AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION SYSTEM
OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR UNIVERSITIES OF
KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in Management

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Abstract

Contemporary discourse on recruitment and selection underpins the researchers’ argument in articulating that staffing function does not take place in isolation in any organization. This is influenced, not only by internal factors but also by external environmental forces. While undertaking staffing function in any setting, HR managers must be cognizant that they select the right persons for the right job as the critically important function set the stage for other human resources subsystems to pragmatically and smoothly function.

Using general systems theory as a theoretical lens, this qualitative study investigated the system of recruitment and selection in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan with a focus on administrative staff. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with participants, and thematic analysis was undertaken. This empirical study explored; how the system of recruitment and selection was designed in the universities by carrying out a comprehensive scrutiny of the current staffing function. This multiple case study identified major loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection in the universities and the major factors responsible for the bottlenecks that need to be addressed if the institutions of higher education were to meet emerging challenges of the competitive academic world and growing expectations of all stakeholders.

One of the major loopholes in the universities was that recruitment and selection function operated in a vacuum. Conflict of interest was not declared and recorded. There was a pervasive misuse of authority. Universities generally did not have detailed policies and procedures in place to inform objective, fair, equitable, consistent and responsible functioning of recruitment and selection system. There were found to be various flaws, plentiful
contradictions and numerous deficiencies in the existing by-laws, statutes and rules governing HR affairs in the universities, to the serious disadvantage of the universities and its employees.

This study revealed some of the micro and macro environmental factors impacting system of recruitment and selection in the universities embracing political, legal, regulatory, technological and socio-demographic forces. The study recommended some measures which would help the universities in improving the system of recruitment and selection.
Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I offer my profound and sincere gratitude to the Almighty Allah (Subhanahu wa ta'ala) for bestowing me with strength, acumen, courage and intellect to complete this assignment successfully. I am very thankful to my supervisors Dr. Usman Ghani and Dr. Humera Manzor for their assistance, guidance and support throughout the entire research process.

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Once again, I convey my gratitude to all those who directly or indirectly helped me to complete this study.
Author’s Declaration

I, Syed Hafeez Ahmad, hereby state that my Ph.D thesis titled, “an exploratory study of recruitment and selection system of administrative staff in the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa” is my own research work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from the Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar or anywhere else in the country/world.

At any time if my statement was found to be incorrect even after my graduation, the Institute has the right to withdraw my PhD degree.

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No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of Human Resource Management.

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To

My Teacher
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<td>ACR</td>
<td>Annual Confidential Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAI</td>
<td>Degree Awarding Institute</td>
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<td>GoP</td>
<td>Government of Pakistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEC</td>
<td>Higher Education Commission of Pakistan</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<td>HRM</td>
<td>Human Resources Management</td>
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<td>KMU</td>
<td>Khyber Medical University</td>
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<td>MNCs</td>
<td>Multinational Companies</td>
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<td>NPM</td>
<td>New Public Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>ORIC</td>
<td>Offices of Research Innovation and Commercialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QEC</td>
<td>Quality Enhancement Cell</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>UET</td>
<td>University of Engineering and Technology Peshawar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UOP</td>
<td>University of Peshawar</td>
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<td>WEF</td>
<td>World Economic Forum</td>
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Chapter 1  Introduction

1.1 Prologue

This empirical study investigates how the system of recruitment and selection is designed in the public sector universities by carrying out a comprehensive scrutiny of the current employment practices, investigating major problem areas, various factors responsible for these loopholes which need to be addressed if the institutions of higher education were to meet challenges of the competitive academic world and growing expectations of the stakeholders.

The first part of this Chapter covers the background of the study followed by a brief overview of the context of the study elucidating higher education landscape in the country. The Chapter describes the statement of the problem accompanied by a brief description of the objectives of this research study. Motivation, the rationale of the study and evolution of the research questions are also discussed here. Outcome and significance of the study have been presented in the subsequent parts of this introductory Chapter. The concluding part of this Chapter outlines layout of the thesis.

1.2 Background

The growing forces of globalization and increasing significance of emerging market economies advocate strongly that success of managers in the contemporary world rests on the degree to which they grasp a deep understanding of the issues confronted by organizations while managing human resources (Budhwar & Debrah, 2001). For effective management of human resources, organizations require a sound
Human Resource Management system. The HRM system is defined as “a set of distinct but interrelated activities, functions, and processes that are directed at attracting, developing, and maintaining (or disposing of) a firm’s human resources” (Lado & Wilson, 1994:701). Effective HRM system requires interconnected and dependent subsystems to work in harmony for its smooth functioning. HR subsystems connote those relationships and interactive activities ingrained in a larger organizational context which is aimed at managing the pool of human resources and making sure that these resources are utilized in the most effective and efficient manner so that strategic goals of the organization may be accomplished (Tiwari & Saxena, 2012:671).

The paramount HR subsystems include recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation, career development, performance evaluation, working environment and succession management to mention a few. Each of these subsystems has its own peculiar dynamics and significance. Amongst them, the most exigent is recruitment and selection. Recruitment is the process through which organizations hunt for potential applicants intended for productive employment while selection implies the process by which organizations attempt to identify the most suitable candidates with the desired knowledge, skills and ability to perform the desired tasks to help the organization realize its goals (Searle, 2009:151).

Concerted efforts aimed at reforming employment management practices were underway in developed countries for the last couple of decades. These initiatives were primarily set off by financial crisis confronted by both developed as well as developing economies. The role of the state was challenged for mismanagement and
bad governance and the efficacy of service delivery system in the public domain came under enormous pressure. Hence, the public sector was censured severely for its lack of efficiency, transparency and flexibility. HRM has become one of the central themes of the public sector reform agenda (Colley, McCourt & Waterhouse, 2012:508; Gray & Jenkins, 1995: 80; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2009:30).

Indeed, HRM is at the embryonic stage in Pakistan (Khilji, 2001:250), the case with the public sector universities is not much different. Since inception, much attention was not paid to the management of human resources in the higher education sector. With mushroom growth of universities, the HR problems confronted by these academic bodies multiplied with the passage of time. The traditional HR department, regarded as Establishment Section, in the universities used to be grossly deficient in having the requisite skilled and experienced HR professionals. Recruitment and selection was not conducted in a systematic manner. Training and development of employees were undertaken in the most orthodox fashion. Career development opportunities were scarce and infrequent. Pay was not performance based and performance appraisal was equally defective. Precisely, the prevalent HR system was malfunctioning in the public sector universities for more than six decades. Nevertheless, serious and sincere efforts were not undertaken in the past to revamp, redesign and restructure the same, to put it according to the changing needs of the globalized world. To be brief, HR was found to be one of the most neglected areas in the public sector universities in Pakistan (Abbas & Ahmad, 2011:21; Qadeer, Rehman, Ahmad & Shafiq, 2011:230).
Over the years, much attention has not been paid to evolve HRM system in the universities. The scenario of staffing function is not much different. Especially, the recruitment and selection system of administrative staff remained overlooked. Having taken for granted, this area remained grossly deficient and out-rightly neglected. In fact, the system of recruitment and selection of administrative staff has not received the desired level of attention and consideration. It remained controversial for being non-meritocratic, asymmetrical and even unlawful (Husain, 2007:1; Khilji, 2001:104). This area received little attention from academics, researchers and scholars despite its overall significance. This thesis investigated the prevailing employment practices in the six public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with prime focus on recruitment and selection system of administrative staff. This multiple case study research unveiled numerous loopholes in the prevailing system of recruitment and selection in the public sector universities in the province and makes several recommendations in light of which the system of recruitment and selection system of administrative staff may be revived in the institutes of higher education in the country.

1.3 Context of the study-higher education sector in Pakistan

Institutions of higher education exist in all kinds of configurations, sizes and shapes (Edgley-Pyshorn & Huisman, 2011:610). Universities are generally esteemed as “communities of scholars researching and teaching together in collegial ways” (Deem, 1998:47). University is a seat of advanced learning, a meeting place for researchers, scholars, academicians and academic workers where students pursue their higher studies after school or college level education. It is an intellectual center of the
highest level offering various academic programs and different schemes of studies for graduate and postgraduate students (Ahmad & Junaid, 2008:501).

It is essential to have a background understanding of the landscape in which higher education sector operates in Pakistan. The contemporary higher education system in Pakistan is fundamentally influenced by its historical traditions (Altbach, 2004:15). Universities in Pakistan have a robust colonial legacy. Rahman (1998:669) depicted a vivid picture of the institutions of higher education in the country with historical perspective:

The universities of Pakistan were established by the colonial British government in 1858 so as to produce educated Indians to serve in the expanding bureaucracy. As government and security were the major concerns of the colonial government they made the bureaucracy—and the military prestigious and efficient institutions while higher education remained subordinate, government controlled and poor. Being unattractive, the universities could not attract the most competent students and remained medieval teaching institutions…. This continues in Pakistan because the ruling elites of Pakistan continue to govern the country in the colonial tradition of the past.

At the time of creation of Pakistan in 1947, there was only one university functioning in Pakistan, namely University of Punjab established by the British rulers (HEC, 2013; Rahman, 1998:672). The rationale for setting up a university, in this part of the world, was that many British officers, essentially, felt that the cost of running
the administration would substantially decrease if the lower level jobs were given to the Indians. And secondly, to appease the concerns of the Indians as they were left frustrated and got alienated from the British rule by the fact that they were debarred from all offices of trust, lucre and authority. Therefore, the colonial masters desired that the Indians should be educated —“educated to be westernized — and employed under British superiors” (Rahman, 1998:670). Altbach (2004:17) argues that the aim of the colonial university was to train obedient and loyal civil servants to serve the colonizers. This system of governance, subservient administrative arrangement, docile academic models and pliable managerial practices influenced from the British era persisted in universities in Pakistan with cosmetic changes even today (Altbach, 2004:15).

Sharp increase has been recorded in the number of universities established, both in public as well as private sector, in Pakistan during the last two decades. At the moment, there are one hundred and sixty-three universities and degree awarding institutes in the country. Amongst those, ninety-four are public sector, whereas; sixty-nine are private sector (HEC, 2015). The public sector universities are government chartered, self-governing autonomous bodies funded by the Government of Pakistan through HEC. According to Hayward (2009:19), universities and institutions of higher education remained, largely, neglected in Pakistan throughout, its history. “The crisis in higher education was acknowledged as early as 1947, followed by more than a dozen commissions and policy documents. In 1998, some small steps were finally taken to improve access by increasing the number of higher education institutions from 18 to 78 and encouraging private higher education”. Major changes took place, in the sector with Musharraf’s takeover and the establishment of HEC in 2002,
development budget of higher education has risen exponentially, and the number of new universities increased manifold.

Hence, based on the dates of inception, space, diversity of programs offered, availability of internet and video conferencing facilities, these universities can be classified into two broad categories of universities (i.e. the first generation and second generation universities). The ‘first generation’ of these universities were established since 1947 till 2002 (before the establishment of HEC). The ‘second generation’ comprises of those universities, established in the last 10 to 15 years. The ‘first generation’ of these universities are marked by spacious flat buildings, serene academic environment, intellectual richness, outdated libraries, on-campus residency, little automation and a vast pool of imaginative students. University of the Punjab University of Peshawar, and Quid-e-Azam University, Islamabad are few among those. The ‘second generation’ comprises of those universities, established in the last ten to fifteen years. These are distinguished, mainly, by multistory buildings, fully automated offices, Wi-Fi and video conferencing facilities, with newly established well-furnished Offices of Research Innovation and Commercialization, Quality Enhancement Cell, Career Counseling and Student Aid and Placement Offices. Some of the recently established universities are housed in rented buildings while others have erected their own structures. University of Health Sciences, Lahore, Kohat University of Science and Technology and Karakurum International University, Gilgit, Baltistan are few of the second-generation universities. The points of difference in these universities are reflected in the table given at Appendix-1.
These public sector universities, in general, share symmetrical organizational composition having top-down hierarchical structure. The governor of the respective provinces or the president of the country, in the case of federal universities, used to be the Chancellor by virtue of their designation. They accord approval for appointment of the vice-chancellors, some members of the Senate, Syndicate and Selection Board (the key statutory bodies of the universities) and the Deans, the most distinguished academic position in the universities (Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, 2000; Rahman, 1998:673).

The University of Punjab, being one of the oldest among the public sector universities in the country, provides major reference and guidelines for all kind of legislations, acts and ordinances and by-laws such as statutes, rules and regulations for the rest of the universities in the country. Most of these institutions are following the government timeworn policies while managing human resources. Notwithstanding, these universities have own statutory bodies to revamp and redesign their own employment system, but little efforts have been made in the past to this effect. Resultantly, these universities are confronting a myriad of challenges pertaining to employment practices. Some of these are external; nevertheless, most of these are internal challenges. The major among the external challenges are: i) Globalization; ii) Technological advancement; iii) Mushroom growth of universities; iv) Legal and judicial activism; v) Compromised autonomy; vi) Massive open online courses; and vii) Accountability. Whereas, internal challenges confronted by these universities, mainly, comprise of: i) Financial; ii) Administrative; iii) Relevance; iv) Quality; v) Research and development; and vi) Job diversification (Altbach 2004:23; Siemens & Matheos, 2012:3).
These challenges have the potential, to engender serious repercussions for employment practices in the public sector universities. At the same time, key stakeholders such as students, parents, employees both academic and administrative staff, academic community, competitors, tax payers, university authorities, union groups, national regulatory bodies, funding agencies and government both federal and provincial have varied expectations from the contemporary universities in the country (Ahmad & Ghani, 2013).

In the face of these emerging challenges and growing expectations of the stakeholders, the university top management has to overhaul, redesign and restructure the entire HRM system in order to hunt the best lot in the market to circumvent total collapse of the higher education system in the days to come. The next ten years are anticipated to be crucial for the universities in Pakistan. This might turn out to be the golden era for higher education sector if university authorities, policy makers, government functionaries and funding agencies realize this, seize the opportunity, take the initiative and act ambitiously. If failed, “an avalanche of change will sweep the system away” (Barber, Donnelly & Rizvi, 2013:5).

1.4 Statement of the problem

Recruitment and selection of administrative staff are one of the most redundant areas in the institutions of higher education in Pakistan. Being one of the most crucial HRM subsystems, staffing function failed to muster the desired level of attention in the public sector universities for a variety of reasons. The most palpable among these is the widespread misconception prevailing about the discipline. It is
generally said, ‘it is an HR job and anybody can perform it.’ Little effort has been
made in the past to revamp and overhaul recruitment and selection system in the
universities in Pakistan by appreciating its contribution as a strategic undertaking and
a change agent role. At a time, when unprecedented modernization and innovation are
taking place in the system of recruitment and selection across the globe, staffing
function in the public sector universities in Pakistan is operating in the most obsolete
and redundant fashion. This presents a scenario worse than the early days of personal
management. Similarly, limited research has been undertaken in the area to explore its
dynamics and inform reforms initiatives and enlighten necessary improvement.

This pioneering multiple case study research unveiled the problems confronted
by higher education sector with a prime focus on the system of recruitment and
selection of administrative staff in the public sector universities of Khyber
Pakhtunkhwa while using General Systems Theory as a theoretical lens. The
philosophical doctrine of this theory expands our understanding of our role in the
universe of discourse by providing a framework to examine and understand the
environment. A systems approach, hence, offers major guidelines and a common
framework for the inquiry of social and organizational patterns. It provides a well-
defined vocabulary to heighten communication across multiple and cross cutting
disciplines. Rather than being an end in itself, systems theory is a way of looking at
things in a holistic fashion from a boarder perspective. Indeed, it is an internally
consistent method of scholarly inquiry that can be applied to all areas of social and
management sciences (Walonick, 1993).
This study is destined to open up new avenues for further research in other subsystems of HRM in the institutions of higher education in the country. The study has come up with some recommendations to regenerate and transform the system of recruitment and selection of administrative staff that successfully address the varied needs of the universities and growing expectations of all stakeholders.

1.5 Motivation, rationale of the study and evolution of the research questions

A detailed review of the literature revealed that management of the human resource is one of the most neglected areas in the higher education sector in Pakistan (Abbas & Ahmad, 2011:4). The traditional HR practices prevailing in the public sector are in place in the universities across the board. HR policy is hardly designed in any public sector university. Job descriptions are not available for any position. Compensation is not performance based. Performance appraisal is not systematic. Recruitment and selections are not merit based. This invariably engenders serious administrative problems besides audit objections and legal complications. The entire process is tiresome, hectic and time-consuming, essentially, characterized by bureaucratic behavior and red-tapism. A great deal of confidentially is involved in the process culminating in serious doubts and concerns.

As a result, injustice, discrimination, and malpractices are rampant in the public sector universities in the country. This multiplies frustration, discontent and demotivation among the employees. This premise is vehemently substantiated by the findings of Bibi, Lanrong, Haseeb & Ahmad (2012:9), Mumtaz, Khan, Aslam & Ahmad (2011:14) and Khan, Ghauri & Akram (2012:31). Serious efforts were not
undertaken in the past in the universities to address these problems at the strategic level. Similarly, limited research can be found in the HR domain in the context of higher education sector. Dubosc & Kelo (2012:1) argued that there is a serious deficiency of research on strategic HR practices prevailing in universities across the globe. In the same vein, very limited research can be found on recruitment and selection system with a focus on institutions of higher education in Pakistan (Shahzad, Bashir & Ramay, 2008:302; Iqbal, Arif, & Abbas, 2011:217; Qadeer et al., 2011:231).

This provided the desired impetus and thrust to undertake this study. This research is aimed at investigating the existing recruitment and selection system in the higher education sector exploring how this subsystem of the overall HR system is aligned with the remaining HR subsystems to drive the overall academic business of the public sector universities. This research study is an important inquiry enabling universities to respond better to emerging academic environment (i.e. general environmental conditions, changing global scenario and socio-political landscape) that shape the entire academic landscape in which the public sector universities operate. This study will unearth how to meet the stakeholders' expectations in a best possible manner. This study will be looking into the ways in which recruitment and selection system in the public sector universities may be reshaped to meet burgeoning aspirations and growing challenges of the knowledge economy.

In view of the above discussion, this study is aimed at addressing the following three broad research questions:
i. How for the function of recruitment and selection of administrative staff in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is designed in a systematic manner?

ii. What are the major loopholes in recruitment and selection of administrative staff in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

iii. What are the major factors responsible for these loopholes?

Detailed scrutiny of the literature revealed that researchers used different terminologies to capture flaws or weaknesses in the HR system. For example, Fenton-O’Creevy, Gooderham & Nordhaug (2005:8) used the term “loopholes” while Ryan & Tippins (2004:306) used the term “gaps” for investigating problems in the system of recruitment and selection and delineated reasons for the loopholes. They also used the term “factors” while describing elements responsible for the gaps underlined in the study. Whereas, Bhatia & Jain (2014:5) used “gaps” and “loopholes” alternately while studying issues in the HR domain. Nevertheless for the purpose of this study both the terms “gaps” and “loopholes” were borrowed from Ryan & Tippins (2004:306) and Bhatia & Jain (2014:5) and were used alternately to best address the bottlenecks in the system of recruitment and selection in the selected universities.

1.6 Objectives of the study

This research study will probe the current employment practices in the public sector universities of Pakistan. This study, in the first instance, will investigate the prevailing system of recruitment and selection in the selected universities, in order to develop a deep understanding of the current practices. This study will, then, identify
various loopholes in the recruitment and selection system. All the key factors responsible for these loopholes will be inquired to delineate how to bridge these gaps. The study will conclude with recommendations for policy makers at university level, authorities at the federal and provincial government level, HEC, provincial higher education departments and donor agencies to prioritize the area, which will help in unleashing spate of reforms in higher education sector by defining proper HR policies, establishing a full-fledged HR council and setting up HR departments/sections in each public sector university headed and staffed by HR professionals entirely meant for dealing with HR issues.

The study will help in realizing the following objectives:

i. To investigate the current system of recruitment and selection of administrative staff in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

ii. To identify gaps/loopholes in the prevailing system of recruitment and selection of administrative staff in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

iii. To examine the factors mainly responsible for the gaps/loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection of administrative staff

iv. To explore how the system of recruitment and selection system of administrative staff may be revisited to overcome these gaps/loopholes?

1.7 Significance, expected outcome and contribution of the study

Appreciating that human resource is one of the most valuable assets, effective recruitment and induction system is critically important for organizations to ensure
that the new employees become productive in the shortest possible time. Indeed, the benefits which can be derived from a merit-based selection system are widely established and frequently reported in the body of knowledge (Ulrich & Allen, 2009:33). This helps in developing intrinsic capabilities; organizations direly need to acquire, nourish and nurture to compete and win. This study is not only about undertaking fresh induction in a transparent manner but also focused on stimulating academic success and adding value to the academic business by connecting all HR functions in a systematic manner rather than simply reckoning recruitment and selection as a function in isolation.

The study will unearth gray areas in the staffing function in the institutes of higher education in the public sector in Pakistan. The study will give new insight to the academicians, university administrators, researchers, practitioners, and HR professionals. The study will provide useful guidelines for social scientists working in the field of higher education and policy makers at the national level. It will add, not only to the body of knowledge but will also help in unleashing reforms in the higher education sector by paving the way for standardization of recruitment and selection practices in universities in Pakistan. This thesis will be a starting point of a roadmap for the academe, to devise new HR strategies, to confront challenges of the globalized world. The study will be helpful in persuading the people at the helm of universities’ affairs to manage employment practices strategically, in order, to avoid a total collapse of higher education sector, in the days to come. The study shall enable the universities, to put the recruitment and selection system according to the demands and challenges of the contemporary academic world. The study holds immense significance for the university administrators, researchers, decision makers and HR
practitioners. The study will help the universities in revisiting recruitment and selection system, to make it more transparent, unbiased and meritocratic, thus, minimizing personal influence, political clout and external pressures.

1.8 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is divided into three major parts, comprising of nine chapters including Chapter 01- Introduction. These are structured as follows. Chapter 02 presents an overview of the available literature on HRM concentrating on the historical perspective of the discipline. The first section of this Chapter discusses basic concepts of HRM, its historical evolution and its application in the public sector. This Chapter outlines how HRM is designed in the public sector. A brief historical background of HRM in the public sector and working of HRM in both developing as well as developed countries have been taken up in this section. The second section of Chapter 02 talks about the background of the study, hence, is setting the stage for the thesis. This section discusses organizational structure of the universities in Pakistan. This Chapter covers HRM policies and practices in the public sector universities across the globe, with a particular focus on the public sector universities in Pakistan. The third section divulges a brief review of the basics of the system of recruitment and selection. Here, the focus rests on the public sector in Pakistan, and this further converges at the public sector universities in the country. This review helps in identifying gaps in employment practices in the institutes of higher education in Pakistan.
Chapter 03 focuses on the theoretical framework of the study considering the interplay of competing demands, changing trends and varied aspirations of the competitive academic world where university top management has to set the strategic directions of institutions of higher education to survive in the competitive academic world. This Chapter serves to build up the theoretical foundation of this thesis. Here the prime focus rests on understanding systems theory and its various dimensions as a theoretical framework for the study. The concluding section underscores the application of systems theory to recruitment and selection system in the higher education context, whereupon, a critical discussion has been led up embracing justification for my choice of the theoretical framework.

The second part includes the empirical Chapters. Chapter 04 presents methodological underpinnings of the study. It starts with a brief description of the research paradigm, elucidating case study research and research design pursued in the study, drawing attention to case study methodology and data collection mechanism. This Chapter presents the method of data analysis, the scheme of coding, interpretation of data to develop themes and patterns and define headings and subheadings for a systematic presentation of data.

The final part of the thesis consists of Chapters 05, 06, 07, 08 and 09. These chapters elucidate and provide further reflection on the outcomes of the study. Chapter 05 outlines, how the staffing function, starting from job analysis to final selection of a candidate, is undertaken in the selected public sector universities. The entire process comprising of various phases, activities and tasks undertaken in each phase is delineated in this Chapter in detail.
Chapter 06 describes various loopholes in the staffing function. This Chapter discusses various gray areas impacting fresh induction in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. As themes and subthemes emerged during data analysis, these loopholes are divided broadly into two categories. These are strategic as well as operational loopholes. In this section, certain ambiguities are hashed out that require strategic consideration while operation level loopholes affect the process or series of actions undertaken during staff function and require operation level attention to fix. Chapter 07 explains various factors responsible for these loopholes. Chapter 08 discusses various suggestions made by the respondents to address these issues. All the three finding Chapters are assembled and discussed succinctly in Chapter 09 with implications and recommendations of the overall research study.

Chapter 09 prescribes recommendations; how the system of recruitment and selection can be reviewed and redesigned keeping in view the growing needs and changing demands of the competitive academic world. This final Chapter concludes while setting down theoretical contributions and possible avenues for further research along with limitations associated with this research endeavour.

1.9 Summary

This Chapter set the scene and tone for the thesis. This introductory part of the study presented motivation and objectives delineated for the thesis and drew a sketch of the various sections included in this piece of research. Here, the substance and value of this research work in the context of higher education section has been highlighted. This Chapter introduced the background of the thesis with a special
emphasis on key components, providing a clear statement of the theme, outlining the research problem under investigation. Proper rationale was provided for the research study. This section established the need for the research work within the context, in the backdrop of prevailing knowledge of the discipline, in a distinctive logical and explicit manner, illustrating how this work will contribute to the body of knowledge. Besides, this Chapter provided justification for selection of qualitative paradigm adopted for the research culminating in an outline of all the chapters.
Chapter 2  Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

HRM is the effective management of people at work. This Chapter discusses HRM in the era of globalization. The discussion imbibing HR system, policies and practices prevailing in the public sector is a central part of this review. The diagnostic approach, first of all, analyzes designing and functioning of HRM in the public sector in both developed as well as developing countries. The second section of this Chapter reviews current HR practices in the institutes of higher education. Similarly, universities both in developed as well as developing countries have been covered in this review. This discussion is having a special focus on HR practices in the institutes of higher education in Pakistan with peculiar attention on recruitment and selection practices in the public sector universities. Identifying research gaps in the prevailing staffing function, the preceding section provide rationale for the study. This Chapter concludes with a number of propositions which is followed by the outcome of this study.

For the search of relevant literature, open access resources of Google Scholar, PubMed, Science Direct and EBSCOHost, ERIC, SpingerLink, and e-resources of HEC, OECD, Leadership Foundation and WEF were extensively used. The reports, research articles and books published during 1999-2015 were mainly selected for the review. Key words used for the search were “human resources management”, “HRM in public sector”, “recruitment and selection”, “HR planning”, “HR System” “or”/ “and” in “developed countries”. This resulted in a total of 1578 articles, reports, PhD
dissertations and book reviews. The search was further narrowed down to “developing countries” “or” “and” “Pakistan”. The search was further narrowed down to “institutions of higher education” “or” “and” “universities” in “or” “and” “Pakistan” in “or” “and” “Khyber Pakhtunkhwa”. A total of 434 articles, books and reports having particular focus on recruitment and selection in the universities were finally selected for the systematic review.

It is important to mention that before starting review of the literature for the thesis, the researcher conducted a comprehensive examination of the existing literature on HR in the public sector encompassing various dimensions of HR in the public sector. The review delineated how HRM was designed in the public sector, in general and developing as well as developed countries, in particular. Once a comprehensive write up was developed, the researcher turned to studying HR in the universities.

The researcher started digging out research studies undertaken in the HR domain with focus on HR in the universities. More than one hundred research papers were scrutinized out of which some sixty were considered as significant in the area and were selected for the systematic review. Here, the researcher examined the area covered in the studies, research paradigm and methodology adopted to understand the critical approach to scholarship. The basic purpose was to comprehend how other authors have analyzed and critiqued the theories or methodologies in the field in order to develop a coherent account of what was known in this particular field of inquiry and what remained to be learned. Once a detailed account was developed, the
researcher directed attention to studying published/unpublished PhD thesis (available online) in the domain.

In order to further educate myself on the theoretical and methodological approaches to the discipline, as well as the notable researchers who were the most important scholars and key authors in the discipline, what questions were asked and answered, what question were left unanswered and what controversies remained unaddressed within the discipline, the researcher studied some fifty PhD dissertations of various national and international universities. The extensiveness of the exercise undertaken prior to initiating formal literature review for the study helped in arriving at the structure of the literature review for the study. The structure of the review was primarily conceptualized by the researcher and further refined in consultation with the supervisors and modified multiple times during the course as new themes were explored, new dimensions were emerged and new insight was developed and presented in the following section.

### 2.2 Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management is the management of people working in an organization. This primarily deals with human dimension in an organization. To match an organization’s needs of the capable and committed workforce, to the skills and abilities of its employees, essentially comes under the domain of HRM (Decenzo, Robbins & Verhulst, 2010:4). It is a managerial function overseeing management of people in the organization. Bringing people in, helping them perform to their best, compensating them appropriately and resolving their work related problems amicably
fall under the realm of HRM (Hendry & Pettigrew, 1990: 22). “HRM is a system that strives to achieve a dynamic balance between the personal interests and concerns of people and their economic added value” (Hussain & Ahmad, 2012:10).

To manage human resource is a challenging task. The organizations that have learned to manage human resources diligently and professionally enjoy an edge over others (Wright, MacMahan & MacWilliams, 1994:320). It is a vital element for the success of any organization. The fair and efficient employment of HR practices leads to the realization of institutional goals. Organizations attain competitive advantage owing to the best use of these resources (Barney, 1991: 99). Undoubtedly, HR is one of the most essential assets for an organization; nonetheless, very few have realized its significance and even very few have harnessed its real potential (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2003:19).

According to Ferris, Rosen & Barnum (1995:1), “It is the science and the practice that deal with the nature of employment relationship and all of the decisions, actions, and issues that relate to that relationship”. The major focus of attention of this managerial function is staffing, compensating, motivation and providing direction to the staff who work in the organization. It deals with issues pertaining to hiring and firing, compensation and reward, performance appraisal, capacity building, wellness, benefits, motivation and succession. “HRM includes anything and everything associated with the management of employment relationships in the firm” (Boxall & Purcell, 2003: 1). Price (2007: 32) defines HRM as a “Philosophy of people management based on the belief that human resources are uniquely important in sustained business success…HRM is aimed at recruiting capable, flexible and
committed people, managing and rewarding their performance and developing key competencies”.

Managing employees hailing from diverse geographical backgrounds with dissimilar personal beliefs, different value systems and discerned mindsets has always been cumbersome. If, not handled diligently and professionally; can be detrimental to the cause of organization in a myriad of ways (Iqbal et al., 2011: 215). HR, since its inception has transformed a great deal in significance from its role largely as maintenance and administrative function of diminutive impression to the contemporary world, where it is widely reckoned to have strategic business partner status, having bottom-line implications for the organization (Ferris, Perrewé, Ranft, Zinko, Stoner, Brouer & Laird, 2007: 117). Nevertheless, there is a common misconception that HR has become “a reactive, fire-fighting and administrative” function, has lost its relevance and dismally failed to be connected with strategic aims of the organization (Collings & Wood, 2009: 5; Lundy, 1994: 687).

2.3 HR system, policies and practices

The HR function and activities in an organization may be classified along several levels of analysis. At the lowest level, HR practices connote those specific organizational activities designed to achieve some specific outcomes. There is a series of HR practices such as behavioral interviews, hourly pay, employee socialization and 360-degree appraisal from which the organizations may exert leverage to choose to manage workers (Becker & Gerhart, 1996: 787; Schuler, 1992:20). HRM practices connote those activities in an organization which are aimed at managing the pool of
human resources and making sure that these resources are utilized in the most effective and efficient manner so that the strategic goals of the organization may be accomplished (Tiwari & Saxena, 2012:671). These imbibe the “organizational activities directed at managing the pool of human capital and ensuring that the capital is employed towards the fulfillment of organizational goals” (Wright et al., 1994:304).

At a higher stratum subsists HR policies. This reflects employees focused programs of an organization. This ultimately influences the choice of HR practices developed and implemented by the organization. For example, commitment to pay-for-performance might be the cornerstone of an HR policy. For this wide array of HR practices such as profit sharing, bonuses, commission and allowances might be used to accomplish the policy. Whereas, HR system is, “a set of distinct but interrelated activities, functions, and processes that are directed at attracting, developing, and maintaining (or disposing of) a firm’s human resources” (Lado & Wilson, 1994:701). The HR system, in fact, functions at an even higher level and wields a program of multiple HR policies and practices that are implemented to be internally coherent and reinforcing to attain some overarching results. For example, an HR system might rely on policies of merit-based selective staffing, comprehensive capacity building, pay for performance, performance-based promotion, employees commitment and enhancing their contributions, efficiency, and productivity towards organizational strategic goals (Becker & Gerhart, 1996: 787; Schuler, 1992:20). While outlining systems view of HR, Catano, Fitzgerald, Hackett, Wiesner & Methot underlined two fundamental principles in their study stating that: i) HR management are required to closely coordinate multiple activities of all the organizational units, subsystems and people if the larger system is to function properly and ii) HR managers must think in systems
terms and have the wellbeing and best interests of the entire organization in mind while acknowledging contributions of others (2009:6).

Notwithstanding, there is a general understanding among researchers on “what HR systems are in the abstract (a bundle of HR practices or HR policies oriented toward some overarching goal), there is a noticeable lack of agreement regarding the nature or composition of HR systems” (Lepak, Liao, Chung, & Harden, 2006:221). Becker & Gerhart (1996: 786) and Youndt et al., (1996:839) in their studies brought to the limelight the subsisting lack of consensus in the body of knowledge concerning what essentially constitute HR system as well as its constituent ingredients such as HR policies and HR practices. However, for the purpose of this study, HR system lies in the middle, encompassing subsystems as recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and career development, etc. with policies and practices at the operational level within the larger organizational system at the top level.

2.4 HRM in public sector

For successful operations, every organization, whether public or private, commercial or not-for-profit requires people (Tessema & Soeters, 2006:86). Since, this thesis is taking up public sector intuitions of higher education, therefore, the focus primarily converges on public sector HR practice. Public sector implies that part of the economy, which is predominantly concerned with the provision of basic public services. This is generally regarded as government sector or public service. In general terms, the public sector consists of government and all publicly controlled or publicly funded agencies, enterprises, and entities that deliver public programs, goods, or
services. It is, however, not always clear whether any particular organization should be included under this umbrella. The concept of the public sector is broader than simply that of core government and may overlap with the not-for-profit or private sector in some areas. The public sector consists of an expanding ring of organizations with core government at the center, followed by agencies and public enterprises. Around this ring is a grey zone consisting of publicly funded bodies, businesses, corporations and autonomous institutions which may be, but for the most part are not, part of the hardcore public sector, largely funded by government but free to run its own affairs in an independent manner (Flynn, 2007:1).

The structure and composition of the public sector vary from country to country and region to region. Nevertheless, basic services such as education, healthcare, communication, transportation, army and police services fall under the ambit of the public sector. These services are essentially not for profit, tailored to the need of public in general and aimed at serving the welfare of the society at large (Colley & Price, 2010; OECD, 2008:18). Being highly ‘personnel intensive’, the functioning of public sector enterprises, their efficiency and transparency are assessed on the basis of performance of their workforce (Tessema & Soeters, 2006:86). Hence, HR practices are regarded as vital to improving the overall quality of public services extended by the government functionaries (Ingraham & Kneedler, 2000:245). To put it differently, effective HRM practices engender loyalty, commitment and willingness among the employees to go the extra mile to realize organizational strategic objectives (Pfeffer, 1994:33).
Indeed, public sector plays a vital role in delivering goods and services and maintaining law and order. The workforce being the public service providers and executors of duties is the critical core of public management. The effective management of human capital not only determines efficiency and quality of service delivery in the public sector (Tessema & Soeters, 2006:86) but having serious bearing upon the socio-economic development of the entire country (Chang & Gang, 2010:1). “The ability of governments to recruit, train, promote and dismiss employees is a key determinant of their capacity to obtain staff with the skills needed to provide public services that meet client needs and to face current economic and governance challenges” (OECD, 2009:75).

