

Impact of High Performance Human Resource Practices on Intention to Leave and Emotional Exhaustion

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Abstract

Rapid changes in globalization, privatization/deregulation, competition, and technological advances, human resources (HR) and other management practices, organizations shifted their mind set towards high performance HRM practices. Now, these practices are become as internally consistent set of policies and strategies, which contributes to the achievement of business objectives. Hence, present paper explored all major high performance HR practices. Further, it also explored the impact of high performance HR practices on intention to leave and emotional exhaustion. The conceptual models has been checked through SEM. Results revealed that high performance HR practices have significant but, negative impact on emotional exhaustion and intention to leave. Further, theoretical, managerial and financial implications and future research also stand discussed.

Keywords: high performance HR practices, intention to leave, emotional exhaustion

INTRODUCTION

Practices are particular methods and procedures that the organization adopts to put in action the organization's principles and policies. These are fundamental building blocks for theory building in this literature (Whetten, 1989). In high-performance HR architecture, these are called High Performance Work Practices (Posthuma et al., 2013). Previously organizations focused only on traditional human resource management (HRM) practices. But due to rapid changes in globalization, privatization/deregulation, competition, and technological advances, human resources (HR) and other management practices, organizations shifted their mind set towards high performance HRM practices (Gurbuz, 2009) viz., human resource planning, recruitment, selection, screening, orientation, training,

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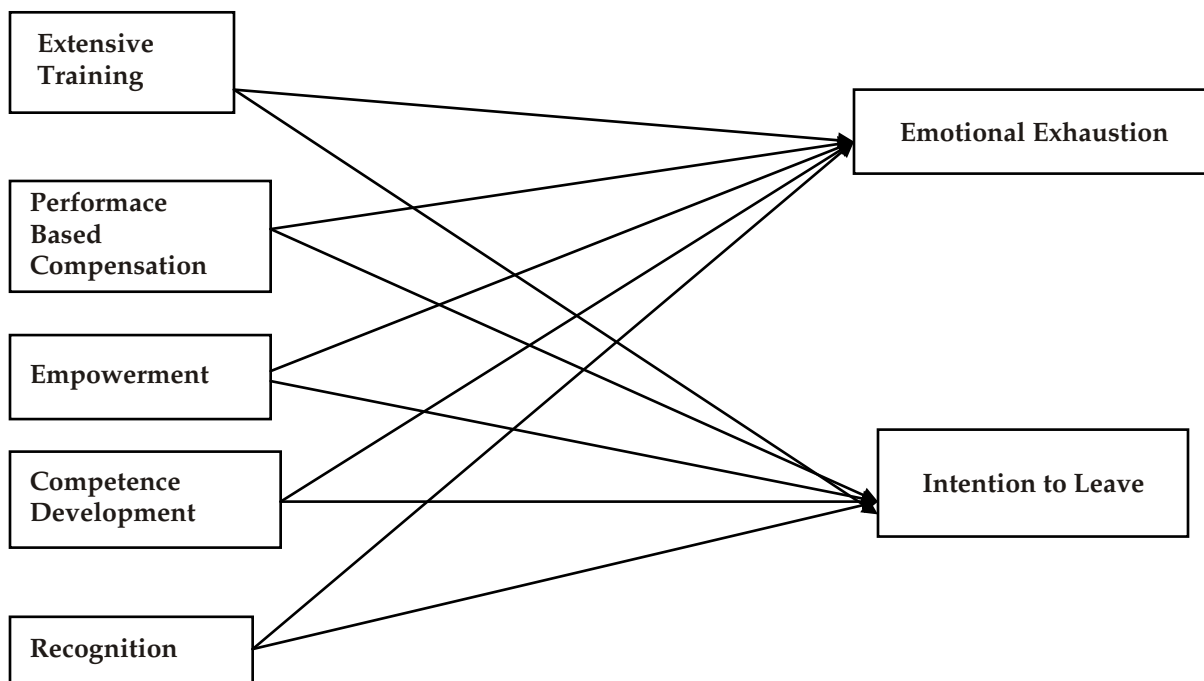
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performance-based compensation, performance-appraisal, performance management, empowerment, competency development, job analysis, recognition, and health and safety (Mohamad et al., 2009; Osman et al., 2011; Absar et al., 2010; Stumpfy et al., 2010; Evans and Davis 2005). High performance HR practices objective is to enhance company performance with the help of its employees for achieving competitive advantage (Pfeffer and Veiga, 1999; Armstrong, 2006). Huselid (1995) have identified high-performance HR practices as "internally consistent set of policies and practices that a firm's human capital contributes to the achievement of business objectives" (pp.110-123). Though there is no consensus about high performance human resource practices but training (Posthuma, 2013; Chan and Mak, 2012; Khasawneh and Alzawahrez, 2012; Wei et al., 2010; Dizgah et al., 2011; Huselid, 1995), performance-based compensation (Posthuma, 2013; Gupta and Singh, 2010; Wei et al., 2010; Gurbuz, 2009; Lopez et al., 2005; Huselid, 1995),

