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THE COMPARISON OF THE PERCEPTION OF UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS ABOUT THE USE OF E-HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

Information technology is playing an important role in Pakistan. Electronic human resource management (E-HRM) is a new phenomenon to create new opportunities and cost-effective benefits in any organization. The purpose of this study was to trace out the difference between the perceptions of university administrators from public and private sectors about the use of e-HRM practices. For this purpose, a questionnaire (e-HRMPQ) based on fifteen items was developed on Likert five-point scale. The validity and reliability were found through pilot study. This research was based on survey quantitative nature research design. After maintaining target and accessible population, multi stage sampling technique was used to select representative sample. The data was gathered from '387' administrators (public and private) through postal services and personal visits. The objectives of the study were fulfilled through the analysis of data with the help of SPSS-21 software. The administrators from private sector universities have statistically significant differences over the administrators from public sector universities about the use of e-HRM practices. The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan should take exemplary initiatives in public sector universities to meet future challenges.

Keywords: University, Administrators, Perception, Human Resource Management, E-HRM.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization, innovation, and technology advancements have changed human resources management domains. HRM is more important than financial and material resources. It is subdivided into recruitment, appointment, development and encouragement of the personnel to attain the educational objectives. This era of ever increasing need for innovative ways requires people know new knowledge and skills effectively to face technological changes in the organization.

E-HRM is focusing on the usability of digital technologies in the organization for managing human resources efficiently. The personnel are trying to implement HRM plans, policies, strategies and practices with the interaction of internet based technology channels. The current literature of e-HRM differentiated three types: operational, relational and transformational. The first type deals with administrative functions like payroll and keeping well-managed employees' data through HR website in the institution. The second type is concerned with the processes of recruitment, selection and training through web-based technologies and so forth.

Finally, third one is related to create an innovative-ready workforce through the integration of web-based tools keeping in view the company's strategic goals.

Stanton and Coover (2004) had narrated that e-HRM encompasses three goals in the organization. These may be cost reduction, improving HR services and developing strategic orientations.

Therefore, there is dire need to improve human resource administration by using latest technologies for vigilant and prompt performance under central governing body Higher Education Commission, Pakistan.

Rationale of the Study

There are two main types of universities public sector and private sector in Pakistan. Public sector universities are governing by government rules and regulations which are following traditional human resource management system while private sector universities are governing by private ownerships which are following innovative human resource management system. Therefore, it was dire need to investigate the perception of university administrators from both different domains.

Statement of the Problem

Keeping in view of the rationale, this study intends to the comparison of the perception of university administrators about the use of e-human resource management practices.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study were framed as:

1. The comparison between university administrators from public and private sectors about the use of e-HRM practices.
2. To give recommendations and suggestions on the basis of findings of this study.

Hypothesis

There was no difference between the perceptions of university administrators from public and private sectors about the use of e-HRM practices.

Purpose of the Study

Information technology is playing vital role in developing new opportunities in human resource management system in Pakistani universities. These technologies are delivering competitive advantages to the administrators in the universities. So, the purpose of this study was to determine the difference between the perceptions of university administrators from public and private sectors about the use of e-HRM practices.

Delimitation of the Study

The administrators of academic departments from public and private sector universities were included in this article.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

E-HRM is a strategy of implementing human resource plans and policies by using internet technology in the organization. It provides a platform to the managers and employees viewing, extracting and altering necessary information. In addition, fewer HR professionals are sufficient in e-HRM because it eliminates the role of middle level managers. It is expected that e-HRM systems improve the quality and efficiency of the human resource managers in the organization.



The fundamental business tools are transforming from manual bookkeeping to advanced information technologies. The information technologies have significantly changed how organizations operate their businesses in records management and procedures. It also supports the HR functions to meet the HR needs through web-based technology channels. Lengnick and Moritz (2003) have narrated that e-HRM digital tools provide portals which enables the managers and HR professionals to view, detect or alter information with respect to their organizational needs.