HRM is of prime importance for every state agency as the government functionaries are expected to deliver commodities and services, efficiently and effectively (Anazodo, Okoye & Chukwuemeka, 2012:1; Nyameh & James, 2013:68). HRM in the public sector symbolizes flexible and flatter management structure. Decentralization of decision making, devolution of authority, uniformity of rules, sharing of responsibility with line managers are some of the key dimensions of HRM in the government sector (OECD, 2009:76). The framework of HRM in the public sector articulates the notion of the human resource having the faculty to realize performance outcomes aligned with the strategic direction of public sector organization (Shim, 2001:114; Brown, 2004:307). “Flexibilities such as merit pay, employment at will, privatization, and pay-banding are increasingly being used by federal, state, and local governments” (Llorens & Battaglio, 2010:113). Some of the virtues of the paradigm shift in the public sector from administration to management and from personnel administration to HRM are multi-skilling, newly built up career
ladders, abolition of seniority-cum-fitness being the only yardstick for promotion, increased emphasis on performance measurement, equity concerns and abolishment of rigid compartmentalization of job positions (Brown, 1997:307).

Broader and multi-skilled jobs are the defining features of the system in the public sector. The focus of activity shifted towards performance and output measures. Increased emphasis rests on securing and retaining staff who could deliver. There is a high degree of reliance upon performance management system to accomplish workforce flexibility and productivity (Haque, 2007: v). Changes have also been introduced in the way the public sector is colligated with and molds the pattern of relations with external organizations especially non-profit and community organizations. The diverging aspects of public sector employment and its associated terms and conditions indicate that HRM is having a subtle impact on the overall operation of the public sector entities (Brown 1997:308).

Notwithstanding, HRM has been sharing common attributes across all sectors, whether public or private for its prime focus on workforce issues and concerns, HRM in the public sector is vastly different from HRM in the private sector in all most all kind of employment practices. Indeed, public interest has always been the focus of attention for public sector entities, whereas private sector organizations remained concern more with private interests. The notion of public interest is perplexing, as the theme does not “easily fit with HRM as a strategic partner in accomplishing organizational competitiveness and business outcomes” (Brown, 2004:305).
Large-scale downsizing, erosion of employment conditions, contracting out and diminished opportunities for career development have been pointed out by Haque (2007:v) in his study with a focus on the public sector, as real or perceived fractures in the traditional system resulting in poor quality of service delivery. Slashing wages and fringe benefits, staff reductions and changes in the organizational culture and structure are argued to be some of the ramifications of adopting HRM practices and principles (Black & Upchurch, 1999). Notwithstanding all its notable shortcomings, the vital role played by HRM in apprehending various integral component of the model of ‘new’ public sector is convincing. Agenda of reforms and emergent plan of restructuring can be materialized under the umbrella of New Public Management as the model “has a place on centre stage in terms of affecting the agenda for change” (Brown, 2004:306).

The concept of NPM emerged with renewed emphasis on transferring private sector management techniques to the public sector. NPM is regarded as the ‘arts of private sector management’ extended into the public sector (Gray & Jenkins, 1995). This has opened up a host of venues for the managers evolving or recrudescing sophisticated HRM techniques. This resulted in transparency, flexibility and responsiveness in the public sector while addressing issues of staffing, capacity building, motivation, retention, compensation and promotion (Brown, 2004:306).

This model underlines the HRM cardinal role to play in attaining cultural change considered essential to yield employees commitment. Bottlenecks in the implementation phase of the strategic approach to HRM may be the lack of responsiveness on the part of the bureaucracy and “deep politicization of the
administrative system” (Colley et al., 2012:509; Common, 2011:421). Devolution of authority, decentralization of activities, performance management, focus on outcomes and risk management are few of the key attributes of NPM (Common, 2011: 426). NPM embodies application of all kind of resources i.e. physical, financial and human capital to accomplish government objectives (Brown, 2004:305). Flexibility, transparency, responsiveness and market orientation are some of the salient characteristics of this new model (Hughes, 1994).

2.5 HRM in public sector in developed countries

Hammerschmid, Meyer & Demmke (2007:145) in their study reflect on the results of an extensive survey carried out on public management practices and innovations in the European Union. The analysis reflects that the 27 countries covered in the survey still organize their HR services very differently. Divergent structures, traditions, and paths followed do not seem to give rise to an overall shared model of the developed countries. Different national traditions have a considerable impact on the organization and modernization of HR decision-making process. The clusters based on the administrative traditions and the HR systems proved to be helpful in outlining different patterns, but also revealed several directions for further reforms.

Vanhala, & Stavrou (2013:416) explore HRM practices and performance link in public and private sector organizations across three societal clusters of the developed countries: the Anglo, the Germanic and the Nordic European and found that HRM practices are more sophisticated and advanced in the private sector than in the public sector organizations. The study reveals interesting similarities but also
differences across the two organizational sectors and three societal clusters. More in-depth research designs are needed in public sector HRM across Western societal clusters. Harel & Tzafrir (2001:316) while comparing HRM practices in public and private sectors and discoursing their differences and similarities, found that public sector emphasizes those HRM domains that deal primarily with employee selection and grievance handling procedures, whereas, private sector management emphasizes employees growth and pay for performance. Nevertheless, they argue that the public sector is ‘moving’ closer and closer to private sector model by adopting ‘high-performance work practices’ to overcome the turbulent environment and public demand.

Based on the experiences of the public sector in developed countries, Shim (2001:323) identified a number of common managerial practices in advanced countries. HRM practices in both the public and private sector became much more symmetrical. Efficiency was accomplished by using the tool of downsizing. Through a mix of policies of decentralization and devolution, line managers were accorded greater flexibility and freedom in managing HR. Renewed attention was placed on performance and the notion of accountability in HR management in the domain of civil service. To become a ‘model of a good employer’ became the topmost priority for the government functionaries. Regardless of these generic transformation efforts, not all of the developed nations pursued the same HRM reform agenda. The intensity and scale of these reforms vary from country to country and region to region. Cultural and historical background, the magnitude of the financial crisis and the reform strategies employed by the individual countries play a critical part in it (OECD, 2009:75).
Developed nations are having conspicuous disparity in pursuance of their HRM reform strategies. There are countries that have embraced the most extensive public management reform agenda, which has out-rightly transformed the landscape of the entire public service employment and people management as in the case of New Zealand, United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden and Switzerland. Contrary to this, there are countries, where HRM reforms have been followed in a much more circumscribed and dispirited manner. The traditionalistic approach of people management prevails, as the centralized system and HR practices remain unchanged. Reform initiatives have been undertaken in a piecemeal and half-hearted manner, addressing only individual level HRM issues (Shim, 2001: 324; Brown, 2004:308; OECD, 2009:76).

On the divergent and mutually exclusive sides are numerous cases unfolding in the realm of public management transformation. Across-the-board re-engineering and organizational reformation are currently in progress in Holland, Canada, US, Germany and Norway. Similarly, in many of the states on the southern European peninsula reforms are underway focusing on modernisation and systematization of personnel systems rather than embracing new philosophies of HRM. Employing the apparatus of competitive examinations and adopting centralized entrance mechanism are the distinguishing features of structural reforms in these countries intended to foster rational, fair, transparent and merit-based hiring systems. Nevertheless, keeping in view the demands of the globalized world the essence of HRM affairs among these developed nations as a whole has drastically changed in recent times (Shim, 2001:324; OECD, 2008:38).
While contemplating upon applicability of western management practices in developing countries, Ozgediz & Sachdeva (1983:75) opined that while some quantitative management techniques that have evolved in developed countries can be applied effectively in developing countries after some modification and adaptation, nevertheless, the transfer of people-oriented qualitative management practices often requires considerable tailoring to make them consistent with local political and cultural realities.

2.6 HRM in public sector in developing countries

Haque (2007:6) argues that under the traditionalistic approach, public service is just a ‘transfer mechanism’ in developing economies. He maintained that over the years, no systematic effort has been undertaken, to collect more information on the employment practices in the public domain in the developing countries which is considered to be at the heart of economic development.

Sparse and disjointed data series obtained from some individual efforts made numerous disclosures regarding pay structure, employment mechanism and human resource management policies and practices in the public sector in developing countries. Husain (2007:3) in his study found that “the composition and structure of civil services in developing countries are ordinarily non-meritocratic, hierarchical, unified and closed. The all wide-encompassing government has become too cumbersome and centralized with overlapping and competing interests, inefficient and unresponsive to the emerging needs of the public”.

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According to Tessema & Soeters (2006:86), the HR practices operate in the developing countries are not contributing in maximizing the impact of HR practices on performance as public service in a host of developing nations has become ghastly politicized. Posting, transfer and promotion to key positions are politically motivated. “Civil servants are poorly trained, sub-optimally utilized, badly motivated and ingrained with attitudes of indifference and inertia” (Husain, 2007:3). Indeed, the public sector has miserably failed in enticing talent for not offering competitive, market-based salaries. In many developing countries, wages of those who serve in the public sector declined in real terms over the period of time. This trend is at the worst in the least developing countries. Although wages at the lower level of the hierarchy are much higher in the public sector as compared to the private sector, nevertheless, the opposite is true while drawing a comparison between the two at a higher level (Haque, 2007:9).

Employees serving in private sector particularly international non-governmental organizations are getting pay packages several times higher than that of the civil servants depicting a wide schism between the salaries of public and private sector employees (Tessema & Soeters, 2006:97). In certain cases, there has been noted considerable wage compression as there is a small difference in pay irrespective of experience, professional skill, or productivity of the employees. The starting salaries of new employees in a particular job position in many cases, in the public sector, are too close to the wages of the incumbents working in similar positions. To be brief, bad governance, mismanagement, and pervasive misuse of authority are the hallmarks of public administration in developing countries (Haque & Aziz, 1999:79).
Budhwar & Debrah, (2001:238) provided a thorough analysis of HR practices in thirteen developing countries in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East and found that most of the developing countries are entrapped in obsolete and ineffective HRM systems that ultimately hinder progress in public management. They noted that the forces of instability and uncertainty in developing countries’ external environment made it imperative for managers to develop appropriate approaches to managing human resources to deal with emerging challenges of the globalized world.

Ozgediz & Sachdeva (1983:74) in their study focus mainly on ways of better managing human resources of the public sector in developing countries and find how management of these resources must be reoriented towards objectivity and performance goals. They divulged that public sector employment in developing economies have been growing about four times as fast as in developed countries, partly in response to the demand for improved public services. In many countries, overstaffing at lower levels is accompanied by shortages of professional and technical staff at mid-career level and executive level. This situation is further exacerbated by the brain drain. Grindle & Hilderbrand (1995: 461) observed that there are no easy solutions to getting better public HRM. Nevertheless, there are some time-tested and research- based approaches that are more effective than others and some specific kind of interventions that are likely to lead to better results than many that have been followed in the past. Anazodo et al., (2012:17) argued that the kind of civil service reform that would tackle these problems should be evolutionary and pragmatic in nature to meet developmental needs of developing economies and face challenges of the modern world.
In the human resource management area, the underlying need is to shift from a philosophy of passive administration of personnel policies to one of active management of human resources on the public sector in the developing countries. “This requires, among other things, clarifying the role and raising the status of the personnel function in government, building effective career development systems, improving public sector pay and conditions, and linking material and nonmaterial incentives more closely to performance” (Ozgediz & Sachdeva, 1983:73). However, efforts aimed at reforming and restructuring the same, have not yielded the desired results in the developing countries like Pakistan (Haque, 2007:26).

2.7 HRM in public sector in Pakistan

As a British colony, before independence in 1947, the government machinery was run under the bureaucratic administrative structure set up by the colonial masters. Even after sixty years of independence, the public sector is still getting hitched with British legacy (Ali et al., 2010:3; Rehman, 1998:678). The public sector, as a whole, is having a passive management culture. To run the administrative affairs of the government, key strategic decisions are being made, essentially based on political clientele rather than sound business acumen (Khilji, 2001:104). “Decades of mismanagement, political manipulation and corruption have rendered Pakistan’s civil service incapable of providing effective governance and basic public services” (International Crisis Group, 2010). To get away with British traditions in many spheres of public management, particularly, bureaucratic setup and employment practices have become cumbersome for the Pakistani public sector over the years (Husain, 2007:1; Khilji, 2001:104).
According to Khilji (2001:250), HRM is at the very early stage of evolution in Pakistan. Very few organizations in the country have adopted a strategic approach to managing human resources. In some organizations, the function of HRM has broadened in scope and importance. HR departments have been linked with service delivery function and communication channels have been established. Some organizations are pursuing HR practices in a piecemeal manner. These organizations have adopted new practices such as ‘Management by Objectives’ and ‘pay for performance’. Concerted efforts are being made to adopt ‘open’ appraisal systems and further expound the role of their training programs.

Notwithstanding these thoroughgoing endeavors, most of these organizations are beset with numerous attenuations having centralized structure, serious communication gaps between managers and employees and inconsistency in the execution of HRM practices. Policies developed in isolation at the centrally located head offices percolate to sub-offices/regional offices. HR policies and their implementation are discrete. Feedback is never sought from employees in policy formulation or its implementation. To approach head offices, particularly, HR departments has always been cumbersome for the employees, as they cannot approach these offices directly. Going ‘through proper channel’ is the norm and has always been stressed upon. Employees are having the minimum level of self-reliance and learning new things are not encouraged (Husain, 2007; Khilji, 2001:108).

The significant features of the system are centralized decision-making, a major factor contributing towards inefficiency, rigidity and lack of responsiveness (Bashir & Khattak, 2008:244; Husain, 2007:3). Since its inception, the public sector has

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dreadfully failed in rendering efficient services to the community due to the incessant economic commotion and political turbulence in Pakistan. Most of the time, the government authorities in the country used to manipulate public offices in pursuit of their vested interests and use public officials for political stakes (Haque, 2007; Bashir and Khattak, 2008:244). “Low salaries, insecure tenure and obsolete accountability mechanisms have spawned widespread corruption and impunity. Recruitments, postings, and promotions are increasingly made on the basis of personal contacts and political affiliation, instead of on merit” (International Crisis Group, 2010).

Pay disparity is widely prevailing and standing high across the sector. The executive cadre enjoys an array of perks and privileges, allowances and fringe benefits, whereas; the lower level employees have meager salary not even adequate for sustenance. Employees’ dissatisfaction, trust deficit and salary differentials between entry-level positions and executives are phenomenally high as high as hundred percent (Khilji, 2001:107).

Ironically, efforts are being made to improve upon employees’ performance based on past practices; nevertheless, these are neither based upon any research findings nor substantiated by any proper homework. Similarly, success stories of technologically advanced countries are being replicated and implemented without taking into account cultural disparities (Bashir & Khattak, 2008:250). To transform the existing corporate culture of public sector enterprises, nonetheless, the government took a number of reform measures during the 1990s. Hiring teams of sound professionals at the top level to invigorate the entire HRM culture as to make it flexible, meritocratic and responsive was one of those initiatives (Khilji, 2001:104).
Resultantly, a series of business concerns in Pakistan restructured their personnel divisions. HR departments were established. The role of HRM was further expanded. Wherever, there existed HR departments; those were redesigned at par with practices in the corporate sector. Communication channels were established, and coordination was strengthened. The concepts of performance-based salaries; continuous professional development and performance evaluation mechanism were being adopted. Some organizations embraced HRM best practices in holistic fashion, others have done it, in a piecemeal manner (Khilji, 2001:104). In the face of these reforms, one of the dilemma with the application of HR best practices in Pakistan is that the “policy-makers and HR managers repeatedly talk of bringing about revolutionary changes in the HRM system, but do little to implement it. This has left employees frustrated, demotivated and largely dissatisfied” (Khilji, 2003:136).

Bashir & Khattak (2008:250) examined the relationship between three key HR practices (i.e. compensation, performance evaluation and promotion practices) and perceived employee performance of the supervisors and lower level employees in public sector organizations of Pakistan and found that performance of public sector employees is affected by compensations practices and promotion practices. However, performance evaluation practices have an insignificant impact on perceived employee performance. They observed that HR practices and employment matters were primarily governed by the Civil Servants Act, 1973 which has seen its better days and turned obsolete and moribund these days. They, therefore, suggested that the compensation framework need to be revived in line with international best practices. There should be an inbuilt mechanism in the services structure for regular review of the pay structure. This requires job evaluation of all the posts at all levels. The salary
structure should be in harmony with performance evaluation. The pay packages should be comparable to the private sector seeing that compensation practices in vogue in the private sector are fair and based on international standards. Without a fair and reasonable compensation scheme, performance in the public sector cannot be ameliorated.

Husain (2007:8) argued that recruitment at all levels and cadres of public services needs to be made open, transparent and merit-based. Performance needs to be evaluated based on quantifiable objectives and according to well-defined key performance indicators. All employees should have an equal opportunity for promotion and career advancement grounded not only upon a single element (i.e. length of service) but a blend of factors such as past performance, assessment of capacity and mandatory training at various levels. Decent retirement and post-retirement benefits, restructuring of existing cadres and introduction of specialized cadres for professionals and non-professionals need to be the essential attributes of the civil services reform package.

Today in Pakistan, there is a dire need for a smaller but efficient government machinery. Such a government, in the contemporary world, is essential for developing a competitive advantage over other nations of the region. To accomplish these ideals, public sector institutions require potential and talented human resources which are equipped with knowledge and skill sets congruent with the compulsions of the twenty-first Century (Qureshi, 2014). “Incorporating the universal new public management trend, the government of Pakistan is emphasizing public enterprises to emulate corporate management techniques to improve performance” (Naveed & Jadoon,
The government has been putting into practice a wide-ranging program of deregulation of monopolized public sector thus fostering a favorable climate for private investment. Privatization of the state intuitions is also on the cards for creating a robust and fascinating business environment in the country. “Propelled by the need to refashion a sluggish and insular corporate culture and the ineffectual personnel practices of the public sector enterprises, the government also took on the task of helping the development of new HRM policies” (Khilji, 2003:125). The authorities have recently embarked upon a comprehensive reform plan in the civil services in consultation with all the stakeholders. Nevertheless, it is yet to be seen whether these reforms will be ultimately, put into practice or not (Bashir & Khattak, 2008:250). The recommendations made by the International Crisis Group in its Asia Report (2010: ii) and the suggestions, put forward by the National Commission on Government Reforms in its report (2008:6), if implemented in letter and spirit, could help revitalize civil services in Pakistan. In light of the same, the HRM system, policies and practices in the public sector in Pakistan need complete overhauling.

2.8 HRM in Universities

2.8.1 Universities’ composition and organizational structure.

University is a place of advanced learning where students carry on their higher education after school or college. It is an educational institution of the highest level offering various schemes of studies for graduate and postgraduate students (Ahmad & Junaid, 2008). Universities, regarded as professional bureaucracies, portray a distinct form of organizational structure for its unique function and absence of a unique top-
down absolute hierarchy. These are academic institutions fostering long-term vision. Here the real power lies at the level of classrooms and research laboratories. Functionally webbed, these bodies are accustomed to time-consuming decision-making process followed by extensive debate and deliberations amongst peers and constituent units-faculties, departments, or even disciplines-where in general at the top, the vice chancellor or the chief executive officer does not hold overwhelming powers (Soares & Amaral, 1999:13).

As a matter of fact, the university is home to a very diverse group of people. From sanitary worker to vice chancellor, each individual is regarded as an indispensable member of a closely connected team (Archer, 2005). The range of roles that an academic entity is be expected to assume can be easily “clustered under six overarching core functions: teaching and student support; research; community service; professional service; leadership, management and consultancy; and developmental project work” (Gordon & Whitchurch, 2007:5). Nevertheless, the role and functions of the institutions of higher education are expanding beyond these borders to survive and thrive in the changing world

Universities need to have top-quality faculty. Without top-notch academicians, the success of academic institutions is a distant dream. “Their drive for enhancing academic value creation, generating cutting-edge research, leading teaching, and building strong interrelationships with students and executive participants fuels the success of the academic institution.” Nevertheless, the other cadre of employees (i.e. the administrative, technical and support staff) serving in the universities are equally important. The administrative staff needs to be sound
professionals. The IT staff must be exceptional along with finance staff, estate managers, research associates, marketing team; all need to be committed in their own capacity. To contribute efficiently and effectively to the overall success of the universities all the academic as well as non-academic staff, support roles and functional groups are critically important as “they cannot create success alone” (Lorange, 2006: 649).

The structure and composition of modern day university is unique in its own right with “semi-autonomous, loosely-coupled departments, often highly fragmented internally into lone scholars or small teams with shared interests and in which management is viewed by most as a burden or interference to be avoided and minimized where at all possible” (Guest & Clinton, 2007: 6). Similarly, individual endeavours, idiosyncrasy, innovation, and risk-taking are generally, appreciated and highly regarded in the academia. “Professional autonomy, reflected in the distinctive expertise of the distinguished scholar at the leading edge of their specialist body of knowledge, remains deeply embedded and highly valued” in the academic world. Nevertheless, administrative functions such as personnel management engender a common concern for being focused on consistency, management by rules, observing redundant regulations and unnecessary control that emphasize risk-avoidance and value routine business (2007: 7).

2.8.2 An overview of HRM in universities.

Managing human resource has become ‘a critical issue for contemporary universities’ as a result of mounting pressures from government, society at large as
well as global academic market. In fact, the autonomous status has entrusted the capacity of the employer upon the universities resulting in enhanced expectations of faculty and administrative staff and constituent institutes about terms and conditions of employment, working conditions, as well as broader aspects of work-life balance ultimately affecting academic and professional identities (Gordon & Whitchurch, 2007:1).

Dubosc & Kelo (2012:7) in their study found that managing and developing human resource is becoming a key challenge in the institutes of higher education worldwide. Complex academic communities need appropriate career management procedures as well as national HR policies underpinning the institutions of further education in recruiting, motivating and retaining qualified and committed academic workforce.

Guest & Clinton (2007: 6) in their study noted that in the institutions of higher education, HRM has remained merely an administrative activity. It primarily deals with the execution of staffing function (i.e. recruitment and selection), pay fixation, some basic training and career progression. In many universities, managing administrative affairs involving non-academic staff mainly entail decision making regarding hiring recruitment and promotion whereas, the HR role turns out to be narrow, too limited confined only to administrative oversight in the case of administration of the rest of academics work. In the same vein Larkin & Neumann (2012:4) argue that universities, in general, have only partially adopted HRM practices ranging from career development, performance evaluation to retirement preparation and succession planning. By and large, HRM policies and practices in the
universities are “reactive and ad-hoc, designed to respond to immediate needs and lack an organizational strategy to workforce planning”.

The academia, in general, displays an inconsistent and precarious form of adjustment to internal as well as external challenges in connection with managing human capital and addressing employment issues, making them susceptible in a competitive environment (Larkin & Neumann, 2012: 3). Terms and conditions of employment and pay package are centrally negotiated; nevertheless, this centralized system came under considerable pressure in recent days. In contemporary setting where universities are the employer and assume full responsibility for managing human resources, “it is a challenge for institutions to balance system-wide issues, such as a global market for staff, increased international mobility, and skill shortages, with the needs and expectations of individual employees” (Gordon & Whitchurch, 2007:11). According to Gilliot, Overlaet & Verdin (2002:277) universities experience increasing difficulty in staffing their academic positions. Attracting and retaining highly qualified employees is a general problem that has received much attention in recent HRM literature.

For that very reason, universities are castigated for viewing HRM in operational and not in strategic terms (Archer, 2005). Dubosc & Kelo (2012:7) observed that the ongoing reflections and analyses by the researchers, academicians, and practitioners concerning modernization of the educational institutions highlight among many other impediments, the human factor and the trouble to make people change their attitude and adhere to new approaches and methods. They conclude that
structural reforms often fail because of lack of commitment and motivation of individual actors.

2.8.3 HRM in universities in developed countries.

Adriaenssens, De Prins & Vloeberghs (2006: 344) found that management of human resources in the academic sector has become a matter of prime importance as the universities no longer provide the low stress working environment that remained the hallmark of academia since inception. They argue that HR related job characteristics (i.e. compensation, performance appraisal and participation in decision making) cause job dissatisfaction in the university’s academic staff. They suggested improvement in working environment with a prime focus on HR dimension as HR practices within the academic sector require a lot of improvement to meet personal and organizational goals.

Larkin & Neumann (2012:3) in their study on ageing academics and workforce priorities for universities divulged that universities in Australia were facing an unprecedented human resource crisis as the HRM approaches adopted by universities were reactive and ad-hoc, designed to respond to immediate needs and there was lack of consistent organizational strategy for the workforce planning. Those universities presented an inconsistent and unstable pattern of adjustment to their internal and external environments, making them vulnerable in competitive surroundings. They postulated that universities should: i) Modify their current HRM approaches to their aging academic workforce; ii) Adopt a strategic HRM approach
that is proactive; iii) Address workforce planning issues proactively; iv) Strengthen workforce planning systems and v) Develop systematic succession planning.

Teelken (2012:271) in her study of ten universities in Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom noted that the growing tension between academic professionals and managers discerning increasing bureaucracy in universities. She proposed that universities need to move forward towards more measurable standards of performance in the working environment. Kohont & Nadoh Bergoc (2010:33) tracing a different dimension of European universities in their study found that in order to attain the quality of higher education perceived as a transformation process, HRM must be incorporated as a vital activity that enables this kind of transformation within the higher education system. They believe that stronger emphasis on managing human resources in the institutes of higher education is direly required which has so far been a relatively unexplored and unutilized discipline. The most important HRM measurements unearthed by the study are: i) HR planning; ii) Training and development and iii) Performance evaluation and continues development of employees. Hence, it is essential to form HR strategy and suitable HR policies in the higher education institutions to address these demands.

Governments in the developed economies have expressed serious concerns about the level of autonomy cherished by the universities, the way they are managed and the role being played by academia in the socio-economic development of the society (Guest & Clinton, 2007: 6). According to Bett (1999), the personnel function in universities is a domain of “particular weakness that merited concerted action”. A lot needs to be done to reform personnel practices in the institutions of further
education. Whereas, Pellert (2007:105) in his study on higher education management
and development in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe argued that universities are,
for the most part, not self-contained organizations acting as employers. This is why
human resource management is still poorly established in higher education sector. He
maintained that since universities are long characterized by their status as a
subordinate entity with little or no authority to shape its own culture is now required
to manage its human resources instead of simply administering its staff. This is a
culture shift not to be underestimated in its dimensions.

The government in UK even extended financial support to the universities to
set up HR units, restructure and develop HR strategies and take initiatives to
modernize the core areas of HR function including HR planning, recruitment,
orientation, motivation, retention, training and development, performance appraisal,
compensation and job evaluation (Guest & Clinton, 2007: 6). However, universities
confront an abiding and a real challenge to accomplish this (Archer, 2005).

With the passage of time universities in the developed countries started taking
initiatives and made considerable progress to introduce contemporary HRM practices,
develop HR strategy and adopt best HR practices, nevertheless, Archer (2005) raised
questions about their uniform implementation and discernible impact on university’s
performance. Some progress on account of succession planning, a greater focus on
retention issues and choosing external sources for recruitment are playing a part in
making universities more competitive, but all require continued investment and
momentum for change (Archer, 2005). To meet the growing demands for mass higher
education, invigorating the national research base, engaging in partnership and
developing enterprises an immensely diversified workforce is required. This implies that career structures are no longer necessarily homogeneous and that boundaries are blurring between academic and professional roles. “Individual institutions are, therefore, likely to become increasingly creative and innovative in their approach to human resource management, which has become critical in the building of institutional capacity for the future” (Gordon & Whitchurch, 2007:5).

2.8.4 HRM in universities in the developing countries.

According to Dubosc & Kelo (2012:7) in many developing countries, higher education institutions are confronted with a shortage of staff (academic and support staff) in quantitative and qualitative terms. Institutions are falling short of appropriate human resources to properly address the challenges at stake. Unsatisfactory working conditions have an impact on the attitudes and behaviour of staff and create an obstacle to the modernisation of higher education. Proper management of human resources is, therefore, becoming a key challenge within institutions and also at national level. New approaches to human resource management are currently being introduced in many countries to support the modernisation of governance of higher education systems and institutions.

Qadeer et al., (2011:231) observed that there is a lack of strategic focus on HRM covering institutes of higher education in developing countries. This has also been reported by a whole host of other research studies. In fact, HR practices in the academic world in the developing countries are yet to catch the attention of the scholars and researchers. Huselid (2003) reviewed at least one hundred and fifty-eight
studies undertaken during the period 1983-2003 focusing on effective HR system and organizational performance and found that there is a serious deficiency of research on strategic HR practices prevailing in universities across the globe. Dubosc & Kelo (2012:1) substantiated these findings in one of their most extensive study covering HRM practices in the institutes of higher education in twenty-eight countries of the world.

Hong, Hao, Kumar, Ramedran & Kadiresan (2012: 62), in their study reflect on how employees’ empowerment, training, job appraisal and compensation affect retention and to provide better understanding of the relationship of effectiveness of human resource management practices on employees’ retention in the institute of higher learning in Asian context. They found that capacity building, compensation, and performance appraisal are fundamental considerations for academic staff retention decision, whereas; empowerment is less fundamental to lecturers’ consideration as this can be attributed to the Asian culture characteristic of higher authority conformity. Bayissa & Zewdie (2011:13) investigated academic staff reward associated problems and effectiveness of both financial and nonfinancial reward systems in universities in Ethiopia. They found that inefficient administration, lack of recognition and appreciation, the absence of participation in decision-making, unsatisfactory financial rewards, and poor performance evaluation were ranked as the major problems confronted by these universities. However, job security, the opportunity for further education and promotion were ranked less significant areas of concern. They suggested strengthening of HR practices with a focus on rewarding seniority, reducing staff discrimination, improvement of performance evaluation and
reward system and improving the skill and ability of administrators and developing participative management.

Tabiu & Nura (2013: 247) examines the effects of human resource management practices on employees’ job performance in universities in Nigeria and tests the proposition that effective HRM practices have positive effects on employees’ job performance. The results unraveled that some not all HRM practices correlate significantly with employee job performance even though all are related. It was however suggested that constant review of the HRM practices for organizations to move with time should be employed.

In all the developing countries covered by Dubosc & Kelo (2012:7) in their study, human resource management and staff development are becoming serious issues which require special attention on the part of the individual institute as well as national authorities. There is an urgent need to hire and then retain highly skilled and motivated staff in order to make modernisation of higher education a reality. While more attention is often being paid to the working conditions of academic staff, it is slowly becoming obvious that administrative and technical staff also needs to be taken better into consideration, in order to ensure their commitment and contribution to the development of higher education institutions.

2.8.5 HRM in universities in Pakistan.

Public sector universities in Pakistan, by and large, share symmetrical organizational structure having a top-down hierarchy. The governor of the respective
provinces or the president of the country, in the case of federal universities, used to be the chancellors of these universities by virtue of their designation. Vice-chancellor being the chief executive, principal accounting officer and chief academic officer of the university wields overwhelming authority. He chairs almost all key decision-making forums (i.e. the Syndicate, Academic Council, Finance and Planning Committee and Advance Studies & Research Board). As per statutory provision, the position of Vice Chancellor, the lynchpin, holds excessive powers and a vital administrative role to play. According to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Act (2012), he used to be the chairman of Selection Board and Syndicate at the same time and most of the times, call the tunes to create, re-designate and fill contract, temporary positions in various capacities invariably in almost all cadres. This is one of the major sources of political interloping in the universities’ affairs and a major source of HR predicament.

Qadeer et al., (2011:230) found that highly centralized HRM structure, a colonial legacy still prevails in public sector universities in Pakistan. There is hardly any university in the public sector, which has a separate full-fledged office, or specific department or section designed for addressing HR issues. Abbas & Ahmad (2011:21) arguably underpinned these findings stating that HR units do not effectively exist in the universities and HR functions have been made perplexed and complicated which is mainly looked after by the administration with no expertise and training to deal with it. Strong resistance to integrate HRM practices and the high power distance culture in Pakistan are detrimental in framing HR policies and practices. Status quo is believed to prevail in higher education sector until schematic HR departments become
an integral part of the university emerging structure (Qadeer, Ahmad & Rehman, 2010).

Very limited research can be found on HRM practices in universities in Pakistan (Shazad et al., 2008:302; Iqbal et al., 2011; Qadeer et al., 2011:231). Not a single research endeavor has been made to address HR issues in the institutions of higher education in a holistic fashion. However, discrete studies can be found taking up HR practices in the institutions of higher education. On a closer examination, twelve such studies were found, focusing more on just one or two aspects of HR. For instance Arif and Hassan (2013:2) in their study compare HR practices in the purposefully selected six public and private sector universities of Punjab and found that there is a significant difference in HRM practices used by executives of public and private universities. In a similar study Iqbal et al., (2011:215) have investigated similar comparison and substantiate their findings.

Sial, Jilani, Imran & Zaheer (2011:793), in their study probed the effects of HRM practices (i.e., promotion, performance evaluation and compensation of organizational commitment) of faculty members in the randomly selected ten universities in Pakistan (three from private sector and seven from public sector) and observed that organizational commitment is strongly influenced by compensation practices adopted by these universities. Nevertheless, performance evaluation and promotion practices were found to have no significant relationship with organizational commitment. Bibi et al., (2012:1) examined employees’ performance and their job satisfaction and found that job satisfaction of the university employees is very much associated with HRM policies and practices as these policies and practices influence
and affect the performance and job satisfaction of the university employees. Mumtaz et al., (2011:10) investigated the relationship between four HR practices (i.e., compensation, performance evaluation, promotion and employees empowerment and job satisfaction) in the universities in Pakistan and discovered that teacher satisfaction is not predicted by these set of HR practices, so there are some other factors which effects job satisfaction of teaching faculty in universities in Pakistan.

Khan et al., (2012:25) examined the relationship between compensation, promotion, empowerment and performance evaluation and job satisfaction in three different universities of Pakistan and observed that male academic staff are more satisfied with their job, but female teachers are more satisfied with HR practices in universities. They argue that HR practices have a positive correlation with job satisfaction. The study, therefore, recommended that Pakistani universities need to improve the current level of HR practices. Ahmad and Shahzad (2011), investigated the impact of three selected HR practices (compensation, performance evaluation, and promotion) on the perceived performance of university teachers in AJK and pointed out that compensation practices in relation to employees’ performance are significantly positively correlated whereas, the performance evaluation and promotion practices have insignificant relationship with performance of university teaching faculty in AJK, Pakistan.

Khalid, Irshad & Mahmood (2012:126), examined the impact of pay, promotion, supervision, relationship with co-workers, and job security on the job satisfaction of faculty members and university academicians in Pakistan and noticed that academicians in private sector universities were more satisfied with their pay,
supervision and promotional opportunities as compared to academicians in the public sector universities. Conversely, academicians in public sector universities were divulged to be more satisfied with co-worker’s behavior and job security.

Abbas & Ahmad (2011:2), explored the perception of academia concerning HRM practices in a single public sector university in Lahore, Pakistan. Results of the study showed that satisfaction level of academia regarding HR practices is dismally low, especially about the performance evaluation practices. This study confirms the need for restructuring and further strengthening HRM in universities in Pakistan. Arif and Hassan (2013:2), compared HRM practices in three public and three private sector universities in Punjab, Pakistan and noted that there is a significant difference in HRM practices between public and private universities. The results argued that HRM practices in the areas of job definition, training and development, compensation, teamwork and employees participation are significantly better in the public universities than the private sector universities. However, performance evaluation practices were found significantly better in the private sector universities when compared to the public sector universities.

The discourse on HRM system in public sector universities in Pakistan is further extended to individual HR practices with particular focus on recruitment and selection in the succeeding section. First of all, basics of this concept are delineated, followed by a discussion on its patterns in the public sector in Pakistan and lastly the blueprint of its implementation in public sector universities in the country.

2.9 Recruitment and Selection
Recruitment is the process through which organizations hunt for the potential applicants for productive employment while selection implies the process by which organizations attempt to identify the most suitable applicant with the desired knowledge, skill and ability to perform the desired task to help the organization realize its goals (Searle, 2009:151).

