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ENHANCING ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE THROUGH EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT – AN ANALYSIS OF HR PRACTICES AT PUBLIC SECTOR UNIVERSITIES IN Karachi

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ABSTRACT

Human Resource Management is the most crucial element that ensures the systematic operations of any organization. This study highlights the importance of HRM in universities as to why the HR department needs improvement. Education attributes to the personality improvement, skill development, and progress of any organization. It defines the attitude and approach of any individual toward economic, social, and personal matters. Thus, any compromise on the management of educational institutions means we are putting the organization's future at stake. This study employs a survey technique using a close-ended questionnaire. The data has been collected randomly selected sample of 502 employees of three higher education institutes of Karachi. This paper discusses the implication of some of the HR policies and practices (training and development, performance evaluation, and career growth) on the performance of public sector universities. The finding indicates that HR practices are not properly implemented in higher education institutes. This ignorance leads to the disengagement of employees. The study ends up with some policy recommendations for the higher education institutes of Karachi to improvise their HRM practices.

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource managing practices may be identified as the set of executive actions that aims to manage human capital and ensuring that this capital achieves organizational objectives. (Wright and Boss Well, 2002). Human Resource managing practices and policies restrain positive influence on the managerial act and creating powerful bonding between human resource and its

performance. (Khilji, 2001). The dynamics of HRM practices is complex as of unpredictable kind of nature in terms to the human resource (Meshoulam& Bamberger, 2000). The present research paper focuses on the efforts in terms of the determination of the association among the practices of the Human Resource and the public sector organization performance i.e., higher education institutes. Education attributes to the personality improvement, skill development, and progress of any nation, no matter if it's developed or developing (Masino&MiguelNiño-Zarazúa, 2016). It defines the attitude and approach of any individual toward economic, social, political, and even personal matters. It's a comprehensive process where people are dictated systematically about growth and survival under tough conditions in this globe. The world today is regarded as a comprehensive township where the competition level is high. Innovations and technological advancements are taking place on day-to-day basis (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 2000). To meet the future requirements in every other walk of life, there is only one way to go, i.e., "through Education."

Therefore, no one can deny the importance of higher education in the financial growth and progress of a country. Thus, universities account for most of the intensive human capital so far. This ultimately highlights the prominent role of universities in the acquisition of skilled and competitive staff. This is regrettable that any particular institute of Pakistan not include in the list of the world's top 500 institutions according to the ranking survey. There are multiple reasons behind this dilemma that may include the failed policies, deficiency of trained staff, absence of merit-based hiring, lacking motivation and dedicated staff, fake human resource management, lack of research and off-course, scarce financial resources (Guest, 2017). This paper discusses three Human Resource managing practices and its implication in public sector universities. Such as training & development would help the employees in achieving giving tasks effectively and performance appraisal policies and career growth opportunities would help the employees in engaging them to get desired performance (Marín, et al., 2015).

Aim & Objectives of The Research Study

The objective of this research paper is to consider the HR practices and role in enhancing employee engagement with evidence from public sector universities in Karachi. For achieving this objective

- To depict the significance of HR practices for higher education institute
- To depict the association of HR practices with the contributing role of the engagement of employees towards the performance of the organization.
- To analyze the employee engagement moderating role on the relation among the practices of the Human Resource and organization performance.

Significance

University is an essential platform to develop the human resource capital in Pakistan. In terms to improve the performance of the organization motivate the

employees. With the assistance of the adequate HR policies and practices properly implemented may satisfy the employees physically and psychologically that can induce towards employee commitment and performance of an organization. Satisfied employees are more time liable, profoundly dedicated, and engaged. This study is significant because, with the help of the identified issues in this study paper the level of commitment, energy, creativity, and persistence could be enhanced. After all, a motivated employee is having the skill to lead to improved productivity and engagement (Xie et. al., 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The organizations become successful because of their HR operations. It's also a source through which an institution can attain a spirited perimeter. At times, managing financial matters and technology look less complicated than the management of HR. Any institution can be failed if it does not ponder upon healthy HRM practices whatsoever. Different authors have their own set of opinions regarding HRM practices and why the systems fail. Some argue that individuals are used as a spirited lead. Their focus is deliberated toward the appropriate consumption of HR in institutions and organizations intended for better growth.

