

## **The Moderating Role of Entrepreneurial Orientation on the Relationship between Knowledge Management and Human Resource Practices in Organizational Performance in Palestinian Healthcare Sector during COVID - 19 Pandemic**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Currently, organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic on public hospitals' employees specifically managers and top management has become a central issue for the developing countries including Palestine. However, to maintain TQM in today's knowledge management is so challenging due to many changes occur within the Palestinian Healthcare Sector During Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). Critically, globalization became a major contributor to organizational change especially in healthcare. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between knowledge management and human resource practices in organizational performance in the private and public healthcare sectors in Palestine and the influence of entrepreneurial orientation as moderating effect. The study sample use survey questionnaire randomly distributed to 300 questionnaires in public hospitals, private hospitals and private pharmacies, of which 345 were found suitable for analysis. Data analysis use (SPSS) and (PLS-SEM). The findings of the study revealed mixed result H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H11 and H12 were significant and H8, H9, H10 not significant. The findings of this study will assist the policy makers in the public hospitals to come up with policies that will ensure quality of services to the patients especially that the hospitals would have to compete with the private hospitals during Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). In this realm, it is therefore essential that the findings of this study with respect to application of employee capacity, employee commitment and IT should be taken seriously by the hospital management. Furthermore, this study offers several recommendations on how to improve the organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic, Moreover, discusses limitations and future research.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Orientation, Knowledge Management, Human Resource Practices, Organizational Performance Palestinian Healthcare Sector During and (COVID - 19) Pandemic.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Studies shows there is empirical evidence that Knowledge Management (KM) and human resource practices partially influenced by organizational performance (OP). (Iqbal, Latif, Marimon, Sahibzada, & Hussain, 2019). Training (Sahibzada, Jianfeng, Latif, Shah, & Sahibzada, 2020), and performance appraisal have been observed to have such influence. However, while these studies have shown the importance of creating value via human resource practices practices, they found mixed results on the effect of the practices on organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic. Due to the inconclusive findings, more studies need to be conducted to validate such relationship further. Moreover, the inconclusive results may also suggest that the effect of human resource practices on organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic may not be direct, as some researchers would

have assumed. Some asserted that there is a lack of understanding about the fundamental mechanisms through which human resource practices influence organizational performance (He, & Harris, 2020).

This research argues that factors that drive organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic has changed in the knowledge economy. Knowledge has become key in building the core competence of the organization to enable it maintain competitive advantage (Mwita, 2020) and hence organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic (O'Connor, Anoushiravani, DiCaprio, Healy, & Iorio, 2020). Human resource practices play a key role in developing knowledge management. Effective developing and using human resources have the capabilities for creating, measuring, and reinforcing a knowledge management expectation (Collings, Nyberg, Wright, & McMackin, 2021). As a knowledge facilitator, Human resource practices create an environment of sharing and using knowledge with a full understanding of the competitive consequences (Dirani, Abadi, Alizadeh, Barhate, Garza, Gunasekara, & Majzun, 2020). Even though it is argued that Human resource practices are able to help organizations discover and utilize knowledge and expertise, limited evidence is available to confirm such assertion.

Furthermore, from knowledge management literature, it has been generally revealed that most of the knowledge management - organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic (Ghasemi, Nejad, & Aghaei, 2020) have only been carried out in developed countries such as United States, Australia, and European countries. Limited empirical studies have been conducted in developing countries (Ekmeil, & Abumandil, 2020), such as, Palestinian Healthcare Sector. Therefore, this study aims to explore the extent of adoption of KM in service organizations in Palestinian Healthcare Sector. This study opens up research opportunities to fill this gap.

According to Li, Anaba, Ma, and Li, (2021) framework, effective entrepreneurial orientation can be classified as either cost leadership strategies or differentiation strategies. Each of these strategies implies something different about the potential role of Human resource practices in improving organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic. In the present study, entrepreneurial orientation is examined as a moderator because whether or not an organization's performance.

