

The Impact of Human Resource Management on Employee Engagement in Workplace of Primostar, Shanghai

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Impact, Management, Employee

Received : 7, December

Revised : 24, December

Accepted: 29, January

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ABSTRACT

The dynamic economic landscape of Shanghai necessitates effective human resource management (HRM) strategies to engage employees, whose commitment is crucial for enhancing organizational productivity and competitiveness. Primostar, a leading company in Shanghai, faces significant challenges in maintaining employee engagement amid cultural shifts and a highly competitive market. This study aims to evaluate the impact of HRM practices, including recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation, on employee engagement at Primostar. Employing a quantitative research methodology, the study uses a cross-sectional survey design with structural equation modeling to analyze responses from 217 employees. The results reveal that all selected HRM practices significantly influence employee engagement, with performance appraisal showing the most substantial impact. This research contributes to the understanding of HRM's role in fostering employee engagement and provides actionable strategies for HR professionals to enhance workforce motivation and retention in challenging business environments.

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary global business landscape, effective human resource management (HRM) has become a cornerstone for organizational success (Susantinah & Krishernawan, 2023). Companies are increasingly recognizing that their employees are not just workers but valuable assets whose engagement directly influences productivity, innovation, and profitability (Kassa & Tsigu, 2022). Employee engagement, defined as the emotional commitment an employee has to their organization and its goals (Rameshkumar, 2020), has garnered significant attention from both practitioners and scholars. High levels of engagement are linked to reduced turnover rates, enhanced customer satisfaction, and improved financial performance (Parmenas, 2022).

Shanghai, as one of China's most dynamic economic hubs, presents unique HRM challenges and opportunities (Xu & Loang, 2024). The city's rapid development and competitive job market have intensified the need for organizations to attract, retain, and motivate top talent (Warner, 2020). Cultural factors, generational differences, and evolving employee expectations further complicate the HRM landscape (Cooke et al., 2020). In this context, understanding and improving employee engagement is not just beneficial but essential for companies operating in Shanghai to maintain a competitive edge.

At Primostar, a prominent enterprise based in Shanghai, real-world HRM issues have emerged, particularly concerning employee engagement. Despite its strong market presence, the company has experienced a noticeable decline in employee morale and commitment. Primostar has seen an increase in employee turnover rates over the past few years. There is a significant disconnect between management and staff. Employees often feel uninformed about company decisions that affect their work, leading to feelings of uncertainty and undervaluation. The company offers minimal training and development programs. Employees perceive a lack of investment in their personal growth, which diminishes their engagement and loyalty. As Primostar expands, integrating new employees into the existing corporate culture has become challenging. Diverse backgrounds and expectations lead to misunderstandings and reduced team cohesion. These issues not only affect individual performance but also hinder the organization's overall productivity and ability to innovate. Employee disengagement can lead to decreased efficiency, lower quality of work, and a negative impact on customer satisfaction.

While there are some researches on HRM and employee engagement globally, there is a lack of focused studies on these issues within the specific context of companies like Primostar in Shanghai. This gap highlights the need for research that considers local dynamics and provides tailored strategies to enhance employee engagement in this setting.

The study aims to investigate the influence of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee engagement within the workplace of Primostar in Shanghai. Specifically, it seeks to examine how various HRM strategies, such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation management, affect employee engagement. By analyzing these relationships, the study intends to provide

actionable insights that can help Primostar enhance its HR policies to foster a more engaged and productive workforce.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous studies on HRM practices

The scope of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices has significantly expanded in recent years, adapting to the evolving needs of organizations in a dynamic business environment (Groenewald et al., 2024). HRM practices are pivotal in enhancing organizational performance, employee satisfaction, and competitive advantage (Alsafadi & Altahat, 2021). While a myriad of functions fall under HRM, scholars often emphasize four core practices: recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation (Urbini et al., 2021). This study focuses on these fundamental HRM functions as they directly impact employee benefits and are crucial for the industry's success.

