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HIGH PERFORMANCE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PRACTICES (HPHRMPs) AND MOTIVATION TO JOB
PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The article proposes High-Performance Human Resource Management Practices (HRHRMPs) and motivation to enhance employee's job performance. Researchers and practitioners have paid considerable attention to job performance because performance at individual level has desirable consequences on an organizations. However, studies on the role of motivation as a moderator in the relationship between the predictors and performance are relatively limited. From a strategic perspective, since organizations have a major influence on their human capital, incorporating organizational-level elements such HPHRMPs may facilitate our understanding of the interlocking relationships between HPHRMPs and employee performance. The aim of this paper is to review the extant literature and propose a model linking HPHRMPs (training and development, performance appraisal, and reward system) with job performance. Motivation is proposed as the moderator in the above-mentioned relationship. Also discussed is the electrical and electronics sector in the Malaysian manufacturing context to support the proposed linkage. Findings from the review were then utilized to develop a research model for further testing. The key findings emerging from this review suggest that three HPHRMPs (training and development, performance appraisal, and reward system) are the key possible predictors of job performance, and motivation is the likely moderating mechanism that can strengthen or weaken HPHRMPs-performance relationships. These links may prompt organizations to adopt more focused strategies to enhance their employees' job performance.

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Keywords: High performance human resource management practices (HPHRMPs), training and development, performance appraisal, reward system, motivation, job performance.



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1. Introduction

Intense competition in today's business environment forced companies to strategically conduct their operations by concentrating on the lowest possible cost. Many businesses have stressed the quality of their products or services in order to meet the expectations of customers in order to achieve better resource utilization. Malaysia's manufacturing sector is one of the leading sectors in the country and has contributed to the growth of the economy, in terms of manufacturing exports, employment, and investments (MIDA, 2016). According to the MIDA (2018) report, the manufacturing sector recorded total investments of RM63.7 billion, representing an increase of 8.9% from RM58.5 billion in 2016. On a specific note, Malaysia's electronic and electrical (hereafter labelled as E&E) industry has been a significant contributor to the nation's economy, having been identified in the 11th Malaysia Plan as one of the '3+2' catalytic sectors. In 2010, the E&E industry contributed 55.9% of the country's manufacturing export and created employment opportunities for 296,870 people (Brandt & Chuah, 2012). In 2017, the industry attracted the greatest amount of foreign investments (RM8.2 billion, or 84.5% of all investments in the industry), mostly from Singapore, the Netherlands, Japan, and Germany. The success of the E&E industry was further evidenced by it being the country's largest export earner in 2017, amounting to a total of RM343 billion and accounting for 36.7% of the total value of exports. From 2017 to 2018, the investment relating to the E&E industry amounted to RM58.6 billion representing 92% of the total investments approved in this manufacturing sector (MIDA, 2018). This situation requires a huge number of skilled employees, particularly engineers, who are able to champion new product design and development and carry out creative production activities. Therefore, given that engineers function as a manufacturing company's backbone, their job performance would have a huge impact on the performance and success of a business. In this regard, the implementation of high-performance human resource management practices (here after labelled as HPHRMPs), is considered to be able to bring out the best in employees (Du Plessis et al., 2015; Mason, 2017; Sakikawa et al., 2017). An analysis of the existing literature appears to suggest three different HPHRMPs which could have a significant impact on job performance. These, (1) training and development, (2) performance appraisal, and (3) reward system (Du Plessis et al., 2015; Mason, 2017; Sakikawa et al., 2017).

1.1. Literature Review

1.1.1. High Performance Human Resource Management Practices (HPHRMPs) (Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, and Reward System) and Job Performance

HPHRMPs are devices that can improve an organization's efficiency through its workers (Guest et al., 2012). It was noted that HPHRMPs consist of a set of policies and procedures, such as extensive training, performance compensation program, job security, selective hiring, employee engagement in decision-making and career development (MacDuffie, 1995; Snell & Dean Jr, 1992). Organizations adopting HPHRMPs put greater emphasis on the personal development and appreciation of their workers. HPHRMPs should foster a working environment aimed at inspiring, improving and managing workers to do their best to support organizational objectives. Therefore, investing in the expertise, skills and abilities of employees will lead to improved outcomes of individual work and eventually increased organizational

performance. In this study, three HPHRMs are identified: training and development, performance appraisal, and reward system.

