Effectiveness of Orientation Programmes Offered for the Employees of Public Sector Universities of Punjab, Pakistan

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Abstract
The study was designed to assess the effectiveness of orientation programmes offered by the educational management at higher level for the faculty members in understanding the work roles. The objectives of the study were; to assess the effectiveness of orientation programmes for developing work role clarity; to explore the difference between male and female employees in provision of orientation programme; to explore the difference between male and female employees in work role clarity and to explore the difference between different universities in orientation programmes offered to its employees. The population of the research was based on all the faculty members serving in the public sector universities of Punjab. There were 21 Higher Education Commission recognized universities located in Punjab and 6829 faculty members were serving in these 21 universities. Random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the research. 350 faculty members were selected randomly from seven universities located in different cities of Punjab. The data was collected with the help of a questionnaire based on three sections (Demographic, Orientation and Work Role Clarity). The collected data were analyzed with the help of SPSS 21 Edition. The results showed that the orientation programmes offered to the employees of the universities were not effective for developing work role clarity. There was no significant difference between the responses of male and female respondents with respect to the receiving of orientation programmes and work role clarity. However there was significant difference between the universities of Punjab in the use of orientation programmes and employee's work role clarity.
Keywords: Orientation and Work Role Clarity.

Introduction

Orientation is an important element in the organizational effectiveness. Today the world has been converted into a global village. As an effect the organizations and employees have to face national and international challenges. Organizations itself are getting changed with every new day and with every new development. All this develops a culture within the organization. An employee's first year with an organization can be a difficult time for everyone involved (Gray, 2005). When an employee enters in this culture he has to pass through the process of socialization in order to get familiar with the environment. Orientation can play a vital role in this process. It helps to make the new employee comfortable with the rules, system, work role, and the organizational culture. Orientation programs concentrate on why and how employees perform their duties (Ragsdale & Mueller, 2005). Orientations are planned primarily to make the employee comfortable and familiar with the environment. It aims at the understanding of the work roles that the employees have to perform in future. It is the learning tool for the employees. The strong and effective orientation programmes help the audience to learn their work roles in a better way. Ultimately it results in the quality of their work productivity. New employee orientation programs have the power to do two positive things: increase employee satisfaction and improve employee retention (McKersie, 2003).

Reputed organizations all over the world organize orientations for their employees in a proper planned manner. In Pakistan many business and private organizations have also set the trend to say welcome to the new workers through the orientation programmes. However, this concept is not adopted by many of the educational institutions. Teacher as employees in educational organizations need to provide such programmes not only to welcome them but it can also increase the sense of attachment with an organization. Unfortunately in Pakistan the education system is facing several issues. Education at various levels such as primary elementary, secondary and higher level have shortage of facilities, inadequate leadership, managerial flows etc. Thus the researcher has selected the area of Punjab to see the availability and effectiveness of orientation programmes at higher level of education.

Research Objectives

The research was developed with the following objectives
1. To assess the effectiveness of orientation programmes for developing work role clarity.
2. To explore the difference between male and female employees in provision of orientation programme.
3. To explore the difference between male and female employees in work role clarity.
4. To explore the difference between different universities in orientation programmes offered to its employees.

Research Hypothesis
1. Orientation programmes are not effective to develop work role clarity among employees.
2. There is no difference between male and female employees in provision of orientation programme.
3. There is no difference between male and female employees in work role clarity.
4. There is no difference between different universities in orientation programmes offered to its employees.

Significance of the Study

The research in hand is significant as it would provide valuable information for the educational institutions of Pakistan in order to train the new recruits and enable them to adjust with the culture of the organization. As there is no such research has been done in Pakistan and especially in educational organizations at any level till July 2014. Thus its findings will guide the educational administration to adopt the new and interesting ways to motivate and affiliate the new employees with the organization. It becomes more important when we are discussing this area with reference to education and teacher. As the teaching profession still has issues in society related to income and social status. These issues results in the decrease of the trend and attraction to join teaching as profession. So the study will open a way to deal educational institutions and its employees like other well reputed organizations.

Literature Review

Orientation is the important aspect of every organization. It is the first impression that an organizations develops on the mind of the employee. Paul and Anantharaman (2003) wrote: "Organizations that are interested in a long-term relationship with employees reap the rewards in financial terms through increased productivity and long-term affinity of the employee with the organization" (p. 126 1). Effective orientations may lead in the development of healthy relationships with the organization as well as between the employees hired at the same time. The conduct of orientation programme is a challenging task. When it is to be linked with the employees' output, it becomes more challenging. To develop good orientation programme the organizations need a proper planning of resources and events. Parrish (2006) has suggested that "Employees have to be given a strong orientation by the higher level management working within the organization. Then training should be provided to employees so they have the necessary tools in place to perform their job. Employee confidence and satisfaction may be correlated to the length of time they stay with an organization; therefore, it is important for organizations to create an environment that advances those feelings within an employee. Finally, it is important that employees feel good about the work they are doing". The orientation cannot be successful in isolation. It needs a complete system that may involve multiple activities. It has to follow by the management to see its effectives. Further it can be supported by training and mentoring. As the human learning is an ongoing process, we cannot leave the employee after the orientation on his own sake for the learning of job related skills. Orientations can give us the results when the organizations will develop a culture of learning and sharing on continuous basis.

