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Exploring awareness level of health workers for High Performance Work Practices

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ABSTRACT

This is a world of performance. Everyone including sportsperson, politician employee, teacher, student etc runs for performance. It is considered to a natural key to success and goal realization. Entire efforts of management theorists, academicians and practitioners have been directed towards optimization of workplace effectiveness and efficiency. Thus, this study tends to explore status of High Performance Work Practices. The paper aims at examining employees' awareness level for 50 high performance work practices. The findings may help practitioners to deal with various HR related challenges in their respective companies in a better way.

1. Introduction

This is a world of performance. Everyone including sportsperson, politician employee, teacher, student etc runs for performance. It is considered to a natural key to success and goal realization. Entire efforts of management theorists, academicians and practitioners have been directed towards optimization of workplace effectiveness and efficiency. One can give credit to 'carrot and stick' approach to pioneer the systematic exploration of performance excellence. Classical theorists like Taylor and Fayol gave emphasis to structure, scientific management and to principles of management. Max Weber propounded bureaucratic structured organization as most rational and efficient organization. Later on, emergence of thought of Human Relation School added dimensions of social affiliation, group dynamics, recognition and personal touch to the field of management. But again, main objective of human relation school was to augmentation of productivity of the employees. Further,

behaviorists enriched the performance quest by exploring individual behavioral through emphasizing motivational, leadership, communicational and decision-making aspect of workplace. Neo human relation school tried to resolve the anomalies in previous approaches. But main emphasis of all the approaches and theories was on performance optimization.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of researchers (Macduffie (1995); Punia and Garg (2012), Collins and Smith (2006) have provided statistical evidence of positive influence of High Performance Work Practices on employees' performance. As per Kuhlmann (2004), HPWPs positively influences productivity and profitability of the employees. Steigenberger (2013) conducted a meta- analysis of high performance practices. Fan et al. (2014) observed that work practices results into positive psychological outcomes in terms of employee well-being and less burnout. Further, Zhang and Liu (2009) reported that HPWPs leads to better organizational outcomes in terms of innovation, profitability and social climate. The practices increase innovativeness and organizational agility which are essential ingredients for performance optimization (Regan, 2011). Previous researchers have reported that HPWPs are positively related with task interdependence (Ramamoorthy et al, 2005), employer-employees relationship (Zhang et al., 2013), Social structure (Evans and Davis 2005), social identification (Bartram et al., 2014), human resources or capital (Beltran-Martin et al., 2008) and with turnover intentions (Jensen et al., 2013). HR performance practices create human capital which is an ultimate source of workplace innovation (De Clercq and Dakhli 2003; Garg et al., 2019). Zacarhotas et al. (2005) argued that the capable, committed and motivated work force could be achieved through a bundle of HR practices. Practices encourage decision making, training and information sharing.

Academicians and practitioners do not have unanimous view about constituents of a model of High Performance Work Practices. Scholars argued that no combination of practices could be beneficial in every situation. Model of HPWPs varies from one industrial setting to another, one culture to another, one organizational climate to another, one country to another. The modeling of performance practices is based on the consideration that when HR practices are used collectively in a complimentary manner, then the model results into greater performance outcome than the sum of their individual HR practices (Garg and Saxena, 2020). The effect is defined by various taxonomies as 'combination effect', the 'interaction effect', 'synergy effect' or 'complementary effect' (Macky and Boxall, 2007; Garg and Kardam, 2016; Garg, 2019; Garg, 2020). The attempts to develop a rational and appropriate model of High Performance Work Practices have encouraged early high performance studies (Arthur 1992; Appelbaum and Batt, 1994; Arthur, 1994; Garg and Gera, 2019; Sarkar and Garg, 2020; Becker et al. 1997, Whitener, 1997; Wood, 1999) and more recent literature also (Saxena et al., 2020; Way 2002; Penny 2004; Wall and Wood 2005; Combs et al. 2006; Macky and

Boxall 2007; Garg and Punia, 2017). Recent times have seen growth in exploration of studies that focuses in modeling of HPWPs. But none could arrive at conclusive mechanism to model HPWPs. The present study is an effort to develop a model of High Performance Work Practices for the Indian health industry based on employees' awareness and perception for High Performance Work Practices.