Organizations use HPHRMPs to develop employee knowledge, skills and skills and enhance employee motivation by providing comprehensive recruitment and selection procedures, incentive compensation, performance management systems, and extensive employee engagement and training (Chuang et al., 2010).

Several human resource studies have demonstrated the universal applicability of HPHRMPs by encouraging employee engagement, dedication, or success in enhancing organizational outcomes (Ahmad & Allen, 2015; Jensen et al., 2013). Empirical evidence shows that the use of supportive HPHRMPs can lead to better job performance of employees (Du Plessis et al., 2015; Sakikawa et al., 2017; Mason, 2017). Hence, it is proposed that:

Proposition 1: HPHRMPs (i.e. training and development, performance appraisal, and reward system) will be positively related to job performance.

1.1.2. Training and Development and Job Performance

Training and Development (T&D) focuses on identifying, assuring and helping to develop the key skills that allow individuals to perform their current jobs through planned learning. An effective training plan will make it easier and more appropriate for the workforce to build a more favorable learning environment and train them to deal with future challenges. Training typically leads to higher levels of job performance of workers, which in effect can have a positive impact on their productivity. Training is therefore important to improve the knowledge and skills of staff in order to contribute to a team more effectively. For these purposes, the company carries out extensive training for its workers to enhance their current level of work performance. Development programs are intended to improve the future performance of workers (Latham, 2003).

In an era of rapid changes in high-tech technology, all indicators have demonstrated that technological innovation will continue to accelerate in the future (Pulakos et al., 2000). Technology evolution has continued to change the nature of work tasks, requiring employees to learn new knowledge and skills to carry out their work. Training and development were the formal efforts within organizations to improve the performance and self-fulfillment of their employees, especially the use of various educational programs and procedures (Noe et al., 2006). In providing training programs, as workers understand the value of their company in them, they would in effect make their best efforts to achieve their organizational objectives and high performance. Employee need to undergo adequate training and development courses taught by trained employees to perform effectively assigned tasks. Education is an important exercise that can promote the achievement of corporate goals, i.e. sustainable competitive advantages over rivals, and gain substantial market share (Barney, 2000).

Through proper training, both new and current workers do not obtain the information required to encourage them to build the skill sets necessary to perform their roles to their full potential. Therefore, training in the workplace is a must. Employees do not have a firm grasp of their duties or obligations without it. Learning and growth are two of the main HPHRMPs in the current business environment that can improve primary expertise, skills, superior knowledge, positive attitude and actions of employees (Tangthong et al., 2014). Training can also develop the high performance of employees and increase the

productivity of an organization (Ul-Ameeq & Hanif, 2013). Training and development should therefore include programs, seminars and workshops that can develop and enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of employees. Training can be one of the critical strategies to help each employee develop the new knowledge and skills necessary to maintain the level of performance in a rapidly changing work environment.

Organization is based on skilled workforce and product development and the sense of possible loss associated with leaving to gain sustainable competitive advantage. Zenger and Marshall (2000) say that they need to acquire more market share and increase productivity in order for workers to benefit and provide their companies with a sustainable competitive advantage. Organizational management can evaluate the efficacy of training and development programs by comparing the cost of implementing training programs and contributing to organizational efficiency through skill-oriented training programs (Zenger & Marshall, 2000). Organizations implement intensive training in order to grow their staff, gain strategic position over rivals and improve the performance of employees (Brown, 2005). Training and growth are therefore known to be a predictor of expected job performance. The foregoing discussion leads to the following sub-proposition:

Proposition 1 (a): Training and development will be positively related to job performance.

