

HRM PRACTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

The study aims at reviewing Human Resource Management procedures in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). The significance of the chosen field of research is to perform a comparative analysis and reviewing the successes of Human Resource Management procedures among these establishments, and also elucidating the putting into practice of the procedures and how they help the successful improvement of academic quality in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). The study employed the benchmarking technique to examine related literature on Human Resource Management (HRM) best practices as employed in other academic institutions globally. Finesse of the revision can be found in the manner of integrating HRM practice in tertiary academic establishments to improve, maintain and sustain academic quality. The result of the exercise would be brought to bear on the related literature on HRM best practices in tertiary academic establishments.

Introduction

Higher educational institutions' most valuable human resource are lecturers and researchers, who primarily realize the strategic and operational objectives, the holders of human assets and applied knowledge. Without staff possessing proper qualifications, educational and research experience and the right attitude, institutions in higher education cannot operate: in the absence of the fore-mentioned properties they cannot comply with the requirements of accreditation, and they are unable to provide educational and research services to customers effectively. To ensure suitable working conditions, guidance, co-ordination, incentives, evaluation of performance is the responsibility of their supervisors, thereby it is in these supervisors' interest to establish and manage a human resource management system (HRM), taking into consideration the characteristics of the institution.

The main purpose of my research was to attempt to analyze the connections between the educational and research activities and HRM of higher educational institutions via surveys of lecturers and researchers at Bangladeshi universities and colleges. I found important to assess the current situation primarily through the viewpoint of the lecturers and researchers. With the help of these surveys I tried to form a comprehensive view of actual practices of HRM (for example educational and research activity ratio, utilization of work hours, staff development, incentives, performance measurement and evaluation, performance-related pay).

Based on experiences and results of my research, I believe the practice of HRM in higher education presents a worthy example for developing the HRM systems in Bangladeshi higher education. With my research data I try to promote the propagation of efficient HRM practices in higher educational institutions, which are suitable for synchronizing the realization of the institution's strategic objectives with the career prospects of the lecturers and researchers.

Human Resource Management (HRM) Context

The impact of human resource management practices has become a dominant study in the field of staff administration. Armstrong (2006) states that Human Resource is an important and rational method of administering an institution who's highly talented staff singly or as a team add to the realization of its targets. Researchers in human resource management have emphasized that staff administration procedures could result in greater productivity in addition to becoming known for continuously staying ahead of the challenge. In order to maintain the changing trend of human resource activity, human resource experts should expand and display

fresh skills to accomplish their transforming role and tasks. HRM encompasses various activities which are designed to provide for and coordinate the HR activities of companies and also help in the efficient utilization of workers to attain company and personal objectives. HRM entails attracting and maintaining talented workers. This led to the formation of HRM departments/divisions to handle such functions and this has become a total integrated part of the whole strategy. The functions are diverse and include: Staff administrative set ups, staff appointments, sorting and posting, coaching & expansion, work evaluation, employee motivation, retention and turnover, emoluments and benefit.

Objective of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to give an overview of the status of research conducted so far on HRM practices in Bangladesh. The present study has the following specific objectives:

1. To compile the studies conducted so far on HRM practices in context of Bangladesh.
2. To identify the research gaps with respect to HRM practices in Bangladesh.
3. To offer some directions for conducting future research on HRM practices in context of Bangladesh.

Literature Review

The emergence of the idea of planning and corporate administration gave way to a heightened awareness in ways in which companies would be able to align themselves advantageously to try to win against others (Miles and Snow, 1984, Porter, 1985). Shortly after this came a bigger awareness in how HRM may add to that procedure (Wright and McManan, 1992). Preliminary action concerning HRM and its association with corporate plans went on to centre on definite HRM action spots like remuneration and its personal influence on the achievement of corporate plans. The results from these preliminary investigations appeared that HRM activities like instruction or payment could be positioned with strict policy and suitable positioning between these personal HRM activity points and policy added to resilient business leadership (Miles and Snow, 1984; Schuler and Jackson, 1987).

Russel, Terborg, and Powers (1985), came up with the coming of additional inside centred corporate ideas such as the resource based view (RBV), the tradition of relating individual HR activities the corporate plans changed into an additional amalgamated outlook of how HRM as a scheme influenced corporate plans on its part influence work output. SHRM turned out very much to be how bundles of HRM processes or policies and the HR activity as a whole added to the achievement of corporate plans at a schematic point. This ushered in the interest for investigation attempting to comprehend the important features of the potential of people and their plans (Wright, Dunford and Snell, 2001).

