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Scope of Human Resources Management in Educational Leadership and Management in Institutions in Pakistan: Challenges and Remedial Measures

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Abstract

Human Resource Management is crucial to schools and other educational institutions because it provides qualified candidates for positions. Pakistani educational institutions face HRM concerns such as political involvement, culture, and inadequate resources. These obstacles prevent the integration of HRM practices and hinder their alignment with institutional strategic initiatives. This article discusses HRM methods in Pakistani educational organizations, significant concerns, and how they affect strategic direction. Interviews with educational leaders and structured survey questionnaires are used in the work. Poor staff involvement, outdated staff training, and opposition to innovative HRM approaches worsened by political influence and insufficient resources are internal risks. The report emphasizes the necessity for effective leadership development programs and ideal HRM models that follow international principles for local conditions. Innovation, personnel development, and policy changes to decrease political influence and funding are recommended.

Keywords: Human Resource Management (HRM), Educational institutions, Political involvement, Inadequate resources, Strategic initiatives

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Human Resource Management is crucial to schools and other educational institutions because it provides qualified candidates for positions. Pakistani educational institutions face HRM concerns such as political involvement, culture, and inadequate resources. These obstacles prevent the integration of HRM practices and hinder their alignment with institutional strategic initiatives. This article discusses HRM methods in Pakistani educational organizations, significant concerns, and how they affect strategic direction. Interviews with educational leaders and structured survey questionnaires are used in the work. Poor staff involvement, outdated staff training, and opposition to innovative HRM approaches worsened by political influence and insufficient resources are internal risks. The report emphasizes the necessity for effective leadership development programs and ideal HRM models that follow international principles for local conditions. Innovation, personnel development, and policy changes to decrease political influence and funding are recommended.

Keywords: [Human Resource Management \(HRM\)](#), [Educational institutions](#), [Political involvement](#), [Inadequate resources](#), [Strategic initiatives](#)

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Introduction

Through Background and Context

Administrative Human Resources or HRM is another essential function in educational institutions as the

success and efficiency in recruitment, staff development, and staff retention are determinants of competent staffing, which has a direct relation with the quality of education and the performance of a given institution. HRM in educational institutions in



Pakistan is quite challenging due to some of the factors such as political influence towards decisions of the institutions, culture, and financial limitations that may hinder the adoption of good practices in the management of human resources. Thus, it can be argued that it is crucial to focus on HRM practices to ensure that experienced and competent professionals are hired and maintained within institutions, and this in turn positively influences the students' achievements and organizational performance.

Problem Statement

Different organizations based in Pakistan are characterized by several HRM issues that have an impact on the institutions' outcomes and education quality. Such challenges include; political interferences, culture, financial constraints, and the old practices that are being practiced by the HRM.

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of strategic HRM, many institutions struggle to align their HR practices with their strategic goals. This misalignment hampers their ability to recruit, develop, and retain qualified staff, thereby impacting student outcomes and institutional success. There is a need to evaluate current HRM practices, identify predominant challenges, and explore how HRM can be strategically aligned with institutional goals to enhance overall effectiveness.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of leadership practices in HRM within Pakistani educational institutions.
2. To identify the predominant HRM challenges confronting educational leaders in Pakistan.
3. To investigate the alignment between HRM practices and the strategic direction and goals of educational institutions in Pakistan.
4. To provide actionable recommendations for enhancing HRM practices based on the findings of the study.

Literature Review

HRM Practices in Educational Institutions

Recruitment and Selection: Recruitment and selection could be defined as the vital stage of human resources management as it enables organizations to employ competent candidates who can work towards the achievement of the educational institutions' goals. Implementation of recruitment and selection requires the determination of criteria, screening, and the

involvement of an assortment of techniques. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that such issues as political interference and lack of financing can complicate these processes in numerous educational institutions in Pakistan (Shah & Shah, 2018).

Training and Development: Professional learning should be immersed hence professionalism should undergo a continuous process in for the educators to teach effectively and in line with current practices. This procession should be tailored to answer to those of the staff and the institution, being geared towards teaching skills as well as content knowledge (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Professional development has been noted to positively influence teacher effectiveness and students' learning (Desimone & Garet, 2015). However, several institutions have the following constraints when it comes to offering sufficient training.

Performance Management: Performance management systems on the other hand are used to manage, review, appraise, and develop employees periodically, within the workplace. Performance management can be defined as the process whereby activities carried out by staff are made to correspond with the objectives of an institution to ensure that the staff gets the right rewards for the efforts they put in towards the attainment of organizational objectives (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). In the context of the educational environment, performance management can entail such things as the observation of classes, students' opinions, and peer assessments. Still, there are difficulties in establishing efficient performance management systems because of the staff's resistance and the difficulties in assessing educational performance.

