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Impact of Human Resources Practices on Job Satisfaction: Evidence from Manufacturing Firms in Bangladesh

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Abstract

This study aims at exploring the impact of HR practices on job satisfaction in the context of Bangladesh. A total of 60 responses from 20 manufacturing firms were collected and analyzed objectively. It was found that HR practices have significant association with job satisfaction (JS). In addition, human resource planning (HRP), and training and development (TND) were found to have positive impact on job satisfaction (JS). It was also found that TND has the greatest impact on JS. Academicians, researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, students, local and foreign entrepreneurs of Bangladesh and other similar countries could benefit from this paper by exploring the association between HR practices and job satisfaction.

Key words: *HRM, HR Practices, job satisfaction, manufacturing firms, Bangladesh and developing countries*

JEL Classification: *M12*

Introduction

The impact of human resource management (HRM) practices popularly known as HR practices on organizational performance and employee attitudes has been a leading area of research in the developed world for years (Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Huselid, 1995; Katou and Budhwar, 2007; Petrescu and Simmons, 2008)). But surprisingly, very limited number of studies have been conducted on HR practices in the context of developing countries in general (Schuler as cited in Budhwar and Debrah, 2001, Sing, 2004, Yeganeh and Su, 2008) and Bangladesh in particular (Mahmood, 2004). This study has been conducted to fill the existing research gap and to explore the relationship between HR practices and job satisfaction in the context of Bangladesh. Academicians, researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, students, local and foreign

entrepreneurs of Bangladesh and other developing countries could benefit from this study by exploring the association between HR practices and job satisfaction. This study would augment the contemporary research and practice of human resource management. Furthermore, it would also be useful for the developed countries as they find developing countries (like Bangladesh) as attractive places for investment due to their large markets, and cheap and skilled workforces (Budhwar and Debrah 2001).

Research Questions

Specifically, this study was undertaken to explore the answer to the following research questions (RQ):

1. **RQ1**: Is there any association between HR practices and Job Satisfaction?
2. **RQ2**: Do HR practices have any impact on Job Satisfaction?

Objectives

The main purpose of the study was to identity the impact of HR practices on job satisfaction. In order to materialize this objective, the following specific objectives were considered:

- To address the association between HR practices and job satisfaction;
- To identify the impact of HR practices on job satisfaction;
- To suggest some measures in order to enhance the HR practices of the selected industrial enterprises.

Literature Review and Hypotheses

HR Practices

Human resource management (HRM) refers to the policies and practices involved in carrying out the 'human resource(HR)' aspects of a management position including human resource planning, job analysis, recruitment, selection, orientation, compensation, performance appraisal, training and development, and labour relations (Dessler, 2007). HRM is composed of the policies, practices, and systems that influence employees' behaviour, attitude, and performance (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright, 2007). There are four top models of HRM such as the Fombrun, Tichy, and Devana Model of HRM, the Harvard Model of HRM, the Guest Model of HRM, and the Warwick Model of HRM (Bratton and Gold, 1999). Out of these models, Guest Model of HRM is considered to be much better than other models (Aswathappa, 2008). The present study selected the HR practices such as HR planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, and industrial relations which were incorporated by the Guest Model, and the Society of Human Resource Management, USA (Yeganeh and Su, 2008).

Job Satisfaction

The most referred definition of job satisfaction was offered by Locke (1976) who defined job satisfaction as a pleasing or positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of a person's job (Haque and Taher, 2008). Job satisfaction is also defined as an individual's general attitude regarding his or her job (Robbins, 1999). Mullins (1993) mentioned that motivation is closely related to job satisfaction. Various factors such as an employee' s needs and desires, social relationships, style and quality of management, job design, compensation, working conditions, perceived long range opportunities, and perceived opportunities elsewhere are considered to be

the determinants of job satisfaction (Byars and Rue, 1997; Moorhead and Griffin, 1999). Job satisfaction has a significant influence on employees' organizational commitment, turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, accidents, and grievances (Byars and Rue, 1997; Moorhead and Griffin, 1999). According to Robbins (1999), a satisfied workforce can increase organizational productivity through less distraction caused by absenteeism or turnover, few incidences of destructive behavior, and low medical costs.

