



HR Practices in Technical University of Odisha

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the current Human Resource (HR) practices prevailing in the two constituent colleges of the only technical university in Odisha, Biju Pattnaik University of Technology and attempts to measure the perceptual gaps between the current and the desired HR practices prevailing in such colleges. Literature review, pilot survey, questionnaire survey and interview schedules are used in order to meet the objective. The study identified gaps in all the HR practices selected for the study from the results of questionnaire surveys. However, significant perceptual gaps were identified in human resource planning practices followed by compensation and benefit practices and employee participation practices.

KEYWORDS

Human Resource Planning, Employee participation process, Human Resource Management, HR Practices

1. Introduction

In the last century Odisha has witnessed exceptional growth in the field of technical education. The first technical education was established in 1923 at Cuttack "The Bhubanananda School of Engineering". The first Engineering college was established in 1956 at Burla i.e. University college of Burla (presently VSSUT). Regional College of Engineering, Rourkela (Presently National Institute of Technology). At present in our state there are 05 state universities, one Technical University, one Unitary University, two Deemed Universities, one private state university, One IIT, one NIT, 98 affiliated Engineering colleges, and 118 Engineering School/Polytechnics are functioning. The technical institutions are marked by a gamut of functions ranging from modern courses, relevant curricula, syllabus, innovative instruction materials, challenging methods of instruction, reliable procedure of examination and evaluation, a dynamic and motivating institutional climate. Human Resource Management is responsible for selecting and inducing competent people, identifying training needs, reviewing performance, providing training and motivating to perform their duties with efficiency. The HR functions include staffing, training and development, Performance Appraisal, Compensation Management, Safety and welfare measures and employer-employee relationships. Preffer (1998) noted that a human resource system helps to create a workforce whose contributions are valuable, unique and difficult for competitors to imitate. A plethora of academic research conducted at the organization level also suggests that human resource practices affect organization outcome by appropriately shaping employee's behavior and attitudes (Arthur 1994, Huselid 1995, Tsui, Pearce, Porter and Tripoli 1997). All these studies established that the best human resource practices positively influence the performance of firms as well as sustainable growth. HRM practices refer to organizational activities directed at managing the pool of human resource and ensuring that the resources are employed towards the fulfillment of organizational goals (Schuler & Jackson 1987).

Khan (2010) revealed that in energetic business atmosphere, there is a need of an approach to achieve better performance, to originate and implement HRM practices. In considerable and insubstantial extent the organizations need to invest in such practices to get a competitive advantage. The study aims at analyzing the perceptual gaps of the teaching staff between the current and the desired HR practices in the selected constituent colleges under the technical university i.e., College

for Engineering and Technology, Bhubaneswar and college of IT and Management Education, Bhubaneswar.

Brief profile of the university

Biju Pattnaik University of Technology (BPUT), Rourkela was created by an act of the Odisha State Legislature in November 2002. Almost all the Engineering, Pharmacy, Architecture and most of the colleges in Odisha offering B.Tech, M. Tech, MBA, MCA, B. Pharm, M. Pharm and B. Arch degree programmes are either constituent or affiliated colleges of BPUT. Now, the university has 110 colleges, both constituent and affiliated, with around 50,000 students. The disciplines include engineering and architecture, business management and hotel management, computer studies and pharmacy. The College of Engineering & Technology, Bhubaneswar was established by the Government of Odisha in 1981 to meet the growing technical manpower need in the state. After creation of a technical university for Odisha state, the college has become a constituent college of Biju Pattnaik University of Technology (BPUT), Odisha with effect from 09th July, 2002 as per section 37(1) of BPUT ACT, 2002. The college offers a five-year under graduate degree courses in Architecture and four-years B. tech degree in Bio-technology, Civil engineering, Computer science & Engineering, Electrical engineering, Fashion and Apparel technology, Information Technology, Instrumentation & Electronics Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Textile Engineering and few other courses under self financing mode. The College of IT & Management Education, Bhubaneswar, was established in August 2000. The institution provides professional postgraduate degree education in the areas of Business Management and Information Technology as a state governmental business school in eastern Odisha. The institute is an affiliate of Biju Pattnaik University of Technology (BPUT) under AICTE and State Government of Odisha.

