



Impact of High-Performance Human Resource Management Practices on Role Performance: Mediating Role of Employee Engagement

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ABSTRACT

A well-established administrative system, such as High-Performance Human Resource Management Practice (HPHRMP), is crucial for efficiently managing human resources and administrative tasks. This study examines the impact of HPHRMP on employee role performance through engagement among non-academic staff at state universities in Sri Lanka. Data from 334 non-academic staff were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using simple linear regression analysis and Sobel test. The results show that HPHRMP directly influences role performance, and employee engagement mediates this relationship. These findings support the resource-based theory, emphasizing the importance of psychological resources such as expertise, promotion and opportunities for human resources, healthy working climate, and leadership skills in addition to the existing resources like capital, organizational, physical, and human capital resources for gaining competitive advantage. The practical implications of the study are also discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

The Sri Lankan higher education system plays a significant role in creating and disseminating knowledge. There is a growing trend of private universities entering the higher education system in Sri Lanka; however, government universities remain a prominent part of the sector. According to the available data, there are 17 state universities governed by the Universities Grants Commission (UGC) in Sri Lanka. (University Grants Commission, 2021). According to the UGC, at the year-end of 2021, the student population of state universities in Sri Lanka amounted to 121,925-internal students, 283,182-external and distant learning students, and 202-international students. Further, there are 46,057 and 578 local postgraduate students and foreign postgraduate students, respectively (University Grants Commission, 2021) are pursuing their postgraduate degrees. Employees of state universities in Sri Lanka are of two types: teaching faculty and non-academic staff, and they are distinct in their roles. For instance, the teaching faculty of universities are mainly engaged with academic matters such as curriculum development, conducting research, and student counselling. However, non-academic staff are mainly engaged in facilitating academic matters, providing hostel facilities, and providing administrative assistance. Thus, the contributions provided by non-academic staff are significant and considerable.

Although non-academic staff provide a substantial contribution to the smooth functioning of state universities in Sri Lanka, there is a significant criticism of their performance (Imbulgoda, 2019). Due to the poor performance of the state universities, they might not be able to provide dynamic leaders to the country in time. A few scholars have paid attention to this matter, and they have shown that only about 72% of state universities were efficient, while 28% of them showed poor performance during the period from 2007 to 2011 (Dharmathilaka & Jayamaha, 2014). The World Bank assessment of the Sri Lankan Education Sector published in the year 2017 reveals that the internal governance of the state universities is undermined by the administrators with a lack of management experience. Similarly, there was high peracetic among the administrators. Furthermore, the lack of information has badly affected the administrative side of the state universities (Dundar et al., 2017).

HRM perspective of the resource-based theory explains that the human resource of an organization provides an economic foundation to gain a competitive advantage (Barney & Wright, 1998). Further, it discusses that the skills, judgment, and intelligence of the employees of an organization are included as human capital resources (Barney & Wright, 1998). Moreover, it has failed to make available sufficient information about intangible resources and people-based skills. According to a tactic to find resources, the classification approach provided consists of six categories of resources, which are financial resources, physical resources, human resources, technological resources, reputation and organizational resources (Grant, 1991). Thus, this theory discusses the strategic part of management, which is focused on gaining superior performance in an organization. Accordingly, this theory discusses only the organizational performance (Barney et al., 2012). However, this theory did not focus on the psychological resources such as leadership skills, and conceptual skills directly linked with HPHRMP. Similarly, employee promotion opportunities, competencies, and a healthy working environment are also psychological resources that can help to increase employee engagement.

Thus, in this study we develop a conceptual model fill the existing gap in the literature. which contains three main variables, i.e., HPHRMR (IV) mainly focused on leadership and conceptual skills; Employee Engagement (MV), which is mainly focused on employee promotion opportunities, competencies, healthy working environment and Employee Role Performance (DV). Employee role performance is all the behavior required to fulfil the assigned tasks and duties in an expected manner of the organization (Goswami & Upadhyay, 2020) and this can be directly affects organizational performance. The previous studies emphasized that employee performance causes for achievement of organizational strategies and goals for the success of the organization and is the most important and valuable factor for gaining a competitive advantage for an organization in the present business world (Kerdpitak & Jermstittiparsert, 2019, 2020; Khan & Wisner, 2019; Kiruja & Mukuru, 2013; Li et al., 2018; Sutduean et al., 2019) and behavior to achieve organizational goals (Manzoor et al., 2019). If an employee of any organization is not ready to engage in their duties, they will not perform well. On the other hand, employee engagement is a must to increase their performance. Schaufeli et al. (2001) stated that employee engagement is widely affected to gain competitive advantage through employee and

