



A STUDY ON HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (HRD) PRACTICES IN INDIAN BANKS

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Abstract

Human Resources (HR) assume a very important role in banking industry for providing better services to the customer with a smile in order to cultivate and maintain long lasting relationship with their customers. The HR is the most important element for the progress of banking in India. The technology can improve speed and quality of performance, but at the same time, it can also unleash the risk factor. It is a recognized fact that human resources occupy a unique and sensitive position in banking sector; no meaningful change is possible without the involvement of their employees. In this paper, an attempt is made to compare the HRD practices, climate and organizational effectiveness in both Public Sector and New Private Sector Banks.

Key Words: *Human Resources, Banking, Private Sector.*

Introduction

The role of HRD inseparable from business; their practical role is to provide learning opportunities for employees. The execution of HRD activities in banks is a shared responsibility of HRD professionals, managers and employees. The adoption of professionalized HRD practices in India is a recent phenomenon, but has gained the momentum in the past ten years. Banks are now looking upto HRD departments for innovative approaches and solutions to improve the productivity and quality of work life, while adequately coping with an environment changed with high uncertainty and intense global competition. Changing workforce demographics, competing in global economy, eliminating the skills gap, need for life-long learning and organizational learning are some of the challenges that HRD facing in Banks. Banking is a service industry which delivers its services across the counter to the ultimate customer. The activities of banking industry are all about 'relationship'. Hence, Human Resources (HR) assume a very important role in banking industry for providing better services to the customer with a smile in order to cultivate and maintain long lasting relationship with their customers. Notwithstanding the level of technology, banking being a labour intensive service sector, can sustain its effectiveness and committed service only by giving importance to human resource management/ development; technology is only an aid to human effort and not a substitution there of. If technology is the equalizer, then the human capital shall be the differential in future. The HR is the most important element for the progress of banking in India. Though technology can replace manual intervention, the thinking process is the exclusive. The technology can improve speed and quality of performance, but at the same time, it can also unleash the risk factor. It is a recognized fact that human resources occupy a unique and sensitive position in banking sector; no meaningful change is possible without the involvement of their employees. Therefore, banks have come to terms with the significant changes to adapt themselves to new competitive environment. The adoption is now in organizing and preparing its human resources to the requirement of competitive banking.

Need and Significance of the Study

HRD involves all management decisions and practices that direct, affect or influence the Human Resources in the banks. In recent years, increased attention comes from the realization that the bank employees enable the banks to achieve its goals and the management and development of these resources is critical to a bank's success. HRD in a growing economy like India is the need of the hour and undoubtedly, banking sector is the most effective instrument for India's economic development; hence developing human resources for this sector has become essential to achieve the national objectives. In spite of the rapid technological advancements, human resource remains the backbone of the organizational structure of Indian banks, which undertake the crucial responsibility of transforming their operational system into a modern one. HRM and HRD practices have to play a vital role in the stability and growth strategies of commercial banks. Since there is a dearth of studies in this area for recognizing the pivotal position of Indian banks in developing the nation's socio-economic structure, it is found necessary to empirically test the extent of HRD practices in the Banking Industry.

Review of Literature

Patel M K (2003)¹ compared high performing nationalized bank with low performing nationalized banks in Gujarat State with the data collected from 100 employees. The study concluded that low performing banks were required to take a serious look at the HRD variables and educate the employees. Leeamornsiri & Joseph Nantawut (2005)² conducted a study to investigate the perceptions of human resource professional in five Thai banks about the HRD competencies and programs used during the merger and acquisition process. Twenty-six HR professional who were currently working in five Thai banks that had undergone mergers and acquisitions in the past five years responded to this study. Shete N B (1998)³ examined the present status of the staff working with the rural branches, their postings; agricultural field officers and customer services. Sangwan D S (2005)⁴ identified the important strategies of HRM in banks such as recruitment, performance appraisal, training, job security, promotion, reward, incentives, and morale. Alok Kumar Banerjee (2004)⁵ highlighted certain critical HR issues in the banking sector in respect of a large scale survey conducted by NIBM on the opinion of bank employees from 15 public sector banks in all regions of India covering about 7000 employees both officers and clerks from about 1500 branches.

