




Analysis of the Impact of Sanctions on the Quality of Human Resource Management in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration with Emphasis on its Legal and Social Dimensions

1. Shahram Cheraghi : Department of Law, Yas.C., Islamic Azad University, Yasuj, Iran

2. Ali Pourjavaheri *: Department of Law, Yas.C., Islamic Azad University, Yasuj, Iran

3. Ali Jamadi : Department of Law, Yas.C., Islamic Azad University, Yasuj, Iran

*Correspondence: ali.pourjavaheri@iau.ac.ir

Abstract

Economic sanctions, as a coercive tool in international relations, have consistently exerted extensive effects on various sectors of society and organizations, particularly on human resource management (HRM). This article aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the impact of sanctions on the quality of HRM in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, with specific emphasis on its legal and social dimensions. The present study is qualitative in nature, and through purposive non-probability sampling, data were collected via in-depth interviews with key staff members of the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration. The findings indicate that sanctions have had both direct and indirect effects on all HRM processes, including recruitment and hiring, training and development, retention, and employee compensation. From a legal perspective, restrictions have led to challenges in access to modern technologies, international labor relations, and domestic legislation. In the social dimension, sanctions have resulted in reduced motivation, increased job stress, and, at times, a decline in employee morale. Ultimately, this study concludes that to maintain and enhance the quality of HRM under sanction conditions, it is necessary to adopt innovative approaches, focus on internal empowerment, and continuously improve employees' welfare and legal status to strengthen organizational resilience.

Keywords: Economic sanctions, human resource management, quality of human resources, legal consequences, social dimensions, Ports and Maritime Organization, Hormozgan.

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1. Introduction

The shadow of sanctions over organizations and the hidden challenges of human resources in today's complex and dynamic world place both private and public organizations in confrontation with a wide range of challenges that threaten their survival and growth. Among these challenges, economic sanctions, as a political pressure tool, have left profound and multidimensional effects on the economy, industry, and consequently, on human resource management (HRM) in countries targeted by these

restrictions (Asgari et al., 2013; Shiroudi et al., 2015). Iran, with decades of experience living under sanction conditions, represents a clear example of a country whose organizations—particularly governmental institutions—have been compelled to adapt to these difficult circumstances. Within this context, the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, due to its strategic and vital role in the national economy and its position as the main gateway of the country's maritime trade, directly grapples with the consequences of sanctions.

Human resource management is the beating heart of every organization, and the quality of its performance has a direct relationship with productivity, innovation, and organizational resilience (Ahmadi, 2019; Schuler & Jackson, 1987). Under normal conditions, HRM faces inherent challenges such as recruitment, training, retention, and employee motivation. However, when sanctions enter the equation as an exogenous variable, these challenges become far more complex and severe. Limited financial resources, restrictions on technology transfer, difficulties in international communication, and psychological pressures arising from economic uncertainty collectively undermine the quality of HRM in public organizations, which often also struggle with bureaucracy and traditional structures (Momeni, 2014; Sabaghian & Mirzaei, 2018). Particularly in an organization such as the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration—where updated expertise, advanced equipment, and extensive international interactions are indispensable—the consequences of sanctions on human resources can be highly destructive. This situation, in turn, raises serious questions regarding how these restrictions affect the legal and social dimensions of the workforce in such a critical institution. Have sanctions resulted in violations of employee rights (Ghai, 2017; Safari & Rastegar, 2017)? Have employees' psychological and social well-being been affected (Maslach, 1982; Rahimi & Eskandari, 2019)? And have existing strategies succeeded in fostering the resilience required under such conditions (Ahmadi, 2019)?

Examining the impact of sanctions on HRM is not only theoretically significant within the HRM discipline but is also practically crucial for policymakers and senior managers of Iranian public organizations, especially in strategic regions such as Hormozgan (Noe et al., 2017; Schuler & Jackson, 1987). The Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, as the vital artery of maritime transportation and trade in Iran, plays an irreplaceable role in meeting essential needs and promoting non-oil exports. Therefore, any disruption in its performance, particularly those stemming from weakened HRM quality, can result in broad consequences for the national economy and citizens' livelihoods. Thus, a detailed exploration of the legal and social dimensions of these effects contributes to a deeper understanding of challenges and to the development of effective strategies for preserving and enhancing human capital under sanction conditions. Addressing this issue provides a framework for understanding and confronting problems arising from sanctions and may help design appropriate supportive and motivational policies for employees of these frontline organizations (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of sanctions on the quality of HRM in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration. To achieve this, the study pursues the following objectives:

- Identifying and explaining the legal dimensions of the impact of sanctions on employees of the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration.
- Examining and analyzing the social dimensions of sanctions' consequences on employees of this organization.
- Identifying key HRM challenges in this organization under the influence of sanctions.
- Providing recommendations for improving and enhancing the quality of HRM in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration in the face of sanctions.

