

Original Research Article

Relationship between human resource management practices and employee's job performance in selected private Health Care Sector, Selangor, Malaysia

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Abstract: Human resource management practices are crucial, especially in the private healthcare sector. This could be because managing personnel in the healthcare sector is particularly challenging; therefore, meeting every employee's needs is crucial. Recently, the healthcare sector has experienced a scarcity and unbalanced distribution of employees due to job turnover. In addition, employee performance in the private healthcare sector has shown a slight drop due to the dissatisfaction of employees toward human resource practices such as unattractive compensation and rewards packages, bias in performance appraisal, lack of training and development, and many more. Therefore, this study is conducted to examine the impact of human resource practices on employees' job performance. Specifically, there are three main human resource practices observed as factors that contribute to an employee's job performance. The three human resource practices are compensation and benefits, performance appraisal, and training and development. There were four private hospitals operating in Selangor, Malaysia, chosen as a sample for this study. The private hospitals are KPJ Selangor Specialist Hospital, Columbia Asia Hospital Puchong, Assunta Hospital PJ, and Sunway Medical Centre. Out of these four private hospitals, there were about 291 employees working at the front desk: nurses, clinical workers, and administration staff were chosen as respondents in this study. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents by hand. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS version 29. The findings indicate that employee job performance in Malaysian private hospitals is positively correlated with compensation and benefits. Employees feel motivated by compensation, which encourages them to increase their production and work more efficiently. Additionally, the findings also suggest that performance appraisal and training and development significantly contribute to employee job performance.

Keywords: human resource management; job performance; compensation and benefits; training and development; Health Care Sector

Received: 12 May 2023; Accepted: 12 June 2023; Available online: 19 June 2023

1. Introduction

It has been argued extensively in research articles on how human resource management practices affect organisational performance. The findings of research conducted in developed nations have repeatedly demonstrated the importance of human resource practices to the success of organisations. However, the research in this field being done in developing nations is insufficient. Therefore, there is a need to conduct this study in developing countries to add value to the current understanding of human resource practices. Storey^[1] defined Human Resource Management (HRM) as a "collection of connected policies with an ideological and

philosophical grounding.” According to Storey and Sisson^[2], HRM is “a distinctive approach to employment management that tries to generate competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly devoted and capable staff, employing a variety of cultural, structural, and human strategies.” On the other hand, Julie and Tim^[3] note that although there is no consensus definition of HRM in the literature, organisations place a high value on the strategic role of HRM. While many other researchers have identified HRM as a tool for enhancing organisational performance, some studies have highlighted HRM as a strategic element of “best fit”, or matching people with organisational needs.

Recruitment, selection, placement, induction, training, development, performance evaluation, reward system, career planning and development, and employee-employer interactions are the main processes of HRM. The best approaches to developing healthcare professionals are HRM practices. This is supported by Katarzyna and Zuzana^[4] asserting that the most crucial tactic for maintaining healthcare professionals’ work analysis and patient care in an ethical manner is HRM. Therefore, it is crucial to maintain good HRM practices to boost employee job performance and indirectly increase patient satisfaction.

2. Research background

Over the past few years, human resource management practices have received significant interest from scholars, especially in developed countries^[5,6] due to their emerging economies and rapid technological advancement. However, studies related to human resource management practices remain limited and are still evolving, specifically in developing countries, such as Malaysia. Despite several studies conducted to examine human resource management practices in numerous industries such as banking, education, and services^[7-9], studies conducted in the healthcare sector remain limited. In the service sector, healthcare is considered an important service provider. Healthcare organisations face major challenges in order to keep healthcare accessible and affordable to all patients. This requires the healthcare sector to pay attention to its performance. In order to do so, the healthcare sector should influence their employees’ performance^[10]. Therefore, it is necessary to know what the factors are specifically in human resource management practices that could contribute to employee performance in the healthcare sector.