Effective recruitment and selection processes are critical for acquiring talent that aligns with organizational goals (Shrivastava, 2022). Strategic recruitment ensures that organizations attract a diverse pool of candidates, enhancing innovation and problem-solving capabilities (Chittimineni et al., 2024). Selection methods have evolved to include competency-based interviews and psychometric testing, improving the predictability of candidate success in roles (Lievens & Chapman, 2019).

Training and development are essential for maintaining a skilled and adaptable workforce (Gutterman, 2023). Continuous learning opportunities lead to improved employee performance and retention (Lin & Huang, 2021). The integration of technology in training programs, such as e-learning platforms and virtual simulations, has increased accessibility and effectiveness (Kimura et al., 2023). Investment in employee development is linked to higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bashir & Gani, 2020).

Performance appraisal systems are vital for assessing employee performance and providing feedback (Kaydos, 2020). When implemented fairly and transparently, they can motivate employees and identify areas for development. Modern appraisal methods, such as 360-degree feedback and Management by Objectives (MBO), offer comprehensive evaluations that consider multiple perspectives (Barreto et al., 2022). Effective performance management aligns individual objectives with organizational goals, fostering a culture of high performance (Neher & Maley, 2020).

Compensation is a significant factor influencing employee motivation and satisfaction. A well-designed compensation strategy aligns employee objectives with organizational goals (Reddy, 2020). Equitable pay and benefits are crucial for attracting and retaining talent in competitive industries. Non-monetary rewards, such as recognition programs and career advancement opportunities, also play a vital role in employee satisfaction (Hamzah & Matkhairuddin, 2023).

Previous studies on employee engagement

Employee engagement has emerged as a critical construct in organizational behavior and human resource management over the past few

decades. It reflects the level of enthusiasm and dedication an employee feels toward their job, which can significantly influence their performance and the overall success of the organization (Turner & Turner, 2020).

High levels of employee engagement have been linked to numerous positive organizational outcomes. Lambert et al. (2021) found that organizations with engaged employees experience higher customer satisfaction, increased productivity, and improved profitability. Moreover, engaged employees are less likely to leave the organization, reducing turnover costs and preserving institutional knowledge (Setiawan & Prasajo, 2021).

Several factors contribute to employee engagement. Leadership style is a significant determinant; transformational leaders who inspire and motivate employees tend to foster higher engagement levels (Li et al., 2021). Job characteristics, such as autonomy, task variety, and feedback, also play a crucial role (Han, 2021). The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model posits that job resources help employees deal with job demands and stimulate personal growth, leading to higher engagement (Radic et al., 2020).

Organizational support and a positive work environment further enhance engagement (Rasool et al., 2021). When employees perceive that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, they are more likely to be engaged (Saks, 2022). Additionally, opportunities for professional development and career advancement can increase engagement by fulfilling employees' growth needs (Susanto, 2022).

Engaged employees are more likely to exhibit proactive behaviors, going beyond their formal job requirements to contribute to organizational success (Bouckenooghe et al., 2022). They demonstrate higher levels of creativity and innovation, essential for organizational adaptability in a competitive business environment. Furthermore, employee engagement positively correlates with individual well-being, reducing stress and burnout (Lizano, 2021).

Previous studies on HRM and employee engagement

The relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices and employee engagement has been a focal point in organizational studies, highlighting how strategic HR initiatives can foster a more committed and motivated workforce.

Ma'arof et al. (2023) conducted a significant study that scrutinized the influence of specific HRM practices on employee engagement and concluded that three key HRM practices, including rewards and recognition, performance appraisal, and career development opportunities, have a strong positive impact on employee engagement. The study illustrates that when employees perceive these practices as fair and beneficial, their engagement levels tend to rise. This suggests that well-structured reward systems, regular and constructive performance evaluations, and clear career progression paths are crucial in enhancing employee motivation and commitment.