According to Balatbat (2010), the humanity has changed. It is transforming quicker and quicker along with its financial systems, commerce and education. Every institutional transformation and achievement depends on its populace. Staff administration thereby becomes critical as establishments now come across different obstacles facing them. The inception of the new world economic order and modern technical know-how has compelled staff administration to rethink its plans to make them extra receptive to the on-going transformation. In HRM, it is essential to think "human capital". "Human capital theory proposed that, individuals and society derive economic benefits from investments in people" (Zula and Chermack, 2007). The rise of private higher educational collages in recent times coupled with globalization and technology give rise to competitiveness. In order to survive and succeed in this competitive world, institutions should demand responsiveness from society's capabilities. The chance to choose, tutor and make better people's capabilities must be viewed with seriousness in tertiary educational establishments. Strategies ought to be developed in choosing the appropriate personnel, improving capacities, giving instruction, assessing performance and developing a congenial operational environment. In addition, exclusive tertiary learning centres must have the means to recognize the qualities and customs that mix nicely with their traditions, hope and ideals development (Balatbat, 2010).

Formally, HRM was then labelled as Personnel Management. It was for staff administration only, taking care of office and managerial assignments, such as employment, organizing documents as well as payments. Currently however, in addition, HRM has been divided into several diverse smaller areas like: recruitment, instruction, operations, remuneration and employee affairs (Mello, 2006).

Instruction and improvement as envisaged by Noe et. al., (2004) in the financial administration of labour, the proactive administration that which offers chances for advancement of peoples capabilities. Workers could become very good affiliates in endeavours if they are given good education and when they become very

efficient. They state that, when those looking for work are employed, with intent or automatically, consider their development within the establishment. Abilities possessed by new staff are not sufficient when they arrive to take their new jobs. They must obtain more training for additional tasks now and any that would be given to them later. Khan et. al., (2012) in their study of Human Resource Development Practices in Telecom Sector in Saudi Arabia, decided that instruction is thought by workers to influence their performance and furthermore enhance their overall performance on the organization. Instruction has a double effect: Work proficiency improvement (proficiency improvement offers workers understanding of fresh procedures promoting the proficiency of the employees associated with particular work) and helps workers move up the ladder (in a contested scenario, a concern puts in assets in technical development and the formation of highly skilled people through broad education). On the other hand, investigation by Shah et al, (2012) seems to show that education largely affects workers advancement positively influencing the output of an establishment. Advancement of workers by education and rational abilities enhancement makes work performance maintain a high degree of success and improves company output (Kira et al, 2010) mentioned in Shah et al, (2012).

Quality in Higher Educational Institutions

Though the definition of excellence particularly in advanced academia is difficult, Mishra (2007) argued that the expression has some thematic suggestions about which the entire theory spins; quality as absolute (is agreed and thought of as the uppermost achievable value), quality as relative (is portrayed in comparative expressions), quality as a process (is the result of schemes and routine needs), and quality as culture (identifies the significance of institutional outlook of quality as a procedure of change, where every unit is hesitant and recognizes the significance of quality). He observed that academic institutes are mainly preoccupied with quality as a tradition, although erstwhile schemes of quality have their individual areas. In a further viewpoint quality, as a concept, has been described in a dissimilar way by different interest groups.

This is due to the fact that quality has many components and is viewed differently by everybody. In addition, different nations could be inclined to describe these expressions another way. The research will go by these descriptions of quality, quality assurance, accreditation, and licensing from Materu (2007). Quality in principle points to –suitability for a function. It sums up the idea of satisfying universally accepted principles. Such values could be determined by regulation of an institute, a supervising organization or an expert guild. In the varied space of advanced academia, suitability for a function differs enormously by subject and curriculum. Excellence in the framework of advanced academia points to suitability for a functional convention or being in compliance of normally recognized principles as described by institutes, worthiness control organizations and suitable educational and specialized societies. In a large amount of issues, excellence in universities and colleges incorporate their dreams and objectives, aptitude and skill of their lecturers, enrolment conditions, evaluation principles, the training and where it takes place, the suitability of its alumni for industry, the state of its annals and laboratories, administrative efficiency, administration and headship (Marjorie, 2002).

Quality Assurance is a designed and methodical evaluation procedure of an institute or programmes to find out if satisfactory values of instruction, study, and building structure are being satisfied, retained and improved (Hayward, 2001). The quality of a college or university depends on the class of its lecturers - they are the spirit of the institutions that turn out scholars, its study results, and its service to the institution, community, and nation.