organization development. HPHRMP is defined as the Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) that lead to increased individual performance and as well as organizational performance (Zhang & Jia, 2010). HPHRMP is a system that can create a positive work culture or work behaviour and value enrichment that can reach higher performance (Ahmad & Allen, 2015; Fu et al., 2015).

According to previous studies, in particular in Asia, research reported a positive association between HPHRMP, employee engagement, and role performance (Ababneh, 2021; Goswami & Upadhyay, 2020; Kerdpitak & Jermsittiparsert, 2020; Mahesar et al., 2016; Rubel et al., 2018; Siyal et al., 2020; Taib et al., 2018). However, there are limited studies in the Sri Lankan context which examine the role of HPHRMP on employee role performance and most of the extant studies are based on samples of the corporate sector. However, these findings might be changed with the samples of higher educational institutes in Sri Lanka due to differences in HRM practices. However, there are few related studies from Sri Lanka that show the impact of HPHRMP on the job engagement of employees working in multinational corporations operating in Sri Lanka, and the result was a strong positive relationship between the variables (Jayarathna & Shermila, 2018). Another study has emphasized that there was a strong positive relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management and Organizational Performance in the cable industry in Sri Lanka (Karunarathna & Weligamage, 2018). When reviewing the previous studies, it was very difficult to find studies related to the Impact of HPHRMP on role performance through employee engagement in the Sri Lankan context. Therefore, this study has focused on finding the impact of HPHRMP on role performance through employee engagement of the non-academic staff of the state universities in Sri Lanka.

State universities are prominent in the education sector in a country. This is also applicable to the context of Sri Lanka. On the other hand, on the journey of making Sri Lanka a knowledge hub in the South Asian region, university education will be the engine. To achieve the goals and objectives of the universities, both the universities' performance and the employees' performance are the most important factors. Some scholars indicated that Sri Lankan universities show poor performance when compared with the universities in the Asia region (Dharmathilaka & Jayamaha, 2014; Dundar et al., 2017). Similarly, the behavior of both academic and non-academic staff members will directly be affected by the students' satisfaction. Also, the

quality of the service of non-academic staff members significantly affected the students' satisfaction (Dedunu & Weerasinghe, 2017). However, there is no proper statistical evidence to prove the inefficiency of the university system in Sri Lanka. According to social criticism, most of the universities show low performance. The performance of the administration side of the state universities was especially highly criticized. To eliminate this problem, it is important to examine the performance of the non-academic staff members of the Sri Lankan university system. The performance of the academic staff members can be measured based on their teaching performance, research evidence, and institutional contribution. However, there are no proper measurements to find out the level of performance of non-academic staff members. Furthermore, this study focused on examining the impact of HPHRMP strategies used by the state universities and the practice of employee engagement of the non-academic staff members. Accordingly, the results of this study will help to solve the main research problem of this study: what is the impact of HPHRMP on the role performance through employee engagement of the non-academic staff of the state universities in Sri Lanka?

The general objective of this study is to examine the impact of HPHRMP on role performance through employee engagement of the non-academic staff in the state universities in Sri Lanka. This study will help to understand how the resourced-based theory contributes to HPHRMP use by the state universities to gain the expected performance of the non-academic staff members.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resource-based Theory

The resourced-based theory states that organizations run in one industry show different performances during a specific period. They confirmed that the internal competencies of each organization are caused by the difference in said performance, and it will result in gaining a competitive advantage for the organization. (Barney et al., 2012). These organizations set up resources such as capital resources, organizational resources, physical resources, and human capital resources in a specific manner to an organization. Further, managers and academics have identified many factors that can affect organizational profitability. Out of them, the factors listed under the resourced-based view provided a remarkable economic foundation for the profitability of an

organization through competitive advantages. The organization's resources are the main focus of this theory for the journey of gaining a competitive advantage in a business (Barney, 1991). Similarly, there are three main resources included in this resource-based view. The first one is the physical capital resources, which include an organization's plants, equipment, and finances. The next one is the Organizational capital resources. Organizational structures, planning, controlling, coordinating, and HR systems are included in the organizational capital resources. The final resource is Human capital resource, and it includes the skills, judgment, and intelligence of an organization (Barney & Wright, 1998). Moreover, it describes that an organization's capabilities differ from one organization to another, and this difference in variation will help to achieve stability in the organization (Peteraf & Barney, 2003).