An argument for the adoption of e-HRM technologies in the organizations may be reduction in costs of organizational administrative processes. Ruel et al (2004) defined “E-HRM is a way of implementing HR strategies, policies, and practices in organizations through a conscious and directed support of and/or with the full use web-technology-based channels” (pp 365-366). Lawler III (2005) has pointed out that the self-service characteristics of e-HRM can be the cheapest and speedy way to provide any specific HR activity. “For the HR function, e-HRM has the potential to affect both efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency can be affected by reducing cycle times for processing paperwork, increasing data accuracy, and reducing HR staff. Effectiveness can be affected by improving the capabilities of both managers and employees to make better, timelier decisions. E-HRM also provides the HR function the opportunity to create new avenues for contributing to organizational effectiveness through such means as knowledge management and the creation of intellectual and social capital (Lengnick-Hall & Moritz; 2003, p. 366).”

Organizations are trying to achieve their goals through the implementation of e-HRM tools. These are attaining standardization and harmonization of HR plans and policies in global context. Ruel et al (2004) had said that globalization is a driving force for planning HR policies and responsibilities. According to Keebler & Rhodes (2002) e-HRM technology should be designed to make HR processes more efficient, economic and useable.

In general, Strohmeier (2009) has explained that e-HRM uses flexible and integrated technological tools to link up directly with the internal knowledge and the processes of the employees to the objectives of the organization. It is observed that e-HRM enables the managers to have direct access to workplace for better communication, team management, and performance appraisal (Olivas-Lujan et al, 2007). So, Watson (2002) had concluded that E-HRM could be as “the application of any technology enabling managers and employees to have direct access to HR and other workplace services for communication, performance reporting, team management, knowledge management, learning and administrative applications” (p.3).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was based on survey quantitative nature research design. By keeping in view our college (public) education system, the most suitable, basic and simple fifteen e- human resource management practices for the administrators were selected for this research paper.

Population

Population is the all number of university administrators who were working in public sector universities and private sector universities recognized by Higher Education Commission (HEC) in Lahore and Gujranwala division, Punjab province, Pakistan.



Sampling

Multi stage sampling technique was used in this study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select three public sector and three private sector universities. After that, university administrators were selected from these universities through convenient sampling. Hence, total usable public and private sector university administrators' questionnaire were 387.

Instrument of the Study

A questionnaire was developed by the researcher to observe e-HRM practices among public and private sector university administrators. The questionnaire was based on 15 items. These items were constructed on Likert five-point scale. Validity and reliability was calculated through pilot testing. The validity and reliability values were 0.82 and 0.85 respectively of the e-human resources management practices questionnaire (e-HRMPQ).

Data Analysis

After sorting out and organizing the data, the statistical tool of t-test was used in the analysis of the data as follows:

Table 1:

