

Gender Differences in HRM Practices of School Administrators: Is Gender Matter?

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Abstract

HRM practices play a potential role in school Administration. There are a lot of HRM practices for effective School Administration. Among these practices workload management, performance appraisal and compensation are most important. The question is whether there actually is Gender stereotyping in school Administration? An attempt was made in this study to examine the gender differences in the HRM practices of school Administrators. A sample of 100 teachers from ten public secondary schools (five girls and five boys' schools) of district Lahore was taken by using convenient sampling technique. Teacher's perceptions regarding HRM practices of their school administrators were gained on a self developed questionnaire. T-test was applied to analyze the data. The results showed up the myth of gender differences in school administration. It was found that female administrators were better in their HRM practices as compared to male administrators. The findings have important implications for school administration.

Key terms: School Administration, HRM Practices, Gender Differences

Introduction

Obikoya (2002) quoted that human resource management involves procedure through which human resources are organized and directed towards the attainment of organizational, individual and social goals. It makes the best possible utilization of the rank and the employees. HRM is actually the management of people in organizations. It consists of the activities, policies, and practices involved in obtaining, developing, utilizing, evaluating, maintaining, and retaining the appropriate number and skill mix of employees to accomplish the organization's objectives. The goal of HRM is to maximize employee's contributions in order to achieve optimal productivity and effectiveness, while simultaneously attaining individual objectives and societal objectives (Dessler,1999: 2).

Employing new labor forces entails the implementation of human resource management (HRM) practices. HRM practices Refers to organizational activities directed at managing the pool of human resources and ensuring that the resources is employed towards the fulfillment of organizational goals (Schuler & MacMillan, 1984).These practices include recruitment, selection, and hiring of the workforce. Once individuals are hired, they need to be incorporated into the company's framework through training and socialization. Appraising the progress of these employees and motivating them via compensation are also key components of HRM (Schuler & MacMillan, 1984).

To the researcher among these practices the most important HRM practices for sustainable workforce are compensation, performance appraisal and workload management.

Compensation

Employee compensation involves all forms of pay or rewards accrued to employees and arising from their employment. Banjoko (1996) sees compensation of employee as the totality of the financial and other non-financial rewards that an employee receives in return for his or services. It includes his basic pay and other numerous financial benefits and incentives the totality of which determines how well he/she lives in the society. Compensation is all forms of financial returns and tangible services and benefits employees receive as part of an employment relationship (Milkovich 1991). An effective set of choices about compensation systems plays a major role in determining firm performance (Dreher 2001). A pay-for competence program enhances productivity and product quality, and reduces absenteeism, turnover, and accident rates (Jyothi and Venkatesh 2006). Incentive pay plans positively and substantially affect performance of workers (Ichniowski et al., 1997). High performance work practices (including compensation) have a statistically significant relationship with employee outcomes and corporate financial performance (Huselid, 1995). Significantly positive correlation has been reported between compensation practices and perceived employee performance by Teseema & Soeters (2006).

Performance Appraisal

Performance is defined as the record of outcomes produced on a specified job function or activity during a specified time period (Bernardin and Russell 1993). Effective managers need to incorporate performance review and feedback as part of their day-to-day communications with employees (Webb 2004). Appraisals are used widely for tying pay to performance (Schellhardt 1996). Present day firms are facing increased pressure to create human resources policies and programs that avert discrimination against individuals on non-work related aspects with respect to the various functions within human resource management, particularly selection and performance appraisal (Lillevik 2007). Brown and Heywood (2005) state that 'performance appraisal represents, in part, a formalized process of worker monitoring and is intended to be a management tool to improve the performance and productivity of workers'. Brown and Benson (2003) found that employees' commitment and productivity can be improved with performance appraisal systems.

Egan (2003) proposes the following guiding principles for performance management: Most employees want direction, freedom to get their work done, and encouragement not control. The performance management system should be a control system only by exception. The solution is to make it a collaborative development system, in two ways. First, the entire performance management process – coaching, counseling, feedback, tracking, recognition, and so forth – should encourage development. Ideally, team members grow and develop through these interactions. Second, when managers and team members ask what they need to be able to do bigger and better things, they move to strategic development. The main purpose of any performance appraisal system according to Killen (1977) is to evaluate an employee's works to the organization, to provide basis for wages, salary, increases, promotion, demotion and transfer, to point out employee's specific needs for additional education, training and development which will lead to their improved performance and the overall organizational performance, to acknowledge high performance and motivate high performances, to enable workers know how their superiors view their performance, to provide appraisal reports which will serve as the basis determine training and development need and to provide the employer with the data that could be used for staff development to serve in greater capacity.