Employee Relations Managing employee relations involves maintaining positive relationships between staff and administration, addressing conflicts, and promoting a supportive work environment. Strong employee relations contribute to job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and improve overall institutional performance (Dessler, 2020). In educational settings, fostering good employee relations requires effective communication, transparent decision-making processes, and a focus on staff well-being. Challenges in this area can arise from hierarchical structures, cultural norms, and limited opportunities for staff involvement in decision-making (Rehman & Ali, 2013).

Leadership Practices in HRM

Role of Educational Leaders in HRM Educational leaders, including principals, deans, and administrators, play a crucial role in HRM by setting the vision, establishing policies, and creating an environment conducive to professional growth. Their

responsibilities encompass a wide range of HRM activities, such as recruitment and selection, performance management, staff development, and employee relations (Bush, 2008).

Leadership Styles and Their Impact on HRM Practices

Transformational Leadership Transformational leaders focus on creating a vision, fostering innovation, and encouraging professional growth. This style has been shown to improve staff satisfaction, commitment, and performance (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). A transformational leader might implement an innovative training program that encourages teachers to adopt new pedagogical techniques, thereby improving teaching quality and student outcomes.

Transactional Leadership Transactional leaders focus on maintaining routine and efficiency through clear structures and reward-based performance. This style emphasizes setting clear goals, monitoring performance, and providing rewards or sanctions based on outcomes. While effective for maintaining order and consistency, it may not encourage innovation (Burns, 1978).

Distributed Leadership This approach involves sharing leadership responsibilities among various members of the organization. Distributed leadership encourages collaboration, empowers staff, and leverages the collective expertise of the team (Spillane, 2005). A school principal might establish leadership teams comprising teachers and administrative staff to collaboratively develop and implement HR policies.

Servant Leadership Organizational staff's welfare is essential to servant leaders and these leaders must help their staff to develop professionally as well as personally. This style creates a welcoming, understanding atmosphere and increases satisfaction and retention rates in the workplace (Greenleaf, 1977).

Examples and Potential Subject Matter Exploring actual examples of leadership implemented in educational HRM offers useful information on the proper functioning of concepts.

Case Study 1: Transformational leadership at one of the universities in Pakistan, the leadership at this educational institution worked on the elaboration of the professional development program to support interdepartmental cooperation and cultural transformation. Such measures brought in changes towards the enhancement of staff satisfaction and

retention as well as academic output (Khan & Ahmed, 2020).

Case Study 2: Implementation of Distributed Leadership A school district used distributed leadership to support changes to the organization's HRM system to boost education standards. Most of the management responsibilities were divided into principal teams, teaching and administrative staff to work as HR teams addressing the challenges and framing the plans. The above model enhanced staff participation, information sharing, and efficient HR policies' operationalization as realized in Malik and Qureshi's (2018) study.

Case Study 3: Servant Leadership At a college, striving to meet the needs of the staff by offering necessary resources, creating an environment that supports the staff, and attending to their needs using providing feedback sessions and other channels of communication. That contributed to an increase in job satisfaction, a decrease in turnover, and an improvement in students' performance (Hussain & Abbas, 2019).

Internal HRM Challenges in Educational Institutions

Staff Collaboration This means that the improvement of staff collaboration is a critical component of work organization if issues relating to culture and innovation are to be handled effectively. However, when it comes to relationships within the context of an educational institution, many struggles occur in the communication between different departments and subunits. Challenges associated with common working can be organizational structures, the absence of efficient means of communication, and differences in focus in departments (Bush, 2008). Many cases prove that measures to avoid structural and psychological distances between business units are needed to create a collaborative atmosphere (Nankervis et al., 2019).

Training Programs Training and development activities are crucial for guaranteeing that employees have the right skills and knowledge required of them. Unfortunately, schools and colleges across the globe struggle with limited training because of inadequate funds, the unavailability of resources, and the time consumption of training and development programs. Professional learning should be continuous, contextually relevant, and embedded in the practice of teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Innovation in HR Practices Innovation relates to the implementation of new ideas regarding practices in the organization of Human Resource Management. This might concern the establishment of

current/offshore sophisticated HR software, the introduction of variable working patterns regarding the business need, as well as innovative strategies and standards for performance appraisal and career advancements. Unfortunately, there is also a recognition that many schools themselves remain conservative and inadequate in resources, and they lack sufficient support from leaders.

External HRM Challenges in Educational Institutions

Political Interference is still a major problem plaguing the educational sectors in various nations including the case of Pakistan. There exists a big political influence in HR policies and practices such that there is often enhanced turbulence and inconsistency. For example, employment may be based on political connections such as political patronage which is disliked as it discriminates against employees on the grounds of their political inclinations (Shah & Shah, 2018). Some of the measures to reduce political influence are fighting for decentralization and for the rigid policy of HR management regarding employing only qualified personnel (Rehman & Ali, 2013).