Figure 1: Bramley's Individual Model of Training

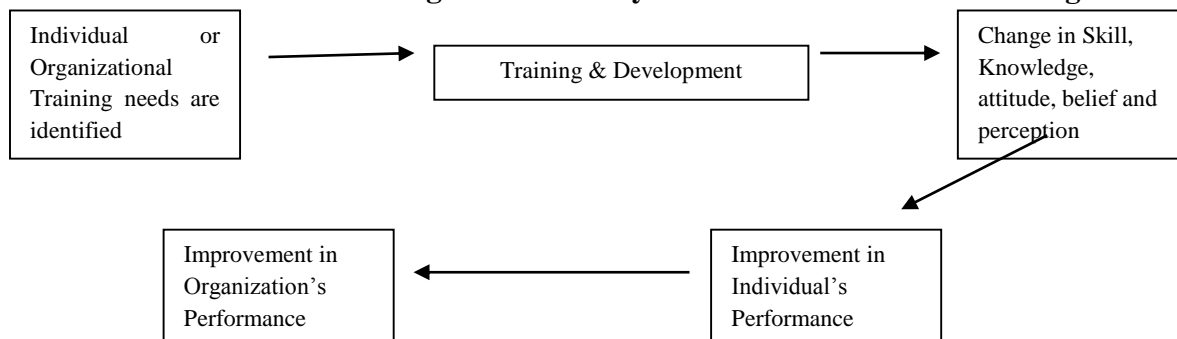
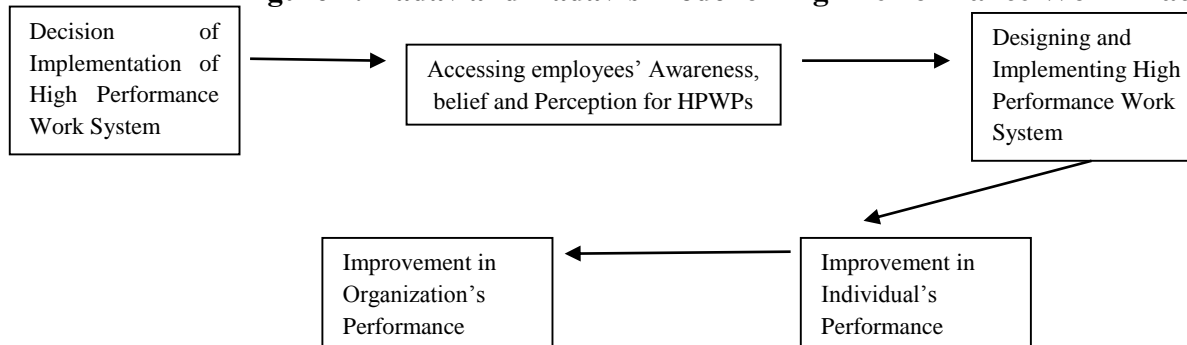


Figure 2: Yadav and Yadav's Model of High Performance Work Practices



3. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The present exploration was based upon 'exploratory-cum-descriptive research design'. The method of random sampling was ensured to accumulate responses from various public and private partners of health sector. The sample size was 937. Respondents belonging to top and middle level were approached as these employees experiences High Performance Work Practices routinely. Primary data was accumulated through a structured questionnaire comprising of fifty High Performance Work Practices. First part of the questionnaire collected the employees' demography data such as age, gender, work experience and educational qualification. Second and third part of questionnaire enlisted fifty high performance practices. Second part of the questionnaire tried to measure awareness level employees for High Performance Work Practices. The awareness level was adjudged on five-point scale ranging from 'Unaware' to 'Highly Aware'. Third part of questionnaire accessed worker's perception regarding the effectiveness of HPWPs. Reliability of data was explored with

the help of Cronbach's alpha. The present study concluded that Cronbach's value is 0.847, which confirm reliability of the data.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

Table-1: Employees' Awareness Level for Fifty HPWPs (Mean)