There have been several studies conducted examining the relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance^[11,12]. From the previous studies, it can be seen that human resource management practices could lead to employee performance through providing constructive training and fun work settings that help retain talent. When employees are satisfied with their organization, this will indirectly boost the employee’s productivity and thus increase their performance. However, it is very crucial to examine the relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance in the healthcare sector, specifically in the Malaysian context. As the basis of management is getting things done via people, hence human resources are a crucial component of management. Unfortunately, a global shortage of human resources has emerged, particularly among healthcare personnel, as a result of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The medical professionals handling these COVID-19 cases at the same time were exposed to the virus and contacted by it. Many of these employees had to take time off work while they recovered, while some of these people passed away from the illness. The rapid rise in patient numbers over a brief period of time has led to stress and unmanageable issues among healthcare employees. Working in the health sector, the demand for productivity to serve the best patients is prominent, specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic. The employee’s job productivity relies on many factors. One of the factors is the HRM practices of the organization. Effective management of human resources will enable responsive health systems, enhance the standard of healthcare, rationalize resource utilisation, and lessen the workload for employees.

3. Problem statement

While the connection between HRM and the healthcare employee's job performance has generally been well studied, the majority of the existing fundamental empirical research comes from Western nations and may only have limited applicability in Malaysia. Therefore, this study is carried out to examine the relationship between HRM practices and employees' job performance in private hospitals, in Selangor, Malaysia. It is assumed that compensation and benefits play a role in boosting the employee's productivity. The pay literature indicates that compensation and benefits are generally able to improve the employees' job performance^[13]. In addition, it is expected that those who received compensation and benefits above industry norms will show high job performance. Along the same lines, it is expected that training and development may have an impact on employee performance. Training and development should be ongoing and a well-planned process designed by the management. Training and development are provided to employees in order to ensure they are equipped with the necessary and adequate skills, knowledge, and abilities to carry out their duties. Therefore, training and development are generally assumed to increase employee job performance. On the other hand, healthcare professionals face a number of difficulties in the modern world, particularly those in the private sector that serve a large number of international patients. Patients now demand easier access to higher-quality healthcare. Therefore, it is crucial for private hospitals to hone their competitive edge in order to obtain an advantage over rivals. As a result, the services and care offered by healthcare professionals are regarded as important sources of quality that can meet patients' needs. As such, performance appraisals serve as a crucial platform to inform healthcare workers of the necessary quality standards that can fulfill patients' demands and ultimately aid private hospitals in achieving their goals. Examining the three HRM practices (compensation and benefits, training and development, and performance appraisal) in a private hospital setting in a developing country such as Malaysia would contribute to better knowledge and understanding of the effectiveness of HRM practices toward increasing employee job performance.

4. Research objectives, research questions, and hypotheses

Specifically, there are three research objectives in this study. The research objectives are as follows:

RO1: To examine the relationship between compensation and benefits and employee job performance in private hospitals, in Selangor, Malaysia.

RO2: To examine the relationship between training and development and employee job performance in private hospitals, in Selangor, Malaysia.

RO3: To examine the relationship between performance appraisal and employee job performance in private hospitals, in Selangor, Malaysia.

The research questions for this study are:

RQ1: What is the relationship between compensation and benefits and employee job performance in private hospitals, in Selangor, Malaysia?

RQ2: What is the relationship between training and development and employee job performance in private hospitals, in Selangor, Malaysia?

RQ3: What is the relationship between performance appraisal and employee job performance in private hospitals, in Selangor, Malaysia?

Below are the hypotheses formulated for this study:

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between compensation and benefits and an employee's job performance.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between training and development and an employee's job performance.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between performance appraisal and an employee's job performance.

5. Literature review

5.1. Compensation and benefits

In recent years, the company has come to believe that remuneration and benefits are crucial to boosting and increasing employee performance. Researchers like David and Steve^[13] suggest that compensation policies should include employee incentives that encourage the pursuit of novel solutions. According to Armstrong^[14], compensation management is one of the key pillars of human resources management. In a similar vein, researchers suggested that compensation has a one-way relationship with employee performance^[15]. In contrast, the definition of compensation as a form encompasses monetary returns and tangible benefits that employees receive as a part of their job relationship^[16]. Additionally, the term compensation usually refers to monetary recompense given to a recipient. In reality, employees received a combination of financial and non-financial awards in exchange for their services to the company, in addition to their pay.