Workload Management

Rapidly changing global scene is increasing the pressure of workforce to perform maximum output and enhance competitiveness. Indeed, to perform better to their job, there is a requirement for workers to perform multiple tasks in the workplace to keep abreast of changing technologies (Cascio, 1995). The ultimate result of this pressure has been found to one of the important factors influencing job stress in their work (Chan, 2000). A study in UK indicated that the majority of the workers were unhappy and unsatisfied with the current culture where they were required to work extended hours and cope with large work field while simultaneously meeting production targets and deadlines (Townley, 2000). In other study, Vinokur- Kalpan (1991) stated that organization factors such as workload and working conditions were negatively related with job satisfaction. In studies that focused on other HR practices, Bame (1993) found that employee turnover was lower when employees had shorter work hours and were given a choice of work schedules, even though their workload was higher. The results suggested that firms that provide employees with flexible work schedules had the advantage of reducing employee turnover.

Monitoring workloads and supervisor-subordinate relationships by management may reduce intention to quit and subsequent turnover, thereby saving organizations the considerable financial cost and effort involved in the recruitment, induction and training of replacement staff.

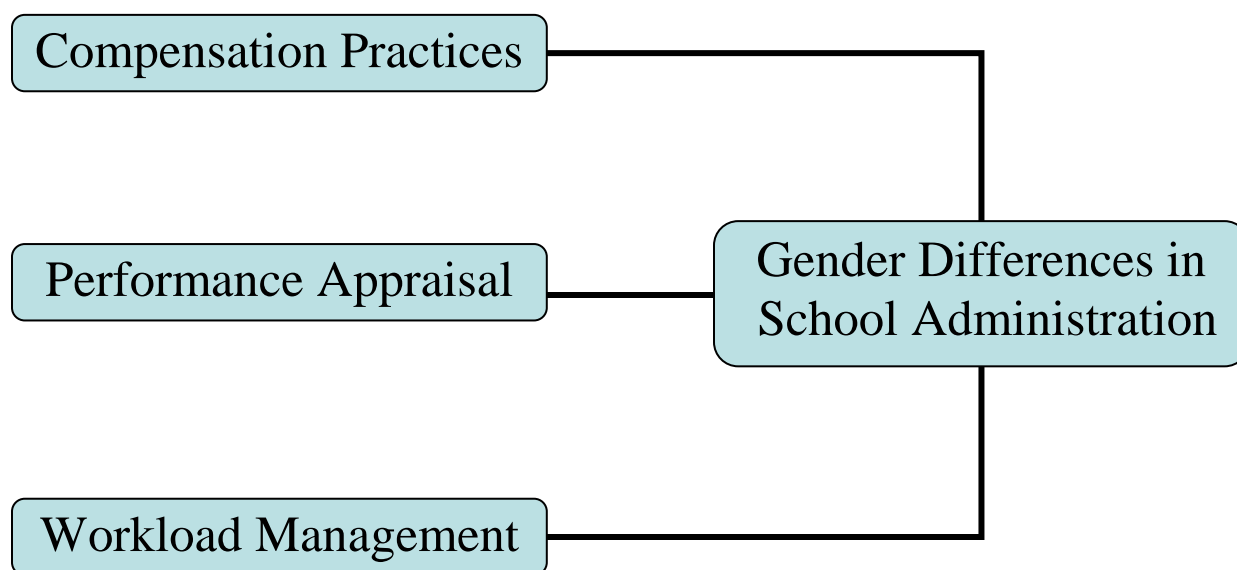
Rationale for the Study

No adequate research has been conducted to investigate the gender difference in school administration using HRM practices.. It was due to this reason that the researchers selected to investigate the effective HRM practices of male and female heads at school administration.

Conceptual Framework

After careful document analysis, the researcher developed following framework for the purpose of the study. This framework shows that sustainable workforce is influenced by three main HRM practices. These practices are compensation, performance appraisal and workload management.

Figure: 1



Objectives of the Study

Following were the main objectives of the study:

1. To examine the perception of Girls and Boys public school teachers about compensation practices provided to them at their workplace.
2. To examine the perception of Girls and Boys public school teachers about performances appraisal practices provided to them at their workplace.
3. To examine the perception of Girls and Boys public school teachers about workload management practices provided to them at their workplace.
4. To find out the gender differences in HRM practices of school administrators.

Research Questions

Putting under consideration the objectives of the study, following research questions were made.

1. What are the perception of Girls and Boys public school teachers about compensation practices provided to them at their workplace?
2. What are the perception of Girls and Boys public school teachers about performances appraisal practices provided to them at their workplace?
3. What are the perception of Girls and Boys public school teachers about workload management practices provided to them at their workplace?
4. What are the gender differences in HRM practices of school administrators?

