

ARTICLE

Perception of kerala state road transportation corporation employees regarding the role of trade union in the practices of human resource management

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The surveillance of service sector purely depends upon the workforce of that organization. The human resources management practices mainly focused to fill the vacancy of employees needed in the KSRTC, because of human relevance in transportation sector is very essential than non-other sector. Among managerial function one among the difficult task is staffing process, it includes three dimensions like recruitment, selection and training. HRM focused the functional area of staffing in KSRTC and same time the voluntary organization trade union focused the welfare of employees in KSRTC that may be a member or non- member in trade union. The study focused to know the perception of employees regarding with HRM practices and the role of trade union in such practices. The statutory corporation consist freedom to take decision regarding manpower. A theoretical approach is developed in order to understand the link with trade union and HRM, because of the common factor between both is human resource.

Keywords: surveillance, human resource, recruitment, voluntary organization, perception

INTRODUCTION

History shows the invention of wheel is a significant milestone for the human era. The most important part of human life is transportation which connects people across distance and time. It leads to improve their standard of living. Modern times, the mode of transportation used by people in all counties have choice. The developing country like India is still facing poverty; the cost of living is not affordable for all citizens. For transportation most commonly used public transportation is road transportation especially bus transportation, its convenience, cheaper fare, availability is the attracting factor which highlights its popularity. Different states in India have their own public bus road transportation. For example Andhra Pradesh (APSRTC), Karnataka (KSRTC) and same name for Kerala too.

About KSRTC (Kerala State Road Transport Corporation)

In 1961, KSRTC was developed. It is a state- owned public road transport corporation in the Kerala. The organization divided into three different zones, north zone, central zone and south zone, their headquarters at Thiruvananthapuram. The Travancore Government

began Travancore State Transport Department (TSTD) to reorganize the transport service of the State. The first superintendent appointed was Mr E.G. Salter. It was inaugurated by His Highness Sree Chithira Thirunal on 20th February 1938. His Highness and his kin were the first passengers of the inauguration trip on bus and Mr Salter was himself the driver to that bus. The department was converted into an autonomous corporation on 1st April 1965. The Kerala State road Transport Corporation was established by 15th march 1965.

In KSRTC the recruitment process of screening and selection are made directly through the government agency called Kerala Public Service Commission. There are some exception for the chairman post only which is not recruited through KPSC. The temporary vacancies recruitment made through direct interview by the Corporation. Some vacancies they filled through employment exchanges. The KSRTC is a highly labour oriented organization which needs a proper channel of human resource management. At present there is no separate section for HRM, exist personal management only.

HRM policies & practice: Trade Union role

Table 1: HRM objectives and functions

HRM objectives	Supporting function
Social objectives	Legal Compliance Benefits Union-management relation
Organizational objectives	Human resource planning Employee -relations Selection Training Appraisal placement Assessment
Functional objectives	Appraisal placement Assessment
Personal objectives	Training and development Appraisal Placement compensation Assessment

Source: Aswathappa, Human Resource Management page:13

According to HRM people is consider as an important source or asset. HRM cannot be isolated; it being integrated element for overall business management.

Some HR practices include selection process, direct communication, task level participation, training, performance oriented pay are helped to build a rapport between management and employee's. The trade union relevance came when the decision and implements of HR management is directly affected to employee's like wage negotiation to improve its scale, in case of industrial conflict. HRM should balance the interest of trade union and employer's relation between employee and employers is framed with the influence of HR practices. The innocent working class believes union leaders to protect their interest against wrong decision made by management. Lot of politicalized trade unions fights between each other made a situation of loading unsolved issues and it cause the development of organization badly.

After several struggles the Transport Employee's Union secures the right to organize a trade union. Earlier transport was a state department does not enjoy any fixed working hours, job security, leave benefits. The top management appoints employees dismissed them without any initiation or reason, they cut salaries, and punishment transfer, physical attack and abusing

subordinates were prevailed before independence. They suffer a lot and waited for an opportunity to fight against it. The trade union in transportation sector is a blessing at beginning.