Huselid (1995:635) asserted that HRM practices influence employees’ skills by means of acquiring and nurturing human resources in an organization. The staffing function in an organization predominantly encompasses the process of hunting, attracting and selecting right people for the right jobs, the people who shall serve the organization, productively and for a longer period of time. Armstrong (2009:515), believes that staffing function is the exercise of looking for the most suitable candidate so that selection of the right person with the right qualification and right frame of mind can be made. Staffing function or the hiring phase include hunting for the prospective and potential candidates for the available vacant slots, assessing their suitability from various aspects, and ultimately selecting those who are deemed to be the most suitable candidates to serve the organization (Itika, 2011:75). HRM process discernibly starts with recruiting and selecting employees in an organization. Recruiting is regarded as a transactional function that merely responds to organizational requisition and demand for the human resource. Selection is the process of choosing the most suitable candidate from a pool of potential applicants who best meets the selection criteria for a particular position (Mukhtar, Siengthai & Ramzan, 2011: 394).
Organizations arrive at selection decisions in order to add employees to its productive workforce, or to transfer existing employees to new positions. Approaches to recruitment and selection involve a variety of choices. Some organizations may actively recruit from diverse external sources, such as Internet job postings, newspaper advertisements, job fairs, and college head-hunting events. Other organizations may rely heavily on promotions from within, applicants referred by current employees, and the availability of in-house people in possession of necessary skills (Decenzo, Robbins & Verhulst, 2010:35). In some organizations, the system of selection focuses on academic qualification, specific technical skills, such as the experience of a particular working environment, developing a computer programming language or operating a particular type of machinery or lab equipment. At other organizations, mechanism of employees’ selection relies on general abilities, such as the ability to work as part of a team or find creative solutions. The interest an organization converges to make the final selection decision affect many choices, from the way the organization measures the ability to the questions being asked by the interview panel; to the places where the new appointees shall be ultimately placed (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 2004: 7).

Research has established that organizations perform better when the process of selection is systematic, straight and transparent (Rehman, 2012:77). According to Decenzo, Robbins & Verhulst (2010: 134), the overall performance of an organization invariably hinges on employees productivity, therefore, selection of a right person for the right slot has remained the utmost priority for the dynamic organizations. The more effective and transparent the process is; the better the performance of the
organization shall be. Otherwise, competitive advantage, goodwill, and quality of working environment shall be highly compromised (Hays & Sowa, 1998: 98).

As a matter of fact, recruitment and selection cannot be undertaken in sequestered fashion in any set up in any environment. This function is impinged upon, not only by the nature and size of an organization but also by the outside forces that affect the organization as a whole (Catano et al., 2009:6). Since general systems theory has been evolved over the years, its basic tenants can still be applied to the recruitment and selection in any organization. Its sense of holism provides a synopsis for the entire HR system by encompassing various relationships and interaction persisting within the subsystem of recruitment and selection (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:26).

2.9.1 Recruitment and selection in the public sector in Pakistan.

Rehman (2012:76) in his study investigated recruitment, job satisfaction and job retention policies of public sector in Pakistan by conducting deep analysis of the problems and challenges confronted by the sector and found that a large number of potential workforce is available in the market, but the challenge for the sector is to identify and select those who could perform efficiently and effectively. He suggested that implementation of various HR practices contribute towards enhancing performance of employees resultantly improving their job satisfaction and ultimately reducing turnover rate. The research work highlighted that the starting point in any effective recruitment process is an accurate analysis of position under consideration. This important aspect of workforce management is generally being ignored
particularly in the public sector. Various psychological factors like job satisfaction and job retention have a positive and subtle contribution in making public sector, the employer of choice. The employees who perceive public sector as a place with fewer opportunities for career advancement are more intended to leave the organization.

Inconclusive findings are reported in the body of literature establishing relationship between HR practices and organizational performance as an outcome of methodological flaws and failure on the part of researchers to distinguish between HR practices intended by the organizations and those actually implemented. For instance in the case of recruitment and selection, Khilji & Wang (2006: 1171) found that HR department in each organization regards the staffing function as critically important since it determines the ability to attract qualified and competent people. External sources, such as open as well as blind advertisements are being used for the purpose. Open job advertisement, use of properly designed tests and conduction of extensive interviews are being cited by HR people as some of the techniques used to ensure merit based selection. Nonetheless, use of personal contacts and political clout to gain employment is not uncommon. Their study with a focus on banking industry highlights some new factors that require attention in developing performance evaluation system. They suggest that mere imitation of HR practices in the hope of improving organizational performance creates no value. It has become essential for HR departments and those who run it to remain committed to the development of an effective HRM system by focusing on actual 'implementation' within the organizations.
In his discourse on the share mix of managerial practices in the area of organizational entry - recruitment and selection in South Asian countries (i.e. Pakistan, India and Bangladesh), Qureshi (1994:6) found the same to be highly diverse. Nevertheless, three dominant themes in such practices could be palpably discerned. One set of practices emphasizes recruitment on the basis of merit alone generally seen in organizations like MNCs. The second set of practices underscores the use of personal contacts or social clout of superiors while selecting employees for various jobs. These practices are prevalent mostly in local organizations. Finally, the third set of selection practices is based on a mix of merit-cum-personal clout considerations. This hybrid form can generally be observed in many public sector organizations in the country.

His analysis underlined that the hybrid practices of recruitment and selection in the public sector in selected three countries are having negative bearings on employees. This impact reveals itself in various ways. First, good performance remains unrewarded at times. This perception adversely affects the performance of employees. Second, this leads to perceptions of discriminatory management practices. Third, such entry practices also produce invisible cleavages and factions in the organization engender blame game of covert accusations and counter-accusations ultimately impacting performance. These factors multiply to create roadblocks which prevent an organization from building capabilities and identifying role models of performance regarded as essential for attaining competitive advantage. Qureshi (1994:8) concluded that if organizations in South Asian region want to compete effectively in the modern competitive global market, the first thing they have to do is
to streamline their organizational entry practices so that these may help in culminating the desired organizational capabilities.

The work of Malik, Waheed, Tufail, Zameer & Hussain (2012:1) presented a detailed analysis of the issues and problems confronted by organizations in Pakistan vis-à-vis staffing function. They argued that screening test, interview, references working environment and culture have a subtle impact on the process and considered as major factors in employees selection in Pakistan. They concluded that the issues and problems faced by the private sector and public sector were different a great deal in nature. In the public sector, the environment was a major issue, and reference is the least important issue whereas in the private sector the major issue was discrimination and the least affecting issue was selection standards.

Qureshi (2014) mentioned the current practice of employment in public sector institutions is not based on the kind of talent that is required to make Pakistani institutions efficient and cost effective- a sine qua non for smaller, leaner and efficient government. His assessment of employment practices in this sector, nevertheless, suggests that a large number of personnel are employed in the clerical cadre. Not only their basic education is of low level, but they also lack the required motivation and willingness to excel. He recommends that if public sector institutions have to enhance their performance and to have an efficient government machinery, the present employment practices of entry at the lowest tier in the public sector entities have to be radically transformed.
According to Mukhtar, Siengthai & Ramzan (2011:398), HRM practices play a vital role in enhancing organizational effectiveness, particularly of the public sector. The government should pay much attention to the HRM dimension by allocating more budget and strengthening HR system, practices, and policies in the public sector entities. They recommended that top brass in the public sector should pay more attention to the role and impact of HRM practices.

2.9.2 Recruitment and selection in universities in Pakistan.

The modern university is a multi-million dollar enterprise, operating in a highly complex landscape, immensely competitive global marketplace and an increasingly challenging economic environment. The quality of university management, especially the administrative staff comprising of top management and midcareer level managers, has thus never been more significant, and it follows that appointing the best candidates has become indispensable (Shepherd, 2011: 3).

Bibi et al., (2012:5) argued that staffing function includes various activities of recruiting employees such as defining evaluation mechanism, designing screening tests and conducting interview before the final decision of selecting the right candidates is being made. Recruitment in public sector organizations involves ensuring that the organizations adhere strictly to established government laws and regulations in order to avoid discrimination. HR managers in the public sector universities are responsible to follow the established procedure and put down the entire hiring and recruiting process in black and white to best serve the organization, protect the candidates, avoid complications and reduce chances of lawsuits.
Mukhtar, Siengthai & Ramzan (2011:398) in their study investigated the relationship between HRM practices and organizational effectiveness and unveiled that recruitment and selection, training and development and performance appraisal have a significant relationship with organizational effectiveness in higher education sector in Pakistan. Among HRM practices, the results indicated, recruitment and selection were found to positively related to organizational effectiveness. This study further recommended that public sector universities in Pakistan should give the opportunity to the existing employees for promotion to serve at higher level positions. This stipulates that public universities in Pakistan accord special attention to recruitment and selection practices and need to invest more in the area to improve organizational effectiveness.

Similarly, Nabi, Wei, Husheng, Shabbir, Altaf & Zhao (2014:12), analyzed the effectiveness of fair recruitment and selection procedures in the public sector universities in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan and found that organizational politics and line management have greater influence on the effectiveness of fair recruitment and selection system which are detrimental to organizational success and affect the overall productivity of the universities. The study revealed that the HR system in universities is not effective enough to ascertain fairness of recruitment and selection owing to the fact that universities do not have an effective and clear policy of recruitment and selection. The key figures in the university administration, the vice chancellor, registrar, concerned deans and line management have overwhelming control over the entire system of recruitment and selection. The study reflected their flaccid approach to work for the establishment of a full-fledged HR department for the larger interest of the universities, instead of relying on old pattern of personnel
administration which is dealt merely by a small administrative unit/section having no relevant people to deal with the entire human resource management function specially recruitment and selection. The study concludes that the universities do not manage recruitment and selection in a fair and transparent manner as the academia do not have an effective system in place for the purpose. Moreover, the universities have no separate, independent and full-fledged HR department or section to manage staffing function diligently. With these bottlenecks, universities are unable to operate its employment system in a fair, transparent and unbiased manner.

To address these issues, the study made a list of recommendations. These are:

i) Universities should establish a full-fledged human resource department on the modern lines manned by competent and relevant professionals having expertise related to various functions of the HR department, particularly recruitment and selection; ii) HEC should develop a recruitment and selection policy for the universities and advise its implementation with full involvement to bring the real talent in the universities and to avoid any kind of political interference in the universities’ administration; iii) Contract appointments in the Universities must be made according to the genuine need of the organization and all the relevant officials must be involved in the selection process; iv) Universities must accord top priority to the recruitment and selection process; v) Researchers should conduct a comparative study of public and private sector universities to get further insight into recruitment and selection system; and vi) A comprehensive research is needed to analyze the recruitment and selection of the administrative cadre specially the relevant officials of human resource department and their functioning on modern lines.
Qadeer et al., (2011:230) compared employment practices and HR policies in fifty-two universities (thirty-three public sector and nineteen private sector) of Punjab, Pakistan and found that public and private sector institutes are similar in most of their pattern of HRM practices. Nevertheless, contrary to these findings, there are marked differences in HR practices in both the sectors. This has also been depicted from the ground realities and has adequately been reported by numerous studies while drawing comparison between the two sectors in other parts of the country. For example Iqbal et al., (2011:215) noted that there are subtle differences in HR practices while drawing comparison between public and private sector universities. They found that HR practices (i.e. job definition, capacity building, compensation, teamwork, and employees participation) were better in public universities. However, performance appraisal practices were found better in the private universities than public sector universities. Malik et al., (2012:6) were having similar findings. Thus, it may be concluded that current research on HR practices in public sector universities in Pakistan is fragmented, contradictory in findings and no concrete conclusion can be drawn for reference, further analysis, policy formulation and theory development.

2.10 The gaps in literature and propositions

Modern organizations, as envisaged by Ployhart (2006:868) are struggling with staffing challenges stemming, essentially from “increased knowledge work, labor shortages, competition for applicants, and workforce diversity.” Nevertheless, in spite of its immense significance and critical needs for an effective employment system, staffing research continues to be neglected altogether or misconstrued by many decision makers in a great deal of organizations taking up its more constrained
outlook. Solving these challenges requires staffing scholars to expand their focus from individual-level recruitment and selection research to multilevel research concentrating on business unit standpoint and organizational level perspective.

As a matter of fact, the staffing function does not take place in isolation in any organization. The other internal HR subsystems, size, structure, leadership styles and the events occurring outside the system that affects the organization as a whole are some of the most climacteric influencing factors. This dynamic relationship between the organization and its environment is having last longing impact upon the organization and its employees (Catano et al., 2009:6). French & Rumbles (2010:171) have rightly pointed out “that recruitment and selection do not operate in a vacuum, insulated from wider social trends, so it is very important to keep abreast of current research”.

While systems theory is developed over the years, its basic principles can still be employed to the recruitment and selection system in any organization (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:26). The concept that how the HRM subsystems are influenced by external challenges such as globalization, technological revolution, new legislations, political intervention, unionization, labor market conditions, national cultures and accountability is yet to be explored (Jackson & Schuler, 1995:237). Within the system if HR managers fail to acknowledge the contributions of others or if they fail to coordinate closely with other parts of the system or sub systems, senior management may begin, to question the added value that HR brings to the organization. This underline the need, to study recruitment and selection in the context of a system, not simply as an isolated function divorced from other functional areas in the organization.
but as a sub-system embedded in a larger organizational system (Catano et al., 2009:6).

Limited research studies are available on HRM in universities with a focus on recruitment and selection. These studies only underline the significance of the area as critically important HR function; nevertheless, much further investigation has not been undertaken with the intentions to explore its dynamics with the changeling times. For example Nabi et al., (2014:12) mention recruitment and selection as being vital to organizational performance in the public sector in Pakistan but there is no in-depth analysis of how it is linked with the rest of HRM functions or how to make the current system of recruitment and selection more transparent, accountable and systemic. Similarly, Iqbal & Ahmad (2006:629) in their study with a focus on public sector governance in Pakistan, highlighted the lack of systemic approach and structural issues as the major bottlenecks in civil services reform initiatives in the country. In view of the above discussion, this study propounds the following proposition:

**Proposition 1:** The Recruitment and Selection in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is not managed systematically since it is not linked with other HR subsystems in a systematic manner.

Van den Brink, Benschop, & Jansen in their qualitative study (2010: 1459) provided insight in multiple ways to understand the notions of transparency and accountability in academic recruitment and selection in the universities in Netherlands stating that recruitment and selection processes in academia are characterized by
‘bounded transparency’ and ‘limited accountability’ at best. The study articulates that
the protocols that should ensure transparency and accountability remain ‘paper
tigresses,’ because of the micro-politics and gender practices that are part and parcel
of recruitment and selection. This requires a profound system change, and concerted
action on the part of university boards, committees and candidates to break with
prevailing norms about privacy and secrecy and introduce new ones about openness
and responsibility. A second, less revolutionary recommendation is to put more
emphasis on the implementation of recruitment protocols in letter and spirit as micro-
politics sternly obstruct its implementation.

Similarly, Crothall, Callan & Hartel (1997:99) consider recruitment and
selection as crucial to academic success and knowledge creation, but there is no
detailed account of how it is affected by both internal and external environment.
Again Mukhtar, Siengthai & Ramzan (2011:398) stressed upon the importance of
recruitment and selection and its role in promoting HRM practices in universities, but
the study does not explain how the top management supports a culture in which HR
best practices thrive. The research article of Bozionelos (2005: 1605) advances the
point that “the selection interview frequently serves as a political arena for various
power networks in the organization whose interests may be conflicting”. He argued
that the interview panel promotes the interests of the power networks, to which they
associate, by lobbying for the candidates of their choice whose background and values
concur most with those interests. This case study of the academic environment in a
British business school concludes that there is a dire need for a systematic
investigation, to generate fresh insight, establish the prevalence of the phenomenon,
develop taxonomies and examine the relationship of various subsystems in other settings.

High frequency of internal recruitment, lack of transparency, corruption, nepotism, use of flawed selection methods favouring poorly qualified and inferior candidates at the cost of best-suited candidates for the jobs, and restrictive legal frameworks are some of the grey areas identified by Dubosc & Kelo (2012:9) in the recruitment and selection of academic staff in the universities. The study further revealed some problematic issues in relation to the lack of open competition for positions at the senior management level, their often politicized selection or appointment, lack of adequate and transparent selection criteria, and the immense political pressures used in the process of recruitment and selection. Internal politics, a factor Abbas & Ahmad (2011a:21) believed to be of serious consideration for the appointing authorities creating a sense of discrimination among rest of the staff. Khilji (2002:238) argued that decisions involving fresh hiring are made in Pakistani public sector organizations in a dubious manner. The merit-based system of selection does not prevail. Family relationships receive preferential treatment, thus guiding major decisions involving hiring and promotions. Given this, the second proposition for this study is:

**Proposition 2:** The Recruitment and Selection system in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is not merit based, impartial and transparent.
In public sector universities in Pakistan, the colonial legacy with highly centralized structure and the traditional personnel management system still prevail. There is hardly any university in the public sector in the country that has a full-fledged HR section staffed by HR professionals to address and look after HR affairs (Qadeer et al., 2011:230). Abbas & Ahmad (2011a:21) have similar findings. They observed that separate HR unit does not exist in the universities, and the HR functions have been made intertwined and complex mainly looked after by the staff having no requisite qualification, capacity, and experience to deal with it. Nasreen & Mirza (2012:236) underpinned these findings postulating that the public sector universities, both old and new, do not have specialized HR offices to address HR issues. This foregrounds the significance and utility of such an office for designing best HR practices and implementing innovative HR policies in order to make HR more productive. Strong resistance to integrate HR subsystems and the prevalent high power distance culture in the country are detrimental in framing HR policies and practices which are often contravening and intricate to pursue. In this scenario status quo is fostered to prevail till formal HR departments become an integral part of the administrative set up in every institution of higher education. This state of affairs call for a detailed, in-depth research study in order to unearth real issues so that corrective measures may be undertaken in light of the same (Qadeer et al., 2010). This leads to the third proposition:

**Proposition 3:** *Public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa do not have any specialized Human Resource Department or Section to look after HR functions such as Recruitment and Selection.*
Similarly, there exist no independent statutory body such HR council or HR board to have an oversight role in the HR domain in universities in Pakistan. A closer examination of all the relevant legislations such as University of Peshawar Act, 1974, North-West Frontier Province University of Engineering and Technology Ordinance, 1980, Khyber Medical University Act, 2007, University of Peshawar Act, 2011, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Act, 2012 and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities (Amendment) Act, 2015 and detailed scrutiny of intrinsic material revealed that there are various authorities looking after administrative, financial and academic business in the public sector universities across the Province. Nevertheless, no legal entity subsists in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to address HR issues.

**Proposition 4:** *Public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa do not have an HR Council on the analogy of Academic Council in universities, to keep an eye on HR affairs in the universities.*

Hence, an empirical research study is needed to explore the recruitment and selection system of the administrative cadre in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as there is a wide scope to investigate the matter further. This thesis is the pioneering work to address these issues by adopting systems approach to fill this gap. While using general systems theory as a theoretical framework, this study endeavors to find answers to some of the most critical questions researchers and academics raised in the aforementioned section which is further deliberated upon in detail in the subsequent Chapter.

**2.11 Outcome of the study**
The objective here is to gain an understanding of how recruitment and selection system is designed in the public sector universities in Pakistan. The study unearths major loopholes in staffing function in a systematic manner and discusses the mechanism how to improve it keeping in view the changing dynamics of the higher education sector in the country. The results of this study shall help in policy-making of the public and private sector universities of Pakistan for broadening their understanding of HR challenges confronted by the universities. This study anticipates becoming a representative of the HR phenomenon in the underdeveloped countries by taking Pakistani universities as its case study.

2.12 Summary

This Chapter presented an overview of the previous work on how HRM is designed and operates in the public sector in both the developed as well as developing countries thus providing the necessary background for the purpose of this research. This review concentrated on a range of HR areas with a focus on recruitment and selection in the context of higher education in Pakistan with particular attention on public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This Chapter explored the literature that is relevant to understanding staffing function prevailing in the universities with identifying gaps in the existing literature. This Chapter reviewed the current application of HR practices in the higher education sector. Universities both in developed as well as developing countries were covered in this review with much of the focus on developing countries. The Chapter identified research gaps in the staffing function prevailing in the universities in Pakistan; hence, providing rationale for the
study. In the end, this Chapter offered various propositions followed by an outcome of the study.
Chapter 3  Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

Current discourse on employment practices enunciates that staffing function does not take place in isolation in any organization. This is shaped not only by internal environment, but it is also molded by external forces. While undertaking recruitment and selection in any setting, HR managers must be cognizant that the new appointees are properly trained. They have plentiful of opportunities for growth and promotion. Their hard work is acknowledged, and once they quit, they are praised formally and eloquently for their contribution. At the same time, HR managers have to keep an eye on external challenges such as globalization, technological advancement, socio-economic pressures, legal and judicial activism, political interloping and accountability impacting staffing function. These are some of the critically important questions that must be addressed by HR managers. To understand these dynamics, a theoretical lens is needed. While General Systems Theory evolved over the years, its basic principles can still be applied to the system of employees’ recruitment and selection in an organization. This Chapter serves to build up the theoretical foundation of this thesis. Here the prime focus rests on understanding systems theory and its various dimensions as a theoretical framework for the study.

This Chapter examines Systems Theory with microscopic care. Elucidating ‘system thinking’, defining - ‘how it works’ and aligning systems thinking with HRM as a subsystem, ingrained in a larger organizational context are the central themes of this discussion. This Chapter, first, introduces the underlying concept of the Systems
Theory, elaborating basic concepts of system and application of system approach and it functioning. Here, the discourse is concentrated on the application of Systems Theory to diverse disciplines. This is followed by application of the theory to recruitment and selection in the higher education context, hence, opening up a critical discussion and furnishing justification for the selection of the theoretical framework. This theory provides useful insight with regard to the influence of environmental forces on the staffing function in the institutes of higher education.

3.2 General Systems Theory

The theoretical lens for this study is provided by Bertalanffy (1950, 1968). General systems theory is one of the contemporary theories of management postulated first by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in the 1930s as a means of explaining the complexity, interaction and relationship among various groups. While propounding his theory, Bertalanffy was reacting against reductionism and attempting to revive the unity of science (1968:49). He is considered to be the founder and principal author of general systems theory. In general systems theory (1950a:23) the unit of analysis is empathized as a complex whole of interdependent parts. One of the basic tenets of systems theory is that it provides for a trenchant distinction between open and closed systems. In open systems, interchange of energy, matter, people, and information take place with the external environment. In closed systems, there are no exchanges of people, information, and matter (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010:127). An open system relies upon external milieu for input which is transformed during throughput to generate output, which are switched over to the environment. This interaction does not come across in closed system (Jackson & Schuler 1995:239). The systemic
perspective of Bertalanffy (1968:38) postulates that comprehending a phenomenon in its entirety merely by splitting it up into basic components and then reconstituting is impracticable; instead, global vision is needed to apply in order to underscore its functioning from a strategic point of view in a holistic fashion.

The systems approach to management sought to mark a fair balance between the enormously impersonal scientific approach and the individually-focused human relations approach. Under this approach, all of the compounding elements of an organization are looked upon as part of one larger system. Nevertheless, in order to comprehend the entire system in its entirety, one must first be able to understand the role and function each individual unit or department plays within the entire system. These units or departments are regarded as sub-systems. Each sub-system is reckoned as a distinct entity underlying how it fits into the entire organizational structure and the role it plays within the larger system.

Bertalanffy premised the idea of a systems approach as part of his general systems theory which he introduced to scrutinize the interaction between organisms and the environment. He sought to further identify the relationship between business organizations and their environment. To do this effect, he explored the relationships between employers, employees, and customers. According to Bertalanffy (1968:45), “as characteristic of modern science that this scheme of isolable units acting in one-way causality has proved to be insufficient. Hence the appearance, in all fields of science, of notions like wholeness, holistic, organismic, gestalt, etc., which all signify that, in the last resort, we must think in terms of systems of elements in mutual interaction”. What he believes is that each constituent part needs to be looked at
separately, and the upshot of these interacting elements must be inquired as well as the whole that is created as an outcome of such interactions.

His systems approach was founded on the theories of Stafford Beer and Kenneth Boulding, both management scientists. Beer, the author of the book, *Cybernetics and Management*, was engaged in operational research and the study of complex social systems. He was instrumental in the idea of combining cybernetics with management systems. Boulding, an economist, ventured into many disciplines outside his original area of study. His beliefs led him to identify three types of social systems. These include: i) Exchange systems; ii) Threat systems; and 3) Integrative or love systems. These systems, he proposed, were essential for society to thrive.

Besides, the systems approach looks at the interface between the social dimensions of business and technological advancement. The changes in the sub-system generated a ripple effect that impacted the entire system. Once technology and the social needs of employees formed a new equilibrium, productivity was restored. This approach, therefore, relies on all components, or sub-systems, to work in harmony and coordination in order to ensure the success of the larger system.

The basic idea of general systems theory entails its focus on interactions and relationship. The preeminence of interconnection leads to believe that the conduct of a single autonomous element is different from its behavior when the element interacts with other elements in unison (Mele, Pels & Polese, 2010:127). “General system theory, therefore, is a general science of wholeness.” “The meaning of the somewhat mystical expression, the whole is more than the sum of parts is simply that constitutive characteristics are not explainable from the characteristics of the isolated
parts” nevertheless, “the total of parts contained in a system and the relations between
them, the behavior of the system may be derived from the behavior of the parts”
(Bertalanffy, 1968:55).

3.3 What is a System?

According to Weinberger (1998:88), much of the literature speaks of the
significance of a systems view of the organization and processes within (Jacobs,
1989:27). A system can be delineated as “the complex relationship between
interconnected parts which transform inputs into desirable outputs via processes
across the system itself and subsystems”(O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:23). “A system can
be defined as a complex of interacting elements” (Bertalanffy, 1968:55). A system is
“an assemblage of objects united by some form of regular interaction or
interdependence” (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010:129). “A system can be natural (e.g.,
lake) or built (e.g., government), physical (e.g., space shuttle) or conceptual (e.g.,
plan), closed (e.g., chemicals in a stationary, closed bottle) or open (e.g., tree), static
(e.g., bridge) or dynamic (e.g., human). In regard to its elements, a system can be
detailed in terms of its components, composed of people, processes, and products; its
attributes, composed of the input, process and output characteristics of each
component; and its relationships, composed of interactions between components and
characteristics” (Tien & Berg, 2003: 23). By and large, people become part of
different systems such as the market economy and the workforce or utilize systems
such as vehicles and transportation in their daily routine life.
Bertalanffy (1968:55) argued that a system is a multifaceted arrangement of interacting elements and that they are open to, and interact with their environments. In addition, they can acquire qualitatively new properties through emergence for being in continual evolution. When referring to systems, it also generally means that they are ‘self-regulating’ (they self-correct through feedback). System thinking is both part-to-whole and whole-to-part thinking about making connections between the various elements so that they fit together as a whole. Systems thinking comes from the shift in attention from the part to the whole (Jackson, 2003), “considering the observed reality as an integrated and interacting unicum of phenomena” (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010:126).

O’Meara & Petzall (2013:23) have narrated the example of a car – a mechanical system in use. A car consists of various parts. These body parts are interconnected and dependent on each other in order to allow the car to function efficiently and effectively. Besides, the car requires some form of propulsion such as an engine- a mechanism to steer with, tyres and suspension so that it can move smoothly. A chassis shall be another prerequisite to keep the occupants safe and free from the danger of bad weather or risk of any other unpleasant incident. A battery is required for smooth functioning of the electric gadgets, and a steering wheel is needed to provide for direction. A person is needed to embark upon and start the car and uses the track in harmony, to arrive at a specific location. Cars also need petrol or gas to fire the combustion engine and oil are used to ensure the engine parts run smoothly. Each component is a subsystem of the whole system – in this case, a car. All its body parts need fully functioning and working in harmony for the car to become a useful means of transport. On the other hand individually, each body part is idle to achieve
very little. In this example when individual body parts work together, the system functions effectively. While the car is a separate system, it is also part of a much larger transportation system. Similarly, the production of the car is a subsystem of a large organizational system, having distinct subsystems such as manufacturing, administration, HR, marketing, finance, sales and budget. This organizational system is further a subsystem of car manufacturing industry which is a super system in this case.

A system is an accumulation of parts, unified and directed to accomplish a pre-defined objective. If one part of the system is detached, removed or changed the nature of the overall system is changed. For instance, a pile of sand is not a system. If one removes a sand particle, there still will be laying a pile of sand. Nevertheless, a functioning car, as delineated by (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:23) is a system. If you remove the carburetor, the car will no longer function. A system can be looked at as having inputs, processes, and outputs. A system is having a feedback mechanism among each of these three aspects of the systems.

3.4 How systems work?

As a matter of fact, any given system consists of several different components or elements. Each component of the system, in its own right, does little but when combined with other parts and interact in unison produce a whole greater impact than just the sum of each part. In the given example, there a number of subsystems such as the electrical system, the fuel system, the gauge system and the traffic system which
combine to create a fully functioning vehicle. Systems have body parts and several parts jointly work to create a sub-system (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:24).

Similarly, systems receive some kind of inputs which are transformed in the process resulting in desirable outputs. One discrete input for the vehicle is the fuel which is then processed and transformed into energy that moves the car. The input (fuel) is ignited and transformed into a gaseous state in the engine while the discernible output is a movement of the car. Similarly, each individual body part of an automobile (i.e. aluminum, steel, plastic, rubber, etc.) is the outcome of other complex and exhaustive processes in the auto industry. Manufacturers such as Ford, General Motors and Toyota transform distinct materials into output (body parts) when put together make up an automobile. Besides, systems also have standardized assessment processes which allow for each individual component, subsystem and the whole system itself to be evaluated and its effectiveness determined. These are in practice in the form of customer satisfaction surveys, feedback, leadership surveys and even employees turnover (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:24).

It is pertinent to recapitulate the two basic types of systems (i.e. the closed system and the open system). The closed system has virtually no interface with the environment as no inputs are being taken from the surroundings. Hence, there are no transformation processes taking place resulting in desirable outputs or outcomes. This contrasts the open system which accredits the environmental interaction and pinpoints the need for human intervention to ensure sustenance of the system (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:24).
With this background, O'Meara & Petzall, (2013:24) conceptualize organization as an open system where persistent interaction takes place between the organizations and its external environment. Organizations procure goods and services from the market environment or community as well as furnish goods or render services in the market. There is a perpetual interaction between organizations and their local, national or global communities or external market environments. This interaction or exchange is outlined in Figure given below.

![Image]

O'Meara & Petzall (2013:25) postulate that inputs from the external environment into any organization mainly consisting of staff (human resources), materials, finances, information, clients, suppliers, education facilities, industry intelligence, government subsidies and tax relief. The organization utilizes these inputs, processes them and transform them into outputs in numerous ways such as: i) Transforming material into desirable commodities (goods and services); ii) Using financial resources to fund growth and expansion; iii) Using real-time information such as demographics to determine the best geographical location to acquire staff, infrastructure, and other services; iv) Providing services to other organizations that can then be transformed into saleable goods and services; v) Industry intelligence being gathered about competitor strategies, declining markets as well as new and
growth market opportunities; and vi) Enhancing or increasing standards of living via wages and salaries of staff.

Hence, fundamental interaction is essential for an organization, its environment, and other systems to define, maintain and assist in determining the strategic direction of the organization. If the nature of this communication and interface add value to the organization, then it will most likely accomplish growth and longer term stability, if not it may result in the organization losing its sustainable competitive advantage. A system is dynamic and proactive to change (Robbins & Barnswell, 2006:138).

3.5 General Systems theory and its application to diverse disciplines

Von Bertalanffy (1968) put forward general systems theory and applied the same in a variety of contexts (Weinberger, 1998:88). Its initial application was in numerical sciences, biological sciences, and physical sciences but has since been applied to a wide range of other disciplines such as organizational theory (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:23), marketing and management (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010:126). “System Theory is a logico-mathematical discipline applicable to all sciences concerned with systems” (Bertalanffy, 1950b:134). This is an interdisciplinary practice that describes systems with interacting components, applicable to biology, cybernetics, and other fields. This theory presumes that there are universal principles of organization which holds for all systems, whether they are physical, chemical, biological, behavioural, cultural and social (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972: 447). This is considered to be a ‘grand’ theory for having universal relevance and applicability.
“Systems theory is a broad view which far transcends technological problems and demands, a reorientation that has become necessary in science in general and in the gamut of disciplines from physics and biology to the behavioral and social sciences and to philosophy” (Bertalanffy, 1968: vii).

Katz & Kahn (1966) applied systems theory to organizations. The organization is seen as a system, built by energetic input-output where the energy coming from the output reactivates the system. Jacobs (1989:65) argues that systems theory is the unifying theory for HRD and “forms the most underlining structure for the HRD profession.” Using a systems approach to realize organizational and individual goals, Jacobs (1988:2) proposed a domain of human performance technology and used the theory for the development of human performance systems and the management of the resulting systems, which is another dimension of performance improvement within the systems concept.

The system approach has been widely used in comprehending connection among different parts of the system, the structure, processes, goals, and outcomes, such as transforming inputs into outputs. There is also proviso for feedback mechanism or loops in this theory, to aid in determining the effectiveness of the overall system (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:23). “Systems theory, in this sense, is preeminently a mathematical field, offering partly novel and highly sophisticated techniques, closely linked with computer science, and essentially determined by the requirement to cope with a new sort of problem that has been appearing” (Bertalanffy,1968: vii).
Capra (1997) contended that systems theory is an ‘interdisciplinary theory’ about every system in nature, in society and in many scientific disciplines, as well as, a framework with which one can investigate a phenomenon from a holistic perspective. Before going into minute details of this theory and its application to organizational HR practices with a focus on recruitment and selection, it is important to explain what the system entails and how it works for better understanding the theoretical framework.

3.6 General systems theory and its application to organization

The didactics of general systems theory are quite basic. Notwithstanding, decades of management training and practices in the workplace, HR managers have not followed this theory in letter and spirit. However, in recent times, in the face of tremendous changes taking place all around, the way organizations function and the way they operate, academics and managers come across this new lens of looking at things. This new overture has brought about a paradigm shift in the thought process of academicians, researchers, managers and the way they approach or manage the organizations.

While looking at the things from the perspective of an organization inputs include resources such as physical resources including raw materials, financial resources, technology and human resources. These inputs undergo a panoptic process called throughput where these are processed and treated (e.g. planned, organized, motivated and controlled) to yield the desired output. The output is the final product or services driven by a marketplace. Feedback entails information received from
human resources carrying out the process or monitoring the activities, customers and ultimate users and clients who use the products and other stakeholders. Feedback also comes multiple sources and from the larger environment of the organization such as influences from government, media, society, economics and technologies. This overall system framework applies to any system, including subsystems (i.e. departments, programs, projects, etc.) in the overall super-system of the organization.

The effects of systems theory on organization espouse managers to look at the organization from a broader perspective. Systems theory has brought home a very impertinent aspect for the managers to interpret patterns and events in the workplace. They recognize various parts of the organization, and, in particular, the interrelations of these various parts, cognized as subsystems. This encompasses coordination at all levels, for instance: i) Coordination of central administration with its subsidiaries, programs, projects, departments and other administrative units; ii) Coordination within the departments for example engineering and manufacturing and iii) Coordination among supervisors and workers. This is regarded as a major breakthrough in the organizational life. In the past, managers typically took one particular unit of the organization and focused on that. Then they moved their attention to other parts. Here, the predicament was that an organization could, have a strong central administrative system and an incredible set of body parts, but the individual units/departments were working in isolation as these same were not synchronized at all.
3.7 General systems theory and its application to HRM

Systems theory carries a momentous effect on the discipline of management sciences and understanding organizations. Mowday (1983) was one of the first HRM researchers who applied systems model to HRM practices. Katz & Kahn (1978:189) argue that HRM is a subsystem embedded in a larger organizational system. The open systems approach towards HRM has been further developed by Wright & Snell (1991:203). They used it to describe a competency management model of organizations. They reckon skills and abilities as inputs from the surroundings; employees behaviors as throughput; and employees motivation, satisfaction and performance as outputs. Under this model, the HRM subsystem functions to acquire, utilize, retain, and relocate knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies (Wright & McMahan, 1992:306).

In the same vein, the description of HRM as a controlled system postulated by Snell (1992: 292) is based upon open systems theory. A more refined discourse on the system theory led us to believe what Kozlowski & Salas (1994: 281) argued to be a multilevel organizational systems approach for better understanding of the implementation and transfer of capacity building initiatives. Many of the more specific theories delineated by Jackson & Schuler (1995:239) in their review to broaden understanding of HRM in context assume that organizations function like open systems.