2. Literature Review

A review of the impact of sanctions on HRM within the Iranian context reveals that economic sanctions and their wide-ranging consequences have long been the focus of researchers and analysts across different fields of the humanities, particularly economics, politics, and sociology (Momeni, 2014; Shiroudi et al., 2015). However, examining the effects of this complex phenomenon on HRM, especially in governmental organizations, with a deep focus on legal and social dimensions, constitutes a relatively newer field that requires further investigation. This section provides a comprehensive and critical review of prior studies (with emphasis on books and theses) in this field to clarify existing gaps and highlight the necessity of the present research.

a) The general impact of sanctions on organizations and Iran's economy.

Most studies in this area view sanctions as an external shock that affects the entire structure of Iran's economy and organizations. For example, Asgari, Nikraftar, and Ghaffari (2013) demonstrated that sanctions have negatively affected macroeconomic variables such as investment, production, and foreign trade (Asgari et al., 2013). Although these studies do not directly address HRM, they create the broader context of influence over HRM, since organizational financial status and access to technology directly shape policies for recruitment, retention, and employee training (Noe et al., 2017; Schuler & Jackson, 1987). Likewise, Shiroudi, Jafari, and Mirzaei (2015) showed that sanctions led to reduced production capacity, difficulties in supplying raw materials and spare parts, and consequently workforce downsizing in some industries—factors that indirectly affect job security for public sector employees (Shiroudi et al., 2015).

b) Sanctions and general HRM challenges in Iran.

Several studies have more broadly addressed HRM challenges in Iran, many of which are exacerbated under sanctions. For instance, Sabaghian and Mirzaei (2018) identified issues such as shortages of specialized personnel, job burnout, the absence of comprehensive HR strategies, and insufficient support from senior management (Maslach, 1982; Sabaghian & Mirzaei, 2018). These challenges become more acute during sanctions, due to economic pressures and international constraints. For example, reduced training and research budgets limit opportunities for skill development and contribute to brain drain—a phenomenon also highlighted in Falahnejad's (2016) thesis on the impact of sanctions on elite migration (Falahnejad, 2016; McClelland, 1973).

c) The impact of sanctions on the legal dimensions of HRM.

In the legal domain, fewer focused studies have directly examined the impact of sanctions on employees' rights in Iranian public organizations. However, insights can be drawn from broader research on labor law and international labor standards. For instance, Safari and Rastegar (2017) highlighted challenges such as job security, temporary contracts, and employee benefits (Safari & Rastegar, 2017). Economic restrictions stemming from sanctions may exacerbate these challenges by affecting safe access to technology and international labor standards, thus influencing employees' occupational safety and health rights (Ghai, 2017). Difficulties in paying wages, especially in foreign-currency-based contracts, and the inability to participate in international training courses may further restrict employees' professional development rights—an aspect underexplored in legal scholarship (Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

d) The impact of sanctions on the social dimensions of HRM.

The social dimensions of sanctions' effects on human resources include psychological, motivational, and welfare issues. Momeni (2014), in his book, emphasized the broader social consequences of sanctions, such as increased stress, inequality, and reduced public welfare (Momeni, 2014; Runciman, 1966). These naturally affect employee morale and motivation in the workplace. Similarly, Rahimi and Eskandari (2019) noted the role of economic and environmental factors in increasing employee burnout in governmental organizations (Maslach, 1982; Rahimi & Eskandari, 2019). Declining purchasing power, lack of alternative employment opportunities, and the general atmosphere of economic uncertainty may reduce motivation, increase job stress, and even cause psychological harm among employees (Homans, 1958; Rezaei, 2018).

Nevertheless, a comprehensive qualitative study specifically focused on exploring these dimensions within a single governmental organization—such as the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration—remains scarce and underscores the need for the present research.

3. Theoretical Foundations

To deeply explore the impact of sanctions on the quality of human resource management (HRM) in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, it is necessary to examine theoretical foundations from HRM, sanction theories, and legal and social dimensions. These frameworks provide the basis for analyzing and interpreting the findings of this research.

1. Human Resource Management (HRM) Theories

a) Strategic Approach to HRM (SHRM).

