

HR PRACTICES IN MANAGING KNOWLEDGE WORKFORCE - A PERCEPTUAL STUDY

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Abstract *The present era of knowledge-based economy has posed immense challenge before organisations, particularly academic institutions, to identify the talent and potential of their human resource for developing them as knowledge workers. Keeping this in view, the present study is aimed to examine the perception of respondents towards HR practices prevailing in sample select institutions. The present study targeted 120 teaching personnel from five constituent colleges of Cluster University Srinagar. Simple random sampling technique was employed to gather information from the respondents. The data whatsoever collected were analysed using SPSS 20 version. The findings of the study depicted that respondents showed favourable satisfaction level towards HR practices. The findings of the study suggest that HR practices in sample institutions need to be further enriched and improved so that they will help in developing human capital which would eventually result in better institutional performance.*

Keywords: *HR Practices, Selection, Performance Appraisal System, Training and Development, Career Development, Reward System*

INTRODUCTION

The paradigm shift in world economy coupled with change in societal expectations, more informed clientele, new innovations in research, and introduction of latest technologies at workplaces has posed a challenge before institutions irrespective of their nature to manage and develop their human capital. Human capital continues to dominate other resources and as such needs to be managed and developed effectively so that their role is beneficial and purposeful in serving their community. Organisations, in order to perform and sustain in this competitive environment, need to embrace, develop, and manage knowledge workers who have the potential to transform institutions and societies for better future. In this respect, educational institutions are more crucial as their impact on society is of high importance due to their dual role in terms of knowledge creation and sharing. Morshidi (2010) stated that higher educational institutions' significance and efficiency lies in the fact that they provide avenues and a suitable environment for developing human resources in meeting market challenges. Zaitouni et al. (2011) opined that attracting and retaining human capital is critical for the success and growth of institutions. As such, academic institutions have greater responsibility in identifying, attracting, managing, and developing their workforce in terms of teachers who act as disseminators and creators of knowledge. It calls for the

promotion of HR practices in academic institutions such as selection of human resources, developing potential of faculty members, appraising their performance, focusing on their training and developmental aspects, opportunities for career advancements, and measures for rewarding their performance. Mufeed (2018) stated that academic institutions can perform better through fostering a climate of continuous change and innovation at their workplaces. The need of the hour is that academic institutions need to focus on promoting HR practices with a focus on teachers' developmental aspects, which would boost their morale and performance and eventually will lead towards better institutional delivery.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Over the years organisations have realised that human factor is critical for their long-term survival and development. The growing popularity of individuals as important asset of organisation has forced institutions to relook and redesign their practices with a focus on human development. The practitioners, researchers and policy-makers have called for addressing the needs and aspirations of employees and linking the same with overall organisational strategy as this would help organisations to execute their plans more effectively. Human resource is considered as a key strategic partner in formulation of policies and business

plans. Guest (2011) viewed that effective implementing HR practices in organisations are critical for individuals performance and also help in attaining organisational laid down goals (Hassan, 2016). HR strategies primarily focus on individuals' development in terms updating their skills, knowledge, capabilities which would make them act as knowledge workers with the aim to make them more competitive at workplaces so that their performance is improved and sustained in meeting organisational and societal expectations. HR practices have been found to be playing a very pivotal role in managing human resources with a focus on developing their competencies and skills and also help in facilitating them to nurture their talent in meeting their individual and career aspirations. Stewart and Brown (2011) stated that effective HR strategies focus on developing human capital, which increases their morale and performance at workplaces. Paul et al. (2014) were of the view that in today's competitive environment performance appraisal system has become a useful tool in assessing their existing performance and identifying their potential for future roles. George and Scott (2012) pointed out that training helps in providing an atmosphere of learning where individuals improve their current job performance whereas development enables them to broaden their skills for taking future responsibility in organisations. Lyria, Namusonge and Karanja (2017), in their views, stated that career planning and development aim to enable individuals to develop their skills and potential for the purpose of enhancing their strengths and overcome their weakness which would eventually facilitate the growth and expansion of organisations.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been laid down for the present study:

- To assess the perception of employees towards HR practices in sample select institutions.
- To analyse the perception of employees towards HR practices across gender.
- To examine employees perception towards HR practices across work experience and
- To draw conclusions and suggest measures for improving HR practices in creating knowledge workers in sample select institutions.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Keeping in view the above objectives, the following hypothesis has been formulated for the present study:

H1: Perception of employees towards HR practices differs across gender.