Prior research, such as Wright et al. (1994), Lado and Wilson (1994), Snell et al. (1996), and Jackson and Schuler (1995) have discussed and considered the resource-based view for their studies to find out the impact of the HR of the organizations for their competitive advantages. Similarly, these authors have focused on the resource-based view to understand the behavior of HR in an organization for its sustainable competitive advantage. Also, they have focused on the resource-based view and economic advantage through the HR capital of an organization, as well as the relationship between the resource-based view and organizational learning (Barney & Wright, 1998). Accordingly, most scholars have argued that the resource-based theory focuses on gaining a competitive advantage for a business. Similarly, the theory says that maintaining and developing the resources, including capital resources, physical resources, human capital resources, and organizational resources will help to gain this competitive advantage. However, the research team of this study argued that psychological resources, including leadership skills, expertise, a healthy working climate, and promotion opportunities for human resources are also important to gain the competitive advantage of a business. When gaining a competitive advantage, the highly efficient performance of an organization is important, and the performance of the employees is directly affected by organizational efficient performance (Qehaja & Kutllovci, 2015). Similarly, some scholars argued that the performance of human resources is a critical requirement for gaining a competitive advantage (Kazlauskaite & Bučiuniene, 2008). Accordingly, the study team argued that introducing the psychological resources mentioned above will be able to

modify the HPHRMP and employee engagement. Then, it will help change employee role performance.

Role Performance

Role performance can be defined as whether an employee is doing his job duties and responsibilities according to the expected level of an organization (Rashid et al, 2017). Further, role performance can be described by considering extra-role performance and in-role performance (Williams & Anderson, 1991) and enhancing employee performance represents the action. Previous studies emphasized that employee performance causes the achievement of organizational strategies and goals for the success of the organization and is the most important and valuable factor for gaining a competitive advantage for an organization in the present business world (Kerdpitak & Jermstittiparsert, 2019, 2020; Khan & Wisner, 2019; Kiruja & Mukuru, 2013; Li et al., 2018; Sutduean et al., 2019) and behavior to achieve organizational goals (Manzoor et al., 2019). Similarly, role performance is described as a core task behavior affecting individual or organizational efficiency and productivity directly and/or indirectly (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Various scholars introduced various dimensions of employee performance. However, two aspects of employee performance are commonly defined as in-role performance and extra-role performance.

In-Role Performance (IRP) and Extra-Role Performance (ERP) have been considered as different measures of job performance by several authors (Deckop et al., 1999; MacKenzie et al., 1998). According to Katz and Kahn (1978), In-Role Performance is described as a core task behavior that affects individual or organizational productivity directly or indirectly (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Further, In-role behavior is defined as activities that are expected from sales associates, as they are explicitly stated in job descriptions (Organ, 1988, 1990). In-role behavior can be defined as all the behaviors that are required to complete the responsible work (Williams & Anderson, 1991). However, there are a few studies that considered the effect of employees' performance, especially their in-role performance required by the job description (Riketta, 2008). In-role performance helps employees to deliberate and do tasks more creatively to solve problems (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Moreover, Vigoda (2000) has also proposed a definition as in-role performance is the formal behavior of an employee about his/her role requirement to fulfil the basic job duties and tasks assigned by the job description (Vigoda, 2000).

Extra-role performance can be identified as the employees' behavior affected by the organization's benefits but not specified in the employees' job description or the formal reward system of the organization (Guo, 2015). extra-role performance is employees' willingness to do anything beyond their work. If there is an employee with high extra-role performance in an organization, he/she is willing to help his/her work colleagues and spend extra hours to do more of his/her work without any demand from the organization (Prajogo, 2019).

