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IMPACT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (HRM) PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE' PERFORMANCE AT SERENA HOTEL IN ARUSHA, TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

Organizations are contending with various challenges such as increasing global competition, changing customer preferences, dramatic advances in the field of information and communication technology and formation of various trading blocks around the world. Human resource has been considered as one of the most important factors that enable firms to compete effectively in such market place environments. The aim of this study was to examine the impact of human resource management practices on employees' performance. The study was conducted through a case study of Serena hotel in Arusha. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire, from 64 respondents out of the 75 employees. The study established that the recruitment and selection activity was the best implemented practice matching 90.9% of the employees' expectations. Training and development were perceived as the second-best practice with a 72.7% success followed by performance appraisal at 63.7%. Reward and compensation practices had a moderate impact on employees' performance as it was rated at 31.9% satisfaction level in relation to employee's expectations. The study concluded that effective human resource practices can influence employees' performance if the interests and expectations of the employees are considered during policy formulation and implementation in an organization. The results confirm that effective HRM practices can guarantee a high level of employee satisfaction which in turn influences individual and group performance. In light of these findings, the study recommends that organizations prioritize comprehensive HRM practices designed to enhance employee engagement through tailored training programs, and cultivate a positive workplace culture that encourages open communication and recognizes employee contributions.

KEY WORDS: *Recruitment, compensation, Training and Development and Performance appraisal.*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of organizing and managing groups of people to achieve specific goals dates back to the practices of our hunter-gatherer ancestors. Although the techniques and styles have evolved considerably over time, the fundamental principle of achieving objectives through effective management of people has remained unchanged (Tayeb, 1988). In today's dynamic and competitive landscape, organizations face numerous challenges, such as increasing global competition, shifting customer preferences, rapid technological advancements, and the formation of international trade blocs. To thrive in such an environment, organizations must enhance their performance by reducing operational costs, introducing innovative products and processes, and improving product quality (Saeed et al., 2013). Achieving these goals requires a robust human resource management (HRM) strategy to plan and execute the organization's operations efficiently.

Human Resource Management (HRM) involves a strategic approach in which HR managers, in collaboration with line managers, plan, organize, direct, and control a firm's operations to achieve its desired outcomes. The role of a human resource manager, often in an advisory or support capacity, is to work closely with other managers to address various human resource matters (Monday & Wayne, 1996). Their primary responsibility is to develop policies and act as catalysts in fostering productive relationships between line management and employees, ensuring the optimal use of resources to enhance organizational performance. HRM aims to integrate various activities within a firm, enabling it to function as a cohesive entity working toward common objectives.

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Porter (1985) categorizes HRM among the support activities that play a critical role in ensuring a company's efficient operation. Over the past two decades, the impact of HRM practices on organizational performance has become a significant focus of research in human resource management (Huselid, 1995). The emphasis has gradually shifted from studying the influence of individual HRM practices on business performance to examining the impact of comprehensive HRM systems on organizational outcomes (Khan, 2010). This holistic approach acknowledges that integrated HRM practices contribute substantially to overall organizational effectiveness.

Empirical literature reinforces the view that HRM practices significantly influence employee performance and, by extension, organizational success. Researchers have often selected HR practices from various HRM functions to evaluate their collective impact on performance outcomes such as productivity, flexibility, and financial performance (Taseema & Soeters, 2006; Wall & Wood, 2005). However, much of the research has been conducted in developed countries, leaving a gap in understanding how HRM practices affect organizational performance in developing regions like Tanzania. Furthermore, while the relationship between HRM practices and performance has been well-documented, there is a paucity of comprehensive studies examining the specific HRM systems and their integrated influence on performance within different cultural and economic contexts (Khan, 2010). This study aimed to address this gap by investigating the impact of HRM systems on organizational performance in Tanzanian organizations, considering the unique challenges and dynamics faced by firms in this context.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Employee performance is widely recognized as a critical factor in determining a firm's profitability and maintaining a competitive advantage, particularly in the highly competitive global market (Bohlander & Snell, 2007). Despite this, many organizations struggle to effectively influence employee performance, posing a persistent challenge across various industries. This issue is especially pronounced in the hotel industry, where the relationship between employee performance and organizational success is significant but often inadequately addressed. Existing research has predominantly focused on sectors such as manufacturing, finance, and healthcare, examining how Human Resource Management (HRM) practices like training and development, performance appraisal systems, and employee engagement impact outcomes such as productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Taseema & Soeters, 2006; Wall & Wood, 2005). However, there is a notable gap in the literature regarding how these HRM practices specifically affect employee performance within the unique context of the hotel industry. Therefore, this study aimed at addressing this gap by investigating the impact of HRM practices on employee performance at Serena Hotel, providing insights that could help hotel organizations better harness their human resources to enhance both performance and profitability.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To investigate the impact of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee performance at Serena Hotel in Arusha, Tanzania