Earlier studies determined the practices of the Human Resource significantly concurrent by an organization and worker performance (Harley, 2002; Guest, 2002; Park et. al., 2003, Tessema&Soeters, 2006). In developing countries, traditional HRM is more focused that harms business approach growth. (Budwar and Debrah,2001). In Pakistan, mainstream community sector organizations find ineffective HRM practices (Lepak and Snell, 2002). In recent years researcher moved their focus to the entire system of HRM function and its effects on the performance of an organization. (Mumtaz, Khan, Aslam &Ahmad 2012).

A study by (Jaskiene, 2015) imparts an explaining of some of those HRM practices that have a visible control on research efficiency and that organically ensure research excellence. According to the study, HRM practices are categorized into motivation-enhancing and occasion-enhancing practices for research-oriented work. As per this study, HRM practices are also about the skill-enhancing of an individual. Results, based on previously existing literature, considering determinants of research performance of an individual and for that matter, a group in a structurally complex manner reveal a set of HRM practices responsible for transforming individual characteristics into an overall performance for an organization. Universities of any other state in the world can utilize those research findings efficiently if they apply HRM practices improving research performance.

One more study by (Nadarajah, et al., 2012) concludes that HR activities have to be abstracted upon two significant concepts that include career development and performance. In this research study, authors constructed a specific model so that they could carve a connection between job performance with HR activities and career growth. The four important elements of HR practices that the authors

have considered in this study are employee security, training and development, reward, and selective hiring.

Gyensare and Asare (2012) look at the HR practice's impacts on the routine of nursing staff in hospitals of Ghana. The study found the reward, promotion, and performance assessment are considerably related to the performance of the nursing workforce of Ghana. Another study by Davies et al (2001) analyses three HR practices development & training, compensation, performance & evaluation on the performance of employees in the accommodation industry in Australia. The study found training significantly improves employee performance while performance appraisal and compensation have no significant impact on employee performance.

Shahzad et. al., (2008) explore to examine the HR practices and its impacts on the performance of workers. The study found there is a momentous association among compensation and performance of employees whereas performance evaluation has no significant relationship and suggested performance evaluation system may be revised. As per Mumtaz et. al., (2012) determined the HR practices and impacts on the job satisfaction of university teachers in Pakistan. The study revealed that compensation and empowerment practices appreciably linked to job satisfaction of university teachers, Punjab

The empirical analysis by (Iqbal & Arif, 2011) found out an inevitable dissimilarity in the practices of human resource management between private and public universities of Punjab. All the administrative activities related to HR whether about training and development, job definition, teamwork, compensation, and contribution of employees in organizational matters were significantly better in the public universities than private universities. On the other hand, when it comes to growth, performance appraisal; private universities stood above public sector universities (Koon 2015).

Moreover, (Olufemi, 2009) also study the effect of the size of the institute on HRM practices in the academic sector of Nigerian universities. They relied upon the resource-based view in their research, tested their designed hypothesis, and found no difference in universities' HRM practices based on their sizes. Which means if the managerial staff is effective in numbers and required expertise according to the size, there is no difference in the management of bigger or smaller universities? The study by (Dauda & Singh, 2017) focuses from the start on HRM and the functions related to it, that how these elements impact administrative performance. As per their opinion, many institutes perceive a vacuum between their designed HRM rehearses and their proper execution.

HRM policies are designed in a way that they deliver the structure by which the workforce is directed to perform in an organization. These policies are in black and white statements a company maintains to mention its standards and objectives and cover all areas of employment, including hiring, salaries, termination process, welfares, leaves of absence, and employee relations. They contain rules and regulations on how workers must execute their jobs and cooperate with each other. Managers, workers, and the HR sector all have roles in ensuring that HR policies are successfully implemented (Schroeder, 2012). If

these policies are not clear, an organization is on the verge of failing its system. Unfortunately, there is a common practice of ignoring the HRM policies in the universities of Pakistan. If we specifically talk about Karachi, then the malfunctioning in the HRM can be observed openly. This is why universities are not achieving the ranking goals to be on the list of the world’s top universities.

Human Resource Management is that powerful factor that can highly influence and for that matter control other factors of production. Oxford, Harvard, Cambridge, or any other top leading universities of the world would have collapsed in the absence of proper HR management and efficient allocation of human resources. So here are some prominent factors that are part of HRM and the loopholes in any part of the process can flop the system as a whole.

