# EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS EFFECTIVE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN CHENNAI

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## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted among the employees of hotel industries in Chennai city to study their perceptions towards the effective human resource practices. The study was carried out among 100 employees by using questionnaire method. The study aimed to find out the existing human resource practices and the practices which will help the personal and professional growth of the employees.

## INTRODUCTION

The role of human resources is changing as fast as technology and the global marketplace. Historically, the HR Department was viewed as an administrative overhead, processing payroll, handling benefits administration, keeping personnel files and other records, managing the hiring process, and providing administrative support to business. Those times have changed. A positive upshot of these changes is that HR professionals have the opportunity to play a more strategic role in business. The challenge for HR managers is to keep up-to-date with the latest HR innovations: technological, legal, and/or otherwise. "It is, indubitably, singular human resource development practices that make the very notion of human resource development at once commendable and  productive. Simple and focused HRD contribute more than any other to a product in terms of both quality and quantity: and their impact   is reflected on the employee too. In short the best HRD practices are those that create a value-based, culturally strong and empowered organization where distances are notional. Human resource development deals with creating conduct/behaviour/attitudes that enable people to get the best out of themselves and their lives.

## STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Strategy, according to Johnson and Scholes (1993), "is the direction and scope of an organization over the long term, which matches its resources to the changing environment and in particular its markets, customers or clients so as to meet stakeholder expectations." Beer and Spector (1989) stated that "Strategic Human Resource Development can be viewed as a proactive system-wide intervention, with is linked to strategic planning and cultural change. This contrasts with the traditional view of training and development as consisting of reactive, piece meal interventions in response to specific problems. Human Resource Development can only be strategic if it is incorporated into the overall corporate business strategy. It is in this way that Human Resource Development function attains the status it needs to survive and to have a long-term impact on overall business, competitive and technological pressures." Strategic human resource development enables an organization to respond to challenges and opportunities through identification and delivery of human resource development interventions. It also makes it possible for individuals, supervisors, line managers and top managers to be informed of their roles and so participate effectually in human resource development delivery - for management to have operational guidelines explaining the reasons for investment in human resource development; a positive public relations awareness initiative for new and potential employees to appreciate that deficiencies in skills will be provided for; policies that relate HRD functions to other operating functions; information disseminated which explains training, education, development and learning and, finally, training/education, development and learning opportunities to have coordinated roles within a systematic process.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The world faces two major challenges in terms of development. The first is to ensure that the fruits of development reach the neediest through an equitable distribution of resources, opportunities and benefits. The second is to develop human capabilities and address changes in political, economic and social developments. The few

countries that have been able to meet both these challenges have demonstrated the importance of investing in developing people and improving the quality of life through the adoption of human resource development strategies. The concept of human resource development assumes immense importance as it plays a vital role in meeting the changing requirements of highly-skilled and competent human resources, thanks in no small measure to the pressures brought to bear by globalization.

The best practices in HR are subjective and transitory. What is best for one company may not necessarily be the best for another. What was best last month may not be the best today. The concept of "best" is highly subjective and non-specific. The best practices are not a set of discrete actions but, rather, a cohesive and holistic approach to organizational management. At a national level, human resource development aims at ensuring that people in a country live longer, live happier, free of disease and hunger, have sufficient skill-based training to earn their own livelihood and ensure their well being and, finally, have a sense of belonging and pride through participation in determining their own destinies. The promotion of the wellbeing of individuals, families and societies provides a human resource agenda for all countries the world over. The business world witnesses changes and challenges every minute, quite unlike the way in which HRD functions in most companies. Since the future and success of any organization depends upon its dynamic and skilled personnel, it is, consequently, critical to be cognizant of  and apply the best human resource development practices. Thus the researcher decided to study employees' perceptions towards the effectiveness of HRD practices in Chennai's hotel industries.