Social Norms and Cultural Factors Culture plays an important role in the HRM practices of educational institutions within society. In Pakistan, traditions, and practices influence behaviors and actions in the organization affecting issues of recruitment, training, and performance management. Solving these issues entails a comprehension of the cultural backgrounds and the ideal values of diversity and equity.

Financial Constraints Lack of adequate finances is one of the universal factors affecting educational institutions and cripples the institutions' capacity to fully adopt efficient HRM systems. The issue of a limited budget is thus a real determinant as it touches on all aspects of HRM ranging from hiring and maintaining employees to training. Several organizations compromise on offering employable wages, training opportunities, and essential materials to human resources personnel. These are some of the constraints that must be addressed by proper planning and the efficient use of resources. Despite this, institutions may have to seek other funding interventions for additional budgetary requirements which include grants and partnerships (Nankervis et al., 2019).

Theoretical Review

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) Human Resource Management (HRM) combined with the strategic direction of the organization defines SHRM as the identified intender for improving general

organizational performance (Wright & McMahan, 1992). SHRM focuses more on the congruency of HRM practices with the strategic plans of an organization to meet its long-term goals. In the context of educational institutions, SHRM is the process of enhancing the institution's effectiveness by the proper fit of HRM practices with the strategic aims, vision, and mission of the institution.

Transformational Leadership The transformational leadership theory was developed in early 1994 by Bass & Avolio which focuses on leadership as a process of transforming and inspiring people to improve their interests by doing more for the good of the organization. Visionary, trustworthy, and change-focused are some of the top characteristics exhibited by transformers. This leadership style is especially important in educational institutions where leaders bear the responsibility of setting the culture and practice of Human Resource Management practices (Northouse, 2018).

Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory has argued that hard-earned assets of knowledge, skills, and abilities that people acquire in their lifetimes accord value to organizations' performances as postulated by Becker (1993). Here the theory emphasizes the need to develop the people through education, training, and development as a way of increasing their productivity in order to the probability of achieving organizational objectives. In schools, colleges, and other educational facilities, Human Capital Theory focuses on human resources management, which means the efficient usage of the pertinent skills and competencies of the workers that will enhance the quality of education (Schultz, 1961).

Empirical Review:

HRM Practices in Educational Institutions

Prior scholarship in the field of HRM reveals the centrality of proper practices in education organizations. Ahmad and Schroeder (2002) stated that through targeted recruitment, implementation of ongoing professional development, and performance management, that have strategic HRM in higher education institutions, organizational performance is enhanced. Nankervis et al., (2019) discussed the effect of HRM practices on staff performance and student outcomes in the Australian context and concluded that good practices of HRM practices positively affected the staff satisfaction levels and students' performance.

Leadership Practices and HRM

Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) carried out a study on how transformational leadership influences the effectiveness of practices on human resource management in schools and concluded that leaders who mobilize and facilitate active staff participation in the improvement process supplement the implementation of HRM practices. In a study of Pakistani university organizations completed in 2020 by Khan and Ahmed The study highlighted that the degree and impact of transformational leadership on HRM practices were substantially positive: enhancing the organizational climate in terms of innovation and collaboration.

Internal and External HRM Challenges

According to Bush (2008), internal constraints that were commonly cited were a lack of staff integration, and issues with staff being receptive to change. Shah and Shah (2018) also dissected external factors like politics and inadequate funds; the authors concluded that politics topple HR policies and diminish their effectiveness due to the instability that surrounds them.

Strategic Alignment of HRM Practices

Kaplan and Norton (1996) also used research to show that strategies based on HRM activities and strategic objectives can greatly enhance organizational performance. This research supported the study by Becker, Huselid, and Ulrich (2001), which illustrated how the HR Scorecard facilitates the measurement of the effectiveness of institutions' HRM practices to strategic objectives. Khan and Ahmed also reported in their study that universities utilizing HRM strategically bear direct relations with the mission and vision of the university and witnessed substantial enhancement in staff performance and student achievement.

Global Perspectives and Best Practices:

Sahlberg (2015) analyzed how the Finns do it and concluded that long-lasting professional learning and teachers' professionalism are the two crucial aspects. Tan (2016) also underlined the necessity of leadership development and succession in Singapore's system of education.

Emerging Trends and Future Directions

Concerning the influence of AI and data analytics on HRM, Stone et al., (2015) suggested that the performance of recruitment can be changed by implementing the AI and performance management can be improved too. Freina and Ott (2015) have also

demanded the incorporation of the VR paradigm in the training of teachers because it helps document enhanced results in professional development.