Ewing K D mentioned in his study that "Over the course of time, trade union has developed five principal functions. There are respectively a service function, a representation function, a regulatory function, government function and a public administration function". Trade unions came in existence in all organization in varied form with different power and effect in employment condition may occur. "Solution to the problem" is the main motive behind the workers to join trade union. The workers believe trade union will encountered their problems both personal and organizational. The dual objectives aimed by trade union for an effective functioning of an organization: (a) Protect the interest of the workers (b) Protect the employers interest in organization.

Their focus to other areas includes satisfactory wage and salary, better working condition to employees, inculcating a sense of discipline, guidance and counseling to reach the welfare of man. More than 9000 trade unions in our country but the popular unions are following AITUC, INTUC, HMS, UTC, and CITU. These may consist registered or non-registered; registration will become under Trade Union Act 1926.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Recently KSRTC was in the news because of failure to pay salary and payments to employees. The transport department of Kerala facing a tragic crisis that is ran out of cash to make payment. Unhealthy competition from private bus operators, non-availability of workers, increase in fuel price, non-utilization of the available capacity is the other problems which reduce the fitness of KSRTC. In 2018, Kerala SRTC empanelled workers given dismissal order and the vacant posts remain vacant it leads to trouble in entire operations of corporation. Efficiency of HRM is not there in KSRTC, manpower planning and timely recruitment is not happening.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand about HRM practices in KSRTC.
2. To evaluate the perception of employees towards trade union in role of HRM practices

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The foremost study focused to know the theoretical aspect of KSRTC and HRM practices. The perception about the role of trade union in HRM practices studied here used the retired employee together with empanel employees who worked previously in this institution. In Kerala, among 14 districts, the capital city Thiruvananthapuram considered to collect data. The availability of retired staff and empanel employees are scattered in rural and urban areas of Thiruvananthapuram. The study evaluate the perception of employees towards trade union role in HRM practices limited with two variable in HRM practices welfare measures and employment opportunity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Method of the study: The methodology used in the study is according to the objectives. The method of study used is descriptive and analytical. The main objective is to understand the profile of the institution and the HRM practices for that the secondary data collected and the perception using simple analytical method.

Data source: In primary data collected through questionnaire from 60 employees from different areas of Thiruvananthapuram district.

Sampling technique: Purposive sampling

Sampling Tools: sampling tools structured questionnaire used for primary data collection. For data analysis, percentage and sampling technique and 5 point scale used.

Sample design: the total respondent 60 are

from different places of Thiruvananthapuram district included retired employees and dismissed empaneling employees whose designation driver, mechanic staff, conductor, store keeper and office staff.

DESIGNATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	
	Retired	Empanel employees
Conductors	21	7
Drivers	9	3
Mechanical staff	11	2
Office staff	7	-

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nagaraju, B. (2014) the paper aims to evaluate the employee's perception regarding KSRTC. Perception means in this study is to find interpretation of employee's perception may differ from person to person. For this study purpose, 100 permanent workers responses collected through a questionnaire. The problem stated to study was perception level of KSRTC employees towards management and colleagues, if HRD practices are positive towards worker, they will be satisfied and if it is negative attitude then employees will be unsatisfied.

Antony, M., & Puthussery, J. J. (2015) The study focused to find the perception of the employees towards human resources practices pertaining in the company and how satisfied they are. Along with two other objectives studied were the selection and recruitment process undergone by the employees and evaluate the performance of the employee in the organization. The result shows they need lot of improvement and revision in case of employees at each level of management. The very essential thing is regular or periodical feedback to evaluate employees, it helps to plan effectively.

Janakiraman, R. (2014).the study interpret the perception of employees regarding job satisfaction towards the TamilNadu State Road Transports Corporation. Both primary and secondary data used for data analysis , Simple Percentage Analysis, Chi square test, Factor analysis, Correlation tools used. Suggestion made by this study to corporation was need improvement in basic amities in all depots and employees need should be considered.