The major purpose of orientation is to adjust the employee within the culture of organization. It is the first step of the employee in a new environment. The welcoming attitude of the organization can lead to the loyalty of the employee. Ragsdale and Mueller (2005) state that "new employees need to be introduced to the structure, culture, and standards of the hiring facility" (p. 268). "Orientation programs concentrate on why and how employees perform their duties" (Ragsdale & Mueller, 2005). Ragsdale and Mueller identified benefits of employee orientation programs. They exposed that "formal orientation programs are necessary in retaining and motivating employees, lowering turnover, increasing productivity, improving employee morale, facilitating learning, and reducing the anxiety of new employees". Hacker (2004) stated that substandard orientation programs can affect an organization's present and future recruitment efforts.

Lee and Bruvold (2003) also consider that employee development leads to employee commitment and satisfaction. Klein and Weaver (2000) conducted a study focusing on evaluating the impact of formal organizational-level orientation programs, which they identify as a common tactic for socializing new hires. Their research was conducted in a large educational institution and studied 116 newly hired employees. In the study 55 respondents attended the orientation programme while 66 respondents included in study were not given any orientation. It was observed that orientation was significantly related to organizational commitment. Orientation programs are successful and helpful in reducing turnover. We need to design the orientation program components according to the needs and requirements of the job. "Organizations should be aware of employee retention rates when they construct their orientation programs" (Reese, 2005). When Hacker (2004) reviewed research on new employee orientation programs, he found that just by improving the orientation program, organizations had the ability to increase their retention rates by up to 25%. "When designing widespread orientation programs, there are three things organizations should think about: (a) their adult learners, (b) creating programs that allow information to be shared, and (c) providing opportunities for that information to be implemented in the organization" (Ragsdale & Mueller, 2005). The design of the program is important because

orientation programs have the power to shape employees' attitudes about their job duties and their action within the organization.

Methodology
The research was designed by adopting quantitative approach. The information collected was analyzed with the help of statistical tests. The study was a descriptive type research that was dealing with the current issue related to the orientation programmes used by the public sector universities of Punjab. The population of the research was consisted of all faculty members hired by the "Higher Education Commission" (HEC) recognized public sector universities of Punjab, Pakistan. The HEC data base revealed that there were 21 HEC recognized universities in Punjab. While there were 6825 faculty members serving in these universities. The random sampling technique was selected to select the sample for the study. 350 faculty members from seven different universities were selected in order to collect data. A questionnaire based on three sections was developed by the researcher as a research tool. The first section was related to the demographic information; the second section was related to the orientation programme having 19 items and the third section was related to the work role clarity having 08 items. The data was collected by the personal efforts of the researcher. Researcher personally contacted the sample respondents and got the response. The responses were coded and analyzed with the help Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) 21 Edition. For the purpose of analysis Cronbach's' Alpha Reliability, Regression, t test and ANOVA were used.

Tables

Table No. 1

Scale	Items	Cronbach's Alpha Reliability
Orientation	19	.91
Work Role Clarity	08	.71

Table No. 2

Independent Variable	Dependant Variable	β (Coefficients)	t	Sig.	R Square
Orientation	Work Role Clarity	**-.03**	**-.56**	**.57**	**.001**

Table No. 3   (t Test)

Variable		N	Mean	t value	df	Sig	Cohen D	r
Orientation	Male	163	29.19	.21	348	.83	.02	.01
	Female	187	29.01					

Table No. 4   (t Test)

Variable		N	Mean	t value	df	Sig	Cohen D	r
Work Role Clarity	Male	163	29.16	.49	348	.62	.05	.02
	Female	187	28.91					

Table No. 5   (ANOVA)

Variable		N	Mean	df	F	Sig
Orientation	Islamia University Bahawalpur	50	27.44	6	11.04	.00
	Lahore college for Women	50	25.28			
	Arid Agriculture	40	28.40			
	University of Gujrat	105	30.27			
	King Edward Medical College	46	25.67			
	University of Agriculture Faisalabad	23	35.48			
	Bahaw u Din Zakaria University	36	34.33			
	Total	350	29.09			

Table No. 6   (ANOVA)

Variable			N	Mean	df	F	Sig
Work Role Clarity		Islamia University Bahawalpur	50	28.02	6	4.21	.000
		Lahore college for Women	50	29.44			
		Arid Agriculture	40	31.60			
		University of Gujrat	105	28.70			
		King Edward Medical College	46	29.85			
		University of Agriculture Faisalabad	23	26.65			
		Bahaw u Din Zakaria University	36	28.44			
		Total	350	29.03			

Results

1. Table No. 1 shows that the scale developed for the research was reliable and can be used for future researches with a fair amount of confidence. The reliability of the section related to orientation was .91 while the reliability of the section related to the work role clarity was .71.