## NEED FOR AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

India is a very big country with people of different and diverse backgrounds. Any organization will, of necessity, comprise people drawn from various parts of the country. The time-honoured value system of India's people is rapidly changing, thanks to instantaneous changes in conditions obtaining in the educational system, the

unchecked rise of technology and slick marketing. An utter lack of humanity and fellow feeling have found a place in contemporary society today as a direct upshot of exaggerated aspirations and unrealistic ambitions, characteristic of most people living today. Society today expects organizations to deal seamlessly with the challenges imposed by changing demands; and the mounting expectations of clients require that employees constantly undertake new tasks and challenges and equip themselves adequately to respond to environmental changes. Likewise, certain organizations have reached saturation point in terms of growth, with the result that employees have begun stagnating due to lack of suitable opportunities for growth. The concept of  human resource development practices is multidimensional. It is about building up the people, place and organization. Real development occurs within an organization only where there is scope for the development of its own personnel. No organization anywhere can hope to expand and diversify without applying the most progressive HRD practices, and there are  as many HRD practices in the world as there are corporations. What is it, then, that makes a company uniquely successful? The answer, quite simply, lies in its noteworthy HRD practices. This study, therefore, is most important in the current scenario.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

- To be familiar with personal data of the respondents
- To study existing human resource development practices
- To understand how HRD practices can offer personal and professional enhancement

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design is planning a strategy for conducting research, and the one adopted in this study is "descriptive research design.*"* The major goal of descriptive research is to describe events, phenomena and situations. In this study describing human resource development practices, descriptive research design has been found most suitable. Since the study is about HRD practices that play a key role in

organizational growth and success, the researcher developed an appropriate tool in the form of a structured questionnaire method. The choice of a questionnaire was made taking into account the convenience factor, particularly for those respondents with an especially busy work schedule. The questionnaire comprised a total of 44 questions on five major components including a personal profile, HRD in general, recruitment and selection, induction, training and development, performance appraisal, career progression, communication and decision-making, reward and recognition, recreation for employees, employee retention and suggestions/measures for improvement. The researcher embarked on a pilot study at the organization to ascertain the feasibility of the research i.e. the availability of the respondents and the time at their disposal. The researcher pre-tested the questionnaire in the field with 10 respondents, made the necessary changes and modified it accordingly. Sampling, a device for learning about the masses by surveying a few individuals, was resorted to. The researcher adopted multi-stage sampling, with100 being the sample size taken for the purpose of the study, and chiefly used primary data collected from the respondents, obtained through the administration of the questionnaire. Secondary sources of data included books, journals, magazines and related websites. The data collected was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Globally, the economic landscape of the 21st century has become volatile and unstable: consequently, firms must continue to reinvent themselves in order to maintain their competitive edge. The rapid rise in current knowledge work systems, as well as reduced product life cycle time; workforce diversity; and the emergence of flatter, leaner and more participative organizations have put a priority on human capital as the major strategic asset of organizations striving for a sustainable, competitive advantage (Akinyemi, 2007; Becker, Huselid, & Ulrich, 2001; Kearns, 2004; Mercer, 2003; Pfeffer, 1998; Torraco & Swanson, 1996; Ulrich, 1998, and Wright, 1999).

**Table-1**

**Distribution of Respondents by Age**

| S. No. | Age | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|-----|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Below 25 | 14 | 14 |
| 2 | 26 – 35 | 58 | 58 |
| 3 | 36 – 45 | 22 | 22 |
| 4 | 46 & above | 6 | 6 |
|  | Total | 100 | 100 |

The above table describes the distribution of respondents by age. A majority of the respondents (58%) in this study were found to be below the age group 25- 35 years, primarily because hotel industries recruit young people, given the nature of the work involved. Of the respondents, 72% were male, the gender preferred both for the nature of work and the demands of the job profiles required in this particular sector.

**Table - 2**

**Distribution of Respondents by Total Years of Experience**

| S. No. | Total Years of Experience | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Below 5 Years | 74 | 74 |
| 2 | 6-10 Years | 22 | 22 |
| 3 | 11-15 Years | 4 | 4 |
|  | TOTAL | 100 | 100 |

Table 2 illustrates the distribution of respondents by years of experience. Majority (74%) of the respondents had below 5 years of experience hence it is evident that the study was conducted among the respondents who are in the early stage of career. It is also understood that all employees covered in this study drew, on an average, more than Rs 10, 000 a month. This is because all employees are well educated and have considerable experience. The management, consequently, prepared to pay them well.

**Table - 3**

**Distribution of Respondents by Satisfaction with Existing HRD Practices**

| S. No. | Satisfaction with Existing HRDPractices | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | Yes | 79 | 79 |
| 2 | No | 21 | 21 |
|   | Total | 100 | 100 |

The above table 3 reveals the distribution of respondents by satisfaction with existing Human Resource Development Practices. Majority (79 percent) of the respondents are satisfied with existing Human Resource Development Practices.