1.1.3. Performance Appraisal and Job Performance

Performance appraisal is a method of assessing the roles and goals of a worker and is a vital indicator for both a worker and an organization (Ollington et al., 2013). A performance evaluation provides a standardized opportunity to categorize, measure and cultivate the performance of the worker (Germeroth, 2015). Employee performance evaluation can be done on the basis of self-assessment or on the basis of human resource managers, supervisors and co-workers' experiences (Brown et al., 2014). The method of performance evaluation is a formal, year-long system for communicating to an employee the degree to which he / she fulfills the obligations of the work. Quality appraisal issues raising awareness of how they are perceived within the company by an employee, and this recognition is likely to result in successful engagement (Levy & Williams, 2004).

A performance appraisal will help employees improve their performance (1) by providing specific feedback on the need for improvement and (2) by receiving positive reinforcement to continue to succeed. This kind of feedback may be crucial to enhancing employee performance at all levels (Mani, 2002). The perceived fairness of the performance evaluation of the staff can adversely affect their attitude and performance (Heslin & VandeWalle, 2011). When an employee believes that an unfair evaluation of personal performance has occurred, he or she may feel compelled to behave in unsatisfactory or unexpected ways, resulting in lower rates of performance and process disturbance. Thus, the sub proposition is as follows:

Proposition 1 (b): Performance appraisal will be positively related to job performance.

1.1.4. Reward System and Job Performance

Reward system is the most commonly used HPHRMPs for identifying and compensating sales associates for their good job results. A scheme of incentives consists of both systems of motivation and acknowledgement. Reward is the financial incentive provided to workers by a company in return for

contributing to sales figures, productivity, and customer service. It is important to note that benefits vary from compensation and benefit (salary or wages) methods. Recognition, on the other hand, refers to the identification of a "good job," which is a non-financial means of appreciating and acknowledging the contributions of a sales partner to sales figures, quality, and customer service. HPHRMPs should also concentrate on a program of incentives to promote the success of an employee in line with the strategy of an organization (Mason, 2017).

According to (Oke et al., 2017), the success and compensation structure of a company has an effect on morality and profitability. Several companies have discovered that their success and incentive programs, far from complementing a business' stated goals, actually caused counter-productive actions. The "path-goal model" on the one hand definitely explains the relationship between the reward system and the success of the workforce. The idea of the "path-goal model" suggests that if a worker sees high productivity as a path that leads to one or more of his personal goals being accomplished, he will continue to be a high producer. Conversely, if he sees low productivity as a path to achieving his goals, he would continue to be a low producer. In other words, if he thinks his previous effort has resulted in his earning bonuses, the employee would be inspired to put more effort into his job (Güngör, 2011). A method of reward system involves the procedures, processes and activities of a company to reward its workers according to their achievement, skill and artifice. It is advanced within the reward philosophy, strategies, and policies of an organization, and includes agreements in the form of processes, practices, structures, and procedures that provide appropriate types and levels of pay, benefits, and other forms of reward. Initially, workplace job performance is what an employee does or does not do. Workplace performance may include: output quantity, output quality, output timeliness, workplace presence, cooperation. A reward system involves financial (extrinsic) as well as non-financial (intrinsic) rewards. Financial rewards are wage increases, incentive programs, perquisites etc. Non-financial reward includes promotion and title, authority and obligation, employment, gratitude and support, qualification and plague, decision-making, holiday time, workplace comfort, social activities, reviews, flexible working hours, job design, recognition, social rights, etc (Du Plessis et al., 2015). The foregoing discussion prompted the following proposition:

Proposition 1(c): Reward system will be positively related to job performance.

1.1.5. Motivation and Job Performance

Motivation refers to the intrinsic and extrinsic elements that motivate an entity to act or take certain actions in certain ways (Nahavandi et al., 2013). Motivation is a force that makes people do what they do (either intrinsic or extrinsic). This suggests that both internal (including personal needs and expectations) and external (organizational incentive and compensation) factors influence individual motivation. According to Murphy (1989), while the job performance of employees is the role of cognitive ability at transformation stages, stronger predictors of job performance at maintenance stages would be the temperament and motivational factors inherent in the task.