Misra, S. S., & Ghosh, P. (2022). The article studied the union effectiveness required Managerial competencies for trade union officials in India. Because the number of trade union and leaders prevailed still labour problems are not solving. In several studies mentioned the effectiveness required an efficient

leadership in union. The study finds the gap to explore the required competencies for trade union officials.

SAMUNDESWARI, R (2020) her study stated the attitudes of trade union in V.O.Chindambarnar Port Trust. The study mentioned the essentiality of trade union in the organization. Trade union is ladder to both employer and employee, which promotes an effective channel of communication. Descriptive and analytical study is conducted on the basis of empirical observations and comprehensive study took 150 employees on the basis of proportionate random sampling technique. It concluded with the opinion that

trade union should build additional value to members in the work place and mentioned the major task ahead is emerged new young trade union.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The personal variable used for the study is number of respondent on designation base, age wise, educational qualification and years of experience. The variable studied here to know perception of employees towards role of trade union in HRM practices is welfare measures taken by HRM and employment opportunity is taken into consideration.

TABLE 2: Number of Respondents

DESIGNATION	NO OF RESPONENTS			
	Retired	Percentage (%)	Empanel employees	Percentage (%)
Conductors	19	40	7	58
Drivers	13	27	3	25
Mechanical staff	9	23	2	17
Office staff	7	15	-	-
Total	48	100	12	100

Source: primary data

The data shows the number of respondents in retired and empanel employees. 40% of respondents were retired conductors and 27% drivers. Only 15% office

staff comes under retired employees. Among empanel employees 58% of respondents were conductors and least percentage 17% belongs to mechanical staff.

TABLE 3: Respondents Age

Serial Number	Age	No of respondent	Percentage
1	Below 30	-	
2	31-40	3	5
3	41-50	12	20
4	51-60	3	5
5	61-70	30	50
6	71-80	12	20
Total	100	60	100

Source: primary data

It is witnessed from the table that the 50% of respondents belongs in the 61-70 age groups. Majority of respondents were retired employees so the sum total of 75% comes under above 60age

group. 5% respondents lie in 31 -40 and 51-60 respectively. 20% of respondents belong to 41-50 age groups. In 71-80 age group 20% respondents found.

TABLE 4: Respondents educational qualification

Serial Number	Qualification	No of respondent	Percentage (%)
1	SSLC	29	48
2	Plus Two	12	20
3	Graduation	8	13
4	Post-graduation	7	12
5	Others	4	7
Total		60	100

Source: primary data

The table 4 shows the educational qualification of respondents. The majority of employees qualified SSLC. 20% qualified plus two. Among the total respondents, 13% stated that they are qualified graduation and the 12% qualified post – graduation. Only 7% respondents stated others.

TABLE 5: Respondents year of work experience

Serial Number	Work experience	No of respondent	Percentage (%)
1	Up to 10	8	13
2	11-20	12	20
3	21-30	7	12
4	Above 30	33	55
Total		60	100

Source: primary data

The table 5 shows the work experience of respondents in years; up to 10 years only 13% of employees. The employees belong to 11- 20 years' experience category is 20%. Only 12% employees worked for 21-30 years. The majority and highest percentage of respondents 55% have work experience more than 30 years.

TABLE 6: Opinion regarding retired employees regarding welfare measures and employment towards HRM practices in KSRTC

Serial number	Factors opined	Highly Agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Highly disagreed	Total
A.	Welfare measures						
1	Adequate infrastructure and sanitation	17 (35%)	13 (27%)	18 (38%)	-	-	48 (100%)
2	Safety measures and medical facilities	25 (52%)	11 (23%)	12 (25%)	-	-	48 (100%)
3	Canteen facility and recreational facilities	40 (83%)	8 (17%)	-	-	-	48 (100%)

B. Employment opportunity

1	Appointment are regular	-	-	-	29 (60%)	19 (40%)	48 (100%)
2	Promotion and career development is possible	9 (19%)	26 (54%)	13 (27%)	-	-	48 (100%)
3	Proper distribution of salary and wages	-	-	-	3 (6%)	45 (94%)	48 (100%)
4	Pension ,provident fund is properly availing	-	-	-	10 (21%)	38 (79%)	48 (100%)

Source: primary data

The data collected shows the opinion of welfare activates initiated by HR management in KSRTC .the total retired employees opined that adequate infrastructure and sanitation is provided by management(62%).more than 52% highly agreed with safety measures and medical facilities provided .83% highly agreed with canteen facility.