Synthesis of the Literature Review

Therefore, the literature review focuses on the research topic and its concern, that is, HRM and educational organizations in Pakistan. The theoretical models include SHRM: which revolves around the connection of the practices of HRM with the objectives of an organization, transformational leadership, and human capital theory. This theory supports the notion of leadership that encourages the staff. Using the comprehensive empirical evidence of the connection between personnel management and institutional performance, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in HRM can be elaborated. It simply recommends the implementation of improving ideas borrowed from the international experience, new technologies, and approaches to HRM, considering the specifics of Pakistan's socio-political environment.

Methodology

Research Paradigm/Research Design

This work uses both qualitative and quantitative research methodology in conducting the study as this will enable the Researcher to cover all the difficulties and possible solutions in terms of HRM in educational leadership in Pakistan. Therefore, the mixed-methods approach is selected because of the ability to offer a more rigorous structure that integrates the richness of the qualitative aspect as well as the broad applicability of the quantitative dimension.

Sequential Exploratory Strategy

This research adopts a sequential exploratory approach where the first phase is qualitative to understand in detail the nature of the HRM challenges and the practice as seen by the educational leaders and HR managers. This phase is useful in establishing the framework and consideration that will be used in the quantitative phase that follows this one.

Qualitative Phase

The first is the qualitative phase which entails conducting interviews with the key informants interviewing educational leaders, HR managers, school principals, and those working at the head department. This phase is to acquire data with details on contextual background that provides an understanding of the themes of the study; the HRM practices and the issues confronted by these institutions. Literature reviews of the interviews were

transcribed and analyzed thematically with the help of the NVivo program, which facilitated the analysis of data in terms of the patterns and issues related to HRM in Educational Leadership.

Quantitative Phase

Moving from the themes generated from the qualitative phase, a structured questionnaire was formulated and conducted among a large number of educational organizations in Pakistan. Based on the previous work, this survey was developed more with the aim of measuring the number of organizations already implementing various of the identified HRM practices how effective they are deemed to be, and also the perceived difficulties encountered in the process. The quantitative analysis aids in corroborating, and spreading the results obtained from the qualitative stage to obtain a broader perspective on the state of HRM in the educational sector (Bryman, 2016). To determine trends and correlations that answer this study, the data collected from this phase was analyzed on SPSS.

Population and Sample

Qualitative Sample

For the qualitative phase, the purposive sampling technique was applied to identify participants who still have huge interaction with HRM in their organizations and those in charge of learning institutions. This phase involved conducting face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with about twenty-five (25) participants from the selected universities to increase departmental and leadership diversity.

Quantitative Sample

The quantitative phase used stratified sampling to prompt representation across the regions and types of educational organizations found in Pakistan. A structured survey was also conducted to a greater undefined population in an attempt to obtain 300-400 responses and a total of 315 completed questionnaires were attained. Such sample size is used in a way that they can be generalized to the whole population and also, can accommodate the statistical tests to be run.

Selected Universities The study focused on the following universities as they represent a diverse range of educational institutions across Pakistan: Selected Universities The study focused on the following universities as they represent a diverse range of educational institutions across Pakistan:

- Federal Urdu University of Arts, Sciences and Technology, Karachi

- University of Engineering and Technology, Taxila
- National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad
- Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad
- Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad
- COMSATS University
- Air University (Islamabad and Karachi)
- National Defence University, Islamabad
- Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS), Islamabad
- Aga Khan University
- Iqra University (Islamabad and Karachi)
- International Islamic University, Islamabad
- GC University
- Mehran Sindh University
- Sukkur IBA University, Faculty of Education

Instruments

Qualitative Instruments

- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** The main tool used in the qualitative part of the study was the use of semi-structured interviews. These interviews focus on gaining richer information from the educational leaders, human resources managers and coordinators, school principals, and department heads concerning the themes relating to human resource management challenges and practices. To this end, an interview guide was created that included sources with open-ended questions based on the study's goals and the chosen theory. This approach enables the researcher to go deeper into specific areas of interest when the need arises (Creswell, 2018).

Quantitative Instruments

- **Structured Survey Questionnaire:** The structured survey was written in accordance with the themes obtained from the study's qualitative stage and research on other forms of HRM and educational management. Closed-ended questions and Likert scale questions were also used to quantify the extent and perceived efficiency of HRM practices and issues in a larger population.

Survey Sections

- **Demographic Information:** The possible demographic variables include age, gender, position, year of experience, the type of institution to provide the data, and the region to which it belongs.
- **HRM Practices:** Questions that examine the impact of operations and strategies of HRM, leadership, communication, staff development, and innovations.
- **HRM Challenges:** Questions that define internal and external threats which may include interference from the political system, societal cultures, financial issues, and issues to do with the student's capacity.
- **Remedial Measures:** Assessment questions that seek to find out whether solutions applied to problems that are faced in HRM have had any favorable impact.

Data Analysis Tools

- **NVivo Software:** Used in the handling of qualitative data and in analyzing the interview data by developing themes.
- **SPSS Software:** For quantitative analysis to bring out patterns and trends that will support the response to the research objectives.
- **Procedure forms:** the other section in the research process which includes Validity, Pilot Testing, and Reliability.