Nevertheless, the HRM functions, vary a great deal in it application, from organizations to organizations, Chaudhry, Khan & Hassan (2015) have established
that “HR function can be declared as a system with full conviction because it fulfills all necessary concepts and assumptions of General System Theory”. Chadwick (2010: 86) postulated the widely accepted theoretical justification for operation of the individual parts of the HR systems in a systematic manner in order to create synergy for attaining the desired outcomes. Organizations will untimely suffer in case, the HR system, its subsystems and constituent parts work in isolation. HR system, hence, aligns various functions, components, policies and practices that need to be internally as well externally consistent as part and parcel of the sub-systems, systems and larger organizational system (Lepak, Liao, Chung & Harden, 2006).

Alsabbah & Ibrahim (2014:11) used General Systems Theory while studying HR practices in the organizations postulated that certain HR practices if implemented intuitively lead to overwhelming organizational outcome. They found the theory as exceedingly pertinent to the HR domain as it envisages HRM as a vast system blending various processes. The study, establishing the viability of the General Systems Theory when applied to HR practices and employees competence, concluded that understanding the theory assist in improving HR performance in many ways. Hence, the application of the theory elucidates the effectiveness of HR practices in raising employee’s competence in an organization.

3.8 Application of general systems theory to recruitment and selection

Since Aristotle’s assertion that knowledge is extrapolated from comprehending a phenomenon in its entirety and not from its individual parts, scholars have been painstakingly engaged in the discourse on systems, its constituent
components and their comparative dynamics (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010:126). The employees who work in an organization are drawn from the external market, and they add new knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies to the organization resources to enable it to respond to indigenous, national and global innovative market trends, growth and sustainability. Systems theory is having a critical and useful function in comprehending the dynamic connection between the organization and its environment through recruitment and selection (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:26).

Catano et al., (2009:6) in their study contended that recruitment and selection do not take place in isolation in any organization. They are influenced not only by the context and type of organization, its type, size, structure, leadership styles, strategic objectives but also by the events occurring in the surroundings that affect the organization as a whole. This dynamic relationship between the organization and its environment is having last longing impact upon national economies at a larger scale in a holistic fashion, standards of living, employment conditions, education and individual and disposable family income at the gross root level. While systems theory has germinated over the years, its basic principles can still be employed to the recruitment and selection system in any setup. Its holistic approach offers a synopsis of the entire HR system by encompassing various relationships and interaction persisting within the subsystem of recruitment and selection (O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:26).

While delineating the systems view of HR, Catano et al., (2009:6) underline two salient principles showcased in their model: 1). HR management must closely coordinate its activities with other organizational units, subsystems, and people if the
larger system is to function properly and 2). HR managers must think in systems terms and have the wellbeing and best interests of the entire organization in their mind while acknowledging the contributions of others.

Catano et al., (2009:6) in their study postulates that there are a number of questions that must be addressed by any HR manager or practitioner in setting up a recruitment and selection system in any organizations. Some of these are: i) How do employers ensure that the people they hire will have the desired knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the best performance of the job?; ii) How do employers ensure that the recruitment and selection system function in a transparent and unbiased manner?; And iii) How do employers ensure that their hiring policies and procedures are gender sensitive and treat candidates from different ethnic groups fairly and accommodate people with disabilities?. Besides, there are some other areas that also need to be professionally addressed. For instance once employed in any organization, the employer needs to ensure that the new appointees are properly trained before placing them on working environment, that they have ample opportunities for promotion and career development. Their hard work and contribution are acknowledged and appreciated.

O'Meara & Petzall (2013:26) presented a sketch of the dynamic relationship between the organization and its environment as given in the figure below. It is an intricate system which is part of larger economic, social, national and global systems while the staffing function - recruitment and selection, connects organization across a wide range of other systems. In the first instance, employees in any organization are drawn from the community (external environment or open market). The long-term
satisfaction, motivation and retention of new employees greatly reduce organizational costs and new staff from part of the talent pool that drives the organization towards phenomenal success or, in some cases, causes its downfall. Feedback loops provide for the overall system and its subsystems to be closely monitored and assessed. In the application of systems concept to recruitment and selection, feedback loops allow the organization, to draw a comparison between what it sought in applicants for some vacant positions and what the outcome was. Each part of the system can be appraised to determine where improvements can be made. The continuous feedback loops allow the organization to engage in a kaizen - continuous improvement strategy in order to maximize the potential of the system (O’Meara & Petzall, 2013:26).

Catano et al., (2009:6) argued that if HR managers fail to acknowledge the contributions of others or if they fail to coordinate their efforts closely with other parts of the system and subsystem, senior management may begin to question the added value that HR brings to the organization. They, therefore, posited that recruitment and
selection must be carried out in the context of a system, not simply as an isolated function divorced from other functional areas in the organization.

In fact, “recruitment and selection set the stage for other human resources interventions. If recruitment and selection are done properly, the subsequent movement of the worker through the organizational system is made easier, and the individual makes a long-term, positive contribution to organizational survival and success”. When this happens, HRM makes a positive contribution to the organizational system as a whole. On the other hand, if a new employee enters the firm on a ‘flat trajectory’ because of a flawed recruitment and selection system then the smooth functioning of the entire structure of the organization, including HRM, is adversely affected (Catano et al., 2009:7).

This thesis combines systems theory with strategic human resource practices with a prime focus on recruitment and selection in order for talent acquisition to have maximum impact. It stresses the importance of continual improvement in attracting talent and engaging, motivating and retaining staff in line with best practices in the face of unbridled market pressures and global challenges. Arguing that it is employees who drive an organization to sustainable competitive advantage, the thesis explain the purpose of preliminary short-listing, pre-employment screening tests, describe the interaction between the interviewer and the applicants during job interview, and suggest how to ensure new employees have the proper credentials and experience to reduce costs of training and ultimate turnover. This furthers the concept that how the HRM subsystems are influenced by external challenges such as globalization, technological revolution, legal and judicial activism (a series of new legislations such
as amendment in universities act, RTI, right to public service act etc), political intervening, strangled autonomy, unionization, labor market conditions, national cultures and accountability (Jackson & Schuler, 1995:237). The internal factors identified by Jackson & Schuler (1995:237) bearing impact on HRM are technology, structure, size, organizational life cycle stage, business strategy and organizational culture.

3.9 General systems theory in the modern world

Contemporary ideas underpinning from systems theory have developed into diverse areas. As an interdisciplinary realm, the theme draws together beliefs and concepts from multiple disciplines such as humanities, philosophy, sciences, information technology, social sciences and management sciences besides others. Currently, systems theory functions as a connection for interdisciplinary dialogue between various fields of study. While the general systems theory seems to have lost many of its Germanic roots, this theory became a buzzword used to illustrate the intrinsic complexity of relationships created in the modern organizations. This theory, with the passage of time encompassed scores of new disciplines. In the modern day world there are more than forty variants of systems theory, all explicitly named systems theory. General systems theorists acknowledge that specialized knowledge in cutting edge disciplines is as crucial as exploring new horizons in the established fields of study, the tenants of general system theory is still well-grounded and valued as a general and integrative framework (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010:127; O'Meara & Petzall, 2013:23).
3.10 Summary

An emerging and increasingly significant trend in social, behavioral and management sciences inquiry is to think about and try to comprehend a particular research problem from an interdisciplinary perspective. To bank, exclusively, on the theories developed in a particular discipline under consideration, is one way of doing this. Nevertheless, sometimes one has to rely upon the theories developed in other disciplines. Ramping up the theoretical framework, grounded on postulates and hypotheses evolved in other disciplinary contexts can both be enlightening and effective, at the same time, to be fully engrossed in the research theme. General Systems Theory, being an interdisciplinary approach, its basic principles can still be applied to the system of recruitment and selection in any organization. This Chapter presented theoretical foundation of this study. Here, the prime focus rested on extrapolating systems theory and its various dimensions. This Chapter discussed various dimensions of systems theory and elucidated applications of systems thinking to the recruitment and selection as a subsystem ingrained in a larger university system. Here, a critical discussion opened up which culminated in furnishing justification for my choice of the theoretical framework.
4.1 Introduction

This Chapter introduces the methodology part and research design of the thesis and elaborates; how it guides data collection and data analysis component of this study. The choice of methodology is justified on the basis of the research problem, literature review and some pragmatic considerations of the study. This Chapter is structured as follows. The next section discusses methodology and methodological underpinnings of the study. A detailed account of the qualitative research paradigm is given in the ensuing section of this Chapter. Subsequent sections discuss case selection and design which is followed by identification of respondents for the study. Interview protocol, quality in research and data triangulations are discussed in the latter part of this Chapter. This Chapter further provides a detailed description of the data collection process, expounding how interview sessions were conducted and how information was transcribed for further analysis, generating themes and developing patterns. The Chapter starts with discussion on research design of the study.

4.2 Qualitative research design

Review of literature revealed scarcity of research studies, addressing HR issues in a methodical manner in developing countries (Budhwar & Debrah, 2001; Yeganeh & Su, 2008:203), including Pakistan (Aycan, Kanungo, Mendonca, Deller, Stahl & Khurshid, 2000: 217; Khilji, 2001; Shahzad, Bashir & Romay, 2008). In the
same vein, very few studies can be found exploring employment practices with a focus on staffing function in the field of higher education in Pakistan (Shazad et al., 2008; Qadeer et al., 2011). Since little empirical evidence is available in the area of recruitment and selection of administrative staff in the context of public sector universities in Pakistan for quantitative analysis and theory development, this study is aimed at bridging this gap by espousing qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research generates new insight into a situation and behaviour so that the meaning of what is happening around can be easily understood. It lays emphasis on the interpretation of behaviour from the perspective of the participants, in view of their personal experiences (Smith, 2007: 53). It is based on evidence that may not be effortlessly reduced to numbers. It makes use of interviews, archival record and observations as data collection methods (Armstrong, 2009:181).

Qualitative research paradigm has been selected for the study for a variety of reasons. The most compelling among those are the conspicuous lack of previous conclusive research on the subject matter (Creswell, 2011; Morse, 1991). Qualitative approach is valuable for the in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, exploration of new dimensions and discovering their interrelationship (Creswell, 1994). As not much background information was available on the theme for empirical analysis, choosing a qualitative approach provides a strong rationale for exploring and describing the phenomenon in minute details for developing a theory (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2005).

The constructivist worldview of Creswell (2009) regarded as paradigms by Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba (2011), epistemologies and ontologies by Crotty (1998), or broadly conceived research methodologies by Neuman (2009) have been used for the
study believing that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work and develop subjective meanings of their experiences. Hence, the processes of interaction among individuals with focus on the specific contexts in which they work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants.

Moreover, the case study approach adopted for the study aids in developing a profound understanding of contemporary employment issues confronted by Pakistani public sector universities in a systematic manner with a prime focus on recruitment and selection of administrative staff. The study involves probing a small number of key informants through extensive and prolonged engagements in order to develop patterns and relationships of key themes and subthemes for further analysis (Nieswiadomy, 1993).

In fact, qualitative research paradigm by virtue of its nature and assumptions, more suits to the studies which are context based as compared to quantitative research studies (Creswell, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2009; Bryman, 1988). Moreover, the phenomenon which is required to be captured by means of exploring the point of views of the participants who work through the same in their day to day life essentially calls for a qualitative stance in terms of research design (Bryman & Bell, 2009). Furthermore, the researcher is aimed at exploring the phenomenon from the perspective of the individuals as how they see and interpret the situation based on their past experiences circumscribed by the context of the location as well choice of the sector. This again postulates for the qualitative research paradigm. In addition, the review of the literature revealed that bulk of qualitative research methodologies were used in the situation where the nature of the study divulge that the phenomenon is not
explored in all its respects. Moreover, thematic analyses were used for a host of such qualitative studies to identify themes, patterns and categories (Muhammad, 2015).

4.3 Case study

This is basically a case study research. Being one of the most challenging of all the social sciences research endeavours, case study method digs deeper into the situation for a better understanding of prevailing capacities and dynamics of a particular case (Yin, 2003:1). Case study research helps in developing a deeper understanding of a complex issue and may add strength to what is already known through previous research (Stake, 1995). Here, the emphasis is centered upon detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. Being an empirical inquiry, case study research methodology investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984). The focus on the richness and depth of a phenomenon or a situation, the case study methodology helps in unfolding new perceptions, new ideas, and its interpretations (Christie, Rowe, Perry, & Chamard, 2000). Yin (1993) argues that the case study is appropriate when the aim is to define a topic broadly and not narrowly. Similarly, case study research is recommended by Yin (1989) when little previous research has been carried out within the context, and there is a gap that needs to be filled in the research examining a situation (Bonoma, 1985; Stake, 1995).

As Yin (2003:13) argues that empirical inquiry “investigates a contemporary phenomenon in-depth and with its real-life context when the boundaries between the
context and the phenomenon are not clearly evident.” Hence, taking the above into consideration the research design used for the said study is a multiple case study design. Using multiple case study design has its advantages yielding evidence considered to be more compelling giving way to a more robust study (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). Yin (2009) endorsed similar thinking, postulating that multiple-case design needs to be preferably chosen over a single case design, having at least two case studies. Hence, this study employs a six case research design- all from the public sector with three from among the first generation and three among the second generation universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan for data collection. The justification for selection of these universities is discussed in the next section.

4.4 Case selection and design

The study was carried out with prime focus on public sector Universities and Degree Awarding Institutes of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the north-western province of Pakistan. According to the data, available on HEC website, there are one hundred and sixty-three universities and degree awarding institutes in the country. Amongst those, ninety-four are public sector (HEC, 2015). In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, there are nineteen public sector universities and DAIs, with five established in the last seven years, whereas, the establishment of four new universities is in the pipeline. These universities/DAIs are government chartered, self-governing and autonomous bodies established and regulated under the law enacted by the Provincial Assembly and funded by the federal government through HEC.
For the study, a total of six universities (three among the first generation and three among the second generation universities as discussed in Chapter 01) were purposefully selected out of the total 19 public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Among the ‘first generation’ of the universities, University of Peshawar, University of Engineering and Technology Peshawar and Agriculture University, Peshawar were chosen. Whereas, among the ‘second generation’ universities/DAIs, Islamia College University Peshawar, Khyber Medical University Peshawar and Institute of Management Sciences Peshawar were selected. To maintain anonymity these universities were designated as University-A, University-B, University-C, University-D, University-E and University-F. Moreover, attribute coding was used for the participants from these universities as reflected in Appendix-XII as participants’ code.

All of the selected six universities/DAIs are located in the provincial capital city, Peshawar. The cogent reasons for selecting these universities are numerous. The most palpable among these are: i) The first generation universities, being the oldest and predominately established public sector universities in the province provide major reference and guidelines for the acts, statutes, regulations rules and all kind of by-laws for the rest of the universities. Similarly, the newly established universities replicated various systems from the established universities (particularly University of Peshawar) such as Financial Management System, Procurement Management System, Academic Management System and Personnel Management System and adopted the same mutatis mutandis. The second generation universities are having diversified learning environment and forward-looking approach; ii) These universities are mainly situated in Peshawar with satellite campuses in other parts of the province; iii) For
being the home city of the researcher the selected universities were easily accessible for the repeated visits and frequent interview sessions; iv) The researcher is having personal, professional and scholastic contacts with key informants in these universities; v) The researcher is having access to a number of gatekeepers in these universities and vi) Besides, the study is undertaken in the same geographical, cultural and economic settings that essentially, differ from other parts of the province. A brief description of the case universities is given at Appendix-XII:

4.5 Data collection

For data collection, three sources of information were used: i) Interview; ii) Non-participant observations, and iii) Documents and archival records. These are discussed in detail in the following:

4.5.1 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were held with low, middle and top management as multiple key informants. The key informant is an expert source of information (Marshall, 1996:92). Since, the Establishment and the Meetings Sections are the two main HR sections/departments in the universities, therefore, the top, mid and low career level manager/administrative officers working in these sections (i.e. Registrar, Additional Registrar, Deputy Registrar and Assistant Registrar) were selected for the purpose.

These units of analysis are highly pertinent for obtaining the type of data required for the study, and this is one of the most important considerations for
selection of respondents for the study. Among them, the most pertinent is the Registrar. He is the Principal Administrative Officer and regarded as custodian of the common seal and the academic records of the university. He executes all administrative policies and those who mainly deal with HR issues. As the secretary of all executive bodies committees, Registrar wields overwhelming powers and influence in decision making in universities. He used to be the ex-officio member-cum-secretary of all major statutory bodies such as Senate, Syndicate, Academic Council and Selection Board. He also chairs numerous committees and sub-committees (including Selection Committee) in the universities addressing mainly employment issues. The other respondents, too, predominantly deal with HR issues in the universities.

And wherever, these positions were found to be vacant, then, the available key informants were further requested to identify the relevant members of the staff from the administrative cadre who were best fitted to be interviewed subjected to the following criteria:

i). Qualification in HR at least MBA

ii). Having at least 05 years of experience in dealing with HR issues at the university level, and

iii). Having deep understanding of the rules/regulations governing HR in the universities

This criterion affirms the non-probability sampling technique. Singleton, et al. (1993) argued that this technique should be used in the situations: i) When the
research is of exploratory nature; ii) When it is more important to identify patterns and generate hypotheses for further research; iii) When there are constraints involving resources such as time and money; and iv) When the population is not readily identifiable. Miles & Huberman (1994: 27) regarded this as purposive sampling. Hence, this study follows non-probability sampling based on the objectives of the study, constraints of resources and technicalities involved in the area. This sampling technique is having certain underlying limitations. The personal bias of researcher in selecting the sample cannot be eliminated and second the sampling error cannot be estimated (Singleton et al., 1993). Hence, a generalization of findings from the sample to population becomes elusive. However, the discourse on external validity reaffirms the aim of this study not to strive for statistical generalization but to make an effort to attain analytical generalization with a focus on literal and theoretical replication.

Semi-structured interviews were mainly used for looking into the phenomenon from the perspective of participants assuming that the respondents explicitly demonstrate their understanding of the phenomenon (Patton, 1990). This allows for the respondents’ point of view to emerge during the interview session in a very candid manner. The interviews were organized in an open-ended manner to allow participants’ perspectives to emerge but were having closed-ended questions to provide some structure to the interview to allow for comparability of findings across cases if required. Semi-structured interviews fall in the realm of qualitative study research design, having a more structural approach as compared to unstructured interviews ensuring that consistent tool may be used in both cases (Creswell, 2009). Another important point to be underlined, here, is that semi-structured interviews provide flexibility as well as consistency to the data collected. By using semi-
structured interviews, the study incurs benefits of both the paradigms, ensuring flexibility associated with qualitative research by lending structure, to multiple case designs for maintenance of consistency of questionnaire across multiple cases.

Thus, a total of twenty-eight semi-structured, in-depth interviews with open-ended questions given at Appendix-XI were conducted with the purposefully selected individuals. The interview guide was designed and finalized based on the initial literature review, conceptual framework and pilot interview conduct for the study (Appendix-X). Each interview session spanned over two to three hours of duration. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed in a narrative format accordingly. However, in some cases, the participants didn’t allow it. Then notes were taken and transcribed and also shared with the respondents, so as to ensure that the essence of their comments was properly reordered. Overall, field notes were taken during interview sessions and data was analyzed once this stage of data collection was completed.

The number of twenty-eight interviews with minimum of four participants from each case university is more than the suggested number and hence, serves the research objectives and to reach theoretical saturation. Here, the acceptable number of total interviews to be ideally conducted for a qualitative study is not clearly defined as different researchers have different recommendations (Guest, Bune, & Johnson, 2006). For instance, Bertaux (1981) believes that fifteen is the appropriate number while Creswell (1998) suggests any number between five and twenty-five. Kuzel (1992 as cited in Guest et al., 2006:61) on the other hand advocates five to eight interviews for looking at homogeneous research objectives while twelve to twenty for
heterogeneous research objectives. The conducted number of interview sessions is adequate to meet the theoretical saturation as per recommendations of Glasser & Strauss (1967) further interviews would not be generating anything novel for the study.

The interviewees were invited, to participate in the research study through emails first, followed by phone calls. Preliminary meetings were held with them, requesting for their consent, as well as, time for formal interview sessions. Before formal interview sessions, the respondents were provided with requisite documents. These include: i) A brief description of the purpose and objectives of the study; ii) Executive summary of the study along with consent form; and iii) The interview guide. The participants were also requested for permission so that their names and names of their respective universities might be disclosed in the dissertation and subsequent publications or otherwise. All of these documents are placed as Appendices. The time duration of each interview session was set, approximately, as sixty minutes in the beginning. However, some of the sessions continued for two to three hours at a stretch.

4.5.2 Observations

Furthermore, the non-participant observation was also used for triangulation of data gathered from primary source as well as secondary sources. “Nonparticipant observation is a data collection method used extensively in case study research in which the researcher enters a social system to observe events, activities, and interactions with the aim of gaining a direct understanding of a phenomenon in its
natural context. As a nonparticipant, the observer does not participate directly in the activities being observed”. This method involves observing participants without actively participating. This option is used to know about a phenomenon by entering a system while staying away from the activities being observed. Non-participant observation is often used in tangent with other data collection methods, and can offer a more ‘nuanced and dynamic’ understanding of a situation that cannot be as easily examined through other methods (Liu & Maitlis, 2010). Since, the researcher visited the university campuses for conducting interviews with concerned respondents and meticulously observed their official settings, a way of disposing of official business and working environment, including the university campuses and their infrastructures. Once data was collected, the same was analyzed, using coding and pattern matching technique (Trochim, 1989). Data was fastidiously reviewed, revisited, compared, and contrasted. Pattern and themes which were emerged were categorized under different headings and subheadings discussed in detail in Section 4.8 of this Chapter.

4.5.3 Documents and archival records

In addition to semi-structured interviews and non-participant’ observations, archival records and official documents were also consulted for the collection of data. These sources include annual reports of the universities and their official websites, as well as official website of HEC. These sources provided information about the act, statutes, rules and regulations of these universities apart from their size, vision and mission statement, structure, their number of faculty members, and the number of the student population. Archival records were found useful; since, they included relevant statutes, regulations, rules, by-laws, service records, personal record and office files.
These were used as supporting material which was helpful in understanding the context of the case and aided in analyses of the data.

Using the secondary source, accessible official documents of the universities have also been thoroughly reviewed. Documents mainly included official letters, appointment orders, office notes, memoranda, agenda and minutes of the meetings, complaints, inquiry reports, court cases, statutes, rules, regulations, acts and published/unpublished reports of the World Bank, HEC, Planning Commission of Pakistan, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan and provincial higher education department. Chapter 05, the first of the findings chapter, is mainly based on the data collected from the aforementioned two sources. Figure-3 presents a flowchart for the research methodology.
4.6 Data Triangulation

Creswell & Miller (2000:126) defined triangulation as “a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study”. Interview being the primary source of data collection, for the study, was not solely relied upon and was substantiated from multiple sources, as discussed in the preceding section. This served as a cross-check for the validity of the conclusions drawn, and the additional sources of information gave more insight into the topic and also served as a means of
assessing the researcher’s interpretation, and the conclusion was drawn and recommendations were made.

Two other sources of data collection (i.e., archival records and non-participant observations) were also used for triangulation purposes. The researcher also confirmed such information from official documents and archival record of the university. All this was done in order to confirm and revalidate the original interview responses of the participants.

4.7 Data analysis

This part of the Chapter delineates data analysis part of the study. This Section starts with a brief account of data analysis in Case Study research in general and then illustrates some practicalities of doing ‘thematic analysis’ in particular. In the later part of this Section, Braun & Clarke (2006: 87) pragmatic six steps, to analyze qualitative data are discussed in detail, where the entire process of arriving at the sub-themes and main themes from the data are delineated.

Various approaches have been used by different researchers, to analyze data in the case study research, such as those described by Creswell (2007). Thematic analysis is one of the most “poorly demarcated, rarely acknowledged, yet widely used” approaches in qualitative data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006:77). It is believed to be not well delineated (Roulston, 2001, Aguinaldo, 2012) for the “insufficient literature that outlines the pragmatic process of thematic analysis” (Aronson, 1995:1). Hence, it should be carried out cautiously and the constrictions
ought to be weeded out to make it more meaningful and comprehensive. Thematic analysis is generally, used to identify, analyze, and report patterns and themes within the data and it helps researchers move their analysis from a broad reading of the data towards discovering patterns and developing themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006:77). The overarching aim for using this approach was to paraphrase and summarize the dataset as a whole or in part in relation to a particular research question or set of questions. This approach to analysis embrace: i) Identifying the content of the data; ii) Curbing redundancy; and iii) Grouping data into representative categories that delineate a particular social phenomenon (Aguinaldo, 2012).

One of the defining features of thematic analysis is that it offers an accessible and theoretically-flexible approach for analyzing qualitative data. This implies that it can be applied within different frameworks, to answer quite different sets of research questions. It suits, questions related to individuals’ experiences, views and perceptions. Moreover, this method has been widely used across social, behavioural and more applied education health and management disciplines (Braun & Clarke, 2006:77).

**4.8 Data analysis process: Coding, developing themes and categories**

The data analysis process involves determining categories, subthemes, main themes and the essence from the participants’ descriptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79). Usually, data analysis starts before the data collection is over, and data collection and data analysis are often conducted simultaneously. Liamputtg (2009) argues that interpretation of data began during the first interview. For the analysis of
data thematic analytic approach propounded by Braun & Clarke was adopted (2006:79). Under this approach analysis is not a linear process. The steps outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006:87) and adopted for the study include: i) Becoming familiar with the data; ii) Generating initial codes; iii) Searching for themes; iv) Reviewing themes; v) Defining and naming themes, and vi) Producing the report. This preceding section outlines; how each step was perused and virtually espoused.

The first step, in this process was getting familiar with the data. Once data was collected, the same was transcribed, accordingly. In this very first step, the task was to get familiar with the data and comprehend the nature and meaning of the data. This was done by reading the transcripts again and again. The second step was to generate initial codes. In this step interesting features of the data were coded in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, hence, generating initial codes. Then data relevant to each code was organized. This exercise was done manually. Here, the interview schedule questions were not collated as codes. In the process, all the potential themes were coded. These codes were predominantly context based. Sometimes, data extracts were multiply coded. Hence, patterns were established from the codes.

The third step was searching or discovering sub-themes and themes. This is a broader level of analysis. In this step, codes become categories, subthemes and central themes. This is an iterative, as well, intuitive process. Reviewing the themes was the fourth step. Once ‘candidate themes’ were found, these were reviewed in this phase of data analysis. Those were ‘candidates themes’ because some were not having sufficient data to support them. Some of those merged or separated and some were even removed. Here, data was further abridged, internal coherence in a theme or
strong distinctions between certain themes were established. Defining and naming
themes is the fifth step. In this step, the emerging themes were described in a way that
captured the essence of the theme. Here, the themes were defined and were ultimately
keyed out. Writing the analysis was the last and final step. Here, an analytic narrative
was provided. Separate four chapters (i.e., Chapter 05, 06, 07 and 08) are dedicated
for the purpose. Under the findings of the study, the themes that were discovered with
examples of extracts were provided which were further coded for the subthemes and
themes and .

To figure out actual coding is a vital stage of data analysis for any research
study. This was performed by identifying patterns, themes and repeated ideas by
meticulously reading the interview transcripts, over and over again. At this stage, the
underlying ideas as well the perennial patterns, were identified across the raw data
which was linked with other data and the literature facilitating the transition of raw
data and the conceptual analysis on the basis of which conclusions were drawn.

As postulated earlier, being a multiple case study research, conducting semi-
structured interviews was employed as the main data collection tool, in order to
establish an essential structure across different cases and at the same time allow new
themes and ideas, to emerge from the raw data collected during data collection stage.
This lends structure as well as imparts flexibility to the data collected for the study
and its subsequent analysis.

To put it succinctly, once data was collected and transcribed into a common
format, the process of coding began by carefully, reading and rereading the raw data.
Here, specific codes were identified during repetitive readings of the data. The actual
words and phrases of the respondents were used to create coding categories. Glaser (1978) reckons this as *in-vivo* coding. This is considered as a lower level categorizing of codes. This is further categorized into more summarized codes called the upper-level categories or themes (Thomas, 2006).

During this exercise, complete absorption in the data was taken on, to comprehend in its entirety, the views of administrative officers of the selected public sector universities for which attribute coding was used. Eventually, the balance was maintained in the research study by looking at the overall meaning and each individual part of the data. This required moving back and forth several times to confirm the whole and the context given to each part, and it matched the general theme and the overall data. Resultantly, several sub-themes and central themes emerged and based on the same; a general structure was developed. For instance, while delineating various loopholes in the staffing function in the universities, the following two central themes emerged. These themes were labeled as:

i) Strategic loopholes

ii) Operational loopholes

Strategic loopholes are the kind of loopholes that consist of the breaches in the matters at the policy level. Similarly, operational loopholes consist of the gaps in the recruitment and selection system at the functional level. These themes are discussed in detail in Chapter 06. Similarly, while elucidating various factors responsible for these loopholes in staffing function in the universities the following two main themes finally emerged. These themes were labeled as:
i) Internal factors

ii) External factors

Internal factors are the forces which are within the control of the university authorities, whereas; external factors are the forces which are beyond the control of the university authorities. These themes are discussed in detail in Chapter 07. While discussing various recommendations to address these loopholes in staffing function, the following major themes emerged. These themes were labeled as:

i) Policy level recommendations

ii) Procedural level recommendations

These themes and sub-themes are discussed, threadbare in Chapter 06, 07 and 08 and the process of arriving at sub-themes and themes are illustrated in the Table-1 to 6 given in respective Chapters in minute details.

It merits mentioning that that there are two main portions of the analysis part. content analysis haven been employed for Chapter 05, as the first of the findings chapter, that is mainly based on the data collected from face to face in-depth interview which was further supplemented by the data from the two important sources (i.e. archival record and non-participant observations). Whereas, thematic analysis has been used in Chapter 06, 07 and 08 for which data was mainly based on the data collected from the face to face interviews.

4.10 Quality in research
Some methodological issues are associated with this research design. The qualitative research paradigm in general, and the case study research design in particular, are criticized by some of the researchers; especially, exponents of quantitative research paradigm for its lack of rigorous systematic procedures, leading towards biased interpretation of data by the investigator, resulting in deceptive findings and misleading recommendations (Yin, 2009). Apart from this, qualitative research is criticized for the problem of generalization of research findings, to a larger population. These issues are addressed here with some further focused discussion on construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability from the perspective of a case study.

Construct Validity: Undoubtedly case study research is widely criticized for being deficient in having an operational set of measures for quantifying a phenomenon under question and hence it is said to have used subjective judgment during data collection (Yin, 2009). To address these concerns and to come up with a correct operational measure a number of mechanisms can be used (construct validity) (Yin, 2009). This study, in the first instance, expounds a series of evidence during data collection, in order to portray the logical flow of evidence. Secondly, the preliminary draft of the study was shared with the key informants to ensure their viewpoints are appropriately presented in the draft.

Internal Validity: Internal validity is of utmost importance if the case study is an exploratory. This is especially true when inferences are drawn when an event cannot be directly observed. Internal validity is to make sure that the inferences drawn
are correct and accurate (Yin, 2009). This study is using pattern matching and explanation building to make sure that internal validity remains intact.

External Validity: External validity deals with the issue of generalization of the findings of the case study (Yin, 2009). This issue of generalization surfaces out of the quantitative measures. The issue here, is the confusion of statistical generalization of quantitative methods (to generalize from the sample to a population) with analytical generalization (to generalize the case study findings to a broader theory) of case studies (Yin, 2009). However, a single case study provides little basis for even analytical generalization, unless the study is tested by replicating the findings to some other cases. This replication logic can be used to conduct multiple-case studies. Replication can be of two types for case studies. Literal replication is where the multiple cases are chosen, anticipating similar results (Yin, 2009). The other is theoretical replication where the cases are chosen, anticipating contrasting results (Yin, 2009). This study follows the theoretical replication logic where the cases of the first generation and second generation universities are augured to be providing contrasting results in some of the areas, due to certain differences in contextual factors of the two generation and literal replication logic for universities of the same generation indicated to be evincing similar results due to them belonging to a similar generation.

Reliability ensures that the study can be replicated by following those already defined specific procedures such as data collection procedures (Yin, 2009). For that reason, a case study database was developed following specific case study protocols,
as specified in order to ensure reliability. This is done to limit the number of errors and biases in the study.

Therefore, undertaking in-depth face-to-face interviews help in eliciting the required response and hence, conducting a case study is a justifiable and valid option. Besides, the research problem of this study warrants a qualitative case study approach. The current study proposes to investigate System of recruitment and selection in public sector universities in a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan by following the qualitative research paradigm. Hence, the research study is the first of its kind in the higher education context in Pakistan as elaborated in the last section of the literature review.

4.11 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations for this study are the participants’ right to informed consent, autonomy, confidentiality and anonymity. These are discussed in detail here.

4.11.1 Informed consent

For the study, informed voluntary consent of all the respondents was obtained in writing beforehand. Participants information sheet was provided to all of them and their queries were addressed before the commencement of interview sessions. Initially, the consent form was provided to all the participants with the request, to return the same duly signed before the interview sessions. A copy of the consent form is available on Appendix-IX. The interview sessions were started once it was felt that
the participants are comfortable and thoroughly understood the purpose of the study and knew what was expected of them and had given their written consent to participate in advance.

4.11.2 Autonomy

While following the spirit of autonomy, it was scrupulously elucidated to the participants that their participation in the research study was entirely voluntary. In addition, their willingness to participate or otherwise would not affect them in any way. Even, it was assured to them that they were free to back out from the study any time at any stage they desire.

4.11.3 Privacy and confidentiality

The personal information of the participants was recorded on demographic data sheet gathered during the interview process. It was assured to keep all the information provided by the participants confidential if they desire so. Data was recorded in the field notes, and audio-taped interviews and their transcripts were kept in a locked cabinet. Moreover, the laptop in which all the data stored was password protected, and a soft copy of the same was kept on a hard portable drive kept in safe custody.

4.11.4 Credibility
In order to maintain credibility, the personal experiences of the researcher were described and shared with the participants. A diary was also maintained in which the content and process of the interaction with participants were noted (Koch, 2006). During these interactions, notes were taken till the interview sessions were completed. The post-interview discussion was also recorded in the field notes. Moreover, the researcher also clarified his position and shared the same with the participants.

4.11.5 Transferability

Koch (1996) argued that transferability is determined by the degree of similarity between two contexts. Hence, the researcher should describe the context in a fastidious and painstaking manner. In view of the same, the context of the current study has already been discussed in Chapter 01 in detail. Besides, transferability has been addressed by offering a detailed account of the context of the study, reckoning all the assumptions and presenting an accurate account of participant’s views. In the chapters covering findings part of this thesis, the context of the study has been further delineated to supplement the data.

4.11.6 Dependability

Dependability is regarded as the process of research being auditable. Sandelowski (1986, 33) believes that findings of a study are auditable when another researcher can clearly and candidly “follow the decision trail used by the investigator in the study.” Dependability was attained by iterative reviewing and discussing of the
study finding with my supervisors. This said criteria were met in order to secure trustworthiness of the study. Participants’ accounts were illustrated in a precise manner and findings of the study were reflected in its context.

4.12 Summary

This Chapter presented methodological underpinnings of this study. It started with a brief description of the research paradigm of the study. This Chapter described Case Study research, research design, and data collection mechanism adopted for the study. This Chapter presented data analysis technique, the scheme of coding, interpretation of data to develop categories and patterns and define sub-themes and themes for a systematic presentation of the data. The aim of this Chapter was to delineate methodology part of this study, elucidate sample selection, explain the procedure used while collecting data and provide an explanation of the procedures used to analyze the data.
Chapter 5   Overview of the Prevailing System of Recruitment and Selection

5.1 Introduction

The findings of the study are discussed in this Chapter followed by Chapter 6, 7 and 8. The findings are delineated by embracing each of the four research questions described in Chapter One. The study findings discussed in this Chapter mainly focused on the first research question of the study. This Chapter describes; how the system of recruitment and selection is designed in the selected public sector universities. As reported by the participants, the entire cycle comprises of various stages and the different activities and tasks undertaken in each phase of the cycle is delineated in this Chapter in detail. In the subsequent section, an overview of the prevailing system of recruitment and selection in public sector universities is given. Then each step involved in the process is discussed in detail followed by an overall summary of the Chapter.

