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Exploring High Performance Work Practices in Indian Health Industry

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to develop a conceptual model of HPWPs for Indian health industry. A structured questionnaire comprising of 50 HPWPs with a five-point rating scale has been used. Model is based on two important paradigms of HR practices – employees' awareness and perception for HPWPs. Factor analysis is followed by confirmatory factor analysis to build a model of HPWPs. The paper has successfully developed high performance model for health sector companies.

1. Introduction

A model of High Performance Work System Practices is regarded as one of the most efficient and productive techniques of performance optimization. Punia and Garg (2013) argued that the fundamental philosophy behind remarkable accomplishment of HPWPs is "the way people are managed and treated at work place has an impact on their performance level i.e. on their productivity and efficiency" . The authors added that HPWPs are seen as harbinger of higher level of performance. A well-established model of HPWPs recruits and inducts quality and competent personnel, motivates and leads them to higher level of performance outcomes and also ensures satisfaction of psychological, esteem and social needs of the employees. This leads to establishment of long-term relationship with skilled, satisfied, motivated and happy employees (Stewart and Brown, 2011). Garg (2015) stated that a logical and rational model of performance practices works in favor of employees' morale, satisfaction and commitment which ultimately enhance productivity and profitability of the organization.

The concept of HPWPs was developed in western settings but slowly and steadily it is gaining popularity in eastern countries too. Punia and Garg (2012) reported adequate level of awareness of Indian employees for High Performance Work Practices. Later on, Punia and Garg (2015) observed positive perception of Indian employees for these performance enticing practices. The authors added that HPWPs are rapidly making inroads in Indian firms too. Health sector has made significant progress in the field of exploring the potential of high performance work practices. Hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, Third Party Administrators etc. are bending on HPWPs for resolution of HR related challenges namely high attrition, low level of motivation and morale, low involvement and engagement of employees, high organizational role stress and lower levels of mutual trust and respect. Findings of previous studies have advocated HPWPs as an appropriate and potent solution of such HR challenges. This paper makes a sincere attempt to develop a model of high performance work practices for the Indian health sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of theorists have tried to explain the linkage between HPWPs and performance. Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristics theory states that job redesign and job engineering leads to motivated employees. Further, according to Social Exchange theory, HR practices are regarded by workers as a personalized commitment of management for its employees. Implementation of any employee friendly HPWP is seen as an effort of betterment of lives of employees of the firm. This organized organizational endeavour for the betterment of worker is reciprocated back by employees in the form of positive outlook, attitude and behaviour (Hannah and Iverson, 2004). Another theory named as psychological impact theory also defines positive association between HPWPs and organizational performance. Resource based view of Human Resource Management considers HPWPs as a primary source of competitive advantage for a firm. The underlying linkage between HPWPs and competitive advantage is appreciated and incomparable features of the personnel that makes the transformation (Pfeffer, 1994; Delery, 1998; Sarkar and Garg, 2020; Garg et al., 2019). This concept has wonderful practical implications as it enriches HR practitioner with a way to utilize the potentials of human capital pool of an organization. Relational perspective was propagated by Gittell et al. 2008 and Adler et al. 2008. Relational coordination among employees is reported to have positive affiliation with performance related outcomes (Gittell et al. 2008). Major research findings in the field of relational coordination among employees reported constructive worker relations are the greatest strength for accomplishing competitive advantage (Fulmer et al. 2003; Combs et al. (2006), Garg and Saxena (2020), Wood Garg, 2019; Garg, 2020).