empowerment (Dizgah, 2011; Wei et al., 2010; Gong et al. 2009; Gupta and Singh, 2010; Gurbuz, 2009; Lopez et al., 2005), Recognition (Wei et al., 2010; Gurbuz, 2009; Lopez et al., 2005) and competency development (Gupta and Singh, 2010) have been consistently considered as high performance human resource practices.

After reviewing the literature, it has been found that the many studies on HRM practices have been conducted by eminent researchers/scholars. But, the literature revealed that the impact of only few HRM practices has been studied. Most of the previous research concentrated on either individual HRM practice such as training or compensation or their impact on HR outcomes. This research proposes to assess the impact of high performance human resource practices viz., Training, Compensation, Empowerment, Competence Development and Recognition on Intention to leave and emotional. The proposed model is as follows:



HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Emotional exhaustion is a chronic state of emotional or physical depletion. It occurs when a person's life resources are depleted by stressful demands. The commitment of an organization HR practices to its employees may be reflected in its care for employee well-being and satisfaction in the fairness and comparison of its rewards and its investment in competence development, compensation (Lee and Miller, 1999), training, and empowerment. Low commitment HR practices threaten or deplete the resources that employees should gain from their organization and causes emotional exhaustion. This makes employees unable to meet their work demands or obtain anticipated returns on an investment of resources. If the employees feel that the necessary work environment is present for them to satisfy their needs and abilities, they maintain the emotional attachment, otherwise they reduce their commitment and decrease organizational performance. Emotional exhaustion is lower in organizations with high commitment HR practices (Vanhala and Tuomi, 2006). The above literature leads to the formation of first hypothesis:-

HYP1: Higher the empowerment, training, compensation, recognition, competence development lower will be emotional exhaustion.

Previous studies (Huselid, 1995) have shown that high involvement HR practices enhance employee retention. Empowerment has been defined as organizational practices devoted to increase employee discretion and influence through task involvement (Campbell, 2000). Organizations allow employees to perform several roles and responsibilities and thus exert a greater influence at work while enjoying increased autonomy in the hopes that they will experience a higher sense of ownership. This fosters a great sense of support, trust and intrinsic motivation, provide positive work attitude and consequently attenuate job turnover. Competence development conveys to employees that the organization considers employee as a source of competitive advantage

and wants to establish a long term relationship with them (Tsui et al., 1995). It enables the organization to retain productive employees (Guptill, 1998; Agarwal and Feratt, 1999). Training refers to a planned effort, which facilitates the learning of job-related knowledge, skills and behaviour (Noe et al., 1997). Untrained employee/worker tends to change their job more often and therefore the organization increases their cost of keeping trained position filled. Hequent (1993) reported a negative correlation between training and turnover. Further, Abassi and Hollman (2000) have identified lack of recognition and compensation is the reasons for employee turnover in the organization. Hence it is hypothesised that:

HYP2: Empowerment, Training, Compensation, Recognition, Competence development negatively affect Intention to leave.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The present research is evaluative in nature as it tries to find out the relationship of high human resource practices with emotional exhaustion and intention to leave. The following steps were taken to make it more effective and accurate.

Generation of Scale Items

The generation of the scale items were finalised after reviewing the existing literature, detailed discussion with the subject experts, academicians and pilot survey. A pilot survey was conducted in the first phase, where data were collected conveniently from 100 respondents, with 20 respondents from each college.

Items for compensation (ten items) and training scales (six items) were adopted from Lam et al. (2009). Empowerment (seven items), Recognition (fourteen items) and Competence development (five items) scales were generated with the help of previous literature viz., Pare et al. (2000); Pare and Tremblay (2000). Emotional Exhaustion scale (nine items) was generated from Maslach and Jackson (1981) and Rutherford

et al. (2011). Items for Intention to leave (fourteen items) scale were finalised by reviewing the previous research papers viz., Mobley et al. (1977); Knudsen et al. (2006).