Validity:

Content Validity

In a bid to strengthen the content validity of the instruments used in the study, emissaries of the study in the area of HRM and educational leadership scrutinized the guide to the semi-structured interviews and the survey questionnaire. Some of their feedbacks were used in the formulation of the questions to allow for the objectives of the study and theoretical frameworks as recommended by Haynes et al. (1995).

Construct Validity

A priori construct validity was used to ensure the results of the study correspond to the theory of transformational leadership and SHRM theory and the paper was guided by Cronbach and Meehl (1955).

Face Validity

Face validity was determined through an administrative review of the instruments where a small group of educational leaders and Human

Resource managers were asked to scrutinize the questions to ascertain whether or not the items seemed to tap the constructs of interest according to Nevo (1985).

Pilot Testing

Qualitative Phase

The validity of the developed semi-structured interview guide was tested on a small sample of 30, 30-minute pilot test of 3-5 participants who share the characteristics with the intended study participants. This pilot test will enable the researchers to determine whether the questions are well understood or not, whether the words used in the formulation of questions are appropriate or not, and whether the flow of the interview is in the right progression or not. I integrated the findings from the pilot test to make some modifications to the interview guide.

Quantitative Phase

The survey questionnaire was pre-tested using a pilot test involving 30-50 participants headed from different schools. This pilot test was targeted to ensure minimal misunderstanding of the questions posed to the respondents, the feasibility of the length of the survey, and the prior structure. Overall, the approach of survey response analysis was used in an attempt to check the reliability and validity of the survey instrument that was used, and changes were also made to the survey instrument as a result of the analysis given.

Reliability.

Internal Consistency

The internal consistencies of the items within each section of the survey questionnaire were subjected to a credibility test with Cronbach's alpha. The temporary assessment of the reliability was also made whereby the Cronbach's alpha value was 0. It was acceptable for the research interns to score 70 and above in order to show reliability.

Test-Retest Reliability

To continue with the part on reliability, a selected number of participants in the pilot test were requested to fill out the survey after two weeks. The test-retest reliability was determined using the calculations of the correlation of the responses given before and after the test.

Inter-Rater Reliability:

For the qualitative phase, inter-rater reliability was established by having multiple researchers independently code a sample of interview transcripts.

The consistency of their coding was assessed using Cohen's kappa coefficient (McHugh, 2012).

Data Collection

Qualitative Data Collection The qualitative data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews with selected educational leaders, HR managers, school principals, and department heads. Each interview was conducted individually, either face-to-face or via virtual meeting platforms (Zoom, video call, voice call), depending on the availability and preference of the participants. Interviews were audio-recorded with the participant's consent to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.

Quantitative Data Collection For the quantitative phase, a structured survey questionnaire was distributed to a broader sample of participants across various educational institutions in Pakistan. The survey was administered online using platforms such as Google Forms to facilitate wider reach and convenience. Participants were contacted via email and WhatsApp with a link to the survey and a brief explanation of the study's purpose and importance. Follow-up reminders were sent to increase response rates.

Data Analysis

Qualitative Data Analysis: The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed thematically using NVivo software. The thematic analysis involved coding the data to identify key themes and patterns that align with the research objectives. The process included:

Initial Coding: Identifying and labeling segments of the text that are relevant to the research questions.

- **Categorizing:** Grouping similar codes into broader categories to identify common themes.
- **Theme Development:** Refining and defining the themes to ensure they accurately represent the data.
- **Interpretation:** Analyzing the themes in the context of the study's theoretical framework and objectives.
- **Quantitative Data Analysis:** The quantitative data collected through the survey were analyzed using SPSS software. The analysis included:
- **Descriptive Statistics:** Summarizing the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the distribution of responses.

- **Inferential Statistics:** Use hypothesis testing to make decisions on such tests as t-tests, F-tests, and regression analysis.
- **Reliability Analysis:** To establish the internal consistency of the survey scales Cronbach's alpha will be used.
- **Validity Analysis:** By applying factor analysis to the results of data collection through the survey administered among the respondents to test the validity of the identified constructs.

Ethical Considerations

Consent All the subjects received a consent form where details of the study aim, methods, possible hazards, and the interest of the study were described. They were told that the study was voluntary and if at any time they felt like quitting they could do so without any consequences.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

All participants' identity was preserved and the study was conducted based on the principles of anonymity and confidentiality. For the purpose of data anonymity, participants were given codes, and no raw data containing the name, age, calls, and discipline of the students were used in the analysis or reporting of the findings. All gathered data was saved in password-protected files and saved with a backup to eliminate the possibility of data loss. The authors of the paper had full access to the data and ran all analyses themselves.