Employees' Perception and High Performance Paradigm

Perception of employees has been given utmost important in endeavor of modeling performance practices. Yadav and Yadav (2013) argued that the

perception of the employees and also their acceptance of HPWPs have momentous effects on the success of any model of High Performance Work Practices. Takeuchi and Takeuchi (2013) reported that the perception may affect work behavior and outcome. Employees' perception defines, directs and influences its attitude, values, belief, conduct, outlook (Collins and Smith, 2006). Combs et al. (2006) reported a statistically significant association between favourable perception of workforce of an organization with acceptance to change and sense of competence to adapt to these changes. Employees' retention, revenue, sales and profits are observed to have positive association with employees' attitude and perceptions of work conditions Datta et al. (2005). Garg and Sharma (2015) concluded that the perception mediates the causal relationship between HPWPs and performance level of employees. Mediator provides rational linkage between independent and independent variables. Nishii et al. (2009) elaborated that the perception is statistically related with organizational consequence and efficiency. Other studies Garg (2015), Kuvass (2008) etc have also reported importance of perception of employees in success of any proposed change. This is particularly relevant in the case of a model of High Performance Work Practices as it consists of a bundle of practices. The association between HR practices and perception in a two- way process in a way that both acts as dependent and independent variable in different organizational settings. Positive perception leads to effective implementation of HPWPs and institutionalization of pro-employee HR practices results into favorable change in perception of employees.

3. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The main aim of the present study was to develop a model of High Performance Work Practices for the Indian health industry. The research setting for the present study was hospitals, TPAs, pharmaceutical companies, laboratories, clinics etc located in four major metropolitan cities of India. The present exploration was based upon exploratory-cum-descriptive research design. The present study was a pioneer attempt to develop a sector specific model of High Performance Work System. A well-crafted and intelligently designed model of high performance practices could help to accrue synchronized and synergetic benefits of bundles of HPWPs. Such model could prove to be a source of competitive advantage for Indian health industry. The method of random sampling was ensured to accumulate responses from various public and private partners of health sector. The sample size was 937. The survey was conducted in two phases. Firstly, respondents' awareness level for high performance practices was accessed on a five-point rating scale ranging from 1 for 'Unaware' to 5 for 'Highly Aware'. The mean awareness value of all fifty HPWPs was calculated and performance practices whose mean value lies below two are discarded. Thus, practices having mean value less than two were eliminated from second phase of survey. The remaining High Performance Work Practices were subjected to a second phase of survey. In second phase of survey respondents' perception regarding effectiveness of HPWPs was accessed. Again, a five-point rating scale ranging from 1 for

'Ineffective' to 5 for 'Highly Effective' was used to analyze employees' perception regarding effectiveness of remaining high performance HR practices.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Segmentation of High Performance Work Practices

The remaining forty performance practices were subjected to principal component factor analysis. High Performance Work Practice whose factor loading was found greater than 0.50 were included in the factor. Prior to factor analysis, KMO test was conducted to adjudge appropriateness of data for factor analysis. Generally, value greater than 0.5 considered safe for factor analysis. Here value of KMO statistic was reported to be 0.61 and hence data is appropriate for factor analysis.

Table-1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.610
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square Sig.	574.82 0.0000

Source- Primary Data

Table-1 stated that the null hypothesis that considered an identity matrix was rejected and hence it was concluded that the data was appropriate for factor analysis. Factor analysis reduced forty HPWPs into seven factors. These seven factors explain approximately seventy-eight percentage of variance. Zenk et al (1970) suggested that fifty percent of variance explained is considered to be adequate and can be taken ahead for further researches.

Table-2: Result of Factor Analysis

Factors	**Loading**	**Eigen value**	**%age of variance**
F-1: Psycho-Strengthening HPWPs		**3.54**	**13.21**
Formal Grievance Redressal System	0.753		
Corporate Social Responsibility	0.717		
Counseling session	0.700		
Yoga and Meditation	0.699		
Surprise Employees with Unexpected	0.680		
Safe, Happy & healthy Workplace	0.582		
F-2: Team Building HPWPs		**3.23**	**12.90**
Problem Solving Team	0.729		
Information Sharing	0.732		
Team Briefing	0.802		
Semi autonomous team	0.648		
Continuous Improvement Team	0.524		
F-3: Employees' Social Needs related HPWPs		**2.91**	**10.63**
Social gathering	0.892		
Employee Security	0.824		
Two way Communication	0.811		
Post Retirement Plan	0.702		

