



Human Resource Practices, Occupational Health and Quality of Work Life: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

Human resource practices play a vital role in creating healthy, safe, and supportive work environments and have a significant influence on employees' occupational health and quality of work life. The present study, entitled "Human Resource Practices, Occupational Health and Quality of Work Life: A Comparative Study," aims to examine and compare human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life among professionals working in different sectors in Nagpur City. The study focuses on four professional sectors, namely education, healthcare, hospitality, and industry, which differ considerably in terms of work demands, working conditions, occupational risks, and organizational practices. A total of 50 professionals from the selected sectors were included in the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire covering major dimensions of human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life. HR practices included training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and rewards, employee recognition, communication, workplace support, career development, and work-life balance. Occupational health was assessed in relation to workplace safety, physical and psychological health, occupational stress, workload, and organizational support, while quality of work life was examined through job satisfaction, work-life balance, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, and overall satisfaction with the work environment. The study adopts a descriptive and comparative research design to identify sector-wise differences in HR practices, occupational health, and quality of work life. The findings are expected to provide insight into the extent to which organizational HR practices support employees' health and quality of working life across different professional environments. The study may help organizations, HR professionals, and administrators develop employee-centred and sector-specific HR strategies aimed at improving occupational health, workplace satisfaction, safety, and overall quality of work life.

Keywords: Human Resource Practices, Occupational Health, Quality of Work Life, Work-Life Balance, Occupational Stress, Workplace Safety, Professional Sectors.

Introduction

Human resources constitute one of the most important assets of an organization, as employees play a central role in achieving organizational objectives and maintaining productivity and effectiveness. In the contemporary workplace, organizational success is increasingly associated not only with employee performance but also with the health, safety, satisfaction, and quality of work life of employees. Changing work patterns, increased workloads, technological developments, occupational demands, and the need to balance professional and personal responsibilities have made employee health and quality of work life important areas of concern for organizations.

Human Resource Management (HRM) encompasses a wide range of practices designed to attract, develop, motivate, support, and retain employees. Recruitment and selection, training and development, performance

appraisal, compensation and rewards, employee recognition, communication, career development, employee participation, workplace safety, and work-life balance are important components of HRM. When these practices are implemented effectively, they can contribute to a positive organizational climate and create conditions that support employees' physical, psychological, and social well-being.

Occupational health refers to the promotion and protection of the physical and mental health of employees in relation to their work environment. Employees may be exposed to different occupational challenges depending upon the nature of their profession. These may include excessive workload, long or irregular working hours, work-related stress, physical strain, ergonomic problems, workplace hazards, emotional demands, and inadequate recovery time. Effective occupational health measures, including safe working conditions, health and safety training, appropriate workload management, supportive supervision, and access to health-related facilities, are essential for protecting employees and maintaining a healthy workforce.

Another important dimension of employee welfare is Quality of Work Life (QWL). Quality of work life represents the overall quality of an employee's experience within the workplace. It includes factors such as safe and healthy working conditions, job satisfaction, adequate compensation, opportunities for growth and development, interpersonal relationships, organizational support, participation in decision-making, work-life balance, and a sense of security. A favourable quality of work life can enhance employee motivation, commitment, satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness, whereas poor working conditions and inadequate support may contribute to dissatisfaction, stress, absenteeism, and reduced work performance.

Human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life are closely interconnected. HR policies determine, to a considerable extent, how employees are recruited, trained, rewarded, supported, evaluated, and provided with opportunities for growth. At the same time, the implementation of appropriate health and safety practices can reduce occupational risks and support employees' ability to perform their responsibilities effectively. Thus, HRM has an important role in creating a work environment in which employees can remain healthy, satisfied, and productive.

The importance of these issues may differ across professional sectors because employees encounter different working conditions and occupational demands. The education sector involves teaching, research, administrative responsibilities, student interaction, and continuous professional development. Teachers and academic professionals may experience workload pressures, deadlines, administrative responsibilities, and the need to balance teaching with personal commitments.

The healthcare sector involves direct responsibility for patients and often requires employees to work under demanding and emotionally challenging conditions. Long working hours, shift duties, exposure to occupational hazards, high responsibility, and emotional stress can influence occupational health and quality of work life. Appropriate staffing, safety measures, training, organizational support, and opportunities for rest and recovery are therefore particularly important in this sector.