Accreditation is a procedure of self-study and outside value assessment used in colleges and universities to examine an institute and/or its curricula for excellence values and need for class advancement. The method is intended to establish whether an institute has satisfied or surpassed the required benchmark (laid down by an outside organization like the National Accreditation Board (NAB) and National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) in Ghana or other specialized organizations) for certification, and whether it is realizing its objective and established purpose. The procedure typically comprises a self-assessment, assessment by colleagues and location visits. Success leads to the certification of a curriculum or an institute.

Research Design and Methodology

The methodology used for this study was literature survey. The study was completely based on compiling the studies conducted so far on HRM practices in Bangladesh. The researchers collected different studies on HRM practices in Bangladesh physically from different libraries, universities, and book stores. In reviewing the literature, both theoretical and empirical studies were taken into consideration. In total, 37 studies were collected for the review. With respect to the major HRM practices, the collected studies were categorized into six groups

such as overall HRM practices, HR planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and industrial relations. Job analysis and compensation were not included as no specific study was found on these two practices. Necessary interpretations were made on the basis of the findings.

Research Findings

The following sections depict the research studies conducted so far on HRM practices in Bangladesh.

Research on Overall HRM Practices in Bangladesh

Mr. Faruk explored the personnel (HRM) practices of 24 educational institutes operating in Dhaka. He identified that in case of recruitment, personal contact was the primary means (58%) followed by advertisement in newspaper (21%), walk-in (13%), and institute notice board (8%). All the institutes, except one, used work sample test and interview for the selection of employees. On-the-job training was observed to be the most widely used one. The employee turnover was very low (less than 10%) in 92% of institutes. Most of the institutes (87.5%) paid one or more types of allowances in addition to salary. Nearly 7% enterprises paid festival bonus, 20% paid medical allowance, and 20% provided pay increment.

Shelly examined the roles of human resources, and infrastructure in the industrialization process of Bangladesh. He observed that ineffective human resource management was one of the major problems faced by educational sector of Bangladesh. Most of the HRM practices such as HR planning, recruitment, selection, promotion, performance appraisal, compensation, and incentives were not performed properly in educational institutes. Mohiuddin and Mahmood studied the transformation of personnel management into human resource management. Based on different empirical and theoretical studies conducted in the western world, the authors distinguished between personnel and human resource management. They also discussed about the impact of HRM practices on organizational performance. Another researcher discussed about the linkage between human resource management and corporate strategy. He also revealed that corporate strategies developed by Michel Porter such as cost leadership, differentiation, and focus strategies had significant impact on HR strategies and practices.

Moyeen and Huq studied HRM practices of 92 medium and large educational institutes (public and private sector) located in Manikganj and Dhaka, Bangladesh. They found that only 62% of surveyed organizations had an HR/IR department. About 96% institutes had training programs. 91% of institutes had performance appraisal system and similar percent of institutes had a system of rewarding the good employees. The least prevalent practice among the surveyed institutes was employee pension plan. The researchers tested two hypotheses and inferred that union status (presence of unions) was associated with some HRM practices and institutes size was found as an important predictor of some of the HRM practices. They also unearthed that HRM was being practiced, either formally or informally, to a greater or lesser extent, in business enterprises regardless of the size.

Human resource management practices of ten local private colleges listed under Dhaka Board were examined by Akhter. She covered different aspects of HRM practices of the surveyed colleges such as job description, HR planning, recruitment and selection, orientation, training, promotion, performance appraisal, transfer, salary and wage administration, incentives, and fringe benefits. She also measured correlation between employees' opinions regarding HRM practices in their institutes and their age, education, and experience. Islam in a study on the HRM practices of some universities of Bangladesh found that universities did not offer reasonable salaries and benefits, training and development opportunities. The author mentioned that due to outdated HR practices, the productivity and motivation level of the employees of educational institutes of Bangladesh were very low. Haque and Prince (2003) assessed the HR practices such as training, promotion policy, performance appraisal method, and transfer policies of some private educational institute based in Chittagong. They found that the surveyed companies imparted on-the-job training, vestibule training, apprenticeship training, and class room training to employees. They also found that the surveyed institutes filled up vacancies through internal movement. The institutes had formal performance appraisal system. Again, the institutes were found to have no standing policy regarding transfer. An in-depth study assessed the institutional context of human resource management practices in Bangladesh. The author mentioned that research on HRM did not receive its due attention in Bangladesh. The researcher observed that other than organizational contingencies, the institutional context such as national education and training system, national industrial relations system, regulatory frameworks, and overall societal context had significant influence on the development of HRM practices in Bangladesh.