**Table - 4**

**Distribution of Respondents by Type of HRD Practices**

| S. No. | Type of the HRD Practices | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|--------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Informal | 40 | 40 |
| 2 | Formal | 46 | 46 |
| 3 | Both | 14 | 14 |
|   | Total | 100 | 100 |

Table 4 explains the distribution of respondents by the type of Human Resource Development Practices prevalent in the organization. Nearly half of the respondents (46 percent) said that the existing Human Resource Development practice in the organization is formal. This is because most employees favour HRD practices since they play a vital role in the growth and development of the organization concerned.

## Table 5

### Distribution of Respondents by various methods of Identification

### of HRD Practices for implementation

| S. No. | Methods of Identification of HRD Practices | Number of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Employee Satisfaction Survey | 66 | 66 |
| 2 | Creative Ideas | 8 | 8 |
| 3 | Discussion With The Senior Management | 22 | 22 |
| 4 | Peers | 2 | 2 |
| 5 | From Other Organizations | 2 | 2 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

The above table 5 shows the distribution of respondents by methods of identifying the Human Resource Development Practices. Majority (66 percent) of the respondents felt that the identification and implementation of the Human Resource Development Practices through Employee Satisfaction Survey in the organization. Very meager percentage (2 percent) of respondents opined as peers and other organizations.

## Table - 6

### Distribution of Respondents by Training Need Analysis

| S. No. | Training Need Analysis | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Employee Performance | 50 | 50 |
| 2 | Performance Counselling | 18 | 18 |
| 3 | Skill Matrix | 26 | 26 |
| 4 | Need Based | 6 | 6 |
|  | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

The above table 6 reveals the distribution of respondents by training

need analysis. Half of the respondents (50 percent) felt that the training need is analyzed through employee performance in the organization.

## Table 7

### Distribution of Respondents by Rewards and Recognition

| S. No. | Rewards and Recognition | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 1 | Performance | 80 | 80 |
| 2 | Mile Stones (Target Achieved) | 4 | 4 |
| 3 | Birth Day | 12 | 12 |
| 4 | Length 0f Service | 2 | 2 |
| 5 | Marriage | 2 | 2 |
| | **Total** | **100** | **100** |

The above table 7 reveals the distribution of respondents by reward and recognition. Most (80 percent) of the respondents' stated that only performance brings rewards and recognition

## Table - 8

### Respondents on Satisfaction with current appraisal system

| Yes | | No |
|-----|-----|-----|
| **54%** | | **46%** |
| **360 degree performance appraisal system** | **others** | |
| **43%** | **57%** | |

From the table 8, it is found that 54 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the current appraisal system**.** 43 percent of the respondents said that 360 degree performance method is used in the organization and most of the respondents felt that the employee evaluation is done in a fair manner. Majority (72 percent) of the respondents felt that the present Human Resource Development Practices encourage the employee in their career growth to some extent.

## SUGGESTIONS

- 42 percent of respondents said that the induction programme is formal and the duration of the induction programme was just less than a week, the duration of induction programme can be increased so as to give any fresher a full fledged experience for better confidence and higher productivity.

- It is suggested that effective HRD practices be put in place so as to actively encourage employees to grow in their respective careers.

- As far as internal communication is concerned, 54% felt that it was barely satisfactory, calling for improvement in certain areas so as to enhance effectiveness.

- 78% of the respondents had stated that employee participation was minimalist and only encouraged sporadically, the organization could encourage employees to contribute ideas and suggestions through a host of proactive, employee-centered programmes.

- The most effective, current, and the best HRD practices could be put in place in the organization while concurrently generating more awareness on prevalent practices.

## CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made in this study to examine HRD practices in the hotel industry sector in Chennai, focusing on dimensions like recruitment and selection, induction, training and development, performance appraisal, career progression, communication and decision making, rewards and recognition, recreation for employees, and employee retention. The study has been undertaken to understand existing perceptions and the prominence of HRD practices in fulfilling organizational goals. In general, HRD practices in Chennai's hotel industry sector could be conclusively described as one that is proactive, realistic and welcoming, particularly towards meeting the needs, values and feelings of its employees. Though there is an urgent need to introduce more effective human resource development practices, the

existing ones serve as key practices bringing in desired organizational growth and better results. Thus it is these, the best HRD practices that work constructively towards the successful attainment of personal and organizational vision and objectives. It is hoped this study will be useful in providing first-hand knowledge in HRD practices in Chennai's hotel industry sector, and in determining how effectively the said practices contribute to growth and development. It is not the mere existence of current human resource development practices that make an organization visible, but the best practices, applied constantly, that bring great glory, high employee satisfaction, and good profits.

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