |                  |                 |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
|           | Competency-Based Recruitment | Professional & Technical Training | Promotion/ Management Succession Planning | Communication | Pay Satisfaction | Career Planning |
| 2000-2001 | 25%                          | 45%                               | 32%                                       | 31%           | 31%              | 30%             |
| 2001-2002 | 30%                          | 47%                               | 35%                                       | 35%           | 33%              | 37%             |
| 2002-2003 | 34%                          | 53%                               | 40%                                       | 42%           | 40%              | 41%             |
| 2003-2004 | 39%                          | 57%                               | 45%                                       | 47%           | 45%              | 47%             |
| 2004-2005 | 45%                          | 63%                               | 50%                                       | 50%           | 47               | 50%             |
| 2005-2006 | 50%                          | 66%                               | 55%                                       | 50%           | 50%              | 53%             |
| 2006-2007 | 55%                          | 70%                               | 57%                                       | 54%           | 50%              | 57%             |
| 2007-2008 | 57%                          | 72%                               | 62%                                       | 60%           | 55%              | 57%             |
| 2008-2009 | 62%                          | 73%                               | 69%                                       | 62%           | 60%              | 60%             |

**Table 17** HRM Policies & Practices that Influence Commitment in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

The above explained results have demonstrated that HRM policies and practices such as professional and technical training, promotion/management succession planning, performance appraisal and management, management development, communication, pay satisfaction, career planning, competency-based recruitment were perceived by respondents to have an impact on areas that were related to performance such as ability, motivation, job satisfaction and commitment. The policy and practice related to professional and technical training were considered by the respondents as the one of the most important factors influencing performance in ROP. This might be attributed to the following reasons:

1. In policing roles, training is particularly important in that it increases officer competencies to handle the real life situations associated with combating crimes and dealing with different emergencies such as fire fighting, car accidents, firearms incidents, as well as handling equipment and meeting the high standards and expectations of different stakeholders such as the government, senior officers and community.
2. It is considered as an important input for the officer promotion and career advancement.
3. It gives officers opportunities to continue their education by providing them with full or part-time scholarships locally or abroad to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.
4. It is an important input for the employment of senior officer positions.

### 6.5.1.3 ROLE OF ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The role of organisational leadership (senior manager leadership) in creating a clear sense of mission underpinned by values and a culture expressing what ROP is and its relationship with its customers and employees. The Figure 16 shows the significance of organisational leadership on the employee performance in ROP. The results were obtained from the employee surveys that were conducted in ROP during the period from 2000 to 2009.



**Figure 16** Significance of Organisational Leadership in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

#### 6.5.1.4 ROLE OF LINE MANAGERS

When respondents felt that their managers demonstrated good leadership skills, they were also satisfied with a range of other HR policies and practices (particularly those in which line managers play an active role). Where employees were satisfied with management leadership, they also felt satisfied with their level of involvement. Employees who were satisfied with the degree of involvement, also showed high levels of organisational commitment. Managers thus, play a vital role in making involvement happen, in communicating, in being open to allow employee concerns to be raised and discussed, in allowing people space to influence how they do their job, and in coaching, guiding and recognising performance and providing with help for the future. This was clear for the line managers in particular. The Figure 17 shows the significance of the line manager leadership on employee performance in ROP. The results were obtained from the employee surveys that were conducted in ROP during the period from 2000 to 2009.



**Figure 17** Significance of Line Manager Leadership in ROP  
Source: Employees' Survey (2000-2009)

Most of the respondents' views were able to explore the links between the front line leadership and satisfaction with other aspects of policies and practices identified in the model. Most of the respondents understood that the strength of the front line leadership behaviour variable is such that the importance of the line manager is clear. The respondents understanding of the front line leadership is the behaviour in managing people on a daily basis using questions evaluating how good managers are at:

1. Keeping everyone up to date about proposed changes
2. Providing employees with a chance to comment on changes
3. Responding to suggestions from employees
4. Dealing with problems
5. Treating employees fairly

#### **6.5.2 PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

As it was explained in section 4.4 of chapter four that the measurement process focuses on four elements of the policing performance: (1) activity, (2) competency and professionalism, (3) community contact and responsiveness, and (4) internal control and resource management. The performance is evaluated using key performance indicators (KPI) which are set annually at corporate level (based on the three-year plan) initially. The total scores of the auditing process are 400 marks and each element is assessed out of 100.

The performance is assessed by using the auditing approach. The auditing framework (which was explained in detail in Figure 6 in chapter four included the KPI that are considered acceptable to performance in ROP. Tables 18 and 19 illustrate some of the results of the performance auditing reports of the major regional divisions and directorate generals in ROP. The results were obtained from the auditing reports in ROP from 2000 to 2009.

|           | <b>REGIONAL DIVISIONS</b> |                    |                  |                   |                    |
|-----------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
|           | MUSCAT GOVERNATE          | MUSANDAM GOVERNATE | DHOFAR GOVERNATE | AL-BATINAH REGION | AL-DAKHLIYA REGION |
| 2000-2001 | 46%                       | 36%                | 37%              | 32%               | 42%                |
| 2001-2002 | 48%                       | 38%                | 39%              | 34%               | 45%                |
| 2002-2003 | 50%                       | 40%                | 41%              | 36%               | 47%                |
| 2003-2004 | 53%                       | 40%                | 43%              | 38%               | 50%                |
| 2004-2005 | 55%                       | 43%                | 45%              | 40%               | 54%                |
| 2005-2006 | 58%                       | 45%                | 47%              | 40%               | 57%                |
| 2006-2007 | 61%                       | 50%                | 52%              | 45%               | 60%                |
| 2007-2008 | 65%                       | 52%                | 54%              | 47%               | 65%                |
| 2008-2009 | 70%                       | 53%                | 59%              | 51%               | 67%                |

**Table 18** Performance Auditing Results of Regional Divisions in ROP  
Source: Auditing Reports in ROP (2000-2009)

|           | <b>DIRECTORATE GENERALS</b> |                         |                       |         |         |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------|---------|
|           | CIVIL DEFENCE               | CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS | PASSPORTS & RESIDENCE | CUSTOMS | TRAFFIC |
| 2000-2001 | 44%                         | 55%                     | 48%                   | 49%     | 36%     |
| 2001-2002 | 47%                         | 57%                     | 50%                   | 53%     | 40%     |
| 2002-2003 | 50%                         | 59%                     | 50%                   | 53%     | 40%     |
| 2003-2004 | 51%                         | 50%                     | 53%                   | 55%     | 42%     |
| 2004-2005 | 55%                         | 53%                     | 57%                   | 57%     | 45%     |
| 2005-2006 | 56%                         | 55%                     | 60%                   | 60%     | 47%     |
| 2006-2007 | 61%                         | 60%                     | 60%                   | 62%     | 50%     |
| 2007-2008 | 64%                         | 66%                     | 63%                   | 64%     | 55%     |
| 2008-2009 | 69%                         | 72%                     | 63%                   | 67%     | 55%     |

**Table 19** Performance Auditing Results of Directorate Generals in ROP  
Source: Auditing Reports in ROP (2000-2009)



Tables 18 and 19 showed that performance in major regional divisions and directorate generals in ROP has steady improved from 2000 to 2009. This reflects the impact of the new policing strategy applied in the force which resulted in designing a new HRM policies and practices strategy that have played an important roles to improve the performance in different ROP's divisions.

ROP has adopted a strategic approach to measure critical performance elements in its different divisions. The ultimate goal of this approach is making ROP a customer-focused, world class, employer-of-choice by benchmarking best practices of both public and private organisations. The auditing data indicated the following developments in relation to the four performance elements as follows:

**1. ACTIVITY:**

- Divisions have started to use data about the frequency, amount of incidents, activity and demands in order to be able to understand the nature of the services that are needed by the public.
- Divisions have started to build up systematic and dependable systems for recording and processing data at every level in the chain of command to ensure its accuracy, comprehensiveness and timeliness.
- Divisions have started to use information as the basis for regular management team discussions in order to identify trends, problems and service development needs as well as make plans and allocate resources more appropriately.