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the impact of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee performance at Serena Hotel in Arusha, Tanzania?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The findings and conclusions of this study are significant for various stakeholders, including researchers, human resource practitioners, hotel management, policymakers, and employees within the hospitality industry. Researchers will gain insights into the impact of HRM practices on employee performance specifically in the hotel industry, contributing to the existing literature in this area. Hotel management can utilize the study's findings to implement effective HRM strategies that enhance employee performance, leading to improved organizational success. For HR practitioners, understanding the relationship between HRM practices and employee outcomes will facilitate better workforce management. Policymakers can leverage these insights to develop supportive frameworks that promote effective HRM practices within the hospitality sector, ultimately benefiting the economy of Tanzania.

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2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 Equity Theory

Equity theory, introduced by Adams in the 1960s, posits that employees assess their job satisfaction by comparing the ratio of their job outcomes—such as pay, recognition, and promotion—to their inputs, including education, experience, skills, and effort. This comparative evaluation extends to the ratios of peers, leading to perceptions of fairness or inequity. When employees perceive an inequitable situation—feeling under-rewarded in comparison to others—they may experience dissatisfaction. Conversely, if they perceive positive inequity, such as being over-rewarded, satisfaction typically prevails.

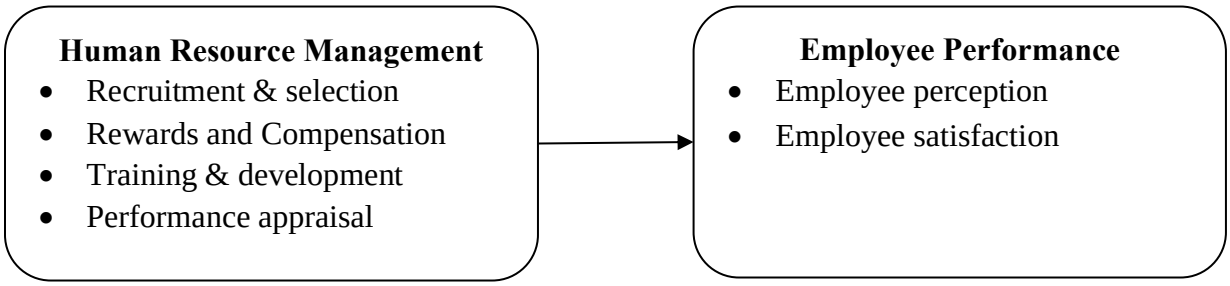
Dissatisfaction stemming from perceived inequity motivates employees to take action to restore balance. They may seek to increase their outcomes by requesting raises or promotions, pursuing greater recognition, or adjusting their perceptions of job satisfaction. Research indicates that individuals who believe they are undercompensated relative to their peers or their expectations may become dissatisfied, potentially resulting in negative outcomes such as decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, or even job turnover (Antony, 2002).

While equity theory has gained traction in understanding employee motivation and satisfaction, it also faces limitations. Critics argue that the theory does not account for the complexities of individual perceptions and experiences in diverse workplace environments (Huseman, et al., 1987; Deconinck, 2010). Additionally, variations in personal values and cultural contexts can influence how equity is perceived and acted upon, suggesting a need for further exploration of these dynamics in different organizational settings (Hofstede, 2001). Nevertheless, equity theory remains relevant to this study as it provided a foundational understanding of how perceptions of fairness impact employee attitudes and behaviors, ultimately influencing organizational performance.