HR Practices and Job Satisfaction

HR practices and job satisfaction are studied widely in different parts of the world. It is assumed that HR practices are closely associated with job satisfaction (Ting, 1997). Because many scholars and practitioners believe that sound HR practices result in better level of job satisfaction which ultimately improves organizational performance (Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg and Kalleberg, 2000). Steijn (2004) found that HRM practices had positive effect on job satisfaction of the employees of Dutch public sector whereas individual characteristics such as age, gender, and education had insignificant effect on job satisfaction. Gould-William (2003) showed that use of specific HR practices in local government organizations in the United Kingdom (UK) was associated with a greater degree of job satisfaction, workplace trust, commitment, effort, and perceived organizational performance.

Hypothesis 1: H_1: HR practices have significant association with job satisfaction.

Edgar and Geare (2005) examined the impact of human resource management practices on employee attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational fairness in the context of New Zealand. They identified that HRM practices had a significant impact on organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational fairness. In a study on 66 employees of three manufacturing firms in India, Agarwala (2008) observed that training, one of the major HR practices, was positively correlated with affective commitment. Moreover, Ostroff (1992) observed that job satisfaction influenced organizational performance enormously. Also, Yu and Egri (2005) found that HR practices had a significant impact on the affective commitment of employees in Chinese firms. Again, Petrescu and Simmons (2008) studied the relationship between human resource management practices and workers' job satisfaction in the context of UK. They found that several human resource management practices raised workers' overall job satisfaction and their satisfaction with payment.

Hypothesis 2: H_1: HR practices have significant impact on job satisfaction.

HR planning is defined as the procedure by which an organization ensures that it has the right number and kinds of human resources at the right place and at the right time (Decenzo and Robbins, 1999). Ahmad and Khalil (2007) compared the HR planning of two banks of Bangladesh - Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd. and Agrani Bank. They observed that neither of the banks had any written HR planning. Aswathappa (2008) argued that an organization should have better HR plans to motivate its employees. Sound HR planning can enhance job satisfaction of the employees by providing opportunities for the employees to participate in planning their own careers (Weeratunga, 2003).

Hypothesis 3: H_1: HR planning positively influences job satisfaction.

The recruitment and selection process determines the decisions as to which candidates will get employment offers. The aim of this practice is to improve the fit between employees and the organization, teams, and work requirements, and thus, to create a better work environment (Tzafrir, 2006). Sophisticated recruitment and selection system can ensure a better fit between the individual's abilities and the organization's requirement (Fernandez, 1992). Hunter and Schmidt (1982) concluded that employment stability could be achieved through a selection procedure based on ability. Katou and Budhwar (2007) in a study on the Greek manufacturing firms found that recruitment and selection was positively related to all organizational performance variables such as effectiveness, efficiency, innovation, and quality.

Hypothesis 4: H_1: Recruitment and selection positively influences job satisfaction.

'Training and development' is considered to be the most common HR practice (Tzafrir, 2006).'Training and development' refers to any effort to improve current of future employees' skills, abilities, and knowledge (Aswathappa, 2008). 'Training and development' has a significant positive impact on employees' job satisfaction (Garcia, 2005). Thang and Buyens (2008) stated that training and development lead to superior knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and behavior of employees that ultimately enhance excellent financial and non-financial performance of the organizations.

Hypothesis 5: H_1: Training and development positively influences job satisfaction.

Performance appraisal is a systematic process to evaluate the performance of an employee after a certain period. Performance appraisal also influences other HR practices such as recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation, and employee relations. As performance appraisal leads to pay raise, promotion, and training, it is assumed that better performance appraisal can have an impact on employee job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: H_1: Performance appraisal positively influences job satisfaction.

Compensation refers to all types of pay or rewards going to employees and arising from their employment (Dessler, 2008, p. 390). Compensation is very much important for employees because it is one of the main reasons for which people work. Employees' living status in the society, satisfaction, loyalty, and productivity are also influenced by the compensation (Aswathappa, 2008). Ting (1997) in a study on the employees of US government found that compensation was one of the most important determinants of job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7: H_1: Compensation positively influences job satisfaction.

Industrial relations play an important role in establishing and maintaining industrial democracy (Monappa, 2004, p. 9). Better industrial relations can create the appropriate working environment for all employees that ultimately influences job satisfaction (Khan and Taher, 2008).

Hypothesis 8: H_1: Industrial Relations positively influence job satisfaction.