According to the Self-Determination Theory of Deci and Ryan (1985), when a person is intrinsically motivated, he or she performs any act because it is inherently gratifying. For instance, an intrinsically motivated employee may perform his or her job, at least in part, as the work is perceived as interesting and enjoyable. When an entity is extrinsically motivated, because it has some instrumental meaning, he or she performs some act. An extrinsically motivated employee, for example, would perform his or her work, at

least in part, because the job is a means of earning an income. Several research studies have found that a lack of motivation can lead to a reduction in job performance (Allen et al., 1982; Gilboa et al., 2008; Jamal, 1985; Kahn & Byosiore, 1992). Motivation in the field of organizational behavior is increasingly becoming an important and widely researched subject (Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Hackman & Oldham, 1975, 1976; Lawler, 1973). The explanation is clear: the degree to which an individual experience contributes to inspiration, optimistic internal emotions when doing a job effectively. Therefore, the definition should be significantly related to the actual job performance of an employee. In other words, a highly motivated individual should perform at high levels as he or she receives many personally valued rewards through doing so. Lack of motivation can turn into a chronic condition in which employees constantly give more than they receive in return, ultimately depleting the energy resources of employees, lack of performance, and thus promoting stress and burnout (Bakker et al., 2007). Therefore, it is likely that motivation will influence the nature of the HPHRMPs relationship between job performance through. With high motivation, the relationship is likely to be stronger. The foregoing discussion has prompted the following proposition:

Proposition 2: The relationship between HPHRMPs and job performance will be stronger when motivation is high.

1.1.6. Conceptual Framework

Based on the preceding discussion, a conceptual framework is proposed as depicted in Figure 01. Both HPHRMPs are assumed to predict job performance within the context of the operators in manufacturing sector. Job performance, for this study, focuses on task performance.

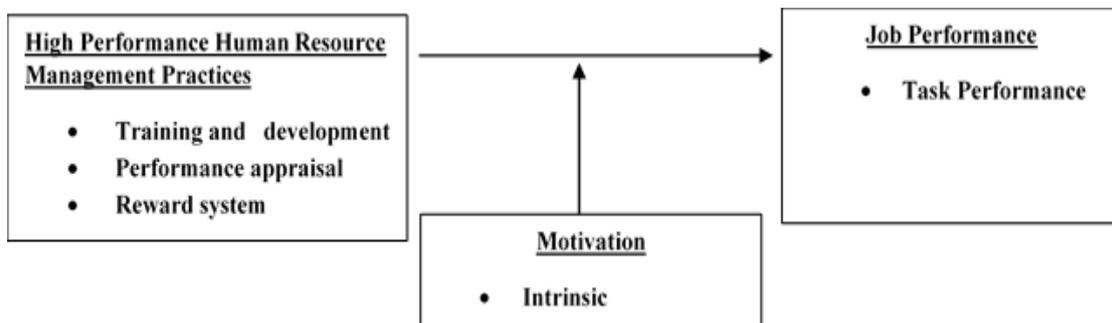


Figure 01. Conceptual Framework

2. Problem Statement

The company biosphere is becoming more competitive, and the environment has resulted in greater uncertainty and unpredictability with rapid changes over the centuries. Although the manufacturing sector of Malaysia is one of the key contributors to its economy, the manufacturing ranking of the country is still far behind compared to other countries. But it is forecast to dip slightly on the basis of growth in developing Asia. The gross domestic product (GDP) in the region will expand by 5.7% in 2016 and 2017, decelerating from 5.9% in 2015 in a difficult and uncertain global environment. This scenario means that development in the region has also dropped slightly and needs to be improved (Asian Development Outlook, 2016). The 2016 trends in industrial production represent a tentative economic expansion in export-oriented economies

based on the Asian Development Outlook survey. Malaysia's rate was not stable and inconsistent based on Asia's industrial production index.