5.2. Training and development

Training and development are done to bring about change by integrating a new employee into the corporate culture. It entails training new hires to develop new skills or enhance existing ones in order to implement organisational change. Workforce motivation cannot be achieved with just training. However, it is a crucial instrument that a company can utilise to accomplish its long-term objectives^[17]. Employees receive training as part of a commitment to uphold the organisational culture and to be productive, both of which will lead to receiving rewards and accolades. Since the skills learned during training will make up the majority of an employee's life cycle in a company, training also has a significant impact on how well employees perform. Employees are more likely to participate in planned activities, support initiatives that will advance the company, and give their all to ensure that organisational objectives are met when they are motivated by training^[18]. Additionally, organizations will find it simple to accomplish their goals when staff are well-trained.

5.3. Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal is one of the important functions of HRM practices in any organization. Effective performance appraisals would help employees improve their weaknesses. It is believed that performance appraisal is able to increase employees' job performance^[19]. This is because, according to Milna^[20], an effective performance appraisal system, which includes using the right tools and giving the right incentives, has a positive, considerable impact on employee motivation, which indirectly increases the employee's job performance. Additionally, according to expectation theory, the results of performance reviews are closely tied to the work output of the employees^[20]. Along the same line, Oliver et al.^[21] explained that an employee's level of effort, dedication, and creativity toward his or her work in an organization affected productivity and that these factors were also considered for their performance evaluation. Therefore, a critical assessment of the results of the performance review is very important because it not only predicts employee performance but may also highlight the need for incentives, training, development, and counseling for the employees.

5.4. Conceptual framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework used for this study. The independent variables in this study are HRM practices, which consist of three elements: compensation and benefits, training and development, and performance appraisal. Meanwhile, the dependent variable for this study is the employee’s job performance.

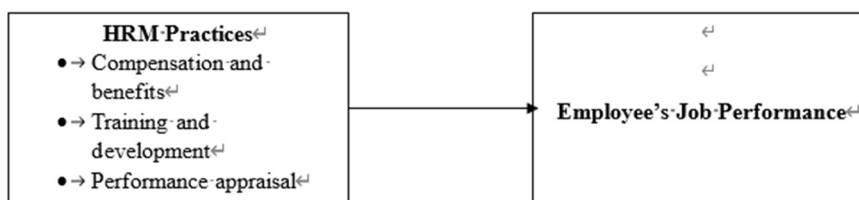


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Source: Authors.

6. Research methodology

6.1. Research approach

This study used a positivist approach with a deductive (quantitative) method. A quantitative design’s overall structure is based on the scientific method. It employs deductive reasoning, in which the researcher develops a hypothesis, collects data in an investigation of the problem, and then uses the data from the investigation, after analysis and conclusions are shared, to prove the hypotheses are not false. In order to collect the data, a set of questionnaires was used and distributed to the respondents. The reason for choosing a questionnaire as a method of data collection is due to the respondents’ nature of working. Working in the healthcare sector is extremely busy with its packed schedule. Therefore, respondents may answer the questionnaire whenever they are available.

6.2. Population and sampling design

Four Selangor private hospitals operating in Malaysia made up the study’s sample, which are KPJ Selangor Specialist Hospital, Columbia Asia Hospital Puchong, Assunta Hospital PJ, and Sunway Medical Centre in Malaysia. Overall, there are a total of 1200 employees working as nurses, pharmacists, and administrative staff in these private hospitals. Therefore, according to the Krejcie and Morgan^[22] Table, the suggested sample size for this study is 291. However, to cater to non-response issues from the respondents, the researcher decided to distribute 350 questionnaires to them. A simple random sampling technique was used in choosing the respondents.

