

The Relationship between Human Resource Practices and Employees' Commitment to Change in Malaysia Higher Education

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Abstract: Extensive researches are available in the organizational behaviour literature investigating the process of Human Resources (HR) practices and commitment to change. But the two constructs—HR practices and commitment to change seem to have been examined almost independently. This is particularly true in the Malaysian context as researchers have speculated that HR practices may have an impact upon subordinates' perceptions of supervisors power. This study explores the relationship between HR practices and commitment to change in selected public universities in Malaysia. It focuses on how HR practices have affected the level of employee's commitment to change towards the employing organization. Five dimensions of HR practices were used in this study, namely participation and involvement, training and development, performance appraisal, incentive and compensation. Two hundred and seventy eight academic staff of selected public universities in Malaysia voluntarily participated in this study. Implications of the findings were discussed further.

Keywords: HR Practices, Commitment to Change, Malaysian Higher Education

Introduction

THE WORLD ECONOMIC situation is changing rapidly with every organization faced with various challenges from internal and external forces. Hence, organizations need to change their business strategies and managerial policies in order to increase their competitiveness and efficiency. Presently organizations begin to value employees for gains in individual performance which leads to organizational effectiveness (Beck & Wilson, 2000; Parker, Bales, Young, Huff, Almann, Lacost & Robert, 2003; Skerlavaj, Stemberger, Skrinjar & Dimovski, 2007; Sullivan & Iles, 2000; Zheng, Morrison & O'Neil, 2006) and see them as an important asset in the operation of an organization. This is also supported by Pfeffer (1994) who mentioned that human capital has been recognized for quite some time as a critical resource in most organizations. Effective use of HR practices will enhance employee commitment towards organizations (Folger, 1997). By having committed employees, organizations will achieve their ultimate goals i.e. maximizing profit.

There has been an increase in the number of public and private universities in Malaysia. The leading universities in Malaysia are currently facing unique challenges as they attempt to meet the human resource demands from various industries. As such, universities in Malaysia need to consider various aspects for the betterment of the university, sources of