2.2 The Conceptual Framework

The study was guided by a conceptual framework (Figure 2.1), with human resource management as the independent variable and employee performance as the dependent variable.

Figure 2.1: The Conceptual Framework



2.3 Empirical Review

Khan (2011) investigated the critical aspects of performance measurement in relation to organizational missions and objectives, focusing on the variation among researchers regarding specific indicators of organizational performance. The study variables included performance indicators and organizational mission alignment, conducted in Pakistan. Using a quantitative research design, Khan employed a sample size of 500 participants selected through stratified random sampling and collected data via structured questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out using regression techniques. The findings revealed that inadequate employee performance could lead to customer dissatisfaction and subsequent loss of clientele, emphasizing the necessity for precise performance measurement frameworks to enhance organizational effectiveness. However, there remains a gap in understanding how various HRM practices specifically influence employee performance in diverse organizational contexts, prompting the need for this study on the impact of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee performance.

Kazlaouskaite and Buciuniene (2009) explored human resource management (HRM) functions within the hotel industry in Lithuania, investigating the impact of wages, retirement benefits, training, and recruitment on employee performance while considering demographic, economic, cultural, and legal factors. The study utilized a mixed-

methods research design, sampling 150 employees through purposive sampling, and data collection was executed via surveys and interviews. Data analysis employed thematic analysis and descriptive statistics. The findings indicated that economic, legal, and demographic influences are pivotal in shaping the development and effectiveness of HRM functions, which underscores the contextual factors affecting HRM practices. Nonetheless, further research is warranted to comprehensively analyze the influence of HRM practices on employee performance across different sectors, reinforcing the need for this current study.

Cho et al. (2005) examined the relationship between multiple dimensions of HRM and organizational performance in the hospitality sector. The variables of interest included placement, training, development, performance appraisal, and internal communication systems, with the research conducted across various hotels in the United States. Utilizing a quantitative research design, the study had a sample size of 300 employees selected through convenience sampling, with data collected via questionnaires and analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings highlighted the significant influence of performance appraisals and employee relations on productivity and sales growth, emphasizing the need for effective HRM practices to drive organizational success. However, the specific effects of these HRM dimensions on employee performance remain underexplored, justifying the necessity for this study.

Davidson et al. (2010) investigated the relationship between work-related rates in four- and five-star hotels and institutional performance in Australia. The study focused on employee turnover as the primary variable affecting performance metrics, using a quantitative research design with a sample of 250 employees selected through random sampling. Data collection involved structured interviews and surveys, while data analysis utilized descriptive statistics and regression analysis. Their findings underscored the detrimental effects of employee turnover on profits and operational costs, emphasizing the importance of implementing effective employee retention strategies. Despite these insights, there is a lack of comprehensive studies exploring how different HRM practices contribute to reducing turnover and enhancing employee performance, necessitating this research.

Carlson et al. (2006) identified five HRM practices that significantly affect employee performance, including competitive compensation levels, training and development, performance appraisal, recruitment packages, and morale maintenance. The study was conducted within a large corporation in the United States, utilizing a quantitative research design with a sample of 600 employees selected through systematic sampling. Data was collected through online surveys, with analysis performed using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The findings align with those of Cho et al. (2005), reaffirming the essential roles of placement, training, performance appraisal, and employee relations in driving organizational performance. Nevertheless, the interplay between these HRM practices and employee performance needs further examination in varying organizational settings, highlighting the importance of the current study.

Hwang and Chi (2005) examined the relationship between internal marketing and job satisfaction among hotel employees in Taiwan, focusing on the interplay between HRM practices and employee satisfaction. The study employed a cross-sectional research design with a sample of 200 hotel employees, selected through stratified random sampling. Data collection involved structured questionnaires, and analysis was conducted using correlation and regression techniques. The findings concluded that effective internal marketing strategies enhance both employee satisfaction and hotel performance, highlighting the interconnectedness of HRM practices and employee outcomes. However, limited research exists on the specific HRM practices that influence job satisfaction and subsequent employee performance, warranting this study.