Family Insurance Plan	0.680		
F-4: Performance Enticing HPWPs		**2.72**	**9.10**
Regular Performance Appraisal	0.872		
Incentive Pay	0.792		
Job Enrichment	0.709		
Performance based Reward	0.631		
F-5: Pro-Employee HPWPs		**2.69**	**9.02**
Smooth Sanction of Leaves & Loans	0.781		
Quality Control	0.730		
Two Way Communication	0.713		
Adequate number of Leaves	0.700		
F-6: Employee Engagement HPWPs		**2.32**	**8.88**
Staff Suggestion Scheme	0.825		
Attitude Survey	0.664		
MBO	0.662		
Information Sharing	0.638		
Profit Sharing	0.627		
Feedback Scheme	0.627		
F-7: Career Building HPWPs		**2.19**	**7.11**
Competency and Potential Test	0.753		
Career Progression Plan	0.748		
Decentralized Decision Making	0.648		
Training and Development	0.627		
Multi-skilling	0.593		
Job Rotation	0.578		

Source:- Primary data

The seven factors extracted through the factor analysis are discussed as per table-2.

F-1: Psycho-Strengthening HPWPs: These performance practices provide psychological solace and delight to employees. They represent employer's concerns for the employees. The factor includes HPWPs like Formal Grievance Redressal System, Corporate Social Responsibility, Yoga and Meditation, Sage, Happy and Healthy workplace etc. The factor explains approximately thirteen percentage of variance and has an Eigen value of 3.54.

F-2: Team Oriented HPWPs: Team is always an asset for any organization. It involves practices like semi-autonomous team, team reward, Information sharing and team briefing are also included in this factor. Variance of 12.90% has been explained by this factor with an Eigen value of 3.23.

F-3: Employees' Social Need related HPWPs: Maslow has highlighted the significance of the social needs of the employees. Satisfaction of social needs may elicit higher level of performance from employees. This factor includes employees' social related practices like social gathering, family insurance plan and postretirement benefit plan. The factor is responsible for 10.63% of variance and has an Eigen value of 2.91.

F-4: Performance Enticing HPWPs: Although main purpose of all HR practices is to enhance performance of employees. But certain performance

practices have direct impact on productivity of the employees. The factor circumscribes all such practices like Regular Performance Appraisal, Incentive pay, Performance based pay etc. The factor elucidates 9.10% of variance and has an Eigen value of 2.72.

F-5: Pro-Employee HPWPs: Performance of employees could be augmented by institutionalizing employee friendly practices. Adequate number of leaves, Quality Control, Smooth Sanction of Leaves & Loans and Two ways Communication are the tenants of this factor. The factor could give explanation of 9.02% of variance.

F-6: Employee Engagement: Engaged employees are the real asset for a company. Such employees are ready to walk an extra mile for betterment of its firm. Engaged employees may prove to be source of competitive advantage for any firm. The factor comprises of six practices like Staff Suggestion Scheme, MBO, Information Sharing, Attitude Survey, Feedback scheme and profit sharing. The factor has been reported to explain 8.88 percentage of variance and has an Eigen value of 2.32.

F-7: Career Building HPWPs: The factor comprises of performance practices like Competency and Potential Test, Career Progression Plan, Decentralized Decision Making, Training and Development, Multi-skilling and Job Rotation.

The factor analysis reduced remaining forty practices into seven factors, which were further subjected to Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Different HR performance practices come under different factors. Three extracted factors have as many as six HPWPs and another three factors have five performance practices. Another factor has only four HR practices. The principal component method of factor extraction helps to extract minimum number of factor with maximum variance. It has been observed that factor loading of four practices were too low to be included in model of HPWPs. These performance activities were not included in any of the five factors. It is imperative to abandon such practices as their insertion would result into more complicated in nested model. Elimination resulted into minimal number of steps to arrive at the final model. The initial exploration started with fifty High Performance Work Practices but as many as ten performance practices were discarded owing to low awareness level of employees.