Budrienė & Diskienė (2020) add to this discourse by pinpointing the emotional aspects of employee engagement affected by HRM practices. Their findings highlight that supportive HRM practices not only improve task

performance but also bolster emotional engagement. This form of engagement is crucial as it encapsulates the emotional commitment an employee has towards their organization, which can lead to enhanced job performance. Supportive practices in HRM create a work environment that aids employees in feeling valued and understood, which in turn, fuels their enthusiasm and loyalty to the company.

Oluwatayo & Adetoro (2020) asserted that core HRM functions such as rewards, performance appraisal, and employee participation are integral to boosting employee engagement. Their research posited that employee engagement is significantly enhanced when employees are actively involved in decision-making processes and when their contributions are recognized and rewarded. They emphasize the importance of participative practices, where employees feel a sense of ownership and accountability towards their roles, which in turn enhances their engagement levels.

These studies suggest a clear trend: effective HRM practices are directly correlated with higher employee engagement. Each of the studies mentioned contributes to a better understanding of how specific HRM interventions can be strategically implemented to foster an engaged workforce. For instance, performance appraisals are often seen as a routine HR function, but when executed as a constructive feedback mechanism that promotes personal and professional growth, they can significantly enhance engagement and job satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research methodology to explore the impact of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee engagement at Primostar in Shanghai. The use of quantitative methods allows for the objective measurement of variables and the establishment of patterns in the data through statistical analysis. This approach is particularly suited to studies like this one, where the goal is to quantify relationships between structured, measurable variables.

The research design adopted for this study is a cross-sectional survey, which is effective for describing and examining relationships between variables at a specific point in time. This design is beneficial for its ability to gather data from a large number of individuals quickly and economically. It involves the use of standardized instruments that ensure the collection of reliable and comparable data across all respondents.

The sample size for this study comprises 230 employees of Primostar in Shanghai, representing a diverse mix of departments and hierarchical levels within the organization. This sample size is deemed sufficient to achieve statistical power for generalizing the findings to the entire organization. The sampling method used is stratified random sampling, ensuring that various subgroups within the organization are proportionately represented, which enhances the representativeness and generalizability of the results.

The primary instrument used in this study includes a structured questionnaire divided into two main parts. The first part assesses HRM practices

based on four dimensions as identified by Urbini et al. (2021): recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal and compensation. Each dimension is evaluated through multiple items that participants rate based on their experiences and perceptions. The second part of the questionnaire utilizes the Employee Engagement Scale developed by Sahni (2021). This scale is chosen for its robust psychometric properties, including validity and reliability, making it an appropriate tool for assessing the level of engagement among employees at Primostar.

The distribution of the questionnaires is carried out through the WJX platform, a popular online survey tool in China that allows for efficient and anonymous data collection. A total of 230 questionnaires are distributed, and 217 valid responses are ultimately collected. The high response rate of approximately 94% adds to the robustness of the study, reducing the potential for non-response bias and enhancing the reliability of the findings.

For data analysis, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) path analysis is utilized. SEM is an advanced statistical technique that allows for the testing of complex relationships among research variables. The use of SEM is justified given the multivariate nature of the study, where multiple dimensions of HRM practices and facets of employee engagement are simultaneously analyzed.

By employing these methodological approaches, the study aims to investigate and elucidate the relationship between HRM practices and employee engagement within Primostar, thereby contributing valuable insights that could guide strategic HR initiatives aimed at enhancing engagement and, by extension, organizational performance.

RESEARCH RESULT

The data analysis for this study utilized Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices and employee engagement at Primostar in Shanghai. SEM was chosen for its capability to handle multiple relationships simultaneously and provide a clear depiction of direct and indirect effects between observed and latent variables.

SEM utilized to investigate the impact of four key HRM practices, including recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation, on various dimensions of employee engagement. The model was constructed to test hypotheses about direct relationships between these HRM practices and the overall employee engagement.

Figure 1 presents the SEM path diagram, illustrating the relationships between the four dimensions of HRM practices and employee engagement. This visual representation helps in understanding the flow and strength of relationships within the model.