2. Review of literature

Growth of Technical education

In 2015, AICTE has given a glimpse of growth and development of technical education in India. There has been exceptionally growth of technical education in India since last decade. At present there are 3887 Diploma and 10,326 degree institutions functioning in our country. The student intake of these institutions are 39,60,981 for Engineering colleges and polytechnics (AICTE, 2015). Bhusi et al. (1998) in their article "the development of engineering and technical Education in India" the authors discuss about current trend of Engineering ed-

education in India with case studies in IIT, New Delhi and BITS, Pilani. The case studies focus on several important aspects, such as administrative structures, department and centres and administrative proceedings. Blom and Cheorg (1999), have elaborately discussed the key issues of governance of technical education. Nine key issues of governance have been deliberated and highlighted in the report.

Human Resource Practices

Harbison and Myers (1964) and Nadler (1984), defined the term HRD as 'organized learning experience in a definite time period to increase the possibility of job performance and growth. Nadler (1980), who is normally attributed to have first coined the HRD acronym, says that development is concerned with providing learning experience to employees, so that they may be ready to move into new direction that organizational change may require. HRD is one of the relatively well developed functions in Indian organizations in 70's & 80's (Mufeed and Nasreen, 2003). However, in '90's the focus shifted towards training which got refocused on HRD. The success of T & D professional in the developed and industrialized countries is indicated by the fact that training and development got more respect and was seen as the main typical mechanism for facilitating HRD in organization. Recruitment is the process of attracting individuals on a timely basis, in sufficient numbers and with appropriate qualifications, developing their interest in an organization and encouraging them to apply for jobs within it (Mondy & Noe, 1993; Crawford, 2004). Performance appraisal represents a formalized process of worker monitoring and is intended to be a management tool to improve the performance and productivity of workers (Brown and Heywood, 2005). Ivancevich (1995) and Hipolito et al (2002) define performance appraisal as the dimensions of human resources which is used to analyze the employees' performance based on their responsibilities, and aiming at goal improvement of people's performance and productivity over time. The main objective of performance appraisal is only for promotion and placement purpose (Miner, 1990; Cumming & Schawab, 1984), though most of the performance appraisal system aims to serve multiple purposes. Yajnik and Wanchoo (1973) have revealed that training is a continuous process of changing people's knowledge, skills, attitude and behavior through instruction demonstration practice planned experience or other techniques. Anuradha (2003) has remarked; 'human resource training is an important requirement for enabling employees to function effectively and efficiently for an organization.. Armstrong (2005) stated that compensation management is an integral part of human resource management approach to productivity improvement in the organisation. A career usually includes various positions, stages and transition in the life of a person. Research suggest that people's psychological needs differ during the career stages: no doubt both job performance and attitudes can also vary according to career stages (Cron & Slocum, 1986). A person can make advances up either on the management ladder or a corresponding ladder on the technical side (Glodstain 1998). Lepper and Greene (1978) also comment on the dual role of rewards saying "both the beneficial and detrimental effects of rewards are influenced by a variety of conceptually distinct factors and that the appearance of these effects will depend upon the specific manner and context of their application to particular problems, subjects and situations." Neal (1992), Bowey (1978) and Singh (2002) say that there is no universal reward and no motivational blueprint; it is the contingency approach which may be emphasized. Motivating an individual depends on a wide range of factors like age, sex, career stage, socio-economic circumstances, national culture etc. Rose (2004) viewed that in resolving grievances, aggrieved employee will file their dissatisfaction through grievance procedure and their immediate managers or supervisors are responsible to take action within period given. West (1990), Isaken and Akkermans (2011) believed that participation improves organisational performance, employee's satisfaction and motivation and decreases the turnover rate, that's why involving employees in decision making will increase employee's creativity. Introducing participation in work group is argued to affect innovation and creativity. Alluto and Belasco (1972) revealed that employees who participate in de-

