

HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION WITH REFERENCE TO TENKASI DISTRICT

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Abstract:

The study "Human Resource Practices in Academic Institutions in Tenkasi District" examines the implementation and effectiveness of human resource practices within educational institutions in Tenkasi District, Tamil Nadu, specifically focusing on school teachers. Employing a descriptive research design, the study utilises stratified random sampling to select a sample of 150 teaching staff from government, private, and aided schools, ultimately gathering responses from 139 completed questionnaires. The primary objective of this research is to evaluate the impact of human resource practices on staff satisfaction and the overall performance of the institutions.

Key Words: Human Resource Practices, Teaching faculty of Schools, Job satisfaction, Tenkasi District.

1. Introduction:

Human resource practices are integral to the success and longevity of academic institutions, serving as the backbone that supports their educational and research missions. As vital hubs of knowledge, innovation, and learning, these institutions depend on a skilled and motivated human capital pool to effectively fulfil their diverse roles, which include providing quality education, advancing research, and engaging in meaningful community service. Effective HR practices are essential to navigate the evolving landscape of education and the challenges of global competition. They encompass various strategies to attract, nurture, and retain exceptional faculty, staff, and administrators. This commitment to human resources extends well beyond the mere recruitment and retention processes; it involves a comprehensive approach that prioritises faculty development through ongoing training and mentorship programs, establishes robust performance management systems that encourage accountability and excellence, and fosters a positive organisational culture that values collaboration and inclusivity.

Moreover, focusing on work-life balance is vital in creating a supportive atmosphere where educators and administrators can thrive professionally and personally. These human resource practices must align with the institution's strategic objectives and cultivate an environment that promotes intellectual engagement and professional advancement. They are crucial in elevating academic institutions' overall quality and impact in today's competitive landscape. This paper explores the unique aspects of human resource management in academic

settings, focusing on strategies that enhance employee engagement, professional development, and institutional excellence. By understanding and implementing effective HR practices, academic institutions can build a resilient and motivated workforce, contributing significantly to their long-term success and societal impact.

2. Profile of Study Area:

Tenkasi district is located in the southwestern part of Tamil Nadu, India. It was carved out of the Tirunelveli district in 2019 and shares its western border with Kerala. The district is renowned for its picturesque landscapes, featuring the Western Ghats, lush greenery, waterfalls, and hills, making it a popular destination for nature lovers. Key rivers in the area include the Tamiraparani and the Chittar. The district headquarters is Tenkasi town, often called the "Kasi of the South" due to the famous Kasi Viswanathar Temple. Agriculture is vital to the district's economy, with prominent crops including paddy, bananas, sugarcane, and spices such as cardamom and pepper. Tourism also plays a significant role in the local economy, with attractions like the Courtallam waterfalls, Papanasam, Manimuthar, and nearby tiger reserves drawing visitors. The district has a diverse population engaged in agriculture, trade, and tourism. Tamil is the predominant language spoken, while a smaller percentage of the population also speaks Malayalam due to the district's proximity to Kerala.

3. Review of Literature:

Menon, Shobh A. (2015) stated that the primary objective of Human Resources Management is to maximise the return on investment from the organisation's human capital and minimise financial risk. HRM also aims to bring out the best in people by creating an environment conducive to employee growth and satisfaction. Human Resources Management is seen as a requisite to improve the commitment of individuals who contribute to institutional growth. Empirical research reveals that organisational variables like leaders' commitment to the implementation process, the involvement of external consultants, institutional reputation, and bureaucratic and political decision-making processes strongly affect the implementation of quality management in educational institutions.

Ruba K. & Panteha F. (2022) study reviews theoretical literature on work-life balance and its impact on the organisation's work. The research examined extensively whether there is a relationship between labour flexibility and production efficiency, the relationship between employer-employee and increased productivity, work climate and turnover rate, and lastly, job protection and retention of employees. The study, therefore, suggested that labour stability, employer-employee relationship, work atmosphere, and job protection positively impact improved production quality, increased efficiency, employee turnover rate, and retention of employees. The results showed that when workers perceive a work-life imbalance, they respond negatively and that management should implement work-life balance strategies to enhance employee performance. It has been inferred from the research results that the work-life balance is of considerable importance to modern work organisations.

4. Statement of Problem:

Human Resource (HR) practices are critical in shaping academic institutions' success and operational efficiency. Effective HR practices can enhance faculty performance, improve administrative processes, and contribute to institutional growth. However, in many rural and semi-urban districts like Tenkasi, academic institutions face unique challenges that may impact the implementation and effectiveness of HR practices. Despite the growing importance of human resources in academic development, institutions in Tenkasi District often grapple with issues such as inadequate recruitment strategies, lack of professional development programs, low employee morale, and insufficient performance evaluation mechanisms. Additionally, resource constraints, resistance to change, and limited exposure to modern HR practices exacerbate these challenges. These limitations affect faculty satisfaction and retention and have a cascading effect on the quality of education and student outcomes. Thus, there is a pressing need to investigate the existing HR practices in academic institutions in Tenkasi District, identify the gaps, and propose actionable strategies to enhance their effectiveness. This study seeks to address these issues by examining the HR practices currently employed in academic institutions in Tenkasi, exploring the perceptions and challenges faced by administrators and staff, and providing recommendations for fostering a more supportive and productive academic environment.