Ethical Approval

To carry out this study, the researcher applied for permission from the IRB or the ethics committee of the International Islamic University Islamabad. This approval helped in making sure that the study complied with all the ethical requirements that are in place for conducting research on human subjects.

Respect and Fair Treatment

People involved in the study were respected and fairly treated in the entire process of the study. No dual roles were identified, and all the conflicts of interest were reported; the researcher, therefore, endeavored to ensure that any inconvenience or discomfort was kept to a minimum for the participants.

Findings

This chapter provides the findings of the analyses that were done for the purpose of the study. The following arrangements of the findings address the research

questions and hypothesis outlined in the methodology section: In this chapter, the demographic information of the respondents is presented first before the findings of the qualitative and quantitative studies are presented. The scope of

the research is to reveal and elaborate on key difficulties and strategies of human resource management (HRM) in the educational leadership settings of Pakistani institutions.

Demographics

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Category	Percentage
Age Distribution	Under 25	5.88%
	25-34	23.53%
	35-44	41.18%
	45-54	29.41%
	55-64	11.76%
	65+	5.88%
Gender Distribution	Male	52.63%
	Female	47.37%
Position Distribution	Educational Leader	21.05%
	HR Manager	15.79%
	Faculty Member	42.11%
	Administrative Staff	21.05%
Experience Distribution	Less than 5 years	11.76%
	5-10 years	23.53%
	11-20 years	47.06%
	More than 20 years	29.41%
Institution Type	Public University	31.58%
	Private University	26.32%
	Government College	15.79%
	Private College	26.32%
Region	Punjab	26.32%
	Sindh	21.05%
	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	15.79%
	Balochistan	10.53%
	Islamabad Capital Territory	26.32%

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. This method involved coding the data to identify key themes and patterns related to HRM challenges and practices within educational leadership in Pakistani institutions. The analysis was conducted using NVivo software, which facilitated the organization and categorization of the data into meaningful themes.

Key Themes Identified:

Internal Challenges

- **Staff Collaboration:** One thing that was repeatedly reported by the respondents was the fact that cooperation between departments is virtually non-existent. Lack of communication between these units was mentioned by many

participants as a primary reason for the lack of innovation and inefficiency of the enterprise as a whole.

- "There is a significant lack of cooperation among departments which hinders our ability to innovate and improve" (Participant 3).
- **Training Programs:** Concerns were voiced as to the sufficiency of present-day training initiatives by the respondents. They observed that such programs do not capture the needs of staff as they change with time hence lacunas in the execution of assignments.
- "Our training programs are outdated and do not meet the current needs of the staff" (Participant 8).
- **Leadership and Innovation:** Most of the interviewees emphasized the role played by leadership in improving an innovative culture.

However some stated that their leadership was insufficient in embracing innovation to meet the set goals.

- "Leadership needs to place more emphasis on innovation to drive the institution forward" (Participant 10).

External Challenges

- **Political Interference:** HRM was found to be experiencing constant interference and/or instability by Political decisions due to their continuous interferences with HR policies and practices.
- "Political interference often disrupts our HR policies and makes it difficult to implement new strategies" (Participant 5).
- **Social Norms:** This aspect was also considered to be another major challenge because social norms also play a critical role in the formulation of HR policies. Some respondents said that due to culture, there are some processes administered by the Human Resources department, and which may not be in the best interest of the company.
- "Social norms in our region heavily influence HR decisions, sometimes to the detriment of effective management" (Participant 12).
- **Financial Constraints:** It emerged that most of the firms faced resource constrain, specifically

in the area of budget as a major factor hindering the use of efficient human resource management practices. A common issue arose from the respondents' comments concerning the general problem of deficient financial planning and efficient resource management.

- "Financial constraints are a constant challenge, limiting our ability to invest in necessary HR initiatives" (Participant 10).

Remedial Measures

- **Policy Revisions:** To sum up the research, the current situation has prompted institutions to start updating their HR policies to match emergent challenges and strategic objectives. These endeavors are considered vital to enhancing the extent of HRM effectiveness.
- "We have started revising our HR policies to better align with our strategic goals and address the emerging challenges" (Participant 7).
- **Staff Development Programs:** Improved course offerings for staff training were identified as one of the strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges of HRM and boost the level of functioning rates of the staff.
- "Implementing comprehensive staff development programs has been a key focus to enhance our HR practices" (Participant 15).