Organizations that follow cost leadership strategy focus on KM practices that lead to reduced cost components to stay entrepreneurial orientation in the price sensitive market segments. On the other hand, organizations that follow differentiation strategy focus on KM practices that lead to enhanced differentiation components of their businesses to stay entrepreneurial orientation in their market segments. Therefore, for the purpose of the study organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic, ought to be meticulous in taking charge of the processes prior to the consumption of the service (Batt, 2002). Moreover, in service sectors, it is crucial to properly deliver the service from the very first time. Moreover, this will increase the organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The positive relationship between human resource practices and organizational performance in service organizations. For example, Mustafa, and Abbas, (2021) conducted a research in

Palestine to investigate the effect of green ict practices among palestinian and malaysian in sme food enterprises during covid-19 pandemic on the effect of human resource practices (performance appraisal, training and development and employee participation and involvement) on organizational performance (turnover, profitability, productivity, and job satisfaction) and he found a significant positive relationship.

Chakraborty, and Biswas, (2020) found a positive influence of human resource practices (training and development, recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, job analysis and design, motivation, employee participation in decision making, and planning) on organizational performance (productivity and profitability). In the same concept, Rana, and Malik, (2017) found a positive influence of human resource (recruitment and selection, job design, manpower planning, extensive training, quality circle and employment security) on OP (profitability, sales growth, productivity, goal achievement, and good services) among 439 respondents working in West Bengal, India. Nayyab et al. (2011) investigates the effect of human resource practices (performance appraisal, training and development and employee participation and involvement) on OP (marketing department, ability to attain market share, financial performance, quality of products or services) in Pakistan and found a significant positive relationship between these practices and OP (Muayad, 2021).

The theoretical link between human resource practices and OP can be understood from the perspective of resource-based view (RBV). RBV argues that human resource, as one of the organization's main and central resources and assets, could help the organization achieve competitive advantage and subsequently superior long-term performance (Barney, 1991). the following hypotheses are proposed below:

*H1: There is a significant statistical relationship between performance appraisal and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

*H2: There is a significant statistical relationship between training and development and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

*H3 There is a significant statistical relationship between employee participation and involvement and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

## KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

knowledge of an organization acts as a strategic asset, assisting the firm in the maintenance of its competitive ability in a fast-paced environment. Knowledge management helps facilitate people to innovate, collaborate and opt for efficient decision. In other words, knowledge management's main goal is propelling people to focus on high-quality knowledge. Knowledge management scholars are of the consensus that effective knowledge management is the root of competitive advantage and enhanced performance (Lee, Tao, Li, & Sun, 2020). But despite its significance, only a few studies have highlighted the relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance (Abualoush, Masa'deh, Bataineh, & Alrowwad, 2018; Attia, & Eldin, 2018; Jaber, & Caglar, 2017; Arqawi, Al-Hila, Abu Naser, & Al Shobaki, 2018) even though there is evidence that KM is related to OP. For instance, Abualoush, Masa'deh, Bataineh, and Alrowwad, (2018) showed that knowledge infrastructure capability had a significant and favorable impact on OP. Data were collected among 134 employees of knowledge management activities within their respective food industry in Jordan. Moreover, knowledge management

capabilities influence creativity and organizational efficiency. Furthermore, demonstrated that when knowledge infrastructural capabilities such as technology, organizational culture, and organizational structure fit the knowledge process capabilities, significant advancements in effectiveness are obtained. They carried out their study in a large metropolitan area hospital with over 300 beds and over \$350 million in patient revenues in the US. In evaluating the relationship between knowledge management and performance. based view and the empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is offered:

*H4: There is a significant statistical relationship between technical knowledge management and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

*H5: There is a significant statistical relationship between structural knowledge management and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

*H6: There is a significant statistical relationship between cultural knowledge management and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