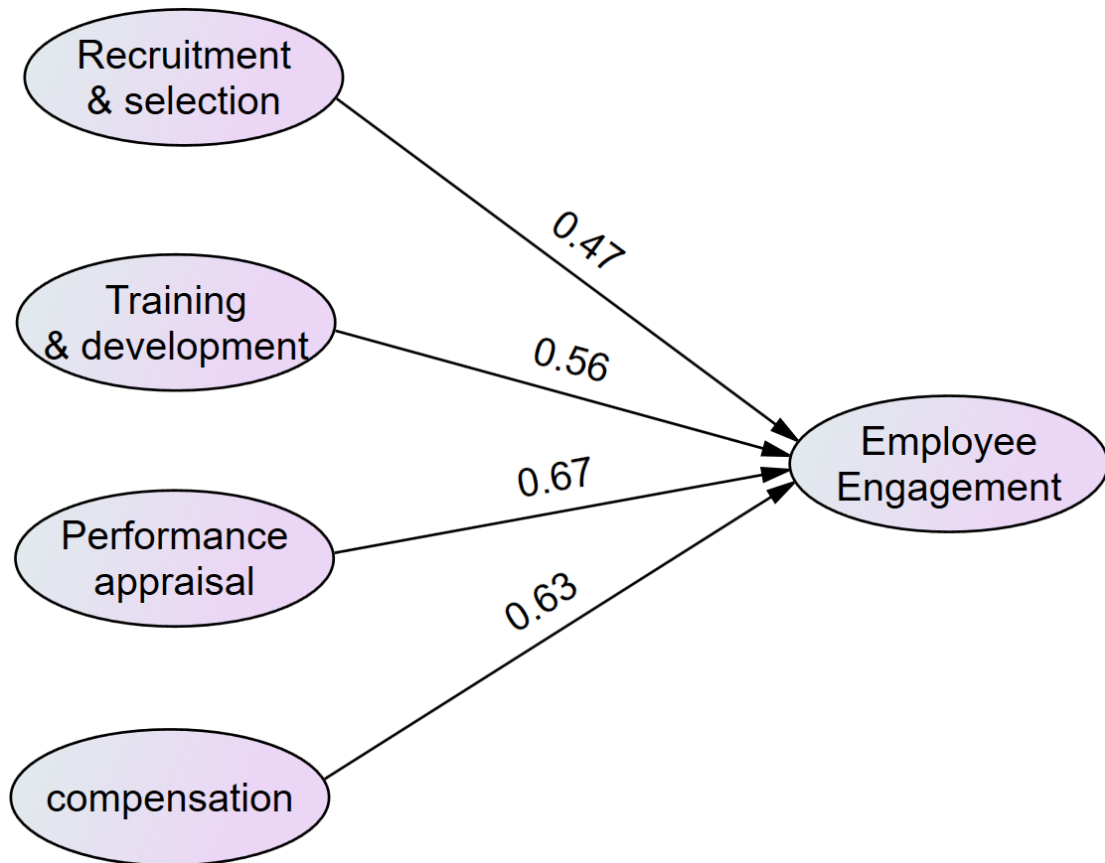


Figure 1. Path Analysis Results

Table 1 presents the statistical data from the SEM path analysis results. The paths from dimensions of HRM practices to employee engagement are detailed to show the influence of each HRM element on employee engagement. In order to conduct the analysis process, the study uses some symbols to represent the latent variables. The symbol RS is used to represent recruitment & selection and TD is adopted to represent training & development. The symbol PA is utilized to represent performance appraisal, and CO is employed for representing compensation. And the symbol EE is adopted to represent employee engagement.

Table 1 Statistical Data from The SEM Path Analysis Results

Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Std Path coefficient
EE <--- RS	0.573	0.057	10.053	0.000	0.471
EE <--- TD	0.661	0.061	10.836	0.000	0.558
EE <--- PA	0.767	0.066	11.621	0.000	0.666
EE <--- CO	0.632	0.062	10.194	0.000	0.629

The findings from the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis demonstrate that all four examined HRM practices, which includes recruitment

and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation, have substantial positive impacts on employee engagement.