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is employees' willingness to devote time to their tasks. According to Kahan's (1990) theory, cited by Goswami and Upadhyay (2020), employee engagement is defined as Job participation as self-utilization of organization members. Similarly, employees participate expressing their performance through work physically, cognitively and emotionally. Harter et al. (2002) define employee engagement as *"the individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work."* Employee engagement is a prominent area of organizational development (Shuck & Wollard, 2010), which is a mirror that can be seen in attitudes and behavior. Most of the activities involve employees engaging in the action and turning it into a process. As a result of this, employee job performance will be created. Accordingly, employee engagement is caused by employee job performance, which can be described as employee output. Similarly, employee engagement emphasizes that an employee gets involved in the employment and the organization cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally (Iddagoda et al., 2016).

High-Performance Human Resource Management Practices (HPHRMP)

HPHRMP is defined as the Human Resource Management Practices (HRMPs) which lead to increased individual performance and as well as organizational performance (Zhang & Jia, 2010). HPHRMP leads to generating positive work behavior among employees, and ultimately, it may help to enhance organizational performance. There is a set of HPHRMPs which are interrelated and enabled to enhance the employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities (KAS) (Messersmith & Wales, 2013). HPHRMP also look at employee flexibility for higher work engagement, autonomy toward task delegation/decision-making process and the employees' planning process,

which leads to career progression (Zhang & Jia, 2010). HPHRMP is a system that can create a positive work culture or work behavior and value enrichment that can reach higher performance (Ahmad & Allen, 2015; Fu et al., 2015). HPHRMPs are integrated with the organizations' strategies, which will enable them to achieve competitive advantages. This will help to increase employees' behavior and morale for innovative work performance. Leadership skills of the managers of an organization are essential for improving HPHRMPs. This study emphasized that leadership skill is a psychological resource that helps to increase employee engagement and employee role performance.

The HPHRMPs consist of three main components, and they are interlinked with the HPHRMP. The first component includes efficiency in recruitment, continuous skill development, career planning, and job satisfaction. The incentives or rewards and performance management systems are included in the second component. The last component is articulated by employee involvement, strategic orientation and involvement in decision-making (Zhang & Jia, 2010). An organization with the right combination of Human Resource Management practices can improve and develop employee motivation, satisfaction, retention, and performance sustainably (Delaney & Huselid, 2017). Currently, it is necessary to redefine the human resource practices previously used by the organization as new HPHRMPs are integrated with the organizational strategies for achieving competitive advantage. Similarly, these HPHRMPs will lead to improving the behavior and morale of the employees to innovate the work performance of an organization (Sun et al., 2007). Similarly, HPHRMP contributes to maintaining high employee morale, greater productivity, innovative behavior, and higher work engagement (Katou & Budhwar, 2010).

Hypotheses Development

Based on prior literature and resource-based theory, researchers developed a conceptual model, which is shown in Figure 1. The conceptual framework of this study includes an independent variable, a mediator, and a dependent variable. Based on the previous literature, the "*High-performance Human Resource Management Practices*" is the independent variable and will be examined through Employee Involvement, Employee Skill and Training, Work Place Environment, and Competency-based Performance Appraisal. The dependent variable is "*Role performance*," and it will be examined through In-Role Performance and Extra-Role Performance. "*Employee*

Engagement” is the mediator (Goswami & Upadhyay, 2020). All the variables were measured based on the respondent’s degree of agreement.

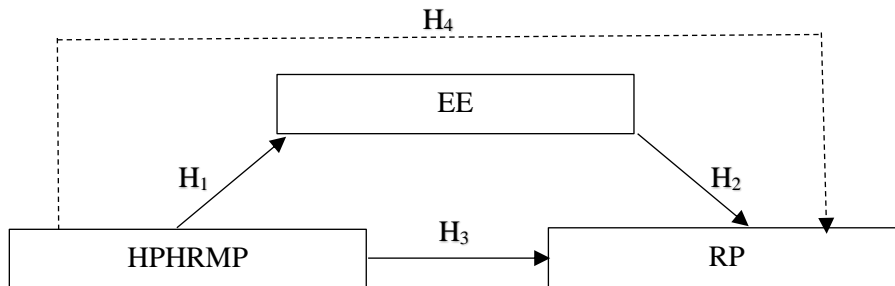


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Note: HPHRMP = High-Performance Human Resource Management Practices, EE = Employee Engagement, RP = Role Performance