This approach, advanced by scholars such as Schuler and Jackson, emphasizes aligning human resource policies and practices with the overall strategies of the organization (Noe et al., 2017; Schuler & Jackson, 1987). Under normal conditions,

SHRM helps organizations achieve competitive advantage through effective recruitment, development, and retention of employees. However, in sanction conditions, HR strategies must become more flexible and capable of responding to external shocks. Sanctions can disrupt long-term workforce planning, negatively affect compensation and benefits programs, and create challenges in attracting and retaining skilled personnel. In the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, sanctions directly influence the organization's ability to access modern maritime technologies, participate in international training, and compete with the private sector in attracting professionals—issues that contradict the principles of SHRM.

b) Competency-Based HRM.

This theory, developed by McClelland and later expanded by Spencer and Spencer, emphasizes identifying, developing, and deploying sets of knowledge, skills, and abilities (competencies) in employees to achieve organizational goals (Karimi, 2016; McClelland, 1973; Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Under normal conditions, organizations strive to develop future competencies. However, under sanctions, access to international educational resources, scientific cooperation, and exchange of experiences with foreign organizations becomes limited. This may lead to stagnation in developing critical competencies, particularly in specialized and technical fields such as port and maritime operations. Consequently, the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration faces challenges in maintaining and enhancing the core competencies of its workforce.

c) Social Exchange Theory (SET).

Introduced by Blau and Homans, SET explains interpersonal relations based on reciprocal exchanges (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Homans, 1958). In the workplace, this theory suggests that employees respond with commitment and participation when they receive rewards and organizational support—both material and moral. Sanctions can disrupt this balance by reducing benefits, increasing job insecurity, and limiting advancement opportunities. These issues may lower employees' trust, loyalty, and commitment, directly undermining HRM quality. Reduced motivation and job satisfaction negatively affect performance, creativity, and retention of specialized employees.

2. Sanction Theories and Their Effects

a) Cost of Sanctions Theory.

This theory is based on the notion that sanctions impose costs not only on the target country but also on the imposing country. For the target, these costs may include reduced GDP, higher inflation, unemployment, and decreased investment (Asgari et al., 2013; Shiroudi et al., 2015). From an HRM perspective, this theory explains how economic pressures from sanctions reduce organizational budgets and limit their ability to provide competitive salaries and benefits. This is particularly critical for public organizations dependent on government revenues. In the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, declining income from restricted trade directly affects resources allocated to HR.

b) Organizational Resilience Theory.

This theory stresses the ability of organizations to resist, adapt, and recover from shocks and disruptions (Ahmadi, 2019). Under sanctions, resilient organizations minimize negative consequences and even exploit new opportunities. From an HRM viewpoint, resilience requires a flexible, adaptable, motivated, and capable workforce. HRM policies in this context must focus on multi-skilling, building a supportive organizational culture, and providing psychological support for employees. This theory helps assess how the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration has attempted—or failed—to enhance resilience against sanction pressures through HRM strategies.

3. Legal and Social Dimensions in the Context of Sanctions

a) Labor Law and International Labor Standards Theory.

This perspective focuses on rules and regulations defining the rights and responsibilities of workers and employers, often shaped by organizations such as the International Labour Organization (Chai, 2017; Safari & Rastegar, 2017). Under sanctions, some of these rights—such as access to professional training, safe technologies, or even social security rights during economic crises—may be indirectly affected. Restrictions on access to standard safety equipment or modern technologies may undermine occupational health and safety. Financial shortages may also delay wage payments or reduce benefits, issues that raise legal questions.

b) Job Stress and Burnout Theory.

This theory explains stressors in the workplace and their negative effects on employees' psychological and physical health (Maslach, 1982; Rahimi & Eskandari, 2019; Rezaei, 2018). Under sanctions, economic uncertainty, job insecurity, reduced purchasing power, and increased workloads due to resource shortages all serve as stressors. Prolonged stress can cause burnout, which is associated with reduced productivity, absenteeism, and deteriorated job performance. This perspective clarifies the social consequences of sanctions on the mental health and well-being of employees in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration.

c) Relative Deprivation Theory.

Proposed by Runciman, this theory argues that individuals feel dissatisfaction or deprivation when comparing their situation with reference groups or past expectations and perceiving a meaningful gap (Runciman, 1966). Under sanctions, employees may perceive their income and welfare opportunities as inferior compared to previous years or to peers in non-sanctioned countries. Such perceptions of relative deprivation reduce motivation, weaken loyalty, and may increase turnover intentions. This theory enriches the understanding of social and psychological dissatisfaction among employees under sanction conditions.