The SEM path analysis results highlight that the recruitment and selection practices at Primostar play a pivotal role in influencing employee engagement. With an estimate of 0.573 and a standardized path coefficient of 0.471, these practices are critical in ensuring that employees are well-aligned with the organizational goals from the onset. This alignment is vital as it fosters a sense of belonging and purpose among new hires, which is a crucial determinant of early engagement levels. Effective recruitment strategies, including precise job matching and the integration of competency-based assessments, help in attracting and selecting candidates who are not only skilled but also culturally fit with the company's values and vision, thereby promoting higher engagement.

Training and development emerged as another significant HRM practice with an estimate of 0.661 and a standardized path coefficient of 0.558. This dimension underscores the organization's commitment to continuous professional growth, which resonates well with employee aspirations for advancement and learning. The investment in comprehensive training programs and development opportunities at Primostar facilitates career progression and skill enhancement. This not only helps in maintaining a competitive workforce but also significantly boosts employee engagement by making personnel feel valued and invested in, leading to increased loyalty and job satisfaction.

Performance appraisal had the strongest influence on employee engagement among the studied HRM practices, with a path coefficient of 0.666. The estimate of 0.767 indicates that transparent and fair appraisal systems are instrumental in enhancing employee engagement at Primostar. Performance appraisals that are consistently conducted and provide constructive feedback contribute to a transparent work environment where employees understand their contributions and see clear pathways for personal and professional growth. Such systems encourage open communication between supervisors and their teams, fostering trust and further embedding employees into the organizational fabric.

Compensation also plays a vital role, with a path coefficient of 0.629 and an estimate of 0.632. This finding corroborates the theory that competitive and equitable compensation packages are fundamental to employee retention and satisfaction. At Primostar, a well-structured compensation system that aligns with market standards and employee contributions has proven effective. This system includes not only monetary benefits but also non-monetary rewards such as recognition programs, which enhance the overall job satisfaction and encourage employees to engage more deeply with their roles and the organization.

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis conducted for the study at Primostar in Shanghai offers compelling evidence on the influence of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee engagement. The four key HRM dimensions, including recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation, all demonstrated significant positive effects on employee engagement, underscoring their critical

roles within the organizational framework. Specifically, performance appraisal showed the strongest impact, highlighting the importance of transparent and constructive feedback mechanisms in fostering employee commitment and satisfaction. Training and development also significantly contributed to engagement, emphasizing the value of continuous professional growth and skill enhancement in enhancing job satisfaction and employee retention. Furthermore, effective recruitment and selection processes were shown to align new hires with organizational goals effectively, promoting early engagement, while equitable and competitive compensation strategies were essential in boosting employee loyalty and overall job satisfaction. These findings collectively affirm that HRM practices are pivotal in cultivating a highly engaged workforce, thereby enhancing organizational performance and competitiveness.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this study reinforce the significant role of human resource management (HRM) practices in enhancing employee engagement. The study conducted at Primostar in Shanghai provides robust support for the established theory that effective HRM practices are directly correlated with increased employee engagement levels, a critical factor in organizational success.

The positive impact of recruitment and selection on employee engagement found in this study echoes the findings of Dessler (2019) and Bratton & Gold (2017), who emphasized the importance of strategic recruitment in aligning employee goals with organizational objectives. This alignment is crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and purpose right from the onset, which significantly contributes to sustained employee engagement. By implementing effective recruitment strategies that focus on cultural fit and job competency, organizations can ensure that new hires are well-equipped to integrate seamlessly into the corporate culture, thereby enhancing their engagement levels.

Similarly, the significant positive effect of training and development on employee engagement observed in this study aligns with the research of Noe et al. (2019) and Jehanzeb & Bashir (2013). These studies highlighted the critical role of continuous learning opportunities in promoting employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. At Primostar, the emphasis on comprehensive training programs substantiates the notion that investment in employee growth is not just beneficial for skill enhancement but is also a key driver of engagement. Employees who perceive that their personal and professional development is valued are more likely to feel committed to the organization, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and engagement.