Further five HPWPs were ignored for having low factor loading. Extracted seven factors are broader seven construct of the High Performance Work System for the Indian health industry. Next, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was implied to substantiate the extracted factors through Structured Equation Modeling (SEM).

5. CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Byrne (2010) stated that the Structure Equation Modeling is a statistical data diagnostic procedure which investigates hypothetical associations between observed variables and latent variables. The data analytical tool utilizes combination of various sample statistics like covariance, correlation, regression weight, variance etc. The method assesses whether a specified model fits the collected or not (Yuan, 2005). Holmes-Smith *et al*. (2004) elaborated that the SEM comprises of repeated procedures converged on a set of parameter

estimates. It is a collection of indices that entices a researcher to select a good model fit. There are three measures of model fit-absolute measures, incremental measures and parsimony measures. Absolute fit indices determine how well a priori model fit the sample data (McDonald and Ho, 2002) and demonstrate which proposed model has the most superior fit (as per table-3).

Table-3: Recommended Cut -off Values for SEM Fit Indices

Fit Indices	Cut off Values from Literature	References
Absolute Fit Measure		Byrne (2010)
CMIN/DF	1-2, Sometimes 1-5	Hair *et al*. (2006)
RMR	≤ 0.05, ≤ 0.08	Tabachnick *et al*. (2007
RMSEA	≤ 0.05, ≤ 0.08	
Incremental Fit Measures		
CFI	≥ 0.90	
TLI	≥ 0.90	
GFI	≥ 0.90	

Source: - Primary data

DEFAULT MODEL AND NESTED MODEL AFTER MODIFICATION

Figure 3 depicts default model of High Performance Work Practices for the health companies. As per statistics listed in table-5 the value of chi square is 77.90 for default model of HPWPs. Such large value chi-square hints towards a poor fit model. It means model needs some revision for better fit. Other fit indices like GFI, TLI etc also compared with their standard value as per table-4. Other indices also observe poor model fit. The poorly fitted default model can be modified by a series of steps:-Firstly, regression loadings of the endogenous variables on the exogenous variable are investigated. Observed variables (endogenous variables) with very small or negative regression loading are eliminated from the model. After elimination of such High Performance Work Practices (observed variables) again regression loadings are observed. If again low regression loading is reported then again corresponding observed variable is eliminated. The process continues till one find good model fit or acceptable values of regression loadings.

Secondly, modification indices are observed. Modification indices (MI) are data driven indices that indicates probable changes in the model that are likely to improve model fit. MI is considered equivalent to chi square ($\chi 2$) at degree of freedom of 4. Value greater than 4 indicates that model needs significant improvement. Thirdly, problem of localized area of problem is observed through standardized residual covariance. The localized area of problem indicates that the relationship between various parameters of the model have been either underestimated or overestimated. Positive residual covariance signifies underestimation whereas negative residual concludes overestimation. Standardized residual covariance is a measure of variation in sample and model covariance matrix. Thus higher value indicates that the model is incompetent to explain sample covariance effectively. Model could be improved by deleting such variables. Standardized residuals covariance greater than 4.96 (for $p < 0.05$) or 2.58 (for $p < 0.04$) indicates probable problem in the model.

