

Organizational and Employee-Related Outcomes of HR Practices in High-Performance Work System

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In present era of global competition in business environment the high performance work system has emerged in the form of popular organization development strategy to maximise firms, competitive advantage. The present study examined the effect of H-P work systems and practices on organizational effectiveness and employee's job satisfaction and psychological well-being in sample of 200 supervisory & management cadres engaged in some H-P Work organizations. The data analyses of the obtained through psychometrically standardized tools revealed that almost all the H-P work practices significantly positively correlate with organizational effectiveness as well as with participant's job satisfaction and psychological well-being.

Keywords: High Performance Work System, Organizational Effectiveness.

In present era of globalization business environment has become extremely competitive, consequently human resource management has become the most happening and crucial function. In order to survive in these highly competitive environment business organizations need to focus even harder on their competitive strength to develop long term strategies. In fact, people offer unique competitive advantage to firm. This insight has created new paradigm shift as to the way in which people should be managed. This paradigm shift has propelled the expansion of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM). The overall purpose of SHRM is to ensure that organization is able to achieve success through people. Today a key task for the researchers has become to understand how human resources can be managed to maximize productivity and enhance creativity while controlling costs.

As a survival or coping strategy in present era of global competition the High-Performance Work System (H-PWS) has emerged in the form of a popular organization development strategy to maximize firms' competitive advantages. H-PWS is a specific combination of human resource practices, work-structure and processes that maximize employees' decision-making ability, knowledge, skills and commitment and leads to flexibility, innovation, and effectiveness in

organizations. The HPWS is an organizations architecture that brings together work, people, technology and information in a manner that optimizes the congruence among them in order to produce high performance (Brown, 2006).

Empirical studies have shown significant linkages between HPWS and measures of organizational performance, including higher productivity and service quality (Huselid, 1995; Subramany, 2009), profit and market value (Wright et al., 2005), customer satisfaction (Nishii, Lepak, & Schneider, 2008), better workplace safety (Berling et al., 2008) workers retention (Subramany, 2009), lower turnover and absenteeism (Datta et al., 2005), higher efficiency (Verma et al., 1999), and team performance (Yang & Choi, 2009). A meta-analytical study of 92 research investigations conducted by Comb, Sui, Hall, and Ketchen (2006) concluded that 20% of the utility available from predicting differences among organizations is resulted from High Performance Work Systems. Thus impact of the HPWSs on organizational performance is not only statistically significant but managerially relevant too (Subramany, 2009). However, varying sample characteristics, research designs, practices examined, and performance measured used have led extant findings to vary dramatically making the size of the overall effect difficult to estimate (Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Ferris et al, 1999; Wood, 1999).

The HPW practices have also been found to result in greater job satisfaction, lower employee's turnover, higher productivity, and better decision making, all of which help improving organizational performance (Evans & Davis, 2005). The studies have shown that HR practices shape desired employee behaviours and attitudes by allowing employees more discretion in their own jobs (Arthur, 1994; Macky & Boxall, 2008). Messersmith, Patel, and Lepak, (2011) in their study found that adoption of high-performance work system is associated with enhanced levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and psychological empowerment. In the study of Wickramasinghe and Wickramasinghe, (2012) it was found that participation in decision making was positively associated with affective commitment and job-satisfaction. Syed and Yan (2012) also noted that empowerment, job rotation, employee participation, merit-based promotions and performance-based pay and effective grievance handling procedures were positively correlated with employee's job satisfaction.

Although there are substantial research evidences on positive linkage between HPWSs and performance a number of authors have suggested that more attention must be paid by researchers in exploring inside the 'black box' or mediating mechanism to examine the character of this link, particularly in relation to how employees experience or perceive the HPWs (Ramsay, Scholarios, Harley, 2000; Nishii et al., 2008). Researches following this approach have found considerable negative impact of the HPWS on workers. One such study investigating HPWS at two aerospace firms found high work intensification and rising levels of occupational stress (Danford, et al Gree 2006). In addition, Godard (2001) reported evidence for decline in satisfaction and increased stress (Zeytinoglu et al., 2007). Controversies have also been reported by some other studies, which noted mixed results (Sparham & Sung, 2007; Antonioli et al., 2009). Kaushik (2009).