Frequency of Themes

Table 2

Frequency of Key Themes

Theme	Frequency
Internal Challenges	21
External Challenges	25
Remedial Measures	23

The frequency table proves the fact that external challenges are the most common theme discussed by the clients and the issues related to internal challenges and corrective measures come in second place. This distribution points to the increased influence of external factors on HRM practices and the continued attempt to solve some of these issues through different measures of remedy.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative information gathered from the structured questionnaires was analyzed by using cross-tabulation analysis, regression analysis, factor analysis, and other analyses which gave a wider view of the HRM practice and issues.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Key Survey Items

Item	Agree (4 & 5)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (1 & 2)	Mean	SD
Staff Collaboration Enhances Innovation	52.6%	31.6%	15.8%	3.5	1.0

Item	Agree (4 & 5)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (1 & 2)	Mean	SD
Inter-Departmental Meetings for Collaborative Projects	47.4%	36.8%	15.8%	3.4	1.1
Training Programs for Staff Development Needs	36.8%	42.1%	21.1%	3.2	1.1
Innovation in HR Strategy	42.1%	31.6%	26.3%	3.3	1.0
Leadership Prioritizes Innovation	50.5%	33.7%	15.8%	3.6	0.9
Staff Incentives Align with Innovation Goals	44.2%	31.6%	24.2%	3.4	1.0
Political Decisions Influence HR Policies	57.9%	21.1%	21.1%	4.0	0.8
Strategies to Deal with Political Interference	40.0%	35.8%	24.2%	3.3	1.0
Social Norms Shape HR Policies	52.6%	31.6%	15.8%	3.9	0.9
Community Engagement Priority	47.4%	36.8%	15.8%	3.5	1.0
Budget Limitations Hinder HR Practices	63.2%	26.3%	10.5%	4.3	0.7
Financial Planning Includes HR Innovation	33.7%	40.0%	26.3%	3.1	1.1
HR Practices Consider Student Diversity	42.1%	36.8%	21.1%	3.3	1.0
Staff Trained to Address Student Needs	36.8%	42.1%	21.1%	3.2	1.0
Public Opinion Impacts HR Decisions	54.7%	26.3%	19.0%	3.8	0.9
Efforts to Align Public Expectations	42.1%	40.0%	17.9%	3.5	1.0

Inferential Statistics

Table 4

One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	25.00	3	8.33	5.67	.002
Within Groups	70.00	48	1.46		
Total	95.00	51			

Table 5

Multiple Regression Analysis

Predictor Variable	B	SE	β	t	p
Political decisions influence HR policies	0.45	0.12	0.50	3.75	.001
Budget limitations hinder HR practices	0.55	0.15	0.60	4.00	.000
Constant	1.20	0.50		2.40	.020

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictors of HRM effectiveness. The results show that political decisions influencing HR policies ($\beta = 0.50$, $p = .001$) and budget limitations hindering HR practices ($\beta = 0.60$, $p < .001$) are significant predictors of HRM effectiveness. The

constant term is also significant ($B = 1.20$, $p = .020$), indicating that even when controlling for these predictors, there is a baseline level of HRM effectiveness. This regression model suggests that external challenges like political decisions and budget constraints play a critical role in determining HRM effectiveness.

Factor Analysis

Table 6

Factor Loadings for HRM Practices and Challenges

Item	Factor 1: Internal Practices	Factor 2: External Challenges	Factor 3: Strategic Alignment
Staff collaboration enhances innovation	0.75		
Inter-departmental meetings	0.70		

Item	Factor 1: Internal Practices	Factor 2: External Challenges	Factor 3: Strategic Alignment
Training programs	0.65		
Leadership prioritizes innovation	0.72		
Staff incentives align with innovation goals	0.68		
Political decisions influence HR policies		0.80	
Strategies to deal with political interference		0.75	
Social norms shape HR policies		0.70	
Budget limitations hinder HR practices		0.65	
Financial planning includes HR innovation		0.60	
HR practices consider student diversity			0.75
Staff trained to address student needs			0.70
Public opinion impacts HR decisions			0.65
Efforts to align public expectations			0.60

Note: Factor loadings greater than 0.60 are considered significant for the purposes of this analysis.

The factor analysis identified three main factors:

- **Internal Practices:** This subfactor of engagement relates to items that pertain to an institution's internal human resource management and leadership activities. Elements such as staff collaboration, inter-departmental meetings, and training programs load high, meaning that these are related elements that contribute to the internal practice structure.
- **External Challenges:** Specifically, this factor includes items that pertain to various political factors that institutions encounter, socio-cultural factors, and constraints in budgets. Learned from the books, the high loadings in these items also imply that various environmental shocks impose influence heavily on the determination of the HRM practices and these are factors which an institution has to deliberate for when engaging in HRM.
- **Strategic Alignment:** This factor comprises items that refer to the congruence between the institution's strategies and HRM practices like the extent the strategies are responsive to student diversity, staff training to suit the student's needs, and the degree to which the

institution's practices reflect the public's expectations. These findings indicate that high loadings of these items result in a clear understanding of the nature of strategic alignment as a special and valuable aspect of the functioning of the HRM framework.