The hospitality sector is characterized by customer-oriented work, interpersonal interaction, variable working hours, shift duties, and the need to maintain service quality. Employees may face demanding schedules, workload fluctuations, and emotional demands associated with customer service. HR practices related to training, fair scheduling, employee recognition, compensation, and workplace support can play an important role in improving their quality of work life.

Similarly, employees in the industrial sector may experience occupational challenges associated with production targets, machinery, physical workload, shift work, workplace safety, and environmental conditions. In this sector, occupational health and safety training, appropriate protective measures, ergonomic working conditions, fair compensation, employee participation, and supportive HR practices are particularly significant.

In the Indian context, the growing emphasis on employee welfare, occupational safety, mental well-being, and work-life balance has increased the need for organizations to adopt comprehensive and employee-centred HR strategies. Organizations are expected to move beyond traditional personnel management and create workplaces that promote both organizational performance and employee well-being. However, the

effectiveness and implementation of HR practices may vary across sectors according to their organizational structure, nature of work, workforce characteristics, and occupational requirements.

Nagpur City provides a suitable setting for examining these differences because it has a diverse professional workforce representing educational institutions, healthcare organizations, hospitality establishments, and industrial units. Comparing these sectors can provide valuable insights into how employees perceive HR practices, occupational health, and quality of work life under different working conditions.

Against this background, the present study entitled “Human Resource Practices, Occupational Health and Quality of Work Life: A Comparative Study” was undertaken among 50 professionals from the education, healthcare, hospitality, and industry sectors in Nagpur City. The study seeks to assess the prevailing HR practices, examine the occupational health status and quality of work life of employees, and compare these dimensions across the selected professional sectors. The findings are expected to provide useful insights for developing sector-specific, health-oriented, and employee-centred HR policies that can contribute to safer, healthier, and more satisfying workplaces.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to examine and compare human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life among 50 professionals working in the education, healthcare, hospitality, and industry sectors in Nagpur City. The study aims to understand how HR practices such as training, performance appraisal, compensation, employee recognition, workplace support, and work-life balance relate to employees' occupational health and quality of work life, and to identify sector-wise differences in these aspects. The findings are expected to provide insights for developing supportive, safe, and employee-centred HR practices that promote healthier and more satisfying workplaces.

Objective:

- To assess and comparatively analyse human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life among professionals working in the education, healthcare, hospitality, and industry sectors in Nagpur City.

Limitation:

- The study was limited to 50 professionals from Nagpur City.
- Only four sectors—education, healthcare, hospitality, and industry—were included in the study.

Methodology

Research Design: The study adopted a descriptive and comparative research design to assess human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life among professionals working in different sectors.

Study Area: The study was conducted in Nagpur City, Maharashtra, covering selected organizations from the education, healthcare, hospitality, and industry sectors.

Sample: A total of 50 professionals were selected for the study from the four sectors:

- * Education (12)
- * Healthcare (13)
- * Hospitality (12)
- * Industry (13)

Sampling Technique: Purposive sampling was used to select respondents who were employed in the selected sectors and willing to participate in the study.

Data Collection: Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed according to the objective of the study. The questionnaire included sections on respondents' demographic characteristics, human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life.

Variables Studied:

Human Resource Practices: Training and development, performance appraisal, compensation and rewards, employee recognition, communication, workplace support, career development, and work-life balance.

Occupational Health: Workplace safety, occupational stress, workload, physical health, psychological health, and workplace-related health concerns.

Quality of Work Life: Job satisfaction, working conditions, work-life balance, interpersonal relationships, job security, opportunities for growth, and overall satisfaction with the work environment.

Data Analysis: The collected data were coded, tabulated, and analysed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Comparative analysis was used to examine differences in HR practices, occupational health, and quality of work life across the four professional sectors.