The research team of this study proposed that HPHRMP has a significant impact on employee engagement considering the literature review. Moreover, we argue that the Resource-Based Theory contributed to this assumption. Previous scholars emphasized that resourced-based theory supposed that organizations have to develop strategies to gain competitive advantage by maximizing existing resources as they are rare, scarce, and limited (Falola et al., 2014). Moreover, it describes that an HRM system that is established in an organization may create a sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). A well-established organization may be able to follow high-performance human resource practices which will result in more engagement of the employees with the organization. Moreover, previous research has also found a positive association between HPHRM and employee engagement (Kerdpitak & Jermsittiparsert, 2020; Taib et al., 2018; Tarasawatpipat & Mekhum, 2020). High-performance Human Resource practices such as introducing effective training and development programs, effective skill development, employer-employee relationships and attitudes-changing programs will lead to enhanced employee engagement. Finally, it shows the impact of HPHRMP on employee engagement. Accordingly, this is hypothesized.

H1: There is a significant impact of high-performance HRM practice on employee engagement.

The resource-based theory focuses on enhancing the performance increasing and providing a good mix of resources to gain a competitive advantage. Also, this area is considered the relationship between employee

engagement and employee performance. Previous studies emphasized that employee engagement has a positive and significant impact on employee performance (Eka & Anik, 2020; Goswami & Upadhyay, 2020; Rahayu & Utami, 2020; Rohman et al., 2021). Thus, the study team hypothesized;

H2: There is a significant impact of employee engagement on role performance.

The main objective of this resource-based theory is that the management of an organization has to consider and stimulate the most valued resources and how these resources have to be developed to increase performance. The theory further explained that the critical success of an organization will be led by human resource competence, financial resources, and past experiences (Hitt et al., 2008). Similarly, previous studies revealed that HR practices such as skill enhancement and motivation enhancement lead to enhance the employees' in-role performance (Khoreva & Wechtler, 2018). Also, many scholars by their studies emphasized that there is a positive and significant relationship between HRM practices and employee performance (Almuktar et al., 2020; Desa & Asaari, 2020; Taib et al., 2018).

According to the theoretical evidence on the relationship between HPHRMP and the effectiveness of an organization, the HPHRMP affects employee attitudes, behaviors, perceptions, organizational climate, and other HR performance measures, which affect organizational effectiveness (Shaukat et al., 2015). HPHRMP also lead to generating excellent employee work behavior for enhancing employee performance and it helps to boost the positive work culture and work behavior of an organization which leads to enhanced performance (Ahmad & Allen, 2015; Zhang & Jia, 2010). Accordingly, the study team argued that HPHRMP affected both organizational performance and as well as employee role performance. Role performance is the level of output of the employees in an organization. However, this theory is silent regarding the mediating effect of employee engagement.

H3: High-performance HRM practice has a significant impact on role performance.

H4: Employee engagement mediates the impact of high-performance HRM practice on role performance

METHODOLOGY

Study Design, Population and Sample

This study is based on the deductive approach, and data were collected at one point in time. The time horizon of this study is cross-sectional. To test the hypotheses, we collected data from 334 non-academic staff from 17 state Universities in Sri Lanka. The population of this study consists of 12,213 (University Grants Commission, 2021). The Morgan table was used to determine the sample size (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). According to the Morgan table, 377 would be the minimum sample size. Including the addition of 10%, the minimum sample size will be 415. Accordingly, the sample of the study represents 3.40 per cent of the entire population, which is selected using a stratified sampling method. However, we considered only the Management Assistant (Technical), Management Assistant (Non-technical), and Primary Grades as Statas of this study.