6.3. Research instruments

The instruments used in this study were adopted from previous researchers. The questionnaires to measure compensation and benefits are adopted from Feraro-Banta and Shaikh^[23]. Meanwhile, questionnaires to measure performance appraisal are adopted from Niazi^[24]. There are three items in measuring compensation, benefits, and performance appraisal. On the other hand, there are four items for measuring training and development. Meanwhile, to measure employee job performance, the instrument was adopted by Pradhan and Jena^[25]. There are 18 items for measuring an employee’s job performance. A five-point Likert scale is used, with 1 denoting totally disagree and 5 denoting strongly agree. All the instruments used have high validity and reliability, with Cronbach alpha values greater than 0.8. A pre-test was conducted with 30 employees from the healthcare sector. The inputs from the respondents in the pre-test helped to develop the readability of the questionnaire. In addition, opinions from five experts in the domain of this study were obtained to enhance the

readability and comprehensiveness of the questionnaire. Based on the inputs from the pre-test and experts' opinions, some of the wording in the questionnaire has been modified.

7. Findings and discussion

7.1. Descriptive analysis

Table 1 below shows the descriptive analysis of respondents' demographic backgrounds. Out of 350 respondents, only 291 responses were obtained. Therefore, the response rate in this study was 83%. Out of 291 respondents, 64.6% were male and 35.4% were female. The majority of the respondents are in the 25–34-year-old category with 6 to 10 years of working experience. The majority of them are diploma or certificate holders. Based on the respondents' demographic background, where most of them are in middle age, career development is assumed to be important to their lives. Therefore, it is assumed that achieving high job performance is crucial to them.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of respondents' demographic background.

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	188	64.6%
	Female	103	35.4%
Age	18–24 years old	56	19.2%
	25–34 years old	105	36.0%
	35–44 years old	78	26.8%
	45–54 years old	35	12.0%
	55–64 years old	12	4.1%
	Above 65 years old	5	1.9%
Educational level	Primary education	3	1.0%
	High education	3	1.0%
	Diploma/certification	167	57.4%
	Bachelor degree	98	33.7%
	Master degree	15	5.2%
	PHD and above	5	1.7%
Years of experience	1–5 years	89	30.6%
	6–10 years	188	64.6%
	11–15 years	8	2.7%
	16–20 years	4	1.4%
	More than 20 years	2	0.7%

7.2. Reliability analysis

Table 2 shows the reliability analysis for all the constructs used in this study. It was observed that all constructs are greater than 0.7^[26], which confirmed the validity and reliability of the constructs.

Table 2. Reliability analysis.

Construct	Cronbach alpha coefficient
Compensation	0.86
Performance appraisal	0.84
Training and development	0.81
Employee's job performance	0.83

7.3. Mean, standard deviations, normality analysis

Table 3 shows the mean, standard deviations, and normality analysis for the study. Based on the findings, the skewness and kurtosis values both range between -1 and $+1$, demonstrating that the data are distributed normally, as indicated by Hair et al.^[26].

Table 3. Normality analysis.

Factors	Mean	SD	Skew	Kurtosis	Min	Max
Compensation	2.23	0.627	0.742	0.965	1.0	5.0
Performance appraisal	2.36	0.667	0.505	0.994	1.0	5.0
Training and development	2.42	0.656	0.265	0.825	1.0	5.0
Employee performance	2.62	0.621	0.303	0.912	1.0	5.0

7.4. Correlation analysis

Using the correlation matrix displayed in **Table 4**, it was found that the data offered significant support for the measurement model. The correlation matrix revealed that compensation and benefits had a very strong link with employees' job performance ($r = 0.831$; $p 0.000$). In addition, training and development are also associated with employee job performance ($r = 0.783$; $p 0.000$). Along the same line, it was found that performance appraisal has a positive correlation with employee job performance ($r = 0.755$; $p 0.000$). It can be seen that HRM practices such as compensation and benefits, training and development, and performance appraisal are contributors to employee job performance. Hence, all three hypotheses developed for this study are supported. Along the same lines, the findings in this study are consistent with previous research by David and Steve^[13], who claimed there is a strong association between compensation and employee performance. On the other hand, other researchers have also suggested that compensation has a one-way relationship with employee performance^[15]. In a similar vein, previous research revealed that there is a significant relationship between training and development and employee job performance^[27]. The plausible reason behind this is that training and development are able to boost employee confidence and directly increase employees' knowledge, abilities, and competencies in completing the job. Thus, employees' job performance will increase. The significant findings of the relationship between performance appraisal and employee job performance are consistent with previous research. For instance, a study by Brefo-Manuh and Anlesinya^[28] claimed that performance appraisal justice is able to increase employee commitment and thus increase employees' job performance.