By employing these theoretical foundations, the present study aims to systematically analyze the multidimensional effects of sanctions on the legal and social aspects of HRM in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, while identifying possible pathways for overcoming the existing challenges.

4. Research Methodology

To achieve a deep and comprehensive understanding of the impact of sanctions on the quality of human resource management (HRM) in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, this study employed a qualitative approach. The choice of this approach was due to the complex and multidimensional nature of the phenomenon under study, which required delving into the experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of individuals directly involved in sanction conditions.

The statistical population of this study consisted of all permanent and contractual employees of the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, who, due to the strategic and vital role of this organization, were directly or indirectly affected by the consequences of sanctions. Sampling was conducted through purposive non-probabilistic sampling. This method enabled the researcher to deliberately select individuals with the most relevant knowledge and profound experiences related to HRM, legal issues, employee welfare, and the effects of sanctions on organizational performance.

The final sample included 16 participants, comprising senior managers, HR specialists, legal representatives, and a number of experienced employees from various operational departments, to capture diverse perspectives. The sampling process continued until theoretical saturation was reached—that is, until new interviews no longer yielded additional information or emerging themes.

The primary tool for data collection was semi-structured interviews. This interview method, based on a pre-designed thematic guide, allowed the researcher to cover all key dimensions of the study while retaining flexibility to pursue new issues and explore participants' responses in greater depth. Questions were designed according to the conceptual model of the study and aimed at extracting participants' experiences and views regarding the impact of sanctions on the legal and social dimensions of HRM, and ultimately on the overall quality of HRM in the organization.

To ensure accuracy and reliability, interviews were audio-recorded (with prior permission from participants) and later fully transcribed word-for-word.

The collected interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method, one of the most common approaches for analyzing qualitative data, enables the researcher to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns, themes, and hidden meanings within the transcribed texts. The steps of thematic analysis included:

- Familiarization with the data: repeated reading of transcripts to become immersed in their content.
- Initial coding: assigning preliminary codes to meaningful segments of text.
- Searching for themes: grouping similar codes into broader themes.
- Reviewing themes: ensuring consistency of themes with the dataset and their interrelations.
- Defining and naming themes: providing clear definitions and appropriate names for each theme.
- Producing the report: writing findings and linking them to the study's objectives and assumptions.

To ensure credibility and dependability of the findings, member checking (where parts of the findings were returned to participants for verification) and data triangulation (using multiple information sources, such as relevant organizational documents) were employed. This comprehensive methodological approach allowed the study to generate valid and reliable findings that provide a solid foundation for practical recommendations.

5. Research Findings

The findings of this research, derived from the in-depth analysis of semi-structured interviews with key and informed employees of the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, present a clear picture of the multidimensional impacts of economic sanctions on the quality of HRM in this vital organization, with a focus on legal and social dimensions. Thematic analysis of the data led to the identification of several major and sub-themes that directly align with the study's assumptions and conceptual model.

1. The Impact of Sanctions on the Legal Dimensions of HRM

The results show that sanctions have significantly affected the legal aspects related to employees in three main themes:

1.1. Challenges related to salaries and benefits.

Participants repeatedly mentioned the erosion of the purchasing power of their salaries and benefits, caused by rising inflation and currency devaluation following sanctions. Although salaries had not been nominally reduced, employees emphasized the significant decline in their real value and quality of life.

- *Direct quote:* "Our salaries haven't decreased, but with these rising prices, their value is only a fraction of what it used to be. We can't live like before." (Finance staff, 10 years of experience).
- *Analysis:* While not a formal violation of labor rights, this situation undermines the principle of adequate livelihood and wage justice, affecting employees' quality of life and satisfaction.

1.2. Restrictions on access to specialized training and modern technologies.

One of the most evident outcomes of sanctions has been the difficulty in accessing international training programs and advanced technologies in the maritime and port sector.

- *Direct quote:* "We used to attend specialized training courses abroad or receive new equipment that required training. Now these opportunities are very limited." (Technical expert, 15 years of experience).
- *Analysis:* These restrictions hinder employees' professional growth and weaken the organization's ability to maintain and enhance competencies essential for competitiveness. From a legal perspective, this may indicate insufficient fulfillment of employees' rights to professional development.

1.3. Uncertainty in job security and contractual challenges.

Although public organizations typically offer higher job security, the economic downturn caused by sanctions created anxiety about future employment and contract conditions, particularly for contractual and temporary employees.