Figure- 1: Default Model of High Performance Work System

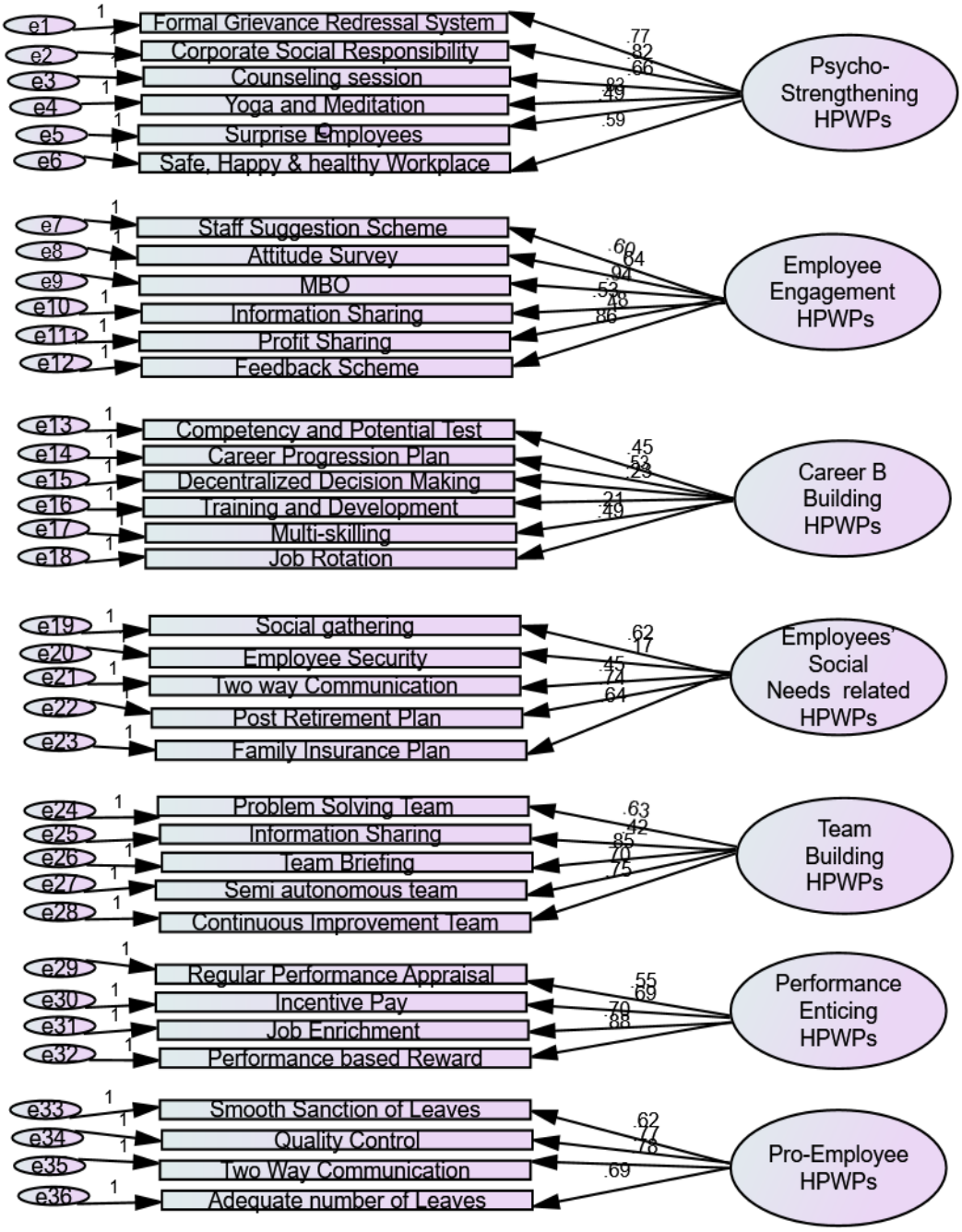

Table 4: Fit Statistics Comparison of Default and Nested Model for HPWPs

Fit Statistics	DF	RMR	TLI	CFI	GFI	RMSEA
Default Model			**Chi square = 77.90**			
Value	21	0.082	0.98	0.74	0.74	0.267
Nested Model- Revision 1			**Chi square = 67.89**			
Value	12	0.067	0.96	0.91	0.83	0.147
Nested Model- Revision 2			**Chi square = 43.90**			
Value	7	0.044	0.83	0.88	0.91	0.079
Nested Model- Final Revision			**Chi square = 9.57**			
Value	**4**	**0.019**	**0.97**	**0 .97**	**1.03**	**0.042**