Moyeen and Huq (2001) studied HRM practices of 92 medium and large business enterprises (public and private sector) located in Dhaka, Bangladesh. They found that only 62% of surveyed organizations had an HR/Industrial Relations (IR) department. Human resource management practices of ten local private manufacturing enterprises listed under Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) were examined by Akhter (2002). She measured correlation between employees' opinions regarding HRM practices in their enterprises and their age, education, and experience. Mahmood (2004) 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 HR practices in Bangladesh. Furthermore, HR practices were found to have a significant impact on affective commitment in context to Bangladesh (Haque & Azim, 2008). Hossain (1995) conducted an in-depth study on the job satisfaction of the employees of commercial banks of Bangladesh. Abdullah (2009) found that job satisfaction had an impact on the productivity of garments workers of Bangladesh. Hossain and Ullah (2009) in a comparative study on the job satisfaction of the employees of public and private banks found that employees of the private banks were more satisfied with their jobs than those of the public banks. Islam, Saha, and Ahmed (2000) evaluated the job satisfaction of women employees in commercial banks of Bangladesh. Haque and Taher (2008) examined the ability of different core job characteristics to influence the level of job satisfaction in terms of gender, marital status, and age in the context of Bangladesh.

Thus, the above review of literature shows that there have been several studies around the globe

focusing on HR practices and job satisfaction. However, studies portraying the impact of HR Practices on job satisfaction in the manufacturing firms have not yet received proper attention in Bangladesh and other developing countries. This study has been undertaken to fill the existing research gap.

Research Design and Methodology

This section is divided into six sub-sections. The first sub-section presents the research design. In the second sub-section, the research approach is discussed. The third sub-section illustrates the sampling design. In the fourth-sub, data sources are mentioned. The fifth sub-section declares the selection of measures and the properties of instruments. The sixth sub-section explains the reliability and validity whereas the last sub-section highlights the types of statistical techniques employed to test the hypotheses.

Research Design

This study is basically an exploratory study. Exploratory studies are a valuable means of finding out 'what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light' (Robson, 2002). It can be linked to the activities of the traveller or explorer (Adams and Schvaneveldt, 1991). Its great advantage is that it is flexible and adaptable to change (Naipul, 1989).

Research Approach

As this study is a business and management research, it has characteristics of positivist and interpretive approaches and it involves the deductive approach (Hussey and Hussey, 1997; Robson, 1993) as well as the inductive approach (Easterby-Smith, Thrope and Lowe (2002). Combining these two research approaches in same piece of research is perfectly possible and advantageous for a research.

Sampling Design

A sampling frame of 91 manufacturing firms (Chittagong Stock Exchange, 2007) was prepared on the basis of listed manufacturing firms under Chittagong Stock Exchange, the 2nd largest stock exchange of Bangladesh. Among them, 20 manufacturing firms (22% of the population) were selected randomly and all respondents were selected as per convenience.

Data Sources and Instrumentation

The study was compiled with the help of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was collected through direct personal interview by means of the questionnaire. A total of 60 employees (i,e., three employees were selected from every manufacturing firm) responded through the questionnaire. Moreover, the desk study covered various published and unpublished materials on the subject. The questionnaire was administered to employees of manufacturing firms in Chittagong, Bangladesh. A five points rating scales of questionnaire from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) were adopted to measure the variables of HR Practices. Job satisfaction was measured by a one-item questionnaire on five-point Likert scale [where disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)], this is the single global rating approach (Davidson,1979) as it is believed to be an easier approach to collect data (Haque and Taher,2008; Yu and Egri,2005).

Reliability and Validity

Before applying statistical tools, testing of the reliability of the scale is very much important as it shows the extent to which a scale produces consistent result if measurements were made repeatedly. This is done by determining the association in between scores obtained from different administrations of the scales. If the association is high, the scale yields consistent

results, thus it is reliable. Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used method. It may be mentioned that its value varies from 0 to 1 but the satisfactory value is required to be more than 0.6 for the scale to be reliable (Malhotra, 2000; Cronbach, 1951). In the present study, we, therefore, used Cronbach's alpha scale as a measure of reliability.