A perusal of the above research review shows that findings regarding the impact of HPWS are contradictory. Moreover, HPWS as related to positive organizational outcomes has been amply investigated, but it's possible impacts

on employee variables, such as job satisfaction, job involvement, commitment and well-being have been studied less extensively and more so, in Indian context. Researchers have called for further empirical studies from different context owing to the question of differences across societies and cultures (Som, 2008; Wright et al., 2005). Keeping the fact in view the present study aimed at examining the effect of H-PWPs on organizational performance/effectiveness, and employees' job satisfaction and psychological well-being engaged in Indian work organizations.

Method

Participants

Initially some manufacturing and service organizations recognized for having adopted High Performance Work System, and moderately to largely using the High Performance Work Practices were identified and selected for the present study. These organizations belonged to both public and private sectors. Randomly selected 200 hundred employees belonging to supervisory to senior management (technical and non-technical) cadres engaged in different departments/sections of the selected High Performance work organizations participated in the present study. The demographic characteristics of the participants are depicted in the following Table:

Age Range	26-52 years (Median = 36 years, 3 months)
Length of service	5 – 31 years (Median = 10 years, 5 months)
Sex	Male: (n= 182) Female: (n= 18)
Sector working in	Public: (n= 90) Private: (n= 110)
	Manufacturing: (n= 161) Service: (n= 39)

Tools of Measurement

The following psychometric tools of measurement were employed in the present investigation:

High-Performance Work System (Adapted): The High Involvement Work System Scale developed by Mandelson, Turner, and Barling (2011) separately assesses the extent of

prevalence and effectiveness of various practices of High-Performance Work System (HPWS) in an organization. The scale comprises 38 items, to be rated on 7-point scale, relating to 8 dimensions/practices of HPWS, namely, selective hiring, employment security, decentralized decision making, extensive training, reduced status discrimination, contingent compensation, information sharing, and transformational leadership style.

But for the present research some items of the original scale were adapted to suit the work organizations in Indian context. Moreover, one sub-scale was bifurcated to give emphasis on two separate nature of practices. For the present purpose the participants were required to give their rating on 5- point scale instead of 7- point scale, for the extent to which each practice of HPWS were being implemented in their organization. The alpha coefficients for 8 sub-scale of the original scale were found to be .63, .69, .69, .69, .15, .58, .62, and .94.

Organizational Effectiveness Scale: A short version of Organizational Effectiveness Scale developed by the Srivastava and Banerjee (1997) was employed. The used scale comprised 38 items of the original scale, which were to be rated by the subjects on 5-point scale. Homogeneity of the items comprising the scale was computed to estimate the internal consistency of the tool. The obtained homogeneity index of the items ranged from 0.40 to 0.67, indicating the high validity (internal) of the scale. Test-retest reliability of the scale was found to be 0.95.

Job Attitude Scale: The inventory was prepared by Srivastava (1997) to assess the extent of employees' liking (satisfaction) and disliking (dissatisfaction) for various aspects of their job, such as job activities, work conditions, social relations, security, compensation, etc. The questionnaire comprises 15 true-keyed items to be rated on four-point rating scale. Homogeneity index of the items ranged from .38 to .58. Split-half reliability of the scale was found to be 0.79. Validity of the scale has been established against the measures of occupational stress, ($r=0.294$, $p>.05$), job performance ($r=0.201$, $p>.01$), and psychological well-being ($r=0.414$, $p>.01$).

General Health Questionnaire- 12 (GHQ-12): The 12-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) developed by Goldberg and Williams (1988) was used for assessing the extent of psychological well-being of the participants. The questionnaire consists to 6 positive and 6 negative items, to be rated on 5-point scale. High score indicate high well-being. External validity of the GHQ-12 was determined by computing coefficient of correlation of the total GHQ and its three factors with the Inventory of Situations. The obtained coefficients were .57, .82, .70, and .75, respectively.

Results

In order to examine the effect of H-PW Practices on organizational effectiveness and employee's job satisfaction and psychological well-being the obtained data were analysed in terms of t-ratio, coefficients of correlation, and multiple regression analysis. The obtained results are presented in following tables.

The results depicted in Table-1 make it apparent that the employees rating higher on the extent of implementation of the various high performance practices perceived markedly higher effectiveness of their organizations, in comparison to those who rated lower on the extent of the H-P W Practices. The results suggest that the extent of implementation of the HPWPs exerts significant positive impact on organizational effectiveness, and so on organizational performance.

Further, the effect of implementation of high-performance work practices on participants' job satisfaction and psychological well-being was examined. The obtained results (Table-2), as per our hypothesis, indicate that adoption of high performance work practices in management of work-force puts significant positive effect on employees' job satisfaction and psychological well-being.