Source:- Primary Data

Step-1: Revision of Model through Regression Loading (Nested model-1)

The first step of model revision is to explore regression loading of all the observed variables on the latent variables. The factor loadings of as many as eight variables are observed either too low or negative. These eight HPWPs are Formal Grievance Redressal System (-.01), Corporate Social Responsibility (.02), Post – retirement Plan (.04), Career Progression Plan (-.12), Multi-skilling (.05), Information Sharing (-.11), Feedback scheme (-.07) and Two-way communication (.09). Removal of these practices lead to some improvement in the model, but model needs further improvement. Table-5 illustrates values of various indices for default and other revised model. Revised values of indices indicate improvement in model but model needs further improvement. Now problem of poor fit is explored by observing modification indices.

Step-2: Revision of Model through Modification Indices (Nested model-2)

Second step of model revision is to explore modification indices. Here highest value of modification indices is considered first. It is reported that value of MI is highest between Quality control and Incentive pay. The highest MI was 31.32 and thus a path is structured between two observed variables. After revision through MI model shows considerable improvement. As per table-5, value of chi-square becomes 24.29 which is still on higher side. The RMSEA, TLI, CFI and GFI values showed a better fit model. But values of absolute indices do not show any significant improvement.

Step 3:- ***Revision through Localized Area of Problem (Nested model-3)***

The next revision in the model is done on the basis of standard residual covariance. The standard residual covariance of Safe, happy and healthy workplace is observed higher than the expected value (4.96 for $p<0.05$). The variable is eliminated from the model and various indices are observed against standard values. Indices report improvement but fall short from standard

values. Again, standard residual is observed and this time value of social gathering is found to be abnormal. Subsequently the endogenous variable (social gathering) is omitted from the model. Now values of all indices fall in line with standard values. According to table-5, values of all parameters are in line with threshold values described by previous researchers and thus, a fit model was achieved (see figure 4).