Table 1. Reliability value of the Scale

Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
1. HR Planning	5	.796
2. Recruitment & Selection	8	.760
3. Training & Development	5	.786
4. Performance Appraisal	3	.620
5. Compensation	5	.954
6. Industrial Relations	5	.833
7. Job Satisfaction	1	-

Source: Survey data

From the Table-1, it is seen that the reliability value was estimated to be α=0.620-0.954 between the scale. If we compare our reliability value with the standard value alpha of 0.6 advocated by Cronbach (1951), Nunnally & Bernstein (1994); and Bagozzi & Yi's (1988) we find that the scales used by us are highly reliable for data analysis. Validation procedures involved initial consultation of the questionnaires. The experts also judged the face and content validity of the questionnaires as adequate. Hence, researchers satisfied the content and construct validity.

Data Analysis and Findings

In the present study, we analysed our data by enter wise method in a multiple regression analysis. In this context, a multiple regression was performed, by making use of all the discrete variables (i.e., dependent and independent variables) available in the dataset. The estimation process was based on Ordinary Least Squares (*OLS*) [i.e.,Y= a + bx]. For this purpose, we consider the following model specifications, by taking as dependent variable i.e., job satisfaction (JS) by making HR practices as independent variables:

$$JS = ß_O + ß_1(HRP) + ß_2(RNS) + ß_3(TND) + ß_4(PA) + ß_5(COM) + ß_6(IR) + e \text{ ..... Model (1)}$$

where: $ß_0$, $ß_1$, $ß_2$, $ß_3$, $ß_4$, $ß_5$ and $ß_6$ are the regression co-efficient;

JS: JobSatisfaction;

HRP: HumanResourcePlanning;

RNS: RecruitmentandSelection;

TND: TrainingandDevelopment;

PA: PerformanceAppraisal;

COM: Compensation;

OIR: IndustrialRelations;

e: errorterm.

To test how well the mode-1 fit the data and findings, correlation (r), R, R^2 (Coefficient of determination), variance, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the t statistic were used.

Correlation analysis was performed to find out the pair wise relationship between variables: HRP, RNS, TND, PA, COM, IR and JS. Hence, the results are summarised in Table-2.

Table 2. Correlations Matrix for HR Practices and JS

Variables	HRP	RNS	TND	PA	COM	IR	JS
HRP	1						
RNS	0.585** (0.000)	1					
TND	0.627** (0.000)	0.422** (0.000)	1				
PA	0.772** (0.000)	0.811** (0.000)	0.637** (0.000)	1			
COM	0.728** (0.000)	0.542** (0.000)	0.699** (0.000)	0.715** (0.000)	1		
IR	0.356** (0.000)	0.598** (0.000)	0.331** (0.000)	0.644** (0.000)	0.533** (0.000)	1	
JS	0.626** (0.000)	0.493** (0.000)	0.623** (0.000)	0.615** (0.000)	0.594** (0.000)	0.439** (0.000)	1

Source: Survey data; **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table-2 shows that the factors HRP, RNS, TND, PA, COM, and OIR are independently positively correlated with JS and also highly significant at 1% levels. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 of the present study was accepted. Here it is obvious that the maximum correlation (r =0.626) is existed between HRP and JS, followed by the association (r =0.623) between TND and JS; PA and JS(r= 0.615); and COM and JS (r =0.594). It should be necessary to give the highest emphasis on HRP for superb job satisfaction of employees. Training and development is also crucial for wonderful job satisfaction of employees. Although there has no so influential link (r =0.493) between RNS and JS; and IR and JS (r=0.439). These were also essential for job satisfaction. HR practices are pair-wise positively correlated with one to another and also statistically significant at P-value 0.000. Among the six HR practices, the relationship (r =0.811) between RNS and PA is the highest, followed by the link (r =0.772) between HRP and PA.

Further, a multiple regression analysis was performed to identify the predictors of JS as conceptualized in the model. An enter-wise variable selection was used in the regression analysis and table-3 and table-4 show the summary measure and ANOVA of the model.

Table 3. Predictors of JS - model summary

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2
1	0.720(a)	0.518	0.464

Predictors: (Constant), HRP; RNS; TND; PA; COM, and IR

Table 4. ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	36.958	6	6.160	9.497	.000(a)
	Residual	34.375	53	.649		
	Total	71.333	59			

Predictors: (Constant), HRP; RNS; TND; PA; COM, and IR
Dependent Variable: JS

The HR practices (HRP; RNS; TND; PA; COM and IR) in the above model revealed the ability to predict JS (R^2 = 0.518). In this model value of R^2 denotes that 51.8 percent of the observed variability in JS can be explained by the HR practices namely HRP; RNS; TND; PA; COM and IR. The remaining 48.2 percent is not explained which means that the rest 48.2 percent of the variation of JS is related to other variables which are not depicted in the model. This variance is highly significant as indicated by the F value (F=9.497 and P = 0.000) [For details please see table-4]. An examination of the model summary presented by the table-3 in conjunction with ANOVA, presented by the table-3, indicates that the model explains the most possible combination of predictor variables that could contribute to the relationship with the dependent variable.