Statement of the Problem

The economic environment has posed new challenges as well as opportunities to the banks in India. To survive in an intensively competitive market, banks must measure up to in terms of efficiency– both market related and internal. Thus, the task of HRD will irresistibly be the central and to swerve from it is to destroy the fabric of banking itself. Despite the fact that commercial banks are one of the biggest employers in the country and have been working as public sector undertakings since 1969, studies dealing with the human resources development in commercial banks in India are scanty. Nevertheless, there are a few studies, dealing with the various aspects of human resource management/development in banks. The research problem is fragmented into specifics and presented in the following sections as objectives.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the present research study:

1. To know the comparative performance of HRD practices in select Public and New Private Sector Banks, and
2. To make appropriate suggestions for improvement of HRD in Indian Banking Sector.

Methodology of the study

The methodology of the study is based on the primary as well as secondary data. The Secondary data is collected from books, journals, magazines, websites, records, thesis etc., the study depends mainly on the primary data collected through a well-framed and structured questionnaire to elicit the well-considered opinions of the respondents. The Multi-Stage Random Sampling is adopted to obtain the responses from the managers of both Public and New Private Sector Banks. The primary data collected through a structured questionnaire from 400 managers of PSBs, 150 managers of NPSBs of the select banks are analyzed.

Analysis of Data

The primary data collected from the managers of both PSBs, NPSBs are analyzed by using the SPSS Package version 12.00, and the following statistical tools are used to obtain torrent of results regarding the objectives of the study. They are Factor Analysis, Cluster and Discriminant Analysis, One-Sample t-test, One-way Analysis of Variance, Z test, and Karlpearson co-efficient of correlation.

Need for HRD in PSBs and NPSBs

In this section, 13 variables of HRD needs and their total mean scores of respective Public Sector and New Private Sector Banks are considered along with their standard deviation. By applying paired ‘Z’ test, the following results are obtained.

Table 1.1, ‘Z’ test for significant difference in HRD needs

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.89	0.46	5.36	0.000
NPSBs	4.09	0.36		

From the above table 1.1, it is found that z value = 5.36, p value = 0.000. It is further concluded that there is a significant difference between HRD needs of PSBs and NPSBs. The NPSBs driven by the HRD needs have become down to earth to meet the customer needs. In the PSBs, the same of vigour in ‘need for HRD’ is not found.

Objectives of HRD practices in PSBs and NPSBs

All 10 variables of objectives of HRD practices and their total mean scores of respective PSBs and NPSBs are taken into account along with their SD. The following results are obtained by applying ‘Z’ test.

Table 1.2, ‘Z’ test for significant difference in objectives of HRD practices

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.82	0.69	9.5236	0.000
NPSBs	4.30	0.45		

From the table 1.2, it is ascertained that ‘Z’ value = 9.52, p value = 0.000. Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant difference between PSBs and NPSBs with respect to objectives of HRD practices. The objectives of HRD practices in NPSBs are more pronounced to bring in the individual and organizational development. However, in the case of PSBs, they do not scale the level of NPSBs. The respondents of NPSBs find the objectives of HRD practices as instrumental for the effective implementation of HRD practices.

Performance Appraisal System in PSBs and NPSBs

In this part, all 13 variables of performance appraisal system are considered along with their total mean scores and respective standard deviations. By adopting ‘Z’ test, the following results are obtained.

Table 1.3, ‘Z’ test for significant difference in Performance Appraisal System

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.32	0.69	10.71	0.000
NPSBs	3.86	0.45		

It is found from the above table 1.3, that Z value = 10.71, p value = 0.000. It is concluded that there is a significant difference between PSBs and NPSBs with respect to their performance appraisal system. It is identified that the NPSBs are following standardized/goal oriented performance appraisal system to their employees to maximize the results. However, this process of appraising employees in PSBs is not given due consideration to measure the strength and weaknesses of the employees in their performance. The performance appraisal system in NPSBs provides a conducive atmosphere to the employees leading to their performance. In the case of PSBs, the appraisal system is implemented as a mechanical process.