A perusal of the coefficients of correlation depicted in the above Table-3 make it apparent that each of the HPWPs significantly positively correlates with employees' job satisfaction, and psychological well-being, and perceived organizational effectiveness. The results specify that 'selective hiring' and 'emphasis on high productivity and quality' related strongly with

Table-1: Comparison of Employees Rating High (mdn+) and Low (mdn-) on Extent of Various H-PW Practices with Regard to Perceived Organizational Effectiveness.

H-PW Practices	Extent of Practice	n	Organizational Effectiveness		
			Mean	S.D.	t
Selective Hiring	High	111	151.51	28.75	4.47**
	Low	89	135.06	21.71	
Employment Security	High	110	153.37	24.43	5.71**
	Low	90	132.97	25.99	
Extensive Training	High	100	152.71	26.20	4.68**
	Low	100	135.67	25.29	
Contingent Compensation	High	114	151.04	29.57	4.30**
	Low	86	135.10	20.14	
Decentralized Decision & Lower Status Discrimination	High	102	147.45	29.72	1.94*
	Low	98	140.48	22.21	
Team Working	High	130	153.75	26.50	7.75**
	Low	70	126.43	17.53	
High Performance/Quality	High	118	152.59	29.24	5.66**
	Low	82	132.10	17.72	
Information Sharing	High	135	150.83	27.06	5.33**
	Low	65	130.40	21.40	
Transformational Leadership	High	106	151.07	30.22	3.95**
	Low	94	136.44	20.54	
Overall H-PW Practices	High	101	155.95	29.43	6.89**
	Low	99	132.19	17.78	

**p<.01, *p<.05

employees' job satisfaction, and psychological well-being, while 'team working' and emphasis on 'high productivity and quality' were found to have relatively stronger association with organizational effectiveness. Finally, the High Performance Work Practices as a whole was noted to be most strongly correlated with organizational effectiveness.

Participants' job satisfaction was noted to be markedly affected by the practices of 'selective hiring', 'transformational leadership' and 'decentralized decision making and low status discrimination'. All these practices were found to cause 21.30% variance in participants' job satisfaction. Individual contribution of these practices to the variance of job satisfaction, were 14.30%, 4.20%, and 2.80%, respectively. It is apparent that 'selective hiring' results in maximum variance in job satisfaction of the employees.

The regression of different HPWPs onto participants' psychological well-being revealed that HR practices of 'transformational leadership', 'selective hiring', and 'employment security' caused significant variance in employees' status of psychological well-being. The three practices together explained 22.00% of the variance in participants' state of psychological well-being. 'Transformational leadership' was noted to be predominantly affecting employees' psychological well-being explaining 15.90% of the variance in it. 'Selective hiring' and 'employment security', respectively contributed 4.80% and 2.10% in the variance in participants' state of psychological well-being.

Finally, causal relationship between HPWPs and participants' evaluation of organizational effectiveness was examined through stepwise regression analysis. The obtained results are presented in the above table. The results

Table-2: Comparison of the Employees Rating High (mdn+) and Low (mdn-) on Extent of Various HPW Practices with Regard to Their Job Satisfaction and Psychological Well-Being.

H-PW Practices	Extent of Practice	n	Job Satisfaction			Psychological Well-Being		
			Mean	S.D.	t	Mean	S.D.	t
Selective Hiring	High	111	44.76	7.47	5.79**	47.74	7.03	5.48**
	Low	89	39.08	6.07		42.54	6.19	
Employment Security	High	110	43.14	7.73	1.94**	47.21	6.68	4.08**
	Low	90	41.14	6.91		43.23	7.10	
Extensive Training	High	100	43.26	8.21	1.98*	47.37	6.76	3.99**
	Low	100	41.20	6.41		43.48	7.00	
Contingent Compensation	High	114	44.09	7.93	4.24**	46.28	7.39	1.96**
	Low	86	39.77	5.89		44.29	6.65	
Decentralized Decision & Lower Status Discrimination	High	102	44.19	7.64	3.96**	46.52	7.34	2.25*
	Low	98	40.18	6.63		44.27	6.77	
Team Working	High	130	43.85	7.95	4.40**	47.06	6.95	4.66**
	Low	70	39.21	5.14		42.37	6.48	
High Performance/Quality	High	118	44.02	7.80	4.27**	47.09	7.24	4.12**
	Low	82	39.64	6.00		43.02	6.27	
Information Sharing	High	135	43.10	7.91	4.42**	46.59	7.01	3.42**
	Low	65	40.41	5.95		43.00	6.81	
Transformational Leadership	High	106	44.38	7.74	4.57**	47.00	7.32	3.42**
	Low	94	39.79	6.24		43.63	6.51	
Overall H-PW Practices	High	101	44.94	7.97	5.59**	47.78	7.34	4.99**
	Low	99	39.46	5.63		43.02	6.07	