Methodology and Procedure

To examine the perception of Girls and Boys public school teachers about the HRM practices of their administrators, a sample of 100 teachers from five girls and five boys' school was taken by using convenient sampling technique. Data about Teacher's perceptions regarding three HRM practices (compensation, workload management and performance appraisal) was gathered by administering a self developed questionnaire. Questionnaire was composed of 15 items. Five items for each variable (compensation, workload management and performance appraisal). Pilot study was made to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire. The instrument was found to have Overall reliability of 0.61. Items of the questionnaire were designed in a five point likert scale. Subjects were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Five point Likert type scale used in the questionnaire was "strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. The data collected in terms of participant's ranking responses was analyzed by applying simple descriptive and inferential statistical techniques such as means and t-test.

Results

Following were the main results of the study:

Table: 1 Perception of teachers regarding compensation practices of their heads.

School Type	No of respondents	Mean	Range of score
Boys	50	2.04	1-5
Girls	50	3.06	1-5

Table: 1. shows that the mean score of boys school teachers on statements about the compensation practices of their heads is 2.04, while girls school teachers got mean score of 3.06. it means that female administrators are good at compensation practices as compare to male administrators.

Table: 2 Perception of teachers regarding performance appraisal practices of their heads.

School Type	No of respondents	Mean	Range of score
Boys	50	2.28	1-5
Girls	50	3.32	1-5

Table: 2. shows that the mean score of boys school teachers on statements about the performance appraisal practices of their heads is 2.28, while girls school teachers got mean score of 3.32. it means that female administrators are good at performance appraisal practices as compare to male administrators.

Table: 3 Perception of teachers regarding workload management practices of their heads.

School Type	No of respondents	Mean	Range of score
Boys	50	3.72	1-5
Girls	50	2.7	1-5

Table: 3. shows that the mean score of boys school teachers on statements about the workload management practices of their heads is 3.72, while girls school teachers got mean score of 2.7. It means that male administrators are good at workload management practices as compare to female administrators.

Table: 4 Difference between the HRM practices of male and female administrators

School Type	N	Mean score (X)	St. Dev	Df= (n1+n2)-2	t-value
Boys	50	2.68	0.77	98	2.13
Girls	50	3.03	0.87		

Table 4 shows that the mean score of girls school teachers is greater than the mean score of boys school teachers in their perception about HRM practices of their school administrators. It shows that t-value 2.13 is greater than critical t-value 1.980 at 5% level of significance. It means that there is a significant difference between the HRM practices of male and female school administrators.

Conclusions

On the basis of empirical finding of the study, there are some points that can be used for concluding purpose of this research paper.

- Female administrators are good at compensation practices as compare to male administrators.
- Female administrators are good at performance appraisal practices as compare to male administrators
- Male administrators are good at workload management practices as compare to female administrators.
- There is a significant difference between the HRM practices of male and female school administrators. Female administrators are good at their HRM practices as compared to male administrators.

Delimitations of the Study

As it happens with all empirical researches, this study is not beyond its limitations. Due to lack of time and financial resources the study had following limitations:

- Sample size for this study was too small. Data was collected only from 100 school teachers.
- Only five public boys and five public girls schools were selected.
- Only teacher's perception regarding HRM practices was gathered. Perception of school administrators (directors and heads) was not gathered.
- Only three HRM practices (compensation, performance appraisal and workload management) were focused in the study. Others like training and development, Human capital planning and employees participation were ignored.

Suggestions and Recommendations

For the school authorities and its HRM executives and practitioners, it is very important to understand the employees, their needs and individual differences. Best and effective HRM practices like compensation, performance appraisal and workload management should be provided to the employees working at their workplace within an organization. HRM executives and practitioners should focus on their HRM skills and they should develop and improve these skills. More research should be conducted in this area at broader dimensions. Especially as the study showed that gender matters, males administrator should focus to improve their HRM skills.

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Questionnaire

Organization Name: _____

HUMAN RESOURCE (HR) PRACTICES	SA	A	N	D	SD
I. COMPENSATION					
1. My salary is up to my satisfaction level.					
2. All teachers of this institute are paid proportionate to their work and abilities.					
3. My pay scale highly motivate me at my workplace					
4. Attractive incentives and rewards are available in this institute for the good performers.					
5. I am fully satisfied with the compensation system of this institute					
II. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL					
1. My performance appraisal in this institute accurately reflects my performance.					
2. Performance appraisal system in this institute is excellent and admirable.					
3. Continuous rating of teacher’s performance is done in this institute					
4. Proper feedback is provided to the teachers at their workplace.					
5. I am fully satisfied with the performance appraisal system of this institute .					
III. WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT					
1. I feel easy to balance my work routine with my personal life.					
2. I am allowed to adjust my work schedule as I feel convenient.					
3. Workload is adjusted here by taking into consideration the capabilities of people.					
4. Work is assigned here after discussion and negotiation with teachers.					
5. Sound workload management practices are applied here at our workplace in this institute .					