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data on HPHRMP, Employee Engagement and Role Performance. Questions for the variables consist of a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree – 1, disagree – 2, not sure – 3, agree – 4, strongly agree – 5). The questions on HPHRMP, Employee Engagement and Role Performance (Goswami & Upadhyay, 2020) were adapted from prior literature with permission from the relevant corresponding authors. The content validity was acceptable as the questions on HPHRMP include (i) Employee Involvement, (ii) Employee Skills and training, (iii) Workplace Environment, and (iv) Competency-based Performance Appraisal, Employee Engagement and Role Performance, including (i) in-role performance; (ii) extra-role performance (Goswami & Upadhyay, 2020).

Data were collected using a survey method and the instrument was available in all three languages (English, Sinhala, and Tamil). First, developed the instrument in English and then translated it into Sinhala and Tamil with the support of a professional translator. To check the translation validity, we checked it with two professionals who are experts in both languages; English and Sinhala, and English and Tamil. The questionnaire was pre-tested by 30 members from the sample to check its content, language, clarity and sequence. The questionnaire was modified based on their feedback.

A total of 415 permanent non-academic staff were selected from the 17 state universities as a sample. Overall, 347 participated. Out of them, 13 were omitted due to incomplete details. A total of 334 entries were included in the final analysis. The statistical analysis including simple regression and the Sobel test were conducted using the SPSS 23.0 version. Most were males (51.6%). Married employees were 80.1% while single was 19.9%. Also, most were Management Assistant (Non-Technical) 55.7% followed by Primary Grades (27.7%), and Management Assistant (Technical) 21.6%. Further, most had a G.C.E. (A/L) qualifications (52.4%) followed by a first degree (24.5%), a G.C.E. (O/L) qualifications (15.3%), a master's degree (3.7%), a postgraduate diploma (2.3%) and below G.C.E. (O/L) 1.7%. Most were in the University of Peradeniya (33.4%), in the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (12.4%) and 54.2% were represented by other 15 state universities. Experience in the University system ranges from 1 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 21 to 25 years and 36 to 40 years were 24.8%, 20.5%, 21.9%, 13.0%, and 0.6%, respectively. Age ranges from 30 to 35 indicated the highest percentage (26.2%), age range from 18 to 23, 24 to 29, 36 to 41, 42 to 47, 48 to 53 and more than 53 were 0.6%, 11.0%, 21.0%, 17.3%, 15.6% and 8.4 respectively.

Measures

Twenty-five items were used to measure the HPHRMP, and those were extracted from the study developed by Goswami and Upadhyay (2020). Similarly, we measured Employee Engagement using nine items of the scale developed by Goswami and Upadhyay (2020). To measure the role performance, we used eleven items of the scale developed by Goswami and Upadhyay (2020). The instruments were translated into the Sinhala language and re-translated into English by language experts who have research experience in the management discipline. Similarly, the questionnaire was pre-tested by 3 experts to check its content, language, clarity and sequence. Based on their feedback, the questionnaire was modified. Then, the questionnaire was circulated among the sample collected the data. Using SPSS version 23.0 Software package was conducted the validity test of each item included in the questionnaire and the KMOs value was 0.940 and $p < 0.05$. As the KMO value of the test was more than 0.7, the questionnaire was valid for this study. Then, the Cronbach's Alpha test was carried out to determine the inter-item consistency of each part of the questionnaire, and Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.7 .

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive analysis of variables at the individual level was conducted. Table 1 represents the results of the descriptive analysis. Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to find the relationship among the variables. According to the correlation analysis, there was a positive moderate relationship between HPHRMP and Employee Engagement ($r=0.458$, $p<0.05$). Similarly, there was a weak positive relationship between HPHRMP and Role Performance ($r=0.286$, $p<0.05$). Also, the relationship between Employee Engagement and Role Performance was moderately positive ($r=0.529$, $p<0.05$). To test the hypotheses of this study, the study team used simple linear regression. In addition, this study used the Sobel test to assess the mediation effect.