**2. COMPETENCY & PROFESSIONALISM:**

- Divisions have started to adopt clear ethos of hard work, service, commitment to quality and integrity which is reflected in the performance of the officers when dealing with different situations and incidents.

- There is a clear mission described for the work of the divisions which provides guidelines not only related to what the division exists for and what it seeks to achieve, but also the values and standards that it subscribes to which in turn will govern its services to others.
- Every officer knows what their specific responsibilities are, what results they are supposed to achieve, and to whom they have to report these results. These responsibilities are charted in such a way to ensure that all key tasks of the policing are covered without duplication of effort. This is to avoid confusion about who is responsible for what.

### **3. COMMUNITY CONTACT & RESPONSIVENESS**

- Divisions have started to ensure that there are clear standards established for each aspect of service where there is contact with members of the community. The database contained names and contact numbers of focal tribe figures.
- Divisions have started to ensure that care taken with those whom are victims of any crime, so that these people are supported and reassured about the way the police are dealing with their situation.
- Divisions have started to regularly review their officers' performance to develop their competencies and skills related to community service and responsiveness.

### **4. INTERNAL CONTROL & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

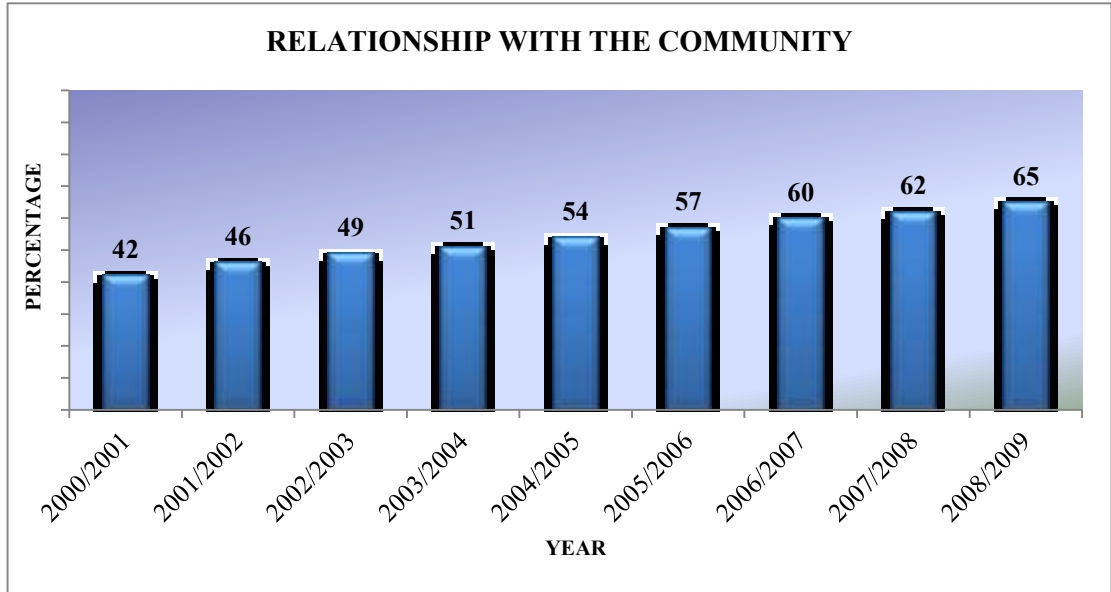
- Divisions have started to measure regularly the total amount of resources (manpower, time, money, and equipment) used in accomplishing each key task to see if there are ways to achieve the same results using fewer resources.
- Divisions have started to evaluate information to see if the largest amount of resources are deployed to established priority or are being absorbed into relatively unproductive routines.

- Divisions have started to test if the effort put in is producing the results (outcomes) desired particularly when measured against what the community requires in terms of speed to response, follow up, accurate information, successful prosecution, crime reduction.
- Divisions have started to manage the total skill resources available (uniform, CID, traffic, support) in a flexible and integrated way, in order to achieve the policing goals within the area that has to be policed.

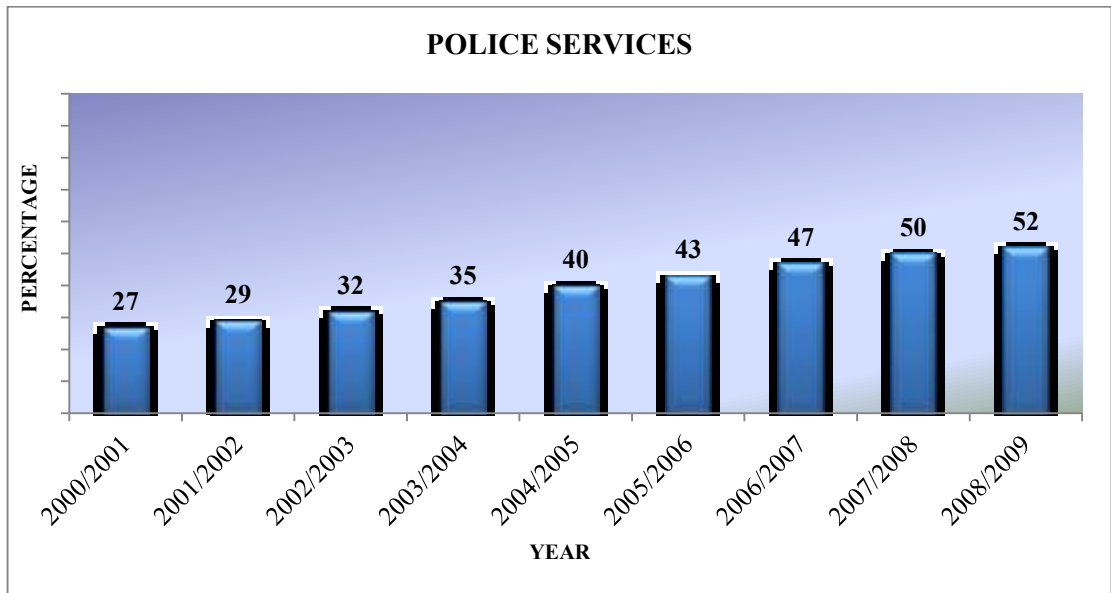
In addition, results of public surveys (2000-2009) showed that the public have been satisfied by the quality of the police force performance and services after the completion of the change project in 2002. The public think ROP's performance has improved on areas such operational effectiveness, relationship with the community, police services (issuing of passport and ID cards, issuing of driving license and car registration cards) and crime reduction. Figures 18 to 21 show the response of the public to improvement in these areas. The results were obtained from the public's surveys that were during the period from 2000 to 2009 (Appendix 3).



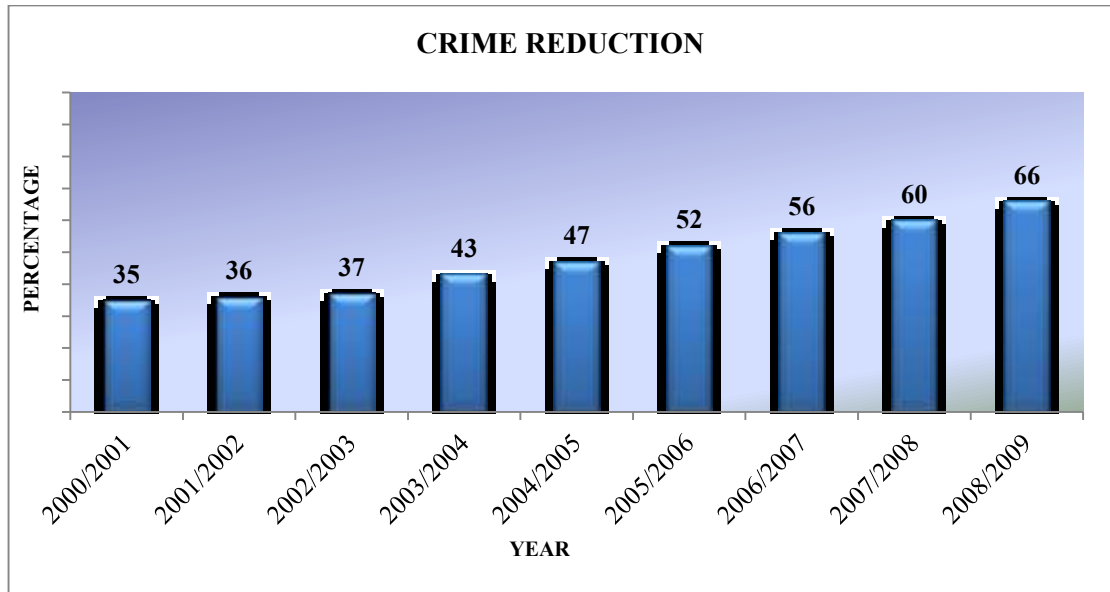
**Figure 18** Response of the Public to Operational Effectiveness  
Source: Public's Survey (2000-2009)



**Figure 19** Response of the Public to the Relationship of ROP with the Community  
Source: Public's Survey (2000-2009)



**Figure 20** Response of the Public to the Police Services  
Source: Public's Survey (2000-2009)



**Figure 21** Response of the Public to Crime Reduction  
Source: Public's Survey (2000-2009)

It is clear that the improvement in policing performance has a positive impact on the public's satisfaction with police services. This implies that ROP knows its customers and it has established a fruitful way of communicating with them to understand how they view the force services. Accordingly, ROP has improved the ways through which services are delivered in order to meet the public expectations.