5.2 System of recruitment and selection

This Chapter explores the system of recruitment and selection prevailing in selected public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During interview sessions, respondents were asked to elucidate; how the system of recruitment and selection is designed in their universities. The responses were scanned, reviewed, analyzed and organized in a coherent manner. Besides, data from non-participant observations and the archival record including but not limited to official documents such as Acts, Statutes, Rules, memos, annual reports, advertisements, complaints lodged by the
applicants at various forums, minutes of the meetings, court cases, and media reports were also content analyzed and presented in an organized fashion. 

**Figure-4** illustrates the various steps involved in the process recruitment and selection in the universities as reported by the interviewees.

Data revealed that there is some degree of variation in the process of recruitment and selection in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa depending upon the level, grade and cadre of positions against which appointment are being made. For instance, for vacant positions in lower scales (i.e. BPS-1 to 16) the University Selection Committee conducts interviews and makes recommendations for approval of the Vice Chancellor, whereas, for mid and upper carrier level administrative positions (i.e. BPS-17 and above), the University Selection Board conducts interviews and makes recommendation for approval of Syndicate. In the case of faculty appointment (which is not the focus of this study) the University Selection Board makes recommendations for final approval of Syndicate.

The responses of participants disclosed that universities, in general, use three-pronged strategies for hiring people. This embrace: i) Selection against regular positions through advertisement and open competition; ii) Contractual appointment through advertisement (walk-in-interview) and iii) Direct appointment without proper advertisement and open competition. This depends on the nature of the positions, the complexity of circumstances and exigency of situation involved in filling a vacant position. Respondents were of the view that whenever a position in the public sector universities becomes vacant or newly created, the university’s ultimate objective must be to hire the very best candidate from the market to ensure the University
accomplishes its overall vision and objectives articulated in the strategic plan. But when it comes to real life practices, this does not happen, and the university struggles to accomplish its goals and objectives.

In fact, the system of recruitment and selection in universities is highly centralized and managed in a very conventional manner. For instance, for fresh hiring in the selected public sector university and particularly against regular positions, the posts are advertised in the national press to invite applications from suitable candidates. Once applications are received, these are scrutinized by a short listing committee. The provisional merit list is prepared based on the overall academic performance, higher qualification, experience and screening test. The interview is held before the final selection and appointment. The interview is conducted by a panel regarded as Selection Board or Selection Committee and make recommendations to the competent authority for approval. Once approved, the offer of appointment is issued finally to the selected candidates. Once the new appointee joins the university, the whole cycle completes. Again, it merits mentioning that there prevail score of inner variations and inconsistencies, as divulged by the respondents, in these practices. Variations also existed at different phases and levels within the university and among the selected universities as a whole. Taken this into account, Figure-4 presents the recruitment and selection process in universities as reported by the respondents.

5.3 Steps involved in recruitment and selection process
The entire process of recruitment and selection in selected universities consists of eight distinct stages, starting with identification of the real-time need for new hiring and ending up with the final selection and issuance of the offer of appointment to the selected candidate(s). Each stage comprises of a series of activities that have to be executed in an integrated and coordinated manner before embarking upon the next stage. These various phases of recruitment and selection are elaborated as under:

5.3.1 Need assessment for new recruitment and selection

Firstly, the exercise of identification of the real-time need for fresh intake of various sections, academic units, teaching departments, institutes and centers of the University is undertaken. This small activity starts when the Registrar’s office writes to various administrative offices, teaching departments and institutes to furnish updated information about their human resource requirements so that the vacant positions may be advertised in the national press. For this purpose a standard proforma called as human resource need assessment proforma is circulated all concerned for feedback specifying a particular date and time for its return submission. The filled-in proforma is returned to the office of Registrar within the stipulated time. Once this information is collected from the entire university, the same is compiled, and demand for a fresh intake of various sections/academic units are assessed by the Establishment Section.

Once the demand for human resource of various sections, institutes and departments is properly assessed, the same data is shared with Finance /Treasury Section of the University for three-pronged conformation: i) Whether the post is
actually sanctioned or not; ii) Whether the post is reflected in the budget or not; and iii) Whether the post is currently vacant or otherwise. Some universities complete this part of the activity in-house, within the Establishment Section, from own sources to avoid unnecessary delay. This exercise is undertaken for two legally binding reasons: i) To have a fair idea of the current position and future requirement of staff in different cadres in various institutes, sections, administrative units, teaching department and directorates of the University; and ii) To ensure that the positions which are actually required and properly sanctioned are advertised only. This further helps in overcoming legal complications and audit objections at later stage. Once this is done, the posts are advertised in the national press and uploaded on the university’s website inviting applications from potential candidates.

5.3.2 Invitation of applications

As per provision in the service rules in the universities, it is mandatory that the advertisement for jobs shall be published in at least three national dailies of repute, having wide circulation. A job application form (varies from university to university) is made available online. This can also be obtained from the concerned section of the university. In the advertisement, complete details of the requirement for the vacant positions (i.e. the requisite academic qualification, professional experience, age, etc.) is made available to the public to avoid confusion, inconvenience, and litigations. The advertisement underlines the closing date for submission of application forms after which applications are not entertained.

5.3.3 Submissions of applications
The applicants or potential candidates are required to submit this application form along with requisite testimonials (i.e. Computerized National Identification Card, domicile, educational testimonials, experience certificates and no objection certificate from the parent department, etc) complete in all respects in the concerned section or in the diary section of the university within the stipulated time. The candidates may also send their application forms through courier or surface mail but not through the electronic mail. The applications received are recorded in a register manually for record purposes. Each application is given a diary number and in some universities, the applicants are given those diary numbers for future reference. Immediately, after the closing date these applications are handed over to the Meeting Section or Establishment Section for further process.

5.3.4 Short listing/ preliminary scrutiny of the applications

Once application forms are received, these are sorted out and a committee is constituted by the office of the Registrar, to shortlist the candidates having requisite eligibility criteria for the advertised position. In a great deal of cases, the faculty or staff of the concerned institute/department/section for which a job position is advertised, carry-out short-listing of the applications. The short listing is conducted, in order to do preliminary screening of a large number of applications and to sift only the eligible candidates for further process. The convener of the short listing committee compiles the report of the activity and submits the same to the office of the Registrar within the stipulated time after which further work (i.e. organizing screening/written test) is initiated on these applications. In case, no one is found eligible, the position proceeds for re-advertisement. Otherwise, necessary arrangements are made for
organizing screening/written test. During this stage, if some candidates have their concerns regarding shortlisting, it is brought to the knowledge of Appellate Committee constituted for the purpose. Such a Committee is instituted in very few universities, to address complaints of the candidates, in case, they feel that they were not treated equally and fairly at this stage.

Various steps involved in the recruitment and selection process:
- Identification of the need for new hiring
- Confirmation of availability of post
- Publication of advertisement
- Scrutiny of applications based on set criteria
- Screening Test
- Interview through the Selection Committee/Selection Board
- Approval of the Syndicate
- Issuance of offer of appointment to the selected candidates

Figure-4: Various steps involved in the process of recruitment and selection.

5.3.5 Organizing Screening Tests

As per practice, some of the public sector universities conduct their own screening/written tests for which the shortlisted candidates are informed in advance
through call letters, e-mail, telephone calls and Short Message Service, intimate date and venue of the test. The screening test, most of the time, in most of the public sector universities used to be subject oriented and job specific, prepared and checked, generally, by the head of the concerned department/section in order to assess command of the candidates on the subject matter. Screening tests used to be of different nature/level depending upon nature and level of job (e.g. for the appointment of teaching faculty (Lecturers only) a different kind of test is designed, whereas; for administrative/non-teaching positions, a different kind of test is designed). Organizing screening test, being a critical task, is handled by the staff of Establishment Section or concerned administrative staff of the Meeting Section. Generally, screening tests are conducted for administrative positions in BPS-17 and blow only.

For administrative staff positions, the candidates who have qualified the screening test are required to appear for the interview. For technical positions, such as Computer Operator, laboratory staff, as well as Driver, it is mandatory that the technical skills of the candidates are required to be evaluated through practical demonstration. Once these demonstrations are conducted, the reports of the same are submitted to the Registrar office accordingly for further process of convening meetings of Selection Board/Committee to conduct final interview.

To ensure fair play and transparency in the conduction of screening test and to avoid discrimination in the process, some universities outsource arrangement of screening tests to some external testing bodies or agencies such as NTS or ETEA. However, this practice is not uniform in the universities and is having its own merits and demerits. Based on the overall academics, experience and performance in the
demonstration (for the position of Lecturer only), practical test and screening test a provisional merit list is prepared (with weightage varies from university to university) and only top ten candidates in order of merit are called for interview. In some universities, where some qualifying marks are set for the screening test then the post is re-advertised if no one qualifies the screening test.

5.3.6 Comprehensive Interview

As per university policy, for positions in BPS-17 and above interview are conducted by the Selection Board. Selection Board consists of various members with the Vice Chancellor as chairperson, and the Registrar acts as secretary. The composition of Selection Board in public sector universities, with slight variation from university to university, is given at Appendix-III. The Selection Board conducts an overall assessment of the candidates, evaluating their suitability for a particular job. The recommendations of the Selection Board are submitted to the Syndicate for approval. If the panel does not find any suitable candidate for appointment then the position is advertised again.

For positions in BPS-16 and below, the interviews are conducted by Selection Committee. This Committee has its own composition. It is headed by the Registrar and comprising of various other members. The composition of Selection Committee in public sector universities is given at Appendix-IV. The recommendations of the Selection Committee are submitted to the Vice Chancellor, being the competent authority for approval. Various competent authorities for recommendations and final selection in public sector universities are given at Appendix-V. Once approved by the
Vice Chancellor, appointment orders are issued to the selected candidates and this is just reported to the Syndicate for information.

5.3.7 Final selection decision

The Syndicate, the executive decision-making body in the universities, chaired by Vice Chancellor, is the competent forum for approval of all kinds of regular appointments in BPS-17 and above. The composition of the Syndicate in public sector universities is given at Appendix-VI. The Syndicate, most of the time accords approval to the recommendations made by the Selection Board. However, if the syndicate is not satisfied with the recommendations of the board or finds some gross irregularity, the Syndicate may nullify the same and ask for re-advertisement of the positions.

5.3.8 Offer of job to the selected candidate

Once approved by the Syndicate, the offer of appointment is issued to the selected candidate. The selected candidate is required to submit joining/arrival report within the stipulated time. In case, the selected candidate regrets, the next candidate in order of merit is considered for appointment. With the joining of duty, the process of recruitment and selection formally comes to an end in the universities.

5.4 Summary

In fact, there are a number of sub-systems in any conventional recruitment and selection system in universities such as conformation of availability of vacancy,
advertising, handling the response, short-listing, evaluating candidates through a screening test, interviewing, selecting, making an offer, joining of the new employees. The same process is undertaken in the same manner since the establishment of the universities. However, proper planning is not carried out beforehand. Job analysis, job specification and job description are rarely undertaken in the universities. Resultantly, the universities are confronting numerous challenges. The score of loopholes, deficiencies, gray areas, bottlenecks, and impediments are discussed in detail in the next Chapter.
Chapter 6  Loopholes in the Prevailing System of Recruitment and Selection

6.1 Introduction

This Chapter unveils various loopholes in the prevailing system of recruitment and selection in the selected universities. This Chapter talks about the two central themes emerged during the first five steps of data analyses as propounded by Braun & Clarke (2006: 87). The strategic level loopholes came out in light of participants’ view is the first part of this discourse. Operational loopholes have been covered in the succeeding section. Various interrelated sub-themes are discussed here with a subtle explanation of each as derived from data. The findings divulged that there subsist profound perplexity about the system of recruitment and selection and various processes involved in it with widely dissenting views among the respondents concerning the major gray areas in the selected universities. Nevertheless, combining the same and presenting it in a comprehensible fashion reflecting overall gist of the data is the primal intent of this Chapter

6.2 Loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection

The literature review Chapter three outlined some of the major HR challenges confronted by Institutes of higher education in Pakistan. The review also identified some of the gray areas in the domain of recruitment and selection. During interview sessions, respondents were asked to identify major loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection in public sector universities. The responses of the interviewee were skimmed over, re-examined and organized under various subthemes
and themes as reported by the respondents. This section reports in detail various loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection in the selected universities. The two main themes that came forth as a result of thematic analysis data are: i) Strategic loopholes and ii) Operational loopholes. Table 1 & 2 illustrate the process of arriving at categories, subthemes and main themes from the data extracts.

These two main themes are further elaborated with subthemes in the following Sections. First of all, the strategic loopholes are delineated with subthemes: i) Recruitment and selection operate in a vacuum; ii) Non-declaration of conflict of interest; iii) Misuse of authority; and iv) Bypassing rules and merit. These subcategories are gaps at the level of top management. These are trenchant, distinct and sequester which can be clearly defined, however, at times they bisect each other boundaries in a loose manner. These are discussed in further details in the subsequent section.

6.3 Strategic loopholes

Strategic loopholes are the kind of loopholes that comprise of the gaps exist in the system in the matters falls in the domain of top level management. These are mainly issues pertain to policy guidelines. These loopholes have long term implications relating to overall aims and interests of the universities and hence, call for policy level interventions for their redressal. These are discussed in the following section:

6.3.1 Staffing function operates in a vacuum
In the universities, recruitment and selection operate in a vacuum, insulated from wider social trends not keeping abreast with current research findings. Participants were of the view that systems approach is not adopted towards staffing function in the institutions of higher education causing personal biasness in the final selection. Generally, a highly personalized approach is assumed towards recruitment and selection in universities. This is, essentially, based on personal predilection. This is destined to run into troubles, at some stage because of its utter disregard for legal, social and political challenges in the contemporary academic world. The staff, in the orthodox Establishment Section, in the universities are function-oriented and neither trained nor experienced horizontally across the organizational structure and do not understand the dynamics of the institutes of higher education. Consequently, they are not cognizant of the interrelationships between various components of HR system, its subsystems and other aspects of the universities. This malfunctioning at the strategic level, to provide for a coherent and integrated HR system is common in all most all selected universities. This call for a series of laid-down procedures, to be followed interlinking recruitment and selection with other parts of the system in a coherent fashion, culminating, ultimately, in the rational selection of the most suitable and best candidate for a job. For instance, a respondent divulged that:

*Recruitment and selection require an open-system approach. It is carried out within our university in complete isolation not aligned to internal as well as external environment. The internal components such as HR policies, academic environment, changing trends, managing diversity, and reward system are not taken into account. Similarly, the external environment is not kept in mind. Global HR best practices,*
research in the field, high technology demands and unique dynamics of higher education sector are not taken into consideration (KUARE-5).

This critically important function is linked with other HR sub-system in a very loose manner. Respondents revealed that for a particular position in the universities, pay package used to be defined, well in advance, as a part of the national basic pay scale mechanism adopted by the universities from the government mutatis mutandis but there is no job description for any position, and the pay is also not performance based. There are limited opportunities for capacity building of the new employees who join the universities, through initial induction. The future prospects for career development are not clearly defined, in most of the cases. Thus, it was inferred from the data that the system of recruitment and selection lacked connection with other HR subsystems in an immaculate manner. The entire HR system was found to be not closely integrated, covering all other sub-systems, in a holistic fashion. Similar gaps subsisted in almost all selected universities. One of the Assistant Registrar asserted:

This system of fresh induction is not connected with other HR related functions. For example; there is no interconnection between recruitment and selection and training and development as the training is not conducted for administrative staff in a systematic manner, in any university. Similarly, there is no alignment of recruitment and selection with promotion and compensation. This important bond is totally missing, everywhere, in all most all public sector universities. Same is the case with other HR functions (KUARE-4).
The lack of integration of various staffing functions is manifested in the HR operations, invariably, in all selected universities which is an obstacle in smooth functioning and harmonizing of recruitment and selection systems with other subsystems within the institutions.

6.3.2 Non-declaration of conflict of interest

In universities, many a times, situations of conflict of interest emerged in the process of recruitment and selection. In such a situation, employees dealing with staffing function or the members of the interview panel had competing interests or loyalties that were potentially at odds with each other. This kind of situation causes an employee to experience a struggle between diverging interests, point of views, or allegiances. Data revealed that in all most all selected public sector universities, the employees who either deal with the business of recruitment and selection or the members of the selection panel, failed to disclose that they were related to a candidate who was competing for a particular position advertised by the university. An HR manager of a university disclosed:

It has happened in the past, in numerous cases, in our university that the close relatives of the members of the interview panel (Selection Board) appear before the panel for interview, and the concerned panel members did not declare the same. This strengthened my belief that the members of the panel were not mindful of the guiding principles in this connection. In most of such cases, even the candidates are finally selected through the use of undue influence of their close relatives and patrons on the panel (EUHRM-2).
In numerous such cases, for instance, wherever there existed an obvious situation involving a conflict of interest, it was not declared, and even the candidates were finally selected and appointed in such a situation. Participants were of the opinion that they didn’t come across a single case, in their entire professional career, in which a member of the Selection Committee or Board had declared such a situation. Likewise, the staff members who used to deal with the job of recruitment and selection in public sector universities did not disclose it either. Assistant Registrar of a university narrated that:

In one such a situation, a blood relative of an incumbent Registrar was selected on an important position while the later was managing the whole process of recruitment and selection and he was even setting on the panel in the capacity of Secretary of both Selection Board and Syndicate without declaring a conflict of interest. In another such case, the uncle of a candidate was setting on the panel, but the former did not declare the same situation (KUARE-5).

Data revealed that a number of administrative functions performed in the public sector universities potentially involved a situation of conflict of interest. As far as recruitment and selection was concerned, identifying and managing such a scenario was quintessential and that was not happening in almost all selected universities.

6.3.3 Misuse of authority

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities Act, 2012 empowers the Vice Chancellors of public sector universities, to make appointments in their respective
universities, on contract basis at all levels and in all grades for a specified period of time. This set the stage for misuse of authority, in the hiring and firing practices, in the institutions of higher learning. This opens up, a floodgate of all kind of illegal, unfair and discriminatory practices in fresh employment in universities, with preferential treatment of certain candidates of choice, resulting in under-the-table deals and selection of candidates in violation of merit. Prima facie, the jobs were posted as open, but in reality, the top management in most of the cases had already made-up their mind for selection and appointment of a particular candidate of their choice. The respondents substantiated that the Vice Chancellors, blatantly, violated the rules and statutes and hired their own family friends, associates and relatives, reprehensively, with unprecedented perks and privileges. One participant mentioned that:

"Sometimes, the Vice Chancellor flagrantly abuses his authority by hiring his personal acquaintances, friends and relatives improperly. To my understanding, he used to have someone in mind, at least some of the times, prior to announcing a vacancy, which is perceived as a situation of 'pre-selection.' In one such case, as, I am personally witnessed to it, job specification of a post was outlined, keeping a particular candidate, in mind. Later on, when the post was advertised, the same candidate was selected (KUARE-4).

There is a gross violation of merit and misuse of powers, by the people at the helm of universities’ affairs, in all kinds of hiring decisions, pushing the universities into deep administrative as well financial crises. With certain exceptions, such practices, invariably, prevail in most of the selected universities. In some cases, the
entire process, including interview and final selection is undertaken in a very dubious and questionable manner by the Selection Board or Selection Committee, as well as Syndicate. Respondents revealed that such practices are reported, from time to time, even in the media, calling for such appointments, to be declared as null and void and demand that the cases must be referred to the competent authority for initiating disciplinary actions. However, things are hushed up as a routine business, with the passage of time and the life moves on.

Most of the illegal appointees, happen to be relatives and personal acquaintances of the Vice Chancellor, higher ups of the University, members of the Selection Board and Syndicate and through a pre-determined process of selection, they are selected and appointed as a result of share favoritism and cronyism (EUSUPDT-1.

Like public sector, this misuse of authority involving selection decisions is quite widespread in the public sector universities. However, the case of one public sector institute keyed out to be vastly different as the data could hardly discern cases reflecting an abuse of authority in the fresh recruitment and selection decisions.

Table-1: The process of arriving at subthemes and main themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme I: Strategic Loopholes</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main theme</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Data extract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Loopholes</td>
<td>Lack of system approach</td>
<td>Improper interaction with internal and external climate</td>
<td>Poor linkage with internal factors</td>
<td>External</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(These are the gaps in the system at the top level)</td>
<td>Nonalignment with other subsystems</td>
<td>forces discounted</td>
<td></td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non declaration of conflict of interest</td>
<td>Decisions influenced by personal interests</td>
<td>No connection of parts and body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of office</td>
<td>Personal considerations influence professional judgment.</td>
<td>Missing link</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bypassing rules and merit</td>
<td>Selection of relatives</td>
<td>Relative of a candidate on the panel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misdeed</td>
<td>Use of undue influence</td>
<td>Non disclosure of relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of fairness</td>
<td>Improper hiring of relatives</td>
<td>Selection of relatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malpractices</td>
<td>Abuse of discretionary powers</td>
<td>Use of undue influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Injustice</td>
<td>Breach of established practices</td>
<td>Improper hiring of relatives</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of office</td>
<td>Pre-determined selection</td>
<td>Abuse of discretionary powers</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non compliance of rules</td>
<td>Manipulation of merit</td>
<td>Breach of established practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injustice</td>
<td>Defective assessment</td>
<td>Pre-determined selection</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“System... not connected with ... HR functions...no interconnection between recruitment...and training...no alignment of ...selection with promotion...compensation...important bond is totally missing ...”

‘...close relatives ... of candidates...as ...members on ...panel ...appear...for interview ... panel...not declare the same... the ...panel ... not mindful ... no...guiding principles ... candidates are... selected... use of undue influence”.

“...the son of an incumbent Registrar was selected ... while ... later ... managing ... process ... recruitment... and ... was ... setting on the panel ... another ... case, ... uncle of a candidate ... on the panel ...”

“...Vice Chancellor ... abused... authority ... hiring... acquaintances, friends...improperly...to have someone in mind...prior to announcing a vacancy... perceived as ‘pre-selection’.

I ... witnessed ... job specification of ... post ... outlined keeping ... particular candidate in mind. ...the post...advertised...same candidate ... appointed”.

“...illegal appointees ... relatives ... personal acquaintances of .. Vice Chancellor, higher ups of ... university, ... through a pre-determined process of selection, they ... appointed on basis of favouritism and cronyism”.

“...assessment...not...competitive...just useless formalities ... assessment of ... suitability of candidates ...work-related qualities ... those required for the job position is not undertaken”.

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6.3.4 Bypassing rules and merit

In universities, the selection decisions, by and large, are not merit based. The employment recommendations are not based on an impartial assessment of a person’s ability to perform a job in the best possible manner. These are not objective and fair. These are, generally, guided by patronage, favoritism and unwarranted discrimination. It is not uncommon that the Vice Chancellor facilitate creation of certain new positions, with a particular person(s) in mind and gives unfair advantage to them, by having them work in a particular role, for an extended period of time, without first undergoing a competitive process and hence, paying way for their selection in the university. Short cuts are adopted, to recruit someone quickly for a temporary assignment and later on are appointed against regular and permanent positions. One respondent mentioned that:

*In universities, despite the fact that jobs are openly advertised, screening tests are held, and interviews are conducted, but the assessment is not competitive. These are all, just useless formalities. Here, assessment of the relative suitability of candidates, using a competitive selection process, based on the relationship between the candidates’ work-related qualities and those required for the job position is rarely undertaken (KUARE-5).*
This kind of assessment is not considered as pivotally important while determining candidates’ suitability for a particular position. The work-related attributes including qualification, skills, abilities, relevant personal qualities, the potential for future growth, ability to contribute to the teams’ performance and effective performance at the level required are not taken into consideration during the entire process of assessment. Establishment Officer of a university maintained that:

*Individuals, having strong links and contacts receive preferential treatment.*

*The unprivileged do not compete on equal footings with those who have strong patronage and backing in any selection process here. Confining selection decisions to individuals having the personal clout or family influence are detrimental to the universities overall performance, as it limits the pool of applicants through precluding competent employees and potential candidates (EUEO-1).*

The practices of breaching the rules and defying merit is seeped into the system of recruitment and selection in the first generation public sector universities rendering it, virtually, arduous for the respondents to identify proceedings of the Selection Board which were free from such practices with a noticeable exception of a case Institute from the second generation universities where the participants could hardly discern cases involving violation of rules and bypassing merit in fresh hiring.

### 6.4 Operational loopholes

Detailed analyses of data revealed a number of operational loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection in the selected universities. Operational loopholes
include gaps in the recruitment and selection system which subsist at the functional level. These loopholes are delineated with a number of subthemes, including: i) Lack of uniformity and consistency, ii) Ineffective coordination, iii) Lack of objectivity, iv) Untoward delay and v). Defective evaluation. These exist at the functioning level and are confined to matters subsist at the operational level. These are mainly connected with execution level responsibilities. These are markedly distinct, nevertheless, these are related in some respects. Table-2 reflects the process of arriving at subthemes and main themes. These are discussed in further details in the subsequent section.

6.4.1 Variation and inconsistency

In the universities, there found to be a serious dearth of uniformity and consistency while pursuing various phases of recruitment and selection cycle. Variations and inconsistencies exist even within the university. A great deal of decisions regarding staffing practices are made in an impromptu manner. For instance, a participant told that:

*Inconsistency prevails in various practices pertaining to recruitment and selection in our university. Variations surface in the mode of appointment. Sometimes, vacant positions are filled through open competition, sometimes; it is done on a contract basis with no sound justification. Sometimes, University conducts own screening test and at times, the task is assigned to some testing agency. Regarding pattern of the screening test, sometimes, it consists of general multiple choice questions, at times, it is subjective type test (ICARE-3).*
Extraneous variations exist in various phases and in different levels. Need assessment for new positions, rarely, take place in universities. Informants believed that the exercise of identification of the real-time need for fresh recruitment and selection was undertaken, in some universities, in the past but not in a uniform and consistent manner in all the selected universities. This exercise was in practice, primarily, in some of the newly established universities, whereas, in the ‘first generation’ universities this is not a regular feature of the entire recruitment and selection process. This activity is the beginning of a process marked by needlessly, time-consuming procedure and inadvertent delays, resulting in impeding the entire function. The Principal Administrative Officer of a university elucidated that:

In fact, this exercise rarely takes place in universities, these days. To be honest, this practice was in force, intermittently, in certain universities a long time ago; however, the real worth and spirit of this activity were dissipated with the passage of time. This important activity which was once used to mobilize the entire system of recruitment and selection in many ways has stopped working these days (KUR-4).

Besides, there exist certain discrepancies within the universities, whereas, there are variances across case universities in some other areas. The existence of different sets of criteria to hire, evaluate, pay, train, develop and recognize employees within a single job is quite common in many universities. Overall, a very casual approach is adopted towards the execution of staffing function, and the whole system is haunted by blithe unconcern, lethargy and disinterest. Deputy Registrar of a university shared that:
As per practice, some of the universities conduct own screening tests while some universities outsource arrangement of such tests to external testing agencies such as NTS or ETEA. However, this practice is not uniform in the universities and is having its own merits and demerits (EUDRE-2).

The prevalence of variations and inconsistencies in these practices are the hallmark of HR systems in both old and new universities. Sometimes, a single cycle of recruitment and selection takes not more than a couple of days. In other cases, it takes years. To be brief, there is a critical deficit of standardization in pursuance of these practices within the universities and even across the universities.

### 6.4.2 Ineffective coordination

In universities, various tasks and activities, involving fresh induction are not pursued in an organized and coordinated manner. Various activities take place in a haphazard fashion, marked by poor internal as well as external coordination. Participants believe that effective coordination, both internal as well external, is grossly missing in the universities while pursuing staffing function. Various administrative sections, academic units and teaching departments are almost, entirely, bereft of internal coordination. Similarly, effective coordination does not exist with external parties such as candidates, academic bodies, regulating agencies and professional institutes.

Besides, coordination is lacking with the post recruitment arm of HR function. For instance, most of the time advertisements are issued to the print media for
publication in a reckless manner and without proper homework. Sometimes, important information is overlooked, to be included in the final draft resulting in errors of omission and commission. Hence, complete information about vacancies is not generally, made available to the public through advertisement in an open and candid manner. Participants believed that lack of effective coordination and bureaucratic red tape decreased productivity, complicated various processes and delayed completion of different tasks related to recruitment and selection. Gaps in internal as well external coordination reverberate serious deficiencies in systematic integration of staffing function. This was also pointed out by Registrar of a university.

   For the lack of effective coordination, positions which are not immediately required to be filled are advertised, whereas, positions which are direly required to be filled are left out to be published. This call for a new advertisement to be floated in the national press; essentially, multiplying the overall cost of a single activity, causing an inadvertent delay in filling vacant positions (KUR-4).

   The task of shortlisting is quite cumbersome. In practice, in almost all universities, this important task is not streamlined. In some universities, there exists no standing shortlisting committee altogether. Thus, a new shortlisting committee is constituted each time, to carry out the task of shortlisting which is a taxing job in itself. Hence, this committee loses its no legal standing. In certain universities, where there exists a standing shortlisting committee, it is used to be not functional, and the task of shortlisting is performed by a junior level official of the Registrar’s office who is not trained for the job in the first place.
Besides, there are numerous cases, where candidates who apply for vacant positions, do not provide accurate information about their credentials. This might be due to the fact that they do not understand what information is actually required or because they direly want the job, even though, they are not sufficiently qualified or experienced, and want to grab it one way or the other. But, this might also be due to poor coordination (ICARE-3).

Since, fresh hiring in any organization involve many stages, many people and many bodies, therefore, coordination within and outside partners is an integral part of the whole system. Nevertheless, this serious lack of coordination manifests itself, at various stages of the recruitment and selection process within and outside the universities in multiple ways. Coordination with external parties outside the universities such as media, testing agencies and panel members has always been faulty. Coordination inside the universities, regarding posts creation, job descriptions, management of test and interview, grievances handling, the final selection of the candidates and handling the prolonged process of selection is characterized by a myriad of bottlenecks impacting the entire system in an adverse manner.

6.4.3 Lack of objectivity

The recruitment and selection system in universities is not only haunted by numerous flaws, malpractices and red-tapism but also suffer from lack of objectivity, the biased approach in evaluation and inconsistency in assessment. This lack of objectivity is reflected, in almost, each phase of staffing function. Job description, as a matter of fact, is not available for any of the administrative positions in the
universities, invariably. While defining eligibility for a position, the actual work to be performed by the incumbent and the expected deliverables, essential and desirable attributes are not taken into consideration. Need assessment for new hiring is not smooth and effective. Jobs advertisements are flawed and vague. The most suitable candidates for the jobs are not targeted while floating advertisement in the media. Short listing is conducted by the irrelevant officials. A great deal of subjectivity is involved in it. Short listing is more about reducing the number of candidates to be fitted to certain ill-defined criteria. It is more about looking at the age bracket, the number of years of education and number of years of experience. Genuine professional expertise, wide-ranging experience, leadership qualities and administrative acumen of the candidate is not valued if he does not fall within a certain age bracket. This lack of objectivity is deep-seated in other tasks, as well. For instance, Assistant Registrar of a university argued that:

"Generally, in universities selection interviews tend to be very superficial and generalistic. As per practice majority of the selection interviews do not probe each candidate’s proficiency, knowledge and skills with regard to advertised position and candidate personal specification (KUARE-5)."

Apart from this, there happens to be no consistency in the interview questions. A large number of candidates are being interviewed by the panel on a single day, just to do away with formalities. No feedback is given to unsuccessful candidates, explaining the reasons, why they were not selected. Above all, excessive confidentiality prevails in the process, in almost, all universities. A participant revealed that:
Consistency in approach, while asking questions during interviews, is grossly missing so that all applicants are subjected to more or less the same treatment during the interview phase. There are no policy guidelines for the purpose in any of the public sector university in the province to overcome this problem (EUEO-1).

Another important dimension is the overestimation of potentials and predilection for internal candidates. The selection decisions in favour of internal candidates, by and large, are influenced by factors like seniority, judgmental approach, their ill-defined reputations, undue favour, sympathetic consideration and internal politics. This practice is another reflection of how numerous personal factors, impinging objectivity in fresh hiring decisions in both new and old universities.

Table-2: The process of arriving at subthemes and main themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Theme II: Operational Loopholes</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main theme</th>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Data extract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operational loopholes (These are the gaps in the system at the functional level)</td>
<td>Variations and inconsistency</td>
<td>Discrepancies</td>
<td>Need assessment take place spasmodic</td>
<td>“…need assessment rarely takes place...these days...this practice was in force ...in certain universities ..., the ... worth... spirit of this activity has dissipated. ... activity which ...used to mobilise the ... system of recruitment and selection ... stopped working ...these days”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variation in practices</td>
<td>Inner variations</td>
<td>Adhocisim</td>
<td>“… some ... universities conduct ... own screening tests ... some universities outsource ... screening tests ... also on adhoc basis. Similarly, some ... upload ... outcome of screening test ... interview on the university’s websites ... done once in a while, lacking uniformity and consistency”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casual approach</td>
<td>Extraneous variation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ineffective Coordination</td>
<td>Internal coordination impairment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disharmonious operations</td>
<td>Poor external coordination</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ineffective communication</td>
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Lack of Objectivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biased approach in evaluation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improper evaluation for a role</td>
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<tr>
<td>General interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistency in assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time lag in completion of various tasks</td>
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Untoward Delay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delay in one step delay whole process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditionalistic approach to assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaic mood of assessment</td>
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Defective Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditionalistic mood of assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defective evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incomprehensiveness of assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“...lack of ... coordination, positions... not ... required ...are advertised... positions ... required ... are not advertised... causing numerous hiccups...a new advertisement...floated... multiplying ... cost...causing ... delay”

“... numerous cases ... candidates ... not give accurate information about ... credentials. .... they ... not understand what information is .. required, ....

“... the finally selected candidates are informed ... the rest of the applicants are not informed about the outcome ...”

“... questions ... screening test are not designed to test ...knowledge, skills and abilities of ...candidates for a... role....nothing in it assessing creative thinking ... analytical ability”.

“selection interviews tend to be ... superficial ... generalistic... ... interviews ... not probe ... candidate’s proficiency, knowledge ... skills”.

“Consistency ....asking questions ... interviews...missing and all ... applicants ... not subjected to....same treatment...the interview”. ...takes ... long time to complete ... task ... delaying the whole process”.

“...it takes too long to ... meeting of selection board and syndicate and .... delays ...process. Some time...done expeditiously ...”

“...screening test...outdated, questionable ... time- consuming ...nothing in it assessing creative thinking ... analytical ability”.