McShane and Von Glinow (2007) emphasized four key factors influencing voluntary employee performance: motivation, abilities, role perception, and situational factors. The study, conducted within a corporate setting in Canada, utilized a qualitative research design with a sample of 150 employees selected through purposive sampling. Data collection involved interviews and focus group discussions, while thematic analysis was applied for data interpretation. The results indicated that personal values significantly shape motivation and role perceptions, demonstrating the intricate link between HRM practices and employee performance. However, the diverse contexts in which HRM practices operate require further investigation to understand their overall impact on employee performance comprehensively, thus necessitating this current study.

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3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a case study research design, focusing on the 75 employees working at Serena in Arusha, Tanzania, as of July 2014. Given the small and accessible nature of the population, all employees were included in the sample to ensure comprehensive data collection. The choice of a case study approach allowed for an in-depth examination of the specific organizational context and its unique dynamics. Primary data were collected through the use of a structured questionnaire designed to gather relevant information on employee experiences and perceptions. Descriptive statistics were used for the data analyses and the findings were as presented in the next section.

4.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study focused on examining the impact of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee performance at Serena Hotel in Arusha, Tanzania, specifically focusing on key HRM practices such as recruitment and selection, rewards and compensation, training and development, and performance appraisal, and how these influence employee perception and satisfaction. The results are as presented in Tables 1-4.

Table 4.1: Impact of Recruitment and Selection on Employee performance

STATEMENTS	AGREE		NEWTRAL		DISAGREE	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
I am satisfied with the process of recruitment and selection of new employee?	58	90.6	3	4.7	3	4.7
I got information about the job vacancy through a friend	45	70.3			9	29.7
I got information about the job vacancy through the newspaper	4	6.3			60	93.7
I am satisfied with my job description?	49	76.5	12	18.8	3	4.7

Source (Field Data, 2024)

Based on the results presented in Table 4.2, the findings demonstrate a high level of satisfaction among employees regarding the recruitment and selection processes at Serena Hotel. A notable 90.6% of employees expressed satisfaction with the recruitment and selection procedures, indicating that the hotel's strategy is well-received by its staff. Furthermore, 70.3% of respondents reported obtaining their job positions through referrals from friends, highlighting the significant role networking plays in the hotel's recruitment strategy. This reliance on employee referrals not only enhances the quality of new hires but also involves current employees in the recruitment process, creating a workforce that aligns closely with the hotel's operational objectives. Additionally, 76.5% of employees felt that their job descriptions accurately reflected their roles, further supporting the notion that the recruitment process is effectively designed to meet both the organizational needs and employee expectations.

These findings are consistent with the research by Rees and Redfern (2016), who emphasized that employee referrals are an effective method for attracting high-quality candidates and improving organizational performance. However, a contrasting view is presented by McBain et al. (2017), who argued that an over-reliance on referrals may limit workforce diversity, raising potential concerns about inclusivity in the recruitment process.

Table 4.2: Impact of Reward and Compensation on Employee Performance

STATEMENTS	AGREE		NEUTRAL		DISAGREE	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
I am satisfied with my basic salary?	18	28.1	25	39.1	21	32.8
I am satisfied with other Payments and benefits	22	34.4	21	32.8	21	32.8

Source (Field Data, 2024)

Based on the results in Table 4.2, the findings reveal mixed perceptions among employees regarding their basic salary pay. Specifically, 28.1% of employees reported being satisfied with their salary, 39.1% held a neutral stance, indicating they were neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, while 32.8% expressed dissatisfaction with the current salary structure. These results suggest that basic salary pay exerts a negative impact on employee performance, as a significant proportion of the workforce, 71.9%, feels inadequately compensated for their efforts.

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This dissatisfaction aligns with the findings of Shields et al. (2015), who noted that inadequate compensation negatively affects employee motivation and job performance, thereby reducing organizational efficiency. Furthermore, a study by Armstrong and Taylor (2017) emphasized that employees who perceive their pay as insufficient are more likely to experience lower job satisfaction and engagement, reinforcing the relationship between compensation and performance. However, in contrast, the work of Herzberg (2003) argued that salary alone might not be the primary factor driving employee satisfaction, as factors such as opportunities for advancement and recognition also play crucial roles in maintaining a motivated workforce.