#### MODERATING ROLE ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION

The main aim of entrepreneurial orientation is to help firms create competitive advantages (Al-Henzab, Tarhini, & Obeidat, 2018). Entrepreneurial orientation such as differentiation and cost have been constantly mentioned in strategic management studies (Zhu, Liu, & Chen, 2018). But whether the difference in entrepreneurial orientation lies in the difference with regards to KM is something that needs investigation, as knowledge is a basic factor in the entrepreneurial orientation creation. Accordingly, Martins, & Perez, (2020) mentioned that entrepreneurial orientation should be considered as a one-of-a-kind knowledge source in order to relate knowledge with strategy. KM should facilitate the combination of entrepreneurial orientation which will eventually result in the enablement of KM activity to support and enhance OP. Several researchers contended that direct relationships exist between KM and entrepreneurial orientation in order to improve the company's opportunities in creating and maintaining competitive advantages.

A moderator variable may play a strong contingent effect to modify the relationship between KM and OP. entrepreneurial orientation can create competitive advantages in the industry in which a firm operates. Generic entrepreneurial orientation such as differentiation, focus, and cost, have been considered in many strategic management studies (O'Connor, et al., 2020; Mwita, 2020; Collings, et al., 2020; Li, et al., 2021; Ghasemi, et al., 2020). The assumption of a close link between entrepreneurial orientation and human resource practices are based on contingency theory. This theory holds that human resource practices are selected to be aligned with the type of entrepreneurial orientation adopted on the assumption that such coordination will enable companies to achieve better performance than those that do not. As mentioned earlier, several studies have been entrepreneurial orientation as a moderating variable. Even though the moderating effect of entrepreneurial orientation has been examined in a few studies (Iqbal, et al., 2019; Gopalan, & Misra, 2020; He, & Harris, 2020), it is yet to be examined on the relationship between KM and OP. The present study thus attempted to examine the moderating effect of entrepreneurial orientation on the relationship between KM and OP. Therefore, the following hypothesis advanced in the present study is as follows:

*H7: entrepreneurial orientation moderating role on the relationship between performance appraisal and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

*H8: entrepreneurial orientation moderating role on the relationship between training and*

*development and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

H9: entrepreneurial orientation moderating role on the relationship between *employee participation and involvemen and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

H10: entrepreneurial orientation moderating role on the relationship between technical knowledge management *and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

H11: entrepreneurial orientation moderating role on the relationship between structural knowledge management *and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

H12: entrepreneurial orientation moderating role on the relationship between cultural knowledge management *and organizational performance in Healthcare Sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.*

## STUDY METHODOLOGY

The study is quantitative method of research is incorporated (Sekaran, & Bougie, 2016). This quantitative part of the study includes a set of questionnaires to collect data on the variables of the study. Moreover, it was appropriate that a cross-sectional method should be carried out as the researcher desired to determine the perceptions of the participants of the human resource practices carried out in their organization, as well as their knowledge and entrepreneurial orientation. Moreover, theoretical framework is defined as a collection of interconnected concepts guiding the research and pinpointing the things that are required to be measured and the relationships that are sought in the data. However, Literatures indicate that human resource practices are keys that affect KM and OP. Human resource practices namely performance appraisal, training and development and employee participation and involvement have been shown to influence OP. (Iqbal, et al., 2019; Gopalan, & Misra, 2020; He, & Harris, 2020; O'Connor, et al., 2020; Mwita, 2020; Collings, et al., 2020; Li, et al., 2021; Ghasemi, et al., 2020). Other studies found the effect of performance appraisal, training and development and employee participation and involvement on KM (Rana, & Malik, 2017; Attia, & Eldin, 2018; Jaber, & Caglar, 2017; Martins, & Perez, 2020). In another group of studies, the literature also reveals that KM influences OP. Moreover, entrepreneurial orientation were also found to influence OP (Rana, & Malik, 2017; Lee, et al., 2020; Abualoush, et al., 2018; Attia, & Eldin, 2018; Jaber, & Caglar, 2017). A schematic model that demonstrates the relationship among human resource practices, KM, entrepreneurial orientation, and OP is presented in Figure 1.1. The figure presents an overview of the variables to be tested in this study. The independent variable is human resource practices, which purportedly have three dimensions, namely, performance appraisal, training and development and employee participation and involvement. The dependent variable of this study is OP, while entrepreneurial orientation is hypothesized to moderate the relationship between KM, HRP and OP. The underpinning theory in the present study is the resource-based view (RBV), a theory that has been employed by many research studies to examine the human resource practices-organizational performance relationship even across various geographical locations.