Research on Recruitment and Selection in Bangladesh

Taher and Arefin examined the recruitment and selection (R and S) process of Bangladesh Open University (BOU). They emphasized on proper R and S because it constitutes the most important features of HRM and the cost of improper R and S is also very high. Finally, they recommended that BOU should set a fully fledged HR department with experienced and competent people, formulate HR plans, and introduce computerized HR system to improve the R and S process of BOU.

Research on Training and Development in Bangladesh

Islam studied the training and development needs of the managers of the educational sector. He uncovered that the employees of the production management, general administration, and personnel management departments of the education sector needed extensive training. The author also uncovered the problems related to shortage of adequate number of professional in our public sector with proper knowledge, concepts, and techniques of management. He mentioned that the problem was rooted in the vacuum created by the departure of non-local experienced managers (who used to manage most of our enterprises before liberation), low level of education and training, and lack of experience and expertise. This caused a severe deterioration of economic indicators in our country. Hoque investigated 10 educational organizations (5 public and 5 private) located in Dhaka. He found that human resource development (HRD) had positive impact on organizational effectiveness (OE). Ather and Solaiman assessed human resource development (HRD) practices of 50 public and private institutes located in Dhaka. They found that training needs of the employees of the sample institutes were identified on the basis of circumstances, corporate objective, new recruitment, introduction of new technology, new assignment by promotion, existing requirement for skill development and improving productivity, requirement for filling present and future vacancies, trend of profit or loss, and comparative study on productivity and output. They further unearthed that 75% of the workers of the sample institutes went through on-the-job training, followed by 17% apprenticeship training, and the rest 8% vocational training. On the other hand, 95% of the executives of the sample institutes were trained through job orientation, followed by 40% through job rotation, 35% through understudy method, 32% through workshop, 25% through special courses, 8.5% through seminar, and 5% through case method. In case of workers, the areas of training were industrial relations, safety, machine maintenance, operator orientation, and worker leadership. On the other hand, the areas of training for executives were corporate management, financial management, marketing management, personnel management, security management, and human resource development. Jahur, Absar, and Hossain examined the training programs of two leading Educational Institutes of Bangladesh. They studied the training needs assessment process, training methods, and training effectiveness of BRAC and Proshika. They uncovered that both the institutes used very sophisticated techniques in assessing training needs. They also found that effectiveness of the training programs offered by the institutes was very high.

Research Gaps and Directions for Future Research

The above literature survey reveals that like other developing countries, HRM as an area of research has not received proper attention in Bangladesh. Though, both review type and empirical type of studies were carried out, empirical studies primarily used descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage. Only 5 studies compiled in this study used inferential statistics in the data analysis. Research studies were conducted more on educational institutes than on the service oriented organization. Only two studies researched the HRM practices of small educational firms. No specific study has been found on job analysis and compensation. Studies showing the relationship between HRM practices and organizational performance have not yet carried out in Bangladesh context. It is also evident from the above review of literature that except a few articles on different HRM practices, a limited number of in-depth studies have been conducted so far on human resource management practices in context of Bangladesh.

As human resource management practices have not been studied extensively in Bangladesh, therefore, there are a number of areas where future studies can be directed such as:

- Studies can be undertaken to portray the HRM practices of educational institutes of Bangladesh
- Case studies may be undertaken on HRM practices of different institutes for thorough analysis.
- In-depth studies may be conducted to evaluate the impact of HRM practices on organizational performance through using associational and difference inferential statistics.
- Studies may be carried out on HRM practices of education sector institutes.
- Studies may be carried out to portray the comparative scenario of HRM practices with respect to public and private educational organizations of Bangladesh.

- More studies may be undertaken on least investigated areas of HRM in Bangladesh such as job analysis, compensation management, HR planning, career development, safety and health, HR audit, and HR research.

Conclusion

The literature review looks at related topics in the field of human resource management processes in organizations and how these practices relate to employee performance and more especially how these practices in higher educational institutions will enhance academic excellence. The study begins with a clear direction on how human resource management and its functions impact on organizational performance. The reviewed article will facilitate the overview of the principles and issues pertinent to the field of research. Prior studies primarily concentrate on direct relationship between these two variables. Many institutes still perceive a gap between their intended HR practices and the actual implementation. Future studies could look at employee perceptions of the actual practices if we want to link HR practices to organizational performance and excellence. Again studies could also be carried out to establish a set of HRM practices that has a positive impact on firm performance.

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