- *Direct quote:* "There's always this worry that if things get worse, they might downsize staff or cut our benefits. Even in government offices, this sense of insecurity exists." (Service staff, 8 years of experience).
- *Analysis:* While mass layoffs had not formally occurred, the psychological sense of insecurity has grown, negatively influencing commitment and performance. Legally, this uncertainty may lead to disputes in interpreting or implementing employment contracts.

2. The Impact of Sanctions on the Social Dimensions of HRM

Sanctions have also clearly produced significant social consequences for employees, reflected in the following themes:

2.1. Declining motivation and job satisfaction.

Most participants reported a sharp decline in motivation and satisfaction, attributed to reduced purchasing power, lack of career advancement opportunities, and perceived injustice compared to peers in non-sanctioned contexts.

- *Direct quote:* "We used to come to work with more enthusiasm. Now it feels like no matter how hard you work, you can't make ends meet. Motivation has dropped." (Middle manager, 20 years of experience).
- *Analysis:* This decline reflects the imbalance between effort and reward, undermining employee engagement and loyalty.

2.2. Increased job stress and psychological consequences.

Difficult economic conditions, uncertainty about the future, and greater workloads due to limited resources and staff shortages have created high levels of stress among employees.

- *Direct quote*: “We’re constantly worried about tomorrow—how much the dollar will rise, whether our salary will cover our needs. These pressures really drain us mentally.” (Administrative officer, 12 years of experience).
- *Analysis*: This finding highlights how sanctions have turned the work environment into a source of chronic stress, risking employee burnout and declining mental health.

2.3. Effects on interpersonal relationships and team spirit.

Some participants pointed to negative impacts on workplace relationships and team spirit, noting that economic stress sometimes reduced cooperation and empathy.

- *Direct quote*: “Sometimes the economic problems make people irritable, and it affects workplace relationships.” (Operations staff, 7 years of experience).
- *Analysis*: Though less severe than other effects, this reflects the indirect social and psychological impacts of sanction-induced pressures.

3. Overall Impact of Sanctions on HRM Quality

The combined legal and social impacts ultimately reduced the overall quality of HRM in the organization. This reduction was observed in the following dimensions:

1. **Recruitment and retention**: Challenges in attracting new talent and retaining specialists due to inability to offer competitive compensation and development opportunities.
2. **Workforce planning**: Economic uncertainty complicating long-term human resource planning.
3. **Training and development**: Decline in training program quality due to limited resources and restricted access to up-to-date knowledge.
4. **Compensation systems**: Reduced ability to meet employees’ livelihood needs.
5. **Performance evaluation**: Sanction-related pressures undermining fairness and motivational aspects of performance assessments.

In conclusion, the findings strongly indicate that sanctions, as an external pressure factor, have triggered a chain of negative consequences in both legal and social dimensions for employees of the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration. These, in turn, have weakened the quality of HRM in this organization. The results provide a foundation for practical and applicable recommendations in the next section of the study.

6. Discussion

This study aimed to analyze the impact of sanctions on the quality of human resource management (HRM) in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration, with emphasis on its legal and social dimensions. The qualitative findings derived from in-depth interviews with employees of this organization offered a multilayered and realistic picture of the consequences of sanctions. These results not only strongly confirm the assumptions of the research but also provide a richer understanding of the mechanisms through which sanctions influence human capital in a strategic Iranian governmental organization.

The findings revealed that economic sanctions have directly and indirectly exerted negative effects on the quality of HRM in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration. These effects were particularly evident in the form of legal challenges (such as reduced purchasing power of salaries and benefits, restrictions in access to specialized training, and uncertainty in job security) and social challenges (including reduced motivation and job satisfaction, increased stress, and psychological consequences). These results align closely with the theoretical foundations discussed earlier.

On the legal dimension, the challenge of reduced purchasing power of salaries and benefits—although not formally a violation of labor law—practically undermines the principle of “livable wages.” This finding resonates with what Safari and Rastegar (2017) emphasized regarding labor law challenges in Iran (Safari & Rastegar, 2017). It demonstrates how external factors such as sanctions can undermine the practical implementation of employee rights. Restrictions in access to specialized training and modern technologies, particularly in an advanced organization such as the Ports and Maritime Administration, directly compromise employees’ right to professional development. This issue contradicts Competency-Based HRM theory, which underscores the importance of continuous skills development (Karimi, 2016; McClelland, 1973; Spencer & Spencer,

1993). Karimi (2016) also highlighted the necessity of competency development, which under sanction conditions faces serious obstacles.