“...interview...not conducted in...fair... effective manner... candidate ... not weighed comprehensively....mind for selection ... a particular candidate ... already been made up by ... top management. ...Selection Board ... just a formality”.
6.4.4 Untoward delay

The whole process involving fresh hiring, commencing from need assessment to final selection is plagued by numerous lacunas. Untoward delay in completion of various tasks and processes has been reported by participants, unequivocally and invariable in all case universities. There are hordes of bureaucratic impediments obstructing holding of regular meetings of various bodies. In one case, where the researcher was a candidate himself, for an advertised position in a public sector university, it took more than a year, for just the short listing task to be completed. In another similar case, the post for which the researcher applied was re-advertised thrice as some very important information about the position was missing in the first advertisement that was published some four months earlier. Even after the lapse of seven months, the case is yet to be finalized. This gives rise to many apprehensions and doubts. On respondent contended that:

_Here, in this university, nobody is willing to take responsibility of this important task, since no effective mechanism for short listing of applications is available in any university. No proper guidelines exist, to facilitate the task. It takes excessively long time to complete the task. The short-listing, most of the time, takes a great deal of time which further delay the whole process. Some time, a single task of shortlisting takes weeks and even months (EUSUPDT-1)._

Meetings of the statutory bodies such as Selection Board and Syndicate take a long time to be held, and this is one the main reason for the delay in recruitment and selection process in the universities as reported by the participants. At times, the
official documentation and compilation of proceedings of various meetings while finalizing cases of fresh induction take overly long time. This further delays the whole process. Assistant Registrar of a university added that:

_The Syndicate, most of the time accords approval, in toto, to the recommendations made by Selection Board of the University. However, it takes too long; to hold the meeting of Syndicate and this, ultimately, delays the whole process (ICARE-3)._ 

Being public sector entities, the time lag is a common phenomenon in universities while disposing off official business relating to staffing function. With few obvious exceptions, these dillydallying practices, predominately, prevail in both old and new universities. One Deputy Registrar told:

_If the higher authorities in the university have some favored candidates in the run for some positions, then the whole process takes very few days to complete. Otherwise, it takes months and even years. To me, it depends on the circumstances of the case. However, there are no approved SOPs in our university specifying time limit for completion of each task (AUDR-5)._ 

Data revealed that nobody in the universities, both new and old, invariably recognize that time is of the essence in recruitment and selection. Sluggishness and delay add to the workload of staff dealing with the subject matter. It doesn’t only portray a poor image of the university, but the potential candidates also lose interest in the process and pursue employment opportunities somewhere else.
6.4.5 Defective evaluation

In universities, in general, there subsists a very traditionalistic mode of assessment. Under the existing archaic evaluation mechanism, there happens to be no serious consideration of the future role; the selectee is going to perform. Organizing screening or written test, being a critical task, is marred by numerous concerns and complaints. From preparation of screening test to the conduct and checking of the test, the entire business gives rise to serious doubts and reservations. In the first place, the pattern of the screening test is not made public. Besides, the validity of such screening tests has always been a question mark. Respondents believe that the current screening test, in no way, evaluates the candidates’ ability knowledge or skills to perform a job efficiently and effectively. Again it is more of a short listing, reducing the number of applicants to a manageable few. Deputy Registrar of a university informed:

The design and conduct of screening test create a great deal of confusion and dismay among the candidates, as they are not informed about its pattern, sample or design. The eligible candidates are not informed properly for the written test or interview, and it is almost a routine exercise that candidates register their complaints, time and again, in this regard. The result of the written test is kept confidential, and those who do not qualify for the next stage are not informed, and they remain in a fix about the outcome of the test (EUDRE-2).

As described by multiple sources, the concern was expressed, time and again that the screening test is not managed in a fair and transparent manner. The participants pointed out that the screening tests conducted by the universities have
relatively more issues than the one outsourced and conducted by any external testing agency. An informant told:

_The existing procedure of screening test is regarded as outdated, questionable and time-consuming. In fact, the written test of one-hour duration, comprising of multiple choice questions is not a sufficient and appropriate method, to screen less qualified candidates. The questions of the written test are not designed to test the knowledge, skills and abilities of the candidates, for a particular role or to identify the most suitable candidate. There is nothing in it to assess creative thinking and analytical abilities of the candidates (KUARE-5)._  

Besides, the composition of Selection Board and Selection Committee varies from university to university. The members of the Selection Board or the Selection Committee are not properly trained for the job. The respondents thought that the Board or the Committee conduct the interview by asking few general knowledge questions but in no way, make an assessment of the candidates, evaluating their suitability for a particular job.

_In fact, the interview is not conducted in a fair and transparent manner. Each candidate is not given sufficient time to be assessed properly and hence, each candidate is not weighed comprehensively, against the job requirement. To me, the mind for selection of a particular candidate has already been made up by the management, in most of the cases; whereas, the business of Selection Board or Selection Committee used to be, just a formality in a great deal of cases (EUSUPDT-1)._
Similarly, no pre-meeting of interview panel is held to review short-listing and prepare for the interview procedure, including questions and allocation of roles and responsibilities for the day of the interview. A large number of candidates are being interviewed by the panel on a single day or even in groups. The Syndicate, the executive decision-making body of the university, is too broad and too occupied with the rest of the business, to save a little time for detailed deliberations and consideration of the recommendations made by the Selection Board. Hence, the system of recruitment and selection in universities experience numerous bottlenecks and challenges.

6.5 Summary

By focusing specifically on recruitment and selection process, this research has tried to provide some insights about the various loopholes in the entire system. It is clear from the data discussed above that the universities experience troubles across a range of areas in relation to recruitment and selection and that these difficulties result in the selection of poorly qualified candidates. HR best practices, widely used globally, are not gaining currency in the universities as recruitment and selection are undertaken in the same fashion as was carried out some twenty or thirty years back. Most of the public sector universities are replicating either the established practices of the government or following the rules and services statutes of the University of Peshawar, which are prone to numerous ills, lacunas and shortcomings.

This Chapter unearthed a number of loopholes in the existing staffing function. Among these, there is a strong view that the recruitment and selection system, while unnecessarily perplexed and frequently complex, presents additional
barriers to the candidates seeking employment in the universities. Here the staffing function, essentially, operates in a vacuum. Declaration of conflict of interest is not in common practice. There is a brazen misuse of authority. The system is not open, merit-based and transparent. Violation of rules is a norm. This result in the selection of blue-eyed persons in violation of rules and the best of the candidates are overlooked. These wide-ranging, deep-rooted loopholes are generally engendered by a range of internal and external forces. These factors are delineated in the next Chapter.
Chapter 7  Factors responsible for the loopholes

7.1 Introduction

The literature review in Chapter 02 outlines some of the macro-environmental forces impacting higher education landscape in general and HR in particular. This Chapter looks at internal and external elements, emerged as central themes in the factors that impact staffing function in the universities. Data revealed that universities, in general, experience numerous constraints while hiring new employees since the system of recruitment and selection is managed in the most obsolete, outdated and redundant fashion. In some of the universities, it is even worse than the era of personnel management. The informants divulged that universities are espousing rules, regulations and practices effective in the public sector, mutatis-mutandis; nevertheless, the same is even further overshadowed by excessive bureaucratic red tape, nepotism and malpractices in the selected universities. Personal contacts, political influence and family clout are widely used in decisions involving recruitment and selection. The hierarchy is too complex and overriding. A little deviation from established norms can place the employees in serious troubles. The construct of internal as well as external factors are explored in this Chapter as reported by respondents and presented in the succeeding sections as guided by thematic analysis of the data extracts.

7.2 Factors responsible for the loopholes

During interview sessions, respondents were asked to identify major factors responsible for the loopholes affecting the system of recruitment and selection in
public sector universities. The responses of the participants were thoroughly read, reviewed and organized into various categories. The two central themes that emerged during data analyses are internal and external factors. Table-3 reflects the process of arriving at subthemes and main themes. Seven interrelated sub-themes came forth as internal factors contributing towards prevailing gaps in the system. These are discussed in the next section. Whereas, the four interrelated sub-themes, discussed deep down the external factors, impinging on the system of recruitment and selection, followed this discourse. Both the internal as well external factor are loosely delineated are distinct in their own right, bisecting each others’ boundaries at times. Table-3 depicts the process of developing codes, getting to the categories and arriving subthemes and central themes. First of all the internal factors are delineated here.

7.3 Internal factors

The internal elements affecting universities’ ability to undertake merit-based recruitment of administrative staff are the forces which are intrinsic, existing solely within the circle of influence of the universities top management. These are the factors that are frequently considered as part of the internal environment accrues within the reach of the university authorities and that can be managed by the universities conveniently. These mainly comprise of: i) Lack of system approach; ii) Dearth of policy guidelines on conflict of interest; iii) Centralized decision making; and iv). Deficiencies from HR perspective. These subthemes are discussed in detail in the succeeding section.

7.3.1 Lack of system approach
As reported by the respondents, recruitment and selection are designed in a systematic manner hardly in any selected public sector university. From HR perspective, this function is taking place in complete isolation from the rest of HR functions in the academia. Here, the approach is not professional. Proper HR system barely exists, encompassing diverse relationship and interaction taking place within and around the subsystem of recruitment and selection. All the HR functions are not closely related and tightly connected, having a marginal propensity towards effective coordination, culminating in a system that does not function efficiently and effectively. Assistant Registrar of a university maintained that:

*The entire scheme of things operates in a closed and conventional manner unresponsive to new ideas, new trends, and new challenges. This conformist approach does not work in terms of a system here and, hence, does not watch over the working relations of the entire university as an organizational entity, operating in complete unison. This does not take into account; how system's constituent parts, for instance, staffing function, interrelate with other HR functions and how various subsystems work over time within the larger HR system, in the context of even larger higher education system (KUARM-4).*

The responses of participants revealed that recruitment and selection are scarcely designed with system approach in mind and in fact, it is undertaken merely as an isolated HR function, divorced from other functional areas. This misalignment of internal activities, such as identification of real-time need for fresh hiring, job specification and job description, advertisement, short listing, screening test, interview and final selection, are mainly engendered by lack of profound
understanding of system approach and system thinking. Hence, new hiring in universities is carried out for the positions, for which proper job analysis is rarely delineated, in the first instance, in the universities. Subsequent plans for the capacity building of new entrants are chalked out, infrequently. Proper career development plan is not envisaged for those who have recently joined the universities. This situation predominates, invariably, in almost all public sector universities. Registrar of a university narrated that:

*The existing system of recruitment and selection in the universities is exceedingly unresponsive, centrally controlled, inefficient and ineffective, to the best. This is used to be very vague and largely inequitable, characterized by injustice and deception. And probably this is why staffing function ferments in a total vacuum, oblivion from wider social trends, hence, not keeping abreast with emerging challenges and latest research findings in the domain (KUR-1).*

For that very purpose, the incapacity on the part of universities’ top management to provide for a coherent and integrated recruitment and selection system is merely due to the lack of realization of the genuine need for a systematic approach towards recruitment and selection. Even though, if its significance is realized, there is a scarcity of deep understanding, skills and experience, to deal with the problem at a fundamental level.

**Table 3: The process of arriving at subthemes and main themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme III: Internal Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Main theme</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subtheme</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Factors (These are the forces that can be managed by the universities)</th>
<th>Lack of system approach</th>
<th>Conformist approach</th>
<th>Lack of system thinking</th>
<th>Central control</th>
<th>Social seclusion</th>
<th>Non declaration of conflict of interest</th>
<th>Use of undue influence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dearth of policy on conflict of interest</td>
<td>Closed and conventional style</td>
<td>Conformist approach</td>
<td>Lack of system thinking</td>
<td>Dearth of system approach</td>
<td>No idea of such a policy</td>
<td>No record of conflict of interest</td>
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<td>Centralized decision making</td>
<td>Misuse of authority</td>
<td>Imposing role</td>
<td>Manipulate the things</td>
<td>Commanding role</td>
<td>Discretionary powers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deficiencies from HR Perspective</td>
<td>Poor HR Planning</td>
<td>No importance of HR planning</td>
<td>Paucity of HR professionals</td>
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“...things operate...closed...conventional manner...unreceptive...new ideas, new trends...conformist approach...not think in terms of...system...does not watch...the entire university as...organizational entity...how...system's constituent parts...staffing function interrelate with other HR functions...within the larger HR system...”

“...system...is...unresponsive, centrally controlled...very vague...inequitable,...works in...vacuum, segregated from...trends, ...not keeping abreast of...latest research ”.

“...not developed clear-cut policy and procedure to manage a situation where conflict of interest arises...universities...do not keep record of such a situation ....such a situation...not reported”.

“...close relatives...of...interview panel...appear...for interview...panel...do not...declare the same...the members of the panel are not mindful of such...situation. ...the candidates are...selected...undue influence...relatives on the panel...”

“...Vice Chancellor...decisive role...to manure...manipulate the...system...for selection of a favoured candidate...Being chairman of the selection committee, selection board and syndicate”.

“...discretionary powers of...Vice Chancellor to make appointments...the near and dear ones of the influential figure, political personalities...are appointed...in total disregard of procedural requirements...eligibility criterion...”

“...lack of...HR planning...its implementation...relevant processes...practices...not...strategically integrated...lack of appreciation of...HR planning...not have the necessary roles, skill...underpinning HR planning”.

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<td>ive ce of HR</td>
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<td>Nonexistence of HR section</td>
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<td>No HR council</td>
<td>Dearth of HR staff</td>
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<td>Scarcity of HR specialist</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No training of HR staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>HR position occupied by teaching faculty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No legal HR body</td>
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“...Establishment Section deals with personal files, ACRs, transfer ... promotion cases of employees. ...no concept of HR ... same ...the position in other universities”.

“...who ... deal with HR issues...are not HR specialists ... are not properly trained ...no realization of the need ... HR professionals to look after ... HR business...”

“HR positions ... occupied by faculty...no relevant qualification...experience...poor understanding...no full-fledged HR section ... no independent HR council ... pathetic status of HR.”

7.3.2 Dearth of policy guidelines on conflict of interest

Participants were of the view that before commencing the task of shortlisting, it is a prerequisite for the staff working in HR section to examine the list of applicants, to ensure that there exists no conflict of interest during the course of the entire process. This situation arises where any employee, dealing with recruitment and selection or member of the interview panel or member of the final decision-making bodies have personal, professional or working relations with any candidate that may, in any way, affect the whole process at any stage or may influence the decisions, they make. Universities, in general, have so far not designed such guidelines or adopted such a policy, to address such a situation in order to ensure that all the tasks, activities, and processes associated with staffing are pursued with high standards of
conduct, honesty and integrity, in all circumstances. An HR Manager of a university articulated that:

*Our university has not developed clear-cut policy and procedures, to manage a situation where a conflict of interest arises. As per practice, universities, by and large, do not keep record of such a situation in the first place. At least, such a situation, to the best of my knowledge, is not even reported in the universities during my entire professional career (EUHRM-2).*

Data revealed that university employees and public officials involved in the recruitment and selection did not declare such a situation for a variety of reasons. The most compelling among these include: i) They happened to be not properly educated about such a situation; ii) They did not report it officially for personal reasons even if they were aware of it; and iii) They did not disclose it openly and publicly for lack of policy on the subject matter. This was further elaborated by an HR manager:

*Generally, there is uncertainty in the staff members about such a policy. The employees who are engaged in the process of recruitment and selection are not properly sensitized, how such a situation may arise and how it shall be managed while pursuing new hiring, as it seems highly undesirable that close personal relation intrudes or influence staffing decisions in any way in the universities (EUHRM-2).*

In all cases, the premier first thing surfaced is that there is no such policy subsists in any selected university, having clear guidelines defining such circumstances involving a conflict of interest where employees’ personal interests are
at odds with the universities’ interest. Hence, there is no assignment of responsibility for identifying and resolving actual and potential conflicts in the recruitment and selection.

7.3.3 Centralized decision-making

Overwhelming authority rests in the position of a single individual in the universities, and that is the Vice Chancellor. He is in the possession of controlling authority by virtue of his designation while managing staffing function in the universities. Many matters hinge upon his formal approval. He is the chairman of Selection Board (recommending body) as well as Syndicate (approving body) at the same time. The response of participants unveiled that on the one hand interview panel is too big and too broad, but on the other, the Vice Chancellor is having an immense influence on the recommendations made by the panel. Subject experts are nominated on the panel upon his sole approval. To put it succinctly, in a great deal of cases, jobs are posted as open, but in reality, the top management in the universities have already made up their mind to select an internal or a ‘privileged’ candidate for the overweening centralized authority. Deputy Registrar of a university added that:

The Vice Chancellor has a decisive role in the entire business. Literally, he is in the driving seat and has the leverage to manure and manipulate the entire system, to pave the way for selection of a particular favoured candidate. With his approval, proposal for the creation of new positions is moved, eligibility criteria proposed, advertisement floated, shortlisting committee constituted and subject experts on the interview panel nominated. Being chairman of the Finance and Planning Committee,
Selection Board and Syndicate at the same time, these bodies accords approval, in most of the cases, to whatever he recommends (EUDRA-2).

Being autonomous entities, the provincial legislation has empowered the Vice Chancellor to create, re-designate and make appointments at all levels in all cadres. This is the root cause of all sorts of corrupt practices in recruitment and selection in the universities. Content analyses of relevant documents revealed powers and functions of the Vice Chancellor. A respondent further elaborated another dimension of the centralized decision-making powers elaborating that:

The discretionary power of the Vice Chancellor to make appointments at all levels, in all grades and scales in the universities on contract basis is the source of all kinds of corruption, cronyism and favoritism in the universities. The near and dear ones of the influential figures, politician, bureaucrats and people at the helm of universities’ affairs are appointed against various positions through the use of personal clout or political influence, in total disregard of the procedural requirements and requisite eligibility criterion on contract basis and are regularized in due course of time by adopting procedural requirement, just to complete codal formalities (KUR-4).

This systematic and unswerving reservation of authority at central point within the universities under which various activities related to recruitment and selection are brought under the direct control of the office of the chief executive officer culminating in reducing the importance of HR Department and its staff and increasing the importance of the superior executive office of the Vice Chancellor.
7.3.4 Deficiencies from HR perspective

7.3.4.1 Poor HR Planning.

Participants were of the view that like any other business, planning has always been crucial at the beginning of any recruitment and selection process as this result in the best possible outcome as desired. This assists in managing various bottlenecks; overcoming time constraints and streamlining staffing function to best facilitate the applicants and serve the interest of the universities. Nevertheless, this all is not in practice in universities. In fact, HR planning is not a regular feature of the administrative function in the higher education institutions. In almost all case study universities, HR is managed in a very traditional personnel management style. An HR Manager of a university disclosed that:

*HR planning, by and large, is not believed to be essential here in our universities. There is very little planning undertaken here at any level, as the academia, generally tend to be reactive rather than proactive, and long term planning is not seriously considered. This is because the concerned administrative units often lack adequately qualified professionals to look after it. Thus, HR planning hardly exists in the institution of higher education in our country (EUHRM-2).*

Similarly, HR policy is hardly designed or adopted by any of the selected public sector universities. Recruitment and selection policy exist in a very circumscribed manner in some of the universities. Comprehensive guidelines supporting recruitment and selection do not exist. Same is the position of all most all
universities. The existing service statutes or rules are considered as HR policy. Proper training sessions are not arranged for the staff involved in staffing. Proper job description is not made available in the universities for the advertised positions. The entire process of recruitment and selection is undertaken in a very casual manner. Necessary homework is not undertaken before embarking upon the task. Each activity involved in recruitment and selection is not properly identified. Proper schedule for execution of these activities, inter alia, is not chalked out and this is why the entire process takes unduly long time, efforts and energies to complete. An informant highlighted the challenges involved in HR planning in the universities summatting that:

As the public sector entities have to come out from the conventional approach of personnel administration to the human resource paradigm, there is a lack of successful HR planning and its implementation in the academia. Effective HR planning is vital to meeting internal and external challenges. However, relevant processes and practices do not seem to be strategically integrated in public sector universities. This reflects the lack of appreciation of the potential value of HR planning as many universities do not possess necessary roles, skill base and competencies underpinning HR planning (EUEO-1).

Data divulged that the concept of HR planning does not prevail widely in the universities, embracing long-term as well as short-term HR requirement, defining how the universities shall move from its current manpower position to its desired manpower position in the days to come. In the absence of a well thought-out HR plan,
it is very difficult to provide the right kind of people at the right time for smooth function of academic life on the campuses.

7.3.4.2 Underestimating significance of HR.

Data revealed that four out of the selected six universities are offering specialized and advanced courses at the post graduate level in HR, nevertheless, its practical application at the university level is fragmented, inconsistent and flawed. The discipline of HRM, its various concepts, HR planning and the idea of HR best practices are not areas of much concern to the administrators. They were not even mindful of the fact that HR is a specialized discipline and that it requires sound HR professionals and qualified staff possessing HR management skills, rich experience in HR and having a deep understanding of HR in the context of higher education. An HR Manager believed that:

None of the entire top brass in the university management is mindful of the HR challenges confronted by universities in the globalized world. Similarly, none of them is cognizant of the changing demands and latest trends in HRM in both developing as well as developed countries (EUHRM-2).

This lack of profound understanding of HR concepts, its significance and its dynamics resulted in a higher education landscape featuring critical deficiencies on strategic planning front. This is one of the critically important area; participants believed received frighteningly, little attention. A respondent referred to this poor state of HR affairs in universities stating that:
Those who mainly deal with HR issues in public sector universities are not HR specialists and even they are not properly trained for the job. Ironically, there is no realization of the need, to have HR professionals, to look after the HR business in public sector universities. For training and development of administrative staff, in general, and HR staff, in particular, very limited opportunities are available in the universities. To those, who are at the helm of affairs in the universities, recruitment and selection is a simple administrative job and anybody can do it which is not the case (KUARE-4).

Respondents were of the opinion that little efforts were made in the past to appreciate, value and emulate widely used HR best practices that were considered as climacteric to how universities operated in the globalized world. Universities, hence, would not be able to build a good team of working professionals without realizing the significance role of HR.

7.3.4.3 Nonexistence of HR Department and HR Council.

Universities in the public sector, in general, have not instituted an established, full-fledged and separate office or a specific department or a specialized section designed to look after HR issues. In all the selected case universities, as revealed by the participants and further substantiated by the available archival record, Establishment Section is the only administrative unit, primarily responsible for managing HR affairs. Similarly, there is no statutory body or council (i.e. HR council or board) to oversee HR affairs in the universities. This was further substantiated by a respondent:
Here, in our university, Establishment Section deals with personal files, ACRs, transfer and promotion of employees. There is no concept of HR, here. I think, more or less same is the position in other universities (IUARM-3).

Further probe into the matter revealed that in all most all of the selected universities, HR affairs were predominately, looked after by the Establishment Section - the most disgusted and intensively disliked administrative unit in the universities. In other words, Establishment Section was the so-called HR department in the public sector universities. The position of Director HR exists, hardly, in any university. The Registrar, the principal administrative officer, heads the Establishment Section. He was having multiple assignments of administrative nature to look after. He remained preoccupied with administrative, as well, as academic matters most of the time and thus, he rarely, saved time for taking up HR issues wholeheartedly and diligently.

In most of the cases, with certain exceptions, the key HR positions are occupied by faculty members on acting charge basis, with no relevant qualification and experience, multiplied by poor understanding of HR issues. There is no full-fledged, HR section and no independent HR Council, reflecting the pathetic state of HR affairs in universities (EUDRA-2).

In all cases, important thing that came forth was that the universities’ management structure did not feature a full-fledged HR department, in line with modern HR best practices prevailing across the globe, manned by qualified and skilled HR staff, having relevant professional expertise of various functions of the HR
department specially recruitment and selection so that the universities might be able to perform staffing function in a professional manner. This was increasingly becoming indispensable as it would help the academia, to remain competitive in the fastly moving, rapidly changing world.

7.3.4.4 Dearth of HR professionals.

The response of participants revealed that placement of right person for the right job, invariably, remained a serious issue in the universities. In very few cases, employees working in the so-called HR Section were having qualification and experience in HRM. In case, if you found someone in the said administrative unit with relevant HR qualification and experience, it would be merely, due to favourable combination of circumstances rather than proper homework and thorough HR planning. In only one of the six selected universities, staff with HR qualification was placed in the Establishment Section. Participants were of the view that the workload of this Section was, comparatively, more than other administrative departments in the university, as this particular unit used to deal with multiple administrative, academic and HR affairs at the same time.

The staff working in the Establishment Section are not much different from the rest of administrative units in terms of knowledge, skill, qualification and, experience. They are not, having relevant qualification and even not trained for the job. They, most of the time, remain under stress and exceedingly demotivated, as there subsist no mechanism to compensate hard working employees.
Like the post of Registrar, the rest of key administrative positions such as Director Academics, Director Planning, Director Finance, Controller of Examinations, Director ORIC and Director QEC were usually, occupied by teaching faculty or officers, having no relevant qualification and administrative experience of working in similar capacities. Strong resistance to integrate HR practices and the high power distance culture in the universities were narrated to be detrimental in framing HR policies and practices. Status quo is believed to prevail regarding divergent HR trends prevailing in higher education sector until qualified and experienced HR professionals were hired to deal with HR issues in the universities.

7.3.4.5 Ineffective use of Information Technology.

Informants were of the view that Information Technology was one of the most significant environmental factors affecting higher education landscape in many ways, particularly, management of human resources. The literature review identified application of information technology as a critically important factor affecting recruitment and selection in the globalized academic world. Nevertheless, the participants during interview sessions deplored its limited application in the context of higher education sector in Pakistan with a focus on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The significance of Information Technology was highlighted in the context of growing role of social media, particularly, Facebook and Twitter and the use of web portals such as LinkedIn for online recruitment and selection purposes.

Very few public sector universities at this stage are embracing social media. Some have just set out, to incorporate it into their recruitment strategy. However, the
majority of universities are not as confident about social media nor had the capacity to incorporate it into their recruitment process. Overall, in Pakistan, the public sector universities are still in their infancy, in terms of using social media for recruitment purposes (AUAdR-5).

Throughout the interviews and subsequent data-gathering, a number of internal factors were also identified that are making it challenging for universities, to opt for online recruitment and selection. An HR Officer of an Institute shared his opinion:

*Our Institute has not automated the system of recruitment and selection and the entire process is executed manually. There is no online system for application submission. Short listing is done, manually. Screening tests are paper based. Results of the screening tests are rarely displayed on university’s website. Although, we are working on it, and a committee has been constituted for the job, yet, at the moment there is almost negligible application of IT in the entire process (IMHRO-1).*

Of late, organizations both in public as well as private sector, have realized the growing significance of using IT in leveraging their HR functions. Drastic and far-reaching changes in the domain of recruitment and selection rely heavily on cutting edge IT. Nevertheless, universities both, the first as well as the second generation, have not yet caught up with this trend. The use if IT is confined to only very few areas, whereas its full-scale use in HR in the institutions of higher education will take some more time.
7.4 External factors

The central theme, external factors impinging on the system of recruitment and selection of administrative staff in universities, imbibe forces which are beyond the control of the university authorities. These are the external environmental factors accruing in the circle of interest of the universities' top management, mainly, comprising of three subthemes: i) Political and legal forces; ii) Excessive bureaucracy; and iii) Ineffective system of monitoring and accountability. These themes were discerned through a rigorous process of analytic thinking. Table-4 reflects the process of arriving at subthemes and main themes. These are discussed in detail in the following section.

7.4.1 Political and legal forces

During interviews, respondents identified a number of political, legal and regulatory factors affecting public sector universities' capacity to hire administrative staff in a transparent manner, particularly, at the lower cadre. As the quality of higher education is diminishing and unemployment is skyrocketing, politicians, eminent persons, and renowned figures exert insurmountable pressure to get their near and dear ones, relatives and political supporters induct in the universities, one way or the other. In fact, the Vice Chancellor is having a vital role in decision making in universities, therefore, influencing decision making is relatively easy in these autonomous academic bodies. Additional Registrar of a university evinced that:
This politicization of higher education system is a symptom that impacts universities across the board. To be honest...institutions of higher education, nevertheless, are not truly autonomous to weather these forms of polarization, unionism and interventionism (AUADR-5).

Nevertheless, data uncovered some obvious exceptions. The Director of an Institute claimed that political pressure was never accepted, at any stage, in the selection process in the institute neither by him nor his predecessor. This was further substantiated by the other participants of the study as well available archival record. Apart from this, on the legal front, the traditional system of personnel management in universities and its process have not been revisited, as per court injunctions issued from time to time, new legislations and new laws enacted by the legislative bodies but more or less shaped by the whims and caprice of top management. This was further affirmed by a participant while referring to the relevant documentary evidence:

New developments in the field of HR and new legislations passed and enacted by the government have a marginal impact on the personnel management system in the universities. This is evident from the fact that the newly promulgated legislations such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities (Amendment) Act, 2015 and Right to Information Act are not implemented, here in the universities, in true letter and spirit, even after the lapse of several months and even years (KUARE-4).

As universities’ top management need the backing of these political leaders on numerous occasions for multiple purposes, thus, the latter make their best efforts to get the people of their choice employed in the universities. Moreover, unionization
and internal politics are also on the rise on the campuses. The participants were having little doubt in mind that the politicians have a strong and effective role in the recruitment and selection process in the public sector universities.

### Table-4: The process of arriving at subthemes and main themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main theme</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Data extract</th>
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| External factors (These are the forces that cannot be controlled by the universities) | Political and legal forces | Political intertivism | Politicians role in universities’ affairs | “…politicisation…impacts…universities…institutions of higher education…not truly autonomous to weather these forms of … polarization…, unionism …. interventionism”.
| | Increasing internal politics | Unionism | New legislations have little impact | “… new legislations …enacted …government … marginal impact on … personnel …. system … newly promulgated legislations … are not implemented in … universities …. even after … lapse …. several months … even years”.
| | Non implementation of law | Influence decisions | Vested interest | “… have … vested interest in … affairs of … universities. … to influence selection decisions to their favour. … they try their level best …person of … choices … vice chancellor … they … realize their aspirations”.
| | Excessive bureaucracy | Bureacratic power struggle | Manipulation of authority | Serving personal agenda | “… vice chancellor …cardinal position … universities, … has to keep himself in good books of … bureaucrats … want… jobs for their people …this is…prime reasons for bureaucratic interventionism in universities”.
| | | | Obliging bureaucrats | | “… government officials, bureaucrats, .. ensure that … people of their own choice are … selected and appointed …. in universities. …. these ….universities are … dominated … who have limited …or … no academic experience … run by management … bureaucratic structures … style”.

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7.4.2 Excessive bureaucracy

Participants of the study argued that the role of robust bureaucracy has infringed upon the autonomous status of universities. They were of the view that bureaucratization of higher education is on the rise in the province for the last couple of decades. This manifests itself, in many ways. From the establishment of new universities to appointment of vice-chancellors; from approval of various research and developmental projects to allocation and release of funds; from the appointment of Deans to the management of administrative affairs, federal as well as provincial bureaucracy has a vital role to play in the affairs of public sector universities. Content analyses of relevant documents unfolded that three separate sets of bureaucracies are engaged in the official business with the higher education sector in the province.
These include: i) The provincial bureaucracy; ii) The federal bureaucracy; and iii) The growing bureaucratic set up of HEC. This excessive managerialism adversely impacts the official business in the universities. An informant told that:

*They have their own vested interest in the affairs of the public sector universities. One of the most obvious is to influence selection decisions in their favour. Even, they try their level best to have a person of their choices, as a vice chancellor so that they the latter may facilitate them in realizing their cherished desires.*

The appointment of Vice Chancellor by the Governor in the capacity of Chancellor of all public sector universities in the province set the stage for the government functionaries, politicians and bureaucrats to intrude upon the autonomous status of the universities, consequently, promoting their agenda and serving their vested interests. A participant articulated that:

*Since, the vice chancellor occupies a cardinal position in the universities, once appointed; he has to keep himself in good books of all senior bureaucrats, officials of Governor’s secretariat and officers of the administrative departments for personal gains such as extension, etc. ...bureaucrats have their own personal agenda to serve. And this is one of the prime reasons for bureaucratic interventionism in universities (EUSUPDT-2).*

The key governing bodies in universities such as Syndicate and Senate are represented by Secretaries of four provincial government departments (i.e. Higher
Education, Establishment, Finance and Administrative Department). Apart from this, the Chancellor/Governor appoints a couple of other members on these governing bodies, on the recommendations made by Secretary Higher Education Department. This excessive bureaucratization makes management of administrative affairs immensely problematic. The complexity of this situation is portrayed by an informant stating that:

*To make thing worse government officials, bureaucrats, politicians leave no stone unturned to ensure that the people of their own choice are finally selected and appointed against positions of authority in the universities. It is also a matter of serious concern to see that these public sector universities are being dominated by administrators who have limited or absolutely no academic experience and run by management with bureaucratic structures and style (AUAdR-5).*

In a nutshell, staffing function in the universities always remained defective as almost all key positions of power are either controlled or at least influenced by bureaucrats both serving as well as retired. In fact, universities all over the province are already and completely bureaucratized by the governments and HEC. The university authorities are cognizant of these deficiencies but lack of a profound understanding of what higher education demands in the changing times. The higher education is completely at the mercy of the bureaucrats. This bureaucratized higher education while apparently promoting excellence, has been systematically undermining it in the long run.


7.4.3 Ineffective system of monitoring and accountability

For being autonomous bodies, universities need to have strong internal control system having proper check and balance mechanism. As pointed out by the respondents, the important role that robust accountability machinery can play is to ensure that universities adhere to the principles and ethical practices, ultimately safeguarding public interest and trust from dishonesty and deceit. In fact, the genuine autonomy of the universities has been tarnished, for all practical purposes, in many cases, by a system of the pursuit of power, within and outside, as the ruling political party makes great efforts to control the affairs of the academia in the absence of an effective system of accountability.

Detailed scrutiny of the relevant documents revealed that much information was not available providing evidence of some effective oversight mechanism, in force in the institutions of higher education or the affairs of the universities were monitored by some external source, to ensure universities operate in a fair, smooth and transparent manner.

In fact, universities in the public sector, do not have a robust internal control system and external monitoring mechanism in place, and there is an urgent need for developing and implementing institutional assessment and accountability processes on the campuses even in the entire country (KUAREx-4).

Besides, there is no monitoring mechanism in place, through which the universities ensure to verify that: i) The people who were selected and appointed in
the universities have the desired knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for excellent performance of the job; ii) The recruitment and selection system function in a transparent and unbiased manner; iii) The hiring policies and procedures are gender sensitive and treat candidates with disabilities and applicants hailing from different ethnic groups fairly and justly, and iv) The top management is equally responsible and accountable for the affairs of the universities. This dismal state of affairs prevails in almost all public sector universities, invariably. One of the Deputy Registrar of a university shared that:

"Interestingly, in our university one person was hired and was appointed as a Coordinator of one of the university’s satellite campus with exorbitant pay package, multiplied by rich perks and privileges. He served the university for a couple of years. However, on verification, it was found that the person concerned was not having the basic level of qualification/degree in the relevant field let alone advanced level qualification required for the position.

On further probe, it was found that even no inquiry was initiated in the said case and the matter was ultimately hushed up with the passage of time. Moreover, nothing was learnt from the incident and hence, no mechanism was developed, to avoid the occurrence of such incidents in the future. A participant, very succinctly, commented that:

"In reality, the Vice Chancellor is responsible, to none, but only the Governor being Chancellor of the public sector universities and accountability to an individual"
creates a sense of irresponsibility and dependency rather than promotes autonomy and good governance (EUSUPDT-2).

In fact, the recruitment policy, service statutes, and ancillary documentation are not made available to the public and applicants. There as such no policy defining system of accountability to be followed during the process of recruitment and selection. Similarly, universities have not evolved an effective grievances redressal mechanism. People involved in the recruitment process happened to be not mindful of unconscious bias, diversity, gender equity and how to make selection decisions in an unbiased and non-discriminatory fashion.

7.5 Summary

By bringing into focus, management of staffing function, particularly recruitment, and selection, this Chapter made an attempt to provide some new insights about the various factors responsible for the loopholes while pursuing fresh hiring in the universities. The data elucidated that universities experienced numerous problems across a range of areas in connection with undertaking fair, impartial and merit-based recruitment and selection and that these difficulties resulted ultimately in the selection of poorly qualified candidates. This Chapter presented a series of factors, primarily, responsible for the loopholes in the prevailing staffing function. Among these, there was a strong argument that recruitment and selection system, essentially, operated in a complete vacuum for the reason that system approach was not adopted to manage it. A proper policy was not designed for handling conflict of interest. Centralized authority was the hallmark of the system resulting in misuse of authority and violation
of rules. Above all the universities had never ever scrutinized their own system of selection to check its accuracy with the intent of verification. There was no HR audit taking place in the universities. Effective system of accountability did not exist in the universities. To overcome these problems, academia needs to undertake proper research in the domain, transform its HR system and adopt widely used HR best practices. These suggestions and recommendations are discussed in detail in the next Chapter.
Chapter 8 Reforming Recruitment and Selection System

8.1 Introduction

This Chapter discusses various suggestions and proposals put forward by the participants, to regenerate the existing recruitment and selection system in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in a systematic way. These recommendations, as reported by the respondents were organized into a structured or coherent whole and are presented here. Some of these mainly comprise of policy level recommendations, whereas, some are procedural level recommendations. Both these categories are the focus of discussion in this Chapter. In fact, there are several things; top management in universities need to take into account while starting a new recruitment and selection cycle. In the role of an HR manager, it is the prime responsibility of the Registrar, to plan each and every single stage of the process and to see that everything is moving in the right direction and according to the proposed plan. All these will be possible only when the universities follow the best talent selection procedure and pursue recruitment and selection with system approach in mind and not as a sequestered one time affair.