Malaysia's production index decreased from 2014 to 2016 (see Figure 02), so we need to look at it and boost our production index. Malaysia needs to improve economically, particularly in the manufacturing sector, to compete with other countries.

In addition, according to the 2013-2018 World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY), Malaysia ranked 22nd out of 63 countries (see Figure 03), indicating that while manufacturing is one of Malaysia's leading sectors, it still lags behind other countries. This underscores an area that needs improvement. Malaysia needs to carry out R&D activities to develop or innovate new products or systems in order to compete with other countries. Nevertheless, these efforts require that every employee in the manufacturing sector perform better in order to increase productivity.

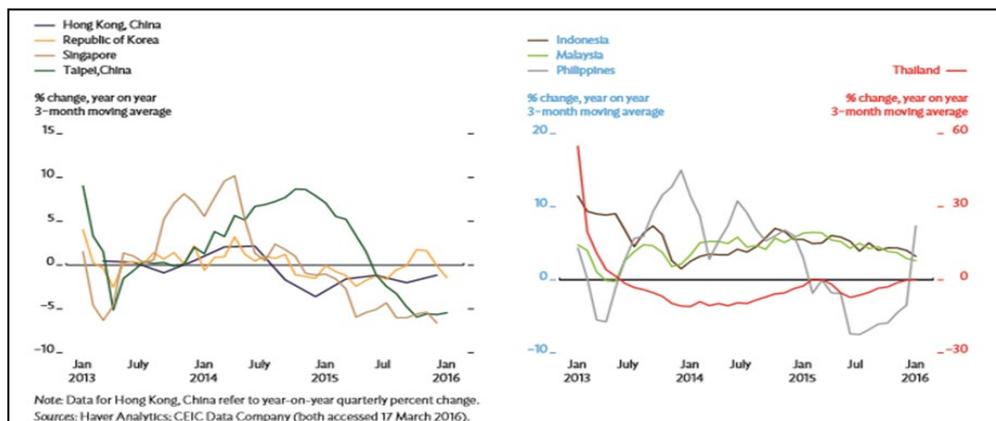


Figure 02. Industrial Production Index (Source: Asian Development Outlook, 2016.)

A. Ranking and Score: Malaysia and other selected countries in World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY), 2013-2018

| NO | COUNTRY | 2018 | | 2017 | | 2016 | | 2015 | | 2014 | | 2013 | |
|----|-------------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|
| | | RANK | SCORE |
| 1 | USA | 1 | 100.00 | 4 | 98.66 | 3 | 97.88 | 1 | 100.00 | 1 | 100.00 | 1 | 100.00 |
| 2 | Hong Kong | 2 | 99.16 | 1 | 100.00 | 1 | 100.00 | 2 | 96.00 | 4 | 90.30 | 3 | 92.80 |
| 3 | Singapore | 3 | 98.55 | 3 | 99.49 | 4 | 97.65 | 3 | 95.00 | 3 | 91.00 | 5 | 89.90 |
| 4 | Switzerland | 5 | 97.14 | 2 | 99.66 | 2 | 98.02 | 4 | 91.92 | 2 | 92.42 | 2 | 93.36 |
| 5 | China | 13 | 89.03 | 18 | 87.76 | 25 | 79.35 | 22 | 77.00 | 23 | 73.30 | 21 | 77.00 |
| 6 | Qatar | 14 | 88.89 | 17 | 88.10 | 13 | 86.72 | 13 | 84.60 | 19 | 77.10 | 10 | 85.50 |
| 7 | Germany | 15 | 88.75 | 13 | 91.59 | 12 | 88.57 | 10 | 85.60 | 6 | 85.80 | 9 | 86.20 |
| 8 | Taiwan | 17 | 87.91 | 14 | 90.48 | 14 | 86.37 | 11 | 85.40 | 13 | 81.20 | 11 | 85.20 |
| 9 | Australia | 19 | 87.06 | 21 | 85.25 | 17 | 84.27 | 18 | 80.50 | 17 | 79.60 | 16 | 80.50 |
| 10 | UK | 20 | 85.62 | 19 | 86.78 | 18 | 83.34 | 19 | 79.90 | 16 | 79.80 | 18 | 79.20 |
| 11 | Malaysia | 22 | 85.17 | 24 | 83.53 | 19 | 83.05 | 14 | 84.10 | 12 | 82.10 | 15 | 83.10 |
| 12 | Japan | 25 | 81.31 | 26 | 82.27 | 26 | 78.72 | 27 | 72.80 | 21 | 73.80 | 24 | 74.50 |
| 13 | Korea | 27 | 80.12 | 29 | 78.65 | 29 | 74.20 | 25 | 73.90 | 26 | 69.70 | 22 | 75.20 |
| 14 | Thailand | 30 | 79.45 | 27 | 80.10 | 28 | 74.68 | 30 | 69.80 | 29 | 65.00 | 27 | 73.00 |
| 15 | India | 44 | 68.77 | 45 | 69.70 | 41 | 65.83 | 44 | 59.50 | 44 | 53.90 | 40 | 59.90 |
| 16 | Philippines | 50 | 64.66 | 41 | 71.8 | 42 | 65.54 | 41 | 60.20 | 42 | 55.00 | 38 | 63.10 |