Comparing Training and Development in PSBs and NPSBs

In this section, all the 14 variables of training and development are taken into account along with their total mean scores and standard deviations of respective PSBs and NPSBs for the purpose of applying ‘Z’ test. The following results are obtained and presented below:

Table 1.4, ‘Z’ test for significant difference in Training and Development

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.89	0.46	5.36	0.000
NPSBs	4.09	0.36		

From the above table 1.4, it is found that ‘Z’ value = 4.70, p value = 0.000. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant difference between PSBs and NPSBs with respect to their training and development. It is objectively concluded that the training and development programmes in NPSBs are need-based, goal oriented and of short duration. However, in PSBs, the training and development process is flexible and circumstances oriented.

Other HRD practices in PSBs and NPSBs

In this segment, 7 variables of other HRD practices are considered and their total mean scores are considered along with their respective standard deviations. The paired ‘Z’ test is applied and the following results are obtained:

Table 1.5, ‘Z’ test for significant difference in other HRD practices

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.41	0.65	3.22	0.0013
NPSBs	3.58	0.51		

From the above table 1.5, it is ascertained that ‘Z’ value = 3.22, p value = 0.0013. It is concluded that there is a significant difference between the PSBs and NPSBs with respect to other HRD practices. It is strongly inferred that human resource information system, total quality management, competency mapping and quality of work life are followed in NPSBs innovatively. In addition, the respondents in the NPSBs are more concerned about competency mapping and quality of work life. However, the PSBs give moderate importance to these variables of other HRD practices.

Problems and Difficulties in implementation of HRD Practices in PSBs and NPSBs

In this sector, all the 12 variables of problems and difficulties in implementation of HRD practices are taken into account along with their total mean scores and standard deviations of respective PSBs and NPSBs for the purpose of applying ‘Z’ test. The following results are obtained and presented below:

Table 1.6, ‘Z’ test for significant difference in other Problems and Difficulties in implementing HRD practices

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.33	0.61	7.36	0.000
NPSBs	2.92	0.64		

From the above table 1.6, it is found that ‘Z’ value = 7.36, p value = 0.000. It is concluded that there is a significant difference between PSBs and NPSBs with respect to problems and difficulties in the implementing HRD practices. Therefore, it is concluded that the problems and difficulties in implementing HRD practices in the NPSBs differ as demanded by their nature of work. In the PSBs, the administration finds no hurdles in implementing the various elements of HRD practices.

HRD Climate in PSBs and NPSBs

In this sector, 21 variables of HRD climate are taken into account along with their total mean scores and standard deviations of respective PSBs and NPSBs for the purpose of applying ‘Z’ test. The following results are obtained and presented below:

Table 1.7, ‘Z’ test for significant difference in HRD Climate

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.33	0.62	10.35	0.000
NPSBs	3.79	0.39		

From the above table 1.7, it is found that ‘Z’ value = 10.35, p value = 0.000. It is concluded that there is a significant difference between PSBs and NPSBs with respect to their HRD climate. It is concluded that the HRD climate is different in NPSBs in terms of general climate, HRD mechanism climate and risk management. The HRD climate variables in NPSBs are present and active to achieve the organizational effectiveness. However, the HRD climate in PSBs is not competent enough to take any change in the organizational setup.

HRD Outcomes in PSBs and NPSBs

In this section, 21 variables of HRD climate are taken into account along with their total mean scores and standard deviations of respective PSBs and NPSBs for the purpose of applying ‘Z’ test. The following results are obtained and presented below:

Table 1.8, ‘Z’ test for significant difference in HRD Outcomes

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.55	0.67	0.56	0.5746
NPSBs	3.58	0.51		

From the above table 1.8, it is found that ‘Z’ value = 0.56, p value = 0.5746. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between the PSBs and NPSBs with respect to HRD outcomes. Therefore, the conclusion is that the HRD outcome variables do not differ significantly between PSBs and NPSBs. The

PSBs and NPSBs share the common ground in their objective of attaining both individual and organizational goals.