## **6.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter gave a detailed description of the case study. Then a comprehensive account of the results of the fieldwork was given. It discussed the case study findings from the semi-structured interviews, which represented the perception of the managerial levels of HRM in the Royal Oman Police. This chapter also presented the findings from the secondary data which is related to the measurement of two important areas: HRM and policing performance in ROP. The data analysis in this chapter gave a clear picture about the impact of HRM in improving the performance in ROP.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to uncover the underlying mechanisms through which HRM policies and practices affects performance in the Royal Oman Police using Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as an analytical framework. Although previous studies often implied that HRM policies and practice are essential to improve the firm performance, for example Bae and Lawler, 2000; Boselie *et al.* 2009; Huselid, 1995; and Inchniowski, 1997, no empirical examination of how a system of human resource management practice affects performance in a police organisation has been done before. Most of the literature was mainly based on private sector organisations. Thus, broadening strategic human resources management research with more diverse samples of public sector organisations like police organisations presents a unique opportunity for expanding the literature and broadening the understanding of strategic human resource management.

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the findings from chapter six in relation to the primary research question of this thesis namely: “How does HRM policies and practices impact policing performance in the Royal Oman Police?” These findings have been obtained from the analysis of the semi-structured interviews and secondary data. Therefore, HRM is interpreted by officers representing managerial and non-managerial levels with regard to its value in improving the organisational performance. The following sections will discuss these findings and relate them to the study’s objectives identified in chapter two.

### **7.2.1 HRM POLICIES IN ROP (OBJECTIVE 1)**

As this study represented a novel approach to understanding of HRM-performance link in the Royal Oman Police and its relation to HRM, an extensive literature review was undertaken to explore the nature of HRM and its importance in improving organisational performance.

There was an agreement, within the reviewed literature, about the importance of HRM initiatives in improving performance (Appelbaum *et al.* 2002; Carmelli and Schaubroeck, 2005; Huselid, 1995; Paauwe, 2004; Paauwe and Boselie, 2005; Purcell *et al.* 2003). Nevertheless, as stated in the literature review in Chapter 2, various approaches and debates existed within the generic HRM literature about the type and number of HRM practices likely to create a positive impact on organisational performance.

The HRM model in ROP was based on the contingency approach and it was designed to meet the policing business needs and to suit the organisation and national culture. However, this study has found that the contingent nature of the model was advanced to match the resource-based approach. This model consisted of ten policies and practices that have helped the force to attract, retain, motivate and develop its human capital; namely, the human capital required to implement the force's policing strategy. These policies and practices have influenced the human capital to produce certain outcomes such as abilities or competencies, motivation, job satisfaction and commitment which shape the performance. In other words, it is the skills, abilities, and capabilities of the officers that exist within the force at any given time (the stock of human capital) and it is the ways, systems and processes used to manage this stock of human capital that affects the good performance. The presence, suitability and effectiveness of these ten HRM practices were further explored and varied, during the empirical stages of this study, as discussed in section 6.2.1 of this study.

It was encouraging to note that managerial and non-managerial officers confirmed the importance of these ten HRM policies in ROP and showed how they are applied in the

organisation. Comparison between the HRM policies mentioned in the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model and those applied in ROP that is presented in Table 20, has proved that the design of HRM model in ROP was modelled more closely to fit with the prevailing policing strategy and to be relevant to the Omani policing context (Armstrong, 2003).

| <b>HRM POLICIES IN PURCELL <i>et al.</i> (2003)<br/>PEOPLE PERFORMANCE MODEL</b>   | <b>HRM POLICIES IN ROP</b>   |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Careful/sophisticated recruitment and selection.</li> <li>2. Training and learning/development</li> <li>3. Career opportunities</li> <li>4. Information-sharing and extensive two-way communication</li> <li>5. Involvement in decision-making</li> <li>6. Team working</li> <li>7. Performance appraisal and management</li> <li>8. Pay satisfaction</li> <li>9. Job security</li> <li>10. Job challenge/job autonomy</li> <li>11. Work-life balance</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Competency –based recruitment.</li> <li>2. Professional and technical training</li> <li>3. HR planning</li> <li>4. Management development</li> <li>5. Performance appraisal and management</li> <li>6. Promotion/Management succession planning</li> <li>7. Career planning</li> <li>8. Communication.</li> <li>9. Team working</li> <li>10. Pay satisfaction</li> </ol> |

**Table 20** HRM Policies in Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model and HRM policies in ROP

The eleven practices shown in Purcell *et al.* People Performance Model was identified from previous researches as likely to be of importance (Purcell *et al.* 2003: 8). Different researchers have presented different lists of policies, especially those concerned with producing the ‘best practice’ model. For example, in 1994 Pfeffer produced a list of sixteen practices ‘for competitive advantage through people’. By 1998 this had been reduced to seven practices.

The ten HRM policies that are used in the Royal Oman Police were chosen to connect between people management and the strategic objective related to improving the performance. The outcomes of these policies and practices were achieved through their impact on the three



areas of performance which are motivation, ability and opportunity. This process has reinforced the officers' discretionary behaviour which impacts positively the way in which their job is done and the speed, care and innovation that goes into the delivery.

This study postulated that certain policies and practices used in the HRM model in ROP such as communication and team working was not a pure technical HRM policy. They were used as a mean to support the change in the people management approach and to support the collegial spirit in the force. The input of these policies was considered as an additional driver of attitudinal outcomes, especially people's sense of having opportunities to be involved and to know about plans and prospects. This study demonstrated that HRM policies are not concrete practices enshrined and defined in a manual. They are management behaviour and are a clear indication of the value of people in ROP.

The decentralised structure of HRM also gave the local commanders more autonomy and discretion to manage HRM issues in their divisions and this helped them to understand the importance of HRM in improving performance. Mello supported this view as he argued that SHRM is concerned with three aspects; (a) human resource management is fully integrated with the strategy and the strategic needs of the firm; (b) HR policies cohere both across policy areas and across hierarchies; and (c) HR policies are adjusted, accepted and used by line managers and employees as part of their everyday work (Mello, 2006). Therefore, the implementation of these policies has reinforced the strategic role of HRM in ROP.

### **7.2.2 THE IMPACT OF HRM POLICIES ON EMPLOYEE ABILITY, MOTIVATION & OPPORTUNITY TO PERFORM (OBJECTIVE 2)**

The Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model highlights the importance of HRM practices on employee abilities (A), motivations (M) and opportunities to participate (O) (Boxall and Purcell, 2003).

In this framework, Boxall and Purcell (2003: 20) argued that a firm's performance is a function of employees' ability (they can do the job because they possess the necessary skills); motivation (they will do the job because they want to and are given adequate incentives to do so); and opportunity (the work environment provides the necessary support and avenues for expression). The People Performance Model links employee attitudes (such as job satisfaction and commitment), discretionary behaviour and performance where the three AMO conditions are present. In other words, human capital may provide the potential for higher firm performance while employee attitudes and behaviours may be instrumental in realising that potential. Taken together, both the resource based view of the firm and the behavioural perspective suggests that the attributes (human capital) and efforts (as exemplified by aggregate employee attitudes and behaviours) are critical components in understanding firm performance.