Training and Development

Training is the strategic step of an organization that can prepare an employee to attain organizational goals and objectives. (Schaufeli et. al., 2008; Kyndtet et. al., 2009). Similarly skilled employees enhance the performance of the organization. (Brown, 2005). This is a very important and sometimes ignored factor affecting HRM Practices, especially at the higher education level. Employer Training & development is key to improve the teaching and research methods in universities to promote advanced learning. It’s a process during which lecturers and professors go through sessions that can sharpen their teaching skills, improves concepts, change of approach, and acquisition more information to improve the performance of the workers (Truitt, 2011). High-quality & well-organized training of workforce helps in their skills & development in terms to awareness, that ultimately helps an institute to get better.

This flowchart explains how the need for the training of employees is identified and delivered. The top hierarchy must evaluate staff’s performance, identify the needs for training, establish training objectives, select the methods to train them, and start conducting sessions.



Source: <https://www.mbaskool.com/business-concepts/human-resources-hr-terms/8685-training-and-development.html>

If this process, however, is ignored in any way, the organization must not expect any positive results for its betterment. Based on the above literature it can be hypothesized that the development & training enhance employee engagement and prepared the employees to perform various organizational tasks.

Performance Evaluation

This is also an important step toward improving employee's position in an organization. In performance evaluation, companies note down the individual's performance based on the projects the employee has been associated with. Sometimes it is also called annual review or performance review. With the help of this, the managers decide which resource is more suitable for a specific position, depending on their performance and skills. On the other hand, employees are also curious about knowing their progress report in comparison with their colleagues (Idowu, 2017). This way, organizations can put a healthy competition among resources to perform better. If any organization doesn't give due importance to this part of HRM, there is hardly any chance that they can prosper well. It can be hypothesized that in the absence of performance evaluation, workers have no engagement to attain the organizational goals as a result organizational performance may be suffer.

Career Growth Opportunities

Career growth of employees leads to engage the employees towards the fulfilment of the organizational goals. Many researchers initiate the constructive relationship among promotional practices and job satisfaction (Teseema and Soeters, 2006) another study (Peterson et al., 2003) is supported this point of view. David & Wesson (2001) found limited career growth in public sector organizations that discourage the employees. Based on the above-mentioned past studies it can be expected that career growth opportunities engaged the employees to enhance organizational performance.

Employee Engagement

As per Kamalanabhan et. al., (2009), employees engaged might continue and stay with their organization persistently and longer to discover more viable tactics to comprise an incentive. As per Sanford (2003) disengaged employees cost organizations fiscally utilizing lower consumer loyalty and lower profitability. On the basis of the above literature, it can expect that employees are an asset of an organization that has a great impact on executive act. The engagement of an employee is determined as the commitment to the individual (Lockwood, 2007), as the employment state of mind linking dedication, vigour, and absorption (Bakker and Schaufeli, 2004). Many scholars argue that the engagement of the employees is the concept of multidimensional concept (Harter and Jones, 2005). According to Kahn's (1990) individual engagement, academic structure was supportive in the understanding of the term employee

engagement namely rational or cognitive, affective or emotional, and components which are behavioural.

Hypothesis

H1: Human resource practices significantly related to employee engagement pertaining to public sector universities in Karachi

H2: Human resource practices significantly related to the performance of organization pertaining to public sector universities in Karachi

H3: Employee engagement leads to organizational productivity and growth.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the corridor to conquer the objectives of the study. This research has been conducted through a quantitative approach. In this research, there are two sources of data primary and secondary. To collect primary data survey questionnaire technique has been used. The method of sampling utilized in this research study for getting the questionnaire filled was the non-probability method. The questionnaire was used by 502 individuals who have been employed in public sector universities. A questionnaire has contained two sections: question regarding the dynamics of HR practices and job satisfaction and employee engagement and the second section regarding the personal details gender, age, experience, and education. To gain the numeric data researcher five-point Likert scale ranging from “5= Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree”.