8.2 Reforming recruitment and selection system

While divulging numerous issues in fresh hiring, the participants advised that universities need to restructure its entire staffing function, to make it more responsive, transparent and customers friendly. This Chapter presents recommendations made by the participants, in order, to address these loopholes and to eliminate or mitigate the
elements responsible for the loopholes by adopting system approach, integrating values of accountability, transparency, meritocracy and objectivity in the entire system.

Two main themes that were discovered while analyzing participants’ responses embrace: i) Policy level recommendations; and ii) Procedural level recommendations. These two major themes are discerned with a number of subthemes. First, the central themes with policy level recommendations are taken up with subthemes including: i) Adopting system approach; ii) Constituting HR Council; iii) Setting up HR Department; iv) Formulating HR policy; v) Managing conflict of interest; and vi) Implementing principles of accountability. Table-5 reflects the process of arriving at subthemes and main themes. These are discussed in further details in the subsequent sections.

8.3 Policy level recommendations

The policy level recommendations, mainly, encompass suggestions directed towards the government, policy makers, HEC and governing bodies of the universities. These shall require, major decisions at the top level, particularly, policy making bodies such as provincial government, HEC in some respects and authorities of the universities such as Syndicate and Senate. These are discussed, here, in further detail:

8.3.1 Adopting system approach and system thinking

As already discussed, staffing function is not undertaken in a systematic manner, in the universities and this is one of the central factors, identified by the
participants, mainly responsible for the prevailing gaps in recruitment and selection system. Hence, it has become inevitable, to keep track of the contemporary challenges, emerging trends and latest developments in the field of HR, particularly, recruitment and selection so that the best-fit practices prevailing in the context of higher education in the developed nations can be replicated for improving HR systems in developing countries like Pakistan. In view of the current challenges posed by the competitive academic environment, one of the informants suggested that:

*The staffing function in academia needs to be updated in line with emerging challenges, prevailing best practices and the latest research findings in the field. Universities should move towards modern recruitment, assessment and selection methods (KUAREX-4).*

Participants were of the view that universities need to redesign recruitment and selection system and make it more open, flexible and responsive. Both internal as well external alignments should be evolved for each task within the system. This will help the candidates, to have a fair idea of the various processes involved in fresh hiring in the universities and it will also aid the university administration to conduct staffing in an objective manner. Additional Registrar of a university suggested that:

*Alignment of various internally oriented tasks in recruitment and selection such as need assessment for new hiring, job description, advertisement, short listing, evaluation and selection have become inevitable. Proper job analysis must be made before starting fresh hiring. Alignment with HR subsystems such as capacity building,*
career development reward and compensations and motivation needs to be impeccably established in the universities (AUAdR-5).

8.3.2 Constituting HR Council or HR Board

Detailed analyses of relevant archival record disclosed that there are various forums in the universities, in the form of councils, boards and committees making recommendation on various academic and administrative matters to the governing bodies for approval, academia, therefore, needs to have an HR council or HR board on the analogy of other councils or boards in the universities to have similar function with focus on HR. A respondent maintained that:

There must be an HR statutory body and it needs to be incorporated as part of the KPK Universities (Amendment) Act, 2015. This body shall have an oversight function, addressing HR affairs in the institutes of higher education in the entire province.

Participants were of the opinion that with the establishment of an HR Council, staffing function shall receive the desired level of attention from top management. An informant proposed that:

The need for the establishment of an HR Council was realized since long. This council shall not only look after staffing function but shall be an integral part of internal control system, assuring realization of HR objectives, reliable HR reporting, and compliance with newfangled legislations, statutes and policies. This proposed
council or board shall also keep an eye on job design, training and development, working environment, compensation, motivation, career development and succession planning beside other key HR functions in the universities (KUARM-4).

**8.3.3 Establishing an independent body for recruitment and selection**

Respondents argued that, in view of some of the unethical employment practices reported in the universities and unblemished image of provincial Public Service Commission, the task of recruitment and selection in the universities should be assigned to the Commission. However, in view of the excessive workload of the Commission and mushroom growth of universities, the idea could not muster much support.

With a view to promote fairness and transparency participants shared several propositions. The authorities need to consider the establishment of an independent body which shall be responsible, mainly for recruitment and selection in the institutes of higher education. The members and chairperson of this independent body should be free from political affiliation, and the proposed body should be empowered with the legal authority to perform the desired function in a transparent and unbiased manner.

*Alternatively, one combined, separate and independent Selection Board needs to be constituted by the Government for all public sector universities headed by a man of known credibility and integrity (EUEO-1).*
These measures will help in: i) Countering misuse of discretionary powers of the Vice Chancellors in appointments trespassing law, rules, and regulations; ii) Help eliminate practices of corruption, favoritism and nepotism; and iii) Promote fair play, transparency and meritocracy in the entire system of recruitment and selection.

A full-fledged panel of Public Service Commission can also be assigned the task. Such independent bodies shall be in a position, to instill high standards of integrity, transparency, fairness and accountability in the recruitment and selection practices in the universities.

### Table 5: The process of arriving at subthemes and main themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main theme</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Data extract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy level recommendations (These include suggestions for the government, policy makers, HEC and governing bodies of the universities)</td>
<td>Adopting system approach</td>
<td>Internal and external alignment</td>
<td>Coordinating internally oriented tasks</td>
<td>“Alignment of … tasks … need assessment…, job description, advertisement,… short listing,… evaluation …… indispensable. … job analysis must … before, … hiring. Alignment with … subsystems …capacity building, career development … motivation needs … developed…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coping with Challenges</td>
<td>Managing external complexities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adopting modern trends</td>
<td>Taking care of new trends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Setting up HR Council</td>
<td>Internal HR control</td>
<td>Monitor HR affairs</td>
<td>“The … process … needs … updated …with … challenges … prevailing best practices. … move towards modern recruitment, assessment … selection …”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“… need … establishment … HR council … look after”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting up HR Department</td>
<td>Formulating HR policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>System Provide platform</td>
<td>System Provide platform</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insure compliance with legislations</td>
<td>Insure compliance with legislations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Design HR policies</td>
<td>Design HR policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manage HR functions</td>
<td>Manage HR functions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Streamline HR affairs</td>
<td>Streamline HR affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undertake HR planning</td>
<td>Undertake HR planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop job description</td>
<td>Develop job description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Road map for HR functions</td>
<td>Road map for HR functions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove ambiguities</td>
<td>Remove ambiguities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Staffing function … be … part of internal control … realization … HR objectives, … HR reporting,… compliance with legislations, … policies. … council … shall … oversee job design, …training and development, …compensation,…career development… succession planning …”.

“… transform … Establishment Section into HR… Wing …appoint human resource managers …… The government …merit-based recruitment … appointment …meritocracy …introducing some new legislations and reforms … university … have … catch up with the…”

“…HR section …streamline HR business in universities. shall develop job description …, prepare proper schedule of each task…..undertake proper planning for each stage and scrutinize each task.”

“HR policy … developed … consultation with …stakeholders … be … available …university website …. needs … implemented…. This policy …. be updated … changing demands … new developments. … shall provide guiding principle … HR functions including recruitment and selection and will clarify ambiguities”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Managing conflict of interest</th>
<th>Measures to deal with conflict of interest</th>
<th>Disclosure of conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementing principles of accountability</td>
<td>Strengthening internal and external control system</td>
<td>Recording of conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Designing policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Involve people with no conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Policy of openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inserting flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Involve people having credibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“…a conflict of interest should be disclosed, reported and recoded… appropriate action taken … recommended … relevant policy …. Officials, panel members … members of … governing bodies should not be part of … such process… where … conflict of interest…”

“…confidentiality …be eliminated from … process …policy of openness, flexibility … transparency … be adopted. … credibility … integrity … be nominated on panel”.

“Universities … ensure … principles of accountability … and fairness are adhered …… including … vacancies on contract basis … engaging contingent staff … project positions”.

### 8.3.4 Setting up HR Department

Some universities have, long ago, realized that HR Department can make a greater contribution. The participants, therefore, pleaded that campuses need to have a separate and full-fledged human resource department to look after HR affairs with a prime focus on subsystem recruitment and selection, manned by HR professionals having right qualification and relevant experience. This specialized HR section shall ultimately streamline overall HR business in the universities. The HR section shall develop job description for each position before its advertisement, prepare proper schedule of each task in the recruitment and selection process, undertake proper
planning for each stage and monitor each task to be completed within the stipulated period of time.

The universities should transform the Establishment Section into Human Resource Management Wing and appoint human resource managers to ensure fair practices and good governance in all public sector universities. The government has clearly shown its commitment for a transparent and merit-based recruitment and appointment policy, to ensure meritocracy in the universities by introducing some new legislations and reforms in the recent past. The universities should have to catch-up with the same (EUHRM-2).

The respondents argued that developing a functional HR department with ‘old wine in the new bottles’ shall be just cosmetic changes unless and until top management in the universities have a strong desire, to invest in HR and to embrace the real essence of HR development. An HR officer in an institute concluded that:

This whole process of restructuring and transformation from old, conventional and rigid personal management thinking to the new HRM system approach need changes in the mindset of the top brass in the universities. Otherwise, this exercise of establishing HR departments and hiring HR professionals will not bring the desired level of changes in the HR function in the institutes of higher education (IMHRO-1).

8.3.5 Formulating HR policy
An elaborate, well thought-out and comprehensive HR policy governing overall HR system, encompassing guidelines for various HR sub-system and functions within the larger academic environment is direly required for all public sector universities. Respondents suggested that the universities should develop detailed procedures for recruitment and selection, taking into account prevailing HR best practices, all relevant legislations and respective government policy guidelines. Once developed, these should be approved by the relevant governing bodies of the university and must be shared with all concerned (i.e. employees, potential applicants and all key stakeholders).

_The HR policy of the university once developed in consultation with all stakeholders should be made available on the university website and the same needs to be implemented in letter and spirit. This policy document must be updated with changing demands and new developments in the field. This shall provide guiding principles for all HR functions including recruitment and selection and will clarify ambiguities (EUSUPDT-1)._ 

8.3.6 Managing conflict of interest

To manage situations of conflict of interest, universities need to formulate clear policies and procedures and communicate it, to all concerned for strict compliance. The top management should ensure that the officials involved in the process of recruitment and selection should: i) Recognize any situation of conflict of interest; ii) Disclose in writing if any such situation arise; iii) Do not participate in the
selection decisions in such a situation; and iv) Keep record of a particular situation of conflict of interest.

In any recruitment and selection process in universities, a conflict of interest should be disclosed, reported and recorded and appropriate action taken as recommended by relevant policy guidelines. Officials, members of the selection panel or members of the governing bodies should not be part of any such process where they have a conflict of interest, or where there could be a reasonable perception that it exists (KUARE-4).

Participants were also of the view that the policy of conflict of interest should be put in place for the members of Selection Board and Syndicate to disclose such a situation in case a candidate is related to a member of Syndicate in order to uphold fairness, equality and transparency in the selection process in universities. An Establishment Officer of the University commented that:

Once the process is completed, each member of the panel must sign a declaration to the effect that they were aware of no conflict of interest either before or during the course of the process which could have or might reasonably be perceived as having prejudiced the recommendations of the panel (EUEO-1).

8.3.7 Implementing principles of accountability

It is essential that the principles of accountability are maintained in all kind of recruitment and selection exercises, at all times in the institutes of higher education, in
order to address the concerns and apprehensions of all stakeholders, particularly, candidates raised from time to time. A participant proposed that:

A great deal of confidentiality should be eliminated from the entire process and the policy of openness, flexibility and transparency should be adopted. The people with known credibility and integrity should be nominated on the panel as subject experts (AUAdR-5).

Universities must ascertain that the reports submitted by various committees (i.e., the screening committee, shortlisting committee and interview panel, selection board and selection committee) are complete in all respects and duly signed by all members. It is also imperative that the official record of all recruitment and selection initiatives should be kept in good order and make available, whenever required for scrutiny.

Universities need to take care that the principles of accountability, integrity and fairness are adhered to, at all the levels, all the times in recruitment and selection process including filling of vacancies on a contract basis or engaging contingent staff or various project positions (EUSUPDT-1).

8.4 Procedural level recommendations

The procedural level recommendations, primarily, embrace suggestions for the universities management. These shall require support and commitment on the part of the top management and highly motivated staff at the middle and lower level for its
execution. The procedural level recommendations elucidated with subthemes as: i) Planning various stages of recruitment and selection, ii) Conducting effective job analysis, iii) Conducting fair and effective short-listing, iv) Conducting screening test, v) Organizing interview and vi) Effective use of Information Technology. Table-6 illustrates the process of arriving at these subthemes and main themes. These are discussed in detail in the following section:

8.4.1 Planning recruitment and selection

It has become critical for HR staff in the universities, to clearly identify the relationship between various phases of recruitment and selection cycle and understand the impact of overlooking the planning stage on the overall hiring process. Here, the HR staff in universities must define when to start the process and when to conclude. A respondent suggested that:

Proper homework is essential before embarking upon recruitment and selection in academia. This assist in detailed job analysis and design of the position to be filled keeping in view the immediate, medium term and long term requirements of the universities. This gives a complete breakdown of various activities involved in the entire process (ICARE-3).

The planning stage embodies contemplating about various steps involved in recruitment and selection, scheduling various activities, working out necessary resources and computing time required to complete the entire process. An Assistant Registrar contended that:
When fresh hiring is designed in a systematic manner, proper planning is undertaken beforehand, and various tasks are defined, it allows the universities, to take a methodical and professional approach towards staffing function by scheduling various activities, arranging various tasks and planning various events to take place at a particular time. This in turn, results in successful completion of recruitment and selection process and acceptance of job offer by the selected candidates in a successful and timely manner (KUARE-5).

8.4.2 Undertaking effective job analysis

Being an important task, job analysis is a missing link in the entire recruitment and selection process in the universities. Participants were of the opinion that the HR section in the universities needs to delineate knowledge, skills and attributes required to perform a particular role in the best possible manner. It is essential to recruitment and selection because it is the cornerstone of an effective HR system. An informant advised that:

Universities need to consider seriously; how the position they intend, to fill, is defined. It is essential to think over; what level of technical skills is really required for a job. And this should be a regular feature of the whole staffing function (IMHRO-1).

An improper job analysis is destined to impact the outcomes negatively, regardless of the fact that how meticulously the rest of the recruitment and selection process is carried out. In the absences of a proper job analysis, universities, time and
again, select candidates with poor credentials not even suitable for a particular role on the basis of misperception developed by members of the panel about a particular candidate during the course of the interview. A respondent mentioned that:

This phase identifies not only skills and abilities required to perform a role professionally but also assist in identifying key selection criteria and developing job description that is again some of the key dimensions for attracting and selecting the most suitable candidates to pursue their professional career in universities (IUARE-3).

8.4.3 Conducting fair and effective short-listing

This stage of recruitment and selection process requires an efficient applications assessment procedure, currently deficient in the universities, determining whether the candidates meet the required minimum eligibility criteria for a particular position in order to reduce a large pool of applications to a manageable size. An informant recommended that:

In universities, a proper mechanism needs to be developed for short listing of applications. Proper policy guidelines should be defined, to facilitate the people performing the task. Universities should constitute standing shortlisting committee and ensure it remains functional. Proper training of the members of the shortlisting committee needs to be arranged to perform the task in a professional manner. The proceedings/minutes of the committee meetings need to be recorded and disseminated, eliminating the element of confidentiality in the process (EUSPDT-1).
A proper plan needs to be devised for the activity and the task needs to be scheduled over a period of time and be completed within the stipulated time. The outcome of the shortlisting needs to be made public on the university’s website and the candidates who are not successfully short-listed need to be informed with cogent reasons and their concerns need to be addressed. Apart from this, an HR Officer urged that:

**A standard application form needs to be developed and used by the universities that contain questions pertaining to the requirements of the job in terms of knowledge, skills and experience required for a position, to reduce potential subjectivity in the assessment process (IMHRO-2).**

### 8.4.4 Conducting screening test

To ensure credibility and transparency in the process, participants suggested that the task of arranging screening test should be outsourced to an independent agency or external testing body. If the university is conducting own screening test, then employees of known integrity should be assigned the task. A respondent advised that:

*The screening test should be conducted through an independent body. The pattern and specimen of screening test should be shared with the applicants in a candid manner (EUEO-1).*

The candidates should be informed through telephone, email and SMS. The
services of a Courier Service need to be hired for delivering call letters to the candidates in time. This information should be uploaded on the university’s website. Efforts should be made that the outcome of each and every single stage of the process should be widely circulated and displayed on the university’s website for information of all concerned.

The result of the screening test should be declared and uploaded immediately on the university’s website. Those who do not qualify the written test need to be informed through a letter of regret. The proceedings and record of the written test should be kept open and be made available on request. The grievances of the applicants should be addressed promptly before starting the next phase of the interview (KUAREx-4).

Table-6: The process of arriving at subthemes and main themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main theme</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Data extract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Procedural level recommendations (These encompass suggestions for the universities' management and staff at the middle and lower level) | Planning various stages of recruitment and selection | Undertaking necessary home work | Doing job analysis | “... home work ...before ...recruitment ...selection,... detailed job analysis and design ... gives a complete breakdown ... various activities involved ..... entire process”.
| Define the | Identify | Breakup of activities | Scheduling activities | “...recruitment ... designed in ... systematic manner, proper planning ......various tasks ... defined ... take a methodical ... professional approach ...scheduling ... activities, arranging... tasks ... planning various events ”.
<p>|            |          |                       |        | “... need to ... consider how the position ... intend to fill is defined. ...” |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conducting effective job analysis</th>
<th>role</th>
<th>required level of education</th>
<th>to think ... what level of technical skills ... required ... for a job. ... be regular feature of ... staffing function.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decide requisite skills and experience</td>
<td>Describe skills</td>
<td>“This ... identifies .....knowledge, skills ... abilities required ... perform ... role professionally ... assist in identifying ... selection criteria ... inform ... job description .....attracting ...selecting...suitable candidates .... career”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine expectations</td>
<td>Outline experience</td>
<td>“...mechanism .....for short listing .....policy guidelines ...be defined ...facilitate the task. ........constitute standing short listing committee...training of ... members of short listing committee ....proceedings... of committee meetings be recorded...eliminating...confidentiality ...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting fair and effective short-listing</td>
<td>Constitue standing short listing committee</td>
<td>“....standard application form ... be developed .... contain questions pertaining ... requirements of the job ... knowledge, skills and ... experience required ... position ... reduce ..... subjectivity in assessment...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining shortlisting mechanism</td>
<td>Training of members of short listing committee</td>
<td>“...screening test ... conducted through ... independent body. ....pattern ... of screening test ... be shared with ... applicants in ... candid manner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing comprehensive interview</td>
<td>Openness in screening test</td>
<td>“...result of the screening test ... be displayed... on the university's website. ... who do not qualify .... be informed through letter of regret. ... record of ... written test should be kept open and be made available on request. The grievances of ....candidates ... be addressed ...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting fair screening test</td>
<td>Sharing of maximum information</td>
<td>“....pose questions.... how ... candidate ... gain the required skills and knowledge ... to fill the role, ... many people ...not ... included in ... interview panel ....... panel ... be ... trained for the job”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| Developing proper mechanism for screening test | Grievances redressal | Panel be
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective use of Information Technology</th>
<th>Automatio n of recruitme nt and selection process</th>
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<tr>
<td>modest in size</td>
<td>Eliminate excessive interview marks weight-age</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“..., consistency should be adopted while asking questions from candidates .... The portion of interview marks out of the total for should be scaled down...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“… need … specific HR section …on website … develop a database ....only online applications … use … for short listing of candidates, …applications … received. …. develop a talent pool of applications .....for an alternative position in the future ...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### 8.4.5 Organizing interview

For being expensive, time consuming and complicated most of the universities do not maximize the value of interviewing. However, if used intelligently, this technique might turn out be a good predictor of work performance in the universities. Participants, therefore, recommended that the universities should conduct behaviourally-oriented interviews so that applicants demonstrate through reflecting upon past behaviour, how they meet the requirement of a particular position. Interviewing that is not behaviourally-oriented does not align with best practices and is not considered as an effective and consistent method of predicting work performance. Respondents were of the view that universities should use basic eligibility criteria, key selection measures, developed in light of a detailed job analysis, to design behaviourally-oriented interviews. The interview panel should make a fair assessment of the candidates, evaluating their suitability, knowledge,
skills and competencies for a particular job, in line with advertised position and job description. An informant advised that:

*It is essential to pose questions that cover, how the candidate might gain the required skills and knowledge necessary to fill the role, for instance, covering openness to further study or asking how the applicant learns best. It is advisable that many people should not be included in the interview panel for conducting selection interview. The members of the interview panel should be properly trained for the job (KUARE-5).*

Pre-meeting of the interview panel should be held to review short-listing and prepare for the interview procedure including questions and allocation of roles and responsibilities for the day of the interview. A manageable number of candidates should be interviewed on a single day. Each candidate should be given sufficient time and hence, each candidate needs to be evaluated comprehensively. A respondent suggested that:

*The approach of consistency should be adopted and maintained while asking questions from candidates and all the candidates should be subjected to more or less similar treatment during the interview. The portion of interview marks, out of the total, should be scaled down. The recommendations of the Selection Board should be transparent and need to be based on merit. The Vice Chancellor should chair either Selection Board or Syndicate at the same time, to undertake a fair assessment of the candidates (EUHRM-2).*
8.4.6 Making final selection decision

The Syndicate, the final decision-making body, should give sufficient time to evaluate and examine the recommendations made by the Selection Board and should not act as a rubber stamp. Before final decision, the Syndicate should make an objective assessment of the applicants’ suitability for a particular role. The meeting of the Syndicate should be held regularly, to clear the back log and expedite completion of the fresh process. Participants also suggested that it is essential for the executive body, to keep a vigilant eye on HR affairs. He added that:

*It is not the job of Syndicate to approve or disapprove, whatever recommended by the Selection Board but this executive body has a more important role to play. This apex body should also monitor the whole system of recruitment and selection, to address the bottlenecks in an effective manner (AUAdR-5).*

The universities should ensure, to upload names of selected candidates with their credentials, qualification and experience on the websites. All the unsuccessful candidates should be informed about the outcome of the recruitment and selection process.

*All the official documentation and compilation of proceedings of various meetings of recruitment and selection process should be completed in minimum possible time to avoid delay and facilitate completion of the entire recruitment and selection process within the stipulated time (IMHO--2).*

8.4.7 Effective use of Information Technology
Public sector universities should maximally use Information Technology resources for managing recruitment and selection. Respondents advised that universities need to consider proactively E-recruitment as a means to streamline the business, expedite the process and overcome corrupt practices and professional misconduct. Applications for vacant positions need to be received online and latest computer based tools should be used for assessment of candidates. Universities should use video technology such as Skype for job interviews.

This will help in: i) Expediting the process; ii) Reducing costs involved in fresh recruitment; iii) Reaching a wide pool of applicants; iv) Handling a large number of job applications in a speedy and consistent manner and v) Minimizing risks of malpractices. Moreover, the E-recruitment will help reduce human intervention in recruitment and selection and will eventually assist in reducing the risks of undue influence and favouritism. An HR Officer suggested that:

*Institutes need to have a specific HR section or corner on the website and advertise vacant posts on the various job portals. We should also develop a database for the purpose and receive only online applications and use it for short listing of candidates, the moment these are received (IMHRO-2).*

8.5 Summary

The aforementioned recommendations constitute some of the challenging tasks for the top management of the public sector universities. These propositions, if seriously addressed, shall prove as the dawn of a new reforms era, marked by better
HR planning and effective HRM practices, treating the human resource as a change agent and HR functions as pivotally important for success and better performance of the institutions of higher learning. To sum it up, the realization of the organizational goals, through its vibrant policies and elaborate programs, exceedingly empowered, technically skilled and highly motivated human resource is inevitable. Developing HR capacity and building an effective human resource department in the universities is an uphill task. In fact, it is about complete transformation of HR function, establishing friendly relations with all key stakeholders and reckoning the foremost outcomes of human resources in the academic setting.

To have an ideally perfect state of HRM system in the public sector universities, especially in the back drop of socio-political imbroglio of a developing country like Pakistan, is a challenging job. However, putting the best efforts for attaining the maximum output is highly likely. The optimistic feeling that all is going to turn out well for the universities as the public sector and others key players such as the private sector are now seriously considering reforming their HR systems in line with changing needs of the contemporary world. This requires comprehensive, far-reaching and deep-rooted structural reforms to be introduced in order get away with excessive authority resting in few hands and to tame the burgeoning role of bureaucracy in the affairs of the universities.
Chapter 9  Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

The basic aim of this study was to unearth loopholes in recruitment and selection system in the six selected public sector universities/DAIs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. To comprehend various factors responsible for these loopholes and what universities were doing about it and what needs to be done about it; were the overarching objectives of this study. Since the process of recruitment and selection has become extremely complex and intricate, it is important to understand the entire staffing function espoused in the universities with system approach in mind. This assists in identifying factors which come into play to determine gray areas that call for instant improvement. This Chapter presents an overall synopsis of the major themes arrived at, during analysis of data and postulates comprehensive recommendations to address these bottlenecks. This Chapter begins with underlying some of the major loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection in the selected universities followed by unearthing some of the key factors responsible for these loopholes. Some of the suggestions outlined in the light of the recommendations made by the participants are also part of this Chapter.

A complete section is devoted to the discussion about research propositions and themes elucidating all the four reach propositions in detail where evidence has been provided from the findings in support of the claim made in the individual proposition. Detailed discussion on these propositions have been undertaken where particular reference was made to the literature to integrate relevant literature with the
findings of the study illustrating what the findings entail in social, cultural, political
religious and economic context of Pakistan and specially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
Nevertheless, the structure of this final chapter is designed in such a way as to cover
many other areas and does not remain explicitly organized around the original
research propositions of the study.

Right after discussion on the propositions, implications of this study are
underlined for the universities, policy makers, academicians, scholars and researchers.
Certain limitations inherent in this study are also taken up in the concluding part.
Lastly, this Chapter foregrounds some avenues for possible future research.

In spite of some of the underlying impediments, the study realized its aims and
objectives, adding new insight into the body of knowledge on recruitment and
selection in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This Chapter discusses
the findings of the study in detail and concludes with a number of recommendations.

This research study is one of the first to explore loopholes in recruitment and
selection system in the context of higher education institutes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
The study unearthed various forces being the agent or cause for these loopholes and
postulates what measures universities should take to address these loopholes. Findings
revealed that there are a number of loopholes in the system of recruitment and
selection in universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The participants involved in the
processes argue that recruitment and selection exercises in the universities are not free
from political interventions, iniquity and malpractices. They argued that principles of
meritocracy, transparency, accountability and good governance rarely prevailed in the
selection process. Participants while identifying numerous failings in the HR system also maintained that there was often an absence of proper policy guidelines and procedures for fresh hiring in the universities.

9.2 Major loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection

Based on the participants’ response, the study identified a number of loopholes in the recruitment and selection system in the selected university. The two central themes emerged as a result of a detailed data analysis include: i) Strategic loopholes and ii) Operational loopholes. Various subthemes underpin these central themes. Among the wide-ranging loopholes discovered by the study, the most climactic is the revelation that staffing function in public sector operates in a subtle vacuum. Conflict of interest is rarely declared and recorded. Misuse of authority is common. Selection is made in total disregard of merit and in violation of the rule of law causing widespread dismay among the candidates. Universities generally, don’t have detailed policies and procedures in place, to inform objective, fair, and transparent recruitment and selection of administrative staff. There are numerous ambiguities, scores of contradictions and a host of deficiencies in the existing by-laws, statutes and rules governing HR affairs, to the serious disadvantage of universities and those who serve in it.

There is a serious dearth of standardized policies, plans and procedures, to ensure compliance with the constitutionally prescribed principles, values and social norms regulating HR in the public sector. Institutions of higher education and advanced learning, in this part of the world, don’t thoroughly consider what
knowledge, skills and competencies are essentially required for a position. Valid selection criteria is not determined properly and applied consistently. Universities don’t realize the importance to structure their various processes in accordance with the laid down criteria and don’t motivate and record their findings and decisions properly and monitor their own conduct with a view to revitalize the system.

According to interviewees, the members of the selection panel, in universities, are not properly prepared for the task at hand as they are involved, most of the time, at a very late stage. They are not always provided with sufficient information. Besides, they always remain unfamiliar with the selection instrument utilized and more often lack necessary interviewing skills. Hence, the final selection phase is found not only to be flawed but open to criticism. This has happened mainly, because of the fact that the selection criterion is not properly identified and selection interviews are poorly structured. In essence, there are a number of factors that engendered these problems. This study unearthed some of these factors which are revisited here.

9.3 Factors causing loopholes

This study divulged a number of micro and macro-environmental factors impacting higher education landscape in general and HR in particular. Some of the major forces that impact system of recruitment and selection in universities included political, legal, regulatory, technological and socio-demographic concerns. The data revealed some of the key factors responsible for the aforementioned loopholes which were divided into two broad categories: i) Internal factors; and ii) External factors. The internal factors consist of the forces that can be managed by the universities,
whereas, external factors are the forces which are beyond the control of the universities’ authorities. The internal elements affecting universities’ ability to undertake merit-based recruitment of administrative staff mainly comprised of lack of system approach to recruitment and selection, lack of policy guidelines on conflict of interest and centralized decision making. Effective HR Planning was not in common practice. Similarly, there is no independent HR Council constituted in the universities.

Whereas, external elements impinging on the system of recruitment and selection of administrative staff in universities mainly, embrace legal and political forces, excessive bureaucracy ineffective system of monitoring and weak accountability. Far-reaching and deep-rooted reforms are direly required in the universities to overhaul the entire system of recruitment and selection to develop the same in line with demands of the competitive academic world.

9.4 Reforming system of recruitment and selection

To overcome these challenges, the study put forward a number of suggestions which will ultimately help the universities in improving the system of recruitment and selection. As the main themes divulged, these recommendations were classified into two broad categories. These mainly include: i) Policy level recommendations and ii) Procedural level recommendations. The policy level recommendations, developed in light of the suggestions put forward by participants, underscored the need for adoption of system approach towards recruitment and selection. Universities need to establish a statutory body such as HR Council. This council should be supported by an independent HR Department which will help in formulating HR policy, managing conflict of interest and implementing principles of accountability.
The procedural level recommendations developed in the light of sub-themes postulated that the universities should plan various stages of recruitment and selection process. Similarly, universities should conduct an effective job analysis, followed by fair and effective short-listing, unbiased screening test and impartial interview. All these measures need to be complemented by the efficient and effective use of Information Technology resources otherwise the entire efforts to reform the system shall go down the drain. Public universities in Pakistan should accord special attention to recruitment and selection practices and need to invest more in the area to improve organizational effectiveness (Mukhtar, Siengthai & Ramzan, 2011: 398).

9.5 Conclusions about research propositions and themes

It was propounded, in the first proposition of the study, outlined in Chapter 02 that recruitment and selection in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were not managed methodically, and this subsystem was not connected to the other HR subsystems in a systematic manner. As illustrated in Section 6.3.1 of Chapter 6 and sketched in the process of arriving at subthemes and main themes presented at Table-1&2, one of the major loopholes in the staffing function in the universities was that the recruitment and selection operated in a vacuum. In fact, this remained detached from emerging HR trends and oblivion to the latest research findings. The internal elements such as HR policies, changing academic trends and managing diversity were some of the areas that failed to muster much of the interest of universities’ top management. Similarly, the external environmental forces such as global HR best practices, high technology demands and unique dynamics of higher education sector were not seriously taken into account. In the same vein, staffing
function remained fragmented and was not aligned with other HR subsystem. Pay for performance, capacity building, career prospects and succession planning were not encountered or experienced or observed frequently. The entire HR system was not integrated, embracing all other subsystems in a holistic fashion.

One of the major contributions of this study is that it has identified various factors responsible for the phenomenon. First of all, it was revealed that recruitment and selection were not designed in a systematic manner. Here, the approach was not professional as proper HR system did not exist in the universities imbibing diverse relationship and interaction around the subsystems. The various HR functions were not connected for the lack of an effective coordination and work in a closed and conventional manner unreceptive to new ideas, new trends and new challenges. The prevailing practices did not take into account how system's constituting parts interact with other HR functions and how various sub systems operate within the larger HR system in the context of even larger higher education system.

This is evident from the primary data collected for this study. The participants shared the similar observations and content analysis of secondary data also substantiated the claim. It is delineated in Section 7.3.1 where evidence has been provided from the findings in support of the claim that staffing function was not undertaken with system approach in mind for the lack of comprehensive understanding of the concept and in fact, it is carried out merely as a remote HR function discerned from other functional areas. Being unsusceptible, centrally controlled and aborted this function was characterized by iniquity and prejudice. And probably this is why staffing function fermented in a vacuum in the case universities.
In a similar manner, Nabi et al., (2014:12) articulated that universities do not manage recruitment and selection in a fair and transparent manner for the lack of an effective recruitment and selection system.

It was postulated in the second proposition of this study in Chapter 2 that recruitment and selection in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are not merit based, impartial and transparent. As pointed out in Section 6.3.6 of Chapter 6 one of the strategic loopholes in the staffing function in universities was that the top management misused their authority and violated the rules and statutes in a blatant manner by hiring their associates, acquaintances, friends and relatives reprehensively with unprecedented perks and privileges. This was done in a manner that they used to have someone in mind, prior to announcing a vacancy, subsequently the post was advertised and the same candidate was selected. Nabi et al., (2014:12) underpinned these findings arguing that key administrative officers such as Vice Chancellor, Registrar and Deans exerted considerable influence over recruitment and selection in the universities violating all rules, procedures and processes to ensure the candidates of their choice are finally selected.

This practice of bypassing the merit and misuse of powers by the administration in all most all kind of fresh hiring was ingrained and deep-rooted to the extent that these malpractices were reported even in the press as well as electronic media calling for disciplinary actions. The data collected for this study provided ample evidence to this effect. It was also described in Section 7.3.3 where evidence was produced from the findings in support of the claim. Here, the study contributed in discerning various factors responsible for the phenomenon.
The major part was played by the overwhelming authority vested in the hands of an individual (i.e. vice chancellor). Being chairman of the Selection Board (recommending body) as well as Syndicate (approving body) at the same, he possesses excessive powers while managing the affairs of recruitment and selection. He is having great influence on the recommendations made by the Board. He has the leverage to manipulate the entire scheme of the things to pave the way for selection of a particular ‘choice’ candidate. However, here again, some exceptions were observed. In one case University it was found that decisions of final selection are largely made on merit. However, there were quite a few gaps in other areas identified by the participants.

In the third proposition of this study, as postulated in Chapter 2 universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa do not have any specialized HR Department to keep under scrutiny HR functions particularly recruitment and selection. As underlined in Section 7.3.4.3 one of the internal factor responsible for the loopholes in the staffing function is the dearth of a full-fledged, separate and specialized HR department in the universities. Data collected from the participants and content analysis of relevant documents revealed the same. It was also discussed at length in Chapter 07 where evidence has been provided from the findings in support of the claim that HR Department, without any exception, does not effectively exist in the universities and the HR functions have been made perplexed and entangled, looked after, mainly by administrative staff, with no proper qualification, knowledge and skills.

The data further manifested that in all of the selected universities, HR affairs were primarily looked after by the Establishment Section, and this was regarded as
HR department in the public sector universities. The key HR positions were occupied by faculty members having no relevant qualification and experience multiplied by poor understanding of the HR issues merely on acting charge basis just to run the official business. This reflected the pathetic state of HR affairs in the universities. Here, the case of one institute was little different. In that institute, there was no HR department, *per se*, but the two staff members who were dealing with HR were having relevant HR qualification.