Figure- 2: Final Model of High Performance Work Practices for Indian Bank

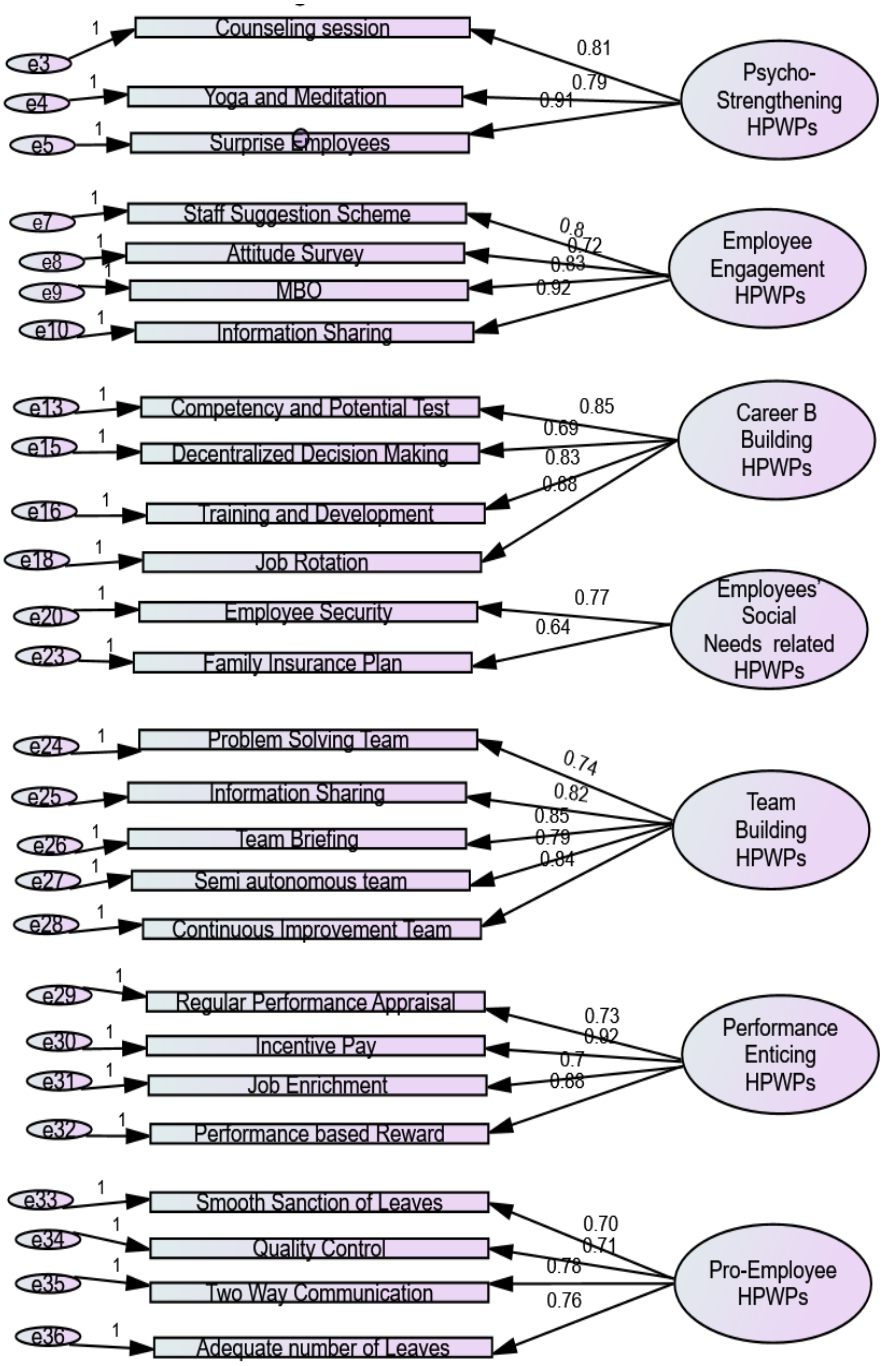

Figure-2: provides the final model of High Performance Work Practices for the Indian health industry. As many as fifty HPWPs were taken initially as observed variables. But they were reduced to a set of twenty-six practices after awareness test, factor analysis and CFA. These remaining HPWPs are found to be the most relevant for health industry of India. These practices are segregated into as many as seven different paradigms of high performance.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The most important duty of a Human Resource manager is to ensure optimum performance from employees through institutionalization of HR Practices. The paper provides a gainful insight that managers could exert an influence on qualitative objectives of the firms (commitment, motivation, engagement, job satisfaction and work-life balance, job satisfaction, loyalty, Organizational Citizenship Behavior) by ensuring higher awareness level and positive perception of employees. And fortunately, both awareness and perception could be molded by HR managers as per their HR strategy and plans.

The developed model of High Performance Work Practices could be revolutionary in redesigning and reengineering HR department and HR strategy of health companies. The present paper is one of the pioneer studies that develop a model of HPWPs. Institutionalization of developed HPWPs model would help HR managers of health companies to contribute significantly in building a team of employees, which is more committed and more satisfied with their jobs. The model will definitely help Indian health companies to enhance performance of the employees and reduced absenteeism and turnover are natural outcome of the same. One of the major challenges in implementing model of HPWPs would be change management. Top management is suggested to devise ways that could facilitates change management through unfreezing the old values and norms and refreezing new norms and cultural values.

The present research project is one of the novel and innovative attempts to develop a model of HPWPs for any specific sector. Given the preliminary nature of this study, further exploration of the field is required on the conceptual model of HPWPs, factors affecting their successful implementation and their qualitative and quantitative relationship with performance. Further researches could investigate the internal coherence of the proposed model of HPWPs. Researchers could take the initiative of model development to higher levels. Individual related factors like attitude, belief system, values etc. could also be explored for their possible effect on performance. Inputs from all these researches could be used to improve model efficacy and usefulness.

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