cision making have a positive attitude towards the organisation and are committed to their jobs and organisation. Woodman et al. (1993) found that a significant strong, positive relation exist between participation in decision making and job satisfaction. Heffernan et al (2009), opined that communication and involvement was found to be particularly significant in creating a climate of creativity. Azad (1978) thinks that institutions of higher education spend more on consumption rather than investment. The expenditure on salary, wages, stationary and expenditure on day-to-day affairs are mounting whereas investment in Infrastructure, laboratories and libraries and on research are scanty and seldom happens. Human capital formation must be aim of higher educational institutions and for achieving it, the institutions must invest in and for human beings, rather than spending on consumption. Vector (2014) in his doctoral thesis "development of a quality enabled model for engineering education in India" said that the mushrooming growth of the technical educations in India has been translated to move in to churning out the number of engineering graduate in quantitative term rather than in qualitative term. Manju (2012), in her doctoral thesis titled "Human Resource Practices-A study of Educational Institutions in the district of Ambala; highlights the need for good HR practices with long term objective and strategy in the educational institutions. She suggests that the line managers should be involved in the processes of design of the HR practices because they are people who deal with employees in their departments and can provide valuable insights. She emphasized on the offering of intensive training and development programmes of employees by the organization.

3. Methodology

Sample and Data collection

Sample of the present study consists of the teachers from the two constituent colleges under BPUT i.e College of Engineering and Technology, Bhubaneswar and the centre for IT and Management Education-Bhubaneswar. The data was collected from 50 faculty members of the two colleges. In this regard a total 80 questionnaires were distributed from which 50 were collected which were properly filled up, 05 were rejected due to incomplete information, 07 questionnaires were returned and 18 could not be collected.

Instrument and Reliability

Primary data from the selected colleges were collected through a structured questionnaire and interview schedules on the eight HR practices i.e human resource planning process, recruitment and selection process, performance appraisal practices, training practices, compensation and benefits practices, employee participation practices, career development practices and employee-employer relationship practices. Five points likert scale ranging from "Not at all=1" to "a very great extent=5" was used to measure the response. The schedules for the final data survey were pretested by way of a pilot survey for its reliability on an actual sub-sample of the universe in the study. Data collected was analysed using SPSS 20.0 software and hypotheses of the study were tested with appropriate statistical tools. To check the reliability of the questionnaire prepared for the staff, 50 samples were collected randomly from the population and a Cronbach's alpha test was conducted. The test revealed the following values as per the table 4.1 about here.

Table 1: Cronbach Reliability-HR Practices dimensions

Dimensions	Item	Cronbach's alpha
Human Resource Planning	5	.664
Recruitment & selection	4	.601
Performance Appraisal system	9	.816
Training program	13	.751
Compensation and benefits	4	.601
Employee participation	5	.622
Career development and promotion	9	.742
Working environment/ Employee-employer Relationship	11	.786

The scale has good consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient reported of more than .60 which indicates that all the scales can be considered reliable for measuring the construct.

Results & Discussions

A paired sample t-test was conducted to evaluate whether a statistically significant perceptual gaps existed between the mean of eight (08) HR practices scores that is currently in practice and mean of desired HR practice .For the test the current HR practices was considered as the first variable and the desired practices was considered as the second variable. The output of the test is as mentioned in table 2 & 3 about here.

Table 2: Paired sample statistics of HR practices in University

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	HRP_mean_current	2.3360	50	.99504	.14072
	HRP_mean_desired	4.3000	50	.63920	.09040
Pair 2	RS_mean_current	2.9300	50	.83152	.11759
	RS_mean_desired	4.3450	50	.56670	.08014