High = Above Median **p<.01; Low = Below Median *p<.05

Table-3: Coefficients of Correlation between HPW Practices and Organizational and Employee Related Outcomes (N=200)

High-Performance Work Practices	Organizational Effectiveness	Job Satisfaction	Psychological Well-Being
Selective Hiring	.375**	.378**	.386**
Employment Security	.305**	.135	.321**
Extensive Training	.373**	.152*	.295**
Contingent Compensation	.349**	.295**	.199**
Decentralized Decision; Low Status Discrimination	.244**	.364**	.224**
Team Working	.517**	.346**	.383**
High Performance/ Quality	.485**	.377**	.301**
Information Sharing	.429**	.256**	.264**
Transformational Leadership	.397**	.369**	.388**
Overall H-PW Practices	.521**	.416**	.417**

**p< .01, *p< .05

Table-4: Regression of Job Satisfaction onto various HPWPs

Predictors	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	R ² Change	F	Significance
Selective Hiring	.378	.143	.138	.143	32.96	.000
Selective Hiring & Transformational Leadership	.430	.185	.177	.042	22.37	.002
Selective Hiring; Transformational Leadership & Decentralized Decision Making	.461	.213	.201	.028	17.64	.010

Table-5: Regression of Psychological Well-Being onto various HPWPs

Predictors	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	R ² Change	F	Significance
Transformational Leadership	.388	.151	.147	.151	35.193	.000
Transformational Leadership & Selective Hiring	.446	.199	.191	.048	24.510	.001
Transformational Leadership; Selective Hiring & Employment Security	.469	.220	.208	.021	18.438	.023

Table-6: Regression of Organizational Effectiveness onto Various HPWPs

Predictors	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	R ² Change	F	Significance
Team Working	.517	.268	.264	.268	72.40	.000
Team Working & High Performance and Quality	.553	.305	.298	.038	43.29	.001

suggest that out of nine HPWPs only two could cause significant variance in participants' perception of organizational effectiveness. The results specify that the practices of 'team working' and 'emphasis on high productivity and quality' predicted 26.80% and 3.80% variance, respectively, in participants' evaluation of effectiveness of the organizations they work in.

Discussion

In general, the study revealed positive relationship between the HPWPs as a whole and employee's job attitudes and well-being, and organizational effectiveness. Most of the earlier studies have also noted significant positive outcomes of the implementation of the practices of high performance work system (HPWS). Though most of the studies examined the effect of HPWSs on organizational performance, only a few studies have investigated into the effect of HPWSs on employees' job attitudes and experiences, and psychological and physical well-being. The study demonstrated that high performance work system as a whole and

most of its practices extend significant positive impact on employees' job satisfaction, and psychological well-being. During last one decade significant empirical attempts have been made by researchers to analyse the relationship between high performance work practices and organizational performance. Combs, Lince, Hall, and Kitchen (2010) uncovered 92 studies which reported significant positive relationship between HPWSs and organizational performance. A good number of researchers concluded that researches provide support for the notion that HPWS positively affects organizational performance (Backer & Huselid, 1998; Backer & Garhart, 1996; Write & Boswell, 2002). High Performance Work System largely centres effective management of workforce and work organization on highly skilled, engaged, involved and empowered workers. In this system higher performance is achieved principally through a highly motivated workforce. The core idea here in this system is to develop a "win-win" situation for employers. The system aims at bringing benefits to both employees and employers. The