HPWPs	Mean	HPWPs	Mean
Semi-autonomous team	3.44	Job sharing	1.79
Problem solving team	3.00	HR audit	3.44
Continuous improvement team	3.74	Yoga and meditation session	4.74
Job rotation	3.40	Counseling session	3.48
Attitude survey	1.00	Human Resource Accounting	1.47
Team briefing	3.33	HRIS	1.84
Staff suggestion scheme	3.88	Flexi timing	3.87
Job enrichment	3.40	Social Gathering	3.74
Management By Objective	3.43	Reward ceremony	3.84
Quality circle	3.88	Surprise factor	3.34
Selective Hiring	3.80	Safe, healthy & happy workplace	3.70
Regular Performance appraisal	3.34	Family insurance scheme	3.70
Competency & potential test	3.87	Employee Stock Ownership Plan	1.73
Training & development	3.34	Corporate Social Responsibility	3.44
Team reward	3.74	Post-retirement benefit plans	3.08
Innovation at Work Place	1.73	Sabbatical Leave	1.33
Multi skilling	3.33	Feedback mechanism	3.83
Formal grievances redressal	3.84	Decentralized Decision	4.87
Transformational Leadership	1.34	Equal and High Pay	4.97
Profit Sharing	4.77	Two way Communication	3.98
Information Sharing	3.09	Reduced Status Differences	1.47
Career Progression Plan	3.84	Performance based Reward	3.87
Discretionary Job Design	1.98	Employment Security	3.33
Adequate number of Leaves	3.90	Smooth Sanction of Leaves/Loan	4.94
Incentive pay	3.73	Highlight best Employee	3.70

Source:- Primary Data

Table-1 illustrated the mean values of employees' awareness for High Performance Work Practices measured on five-point rating scale. As many as five performance practices were reported to have mean value greater than 4. These HR practices were Smooth sanction of leaves, Equal and high pay, Yoga and meditation, Profit sharing and decentralized decision making. Interestingly it was also observed that the mean value of ten practices was less than 2. These ten high performance work practices were eliminated from the questionnaire and rest of forty practices were subjected to second stage of survey. Researchers had observed that awareness results into better and efficient execution and implementation of high performance practices. Adequate level of awareness increases acceptability and decreases fear of uncertainty for innovative work practices (Garg and Punia, 2014). And ultimately it has positive impact on both individual and organizational performance. And

contrary to this, uncertainty and ignorance for new practices may have a detrimental and harmful effect on the morale and self-esteem of the employees. Thus HR performance practices with low awareness level were eliminated for further analysis. Mean Value less than two signified that these HPWPs were either 'Unaware' or 'Rarely Aware'. It is fairly unreasonable and inappropriate to ask respondents for their perception of HPWPs for which they have little or no awareness. Addition of such performance practices in subsequent study would have rendered proposed model highly ineffective and irrational. Further discussion with health personnel divulges that few practices like Attitude survey, Innovation at workplace, Transformational leadership; Reduced Status Difference etc. were not practiced in Indian health industry. Few other HR practices like Employee Stock Option Plan, Human Resource Audit and Job sharing were in embryonic stage of implementation in Indian health companies. Proper institutionalization of these HPWPs would take some time.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

High Performance Work Practices influence work-related perception, attitudes and work behaviour at the workplace. The practices have also been reported to positively influence organizational performance (Barling et al., 2003; Garg, 2019). Other researchers have reported positive association between bundle of performance practices and employees' performance and productivity. Human resource (HR) practices implemented in a comprehensible manner produce promising encouragement over organizational efficiency and effectiveness by producing complimentary constructive influences on employee attitudes, loyalty, morale, belief, values and well-being (Sun et al., 2007; Barling et al., 2003; Garg, 2019). It is also reported that high performance work practices are positively related with various other pro-performance organizational factors like job satisfaction (Barling et al., 2003; Takeuchi et al., 2009), OCB (Garg, 2017), employee' trust and faith in employer (Gould-Williams, 2003), constructive deviant behaviour (Saxena et al., 2019) and employees' organizational commitment (Boxall et al., 2011). The mutual gain viewpoint of HPWPs states that such a model is useful for both workers and employees. While critical outlook argues that these model of HPWPs are advantageous only for employers and the impression on workers is still unconvincing. But both perspectives are unanimous about positive influence on organizational outcome. In order to enrich organization with benefits associated with HPWPs, the present study has developed a working model of statistically selected High Performance Work Practices for Indian health industry.

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