Table 4.3: Impact of Training and Development on Employee Performance

STATEMENTS	AGREE		NEUTRAL		DISAGREE	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
I am satisfied with the training offered in the hotel?	46	71.9	15	23.4	3	4.7
I have been scheduled for external training	40	62.5			24	37.5
I have been scheduled for internal training from 2011-2014	24	37.5			40	62.5

Source (Field Data, 2024).

Based on the results in Table 4.3, the findings illustrate a high level of satisfaction among employees regarding the training and development opportunities offered by the hotel. Specifically, 71.9% of employees expressed satisfaction with the training provided, 23.4% remained neutral, and only 4.7% were dissatisfied. Additionally, 62.5% of the employees had been scheduled for external training, while 37.5% had engaged in internal training programs. However, between 2011 and 2014, a notable 62.5% of employees had not been scheduled for internal training, indicating potential gaps in continuous internal development. The hotel's commitment to enhancing employee skills through both internal and external training reflects a strategic approach to workforce development, which not only improves employee competency but also boosts overall performance and motivation.

This proactive stance is supported by the study of Noe et al. (2017), which emphasizes that comprehensive training programs contribute to higher employee satisfaction and performance. Furthermore, Armstrong and Taylor (2017) also noted that organizations that invest in continuous learning and career development are more likely to experience higher employee engagement and retention. However, contrasting views are presented by Training Magazine (2018), which suggested that training programs may be less effective when not closely aligned with organizational objectives and the specific interests of employees, potentially limiting the long-term impact on employee performance.

Table 4.4: Impact of performance Appraisal on Employee Performance

STATEMENT	AGREE		NEUTRAL		DISAGREE	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
I am satisfied with how I have been appraised every year	40	62.5	18	28.1	6	9.4
I am satisfied with how the manager apprises employees performance	62	96.9	2	3.1	0	0

Source (Field Data, 2024)

Based on the results in Table 4.4, the findings reveal that performance appraisals have a significant impact on employee satisfaction. Specifically, 62.5% of employees expressed satisfaction with their annual appraisals, while 28.1% remained neutral, and 9.4% were dissatisfied. Additionally, an overwhelming 96.9% of employees were satisfied with how managers conducted performance evaluations, indicating a high level of trust in the appraisal process. This suggests that the appraisals are seen as fair and constructive, providing employees with clear feedback on their performance, as well as opportunities for professional growth and development. The hotel's approach to performance appraisals serves multiple purposes, including identifying areas for improvement, informing training schedules, and guiding promotion decisions. These evaluations appear to be a key motivational tool, directly tied to individual career advancement.

This aligns with the findings of Kuvaas (2016), who emphasized that well-structured performance appraisals enhance employee motivation and contribute to personal and professional development. Moreover, the system at Serena Hotel seems to foster a positive perception of fairness and objectivity, despite employee dissatisfaction with other HR elements such as basic salary and bonuses. However, a contrasting perspective is offered by Cardy and Dobbins

(2016), who argued that performance appraisals may not always be perceived positively, especially if they lack transparency or consistency. This suggests that while the appraisal system at Serena Hotel is effective, there is always room for improvement in ensuring the process remains transparent and aligned with the employees' expectations.

5.1 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study establishes that effective human resource management (HRM) practices play a pivotal role in enhancing employee performance. There is a clear correlation between the effectiveness of HRM practices and employee job satisfaction, which in turn fosters greater organizational commitment and overall workforce performance. A motivated workforce exhibits voluntary helping behaviors and individual initiatives that contribute to improved performance at both individual and group levels.

In light of these findings, several key recommendations are proposed. First, organizations should prioritize comprehensive HRM practices that enhance employee engagement and satisfaction through tailored training programs. Additionally, management should cultivate a positive workplace culture that encourages open communication and recognizes employee contributions. Regular assessments of HRM practices are essential to align with evolving employee expectations and market trends. By investing in effective HRM strategies, organizations can enhance employee performance and foster sustainable growth.

By adopting these recommendations, organizations can cultivate a motivated workforce that is committed to achieving higher performance levels, ultimately benefiting both the employees and the organization as a whole.

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