5. Objectives of the study:

- ⇒ To examine the existing human resource practices in academic institutions located in Tenkasi District, including recruitment, training, and retention strategies
- ⇒ To evaluate the impact of HR practices on faculty job satisfaction, performance, and overall institutional effectiveness.

6. Null and Alternative Hypotheses:

H₀: The human resource practices implemented by the schools within the study area do not impact the respondents' job satisfaction.

H₁: The human resource practices implemented by the schools within the study area impact the respondents' job satisfaction.

7. Scope of the study:

The study "Human Resource Practices in Academic Institutions in Tenkasi District" examines HR practices' implementation, challenges, and effectiveness in educational institutions. This research is geographically focused on academic institutions located in Tenkasi district, Tamil Nadu, India. "Academic institutions" refers to schools of various sizes, including small, medium, and large institutions. The target population for this study consists of school teachers. The research will also analyse the effectiveness of HR practices in enhancing staff satisfaction and overall institutional performance.

8. Methodology:

The study uses a descriptive research design to investigate human resource practices in academic institutions in Tenkasi District. It employs stratified random sampling to represent government, private, and aided institutions and involves 150 teaching staff members. The researcher developed a comprehensive questionnaire that was distributed, yielding 139 fully completed responses. The research aims to identify and analyse current HR practices and their impact on academic performance.

9. Limitations:

- ← The findings may not be generalisable to institutions outside the Tenkasi District.
- ← The reluctance of respondents to provide honest feedback on HR policies might pose a limitation.

10. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents

	Category	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	52	37.41
	Female	87	62.59
Age	< 30 Years	31	22.30
	30 – 50Years	63	45.32
	>50 Years	45	32.37
Educational Qualifications	Higher Secondary	14	10.07
	Under Graduate	57	41.01
	Post Graduate	41	29.50
	M.Phil. / Ph. D	27	19.42
Marital Status	Married	41	29.50
	Unmarried	98	70.50
Type of School	Government	44	31.65
	Govt.Aided	39	28.06
	Private	56	40.29
Class Handling	Pre-K. G – U.K. G	19	13.67
	Class 1 - V	32	23.02
	Class V1 - X	62	44.60

	Class X1 - XII	26	18.71
Monthly income	Below 25000	38	27.34
	25000 - 50000	64	46.04
	50000 - 100000	21	15.11
	Above 100000	16	11.51

Table 1 presents the demographic information of the respondents selected for the study. It shows that a majority, 62.59 per cent, of the respondents are female, while 37.41 per cent are male. In terms of age, the largest group (45.32 per cent) falls within the 30 to 50 years age range. Respondents were asked to specify their educational qualifications. The findings reveal that 41.01 per cent hold a graduate degree, followed by 29.50 per cent who possess a postgraduate degree, and 13.67 per cent are professionals in their respective fields. Regarding occupation, 40.29 per cent work in private schools, 31.65 per cent in government schools, and 28.06 per cent in government-aided schools. Regarding income, 46.04 per cent of respondents belong to the 25000 to 50000 income group, followed by 27.34 per cent who earn below 25000, and 15.11 per cent have an income ranging from 50000 to 100000.

Table 2

Respondents' opinions about the H.R practices followed by the schools in the study area

Code	Variables	Mean Score	Rank
VAR 1	Effective Recruitment and Onboarding	4.151	I
VAR2	Faculty Development and Training	3.219	VIII
VAR3	Performance Management	3.687	IV
VAR4	Staff Engagement	3.473	VI
VAR5	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)	3.167	IX
VAR6	Compensation and Benefits	3.912	II
VAR7	Faculty Wellness	3.841	III
VAR8	Compliance and Policies	3.579	V
VAR9	Technology Utilisation	3.258	VII
VAR10	Exit Management	3.084	X