Data Analysis and Findings

The following section of the research contains the analysis of data. Demographic data has revealed that majority of the respondent is 74.7% male and 25% female (Table 1). The age group of lower 35 years has the lowest percentage of the respondents i.e., 13.7% and 1% respectively and the age group of 46-55 constitute a high percentage of the respondents i.e., 33.1%. As for qualification, the majority of the respondents are M.Phil./M. S and Ph. D which constitutes 25.5% and 25.9% respectively those respondents who are masters constitutes 19.7% and graduates were 27.3% and post-graduate constitutes 1.6%. The majority of the respondents have more than 15 years’ experience that constitutes 32.1% of the respondents and who have the lowest percentage 0.6% have less than 6 years’ experience.

Table 1: Demographical Data Representation

S. No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender		
	Male	375	74.70
	Female	125	24.90
	Total	502	
2	Age		

	18-25 years	5	1.0
	26-35 years	69	14
	36-45 years	160	31.9
	46-55 years	166	33.1
	55 and above	102	20.3
	Total	502	
3	Education		
	Graduation	137	27.3
	Masters	99	19.7
	M.Phil/M. S	128	25.5
	Ph. D	130	25.9
	Post graduate	8	1.6
	Total	502	
4	Experience		
	less than 1 year	3	0.60
	1-5 year	55	11.0
	6-10 years	152	30.3
	11-15 years	131	26.1
	more than 15 years	161	32.1
	Total	502	

Primary Data

In this section, the researcher presents data on the research objective. To evaluate the respondent’s perception adopted five-point Likert scale from ranging “strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1)”

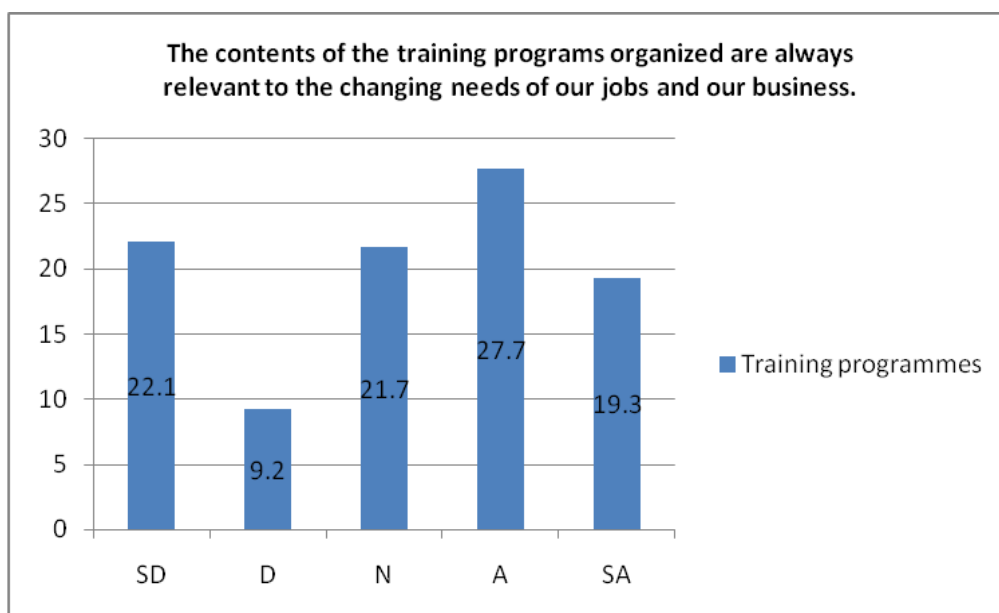


Figure 1

A huge majority 47% of the respondents agreed to this fact that the training programs are related to the changing needs of our job while 22% neutral and 30% disagree out of 502 respondents. (figure1)

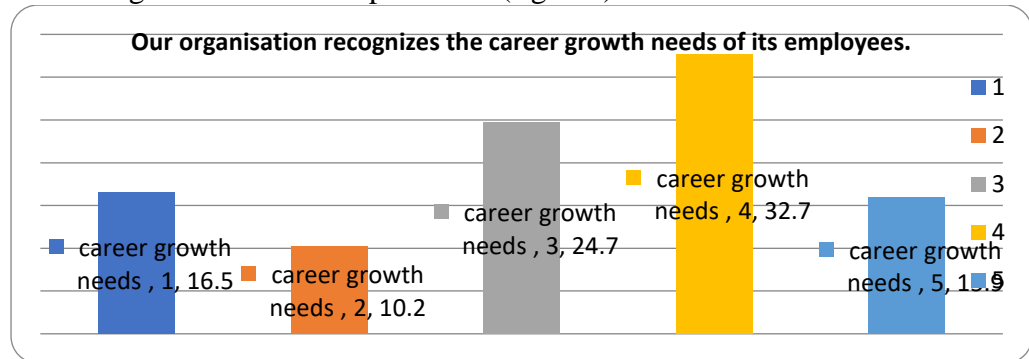


Figure 2

Majority 49% of the respondents are agreed to this fact that our organisation identifies the career growth requirements of the employees while 24.7% neutral and 27% disagree. (Figure 2)