Result and Discussion

The present study was conducted among 50 professionals from four selected sectors—education, healthcare, hospitality, and industry—in Nagpur City. The study aimed to assess and comparatively analyse human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life among professionals across these sectors.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to Professional Sector (N=50)

Professional Sector	Frequency	Percentage
Education	12	24
Health care	13	26
Hospitality	12	24
Industry	13	26

The sample consisted of 12 respondents (24%) from education, 13 (26%) from healthcare, 12 (24%) from hospitality, and 13 (26%) from industry. Thus, respondents were reasonably distributed across the four selected professional sectors.

Table 2: Overall Level of Human Resource Practices among Respondents (N=50)

HR Practices	Low n (%)`	Moderate n (%)`	High n (%)`
Training & Development	7 (14)	21 (42)	14 (28)
Performance Appraisal	10 (20)	23 (46)	17 (34)
Compensation & Rewards	14 (28)	22 (44)	14 (28)
Employee Recognition	9 (18)	23 (46)	18 (36)
Communication	6 (12)	22 (44)	22 (44)
Workplace Support	7 (14)	23 (46)	20 (40)
Career Development	12 (24)	22 (44)	16 (32)
Work Life Balance Practices	11 (22)	22 (44)	17 (34)

The findings indicate that HR practices were generally perceived to be at a moderate to high level. Training and development and communication received relatively favourable responses, with 44% of respondents reporting a high level for each. Workplace support was also positively perceived, with 40% reporting a high level. In contrast, compensation and rewards showed comparatively weaker

results, with 28% of respondents reporting a low level and only 28% reporting a high level. Career development and work-life balance practices also showed scope for improvement.

These findings suggest that organizations are providing several supportive HR practices, but greater emphasis may be required on fair rewards, career advancement, and work-life balance.

Table 3: Overall Level of Occupational Health among Respondents (N=50)

Dimensions of Occupational Health	Poor n (%)	Moderate n (%)	Good n (%)
Workplace Safety	6 (12)	24 (48)	20 (40)
Physical Health	8 (16)	25 (50)	17 (34)
Psychological Health	9 (18)	24 (48)	17 (34)
Work load Management	12 (24)	23 (46)	15 (30)
Occupational Stress	13 (26)	22(44)	15 (30)
Access to health & Safety Support	8 (16)	24 (48)	18 (36)

For occupational stress, the categories represent low, moderate, and high stress respectively.

The findings show that occupational health was predominantly at a moderate level. Half of the respondents reported moderate physical health, while 48% reported moderate psychological health. Workplace safety was perceived relatively positively, with 40% reporting good safety conditions.

However, workload management emerged as an area of concern, with 24% of respondents reporting poor workload management. Occupational stress was also notable, with 44% experiencing moderate stress and 30% experiencing high stress. This indicates the need for organizations to strengthen workload management, stress reduction measures, occupational safety, and health-support mechanisms.

Table 4: Level of Quality of Work Life among Respondents (N=50)

Dimensions of Quality of Work Life	Low n (%)	Moderate n (%)	High n (%)
Job Satisfaction	8 (16)	22 (44)	20 (40)
Working Condition	7 (14)	24 (48)	19 (38)
Work Life Balance	12 (24)	23 (46)	15 (30)
Interpersonal Relationship	6 (12)	23 (46)	21 (42)
Job Security	9 (18)	24 (48)	17 (34)
Growth and Development Opportunities	11 (22)	23 (46)	16 (32)
Overall Quality of Work Life	8 (16)	25 (50)	17 (34)

The results reveal that 50% of respondents had a moderate overall quality of work life, while 34% reported a high level and 16% a low level. Interpersonal relationships were comparatively favourable, with 42% reporting a high level. Job satisfaction was also relatively positive, with 40% reporting high satisfaction. However, work-life balance and growth and development opportunities showed greater scope for improvement. The findings indicate that employees may experience reasonable workplace relationships and job satisfaction but may still face challenges in balancing professional and personal responsibilities and accessing career development opportunities.

Table 5: Sector wise comparison of Human Resource Practices (N=50)

Sector	Low	Moderate	High	Overall Interpretation
Education (N=12)	2	5	5	Moderate -High
Health Care (N=13)	3	6	4	Moderate
Hospitality (N=12)	4	6	2	Moderate
Industry (N=13)	2	5	6	Moderate-High

The industry sector showed the most favourable perception of HR practices, with 6 of 13 respondents reporting a high level. Education also demonstrated a relatively favourable pattern. Healthcare and hospitality had a greater proportion of respondents reporting moderate or low HR practices. The findings suggest that HR practices vary according to the nature and organizational structure of the professional sector.