However, previous research did not integrate these two perspectives to examine the relationships among HRM, human capital, employee attitudes and behaviours, and firm performance (Boselie *et al.* 2005). Hence, the primary research question in this dissertation focuses on addressing these issues.

The majority of the managerial and non-managerial officers understood that individual performance is a function of ability, motivation and opportunity. The ability is where officers will want to apply for the force, have their attributes recognised and be willing to learn new skills. The motivation is the assumption that officers are motivated to use their ability in a productive manner because they respond to various rewards to provide high quality of work (beyond the satisfactory level) and wish to engage in extra activities such as problem solving. And in order to do so they need to be given the opportunity (Purcell, 2003).

The ten HR policies discussed in section 6.2.1 are considered by managerial and non-managerial officers to improve the force's performance through the causal routes of

increasing employee skills and abilities, promoting positive attitude, and increasing motivation. The findings have pointed out that the attraction and fostering of relevant human ability is clearly of vital importance for a force that wants to grow.

Managerial and non-managerial officers were aware that every job in a policing organisation like ROP contains both prescribed and discretionary elements. The discretionary elements are very dependent on the occupant of the role and their judgement and feelings. The key link with performance is to get officers not just to do their job but act beyond contract and to do more than they are formally required. This depends on improvements in job satisfaction and organisational commitment and motivation. It is also strongly influenced by the way supervisory officers exercise their own discretion and how they put HR practices into operation.

The determinant policies of motivation, job satisfaction and commitment that are mentioned by Purcell *et al.* (2003) are different from the findings of this study. However, these findings demonstrated the importance of these determinants in improving the officers' performance by influencing their motivation, job satisfaction and commitment. These differences are presented in Tables 21, 22, and 23 below.

Firstly, the determinants HRM policies of motivation:

| THE STUDY of PURCELL <i>et al.</i> (2003)   | THIS STUDY  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job influence</li> <li>• Career opportunities</li> <li>• Job challenge</li> <li>• Involvement in management decisions</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Line manager respect</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional and technical training</li> <li>• Promotion/management succession planning</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Pay satisfaction</li> <li>• Promotion/management succession planning</li> <li>• Career planning</li> </ul> |

**Table 21** Comparison between the Determinants Policies of Motivation in The Study of Purcell *et al.* (2003) and This Study

Secondly, the determinants HRM policies of job satisfaction:

| THE STUDY of PURCELL <i>et al.</i> (2003)  | THIS STUDY  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job influence</li> <li>• Career opportunities</li> <li>• Job challenge</li> <li>• Team working</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional and technical training</li> <li>• Promotion/management succession planning</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Pay satisfaction</li> <li>• Promotion/management succession planning</li> <li>• Career planning</li> </ul> |

**Table 22** Comparison between the Determinants Policies of Job Satisfaction in The Study of Purcell *et al.* (2003) and This Study

Thirdly, the determinants HRM policies of job commitment:

| THE STUDY of PURCELL <i>et al.</i> (2003)  | THIS STUDY  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job influence</li> <li>• Career opportunities</li> <li>• Job challenge</li> <li>• Team working</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional and technical training</li> <li>• Promotion/management succession planning</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Pay satisfaction</li> <li>• Promotion/management succession planning</li> <li>• Career planning</li> </ul> |

**Table 23** Comparison between the Determinants Policies of Commitment in The Study of Purcell *et al.* (2003) and This Study

It is clear that the 10 policies or practice areas in HRM are identified to feed into and give practical meaning to AMO, and are themselves interrelated with one another. Officer attitudes or feelings towards ability, commitment, motivation and job satisfaction has increased as it was shown in chapter six in Tables 14 to 17. As a result, this encouraged the officers' discretionary behaviour when dealing with different situations. It can be concluded that changes made to HR policies and practices in ROP improved people management and performance.

This study has demonstrated that the policies and practices related to professional and technical training remain vitally important in influencing officers' attitudes and helping to create positive discretionary behaviour with the HRM model in ROP. As section 6.5.1 explained training was valued because it held the promise of learning to do things better, or doing new things. It was also considered as an important input in the progression path of officers and it is the sense of advancement and purpose that is important, especially in linking to organisation commitment.

Tables 14 to 17 showed that there was an increase in ability, commitment, job satisfaction, motivation levels in ROP. This may be indicative of the underlying values of mutuality as lived within the organisation. This study has demonstrated convincingly that research which asks only about the number and extent of HR practices can never be sufficient to understand the link between HR practices and business performance. It is misleading to assume that simply because HR policies are present they will be implemented as intended. The key issue was the robustness of this association between HR policies and business performance, and the extent to which competitive advantage could be sustained. This study argued that not only are the HR policies themselves important but that the way they are put into operation also contribute to the HR advantage.

### **7.2.3 THE IMPACT OF SENIOR OFFICER LEADERSHIP ON HRM POLICIES & PRACTICES (OBJECTIVE 3)**

The literature interpreted the role of the senior officer leadership in enabling HRM to carry out its strategic roles and integrate it with business strategy. Linking the role of the leadership to SHRM was accentuated with the rise of the resource-based view of the firm (Paauwe, 2004; Purcell *et al.* 2003).

The adoption of a SHRM approach necessitates the alignment of HR strategies with overall business strategies, as already noted. Without a clear sense of mission from the organisational leadership that support the values and culture, then SHRM is not possible.

The overall data showed an understanding of the role of ROP's senior manager leadership in helping the force to find a way of dealing with challenges that will occur at present and in the future. They also endorsed the role of SHRM in systematically linking people with the organisation.

This study has shown that the implication of the big idea in ROP is demonstrated by the determination of the force leadership to maximise the contribution that people management makes by developing HRM policies and practice that seek both to meet the needs of individual officers and to improve their performance outcomes. It was also evident in this study that it has taken the ROP a number of years to adopt this approach of people management that helped the HRM management to be fully integrated into the management process, and to understand the interconnection between customer satisfaction and employee attitude and behaviour.

Mueller argued that SHRM grows out of an organic development process which is facilitated by 'persistent intent' and builds on underlying developments in skills formation and establishing patterns of 'spontaneous cooperation' (Mueller, 1996). This should ensure that the best of the existing practices and attitudes could be retained, whilst alignment with the overall objectives takes place.

The strategic management process in ROP has been built on a clear sense of mission and values by organisational leadership. These values are embedded into the people management approach which set the fundamentals on how employees should be managed, developed and rewarded.

This link between HR and customers (the internal and external) means that values are consistent and mutually reinforced between HR strategy and policing strategy. These values are meant to provide a stable base on which different initiatives and policies can be built on within ROP. They provide the base for both the management of performance and the achievement of change.

Another important aspect of the organisational leadership lies on the collectivism that underpins the policing culture in ROP. This collectivism has helped binding people and processes together. The new HRM model in ROP has given the force a new design and application for HRM policies and practices aiming to increase the human capital pool and providing the human resource advantage.

The organisational leadership has supported the linkage between police strategy and HR strategy to enable the HRM model to contribute to the development of performance in different functional areas in ROP. Different HR policies and practice were created to support the new performance-led culture.

The findings showed that HR policies are not themselves important but that the way they are put into operation contributes to the 'HR advantage'. Boxall argued that "Firms have the possibility of generating human capital advantage through recruiting and retaining outstanding people, through capturing a stock of exceptional human talent, latent with productive possibilities" (Boxall, 1996: 443). The human resource advantage, which is the superiority of one firm's people management over another's, might be conceived as the product of its human capital advantage and human process advantage. The implications advantage, as it were, can be traced to better people employed in organisations with better processes.

Based on these findings, this thesis has demonstrated the notion of the big idea which implies that there is a clear sense of mission underpinned by values and culture, expressing what the ROP is and its relationship with its customers and employees. The big idea is seen as one of the keys to the HR-performance link as it creates the organisational values necessary for the particular policies to work effectively and to secure discretionary effort and commitment. It demonstrates that people are managed strategically, rather than operationally or opportunistically (Purcell *et al.* 2003).