# Independent Variables

# Moderating Variable

# Dependent Variable

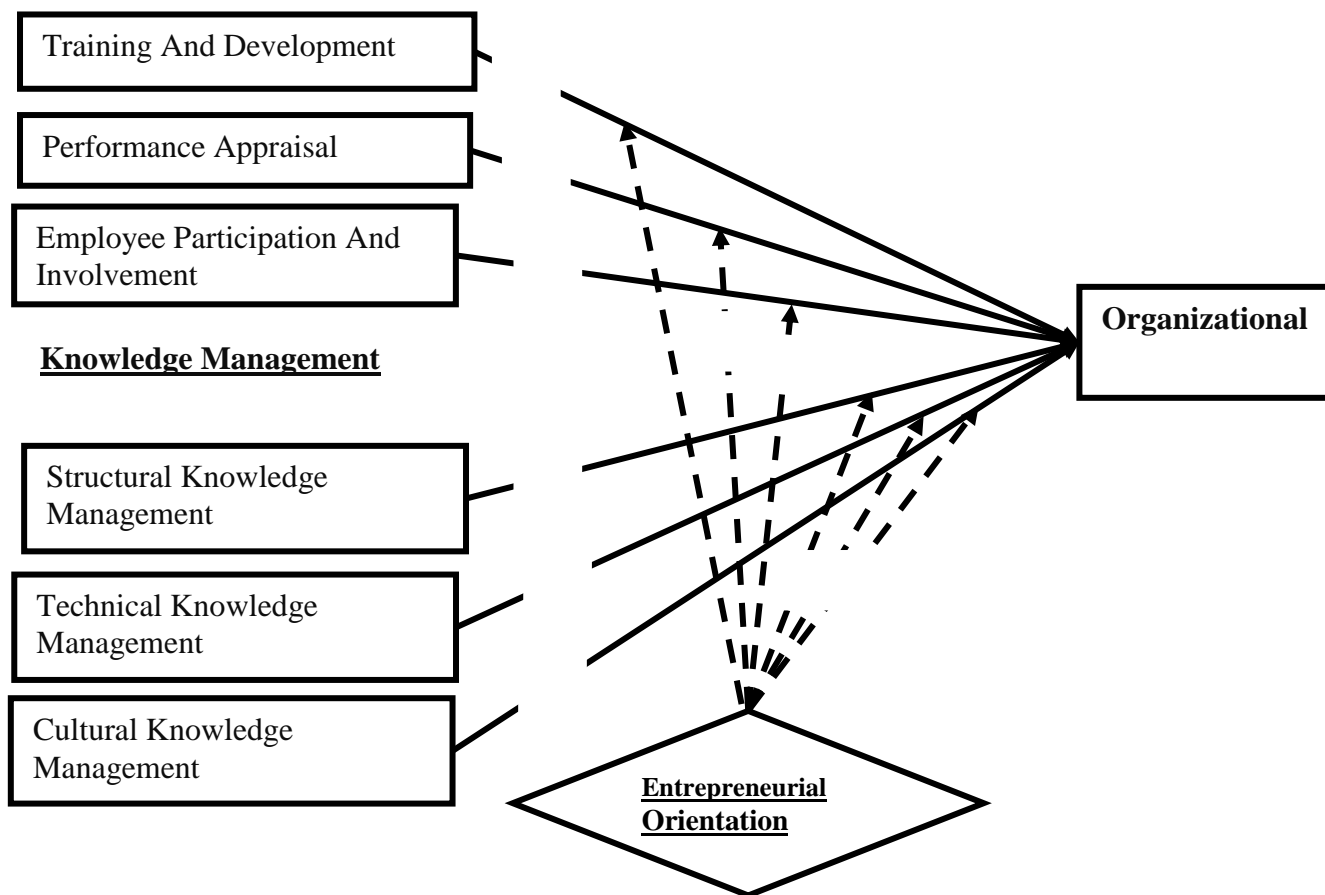


Figure 1. The proposed Study framework

## POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the present study will include all the public hospitals in Palestinian represented by the directors in these public hospitals, private hospitals and private pharmacies (Sekaran, & Bougie, 2016). Consequently, the study employs an organizational unit of analysis represented by the directors of the Palestinian public hospitals, private hospitals and private pharmacies. The sample from healthcare are doctors, Pharmacists, Nurse, Head of the department, and psychologists. Moreover, the present study has 13 variables. Therefore, following this rule, the minimum sample size required was 345. But to ensure greater generalizability of the findings and minimize the sampling error, the present study decided to use the Krejcie and Morgan's formula in determining the sample size (i.e. 370), as shown in the table 1. However, there are 370 samples analysis in this study.

Table 1: The number of hospitals and their distribution.

<b>Hospitals</b>	Jerusalem	<b>8</b>
	West Bank	<b>43</b>
	Gaza Strip	<b>30</b>
	Pharmacist	<b>55</b>

<b>Job description</b>	Nurse	<b>85</b>
	Head of the department	<b>113</b>
	psychologists	<b>117</b>
	Jerusalem	<b>39</b>
<b>Working city</b>	West Bank	<b>234</b>
	Gaza Strip	<b>97</b>
	Hospitals	<b>275</b>
<b>Working institute</b>	Private Hospitals	<b>59</b>
	Private pharmacies	<b>36</b>
	Male	<b>264</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female	<b>106</b>

## RESULT OF TESTING HYPOTHESES

In the first step, the main effect has been tested separately without moderator. As indicated in the Table 2, the first hypothesis, Performance Appraisal (PA) → Organizational Performance OP is positive and significant (0.30 - \*1.962), thereby providing support