Table 1: Results of Descriptive Analysis of the Variables

Variable	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
HPHRMP	3.1007	3.1000	0.73953
Employee Engagement	3.9258	3.8889	0.52116
Role Performance	4.3508	4.2727	0.47152

Note: $N = 334$, HPHRMP = High-Performance Human Resource Management Practices

Table 2: Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis

IV	DV	B	R ²	F	β	p
HPHRMP	EE	.323 (.034)	.210	88.294	.458	.000
EE	RP	.479 (.042)	.280	128.931	.529	.000
HPHRMP	RP	.182 (.034)	.082	29.510	.286	.000

Note: $N = 334$, HPHRMP = High-Performance Human Resource Management Practices, RP = Role Performance, EE = Employee Engagement, The value included in the () is standard error

Figure 2: Results for the Sobel Test

Input:	Test statistic:	Std. Error:	p -value:
a 0.323	Sobel test: 6.94912437	0.02226424	0
b 0.479	Aroian test: 6.93129386	0.02232152	0
s_a 0.034	Goodman test: 6.9670932	0.02220682	0
s_b 0.047	Reset all	Calculate	

In H1, we proposed that HPHRMP has a significant impact on employee engagement. According to the results of the simple regression analysis, as indicated in Table 2, 21% of the variation in Employee Engagement was explained by the HPHRMP, and the model of this study is efficient and significant in explaining the variation in Employee Engagement by the HPHRMP ($R^2=0.210$, $F=88.294$, $p<0.05$). Similarly, the results of regression analysis showed that there is a significant impact of HPHRMP on Employee Engagement ($\beta=0.458$, $t=9.396$, $p<0.05$). Thus, H1 is accepted. In H2, we

proposed that employee engagement has a significant impact on role performance. Table 2 indicates that 28% of the variation in Role performance was explained by Employee Engagement, and the model of this study is efficient and significant in explaining the variation in Role Performance by Employee Engagement ($R^2=0.280$, $F=20.709$, $p<0.05$). Similarly, the results of regression analysis confirmed our argument that there is a significant impact of Employee Engagement on Role Performance ($\beta=0.529$, $t= 1.355$, $p<0.05$). Thus, H2 is accepted. When drawing attention to H3, it was proposed that HPHRMP has a significant impact on role performance. According to Table 2, 8.2% of the variation in the Role Performance was explained by HPHRMP and the model of the study is efficient and significant in explaining the variation in Role Performance by HPHRMP ($R^2=0.082$, $F=29.510$, $p<0.05$). Similarly, this argument was proved by the results of the regression analysis. According to the results, there is a positive impact of HPHRMP on Role Performance ($\beta=0.286$, $t=5.432$, $p<0.05$). Thus, H3 is accepted.

In H4, the study team proposed that Employee Engagement mediates the impact of HPHRMP on Role performance. Based on the acceptance of H1, H2, and H3, HPHRMP had a significant impact on employee engagement and role performance. Moreover, there is a significant impact of Employee Engagement on Role Performance and HPHRMP on Role Performance. Considering the results of regression analysis and the Sobel test, Employee Engagement mediates the relationship between HPHRMP and Role performance ($a=0.323$, $b=0.479$, $S_a=0.034$, $S_b=0.047$, $p<0.05$). Thus, H4 is accepted. According to the study results, Employee Engagement indicated a partial mediating effect as there was a positive impact of HPHRMP on Role Performance.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of HPHRMP on role performance and whether employee engagement plays a mediating role in the above relationship. To prove this, the findings of the previous studies were contributed (Goswami & Upadhyay, 2020; Kerdpitak & Jermstittiparsert, 2020; Mahesar et al., 2016). This study has focused on modifying HPHRMP used by the university system will be able to enhance employee engagement and role performance of the non-academic staff, and the previous literature has confirmed that (Almuktar et al., 2020; Desa & Asaari, 2020; Shaukat et al., 2015). Accordingly, the Role performance of the non-academic staff members

can be improved by modifying HPHRMP activities, which include performance-based rewards, employee involvement, skill and training, and workplace environment. The findings also confirmed that there is a positive impact of HPHRM practices on Employee Engagement, which was confirmed by the previous empirical studies (Kerdpitak & Jernsittiparsert, 2020; Tarasawatpipat & Mekhum, 2020). Accordingly, when modifying the combination of employee involvement, employee skills and training, and workplace environment, which come under the HPHRMP, the employee engagement of non-academic staff members of the state universities was enhanced. Therefore, the policymakers can draw more attention to modifying the existing HRMP. Similarly, this study confirmed that there is a positive impact of employee engagement on role performance, and this has been supported by previous studies (Adrian et al., 2020; Fidyah, 2020; Goswami & Upadhyay, 2020). The results contributed to introducing effective ways to communicate between the managers and employees. Similarly, psychological resources such as managers' leadership skills help to motivate the employees (Ismuhadjar et al, 2017; Munna, 2021). Similarly, leadership skills help to increase interrelationships to enhance employee engagement (Jha & Malviya, 2017; Jha & Malviya, 2017). Based on the evidence of previous studies and the results of this study, when modifying HPHRMP, considering the psychological resources, including leadership skills, expertise, healthy working climate, and opportunities to promote human resources enhances employee performance. Similarly, employee engagement helps to gain more effectiveness when increasing employee role performance and modifying HPHRMP.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Conclusion