#### **7.2.4 THE IMPACT OF LINE MANAGER LEADERSHIP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HRM POLICIES & PRACTICES (OBJECTIVE 3)**

Typical studies examine the nature and extent of HR practices and their impact upon performance, yet in doing so they make the dangerous assumption that line managers will simply act as ‘robotic conformists’ in enacting policies (Marchington and Grugulis, 2000). If front line managers vary significantly in how well they undertake their people management activities, then it follows that employee experiences of HR practices will also vary.

Explanations for performance linkages, either value enhancing or value destroying, must therefore include front line managers (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). Indeed it has been historically noted that “different styles of supervision exert a variety of influences on workers” (Lepak *et al.* 2001: 62). Such a focus is further necessitated given the tendencies of devolving HR responsibilities to the line manager and the individualisation of the employment relationship (Gunnigle *et al.* 1998).

Ultimately, in following this logic there is no such thing as the single HR practice of the firm. It is more accurate to imagine the HR practice of the firm as norms around which there is variation due to the idiosyncratic behaviour of the line managers (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). This suggests that future strategic HRM research should incorporate a wider notion of the HR



architecture and in particular the role of the line managers in implementing a work force strategy (Becker and Huselid, 2006).

Further support for a more explicit recognition of the role of line managers in delivering HRM comes from recent organisational behaviour research which draws attention to the study of loyalty to supervisors as an important predictor of employees' outcomes (Marchington and Grugulis, 2000).

The study findings believe that the line managers play important roles in giving the extra quality in making HRM policies and policies achieve their strategic intentions. The new decentralised HRM model in ROP has given the local commanders and line managers the responsibility to manage HR activities locally in different divisions. The findings showed that HR policies and practices success depends on the way that they are put into operation by the line managers.

The HRM model in ROP has helped to strengthen the skills of line managers and develop managers. The development programme aims to connect business challenges and management development. It was built on two main pillars: firstly, making the connection between business strategies, organisation and management development; secondly, managing the learning (getting the implementation right). Managerial and non-managerial officers thought that if officers were satisfied with their supervisors, they also felt satisfied with their level of involvement and accordingly showed high levels of commitment to the force. It is interplay between managers and employees' discretionary behaviour. The study found that the role of the line management impacts HRM policies and practices as follows:

1. The managers are essentially following procedures and are taking advice from the HR department and utilizing the online or published manual to assist them in understanding what is required.

2. The managers coach and support their employees and where appropriate cultivate a team spirit and undertake the policy-like appraisal process.
3. The small actions such as communicating information to employees, responding to their suggestions, treating employees fairly, and managing operational problems which managers undertake on a daily basis have a major impact on employee experience of working life in their organisations.
4. This is the final area of manager behaviour concerned with controlling the behaviour of employees and their influence over the job. It involves a wide range of activities including, for example, the extent to which they closely supervise the work of their employees by checking up on them frequently and monitoring the quality of their work, or alternatively trusting people more to get on with their jobs and allowing them to exercise influence over how the job is done. The issue here is employees' satisfaction with the influence they have over their job, and how employees perceive the way their managers control absenteeism and lateness and manage quality issue.

#### **7.2.5 MEASURING HRM AND PERFORMANCE (OBJECTIVE 4)**

Pillar 4 of the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model highlights the importance of measuring the impact of HRM practices on employee outcome (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). It has long been recognised that measuring outcomes are central to a more complete understanding of how HR drives firm performance (Becker and Gerhart, 1996).

The fact that employee voice and outcomes have largely remained dormant in research examining the HRM-performance linkages is ironic as all the theoretical rationales of how HR affects performance rests on the assumption that it is through these employee outcomes (Legge, 2005).

Pillar 4 of the People Performance Model provides for immediate employee outcomes as opposed to abstract financial measures as a means to measure the impact and role of HRM. Thus, competitive advantage is believed to stem from the ability of organisations to elicit effort from their employees above and beyond the immediate requirements of the job at hand (Applebaum *et al.* 2000: 235).

The study findings showed that the main drive behind the change project in ROP was the dissatisfaction of the government with ROP's performance. The force leadership set the plan to improve the performance and created a mechanism to measure policing performance. An auditing process was introduced as a performance measurement mechanism technique. The measurement process focused on four elements of the policing performance: (1) activity, (2) competency and professionalism, (3) community contact and responsiveness, and (4) internal control and resource management. Measuring these four elements in each of ROP's divisions has enabled the ROP leadership to understand how these divisions carry out the policing services. The performance is evaluated using key performance indicators (KPI) which are set annually at corporate level (based on the three-year plan) initially. The total scores of the auditing process are 400 marks and each element is assessed out of 100.

The public survey is also used as a tool for measuring performance in ROP. The public have been satisfied by the quality of the police force performance and services. In addition, results of the public surveys showed that the public have been satisfied by the quality of the police force performance and services after the completion of the change project in 2002. The results were obtained from the public surveys that were carried out during the period from 2000 to 2009. The public think ROP's performance has improved on areas such operational effectiveness, relationship with the community, police services (issuing of passport and ID cards, issuing of driving license and car registration cards) and crime reduction as it was

shown in Figures 18 to 21 in chapter six. The improvement in policing performance had a positive impact on the public's satisfaction with the police services.

The study showed that performance in ROP's formations was improved through officers who were encouraged by the new HRM model to contribute more effectively by triggering discretionary behaviour which made a difference to the job outcomes. Managerial and non-managerial officers explained that the auditing report from 2002 until 2009 showed that there is clear evidence between the link of positive attitudes among officers and HR policies and practices, motivation and operational performance. Comparison of the results of the employee survey from 2000 to 2009 shows that there is a steady change in officer attitude towards the force. Officers have expressed their satisfaction with different HRM policies and practices and they think these new polices have increased their commitment to the force. The developments in the HRM model were introduced to improve the people management approach and to develop the performance of different divisions/units. The study findings pointed out that HRM policies and practices have played a significant role in improving officer performance through positively affecting factors related to performance such as officer commitment, motivation and job satisfaction. Organisational commitment can be generally conceptualised as the strength of an individual's identification with, involvement in, and attachment to the organisation (Mowday *et al.* 1982). According to Beer *et al.* (1984: 19), "increased commitment can result not only in more loyalty but better performance for the organisation."

The study findings indicated that factors such as organisational fit, remuneration and recognition, training and career development, challenging employment assignments and opportunities, organisational policies, communication, work environment organisational commitment, and turnover intention were associated with an improvement in performance

over the period from 2002 to 2009 as was shown in Figures 7 to 15 in chapter six. These figures show the significance of these different factors on employees' performance in ROP.

Results have demonstrated changes in officer attitudes towards the force after the DGHRM development project was completed in 2002. There was an obvious impact of the HRM policies and practices on areas that were related to performance such as ability, motivation, job satisfaction and commitment as it was shown in Tables 14 to 17 in chapter six.

The study findings showed that HRM policies and practice have influenced officers' outcomes by improving their performance and the quality of the services that are delivered to the public. These results are aligned with other study findings which can be located at different organisational levels. For example, solving immediate operational business problems, preventing effective strategy implementation (Becker and Gerhart, 1996), quick response to the changes in customer demands (Appelbaum *et al.* 2000), and improving quality (Deery and Iverson, 1999; Guest and Hoque, 1994). More specifically, the findings provided empirical support for the assertion of the impact of HRM on performance (Boselie *et al.* 2009; Ostroff and Bowen, 2000; Wright and Boswell, 2002) and of the HRM-performance link in the public sector (Carmelli and Shaubroeck, 2005; Hays and Karney, 2001; Teo and Rodwell, 2007).

### **7.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter provided a comprehensive discussion of the main findings obtained from the fieldwork. The discussion related these findings to the research objectives and the four pillars of the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

#### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

According to the strategic perspective, HRM has contributed to performance through its alignment with business strategy or through the impact of HRM on employee behaviours which in turn influenced their performance. The resource-based view (RBV) focused on unique, inimitable and valuable firm (internal resources which contribute to performance). This study was an exploration of the relationship between the study of HRM and performance in the Royal Oman Police using the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model as an analytical and conceptual framework to examine the nature of the HRM-performance link in the Royal Oman Police by replicating the following four pillars of the model:

5. Investigating the HRM policies adopted by the Royal Oman police in Oman.
6. Examining the impact of HR policies and practices in developing the areas of ability, motivation and opportunity which are considered important components of the performance.
7. Determining the role of the leadership style fostered by managers and its effectiveness in creating a cultural vision for the organisation and in the effective application of HRM policies and practices.
8. Examining how organisational outcomes are measured.