Figure 03. World Competitiveness Yearbook, WCY 2013-2018

Note: Number of participating countries: 63 countries (2018 & 2017), 61 countries (2016 & 2015); 60 countries (2014 & 2013). (Source: Official Portal MASTIC, Malaysian Science and Technology Information Center, Statistics World Competitiveness Yearbook (WCY), 2013-2018.)

On the basis of the above table, the manufacturing output in Malaysia remains lagging (see Figure 01 and Figure 03 for more information). Probably due to the rising efficiency of the manufacturing. One way to address this shortcoming would be through the workers in the Malaysian manufacturing industry to boost job performance. In view of the above, the Malaysian manufacturing sector desperately needs to re-energize itself and become more competitive and advanced. When looking at the HPHRMPs, these findings can be obtained (Hee & Jing, 2018). It has been widely recognized that the use of positive HPHRMPs will lead to improvements in the attitudes and behaviors of employees (Hee & Jing, 2018). One form of work behaviour is job performance and motivation.

3. Research Questions

Does motivation moderate the relationship between HPHRMPs (training and development, performance appraisal, and reward system) and job performance?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to propose a model linking selected HPHRMPs and job performance, and how motivation serve to strengthen or weaken the proposed relationships. The three HPHRMPs identified include training and development, performance appraisal, and reward system.

5. Research Methods

This analysis was based on a sound theoretical framework incorporating secondary data. As an archival process, a systematic literature review was performed to review articles related to HPHRMPs, work participation, and job performance as referenced in repositories such as Emerald, ProQuest, and Science Direct. The secondary data were analysed to construct a solid theoretical structure as the foundation for this study.

6. Findings

As stated in the review of the literature, this study proposes an integrated structure (Figure 01) that highlights the HPHRMPs as the independent variables and job performance as the dependent variable. Motivation is serving as the moderator.

7. Conclusion

The present paper addresses the importance of motivation and job performance and how the three specific high-performance human resource management practices (training and growth, performance evaluation and reward system) can support employees in their work to become highly motivated and achieve higher job performance, especially in manufacturing operators. Findings that enabled the model's development were extracted from a library search engine's analysis of secondary information. The paper provides some practical insights into the use of selected HPHRMPs to influence job performance. Because motivation is critical in strengthening the relationships between HPHRMPs and results, we recommend that

manufacturing types aim to constantly motivate their current employees apart from emphasizing the recruitment of highly motivated candidates. A key source of competitive advantage for a company is highly motivated and high-performing employees. Given the extreme challenges facing the manufacturing sector globally and more so in Malaysia, Malaysian manufacturing companies desperately need to stimulate their workforce to become highly motivated and high performing. Organizations need to pay attention to their HPHRMPs to build a healthy working environment that will offer the best of positive attitudes and behaviors for their workers.

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