The need, for establishment of a specialized HR Department in the universities solely manned by HR professionals, was realized since long (Nabi et al., 2014:12). Abbas and Ahmad (2011) validated these findings postulating that HR section was not effectively existing in universities and HR functions have been made perplexed and entangled which was mainly looked after by administrative staff with no proper qualification, knowledge and skills. Nabi et al., (2014:12) substantiated this claim arguing that pessimistic approach of the top management impeded setting up of a full-fledged HR department in the universities as they firmly believed in status quo and run the affairs of the universities in a more passive manner. They, therefore, suggested that universities should establish a full-fledged human resource department on the modern lines staffed by dedicated and fulltime HR professionals having sound experience related to multiple HR functions executed by the HR department, preponderantly, recruitment and selection.

The last proposition of the study propounded that public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa do not have an HR Council on the analogy of Academic Council or other statutory bodies to keep an eye on HR affairs in the universities. In
the absence of a professional HR Council, the staffing function would not be able to receive the desired level of attention from the top management in the universities. This was also discussed in Chapter 07, Section 7.3.4.3 and outlined in the process of arriving at subthemes and central themes given at Table-3&4 where evidence was provided from the findings of the study in support of the claim that there existed no statutory body or council in the universities (i.e. HR council) to have an oversight role while addressing HR issues in the universities.

While drawing comparison across case study universities, it was found to be so different as to make any comparison of the case universities invalid. The data revealed a great deal of variations across case universities in terms of status, governing bodies, leadership styles, programs offered and staff strength, hence, no meaningful comparison could be made. Nevertheless, if we look at selected universities in the light of above propositions, it merits mentioning that staffing function in the universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was not managed in a systematic manner. It was not linked with other HR subsystems. This is the case of all selected universities in the public sector. Reckoning merit-based selection decisions, the case of one of the university stood out to be little different as the selection decisions in the same were made without any political consideration which has remained the idiosyncratic style of fresh induction in the rest of public sector universities. About other HR attributes, there was no public sector university in the entire Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which has a specialized HR Department to look after HR functions. Similarly, these universities did not have an HR Council or Board on the analogy of Academic Council in the universities to keep an eye on HR problems in universities. Thus, in the absence of a full-fledged professional HR Department and an
independent HR Council, the staffing function was not receiving the desired level of attention from top management in the universities.

This is not only the case of public sector universities in Pakistan, but universities in the global scenario also have similar problems. Crothall, Callan & Hartel (1997:99) revealed that, notwithstanding, being a model in their staffing practices, Australian universities suffer from a host of restrictions such inadequate training of persons involved in recruitment and selection, poor selection criteria and extraneous interview questions not based on proper job analysis. Haas & Collen (1963:45) concluded that universities across the globe have had serious organizational problems. These are, more or less, common to most organizations in developed nations. Recruitment and selection of professionals, performance evaluation and handling of disgruntled employees were few among these.

Budhwar & Debrah (2001:5) argued that “the concept of HRM is relatively new and possibly non-existent” in developing countries. Besides, there are several distinctive HR models exist within the organizations in these countries, each of which depends on a number of distinct factors. They identified four levels of factors that influence HRM policies and practices in developing countries. These factors include: i) National culture; ii) National institutions; iii) Dynamic business environment; and iv) Industrial sector. In a national context, these broad factors shape the macro environment of organizations (2001:8).

These factors have an exhaustive list of sub-components. For instance, national culture mainly includes the process of socialization, common values, norms
of behaviours, customs, traditions, influence of pressure groups, mindsets, attitudes and approaches to culture diversity. Whereas, institutions comprises of educational and vocational institutions, national labour laws, trade unions, politics, professional bodies, trade bodies, government institutions and local authorities. The industrial sector, being the third factor, consists of labour or skill requirement, workforce mobility, regulations and standards, common strategies, business goals, cross-sector cooperation and sector specific knowledge. Dynamic business environment embraces changing composition of the workforce, restructuring, competition, business alliance, information technology and globalization of business. They maintained that despite the fact that many of these dynamics are unique in itself within the country context, nevertheless, these factors have been identified as major determinants of HRM in developing nations like Pakistan (2001:8).

In Pakistan, HRM in the public sector is characterized mainly by passive management culture. To run the administrative machinery of the government, major decisions are made on political patronage rather than proper strategic planning (Khilji, 2001:104). Bad governance, mismanagement, political interloping and malpractices have made public sector in the country largely ineffective and degenerated (International Crisis Group, 2010).

Khiliji, (2001:105) used the framework developed by Budhwar and Sparrow (1998) mentioned in Budhwar & Debrah (2001:5) constituting of the above mentioned four factors (i.e. national culture, dynamic business environment, institutions and specific business sector) to study HRM policies and factors in Pakistan. She has described Pakistani culture as a “mixture of religion, Indian origins,
British inheritance and American influences” which ultimately impact HRM practices in the country. While outlining the impact of national culture on HRM, she maintained that all most all aspects of HRM are affected due to social set up and social clout. “Referrals and knowing the management is the most common source of recruitment, rewards and a good performance appraisal.” Deplorable economic conditions, high unemployment and political instability are some of the aspects of dynamic business environment influencing HRM in the country. Being an agent of change establishment of new universities, increasing use of IT resources and employees’ unions influence HR practices. Adoption of HR practices of multinationals by local organizations, developing participatory management styles and employees engagement are the specific business sector aspects that influence HRM in the country.

Rahman (1998:671) argued that universities established by the British rulers in this part of the world were having numerous governance issues influenced predominantly by two important factors; i) British legacy and ii) Strong bureaucracy. This state of affairs prevails in the contemporary universities in Pakistan even today. “Recruitment to the universities even when they became teaching universities was faulty. Almost all jobs and power were controlled, or at least influenced, by the British bureaucracy...Insofar as entry to Pakistani universities is concerned, this is probably true even now”.

According to Khilji (2002:238) the British colonial rule over “the subcontinent for almost a century, have left significant marks on the legal systems and management structures of the country. Many prevalent laws, such as labour laws, have hardly
changed since independence. The culture within public sector organization is truly a replica of the colonial era: bureaucratic, centralized and not responsive to needs of the public in general. In a typical Pakistani organization, rigid HRM practices are the norm”. Decisions involving hiring of new staff are made on methods other than merit. “Having a family-oriented social set-up, organizational life is also community life.” To form social circles within organizations is a common trend among the employees. The merit-based system of selection does not prevail here. Family relationships receive preferential, bypassing rules and regulations, thus guiding major decisions involving hiring and promotions. With high power distance, public sector organizations are generally authoritarian as decision-making powers rest in few hands at the top level. Employees are having almost no autonomy; communication is minimal and they are not involved in decision making. She also made a point that “due to a high unemployment rate and fewer job opportunities, the market has become quite competitive” (2002:239).

Jhatial et al., (2009) argued that colonial rudiments such as bureaucratic setup and hierarchical structure still prevail in public sector enterprises characterized mainly by “nepotism, sifarish, sycophancy and yes-boss” attitude. “Sifarish is a cultural tradition and one has to be brave enough to adjust it. The stronger the connection, the more are the chances of success”. They maintained that “national culture bears influences of collectivism, hierarchical and high power distance orientations on government enterprises…. Civil-military and landed elites with imperialist mindsets dominate decision making”. The organizational structure of public sector entities is “hierarchical and bureaucratic, elitist and imperialist mindset exist in higher authorities with centralized decision making sparing little role for HRM department”.

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These organizations experience the worst kind of “sycophancy, cronyism and corruption. Affirmative action policies, organizational justice and merit are rhetorics”.

Islam (2004:328) suggests that collectivist orientation and kinship-based institutions in the country sufficiently elucidate the “prevalence of nepotism and relative lack of adherence to any universal rules or laws.” The long established traditions of “tolerance of inequality and high power distance inhibit the development of transparency and institutions of accountability.” The concentration of power at the higher levels allows a lot of discretionary powers in the hands of senior officials untimely germinating political meddling in administrative affairs. “Discretionary power without adequate accountability is a great temptation to misuse public power for private purposes. The Pakistani society’s propensity toward high uncertainty avoidance leads to the creation of elaborate rules and procedures. Applying these rules to individual cases and their interpretation is another source of discretionary powers. In a society where the universal application of rules is anathema, selective application of rules leads not only to injustice but also to corruption and nepotism. …These values tend to contribute to gender inequality, corruption and misuse of power”.

Khilji (2001:250) believes that HRM is in its infancy in Pakistan. Very few organizations in the country have adopted a strategic approach to the management of human resources. Most of these organizations are having centralized structure characterized by communication gaps and inconsistency in the execution of HRM practices. HR policies developed in isolation at the centrally located offices and communicated to sub-offices for implementation. HR policies and their
implementation are inconsistent. Access to head offices, particularly (Establishment) HR departments, has always been taxing as employees cannot approach these offices directly. Following ‘through proper channel’ is the norm. Employees have less autonomy and learning new things is not encouraged (Husain, 2007; Khilji, 2001:108).

Centralized decision-making, inflexibility and lack of responsiveness are some of the defining features of the HR system (Bashir & Khattak, 2008:244; Husain, 2007:3). The public sector in the country has miserably failed to deliver for persistent economic crisis and political turmoil. The government officials misuse authorities to serve their vested interests (Haque, 2007; Bashir and Khattak, 2008:244). Meager salaries and weak system of accountability bred corruption and malpractices. Recruitment and selection are mainly based personal contacts and political affiliation (International Crisis Group, 2010: i).

HR practices particularly, staffing practices, in the public sector are primarily governed by the Civil Servants Act, 1973 which has become obsolete and moribund these days (Bashir & Khattak, 2008:250). To get away with British traditions in many spheres of public management particularly bureaucratic setup and employment practices have become cumbersome for the Pakistani public sector over the years (Husain, 2007:1; Khilji, 2001:104). Husain (2007:8) suggested that recruitment in the public sector needs to be made open, transparent and merit-based in line with global best practices. Performance needs to be assessed against key performance indicators. Employees should have equal opportunities for promotion based on multiple factors.
such as length of service, performance, advance qualification, and mandatory training. Restructuring of entire set up should be the integral part of any reform initiative.

9.6 Implications of the findings

This thesis provided rich insight, in multiple ways, in which the notion of fair play, transparency and accountability required to be put in practice while pursuing fresh hiring, at all the levels, in public sector universities. The study contributed to the system of HR in the higher education sector, by discerning shortcomings mainly in four major areas. First, it provides sufficient evidence, to articulate that recruitment and selection system function in complete isolation in universities. Second, it shows that selection decisions are characterized by misuse of authority, bounded transparency and limited accountability at best. Third, it elaborated that internal control system which ensures impartiality, transparency and accountability in universities remained paper tigresses, owing to legal, political and bureaucratic bottlenecks. Fourth, the findings reasoned there is no regulatory body to oversight HR function in the universities. Similarly, there is no statutory body for an oversight role concerning HR functions in the universities to guide governing bodies to contour key resource areas for which they are unambiguously responsible.

The study, therefore, made an exhaustive list of recommendations for improvement. Among the most practicable is that institutions of higher education need to embrace system approach to recruitment and selection. To set up an HR statutory body such as HR Council, supported by an independent HR Department has become indispensable as the effectiveness of Establishment Department to address
HR affairs in universities has faded with the passage of time. These steps need to be complemented by an efficient and effective Human Resource Information Management System. These measures will go a long way in transforming HR and will address challenges in the system of recruitment and selection in the universities.

9.6.1 Implications for the universities

In the face of numerous challenges, growing stakeholders’ expectations and changing trends in HR, the universities in Pakistan have to transform its HR practices. This thesis provides insight how to reform the redundant personnel management system in the institutes of higher education in line with best HR practices, harmonious to local circumstance, catering to stakeholders’ expectations and meeting impending challenges of the contemporary academic world.

The study highlighted multiple gray areas in the system of recruitment and selection in the institutes of higher education in Pakistan. This study is not only about performing recruitment and selection function in a better way but also focused on building academic success and adding value to the academic business rather than simply optimizing HR as a function. The study made certain recommendations postulating; how the institutes of higher education in this part of the world learn from best practices prevailing in developed countries. In light of the participants’ suggestions, the study came up with concrete, practical recommendations to regenerate staffing function in public sector universities in the country.

The study gives new insight to the policy makers, academicians, university administrators, researchers, practitioners, and HR professionals about HR dimension
of public sector universities. The study is helpful in making a case persuading the people at the helm of universities’ affairs to manage human resources professionally in order to avoid a total collapse of the higher education sector in the days to come.

9.6.2 Implications for future research

This study was, initially, intended to probe four major subsystems of the HR system (i.e. recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and career development) in the context of higher education, in a holistic fashion, nevertheless, due to constraints on account of time and resources, only recruitment and selection was thoroughly investigated.

Hence, this thesis brings to the limelight various unexplored and potential areas for further research. Further research needs to be carried out with a focus on HR subsystems such as training and development, career progression, compensation, performance evaluation succession planning, motivation, working environment, current and emerging HR trends, HR challenges and brain drain using systems approach as a theoretical lens. This study also raises certain questions which need to be addressed by staffing researchers, scholars and academics. For researchers, the question is immediate and intriguing given the growing anxiety around the academic scene about staffing issues and challenges.

This study may be extended, to cover public sector universities located in other provinces of the country including capital city Islamabad or even a new context. Comparison can also be drawn between public and private sector universities, located
within the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or even across the provinces and might be extended to the entire country.

Despite, various bottlenecks and numerous deficiencies, with no professional HR staff, limited training facilities, scanty promotional prospects for the staff, the universities are performing the HR function for the last 70 years, a feat in its own right. However, this has escaped the attention of researchers which needs to be systematically investigated.

9.7 Theoretical contribution

Petre & Rugg (2010) are of the opinion that “making a significant contribution means adding to knowledge or contributing to the discourse – that is, providing evidence to substantiate a conclusion that’s worth making”. Nevertheless, characterizing theoretical contribution means different thing to different researchers as “it is often difficult to judge what constitutes enough of a contribution” (Whetten, 1989:490). Corley & Gioia (2011) argued that a theoretical contribution is something that enriches our understanding of the concepts and interrelationships taken up in the research. They suggested that theoretical contribution needs to show both originality and utility. This is, essentially, related to the scientific usefulness of research contribution, and hence, unearths; to what extent the new understanding prompts further theoretical elaboration beyond the current research context. While usefulness is considered as the most important ingredient of a theoretical contribution, it must also show utility for practice.
This dissertation offers an innovative, analytical and methodological approach, to the study of recruitment and selection. It brings to the limelight, some of the novel dimensions of staffing function which has suffered from decades of neglect in the higher education context. The motivation, for carrying out such study merits mentioning, since this study tackles this important theme from a unique and innovative standpoint that is interesting, as well as, engaging, at the same time. This thesis focuses on institutions of higher education in a country, where HR research has remained, largely, a low priority area. This study aims at contributing to the body of knowledge by making an effort, to address a couple of broad research questions. These research questions were important, and were raised, from time to time, by the scholars and researchers because these were not answered, convincingly, by the previous research studies. The findings of the study are also significantly important because this thesis not only addressed these research questions but also offered certain recommendations which can help policy makers and researchers in handling these issues. The study, therefore, underlined the need for further probe in the HR subsystems such as training and development, motivation, working conditions, performance appraisal and succession plan and hence, opens up new avenues for future research.

Keeping in view the research gaps, the study is fundamentally concerned with applying system approach as a theoretical framework that is not commonly used in this domain. This dissertation is extending systems theory, to explain staffing function where this thinking has not previously been applied to the phenomenon in the context of higher education. This study highlights some new dimensions in the field of HR with a prime focus on recruitment and selection that makes the work an original
contribution to the body of knowledge. Here, is a brief list of some of the contributions that this research makes to the body of literature in the subject area.

i. The study, first of all, discerned paucity of research in the field of HR with focus on recruitment and selection system in the higher education context

ii. The study presented an overall sketch of the current scenario of recruitment and selection system in the selected public sector universities

iii. The research identified gaps in the prevailing system of recruitment and selection

iv. The most important thing, this research pinpointed was that recruitment and selection were managed in the selected universities as an event and not as a system which constituted a part of a larger HR system, in a larger organizational context.

v. The study investigated factors responsible for the gaps and put forward certain recommendations to bridge these gaps.

This study is vital in filling gaps in existing research by providing sufficient evidence underpinning; how the understanding of recruitment and selection issues can be widened further. The thesis, being an original research work, is a significant contribution to the academia. The thesis is very specific and focused and is able to adequately answer all the research questions underlined in Chapter 01.

9.8 Limitations
There were a number of impediments in carrying out the research work. However, it did not adversely affect outcomes of the study. To mention a few, getting down to the fieldwork, participants recruitment and retention was a challenging task in the first instance. Some of those approached for the study declined, out rightly, to participate because of the nature and sensitivity involved in the research work. Some of those, who agreed to participate, were reluctant to give time for the interview.

Those who had given time for the interview did not openly talk about the loopholes in the system. Some of the respondents even expressed their mind openly expressing their concern in this connection. They were of the view that since they deal with HR issues in the universities, thus, it would be more like washing their own dirty linen in public. Those who participated were reluctant to share necessary information very candidly. Some of the respondents expressed unwillingness to answer some of the questions, they felt, were sensitive. They felt this might create troubles for them. Moreover, some of them considered this as unethical to talk about their professional matters, openly. Some of them considered this as their inability to overcome the flaws in the HR system.

But once, the significance of research study was explained to the participants, and they were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of data, they eventually agreed to participate. Moreover, the officers dealing with HR affairs were also remained genuinely busy that it became really hard to set an appointment for the interview. And these were few of the reasons that data collection took overly long time.

9.9 Recommendations
In order to increase efficiency in hiring and retention and to ensure consistency and compliance in the recruitment and selection process, it is recommended that universities should transform its entire HR system to make it in line with international best practices. Research should be conducted by the universities in the area of HR in order to investigate various HR issues and inform decision in the domain of HR. The universities have to get it away with the prevailing conventional recruitment and selection system. Strong resistance to integrate HRM practices and the high power distance culture in Pakistan are detrimental in framing HR policies and practices. Status quo is believed to prevail regarding divergent HR trends prevailing in higher education sector until schematic HR Department becomes an integral part of the university reformed structure (Qadeer et al., 2010). One defining feature of the current HR system in higher education is the centralization of decision-making powers in the hands of individuals particularly matters pertaining to recruitment and selection. Hence, the future of academia rests entirely upon the extent to which responsibility for people management is diffused throughout an institution.

Here, HEC has a very critical role to play. HEC should come forward and play a lead role to reform the redundant personnel management system in the institutes of higher education in line with best HR practices prevailing across the globe, harmonious to local circumstance, catering to stakeholders’ expectations and meeting challenges of the contemporary academic world. HEC should persuade the government to provide additional funding to the universities to rejuvenate their HR system as was done in the case of ORIC and QEC. Universities should establish
independent HR office. Besides, a statutory body such as HR council shall be required.

9.10 Conclusion

Modern universities, being labour intensive organizations, struggle with staffing challenges stemming from increased competition, knowledge work, labor shortages, global complexities and workforce diversity. Nevertheless, regardless of such urgent demands for effective staffing practice, staffing research continues to be out rightly neglected or misconstrued by decision makers in the universities. Addressing these challenges requires researchers, academics, and staffing scholars to expand their focus from individual-specific recruitment and selection research to multilevel research investigating organizational level dynamics of staffing function. Toward this end, this thesis provides a critical analysis of the prevailing gaps in staffing function in universities which need to be effectively addressed in order to enable the institutes of higher education in Pakistan to weather the storm that is coming its way. Those engrossed in contemplating about the prospects for higher education in the 21st century will discover much of interest and engage them in the discourse on staffing.
References:


Khalid, S., Irshad, M. Z., Mahmood, B. (2012). Job Satisfaction among academic staff: A comparative analysis between public and private sector universities of


### Difference between ‘first’ and ‘second’ generation universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Generation universities</th>
<th>Second Generation universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Established since 1947 till 2002 (before establishment of HEC)</td>
<td>Established since 2002 (after establishment of HEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own spacious buildings</td>
<td>Having multistory buildings (some are housed initially in rented buildings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in isolation</td>
<td>Working with multiple actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backward looking</td>
<td>Forward Looking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following</td>
<td>Leading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on teaching</td>
<td>Focus on teaching as well as research and publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero level of automation (moving towards that)</td>
<td>Fully automated offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vast pool of students</td>
<td>Thin students population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional academic departments and administrative offices</td>
<td>Well-furnished ORIC, QECs, Career Counseling and Student Aid and Placement Offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual richness</td>
<td>Internet and video conferencing facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vast libraries</td>
<td>Online resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful academic environment</td>
<td>Diversified learning environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix-II

**List of archival documents consulted for the study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Retrieved from:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Act/Statute Description</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Khyber Medical University Service Statutes, 2008</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kmu.edu.pk">www.kmu.edu.pk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Khyber Medical University Revised Service Statutes, 2010</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kmu.edu.pk">www.kmu.edu.pk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Composition of Selection Board

The Selection Board in public sector universities consists of the following members:

i. The Vice Chancellor who shall be its Chairman

ii. The Chairman Board of Studies

iii. The Chairman of the Department concerned

iv. One member of the Syndicate nominated by the Vice Chancellor,

v. one member of the Academic Council

vi. two eminent doctors or scientists to be appointed by the Chancellor,

    none of whom is an employee of the University

vii. One nominee of the Public Service Commission.

viii. In selecting officers for non-teaching posts of the University / Constituent Colleges if any, the Selection Board shall consult three experts in the area concerned

ix. In selecting candidates for the teaching posts, two experts shall be consulted in the subject concerned

x. Registrar, member-cum-secretary

(Source: First Statutes of Khyber Medical University Act, 2007)
Appendix-IV

Composition of Selection Committee

University Selection / Promotion Committee:

For selection and promotion against posts in BPS-16 and blow in the University, the University Selection & Promotion Committee mainly comprises of the following members:

1. Registrar
2. Member of Syndicate who is not KMU employee.
   
   *(to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor)*
3. Head of Concerned Section / Department / Directorate etc.
4. Deputy Registrar (E)
5. Subject Matter Specialists

Institutional Selection / Promotion Committee:

For selection and promotion against posts in BPS-16 and blow in the constituent colleges / institutes of the University, Institutional Selection & Promotion Committee mainly comprises of the following members:

1. Principal/Director
2. One Professor (nominated by Vice-Chancellor/Faculty Member)
3. Member of Academic Council
4. Registrar or his nominee (not below the rank of Deputy Registrar)
5. In-charge of the Section concerned
6. Subject Specialist

(Source: Khyber Medical Service Rules (Revised) 2010)
## Appendix-V

### Recommending and appointing authorities

The authorities competent to make recommendations and selection against posts various level of positions in the universities are given as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Recommending Authority</th>
<th>Appointing Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Posts in BPS-17 and above</td>
<td>University Selection Board</td>
<td>Senate of the University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Posts in BPS-16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(i) In University</td>
<td>University Selection Committee.</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor of the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(ii) In constituent colleges /institutes</td>
<td>Institutional Selection Committee.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Posts in BPS-1 to 15:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(i) In University</td>
<td>University Selection / Promotion Committee</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(ii) In constituent colleges /institutions</td>
<td>Institutional Selection / Promotion Committee</td>
<td>Principal / Head of the Institute.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Khyber Medical Service Rules (Revised), 2010)
Appendix-VI

Composition of Syndicate in public sector universities

The Syndicate in public sector universities consists of the following members:

i. The Vice-Chancellor, who shall be its Chairperson;
ii. A retired judge of the Peshawar High Court to be nominated the Chief Justice, Peshawar High Court.
iii. One Dean to be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor;
iv. Secretary of the relevant Administrative Department of Government;
v. The Secretary to Government, Higher Education Department, or his nominee not below the rank of Additional Secretary
vi. The Secretary to Government, Establishment Department, or his nominee not below the rank of Additional Secretary
vii. The Secretary to Government, Finance Department, or his nominee not below the rank of Additional Secretary
viii. Two Principals (preferably one male and one female) of affiliated colleges in public sector to be nominated by the Chancellor from a panel recommended by the Higher Education Department
ix. One Professor, One Associate Professor, One Assistant Professor and One Lecturer of the University to be elected by teachers of their respective cadres in a prescribed manner
x. One Principal of the constituent colleges to be elected from amongst themselves in a prescribed manner
xi. One nominee of Higher Education Commission;
xii. One Chairman/ Director of the Department / Institute / Centre to be elected from amongst themselves in a prescribed manner
xiii. Three persons of eminence to be nominated by the Chancellor
xiv. Two members of the Senate to be elected by the Senate.
xv. One Vice Chancellor from Private Sector universities to be appointed by the Chancellor out of a panel, recommended by the Higher Education, Archives & Libraries Department
xvi. Two university administrative officers to be elected from amongst all the administrative officers in a prescribed manner

(Source: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universities (Amendment) Act, 2015)
Letter to the participants requesting for participation in the interview

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a Ph.D. research scholar at the Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar. The purpose of my research is to study investigate the system of recruitment and selection in public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. My study carries out a comprehensive assessment of employment practices, investigating how the staffing function executed in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and what it delivered over the years in a holistic fashion. This probe identifies major loopholes in the system of recruitment and selection in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which need to be addressed if the institutions of higher education were to meet challenges of the dynamic world and growing expectations of the stakeholders. In particular, my research focuses upon:

i. To investigate the system of recruitment and selection in public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
ii. To explore what the employees think about the system of recruitment and selection
iii. To identify gaps in the prevailing system of recruitment and selection in the public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
iv. To examine who are mainly responsible for the gaps/loopholes
v. To investigate the implications of these gaps/loopholes
vi. To explore how the system of recruitment and selection may be revisited to overcome these loopholes?

In order to conduct this study, I intend to observe working HR practices in the universities and conduct face to face in-depth interviews with key administrative officer mainly dealing with HR issues (i.e. Registrar, Additional Registrar, Deputy Registrar and Assistant Registrar) of your university. The interviews will not be more than 45-60 minutes. At the end of the research, I will send you a copy of the report if requested. I completely understand the issue of confidentiality for conducting this research to which I will completely adhere. I will keep the name of your university and all those I interview confidential (if requested) and I can also sign a confidentiality agreement (if required).

I would be grateful if you could arrange a time to be interviewed.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

Syed Hafeez Ahmad
Ph.D. Research Student
Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar
Email: hafeezjee99@yahoo.com
Executive Summary

Syed Hafeez Amad  
Institute of Management Sciences  
Peshawar

HRM is one of the most redundant areas in the institutions of higher education in Pakistan. At a time when unprecedented modernization and innovation has been taking place in the discipline of HRM- its function, policies and practices in the education sector across the globe, the entire HR system in the public sector universities in Pakistan is operating in the most obsolete and redundant fashion that presents a scenario worse than the early days of personal management. Similarly, little research has not been undertaken in the area to explore its dynamics for improvement.

This empirical study investigates the prevailing HR practices in the public sector universities of Pakistan with prime focus on recruitment and selection. This study carries out a comprehensive HR assessment, investigating how HR performed in the public sector universities in Pakistan and what it delivered over the years in a holistic fashion with a focus on one of the most important subsystem (i.e. recruitment and selection). This case study identifies major problem areas in the strategic recruitment and selection that need to be addressed if the institutions of higher education were to meet challenges of the dynamic world and growing expectations of the stakeholders.

This study, the first of its kind, unveils the HR issues confronted by public higher education sector with a prime focus on the existing staffing function and practices in selected universities in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This is intended to open a gateway
of reforms in the field of HRM in the institutions of higher education in the country. The study comes up with recommendations how to transform and revamp recruitment and selection system in the public sector universities that successfully meet the varied needs and expectations of all stakeholders and address challenges of 21st century.
Appendix-IX

Consent form for participants

The aim of the study is to explore the prevailing HR practices in the public sector universities of Pakistan with prime focus on recruitment and selection. This study carries out a comprehensive HR assessment, investigating how HR performed in the public sector universities in Pakistan and what it delivered over the years in a holistic fashion with a focus on one of the most important subsystem (i.e. recruitment and selection).

I am conducting face to face in-depth interviews with key administrative officer mainly dealing with HR issues (i.e. Registrar, Additional Registrar, Deputy Registrar and Assistant Registrar or HR officers) of your university. I will keep your name and address in confidence and – unless you request me otherwise – I shall not identify you or use your name in any publication or discussion.

I am grateful to you for the help and support which you extended all the way through the interview session.

Syed Hafeez Ahmad

I understand that the research is for a Ph.D. scholar project and that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded unless subject to any legal requirements. The researcher has discussed the contents of the project with me and given me the opportunity to ask questions about it.

I agree to take part as a participant in this research, and I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. I also agree that my interview recorded by Syed Hafeez Ahmad, Ph.D. scholar, Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar on the dates ......................

a) may be used for publications

b) may be offered to an archive for the use of future researchers and writers.

I do / do not wish my name to be used in any publication.

Name: ....................................................
Designation: ............................................
Signed: ....................................................
Date: ......................................................
Appendix-X

Interview Guide for participants

Thank you for your willingness to participate in my research project. In this interview, I would like to ask you that in your capacity as a top level manager in the universities dealing with HR.

This research is an important study enabling universities better respond to the emerging academic environment i.e. general environmental conditions, changing global scenario and socio-political landscape that shapes the entire academic landscape in which the public sector universities operate. This study unearths how to best meet the stakeholders’ expectations. This study investigates how HR departments in universities should better respond to diverging demands in the competitive academic environment. This study is aimed at looking into the ways to reshape HR function in the public sector universities to meet the burgeoning aspirations and growing challenges of the knowledge economy.

It is hoped that the findings of this research can be used in the policy making of universities for reforming HR system. The questions mainly rely on your experience as an HR manager.
Appendix-XI

Set of Questions for Interview Session

1. **Personal information of the respondent**
   
   Name of the university: ________________________________
   
   Name of the interviewee: ________________________________
   
   Designation: ________________________________
   
   Qualification: ________________________________
   
   Total experience in the university: ________________________________
   
   Experience in HR department: ________________________________
   
   Email & Contact No: ________________________________

2. **Questions to be asked from interviewees during interview session**

   1. How the staffing function (i.e. recruitment and selection) of administrative staff is carried out in your university?
   
   2. Please describe briefly the typical recruitment and selection system of administrative staff in your university?
   
   3. Do you think your university has clear policies and procedures relating to recruitment and selection?
   
   4. Do you think your university adheres to these policies and procedures?
   
   5. How for the recruitment and selection of administrative staff in your university is carried out in a transparent manner?
   
   6. Do you think politics play an important role in the selection process of administrative staff in your university? Please elaborate.
   
   7. How far the recruitment and selection in your university is aligned with other HR subsystems such as training and development, career development, compensation and succession.
   
   8. How far the recruitment and selection system in your university is developed keeping in view challenges of the contemporary world.
   
   9. How far the recruitment and selection system in your university is in line with new legislation introduced by the government.
   
   10. What are the major gaps/loopholes in recruitment and selection system of administrative staff in your university? Please elaborate.
   
   11. What are the implications of these gaps/loopholes
   
   12. What efforts have been made by your university in the past to improve it? Please elaborate.
   
   13. How the recruitment and selection process of administrative staff can be improved in your university?

   Thank you very much for your cooperation.
### Demographic details of case study universities and participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S#</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Brief case information</th>
<th>Participants’ code</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Years of experience in University/HR department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>University-A</td>
<td>Public sector university established in 1950. One of the most established university of the country. It is a general university. Total faculty strength is 501 with 96 PhDs. Major programs offered include BS, MS, M.Phil and Ph.D in multiple disciplines.</td>
<td>PUR-1</td>
<td>PhD (Botany)</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Experience in university-26 Experience in Establishment Section-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PUDR-1</td>
<td>MSc</td>
<td>Deputy Registrar</td>
<td>Experience in university-26 Experience in Establishment Section-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PUAR-1</td>
<td>LLB</td>
<td>Assistant Registrar</td>
<td>Experience in the university-5 Experience in Establishment Section-5</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PUAR-2</td>
<td>MA English</td>
<td>Assistant Registrar</td>
<td>Experience in the university- 10 Experience in Establishment Section-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>University-B</td>
<td>Public sector university, previously part of the University of Peshawar. Established in 1980. Having 338 Faculty with 100 PhDs and 80 pursuing PhD and 1260 administrative staff. Major programs offered include</td>
<td>EUR-2</td>
<td>PhD (Telecom &amp; Software Engineering)</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Experience in the university- 15 Experience in Establishment Section-03</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EUHRM-2</td>
<td>B.S Engineering</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>Experience in the university- 5 Experience in Establishment Section-03</td>
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<td>EUDRA-2</td>
<td>B.A</td>
<td>Deputy Registrar (Academic)</td>
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<td>University</td>
<td>BS, MS, M.Phil and Ph.D in various Engineering related disciplines.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EUDA-2 B.A Deputy Registrar (E) Experience in the university- 30 Experience in Establishment Section-08</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EUOE-1 MA(Pushto) Establishement Officer Experience in the university-25 Experience in Establishment Section-09</td>
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<td>EUSUPD LLB.MA Journalism Superint endent (E) Experience in the university-10 Experience in Establishment Section-10</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University-C</td>
<td>The mother institution of the three universities and several colleges in the province, established in 1913, became an autonomous public sector university in 2009. Having eight teaching departments offering educational facilities from Intermediate to Ph.D in various disciplines.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>IUR-3 PhD (Statistics) Registrar Experience in the university- 30 Experience in Establishment Section-03</td>
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<td></td>
<td>IUARM-3 MSc Forestry Assistant Registrar (Meeting s) Experience in the university- 05 Experience in Establishment Section-05</td>
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<td>IUARE-3 MBA(HR) Assistant Registrar (E) Experience in the university- 03 Experience in Establishment Section-03</td>
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<td>IUARA-3 LLB Assistant Registrar Experience in the university- 03 Experience in Establishment Section-03</td>
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<tr>
<td>University-D</td>
<td>The sole public sector medical university in</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KUR-4 MBBS Registrar Experience in the university-06 Experience in</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>BS, MS, M.Phil and Ph.D in various Engineering related disciplines.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EUDA-2 B.A Deputy Registrar (E) Experience in the university- 30 Experience in Establishment Section-08</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EUOE-1 MA(Pushto) Establishement Officer Experience in the university-25 Experience in Establishment Section-09</td>
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<td>EUSUPD LLB.MA Journalism Superint endent (E) Experience in the university-10 Experience in Establishment Section-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>University-C</td>
<td>The mother institution of the three universities and several colleges in the province, established in 1913, became an autonomous public sector university in 2009. Having eight teaching departments offering educational facilities from Intermediate to Ph.D in various disciplines.</td>
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<td>IUR-3 PhD (Statistics) Registrar Experience in the university- 30 Experience in Establishment Section-03</td>
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<td>IUDRE-3 LLB Deputy Registrar Experience in the university- 05 Experience in Establishment Section-05</td>
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<td>IUARM-3 MSc Forestry Assistant Registrar (Meeting s) Experience in the university- 05 Experience in Establishment Section-05</td>
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<td>IUARE-3 MBA(HR) Assistant Registrar (E) Experience in the university- 03 Experience in Establishment Section-03</td>
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<td>IUARA-3 LLB Assistant Registrar Experience in the university- 03 Experience in Establishment Section-03</td>
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<tr>
<td>University-D</td>
<td>The sole public sector medical university in</td>
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<td>KUR-4 MBBS Registrar Experience in the university-06 Experience in</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, established in 2007 with jurisdiction over the entire province. Having 06 faculties, 08 constitute institutes, the university is offering PhD, MPhil, Masters and BS programs in medical and allied health sciences. There are total of 360 staff with 130 faculty out of which 40 are Phds and 230 administrative staff.</td>
<td>KUARM-4</td>
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<td>KUAREx-4</td>
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<td>KUARE-4</td>
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<td>KUARE-5</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>University - E</td>
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<td>Institute-F</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Autonomous public sector DAI. Established in 1995 having 98 faculty members with 48 PhD and 25 pursuing PhD and 160 administrative staff, offering a range of courses, undergraduate programs, and graduate degrees in the fields of Management, Computer Science, Information Technology, Banking, Finance and Accounting, Marketing, Health Services and Hospital Management.</td>
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