Few scholars and the World Bank have indicated that the administrative performance was not much. Therefore, the team of this study identified a problem related to employee performance in the state university system in Sri Lanka. This situation led to research in the state university context in Sri Lanka using this model. This model consists of three variables such as HPHRMP, Employee Engagement, and Role Performance. The data were collected from non-academic staff members, and the simple regression analysis and the Sobel test were conducted using SPSS version 23.0 for statistical analysis of the data.

The results were supported to confirm the model relationship and accept the alternative hypotheses. The study was concluded to confirm the efficiency of the study model. Further, it was revealed that when modifying the HPHRMP of state universities, employee engagement will increase. Through that, the employee role performance will also increase. The results of this study supported the achievement of the study objective that the Human Resource Management Practices followed by the state university system in Sri Lanka directly affected the role performance of the non-academic staff members. The results further confirmed that when increasing employee engagement of the non-academic staff members, the effect of HPHRMP on their role performance was increased. Therefore, State universities should focus on introducing psychological resources such as healthy working conditions, leadership skills, career development opportunities, and manager-employee relationships to increase employee engagement. However, this study was limited to the interest of the research team, and it was a cross-sectional study. Therefore, the data was collected only at one point in time. The study team suggested developing an extended model using other dimensions of HPHRMP, such as effective recruitment and selection, employee involvement, employee training and development, workplace environment, competency-based performance appraisal, and compensation and rewards for future research to enrich the research model, including for an extended result.

Theoretical Implications

Further, modifying psychological resources such as expertise, promotion and opportunities for human resources, healthy working climate, and leadership skills caused more engagement among the employees. However, the resource-based theory has not contributed to enhancing this kind of psychological resource. Especially modifying promotion and opportunities for human resource and leadership skills helps to modify the HPHRMP in an organization. Similarly, expertise and a healthy working climate may be affected by employee engagement. Thus, this study contributed to filling the theoretical gap. Therefore, policymakers in the state university sector should consider introducing effective HR practices such as competency-based performance appraisal, skill development and training, and good condition of the workplace to increase the role performance through employee engagement of non-academic staff members.

Practical Implications

The results of this study revealed that HPHRMP has a positive impact on role performance. Thus, enhancing employee-manager relationships, modifying the working environment, and making opportunities for promotion are psychological resources that can be introduced to enhance employee engagement without financial expenses to the universities. The management of the respective universities can ask for volunteer support from their academic members to enhance the skills and the training of the non-academic staff. Similarly, the universities have to focus on changing the existing performance appraisal practices to effective performance management systems to establish competency-based performance appraisal practices. Finally, the researcher recommends that modifying the resources previously discussed can modify the HPHRMP of universities, and the universities will be able to maintain their human resources which will show high engagement and performance.

Limitations and Avenues for Future Research

This study has some limitations, and the results of this study should be of interest to these limitations. First, the design of this study is cross-sectional. We collected data at one point in time and collected data only from the employee, which may not reflect the employer's perspective. Thus, this study suffers from common method bias and recommends that future researchers collect data from different sources over different time points. Moreover, this resource-based theory considered only a few Human Resource Practices elements. Therefore, we suggest an examination of the moderating role of psychological capital in HR work-related practice relations in other samples. Person-safe working conditions, the organization's profitability and stressful working conditions may affect such connections. Further, the study team suggested developing an extended model using other dimensions of HPHRMP, such as effective recruitment and selection, employee involvement, employee training and development, workplace environment, competency-based performance appraisal, and compensation and rewards for future research to enrich the research model, including for an extended result.

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