Specifically the study provided evidence that HRM has a positive impact on the Royal Oman Police performance and this was due to the availability of the conditions that are mentioned in the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model. This contribution has enabled this study

to contribute to the existing HRM research that focuses on explaining the relationship between the HRM and performance.

This conclusion chapter provides a summary of all the chapters included in this study. Then contributions and limitations of this study will be acknowledged. The future directions for research and research recommendations will also be given. Finally, the study conclusion will be provided.

## **8.2 THE STUDY'S SUMMARY**

To evaluate the contributions made by this research, it is necessary to refer back to chapter 2, 3 and 4 which jointly established a foundation on which the present study was based. Chapter 2 provided the theoretical background on HRM and discussed arguments related to HRM and how it can contribute to organisational performance. The initial overview provided a clarification on how the concepts of HRM and SHRM are used in the literature. HRM is understood as an input with a positive influence on the output performance. The subsequent discussion presented theoretical perspectives on the HRM-performance link.

Chapter 3 summarised the literature related to the development of HRM in Oman. Aspects related to the national context of Oman, its political system and economic development were discussed. All these areas are important factors in shaping the HRM movement in Oman.

Chapter 4 discussed aspects related to the development of HRM in police organisations. It gave insights about the factors that help to shape this development such as policing models, policing leadership, policing culture and strategic management in police organisations. It also, investigated HRM in the public sector and a description of the police organisation in Oman (Royal Oman Police) was given.

Chapter 5 discussed the methodological issues related to this study. These issues were: the research design, the rationale for the use of qualitative research, research methodology choice

(a case study), triangulation, semi-structured interviews, pilot interviews, sampling strategy and selection for interviews, secondary data, data analysis process, data analysis framework and research ethics. A semi-structured approach was adopted in the interviews.

Chapter 6 presented an analysis of the results and themes obtained from the semi-structured interviews and the secondary data. Interview questions were derived from the four pillars of Purcell's *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model. This approach gave the respondents freedom to express their views and to go beyond the immediate questions. Piloting the questions with adequate samples from each management levels in ROP (strategic/ middle management/ operational) helped in refining and developing the questions and making them clearer to the respondents. Concerns for validity and reliability were addressed by using two main sources of data that were generated from the (1) semi-structured interviews of the officers whom represented different managerial levels in ROP, and (2) analysis of the results of successive employee surveys, audit reports and the surveys of the general public's perception of the quality of policing in Oman from 2000 to 2009. Using this data gave this study an advantage to explore the HRM-performance link longitudinally.

Validity and reliability were also obtained by asking each of the questions to officers from all management levels in ROP (strategic/ middle management/ operational). As respondents from different levels and positions were chosen to elicit information closely related to their immediate realm, the error introduced by single respondents answering quick questions (Purcell, 1999) which is prevalent in many survey studies was avoided.

On the interpretive level, the adoption of the thematic analysis has helped to sort the data obtained from the research into appropriate categories and sections, and then convert them into themes or codes identified in the research (Breg, 1998). The ability to retain and record information from interviews was as important as collecting them.



Data analysis was determined inductively through multiple readings of the secondary data (successive employee survey, audit reports and the surveys of the general public's perception of the quality of policing in Oman from 2000 to 2009) and the interview transcripts which led to findings connected to the research objectives. This has helped the researcher to break the data into specific themes related to the four pillars of the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

Chapter 7 provided a detailed discussion of the findings from chapter six in relation to the primary research question of this thesis namely: "How does HRM policies and practices impact policing performance in the Royal Oman Police?" These findings have been obtained from the analysis of the semi-structured interviews and the secondary data.

### **8.3 THE STUDY'S CONTRIBUTION**

This study contributes significantly to the body of knowledge of SHRM and policing by providing empirical evidences that demonstrate the effect of HRM on improving the performance of the Royal Oman Police. The study results are in line with other studies that focused on HRM-performance link (Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Boselie *et al.* 2009; Gerhart *et al.* 2000a; Gerhart *et al.* 2000b; Huselid, 1995; Nishii and Wright, 2008; Purcell *et al.* 2003).

By replicating the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model in studying HRM-performance link in the Royal Oman Police, this study achieved the following theoretical and general contributions:

1. Comparison between the HRM policies and practices included in the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model and those applied in ROP has proved that the design of HRM model was chosen to develop the strategic role of people management in improving the policing performance.

2. The impact of the HRM policies and practices used in the Royal Oman Police were obvious in three areas of the officers' performance which are motivation, ability and opportunity that lead to better performance. This impact was supported by certain mediating mechanisms such as leadership of senior and line managers and the increase level of commitment, motivation and job satisfaction which has led to better performance outcomes and discretionary behaviours. This compliments the four pillars of the Purcell *et al.* People Performance Model (2003).
3. Certain HRM policies and practices used in the HRM model in ROP such as communication and team working were not pure technical HRM policies. They were used as a mean to support the change in the people management approach and to support the collegial spirit in the force. The input of these policies was considered as an additional driver of attitudinal outcomes, especially people's sense of having opportunities to be involved and to know about plans and prospects.
4. The implication of the big idea in ROP is demonstrated by the determination of the force leadership to maximise the contribution that people management makes by developing HRM policies and practices that seek both to meet the needs of individual officers and to improve their performance outcomes.
5. The important roles of the line managers in giving the extra quality to make HRM policies and practices achieve their strategic intentions. The findings showed that HR policies and practices success depends on the way that they are put into operation by the line managers.
6. The importance of measuring the impact of HRM practices on employee outcomes. This was done in Royal Oman Police by measuring the impact of HRM on performance using the employees' survey (this type of measure echoes with the measure suggested by Purcell *et al.* 2003) and measuring the quality of policing performance using auditing processes and public survey (this type of measures echoes

with one of the four types of performance measures suggested by Dyer and Reeves, 1995).

7. The transition of the HRM in the public sector in Oman and the Gulf Countries to the strategic role. This gives the policy maker in these countries great opportunity to use SHRM to develop sound national employment policies and practices. This study showed that one of the public sector organisations in Oman has been able to enhance its strategic capability by developing effective HRM model which focuses on building skills and behaviours which contributes to improving performance.
8. Complementing the findings of the previous HRM studies in Oman regarding the role of the organisation's culture as a contingent factor in designing the HRM model (Al-Hamadi and Budhwar, 2006)
9. Dealing with the challenge of improving research methods that were raised by different scholars in relation to the time lag (the time required to assess the effect of an HRM intervention) and level of participants (managers or non-managers) in each study (Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Paauwe, 2009; Wright and Gardner, 2003). This study has explored the HRM-performance link in the Royal Oman Police longitudinally by using data obtained from the period between 2000 to 2009 and using data obtained from managers and non-managers participants instead of relying on manager's participants only.

#### **8.4 THE STUDY'S LIMITATIONS**

Although this study contributes to the understanding of the relationship between HRM and performance, this thesis has some limitations. First, the data were obtained from a single police organisation in Oman. This limits the generalisation of the findings to other sectors (Combs *et al.* 2006) and countries (Boselie *et al.* 2001). Second, this research data were obtained from managers and non-mangers perceptual assessment of HRM and performance in

ROP which is considered as a subjective resource and might have the potential for social desirability bias (Gerhart *et al.* 2000b).

## **8.5 FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH**

Research in HRM has suggested that it takes at least three years to design and deliver new HR practices before these practices have an effect on organisational performance (Wright and Haggerty, 2005). Hence, this study recommends using longitudinal designs to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between HRM and organisational performance. Also, researchers are invited to conduct more studies on HRM in police organisations to build a sound literature on how HRM is practiced and developed in police organisations. Moreover, researchers in Oman are urged to develop the field of HRM by focusing on new directions in their research such as SHRM.