Table 4. Correlation analysis.

		Compensation and benefits	Training and development	Performance appraisal	Employee's job performance
Compensation and benefits	Pearson correlation	1	–	–	–
	Sig. (2-tailed)	–	–	–	–
Training and development	Pearson correlation	0.414	1	–	–
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	–	–	–
Performance appraisal	Pearson correlation	0.520	0.666	1	–
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	–	–
Employee's job performance	Pearson correlation	0.831	0.783	0.755	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	–

7.5. Multiple regression analysis

This study makes use of multiple regression analysis to analyze the significant connections that exist between independent variables (compensation and benefits, training and development, performance appraisal) and dependent variables (employee's job performance). **Table 5** shows the results of the multiple regression model summary. The correlation coefficient (0.721) shows positive values between independent variables and dependent variables. The value of the correlation coefficient of 0.512 indicates that 51% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable. Therefore, the remaining 49% variation of the dependent variable will be explained by other factors. Based on **Table 5**, the value of *F*-Change is 76.360 with 0.000 significant, which indicates the model used in this study is significant. Meanwhile, **Table 6** presents multiple regression coefficient values. From the findings, it can be concluded that compensation and benefits are the highest contributors to employee job performance, with a *B* value of 0.446. The plausible reason behind this finding could be due to the age factors of the respondents in this study. Most of the respondents in this study are in the age of 25–34 years old. Individuals in this age category strive for monetary terms to satisfy their needs. When they are satisfied with their salary, compensation, and benefits provided by the organization, indirectly, they will demonstrate more effort in their work, thus increasing job performance.

Table 5. Multiple regression model summary.

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	<i>F</i> -Change	Sig. <i>F</i> -Change
1	0.721	0.512	0.501	76.360	0.000

Table 6. Multiple regression coefficients.

Model	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	Sig.
(Constant)	1.823	10.697	0.000
Compensation and benefits	0.446	5.678	0.000
Training and development	0.322	-1.167	0.000
Performance appraisal	0.218	3.892	0.000

8. Conclusion

This study aims to investigate the relationship between HRM practices and employee job performance in the healthcare sector. This study has highlighted that HRM practices such as compensation and benefits, training and development, and performance appraisal are associated with employee job performance. The results correspond to hypotheses H1, H2, and H3, which have been supported through data analysis and are consistent with other previous studies.

The study has provided several contributions to the literature and practitioners. This study has investigated how HRM practices are able to influence employee job performance, specifically in the healthcare sector in Malaysia. Up to date, very limited studies have been conducted to examine such relationships in the Malaysian context.

In addition, this study also enables managers to focus on the important variables that have a substantial impact on employees' performance in private hospitals rather than making erroneous assumptions and looking for incorrect remedies. The results of this study are anticipated to be used by management to create organizational strategies that will best complement human resource plans. According to the study's findings, compensation and benefits, training and development, and performance appraisal are some of the important variables that have a substantial impact on an employee's performance. Therefore, management may

concentrate on identifying the issues that are present in the process and also make improvements in the key areas.

There are a few limitations to this study. First, this study used cross-sectional data. Future researchers should conduct this study longitudinally to eliminate the defects in their findings. In addition, this study was conducted in selected private hospitals in Selangor, Malaysia. Therefore, the results obtained in this study may not be generalizable to other settings. Future research may conduct the study in other settings, such as different locations or respondents. This study highlights that only 51% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable. Therefore, the remaining 49% variation of the dependent variable will be explained by other factors. Thus, future research may examine other HRM practice factors such as the selection of employees, effective teams, and designing employee jobs that are able to contribute to employees' job performance.

Author contributions

Conceptualization, NZ and NNOD; methodology, NZ; software, NZ; validation, NZ, NNOD and CM; formal analysis, CM; investigation, CM; resources, CM; data curation, NZ; writing—original draft preparation, NZ; writing—review and editing, NZ; visualization, NZ; supervision, NNOD; project administration, CM; funding acquisition, NZ. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare there is no conflict of interest.

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