for H1. In addition, the relationship between training & development (TD) → OP is positive and significant (0.140- 2.096) this is providing support for H2. In addition, the relationship between Employee Participation & Involvement (EPI) → OP is positive and significant (0.262 - \*\*2.535) this is providing support for H3. Furthermore, hypothesis Technical Knowledge Management (TKM) → OP is positive and significant (0.313 - \*2.614), thereby providing support for H4. In addition, the relationship between Structural Knowledge Management (SKM) → OP is positive and significant (0.341 - \*2.117) this is providing support for H5. In addition, the relationship between Cultural Knowledge Management (CKM) → OP (EPI) → OP is positive and significant (0.262 - \*\*2.535) this is providing support for H6. Furthermore, the moderation role of Entrepreneurial Orientation the interaction model has been initiated. As shown in Table 2, the result has confirmed that one of the hypotheses has been positive and significant (0.103 - 2.010), which is H7. Moreover, hypotheses have been positive and significant (0.160 - 3.955), which is H11. Moreover, hypotheses have been positive and significant (0.114 - 2.067), which is H12. H8 the moderating role of Entrepreneurial Orientation (OP) between TD (EO) → OP (0.026 - 0.637). furthermore H9. EPI (EO) → OP (0.032- 0.998). We're not significant. furthermore H10. TKM (EO) → OP (0.056 - 1.694). We're not significant.

Table 2: Results of hypotheses.

No.	Hypotheses	Path coefficient	t -value	Decision
H1	Performance Appraisal (PA) → Organizational Performance OP	0.307	*1.962	<b>Sig.</b>
H2	training & development (TD)* → OP	0.140	2.096	<b>Sig</b>
H3	Employee Participation & Involvement (EPI) → OP	0.262	**2.535	<b>Sig.</b>
H4	Technical Knowledge Management (TKM) → OP	0.313	*2.614	<b>Sig.</b>
H5	Structural Knowledge Management (SKM) → OP	0.341	*2.117	<b>Sig.</b>