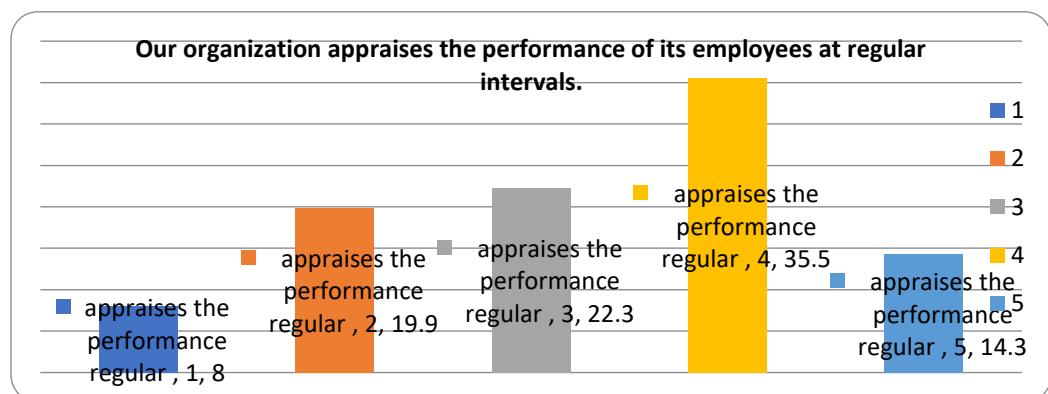


Figure 3

Majority 49% of the respondents out of 502 agreed regarding the organisation appraises the performance of its employees at regular basis while 28% disagree reflects that 22% neutral. (Figure 3)

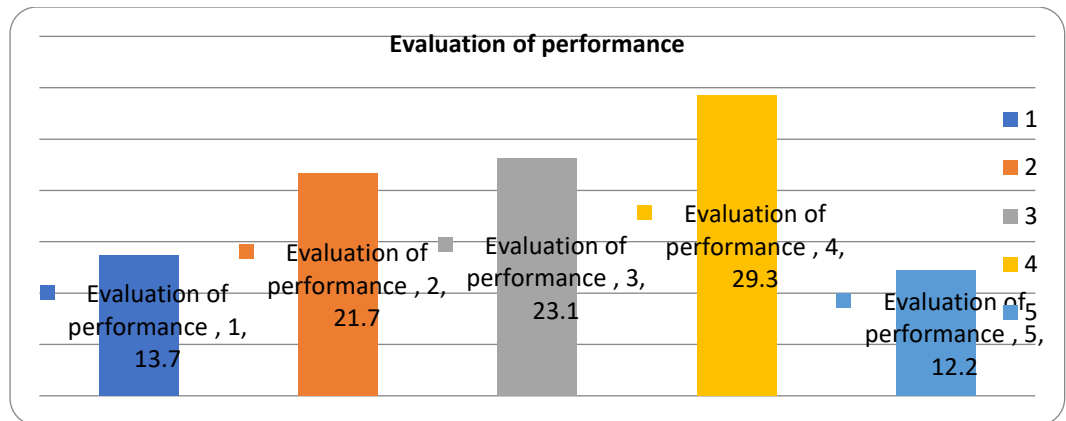


Figure 4

Majority 42% of the respondents revealed that evaluation of performance is based on achieving the organisational objectives while 35% of the respondents disagree to this fact and 23% are neutral. (Figure 4)