Organizational Effectiveness in PSBs and NPSBs

In this segment, all 12 variables of organizational effectiveness are considered along with their total mean scores and standard deviations of respective PSBs and NPSBs for the purpose of applying 'Z' test. The following results are obtained and presented below:

Table 1.9, 'Z' test for significant difference in Organizational Effectiveness

Name of the bank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z value	Significance
PSBs	3.66	0.63	7.86	0.000
NPSBs	4.06	0.49		

From the above table 1.9, it is found that 'Z' value = 7.86, p value = 0.000. The inevitable conclusion is that there exists a significant difference between the PSBs and NPSBs regarding their organizational effectiveness. It is concluded that the implementation of HRD practices has obtained radical effectiveness in the NPSBs than PSBs. The NPSBs implement their HRD practices in tune with their organizational goals to derive the maximum benefit out of them.

A comparative study of impact of personal and organizational profile on various hrd factors of PSBs and NPSBs

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is exploited to identify the significant difference in the mean values of different classification of personal and organizational profile of the employees. The personal and organizational variables i.e. Age, Gender, Designation, Educational Qualification, Total Service, Managerial Service, and Monthly Income are taken for performing the one-way ANOVA. In the PSBs, the HRD needs, Objectives of HRD, HRD practices, HRD climate, HRD outcomes and Organizational Effectiveness have emerged in the form of 24 factors. However, in the case of the NPSBs, the factors that emerged swell to 40 in number. When the influence of personal and organizational profiles on these factors is compared the following differences surface:

Age wise comparison

The age of the employees in PSBs does not influence any of the factors of HRD, whereas in the NPSBs the age group of the employees influences the factors 'Change Management', 'Acceptance', 'Internal Defects', 'Resistance', 'Modern Techniques', 'Risk Management' and 'Perceptive Advantages'. It is microscopically identified that the age of the employees in PSBs does not have any relationship with the mentality of the employees in taking on the HRD practices and their consequences. In the case of NPSBs, the middle-aged employees and young employees have different opinion in understanding the change management techniques and accomplishment. They have also understood the internal defects, resistance, and modern techniques in a different way. The risk management and perceptive advantages are entirely imbibed by the employees with different age group.

Gender wise comparison

The gender influences two factors 'Change Management' and 'External Learning'. In the case of NPSBs the gender influences six factors namely 'Change Management', 'Career Advancement', 'Training Infrastructure', 'Participative Management', 'Resistance' and 'Cultural Changes'. This shows that the male and female employees in PSBs understand the consequences of change management and external learning in a different way. Especially the male employees in PSBs have more awareness of HRD

practices than their female counterparts. In the NPSBs, the male employees have an enormous awareness on change management, and career advancement compared to the female employees. Similarly, the awareness of male employees is predominant in their analytic views about training infrastructure, participative management, resistance, and cultural change.

Designation wise comparison

In the PSBs, the designation of the employees influences the factors ‘Training Mechanism’, ‘External Learning’ and ‘OCTAPACE’. However in the case of NPSBs, the designation of the employees influences the factors ‘Imperatives’, ‘Change Management’, ‘Restructurisation’, ‘Work Environment’, ‘Personality Development’, ‘Team Building’, ‘Futuristic Strategy’, ‘Feedback’, ‘Career Advancement’, ‘Loyalty’, ‘Quality Management’, ‘Participative Management’, ‘Accomplishment’, ‘Internal Defects’, ‘Modern Techniques’, ‘Cultural Change’, ‘General Climate’, ‘Risk Management’ and ‘Perceptive advantages’. An in-depth analysis unearths that the chief managers in PSBs are more thoughtful of the training mechanism, external learning, and OCTAPACE culture than senior, deputy, and assistant managers. In the NPSBs, the chief managers have massive awareness about the imperatives, restructuring process, organizational environment, personality development, career advancement, accomplishment, modern techniques, and risk management, whereas the assistant managers encompass are conscious about the change management techniques, feedback of performance appraisal system, participative management techniques and internal defects in the implementation of HRD practices, cultural changes and general climate of HRD climate survey, and the perceptive advantages of organizational effectiveness. The senior managers and deputy managers encompass acquaintance about the other factors namely team building, futuristic strategy, loyalty and quality management. This leads to the conclusion that the chief managers undertake an important task in planning and executing the HRD practices in NPSBs.