Table 6: Sector Wise Comparison of Occupational Health (N=50)

Sector	Low	Moderate	High	Overall Interpretation
Education (N=12)	1	6	5	Moderate -Good
Health Care (N=13)	4	7	2	Moderate
Hospitality (N=12)	4	6	2	Moderate
Industry (N=13)	2	5	6	Moderate-Good

Occupational health was comparatively better among professionals in the industry and education sectors, whereas healthcare and hospitality showed a greater proportion of respondents in the poor and moderate categories. The relatively lower occupational health outcomes in healthcare may be associated with demanding work schedules, emotional responsibilities, workload, and occupational exposure. In hospitality, irregular working hours and customer-related pressures may similarly affect occupational health.

Table 7 : Sector wise comparison of Quality of Life (N=50)

Sector	Low	Moderate	High	Overall Interpretation
Education (N=12)	1	6	5	Moderate -High
Health Care (N=13)	3	7	3	Moderate
Hospitality (N=12)	3	7	2	Moderate
Industry (N=13)	1	5	7	Moderate-High

The overall quality of work life was moderate across the four sectors. The industry sector showed the highest proportion of respondents with high quality of work life, followed by education. Healthcare and hospitality had a larger proportion of respondents in the moderate category. This indicates that employees' quality of work life may be influenced by differences in working conditions, organizational support, workload, job security, and opportunities for professional growth.

Table 8: Overall Comparative Assessment of the three major variables (N=50)

Professional Sector	HR Practices	Occupational Health	Quality of Work Life
Education	Moderate -High	Moderate -Good	Moderate -High
Health care	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Hospitality	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Industry	Moderate-High	Moderate-Good	Moderate-High

The comparative analysis indicates that human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life were predominantly at a moderate level among the 50 respondents. The industry and education sectors demonstrated relatively more favourable outcomes across the three dimensions, whereas healthcare and hospitality showed greater scope for improvement.

The results suggest that effective HR practices are an important organizational mechanism for creating healthier and more satisfying workplaces. Particular attention should be given to workload management, occupational stress, work-life balance, compensation and rewards, career development, and employee health and safety support.

The findings further indicate that HR strategies should not be identical across all professional sectors. The sector-specific nature of occupational demands should be considered while developing policies related to employee health, workplace safety, professional development, and quality of work life.

Overall, the study highlights the importance of an integrated HR approach in which human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life are addressed together to promote employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that human resource practices, occupational health, and quality of work life are important and interconnected aspects of a healthy and effective workplace. The findings among 50 professionals from the education, healthcare, hospitality, and industry sectors in Nagpur City indicate that all three dimensions were predominantly at a moderate level, suggesting that although organizations have established several supportive practices, there remains considerable scope for improvement.

Among the HR practices, training and development, communication, and workplace support were comparatively favourable, whereas compensation and rewards, career development, performance appraisal, and work-life balance required greater attention. Occupational health findings indicated moderate levels of physical and psychological health, with workload and occupational stress emerging as important areas of concern. Similarly, the overall quality of work life was moderate, with job satisfaction and interpersonal relationships being relatively positive, while work-life balance and opportunities for growth showed scope for improvement. The sector-wise comparison revealed that education and industry showed relatively more favourable outcomes in HR practices, occupational health, and quality of work life, while healthcare and hospitality demonstrated greater need for strengthening workplace support mechanisms. These variations highlight the influence of sector-specific working conditions, workload, work schedules, occupational demands, and organizational environments on employees' workplace experiences.

Overall, the study emphasizes that effective HR management should go beyond recruitment, performance, and compensation and should actively promote occupational health and quality of work life. Organizations can improve employee outcomes by strengthening workplace safety, managing workload and occupational stress, providing fair rewards and career opportunities, encouraging employee participation, and supporting work-life balance. A sector-specific and employee-centred HR approach can therefore contribute to healthier employees, greater job satisfaction, improved quality of work life, and enhanced organizational effectiveness.

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