| Statements | Public | | Private | | t-value | P-value | Cohen's d |
|--|--------|------|---------|------|---------|---------|-----------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | | |
| <i>e-Human Resource Management Practices</i> | | | | | | | |
| I find e-HRM System easy to use. | 2.80 | 1.15 | 3.60 | 0.99 | -2.35 | 0.02 | 0.77 |
| I feel eager to do work in e-HRM system | 3.30 | 0.98 | 4.10 | 0.64 | -3.05 | 0.04 | 0.98 |
| I have sufficient knowledge to use e-HRM system. | 3.40 | 1.09 | 3.90 | 0.64 | -1.76 | 0.08 | 0.64 |
| I have received training for the use of e-HRM practices. | 2.90 | 1.18 | 3.40 | 0.88 | -1.82 | 0.07 | 0.61 |
| E-HRM system helps me to do my work interestingly. | 2.70 | 1.22 | 3.50 | 0.83 | -2.58 | 0.01 | 0.89 |
| Digital tools are helpful for job design and analysis in e-HRM system. | 3.00 | 1.12 | 3.60 | 0.82 | -1.93 | 0.06 | 0.65 |
| Video conferencing is frequently used to communicate the people in e-HRM system. | 3.15 | 0.98 | 3.85 | 0.58 | -2.72 | 0.01 | 0.89 |
| E-HRM System is useful for me to deliver my tasks and job assignments in time. | 3.35 | 0.99 | 3.90 | 0.64 | -2.08 | 0.04 | 0.67 |
| I can perform my learning activities with e-HRM System are clear and understandable. | 3.10 | 0.97 | 3.90 | 0.64 | -3.08 | 0.00 | 0.99 |
| My seniors are helpful in the use of e-HRM system. | 3.50 | 0.88 | 3.95 | 0.40 | -2.07 | 0.48 | 0.70 |
| The HR department uses less time on advising the head of departments. | 3.60 | 0.82 | 4.10 | 0.45 | -2.39 | 0.02 | 0.88 |
| I can easily trace out necessary documentation on e-HRM system. | 3.40 | 0.94 | 4.00 | 0.32 | -2.69 | 0.01 | 0.95 |
| Computer network system is beneficial to manage division of work in the university. | 3.15 | 1.14 | 3.70 | 0.86 | -1.72 | 0.09 | 0.57 |
| I like to explore my talent in global context through e-HRM system. | 3.10 | 1.16 | 3.95 | 0.69 | -2.81 | 0.00 | 0.92 |
| In general, e-HRM system is supportive to improve organizational level. | 3.30 | 0.86 | 3.85 | 0.49 | -2.47 | 0.01 | 0.63 |



This table shows the comparison of e-HRM practices used by university administrators in public and private sector. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'I find e-HRM System easy to use'. The mean score of private sector for this practice (M=3.60, SD=0.99) is greater than the mean scores of public sector (Mean=2.80, SD=1.15), the results of t-test show that at t-value= -2.35, p=0.02. The effect size value $d = 0.77$ suggested that a medium significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'I feel eager to do work in e-HRM system'. The mean score of private sector for this practice (M=4.10, SD=0.64) is greater than the mean scores of public sector (Mean=3.30, SD=0.98), the results of t-test show t-value= -3.05, p=0.04. The effect size value $d = 0.98$ suggested that a high significance was observed. There is no statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'I have sufficient knowledge to use e-HRM system'. The mean score of private sector for this practice (M=3.90, SD=0.64) is greater than the mean scores of public sector (Mean=3.40, SD=1.09), the results of t-test show that at t-value= -1.76, p=0.08. The effect size value $d = .64$ suggested that a medium significance was observed. There is no statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'I have received training for the use of e-HRM practices'. The mean score of private sector for this practice (M=3.40, SD=0.88) is greater than the mean scores of public sector (Mean=2.90, SD=1.18), the results of t-test show that at t-value= -1.82, p=0.07. The effect size value $d = 0.61$ suggested that a medium significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'E-HRM system helps me to do my work interestingly'. The mean score of private sector for this practice (M=3.50, SD=0.83) is greater than the mean scores of public sector (Mean=2.70, SD=1.22), the results of t-test show that at t-value= -2.58, p=0.01. The effect size value $d = 0.89$ suggested that a high significance was observed. There is no statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'Digital tools are helpful for job design and analysis in e-HRM system'. The mean score of private sector for this practice (M=3.60, SD=0.82) is greater than the mean scores of public sector (Mean=3.00, SD=1.12), the results of t-test show that at t-value= -1.93, p=0.06. The effect size value $d = .65$ suggested that a medium significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'Video conferencing is frequently used to communicate the people in e-HRM system'. The mean score of private sector for this practice (M=3.85, SD=0.58) is greater than the mean scores of public sector (Mean=3.15, SD=0.98), the results of t-test show that at t-value= -2.72, p=0.01. The effect size value $d = 0.89$ suggested that a high significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'E-HRM System is useful for me to deliver my tasks and job assignments in time'. The mean score of private sector for this practice (M=3.90, SD=0.64) is greater than the mean scores of public sector (Mean=3.35, SD=0.99), the results of t-test show that at t-value= -2.08, p=0.04. The effect size value $d = 0.67$ suggested that a medium significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'I can perform my learning activities with e-HRM System are clear