Pair 3	PA_current	2.8609	49	1.00097	.14300
	PA_desired	4.4127	49	.61447	.08778
Pair 4	training_current	2.8778	50	.86788	.12274
	training_desired	4.4053	50	.52639	.07444
Pair 5	COMP_current	2.4250	50	.96660	.13670
	COMP_desired	4.3650	50	.78929	.11162
Pair 6	EP_current	2.9265	49	1.01382	.14483
	EP_desired	4.2898	49	.56578	.08083
Pair 7	CD_current	2.7677	50	.77596	.10974
	CD_desired	4.2978	50	.61595	.08711
Pair 8	WE_current	2.7129	49	.77771	.11110
	WE_desired	4.1245	49	.64199	.09171

Source: Survey Data

Table No. 3

Paired sample t-test for HR Practices for the university

Mean		Paired Differences				T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	HRP_mean_current - HRP_mean_desired	-1.96400	1.03308	.14610	-2.25760	-1.67040	-13.443	49	.000
Pair 2	RS_mean_current - RS_mean_desired	-1.41500	.97757	.13825	-1.69282	-1.13718	-10.235	49	.000
Pair 3	PA_current - PA_desired	-1.55181	1.04013	.14859	-1.85057	-1.25305	-10.444	48	.000
Pair 4	training_current - training_desired	-1.52756	.77073	.10900	-1.74660	-1.30852	-14.015	49	.000
Pair 5	COMP_current - COMP_desired	-1.94000	1.11867	.15820	-2.25792	-1.62208	-12.263	49	.000
Pair 6	EP_current - EP_desired	-1.36327	.98037	.14005	-1.64486	-1.08167	-9.734	48	.000
Pair 7	CD_current - CD_desired	-1.53011	.74036	.10470	-1.74052	-1.31970	-14.614	49	.000
Pair 8	WE_current - WE_desired	-1.41156	.91190	.13027	-1.67349	-1.14964	-10.836	48	.000

Source: Survey Data

Results for HRP practices

The result of the paired sample t test for HRP practices were significant, $t(49)=13.443, P<.005$ indicates that there is a statistically significant gap in current practice ($M=2.33, SD=.99, N=50$) and the desired Practice ($M=4.30, SD=.63$). The mean increase is 1.97, with the 95% confidence interval for the difference between the means of 2.25 to 1.67. The researcher thus accepts hypotheses indicating that there is a significant gap between the current HRP practices and the desired HRP practices. This could be due to the fact that though human resource planning exists in principle but it is not practiced in regular manner which is evident from the faculty responses too. Many also perceive that there should be no bureaucratic influence in the planning process. The process should be taken up in fast and transparent manner.

Results for Recruitment and Selection practices

The result of the paired sample t test for recruitment and selection practices were significant, $t(49)=10.235, P<.005$ indicates that there is a statistically significant gap in actual practice now ($M=2.93, SD=.83, N=50$) to the desired Recruitment and Selection Practice ($M=4.34, SD=.56$). The mean increase is 1.41, with the 95% confidence interval for the difference between the means of 1.69 to 1.13. The researcher thus accepts the hypotheses indicating that there is a significant gap between the current recruitment and selection practices and

the desired recruitment and selection practices. In absence of proper human resource planning, recruitment and selection practices has not always been able to put the right people at the right place in the right time. However, most of them perceive that the recruitment and selection process is fair. Many departments have to thrive with faculty constraints so the student teacher ratio is not properly maintained. The faculty perceives that the recruitment process is not always based upon the requirement of the post. The career background with relevant teaching experiences should be considered for screening of bio-data for such posts.

Results for Performance Appraisal Practices

The result of the paired sample t test for recruitment and selection practices were significant, $t(49)=10.444, P<.005$ indicates that there is a statistically significant perceptual gap in current practice ($M=2.86, SD=1.00, N=49$) and the desired performance appraisal practice ($M=4.41, SD=.56$). The mean increase is 1.55, with the 95% confidence interval for the difference between the means of 1.85 to 1.25. The researcher thus accepts the hypotheses indicating that there is significant perceptual gap between the current performance appraisal practices and the desired performance appraisal practices. This could be due to the fact that though performance appraisal is perceived seriously both by the appraiser and the appraisee but it appears to be customary in nature. The process is sometimes influenced by the biasness of the appraiser. Many of

the faculty suggested that outstanding performance should be recognized and rewarded to motivate them and others for better performance.