Table 5. Coefficients for Predictors of JS

Models	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	ß	Std.Effor	Beta		
1 Constant	-.698	1.086		-.643	.523
HRP	.323	.170	.334	1.892	.064
RNS	.160	.342	.079	.469	.641
TND	.404	.164	.354	2.460	.017
PA	-.071	.314	-.056	-.226	.822
COM	-.033	.129	-.004	-.023	.982
IR	.250	.180	.194	1.386	-.172

Source: Survey data

The table-5 shows that HRP and TND are positively influencing on JS. For HRP, the value of t is 1.892(p=0.064, df=53), for TND, the value of t is 2.460 (p= 0.017, df=53). Thus, we accept Hypothesis 3 and 5. But for RNS, PA, COM and IR which fall in the area of rejection. Thus, we do not accept the Hypothesis 4, 6, 7 and 8. Hence, it can be concluded that HRP and TND have significant impact on JS. Therefore, hypothesis-2 is also partially accepted.

Conclusions

From the correlation matrix, the highest positive value of correlation between HRP and JS clarifies that the authorities of selected industrial enterprises are required to focus on HRP for getting fabulous employees' job satisfaction followed by TND; PA; and COM. It is also found that HRP and TND have significant impact on JS. The present study only collected perceptual

data. The study did not collect data regarding size of the firms, the volume of the production, and the turnovers.

Policy Implications

Although the present study was confined to identify the impact of HR practises on job satisfaction, it may be appropriate to state briefly the policy implications for the study. In this context, the following policy actions may be considered worthwhile.

- Organizations should offer extensive training and development programs for the employees
- Organizations should go for thorough HR planning.
- Organizations should carefully conduct recruitment and selection process.
- Organizations should introduce proper performance appraisal systems.
- Organizations should offer at least reasonable compensation to the employees.
- Organizations should maintain healthy industrial relations based on mutual trust and confidence of the employers and employees.
- Organizations should develop good working condition. This facilitates employees to do their work effectively.
- Organizations should induce employees to perform well. This can be achieved by providing reward, motivations, and other benefits etc.
- Employees should be trained to adopt new technology and or develop their career.
- Organizations should provide unbiased promotion. That is promotion should be provided based on the qualification of employees and /or experience.
- Organizations should implement equal employment opportunities. That is employees should not discriminate against female, and minority or old worker.
- Organization should design working procedure including hours work, over time payment and hour's payment.
- Proper working environment should be designed. In that the organization should provide adequate facilities employees to do their works such as appropriate equipment, work breaks, and work sharing.
- Organization should design good grievance procedure, disciplinary procedure and separation procedure etc.

Limitations

Small sample size was one of the major limitations of the present study. The study did not cover all the HR practices of the surveyed manufacturing firms.

Directions for Future Researches

Several suggestions that fruitful for future research emerged from this present study. In order to validate the findings of this study, case study is another interesting approach that can be done by future research. Additionally, the research model of this study can be retested in business organizations, so that the research model can be generalized to other economic sectors.

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Impactul practicilor privind resursele umane asupra satisfacției la locul de muncă: exemplul întreprinderilor de producție din Bangladesh

Rezumat

Acest studiu îşi propune să exploreze impactul practicilor privind resursele umane asupra satisfacției la locul de muncă în contextul din Bangladesh. Un total de 60 de răspunsuri de la 20 de firme producătoare au fost analizate obiectiv. S-a descoperit că practicile privind resursele umane au o strânsă legătură cu satisfacția la locul de muncă. În plus, planificarea resurselor umane, instruirea şi dezvoltarea au demonstrat că au un impact pozitiv asupra satisfacției la locul de muncă. S-a descoperit, de asemenea, că instruirea şi dezvoltarea au cel mai mare impact. Academicienii, cercetătorii, decidenții, practicienii, studenții, întreprinzătorii locali şi străini din Bangladesh şi din alte țări similare pot beneficia de aceste rezultate prin explorarea asocierii dintre practicile privind resursele umane şi satisfacția la locul de muncă.