Educational Qualification wise comparison

In PSBs the educational qualification influences eight factors namely ‘Change Management’, ‘HRD Pre-requisites’, ‘Restructurisation’, ‘Introspection’, ‘Accountability’, ‘Internal Orientation’, ‘External Learning’ and ‘Perceptive Advantages’. In the case of NPSBs, the educational qualification influences nine factors ‘Imperatives’, ‘Change Management’, ‘Work Environment’, ‘Personality Development’, ‘Work Culture’, ‘Review’, ‘Employees Commitment’, ‘Participative Management’ and ‘Risk Management’. It is microscopically identified that the PG and the professionally qualified respondents in PSBs evince more responsiveness to the factors HRD pre-requisites, restructuring, introspection of performance appraisal system, internal orientation for effective implementation of HRD practices and external learning. The UG qualified respondents in PSBs are aware of the change management process and accountability of employee welfare system. In the case of the NPSBs, PG qualified respondents have clear understanding of the significance of the imperatives, personality development, and risk management process. The PG and professionally qualified respondents in NPSBs have deep understanding about the work culture, review, employee’s commitment, and participative management. Some of the factors namely change management process, and work environment are well known to the UG qualified respondents in NPSBs. It is finally concluded that the PG and professionally qualified respondents in NPSBs are constructive enough to carry out the task of implementing the HRD practices.

Total Service wise comparison

Total services of the employees in PSBs do not influence any of the factors of HRD, whereas in the NPSBs the total service of the employees influences ‘Change Management’, ‘Work Environment’,

'Team Building', 'Personality Development', 'Guiding Value', 'Training Infrastructure', 'Accomplishment', 'Internal Defects', 'Resistance', 'External Learning' and 'Perceptive Advantages'. It is microscopically identified that the total services of the employees in PSBs do not have any association with the attitude of the employees in absorbing the HRD practices and their outcomes. It is concluded that the respondents in the category of total service with less than 10, 11-20, 21-30 and more than 30 years share the same positive opinion about all the factors of HRD. In the case of NPSBs, the respondents in the category of total service with more than 30 years have diverse outlook in accepting the change management techniques, work environment, team building, and perceptive advantages. The respondents in the category of total service with 11-20 years have an assorted attitude in accommodating personality development, guiding value, and training infrastructure. The respondents in the category of total service with less than 10 years have varied attitudes in accepting the internal defects and resistance. It is concluded that the various factors of HRD are perceived differently by different groups of respondents with total service spanning less than 10 years, 11-20 years, 21-30 years and more than 30 years.

Managerial Service wise comparison

The managerial service of the employees in PSBs influences only one factor 'External Learning'. In the case of NPSBs, the managerial service of the employees influences 'Change Management', 'Work Environment', 'Team Building', 'Personality Development', 'Guiding Value', 'Review', 'Feedback', 'Training Infrastructure', 'Inductive Training', 'Resistance', 'Modern Techniques' and 'Perceptive Advantages'. An in-depth analysis exposed that the respondents in the category of managerial service with more than 30 years in PSBs are more attentive about external learning programmes. In the case of NPSBs, the respondents in the category of total service with more than 30 years have diverse viewpoint in accepting the change management techniques, work environment, team building, review, and feedback. The respondents in the category of total service with 11-20 years have assorted attitude in accommodating the personality development, guiding value, and training infrastructure. The respondents in the category of total service with less than 10 years have varied attitude in undertaking the inductive training methods. The respondents in the category of total service with 21-30 years have a mixed approach to resistance while implementing HRD practices, modern techniques and perceptive advantages. It is finally concluded that the various factors of HRD are seen differently by different groups of respondents with the managerial service of less than 10 years, 11-20 years, 21-30 years and more than 30 years.