and understandable'. The mean score of private sector for this practice ($M=3.90$, $SD=0.64$) is greater than the mean scores of public sector ($Mean=3.10$, $SD=0.97$), the results of t-test show that at t -value= -3.08 , $p=0.00$. The effect size value $d = 0.99$ suggested that a high significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'My seniors are helpful in the use of e-HRM system'. The mean score of private sector for this practice ($M=3.95$, $SD=0.40$) is greater than the mean scores of public sector ($Mean=3.50$, $SD=0.88$), the results of t-test show that at t -value= -2.07 , $p=0.048$. The effect size value $d = .70$ suggested that a medium significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'The HR department uses less time on advising the head of departments'. The mean score of private sector for this practice ($M=4.10$, $SD=0.45$) is greater than the mean scores of public sector ($Mean=3.60$, $SD=0.82$), the results of t-test show that at t -value= -2.39 , $p=0.02$. The effect size value $d = 0.88$ suggested that a high significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'I can easily trace out necessary documentation on e-HRM system'. The mean score of private sector for this practice ($M=4.00$, $SD=0.32$) is greater than the mean scores of public sector ($Mean=3.40$, $SD=0.94$), the results of t-test show that at t -value= -2.69 , $p=0.01$. The effect size value $d = .95$ suggested that a high significance was observed. There is no statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'Computer network system is beneficial to manage division of work in the university'. The mean score of private sector for this practice ($M=3.70$, $SD=0.86$) is greater than the mean scores of public sector ($Mean=3.15$, $SD=1.14$), the results of t-test show that at t -value= -1.72 , $p=0.09$. The effect size value $d = .57$ suggested that a medium significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'I like to explore my talent in global context through e-HRM system'. The mean score of private sector for this practice ($M=3.95$, $SD=0.69$) is greater than the mean scores of public sector ($Mean=3.10$, $SD=1.16$), the results of t-test show that at t -value= -2.81 , $p=0.00$. The effect size value $d = .92$ suggested that a high significance was observed. There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on 'In general, e-HRM system is supportive to improve organizational level'. The mean score of private sector for this practice ($M=4.85$, $SD=0.49$) is greater than the mean scores of public sector ($Mean=3.30$, $SD=0.86$), the results of t-test show that at t -value= -2.47 , $p=0.01$. The effect size value $d = .63$ suggested that a medium significance was observed.

There is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on acquiring eleven out of fifteen e-HRM practices in Lahore and Gujranwala division.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

In order to test the null hypothesis, the researchers evaluated the results quantitatively on this topic. The results of this study explained that there is statistically significant difference between public and private sector university administrators on acquiring eleven out of fifteen e-HRM



practices in Lahore and Gujranwala division. It is also confirmed that university system (private sector) has statistically significant effects through the availability of electronic human resources management tools. It shows that the university administrators from private sector have perceived the usability of e-HRM practices to increase the HRM effectiveness in the institutions. Bondarouk, Ruël & van der Heijden (2009) have found that e-HRM is the integration of the application of information technology with human resource management practices to raise the quality of employees and management system in the organizations. Hence, it may be narrated that many HR practitioners are using e-HRM practices and strategies to attain useful outcomes.

Recommendations

There are number of recommendations based on the conclusion of this study. These are may be supportive to the university administrators take effective steps about the use of e-HRM practices.

- The human resource administrators of public sector universities should develop positive attitude towards e-HRM practices.
- The adoption of e-HRM practices may uplift performance level of the employees, managers and other professionals.
- The e-HRM system should design the training programs effectively for HR personnel of both public and private sector universities in Pakistan.

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