## **8.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations derived from this research are set out in this section. These recommendations are based on the findings of this study that demonstrated the impact of HRM policies and practices in developing human capital and improving policing performance. Accordingly, the study suggests the following recommendations that are related to the relationship between HRM and performance in ROP, Oman and the Gulf Countries:

1. Future research should replicate the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model in studying HRM in other major public or private sectors in Oman. This could further evaluate the current status of SHRM in Oman.
2. Improvement of performance measurements in ROP by using means like balanced scorecards that incorporate financial and non-financial concepts (i.e. customer, innovation and learning as well internal business perspectives).

3. To highlight the context-specific nature of HRM research and to test the established stereotype regarding similarity of management systems in the Gulf Region. Comparative studies between the Gulf state countries should be encouraged.
4. The present study recommends further refinement to the HRM policies and practices included in the HRM models in ROP and to develop them by taking into consideration the HRM policies and practices in the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

## **8.7 THE CONCLUSION**

This study has achieved its intended goal of exploring the impact of HRM on performance of the Royal Oman Police based on the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model. This framework was utilised as a theoretical foundation to evaluate the HRM model currently used in the Royal Oman Police (ROP) and its contributions to strategic policing needs. Accordingly, the study has successfully answered the research question by explaining the mechanisms that enable HRM interventions that are derived from an HR strategy to reinforce better employees' attitudes and behaviours that contribute to deliver improved performance. These mechanisms reflect pillars 2, 3, and 4 of the Purcell *et al.* (2003) People Performance Model.

This study has contributed to the HRM literature by explaining the HRM-performance link in the Royal Oman Police. Overall, the study findings have shown a considerable support that the police organisation in Oman stimulated a stronger emphasis on HRM and used its policies and practices strategically to influence the policing performance. This study has also demonstrated the influence of the big idea on HRM-performance link. Senior officer leadership, vision and integrated values have played important roles in delivering HR policies and practices and tested the extent to which employees rate these behaviours positively or negatively and shown how this in turn is associated with positive outcomes. In particular

senior officer leadership has contributed to bring HRM policies to life and sustainability by supporting its strategic roles and integrated it with other policing strategies.

Officers participated in this study represented different division/units, which have different functions, structures and objectives which relate to the overall ROP strategy. The study has shown that the HRM model was able to cater for the different functions, structures and objectives of these division/ units and improve their performance, which demonstrated the holistic nature of the HRM on performance of different business units (Becker and Gerhart, 1996). Based on this argument, HRM has contributed in the achievement of ROP's strategic objectives by primarily effecting officer's performance positively when delivering a service or carrying out a policing duty within the context of a particular job role or work team in different division/ units.

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## APPENDICIES

### APPENDIX 1

#### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

|    | <b>MAIN QUESTIONS</b>   | <b>PROBES</b>  |
|----|---|--|
| 1. | What are the HRM policies adopted by the Royal Oman Police?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Name the HRM policies and practices used in ROP?</li> <li>– What is the importance of each policy/practise?</li> <li>– How the new HRM model has helped to improve the implementation of HRM policies and practices?</li> <li>– Is the HRM strategy consistent with the policing strategy?</li> <li>– Are the HRM policies and practices well integrated together?</li> </ul>                         |
| 2. | What is the impact of HRM policies and practices policies on employees' ability, motivation and opportunity to perform? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What is the impact of these HRM policies on employees' ability, motivation and opportunity to perform?</li> <li>– What is the impact of these HRM policies on employees' commitment, motivation and job satisfaction?</li> <li>– How is that impact assessed?</li> </ul>  |
| 3. | How has the leadership style fostered by managers impacted the HRM policies?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What is the role of senior managers in implementing the HRM policies and practice?</li> <li>– What is the role of line managers in implementing the HRM policies and practice?</li> <li>– What is the role of leadership in enabling line managers to implement the HRM policies and practices?</li> <li>– How has the culture influence the implementation of HRM policies and practices?</li> </ul> |
| 4. | What is the impact of HRM policies on employees' outcomes?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How has HRM policies and practices impacted officers' performance in general?</li> <li>– How is that impact assessed?</li> <li>– How is performance measured internally and externally?</li> </ul>  |

**APPENDIX 2**  
**EMPLOYEE SURVEY**

**SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. Age:                     20–29       30–39       40–49       50-65
2. Gender:                 Male             Female
3. Position:                \_\_\_\_\_
4. Department:            \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B: HUMAN RESOURCE FACTORS**

The following statements relate to the way in which you perceive the human resource practices within your organisation. For each statement, you are asked to mark an **X** in the box that best describes your response.

How accurately do the following statements best describe your personal fit with your company's culture and values?

|    |  | 1                                | 2        | 3                             | 4        | 5                  |
|----|--|----------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|--------------------|
|    |  | Strongly<br>Strongly<br>Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor<br>Disagree | Disagree | Agree<br><br>Agree |
|    |  | <b>ORGANISATIONAL FIT</b>        |          |                               |          |                    |
|    |  | <b>1</b>                         | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>                      | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b>           |
| 1. | This organisation has the same values as I do with regard to concern for others. |                                  |          |                               |          |                    |
| 2. | This organisation does not have the same value as I do with regard to fairness.  |                                  |          |                               |          |                    |
| 3. | This organisation has the same values as I do with regard to honesty.            |                                  |          |                               |          |                    |
| 4. | I feel that my personal values are a good fit with this organisational culture.  |                                  |          |                               |          |                    |

How accurately do the following statements describe your company's remuneration and recognition system?

|                                       |   | 1                 | 2        | 3                          | 4        | 5        |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|----------|
|                                       |   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Agree    |
|                                       |   | Strongly Disagree |          |                            |          | Agree    |
| <b>REMUNERATION &amp; RECOGNITION</b> |   |                   |          |                            |          |          |
|                                       |   |                   |          |                            |          |          |
|                                       |   | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>                   | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| 5.                                    | Employees are given positive recognition when they produce high quality work.     |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 6.                                    | This organisation pays well.  |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 7.                                    | This organisation offers a good benefits package compared to other organisations. |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 8.                                    | This organisation values individual excellence over teamwork.                     |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 9.                                    | This organisation offers good opportunities for promotion.                        |                   |          |                            |          |          |

How accurately do the following statements describe your company's training and career development practices?

|  |  | 1                 | 2        | 3                          | 4        | 5        |
|--|--|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|----------|
|  |  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Agree    |
|  |  | Strongly Disagree |          |                            |          | Agree    |
| <b>TRAINING &amp; CAREER DEVELOPMENT</b> |  |                   |          |                            |          |          |
|  |  |                   |          |                            |          |          |
|  |  | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>                   | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| 10.                                      | People are properly orientated and trained upon joining this organisation.   |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 11.                                      | This organisation provides regular opportunities for personal and career development.  |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 12.                                      | Innovation and creativity are encouraged here.   |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 13.                                      | The organisation has career development activities to help an employee identify/ improve abilities, goals, strengths and weaknesses. |                   |          |                            |          |          |

How accurately do the following statements describe attributes that are currently present in your job?

|   | 1<br>Strongly<br>Strongly<br>Disagree  | 2<br>Disagree | 3<br>Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4<br>Disagree | 5<br>Agree<br><br>Agree |
|---|--|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| <b>CHALLENGING EMPLOYMENT ASSIGNMENTS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b> |  |               |                                 |               |                         |
|   |  |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 14.   | Employees are offered more challenging work within the organisation.                 |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 15.   | Employees can work autonomously on their work assignments.                           |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 16.   | Employees are skilled to do a number of different jobs, not just one particular job. |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 17.   | Employees are given opportunities to learn new things.                               |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 18.   | Employees are offered a good amount of variety in their job.                         |               |                                 |               |                         |

19. Which of the following policies has helped to raise your motivation?

- Competency-based recruitment
- HR planning
- Professional and technical training
- Management development
- Performance appraisal and management
- Promotion/Management succession planning capability
- Career planning capability
- Communication
- Team working
- Pay satisfaction



20. Which of the following policies has reinforced your job satisfaction?

- Competency-based recruitment
- HR planning
- Professional and technical training
- Management development
- Performance appraisal and management
- Promotion/Management succession planning capability
- Career planning capability
- Communication
- Team working
- Pay satisfaction