Monthly Income wise comparison

The monthly income of the employees in PSBs influences two factors 'HRD Pre-requisites', 'Resistance'. In the case of NPSBs, the monthly income of the employees influences 'Pre-requisites', 'Change Management', 'Restructurisation', 'Work Environment', 'Personality Development', 'Futuristic Strategy', 'Guiding Value', 'Awareness', 'Training Mechanism', 'Orientation', 'Accommodative Approach', 'Accomplishment', 'Internal Defects', 'Internal Orientation', 'External Learning', 'Cultural Changes', 'Risk Management' and 'Perceptive Advantages'. It is microscopically identified that the respondents in PSBs who are earning less than Rs.15000 as monthly income are more anxious about the HRD pre-requisites and resistance of problems and difficulties in implementing HRD practices. In the case of NPSBs, the respondents who are earning less than Rs.15000 as monthly income have additional perception about the change management techniques, restructuring, accomplishment, cultural changes, risk management, and perceptive advantages. The respondents who are in the monthly income group of Rs.15001-25000 have considerable understanding about the factors of awareness, orientation of job rotation, and internal orientation of suggestions for effective implementation of HRD

practices, internal defects, and external learning. The respondents who are in the monthly income group of more than Rs.35000 have reasonable knowledge about pre-requisites, work environment, personality development, futuristic strategy, guiding value, and accommodative approach. It is concluded that the various factors of HRD are comprehended in a different ways among the various respondents with monthly income groups in NPSBs.

Major Findings of the Study

1. It is found that the managers in PSBs have identified the indispensability of Change Management, Re-structuration, and Pre-requisites for the successful implementation of HRD practices.
2. It is found that in PSBs, the organizational climate is suitable to practice HRD with no roadblocks to enhance both individual and organizational efficiency.
3. It is found that three different heterogeneous clusters towards the factors of HRD Climate, Problems and Difficulties in implementation of HRD Practices, Suggestions for effective implementation, HRD Outcomes and Organizational Effectiveness exist among the managers of PSBs. The managers of different designations are equally distributed among all the three clusters.
4. It is found that, based on the perception of employees in NPSBs about the factors of factors of HRD Climate, Problems and Difficulties in implementation of HRD Practices, Suggestions for effective implementation, HRD Outcomes and Organizational Effectiveness' there exists two groups of employees. The managers of different designations are equally distributed between the two clusters.

Suggestions of the Study

1. It is suggested that the appraisal data should be used by the banks not only for promotion decisions but also for identification of staff training need, job placements, including overseas postings, job enrichment and enlargement, and career planning.
2. It is suggested that the training systems in PSBs and NPSBs should be reoriented. They should be kept in a state of readiness to meet the changing requirements. To spread knowledge to large mass of employees all over the country, banks could initiate activities for on-line training system. The managers should realize that training increases organizational and personality development, which in turn leads to productivity.
3. It is suggested that the concept of linking of career path and training should be implemented both in PSBs and NPSBs. Banks should develop appropriate career strategy to integrate specialists in the banking system. The career path should indicate the degree of knowledge/skills required at different levels.
4. It is suggested that the Survey about HRD Practices should be carried out in the banks every year and findings of these surveys should be interpreted and published for the benefit of employees. It is the responsibility of the PSBs and NPSBs, to take steps to remove or minimize stress among the employees by providing better work environment.
5. Job rotation acts as an internal check i.e. preventive vigilance measure against fraud, mistakes, and procedural lapses. Therefore, this should be practiced both in PSBs and NPSBs.
6. There is a need for benchmarking various organizational systems including HRD with the world-class processes and systems so that the international quality standards in service delivery permeate Indian banking sector.



Conclusion

The HRD managers as well as the employees, especially in the higher cadre, need to update their knowledge and skills constantly, and consciously. Technology is changing the world at a frightening speed. Therefore, the ongoing process of training and learning should not only be based on sound and proven theories and concepts, but also laced with practical aspects and implementation. Overall, the HRD enables the employees to make a long-term commitment to all the managerial values narrated above and to build a good employer-employee relationship. To become world-class banks, it is therefore clear that PSBs and NPSBs have to embrace and enthusiastically implement world-class HRD practices. With India emerging as a dominant knowledge power, it is only in the fitness of things that Indian Banks too should accord high value to human capital and take momentous steps forward to reach world class HR capital adequacy.

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