Findings for Training practices

The result of the paired sample t test for training practices were significant, $t(49)=14.01, P<.005$ indicates that there is a statistically significant perceptual gap in current practice ($M=2.87, SD=.86, N=50$) and the desired training Practice ($M=4.40, SD=.52$). The mean increase is 1.53, with the 95% confidence interval for the difference between the means of 1.74 to 1.30. The researcher thus accepts the hypotheses indicating that there is a significant perceptual gap between the current training practices and the desired training practices. This response could be due to the faculty perception that training is not based on proper training need analysis. Another is all faculty members should be given opportunity to be trained.

Findings for Compensation and Benefit practices

The result of the paired sample t test for compensation and benefit practices were significant, $t(50)=12.26, P<.005$ indicates that there is a statistically significant perceptual gap in current practice ($M=2.42, SD=.96, N=50$) to the desired compensation and benefit Practice ($M=4.36, SD=.78$). The mean increase is 1.94, with the 95% confidence interval for the difference between the means of 2.25 to 1.62. The researcher thus accepts the hypotheses indicating that there is a significant perceptual gaps between the current compensation and benefit practices and the desired practices. Many of the respondents were absorbed on contractual basis on consolidated pay package. Having worked for even more than good numbers of years there has been still no revisions in their pay.

Finding for employee participation practices

The result of the paired sample t test for employee practices were significant, $t(49)=9.734, P<.005$ indicates that there is a statistically significant perceptual gap in current practice ($M=2.92, SD=1.01, N=49$) to the desired employee participation practice ($M=4.28, SD=.56$). The mean increase is 1.36, with the 95% confidence interval for the difference between the means of 1.64 to 1.08. The researcher thus accepts the hypotheses indicating that there is a significant perceptual gap between the current employee participation practices and the desired practices. The faculty response indicated that the management of such colleges should conduct regular employee and management meeting for sharing of ideas and expressing their grievances. The management and the employees should be provided with opportunities to work collaborately for overall development of the university and betterment of the students.

Findings for career development practices

The result of the paired sample t test for career development practices were significant, $t(50)=14.614, P<.005$ indicates that there is a statistically significant perceptual gap in current practice ($M=2.76, SD=.77, N=50$) to the desired employee participation practice ($M=4.29, SD=.61$). The mean increase is 1.53, with the 95% confidence interval for the difference between the means of 1.74 to 1.31. The researcher thus accepts the hypotheses indicating that there is a significant gap in perception between the current career development practices and the desired practices. It was found from the research that there is no such definite and clear career development plan. Many of the respondents were neutral in responding to the career development practices.

Findings for employee employer relationship practices

The result of the paired sample t test for career development practices were significant, $t(49)=10.83, P<.005$ indicates that there is a statistically significant perceptual gap in current practice ($M=2.71, SD=.77, N=49$) to the desired employee employer relationship practice ($M=4.12, SD=.64$). The mean increase is 1.67, with the 95% confidence interval for the difference between the means of 1.67 to 1.14. The researcher thus accepts the hypotheses indicating that there is a significant

perceptual gap between the current employee employer relationship practices and the desired practices.

4. Conclusion

The increasing importance of human resources in today's organizations is recognized by the roles played by their staff. The hypotheses testing results of eight Hr practices in the constituent colleges of the technical university indicates that there are gaps between the current and the desired Hr practices selected for the study. The review of literature indicates that efficient Hr practices enhances the employee performance and overall development of the organization but surprisingly in practice in such university significant gaps exists. There are significant gaps in human resource planning practices, compensation and benefit practices and the employee-employer relationship practices. On the basis of above findings it is suggested that the university administrators should revisit the existing Hr practices and ensure necessary and timely implementation of such practices for better performance of their teachers. This research study is limited by the number of colleges, it includes only two constituent colleges under the university. Few more affiliated colleges can be included for a comparative study.

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