Based on the respondents' opinions about the HR practices followed by schools in the study area, a summary of their rankings and mean scores reveals several insights. The practice of Effective Recruitment and Onboarding stands out with the highest mean score of 4.151, ranking first and indicating that schools excel in attracting and integrating new faculty and staff

efficiently. Following closely, Compensation and Benefits is ranked second with a mean score of 3.912, reflecting the schools' provision of competitive pay and benefits packages that respondents highly value. Faculty Wellness ranks third with a mean score of 3.841, underscoring the importance placed on health and wellness initiatives for faculty members. In fourth place, Performance Management shows a mean score of 3.687, highlighting the effectiveness of performance evaluations and feedback mechanisms. Compliance and Policies secure the fifth position with a mean score of 3.579, demonstrating the schools' commitment to adhering to regulations and maintaining clear policies. Staff Engagement ranks sixth with a mean score of 3.473 and illustrates the efforts made to engage and motivate staff. Meanwhile, Technology Utilisation is ranked seventh with a mean score of 3.258, indicating how technology is integrated into HR practices. Faculty Development and Training comes in eighth with a mean score of 3.219, pointing to the opportunities provided for professional growth. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, with a mean score of 3.167, is ranked ninth, highlighting the schools' efforts to promote diversity and ensure equity. Finally, Exit Management is ranked tenth with a mean score of 3.084, indicating how effectively schools handle employee exits. This ranking and scoring provide a comprehensive overview of the strengths and areas for improvement within the HR practices of the schools in the study area, emphasising effective recruitment, fair compensation, and faculty wellness while identifying opportunities to enhance engagement, training, and inclusion initiatives.

Table 3

Association between the Respondents' Satisfaction and H.R practices followed by the schools in the study area

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-1.240	.080		-15.448	< 0.05
VAR 1	.496	.012	.472	41.986	< 0.05
VAR 2	-.134	.024	-.035	-5.505	< 0.05
VAR 3	-.227	.017	-.086	-13.287	< 0.05
VAR 4	-.023	.045	-.025	-.023	>0.05*
VAR 5	.546	.050	.156	10.848	< 0.05
VAR 6	-.095	.009	-.313	-10.806	
VAR 7	.248	.012	.227	20.025	
VAR 8	.091	.010	.119	9.373	
VAR 9	.448	.039	.175	11.568	
VAR 10	.078	.029	.078	2.735	
“R”	0.894				
“R ² ”	0.799				
Adjusted “R ² ”	0.796				

“F” value	69.472	Sig. Value: < 0.05
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Table 3 presents the regression coefficients that quantify the relationship between respondents' satisfaction and the human resource practices implemented by the schools in the study area. This analysis aims to evaluate the impact of these practices on job satisfaction among the respondents. The values for “R” (0.894), “R²” (0.799), and the adjusted “R²” (0.796) are all good, exceeding the threshold level of 0.60. The “F” ratio is also favourable and suggests a strong likelihood of rejecting the null hypothesis. Furthermore, the “t” values for nine of the ten variables exceed 1.96, with the corresponding significance values falling below 1.96. Therefore, we conclude that the human resource practices implemented by the schools in the study area significantly influence the respondents' job satisfaction.

11. Findings:

- ← The study shows that a majority, 62.59 per cent, of the respondents are female, while 37.41 per cent are male.
- ← The largest group (45.32 per cent) is between 30 and 50 years old.
- ← Respondents were asked to specify their educational qualifications. The findings reveal that 41.01 per cent hold a graduate degree, followed by 29.50 per cent who possess a postgraduate degree, and 13.67 per cent are professionals in their respective fields.
- ← Regarding occupation, 40.29 per cent work in private schools, 31.65 per cent in government schools, and 28.06 per cent in government-aided schools.
- ← Regarding income, 46.04 per cent of respondents belong to the 25000 to 50000 income group, followed by 27.34 per cent who earn below 25000, and 15.11 per cent have an income ranging from 50000 to 100000.
- ← The practice of Effective Recruitment and Onboarding ranks highest with a mean score of 4.151, highlighting schools' success in attracting and integrating new faculty and staff. Following closely, Compensation and Benefits holds the second position with a mean score of 3.912, demonstrating the competitive pay and benefits packages valued by respondents. Faculty Wellness comes in third with a mean score of 3.841, emphasising the importance of health and wellness initiatives for faculty members.
- ← The human resource practices implemented by the schools in the study area significantly influence the job satisfaction of the respondents.

12. Conclusion:

The study on human resource practices in academic institutions within the Tenkasi District reveals that effective HR strategies are crucial for fostering a conducive work environment, enhancing faculty performance, and achieving institutional goals. Key findings highlight the importance of comprehensive recruitment, regular training programs, performance appraisals, and employee welfare initiatives in improving the overall quality of education and job satisfaction. Institutions prioritising transparent recruitment policies, continuous professional development, and equitable career advancement opportunities witness higher employee engagement and retention rates. Furthermore, leadership's role in

implementing participative management practices and maintaining effective communication channels has proven significant in building a collaborative work culture. The study underscores the need for academic institutions to view human resources as a strategic asset and invest in innovative practices to meet the evolving demands of the educational ecosystem. By doing so, they can improve institutional effectiveness and contribute to the holistic development of students and society.

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