findings of the present study may be explained in the framework of this core idea of the HPWS. The HPWS focus on developing effectiveness and efficiency of the organizational systems, policies and practices, and at the same time aims at enhancing job involvement and motivation level of the employees through high performance work practices. The employees operating in HPWS are benefited and get motivated from having more input into their work, greater task discretion and autonomy, more varied and meaningful work, getting opportunities to express their opinions, and feeling valued. On the other hand, the employers are benefitted from having more motivated, committed and loyal workers. In HPWS the employees take initiative without needing regular instructions, engage more in quality work, and are less likely to be absent or leave the firms owing to high involvement and engagement in their work. In fact, the high performance and achievement of the workers become a consistent and strong source of motivation for them. It has been argued that the employees' involvement is the key ingredient of high performance organization design (Cotton, 1996; Ledford, 1994). The review of research on impacts of HPWS indicates that HPWPs are highly correlated with higher productivity and stronger financial performance. There are few but growing number of studies conducted in Indian context have shown positive links between innovative HR practices and corporate performance (Mishra & Gupta, 2009; Singh, 2004; Som, 2008). Thus it may be concluded that HPWS broadly have a positive effect on organizational effectiveness, performance, and consequently on financial gains across the cultures and countries.

These practices were also found to result in positive employee related outcomes. Evans and Davis (2005) in their study noted that the HPW practices result in greater job satisfaction, improved performance, lower employees' turnover, and better decision making, which all helps in improving organizational performance. Messersmith, Patel, and Lepak (2011) found that the adoption of HPWSs is associated with enhanced level of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, psychological empowerment, and enhanced organizational citizenship behaviour.

Employees' engaged in meaningful tasks with ego involvement, having opportunities to make use of their skills and innovative talents, making high achievements, having a feeling self-value and worth satisfying their higher order needs, which consequently helps them in maintaining high psychological well-being, and resisting to the health problems generally arising from stressful job life. Young et al. (2010) suggested that the identification of the employees with their organizations mediate the relationship between HPWS and affective commitment and job satisfaction of the employees. Gallie et al. (2012) argued that in HPW organizations the self-directed team work, featured with task discretion and opportunities for skill development leads to higher organizational commitment and job satisfaction across service and manufacturing organizations. Similar to the findings of the present study, a number of studies have reported positive relationship between various practices of HPWS and employees affective commitment and job satisfaction.

It has been argued by the management experts and researchers that the high-performance work practices result in high organizational performance through motivated, involved and satisfied workforce. The mechanism of the positive impact of high-performance work practices on organizational performance lies in employees' positive job attitude and job behaviour. Explanations of how and why this link between high-performance work practices and organizational performance should work rely on the theories of employees' motivation in response to the practices of HPWS, and have become so embedded as to be taken largely for granted. The implicit argument was that the HPWS practices may be taken at face value, as employee-centred and empowering. Employees, in turn, feel that their needs are met by the opportunities and benefits these practices provide, and respond by taking initiative without needing regular instructions and show loyalty and enthusiasm for their organization and employer. A good number of studies conducted by organizational psychologists have noted positive relationship between job satisfaction and performance.

There are numerous theories regarding the route by which high-performance work practices might affect performance, and the actual mechanism of its influence. Most of the theories vary around a common theme, which was described by Boxell and Purcell (2003) as “ability-motivation-opportunity” model. The model envisages an inter-linear causality between practices and their impact on organizational performance. The model argues that: (a) practices put impact on employees’ ability and capability to perform, (b) practices also influence employees’ attitudes, affecting their motivation level and (c) practices influence the availability of opportunities to make full use of these enhanced abilities. In this way employees capability sets in the limit of performance, motivation determines the degree to which capability is turned into action, and opportunities refers to enhancing avenues for the use of capabilities by the motivated employee. The research have revealed that various high-performance work practices enhance motivation level via increased commitment (Youndt et al., 1996; Pfeffer, 1998; Gould-Williams, 2004; Combs et al., 2006). It has also been noted that high motivation level leads to a high degree of job satisfaction. The researchers have also reported that by relaxing certain rigidities of organizational structure and work design and schedule, and by introducing team-working, and by information sharing, the HPWSs provide employees with the latitude to act to their full capacity, which ultimately reflects in organizational performance (Huselid, 1995; Pfeffer, 1998; Delery & Shaw, 2001). Schneider et al. (2006) suggested that more opportunities for employees coupled with discretion motivate them to go beyond the contract, which in turn can have positive effect on organizational performance (Combs et al., 2006).

Thus the findings of the present study confirm the Post-Fordist thesis regarding link between HPWSs and performance outcomes. The core idea of this argument is that higher performance is achieved basically through developing a motivated workforce (Macky & Boxall, 2007). The adoption of the HPWPs develops a “win-win” situation in the organization, which is gainful to both employers and the employees.

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