Data Collection

The data were collected from five different professional college teachers through questionnaire. All the respondents were contacted personally with due permissions from their respective institutional heads. Census method was used for data collection. Out of 314, only 250 questionnaires were returned back. 19 questionnaires were incomplete so those were not considered. Only 231 responded properly, hence the response rate came out to be seventy four percent.

Final Questionnaire Designing

We assessed the content/face validity of the constructs through review of literature and formal discussions with the subject experts, managers and employees of telecommunication organizations. Based on the respondents' feedbacks (from pilot study) and other concerned people's suggestions, we incorporated changes in the questionnaire to improve its explain-ability and suitability. In addition, the data collected from pilot study was used to assess the factors with the help of factor analysis. Human Resource Management Practices scale was reduced from 37 to 29 items under 6 factors namely Training (F1), Empowerment (F2), Compensation (F3), Compensation Allowance (F4), Competence Development (F5), and Recognition (F6). The item loadings ranged between 0.5 to 0.8. The Cronbach's alpha values of all the factors were greater than 0.70.

Emotional Exhaustion Scale contained six items, which got reduced to four under one factor. The factor consisted of four items with the positive factor loading values from 0.7 to 0.8.

Intention to Leave Scale consisted fourteen items, which got reduced to six under one factor. All items have high factor loadings from 0.7 to 0.8.

RESULTS

To estimate the hypothesized relationships, we followed the Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Henseler et al. (2009) approach of two-stage modeling viz., 1) the measurement model and 2) the structural model. Each model was estimated twice i.e. once with no statistical controls and then controlling for age and qualification of the employees. The result indicated that control variables did not change our findings, so we used only the uncontrolled model results for testing hypothesized relationships (Arnold et al., 2007).

CFA was conducted to assess the validity of the scales used in the study. The fit results revealed that goodness of fit of the eight factor model was better than the one factor model (RMR=0.43, RMSEA=0.059, CFI=0.939, GFI=0.902, AGFI=0.809), thereby establishing the discriminant validity (Arnold et al., 2007). Further, the variance extracted of all the scales is higher than the squared correlation amongst them (Table 1) thereby proving the discriminant validity of the scales (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Further, the convergent validity is achieved if the loading of each of the individual items on its latent scale is 0.5 or higher. In the present study majority of loadings are above 0.5 higher. Beside this, convergent validity has also been established through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which is above 0.5 (Table 1). Hence, convergent validity for all scales stands established.

The reliability of eight constructs i.e. HPHRPs, emotional exhaustion and intention to leave has been established by using Cronbach Alpha. A greater alpha value represents greater reliability. All the values are more than 0.7 for all the constructs (Table 1). Further, construct reliability for the HPHRPs, Emotional Exhaustion and Intention to leave are excellent (above 0.7).

Impact of HRM Practices on Intention to Leave and Emotional Exhaustion - A Structural Equation Modeling

Table 1: Reliability and Validity Analysis

Constructs	AVE	Composite Reliability
HR Practices:		
Training	0.639	0.896
Empowerment	0.515	0.845
Compensation	0.813	0.918
Compensation Allowance	0.709	0.871
Competence Development	0.505	0.807
Recognition	0.531	0.761
Emotional Exhaustion	0.536	0.828
Intention to Leave	0.539	0.851

In the second phase, structural modeling (AMOS 17) as recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was carried out. Structural equation modeling is implemented to assess the robustness of the results and the stability of the models as suggested by Arbuckle and Wothke (2004). In the present study, the relationship among high performance HR practices, emotional exhaustion and intention to leave have been assessed. A model has been designed where the HRM practices have been used as independent variables to assess their impact intention to leave and to check the role of emotional exhaustion as a mediator.

Firstly, we tested the direct structural effect from high performance HR practices on emotional exhaustion. The first path traced the significant impact of training on emotional exhaustion (SRW= -0.781, $p < 0.001$). Compensation and compensation allowances is also negatively associated with emotional exhaustion (SRW= -0.603, -0.561, $p < 0.001$). The fourth path reflected the inverse impact of empowerment and emotional exhaustion (SRW= -0.595, $p < 0.001$). Further, competence development also shows negative effect on emotional exhaustion (SRW= -

0.795, $p < 0.001$) followed by recognition (SRW= -0.747, $p < 0.001$). All the relations were significant but negatively affect the emotional exhaustion, which helps us to accept our first hypothesis.