H6	Cultural Knowledge Management(CKM) -> OP	0.262	**2.535	<b>Sig.</b>
H7	PA * Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) →DM	0.103	2.010	<b>Sig.</b>
H8	TD *(EO) → OP	0.026	0.637	<b>Not sig.</b>
H9	EPI *(EO) → OP	0.032	0.998	<b>Not sig.</b>
H10	TKM *(EO) → OP	0.056	1.694	<b>Not sig.</b>
H11	SKM *(EO) → OP	0.160	3.955	<b>Sig</b>
H12	CKM *(EO) → OP	0.114	2.067	<b>Sig.</b>

## SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Generally, the study provides the necessary insights to enrich the current organizational performance in Palestinian healthcare sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic in the light of the level of knowledge management and human resource practices and moderating effect of certain entrepreneurial orientation.

The first focus of the study was to measure the direct relationship between knowledge management and human resource practices and organizational performance in Palestinian healthcare sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic. Furthermore, six direct relationship hypotheses were found significant. Further, the moderating effect of entrepreneurial orientation have six indirect relationship hypotheses were 3 found significant and 3 not significant. Therefore, Hospital's managers should focus on these four aspects to improve performance appraisal, training and development and employee participation and involvement, technical knowledge management, structural knowledge management and cultural knowledge management. Furthermore, they must train their employees to conform to the new ICT in order to make proper use of the data.

Furthermore, evidence of the major moderating impact of entrepreneurial orientation on the relationship between information management and human resource activities in organizational success in the Palestinian healthcare sector during the (COVID - 19) pandemic suggests that an organization's structure is also essential for successful organizational performance.

healthcare sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic should look for ways to make information management and human resource activities more conducive to each other, such that the development of these two facets leads to the improvement of the other. entrepreneurial orientation and organizational performance in Palestinian healthcare sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.

## THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The present study has contributed some new findings to the body of knowledge, especially in the area of organizational performance. First using Palestinian healthcare sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic as a sample to demonstrate the relationship between moderating role of entrepreneurial orientation on the relationship between knowledge management and human resource practices gives a richer perspective to the organizational performance literature. To date, most of the previous studies conducted examined the relationship between human resource practices and organizational performance in Western society.

based-view (RBV). The premise of this view had been manifested in this study through the human resource practice and OP relationship. According to resource-based view, a firm's resources are key determinants of competitive advantage and performance. It holds that in most cases, organizations create value by producing what others can have it very hard to imitate. It is believed



that though traditional sources of competitive advantage including natural resources, technology and economies of scale lead to the creation of value. The argument states that these types of resources are imitable particularly when compared to a complex social structure like an employment system.

## MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings shown that knowledge management and human resource practices play a significant role in increasing organizational performance. Hence, managers should re-visit their current knowledge management particularly performance appraisal, training and development and employee participation and involvement to improve organizational effectiveness and competitiveness.

The present study also showed that knowledge management and human resource practices can enhance organizational performance in Palestinian healthcare sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic when appropriate strategies are implemented. Even though knowledge management is useful to organizations due to the sharing of knowledge qualities, its efficacy is limited if not aligned with the organization's strategy. Hence, to take the fullest advantage of knowledge management, organizations need to consider their strategy well. Management should know how to integrate these practices in a way that contributes to the realization of organizational objectives. It should also be aware that a changed paradigm of people management is called for in the current dynamic business environment.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

These limitations confine the interpretations of findings, this study employed a cross-sectional design of data collection method, i.e. the survey method - this method obtains the participants' perceptions in a single point in time. Because of this, this study is not suitable to prove causal relationship on a longitudinal basis and hence, the explanation of factors influencing organizational performance in Palestinian healthcare sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic is limited. Since the evidence gathered from the current research was restricted to the Palestinian healthcare system during the (COVID - 19) pandemic, the results could not be applied across cultures or sectors.

Despite these shortcomings, the current study identifies areas where further research is required. Given that the survey research in this study was based on a cross-sectional design, further work needs to be done to establish the effect of changes over a longer period of time in the aspects of knowledge management and human resource practices can enhance organizational performance in Palestinian healthcare sector during (COVID - 19) pandemic.

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