

The Influence of Wasta on Organizational Practices in Kuwait

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Abstract : Despite being frequently used everyday in the Arab World, Wasta, which is seen as a type of social capital, has received little attention from previous scholars, even in the Middle East. In simple words, Wasta basically means granting deserved or undeserved privileges to others through personal contacts. This paper suggests that Wasta is an important determinant of how some employees get recruited and turn to Wasta for privileges and favors in organizations. It is said, that Wasta accelerates career advancement and other work practices for employees, whether they deserve it or even are suitable for it or not. The overall goal of this paper is to see how Wasta influences human resource management practices by viewing the history of Wasta, the importance of using it, and how it affects employees as well as organizations in terms of recruitment and work practices. Accordingly, the question that will be addressed is: Does Wasta influence human resource management, knowledge sharing and innovation in Kuwait, which in turn affects employees' commitment within organizations? Therefore, a mixed method sequential exploratory research design will be used to explore the research topic through initial exploratory interviews, paper-based and online surveys (Quantitative method) and semi-structured interviews (Qualitative method). The reason behind such a choice is because both qualitative and quantitative methods complement each other when combined by providing a clearer picture of the topic.

Keywords : human resource management practices, Kuwait, social capital, Wasta

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