Secondly, we tested the impact on high performance HR practices on intention to leave. The first path traced the negative impact of training on intention to leave, which is significant (SRW= -0.781, $p < 0.001$). Performance based compensation is one of the HRM practices, which normally refer to pay, wage, salary and benefits etc. It also has a significant negative impact on intention to leave (SRW=-0.847, $p < 0.001$). There is also a significant and inverse impact of empowerment on intention to leave (SRW=-0.897, $p < 0.001$). Competence development also traced a negative impact on intention to leave (SRW= -0.655, $p < 0.001$). Recognition is also inversely affecting employees' intention to leave. (SRW= -0.623, $p < 0.001$). Again all practices of HRM shows significant and negative relationship with intention to leave, which give support to our second hypothesis.

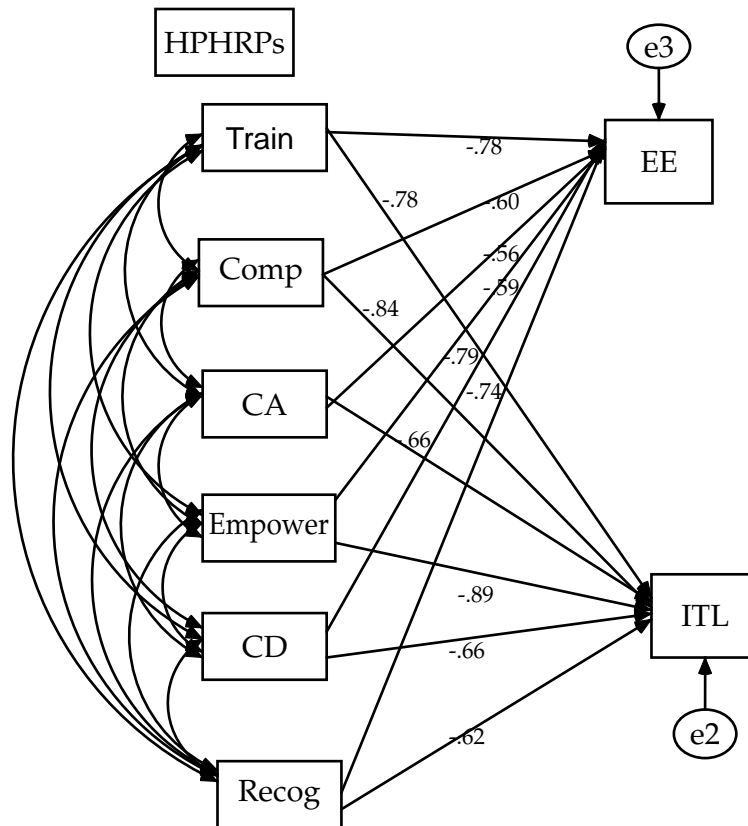


Figure 2: Impact of HPHRPs on intention to leave and emotional exhaustion

DISCUSSION

This study hypothesises and tests an inclusive model that explicitly clears the role of various key variables with each other, which received only partial and independent attention. The major findings and the implications are discussed as below:

The study revealed that training is not only required to enhance skills and competencies, but if it is not provided to an employee, they undergo stress and burnout. According to COR (conservation of resources theory) (Hobfall, 1989) if the institute fails to provide the necessary training to their employees or employees do not have enough training to meet their job demand. In this situation, employees will experience emotional exhaustion. Further, reasonable and competitive salary and the allowances are the key practices to attract and retain workers among companies and industries. If a company fails to

pay salary on time or delay in the payment of other allowances or benefits, the employees feel pressure, which in turn causes emotional exhaustion (Hobfall, 1989). Empowerment is an effective way to reduce burnout, which is an intrinsic component of emotional exhaustion. It increases the energy level of employees and reduces their job tension and henceforth lowering the level of emotional exhaustion among the employees and vice-versa (Sun and Pan, 2008). Additionally, competence development enables the employees to develop a sense of security among them regarding their career aspirations. Employees who have the apprehensions of not getting these development programmes may result into bringing them into the stage of burnout (Sun and Pan, 2008). The study also revealed that employees have the desire of getting the responsibility and a sense of fulfilment of the job. This inculcates a feeling of getting fairly recognised or rewarded by their

employers. Employees who are apprised for the quality of work and efficiency always tend to perform better and subsequently recognised for the same. The employees who are debarred from such recognition, they become stressed and emotionally exhausted (Sun and Pan, 2008).