H2: Perception of employees towards HR practices differs across experience.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present paper gathered responses from employees (teaching staff) working in five constituent colleges of Cluster University Srinagar. The questionnaires were distributed among 120 teaching staff and only 93 questionnaires were returned. Of those 93 returned questionnaires, five were not found fit for further analysis and thus were rejected. Therefore, only 88 questionnaires were used for final analysis with a usable response rate of 73.33%. Simple random sampling technique was employed to gather responses from the respondents. The present study covers 37 female and 51 male teaching staff. The data whatsoever collected were analysed using SPSS 20.0.Version. The reliability of constructs of HR practices varied from .75 to .86. Descriptive statistics such as mean score, Std. deviation and frequency were used to study the employee's perception with respect to HRM practices.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Table 1 depicts the perception of employees (teaching personnel) towards HR practices in sample study institutions. It can be inferred from Table 1 that all the HR practices were perceived positively by employees. However, the highest satisfaction level of employees among HR practices was shown towards selection practice with mean score of (3.26); it was followed by training and development (3.22), reward system (3.18), career development (3.15), performance appraisal system (3.12) whereas teaching personnel perceived least satisfaction level towards potential appraisal with mean score of (3.05).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Values of Study Variables

Constructs	n	Mean	Std. Dev	Cronbach's Alpha
Selection	88	3.26	0.66	0.77
Performance Appraisal System	88	3.12	0.71	0.75
Potential Appraisal	88	3.05	0.64	0.78
Training and Development	88	3.22	0.70	0.86
Career Development	88	3.15	0.75	0.76
Reward System	88	3.18	0.69	0.82
HR Practices		3.16		0.74

Note: Higher the mean score, higher the level of satisfaction

As is evident from the Table 2, the female staff showed higher satisfaction with mean score of (3.19) towards overall HR practices as compared to male staff with mean score of (3.13) in sample select institution.

Table 2: Perception of Teaching Personnel Towards HR Practices Across Gender

Construct	Gender	Mean Score	Std. Deviation
HR Practices	Male	3.13	.70
	Female	3.19	.68

To know whether the difference in respondent group ‘gender’ is statistically significant or not, an independent samples test was employed. The results showed that the difference in the perception of female and male staff towards HR practices is statistically significant as the p value is less than .05 as shown in Table 3. Therefore, hypotheses 1 is empirically supported and hence accepted.

Table 4: Perception of Teaching Personnel Towards HR Practices Across Experience

Factor	Dependent Variable	Group	(n)	Mean Score	ANOVA	Sig*
Experience	HR Practices	Less than 10	24	3.12	3.244	.034*
		10-20	36	3.16		
		More than 20	28	3.20		

Note: *p<.05

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The present study made an attempt to examine the perception of teaching personnel of sample study institutions towards HR practices prevailing in their institutions. It further aimed to analyse the perceptual differences of teaching personnel towards HR practices across gender and experience. Keeping in view the objectives and on the basis of findings of the present study, it was found that there exists a favourable attitude of teaching personnel towards HR practices prevailing in their institutions. The results of the study depicted above-average satisfaction level of respondents towards HR practices. Moreover, it was also observed from the findings of the study that there exists a significant perceptual difference of teaching personnel towards HR practices across gender as well as on the basis of teaching experience. Female teaching staff perceived high satisfaction level towards HR practices as compared to male teaching staff. Further, it was also depicted from the findings that teaching personnel who has more than 20 years of experience showed higher satisfaction level while as

Table 3: Independent Samples Test (Gender)

Construct	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
HR Practices	.498	.543	1.124	86	.039	-0.61245

Note: Sig* (p<.05)

Table 4 examines the difference in the perception of employees regarding HR practices on the basis of variable experience. It is revealed from the above Table 4 that employees having more than 20 years of experience are having highest perception towards overall HR practices with mean score of (3.20) while as employees having less than 10 years of experience showed least satisfaction towards HR practices with mean score of (3.12).

The perceptual differences of respondent employees regarding HR practices are statistically significant when the differences were examined on the basis of experience factor (ANNOVA=3.244; p<.05). Hence, hypothesis 2 is accepted, indicating that there exists a significant difference among teaching staff across experience.

teaching personnel having less than 10 years of experience showed least satisfaction towards HR practices.

Overall, the results of the study highlighted that teaching personnel have favourable satisfaction level towards HR practices. However, it is suggested that HR practices in sample select institutions need to be relooked and further enriched so that performance and efficiency of teaching personnel are improved for better results, which would help them in transforming knowledge and adopting innovative teaching practices more effectively at their workplaces.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is faced with some limitations. Firstly, the study targeted only five colleges in Srinagar district and thus findings of the study cannot be generalised to whole population. Therefore, future research can include more colleges from other districts in order to cover wider geographical representation. Secondly, the sample size taken in the present study was small and only confined to colleges; therefore, future research can include universities

as well with more sample to authenticate the conclusions of this study. Thirdly, the present study gathered information from respondents at only one point of time; therefore, future research can be longitudinal in nature that will provide more holistic picture about the study organisations.

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