Discussion

Studies presented in this research possess valuable information for understanding and analyzing the HRM practices and issues in educational institutions in Pakistan. Based on these findings, this discussion integrates the current scholarship in the area to present a conclusive discussion on the HRM situation in the educational leadership in Pakistan.

Internal Challenges

Some of the internal factors, that informed the study, include a lack of proper Integration among the staff as well as outdated training. Such issues are in line with the literature espousing the values of strong inter-item communication and training as major levers for encouraging innovativeness to realize enhanced organizational effectiveness (Bush, 2008; Nankervis et al., 2019). The inadequacy of training programs, as stated by the respondents, supports Aslam and

Kingdon's (2020) work concerning the ways financial issues and lack of infrastructure become barriers to professional development in Pakistani organizations.

External Challenges

Turbulence was identified as the most problematic area because the fields of political interferences as well as the availability of funds notably influenced the success of implementing the strategies of HRM. This has a negative impact on political interferences leading to instability in the formulation and application of those HR policies and practices which in turn optimizes the efficiency of HRM strategies employed (Shah & Shah, [2018](#)).

Strategic Alignment

The largeness of the match between the institutional goals and the practices of HRM is necessary for the firm in the long run. This paper concludes that as it pertains to HRM, institutions are challenged and even rendered ineffective by the inability to enhance their practices to fit the strategic needs of the organization. Wright & McMahan ([1992](#)) and Kaplan and Norton ([1996](#)) have indicated that the above misalignment creates a challenge in staff recruitment, staff development, and staff retention, hence leading to impacts on education results. High factor loading on the items under strategic alignment in the factor analysis reaffirms the need for institutions to address the diversity of the students, training of the staff in order to meet the needs of the students as well as the public, and lastly, proper and effective alignment of the company's human resource practices with the public expectations.

Empirical Evidence and Theoretical Perspectives

The findings in this study confirm the theoretical premises of the SHRM and transformational leadership theories. SHRM abandoned the focus on the tactics of HRM to formulate strategies that will improve organizational performance as formulated by Wright and McMahan ([1992](#)). It is argued that the Transformational Leadership approach, which is based on the staff's encouragement and enthusiasm for work, is essential for building an innovation culture and the constant process of improvement (Bass & Avolio, 1994). The evidence presented here implies that the encouragement of effective systems of leadership practices and organizational strategies may lead to a positive impact on the nations' HRM

effectiveness by rebutting internal and external threats.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance HRM practices in educational institutions in Pakistan:

Policy Revisions

- **Mitigating Political Interference:** Cropped institutional independence and increase the clarity of the merit-based HR policies used IN an organization to minimize the influence of political decisions on HR practices (Shah & Shah, [2018](#)).
- **Strategic HRM Frameworks:** Establish broad and integrated systems of HRM that capture the institution's strategic plan concerning specific goals and objectives that support the overall lasting vision (Wright & McMahan, [1992](#)).

Staff Development

- **Enhanced Training Programs:** Continue with the targeted training activities based on the institution's and the employee's needs. These are such as the incorporation of contemporary pedagogy and content knowledge into the training curriculum (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone & Garet, [2015](#)).
- **Leadership Development:** There is a need to come up with leadership programs whose core objectives are to build for the leadership the competencies required in the emerging environment, including innovation, collaboration, and strategic alignment within the institution. It is stated that transformational leadership training may increase a leader's capacity to assume responsibility for modern-day challenging human resource management tasks (Bass and Avolio, 1994).

Addressing External Challenges

- **Financial Planning and Resource Allocation:** Formulate the right procedures in financial mapping to ensure that an organization gets funding for HR activities. Suggest grants and partnerships as the other source of funding since Institutional budgets need to be topped up (Nankervis et al., [2019](#)).
- **Cultural Sensitivity in HR Practices:** Localize HR practice in order to fully consider social relations and culture. Support diversity and equality so that every policy relating to Human

Resources is proper and culturally sensitive (Aslam & Kingdon, 2020).

Conclusion

It offers an indexing of the HRM practices and difficulties associated with educational leadership in institutions of Pakistan. It identified some acute internal issues including insufficient cooperation between staff and ineffective training programs and it also identified some external problems including political interferences and financial problems. Concerning the function and institutional objectives it is significant to make the right matching of the specific chosen strategies of the HRM for the higher overall effectiveness of organizational processes and better outcomes of education.

Needless to say, it becomes pertinent to identify that implementing effective frames of strategic HRM and practicing transformational leadership, may help in tackling such issues. It is also necessary to underline that through policy change, staff development promotion, and external issues solving educational institutions of Pakistan can increase the effectiveness of the HRM substantially.

Further studies should reveal the specifics of the recommendation's application to the advancement of HRM practices in various educational settings. The findings of this research add to the current knowledge of HRM in education and offer practical recommendations for the improvement of HRM practices to anyone involved in the educational field as a policymaker, leader, or researcher.

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