On the social dimension, reduced motivation and job satisfaction along with increased job stress emerged as the most prominent consequences of sanctions. These findings strongly support both Relative Deprivation Theory and Job Stress and Burnout Theory (Maslach, 1982; Rahimi & Eskandari, 2019; Rezaei, 2018; Runciman, 1966). Employees, when comparing themselves to their past status or to peers in non-sanctioned environments, perceive deprivation and pressure. This is consistent with Rahimi and Eskandari (2019), who noted economic and environmental factors as key contributors to burnout in governmental organizations (Rahimi & Eskandari, 2019). Similarly, Momeni (2014) pointed to the broader social consequences of sanctions, such as heightened stress and reduced public welfare (Momeni, 2014), which, at the micro-organizational level, manifest as decreased motivation and weakened psychological well-being of employees. This decline in morale and job satisfaction, as predicted by Social Exchange Theory, directly diminishes employees' commitment and performance, thereby weakening HRM quality (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Homans, 1958).

Overall, the findings of this study complement broader research such as Asgari, Nikraftar, and Ghaffari (2013) on the macroeconomic effects of sanctions (Asgari et al., 2013) and Shiroudi, Jafari, and Mirzaei (2015) on the industrial sector (Shiroudi et al., 2015). The present study demonstrates how macroeconomic pressures generated by sanctions penetrate into the micro-organizational level and directly impact human capital—the most valuable asset of any organization. Weaknesses in talent acquisition and retention, difficulties in long-term workforce planning, and reduced effectiveness of training and development programs all confirm that sanctions pose a serious obstacle to the successful implementation of the Strategic HRM (SHRM) approach (Noe et al., 2017; Schuler & Jackson, 1987). Organizations under such conditions require greater flexibility and resilience, yet sanctions themselves constrain the resources necessary for fostering resilience (Ahmadi, 2019).

7. Conclusion

This study successfully addressed its predetermined objectives. It was found that economic sanctions have significantly and negatively affected the legal and social dimensions of human resource management (HRM) in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration. These impacts have ultimately led to a decline in the overall quality of HRM in the organization and created serious challenges in employee recruitment, retention, training, and motivation. In practice, sanctions have weakened the organization's ability to effectively implement HRM processes by restricting resources, creating economic uncertainty, and increasing psychological pressures on employees.

Based on the findings, the following practical recommendations are proposed to manage the challenges caused by sanctions and to preserve HRM quality in the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Administration:

1. **Focus on non-financial and moral compensation strategies:** Given financial limitations, the organization should strengthen systems of non-monetary compensation (such as internal career growth opportunities, promotion, recognition of performance, and creating a healthy and supportive work environment) to enhance employee motivation.
2. **Investment in internal training and development:** With restricted access to international training, the organization should reinforce internal training programs, utilize in-house expertise (including senior professionals and retirees), and promote knowledge-sharing among employees.
3. **Stress management and promotion of mental health:** Considering the rise in job-related stress, providing psychological counseling, conducting stress management workshops, and creating supportive spaces at the workplace are essential.
4. **Revisiting job security policies for contractual staff:** To reduce uncertainty, the organization should develop clearer and more supportive policies for contractual and temporary employees to ensure their job security as much as possible.
5. **Fostering a culture of organizational resilience:** Through training, effective communication, and employee participation in decision-making, the organizational culture should be oriented toward resilience and adaptability to difficult conditions.

This research may serve as a starting point for deeper studies in this area. For future research, the following are suggested:

1. **Comparative studies:** Conduct similar research in other governmental organizations or industries affected by sanctions to enable comparison and enhance generalizability.
2. **Quantitative research:** Design studies with a quantitative approach to more precisely measure the impact of sanctions on HRM variables, job satisfaction, and employee motivation.
3. **Examination of successful strategies:** Identify organizations that have managed to preserve or improve HRM quality under sanctions and analyze their strategies and practices.
4. **Cultural dimensions:** Explore the role of cultural and local factors in shaping how employees and organizations respond to sanction-related pressures.
5. **Long-term impacts of sanctions:** Conduct longitudinal studies to investigate the long-term consequences of sanctions on employees' occupational health and professional life.

This study demonstrates that a deep understanding of the effects of sanctions on human capital is not only a scientific necessity but also a practical imperative for sustaining the dynamism and productivity of vital organizations in the country under difficult conditions.

Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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