21. Which of the following policies has reinforced your commitment?

- Competency-based recruitment
- HR planning
- Professional and technical training
- Management development
- Performance appraisal and management
- Promotion/Management succession planning capability
- Career planning capability
- Communication
- Team working
- Pay satisfaction

22. Which of the following policies has developed your ability (skills, competencies)?

- Competency-based recruitment
- HR planning
- Professional and technical training
- Management development
- Performance appraisal and management
- Promotion/Management succession planning capability
- Career planning capability
- Communication
- Team working
- Pay satisfaction

**SECTION C: ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS**

How accurately do the following statements describe the effectiveness of your company's leadership practices at the organisational and team level?

|                                  | 1<br>Strongly<br>Strongly<br>Disagree  | 2<br>Disagree | 3<br>Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4<br>Disagree | 5<br>Agree<br><br>Agree |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| <b>ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP</b> |  |               |                                 |               |                         |
|                                  |  |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 23.                              | The leadership practices in this organization help me to become a high performing employee.                            |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 24.                              | The leadership practices in this organisation enhance my satisfaction with my job.                                     |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 25.                              | This organisational leadership practices are consistent with my personal values.                                       |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 26.                              | The organizational leadership practices make a positive contribution to the overall effectiveness of the organisation. |               |                                 |               |                         |
| <b>LINE MANAGER LEADERSHIP</b>   |  |               |                                 |               |                         |
|                                  |  |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 27.                              | Team working is valued by the line managers.   |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 28.                              | Line managers support and appreciate high standards of performance.  |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 29.                              | Line managers empower our discretionary behaviour in dealing with different situations.                                |               |                                 |               |                         |
| 30.                              | Each member of my team has a clear idea of the group's goals.  |               |                                 |               |                         |

How accurately do the following statements best describe your company's culture and policies?

|                                |   | 1                 | 2        | 3                          | 4        | 5        |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|----------|
|                                |   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Agree    |
|                                |   | Strongly Disagree |          |                            |          | Agree    |
| <b>ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES</b> |   |                   |          |                            |          |          |
|                                |   |                   |          |                            |          |          |
|                                |   | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>                   | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| 31.                            | Organisational policies and procedures are helpful, well understood and up to date. |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 32.                            | Progress towards meeting planned objectives is periodically reviewed.               |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 33.                            | The organisational structure facilitates the way we do things.                      |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 34.                            | This organisation has a defined vision/mission to meet its goals.                   |                   |          |                            |          |          |

How accurately do the following statements describe your company's communication and consultation process?

|                      |  | 1                 | 2        | 3                          | 4        | 5        |
|----------------------|--|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|----------|
|                      |  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Agree    |
|                      |  | Strongly Disagree |          |                            |          | Agree    |
| <b>COMMUNICATION</b> |  |                   |          |                            |          |          |
|                      |  |                   |          |                            |          |          |
|                      |  | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>                   | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| 35.                  | This organisation keeps employees well- informed on matters important to them.             |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 36.                  | Sufficient effort is made to determine the thoughts and responses of people who work here. |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 37.                  | Communications across all levels in this organisation tend to be good.                     |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 38.                  | Organisational structure encourages horizontal and vertical communication.                 |                   |          |                            |          |          |
| 39.                  | There is trust between employees and their supervisors/ team leaders.                      |                   |          |                            |          |          |

How accurately do the following statements best describe your working environment?

|                            | 1   | 2        | 3                             | 4        | 5                  |
|----------------------------|---|----------|-------------------------------|----------|--------------------|
|                            | Strongly<br>Strongly<br>Disagree  | Disagree | Neither Agree nor<br>Disagree | Disagree | Agree<br><br>Agree |
| <b>WORKING ENVIRONMENT</b> |   |          |                               |          |                    |
|                            |   |          |                               |          |                    |
|                            | <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>                      | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b>           |
| 40.                        | My working life balances with my family life.                             |          |                               |          |                    |
| 41.                        | Overall this organisation is harmonious place to work.                    |          |                               |          |                    |
| 42.                        | This organisation regards welfare of its employees as its first priority. |          |                               |          |                    |
| 43.                        | Workers and management get along in this organisation.                    |          |                               |          |                    |
| 44.                        | For the work I do, the physical working conditions are very pleasant.     |          |                               |          |                    |
| 45.                        | This organisation offers a lot of security.                               |          |                               |          |                    |
| 46.                        | A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists.                              |          |                               |          |                    |



What are your plans for staying with this organisation?

|                           | 1<br>Strongly<br>Strongly<br>Disagree                        | 2<br>Disagree | 3<br>Neither Agree nor Disagree | 4 | 5<br>Agree<br><br>Agree |   |   |   |
|---------------------------|--|---------------|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>TURNOVER INTENTION</b> |  |               |                                 |   |                         |   |   |   |
|                           |  |               |                                 | 1 | 2                       | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 56.                       | I plan to work at my present job for as long as possible     |               |                                 |   |                         |   |   |   |
| 57.                       | I will most certainly look for a new job in the near future. |               |                                 |   |                         |   |   |   |
| 58.                       | I plan to stay in this job for at least two to three years.  |               |                                 |   |                         |   |   |   |
| 59.                       | I would hate to quit this job.                               |               |                                 |   |                         |   |   |   |

### APPENDIX 3

#### PUBLIC SURVEY

The following statements relate to the way in which you perceive the Royal Oman Police effectiveness and quality of performance and services practices within your organisation. For each statement, you are asked to mark an **X** in the box that best describes your response.

|                                  |  | 1        | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5        |
|----------------------------------|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                                  | 1 Strongly Disagree<br>2 Disagree<br>3 Neither Agree nor Disagree<br>4 Agree<br>5 Strongly Agree         |          |          |          |          |          |
| <b>OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS</b> |  |          |          |          |          |          |
|                                  |  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| 1.                               | This police division rules and regulations are fair and sensible in regulating conduct on-duty.          |          |          |          |          |          |
| 2.                               | Senior police commanders in this division are in tune with the realities of present day police problems. |          |          |          |          |          |
| 3.                               | The numbers of police officers available in a duty are sufficient to meet the different challenges.      |          |          |          |          |          |

|  |  | 1        | 2        | 3        | 4        | 5        |
|--|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|  | 1 Strongly Disagree<br>2 Disagree<br>3 Neither Agree nor Disagree<br>4 Agree<br>5 Strongly Agree                 |          |          |          |          |          |
| <b>RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY</b> |  |          |          |          |          |          |
|  |  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| 1.                                     | Police officers are friendly and proactive in delivering the service.  |          |          |          |          |          |
| 2.                                     | The public is cooperative with police officers in the performance of their duty                                  |          |          |          |          |          |
| 3.                                     | This police division rules and regulations do not invade a person's private life in regulating conduct off-duty. |          |          |          |          |          |

|                        | 1   | 2        | 3                             | 4        | 5        |
|------------------------|---|----------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|
|                        | Strongly<br>Strongly<br>Disagree                                    | Disagree | Neither Agree nor<br>Disagree | Disagree | Agree    |
| <b>POLICE SERVICES</b> |   |          |                               |          |          |
|                        |   |          |                               |          |          |
|                        | <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>                      | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| 1.                     | The public shows respect for the police.                            |          |                               |          |          |
| 2.                     | Police officers are dedicated to the high ideals of police service. |          |                               |          |          |
| 3.                     | Police services are of high standard of quality.                    |          |                               |          |          |

|                        | 1  | 2        | 3                             | 4        | 5        |
|------------------------|--|----------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|
|                        | Strongly<br>Strongly<br>Disagree   | Disagree | Neither Agree nor<br>Disagree | Disagree | Agree    |
| <b>CRIME REDUCTION</b> |  |          |                               |          |          |
|                        |  |          |                               |          |          |
|                        | <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b>                      | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
| 1.                     | Arrests for serious crimes (e.g. robbery, burglary) by police officers are the result of hard work more than luck. |          |                               |          |          |
| 2.                     | The criminal justice system is effective in its basic role of bringing criminals to justice.                       |          |                               |          |          |
| 3.                     | The police officers are reducing the public's fear of crime.   |          |                               |          |          |