2. The Table No. 2 revealed that the orientation programmes offered to the employees of the universities were not effective for work role clarity. The R^2 value is 0.001. That represents that the independent variable (Orientation) describes only 0.1 percent variation in work role clarity and the rest is due to some other factors. While the coefficient (B= -.03) is negative and not significant. It indicates that orientation programmes and work role clarity content inversely related with each other but not up to any significant level. Thus the Hypothesis No 1 "Orientation programmes are not effective to develop work role clarity among employees" is accepted.

3. Table No. 3 shows that the t value (.21) is statistically not significant as the p-value (.83) is greater than 0.05. Thus there is no significant difference between the responses of male and female respondents working at the universities of Punjab. Thus the orientation techniques were used for male and female employees equally without any discrimination. Thus the hypothesis No 2. "There is no difference between male and female employees in provision of orientation programme" is accepted.

4. Table No. 4 shows that the t value (.49) is statistically not significant as the p-value (.62) is greater than 0.05. Thus there is no significant difference between the responses of male and female with reference to work role clarity. It shows that the Hypothesis No 3 "There is no difference between male and female employees in work role clarity" is also accepted.

5. Table No. 5 shows that the F value (11.04) is statistically significant at 0.01 level. Thus there is significant difference between the universities of Punjab in the use of orientation programmes. It explains that the Hypothesis No 4 "There is no difference between different universities in orientation programmes offered to its employees" is rejected.

6. Table No. 6 shows that the F value (4.21) is statistically significant at 0.01 level. Thus there was significant difference of work role clarity of the employees working in the universities of Punjab.

Discussion

Hacker (2004) summarizes the important aspects of an orientation program. "Orientation in its most ideal form is ongoing. It starts with recruitment and selection, and continues throughout the new employee's first year on the job" (p. 91). Effective orientation programs have a number of benefits. New employees will quickly be able to get up to speed, have rational expectations, and exhibit positive attitudes. These programs can also cause turnover rates to reduce and be a time saver for employee supervisors (McKersie, 2003). Thus this study is a significant work to see the situation in the educational settings of Pakistan.

The results of the current study shows that the orientation programmes being used by the university management of Punjab were not found effective. Thus it approves the hypothesis No. 1 "Orientation programmes are not effective to develop work role clarity among employees". There was no difference found n the basis of gender in the provision of orientation and work role clarity. It explains that hypothesis No. 2 and 3 ("There is no difference between male and female employees in provision of orientation programme and There is no difference between male and female employees in work role clarity") were proved true.

The data showed that there was a significant difference between the universities in offering orientations and work role clarity of the employees. Thus the Hypothesis No. 4 "There is no difference between different universities in orientation programmes offered to its employees" was rejected in the light of the results.

Recommendations

1. On the basis of the findings of the research it is recommended that the orientation programmes being used by the educational organizations in Pakistan needs proper revision and planning for implementation. As the results showed that these currently used programmes were not found effective

in developing work role clarity. Universities may arrange short term orientation programme for the newly hired employees.

2. If the orientation session are not possible to be arranged at the same time for all the employees. As the employees are hired at different times by the organizations. It is also recommended that the orientation kits may be prepared to provide to the new employees. Orientation kits may contain the sample of important letters, documents, maps, organizational history and management hierarchy.

3. It is recommended that to arrange an orientation kit the following material may be especially consider to be included:

    a. Organizational Chart
    b. Job Description
    c. Work Week and Schedules
    d. Attendance
    e. Professionalism
    f. Job Performance Evaluations
    g. Statement of Financial Interest (if applicable)
    h. Miscellaneous Pay Issues
    i. Leaves
    j. Extended Illness Leave Bank
    k. Emergency Contact Data Sheet
    l. Copy of required license(s) for job

4. It is recommended that the universities may join hands for collaborative efforts to help their employees to adjust in the new situations. Every university has some positive features in one way or another. So it is recommended that collective workshops may be organized to train the new employees

5. It is suggested that universities may make collective efforts to train the university management to develop effective orientation programmes.

6. It is suggested that the university management has to pay proper attention to the work role and job description of employee. The orientation programmes offered to the employee may focus special attention on the understanding of the work role that is the prime purpose of hiring an employee.

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