The findings on performance appraisal reinforce the work of Aguinis (2019) and Murphy (2020), who argued that transparent and fair appraisal systems are instrumental in motivating employees and fostering a culture of high performance. In this study, performance appraisal had the strongest influence on employee engagement, highlighting the importance of regular and constructive feedback. Such feedback not only clarifies expectations but also helps in

recognizing employee efforts, thereby fostering a positive work environment where employees are motivated to excel and engage with their roles.

The positive correlation between compensation and employee engagement supports the findings of Milkovich et al. (2017) and Gupta & Shaw (2014), who found that equitable compensation is fundamental in enhancing employee motivation and satisfaction. At Primostar, the implementation of a competitive compensation strategy that includes both monetary and non-monetary rewards has proven effective in retaining talent and enhancing employee satisfaction. This approach not only aligns employee objectives with those of the organization but also encourages deeper engagement with their roles and the company.

In sum, the study underscores the positive influence of various HRM practices on employee engagement. By aligning recruitment and selection processes, fostering continuous development opportunities, maintaining transparent performance appraisal systems, and offering competitive compensation packages, organizations like Primostar can significantly enhance their workforce's engagement levels. These findings not only validate previous research but also offer actionable insights for HR professionals looking to implement effective strategies to boost employee engagement in dynamic and competitive environments like Shanghai.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study conducted at Primostar in Shanghai has unequivocally demonstrated that Human Resource Management (HRM) practices have a profound impact on employee engagement, thereby substantiating the essential role of effective HRM in fostering a highly motivated and committed workforce. This research, grounded in empirical evidence obtained through robust statistical analysis, has shown that strategic HRM interventions, specifically in recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation, significantly enhance employee engagement. Recruitment and selection processes that emphasize cultural fit and job competency are pivotal in aligning new hires with organizational objectives from the onset, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose that is critical for sustained engagement.

Moreover, the study highlights the transformative power of training and development programs in promoting continuous professional growth, which not only enhances skill sets but also boosts job satisfaction and loyalty. Performance appraisals, when conducted transparently and fairly, provide essential feedback that aids in clarifying employee roles and acknowledging their contributions, thus cultivating a positive work environment and enhancing engagement. Additionally, a well-structured compensation strategy that includes equitable monetary and non-monetary rewards plays a crucial role in retaining talent and motivating employees, thereby encouraging deeper connection with their roles and the organization.

The findings from Primostar resonate with existing literature and underscore the indispensable influence of comprehensive HRM practices on the overall organizational health and competitiveness. By adopting targeted HR

strategies that address the specific needs and aspirations of their workforce, companies operating in dynamic business environments like Shanghai can achieve higher levels of employee engagement, leading to improved organizational performance, innovation, and profitability. This study not only contributes valuable insights into the HRM-engagement nexus but also provides a strategic blueprint for HR professionals aiming to cultivate an engaged workforce in a competitive global market.

ADVANCE RESEARCH

The research conducted at Primostar in Shanghai provides a compelling foundation for advancing scholarly exploration into the intricate relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) practices and employee engagement. Future studies could delve deeper into the nuanced mechanisms through which specific HR interventions impact various dimensions of engagement, such as emotional, cognitive, and behavioral commitment. Additionally, examining the interplay of organizational culture, leadership styles, and technological integration with HRM practices could yield valuable insights into how these factors collectively influence employee engagement in diverse organizational settings. Comparative analyses across industries, regions, or organizational sizes could further illuminate contextual variances and identify best practices tailored to unique operational environments. Furthermore, longitudinal studies tracking the long-term effects of HRM strategies on employee engagement and organizational outcomes would enhance understanding of the sustainability and adaptability of these practices in rapidly evolving business landscapes. By extending the scope of research, scholars and practitioners can better equip organizations with evidence-based frameworks that not only bolster engagement but also foster innovation, resilience, and competitive advantage in an increasingly interconnected global economy.

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