In order to retain employees, an organization must provide a variety of HPHRPs to its employees. In this context, result revealed that training have negative impact on intention to leave. Moncarz et al. (2009) suggested that in an organization where employees receive the proper training needed to assume greater responsibilities turnover rates are generally lower. Organizations are spending high amount and efforts on training practices so that the employees are constantly involved in their work/assignments even during the time of economic uncertainties. As a result, the workers don't prefer to migrate or turnover easily and intend to stay longer in the organization. Compensation is one of the HRM practices, which normally refer to pay, wage, salary and benefits etc. The rationale behind is that this practice ensures that the company can attract and retain the high quality employees by providing them the feeling that the valuable employees are fairly rewarded. Shaw et al. (1998) even identified high pay as the strongest predictor of employees' intention to leave. So, employees expect to be fairly paid for the work done and if this expectation is not met, employees may leave (Mudor and Tooksoon, 2011). There is also a significant and inverse impact of empowerment on intention to leave. Empowerment is a process whereby the employees develop the competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems (Short et al. 1994). Conger and Kanungo (1988) indicated that empowerment enhanced feelings of self-efficacy among employees through the identification of conditions, which in turn reduce employee intention to leave. Competence development also traced a negative impact on intention to leave. The organizations are investing their time and efforts in improving the skills and competencies of their employees by various

practices such as mentoring, training, job rotation etc (Schwochau et al. 1997). These practices in turn foster the idea of competitive advantage in their employees and enable the employees to establish a long term association with the organization. Recognition significantly and inversely affects the employees' intention to leave. Effective recognition programmes helps to create a positive work environment that promotes motivation and thriving attitudes among workers, while improving overall retention rates (Bursch, 1999). The underlying rationale in this approach is that employees need some form of acknowledge for their accomplishments (Appelbaum and et al., 2000). According to Rivenback (2007), approximately 79% of workers leave their jobs because of lack of appreciation. In this regard, many companies are establishing more formal recognition program to build employee loyalty long term (Abrams, 2004).

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study adds to already existing literature on HPHRPs, which shows its direct impact on intention to leave and emotional exhaustion.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

A managerial implication that readily surfaces from our findings is that to reduce their employees' emotional exhaustion and turnover intentions, managements should take actions to establish a high performance HR practices to reduce employees emotional exhaustion and intention to leave the organization.

The management should make it compulsory for all the new teachers to attend refresher orientation courses by sending them to Academic Staff Colleges. This will increase their knowledge about latest advancements in various subjects. For existing teachers also, latest technical and academic courses should be initiated by the regulatory authorities, so that they can match themselves with outside challenges and prepare themselves for further

promotion. Hence, proper on job training should be offered to enhance mental and physical abilities of the employees. Further, Management should devise a reward system to recognise those teachers who perform their job well by providing them red-carpet treatment/conducting award ceremonies and re-unions to honour the best achievers. Indeed, one would feel highly satisfied when he or she obtains a reward for his/her hard work for outstanding performance. In addition, Management should formulate committees where not only senior lecturers are involved but junior lecturers are also included and encouraged to participate in the decision making processes regarding the policy-making, educational issues and technological investments about the institute.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Employees are less satisfied with allowances as the inflation is growing day-by-day. Therefore, the medical and housing allowances should be thoroughly revised, so that they are motivated to perform better at their levels. Secondly, Government should charge marginal fees from the students, so that a mechanism for the generation of funds/income is devised for the

college. And, Government should initiate the proposal to implement sixth pay commission in professional colleges. Government should pay surprise visits in private institutes and ensure that the college lecturers are being paid salaries according to their qualifications and teaching experience. The finance department should regularly conduct audits to check any irregularities.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

All efforts were made to maintain objectivity, reliability and validity of the study, yet certain limitations could not be ignored. The notable limitation of this study is that it is a cross-sectional in nature. In the future, this limitation should be overcome by using longitudinal data. The data were collected from faculty members of professional colleges in jammu.

Future research should be conducted in other sectors also. More outcomes of HPHRPs other than emotional exhaustion and intention to leave should be explored for diversified study like Organizational Commitment, Retention etc.

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