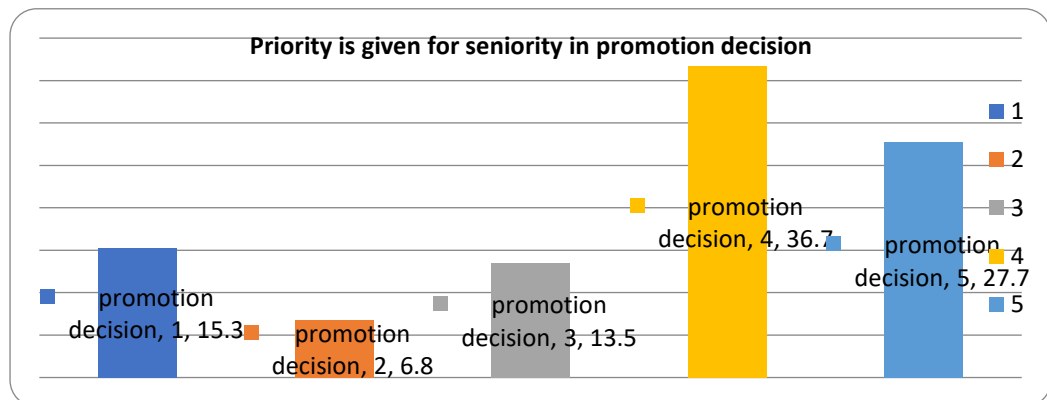


Figure 5

Majority 65% of the respondents are agreed to this fact that promotion is based on experience 13% employees gave neutral reply while 22% respondents disagree to this fact. (Figure 5)

DISCUSSION:

Policies and the practices of HR are usually designed to achieve the aims and objectives of the organization that affect the performance of the organization. Human resource is an asset of any organization that has unpredictable nature. Because of poor HR policies, many organizations could suffer. Most of the firms adopting those policies which could enhance the performance of the organization; this research study intends to explore the effectiveness of HRM policies in the productivity and growth of any organization. Here we discuss three HRM practices: training and development, career growth opportunities, and performance evaluation.

The researcher has believed that some demographic characteristics have a great impact. Ignoring this fact ruined the performance of an organization .as stated

by Bahir et. al., (2011) that employee's perceptions regarding practices of Human Resources may vary with demographic differences. Gender is one of the important factors. The study reveals that the majority 74.7% of the respondents are male that represents the glass ceiling effect in public sector universities in Karachi. It can prove that there is no women vice-chancellor in public sector universities in Karachi. Women face many invisible barriers to attain a high position as compare to men that can affect employee engagement and motivation. Glass ceiling affects the performance of an organization. The study reveals that the majority of the respondents among the age group 46-55 years have more than 15 years of experience and highly educated.

47% of the respondents agree that public sector organizations conduct the training programs to meet the future requirement as employee's satisfaction with their jobs when they have effective training sessions at the workplace (Bradley et al., 2004). 49% of respondents out of 502 agree to this fact that the organization recognizes the career growth needs. Career growth opportunities keep the employee engaged and motivated. Career growth opportunities satisfied the employees that lead to financial benefits. 65% respondents agree to the fact that career growth opportunities are based on experience in public sector organizations. It has a significant relationship with employee engagement. The study reveals that 49% of the employees agree that an organization appraises the performance of its employees on a regular basis

CONCLUSION

In terms to enhance public sector organization performance effectively implement HR practices that have a great influence on employee engagement. Committed and motivated employees trigger the efficiency and performance of an organization. Three variables of HRM practices training and development, career growth opportunities, and performance evaluation have played an important role to enhance the performance of an organization. The strong relation among the practices of the HRM and the performance of the organization provides a perception of how public sector organizations can encourage employees to work resourcefully. It is a fact that training and development and career growth opportunities are not regularly practiced even they don't ACR reports in public sector organizations so the employees are not committed and motivated these factors disengaged the employees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish those policies and practices and training sessions that enhance the skills and abilities of employees. Provide career growth opportunities with respect talent of the employees in public sector organizations (Shaukat, et al, 2015). Communicate organizational goals and objectives. Provide regular feedback to employees on their performance in public sector organizations that motivates and engaged the employees towards their organization

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

Limitation of study author has believed that result of this study may be limited in terms of generalization because it focuses on a single city Karachi. This extinguishes the opportunity of making the comparison of other parts of the

country. The respondents may be biased while answering the questions. lack of time and lacking funds. This study is based on the perception of workers which may vary with a period.

DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

It is highly recommended to apply the study in other public sectors to check the generalization and validity of research findings and apply the same study in other countries will allow comparison of research findings

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