In case of employment opportunity 100% disagreement regarding appointment, proper distribution of salary and wages and also pension matters. A good percentage highly agreed with promotion and career development chances for them.27% stated neutral in case of career development and promotion.

TABLE 7: Opinion regarding retired employees regarding role of trade union in HRM practices in KSRTC

Serial No	Factors consider to opined	Highly agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagree	Highly disagree	Total
1	Union bargaining power with management	8 (17%)	22 (46%)	2 (4%)	16 (33%)		48 (100%)
2	Guidance and support from trade union		12 (25%)	25 (52%)	11 (23%)		48 (100%)
3	communication with management for better working condition	25 (52%)	15 (31%)	8 (17%)			48 (100%)
4	Fight for job security	45 (94%)		3 (6%)			48 (100%)
5	Grievances redressed by union			4 (8%)	18 (38%)	26 (54%)	48 (100%)
6	Fight for more pay and allowances	15 (31%)	10 (21%)	18 (38%)	5 (10%)		48 (100%)

Source: primary data

The table reveals that the retired employee's opinion regarding trade union role in HRM practices. The factor regarding union have relationship with management is agreed by former employees63%.33% opined that union does not have any role in management. About guidance and support from trade union is agreed by25%, neutral statement by 52% and23% not agreed

with that opinion; Retired employees opined about better working condition are 52% highly agreed. 94% opined that union fight for job security and grievance redressed is poor majority of 92% disagreed. Fight for more pay and allowance is carried by trade union 52% agree with that opinion and 10% disagree with that opinion.

TABLE 8: Opinion regarding empanel employees regarding welfare measures and employment towards HRM practices in KSRTC

Serial No	Factors opined	Highly Agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed	Highly disagreed	Total
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A .Welfare measures

1	Adequate infrastructure and sanitation	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	-	-	-	12 (100%)
2	Safety measures and medical facilities	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	-	-	-	12 (100%)
3	Canteen facility and recreational facilities	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	-	-	-	12 (100%)
B. Employment opportunity							
1	Appointment are regular	-	-	-	3 (75%)	9 (25%)	12 (100%)
2	Promotion and career development is possible			12 (100%)	-	-	12 (100%)
3	Proper distribution of salary and wages	-	-	-	3 (25%)	9 (75%)	12 (100%)
4	Pension ,provident fund is properly availing			12 (100%)			12 (100%)

Source: primary data

From the table above shows the opinion regarding empanel employees regarding welfare measures regarding adequate infrastructure and sanitation 75% highly agreed and 25% agreed. About safety measures and canteen facility together with recreational activities also shows same percentage 83% highly agreed and 17% agreed. It reveals that in welfare measures empanel employees are satisfied. The perception regarding

employment opportunity the factor considering the appointment regularity shows the 100% disagreement from empanels employees. About promotion and career development cent percentage neutral option they choose. Proper distribution of salary and wages shows disagreement cent percentage form whole respondents. Factor showing pension says neutral option from respondents.

TABLE 9: Opinion regarding empanel employees regarding role of trade union in HRM practices in KSRTC

Serial No	Factors consider to opined	Highly agreed	Agreed	Neutral	Disagree	Highly disagree	Total
1	Union bargaining power with management	7 (58%)	3 (25%)	2 (17%)			12 (100%)
2	Guidance and support from trade union	4 (33%)	5 (42%)		3 (25%)		12 (100%)
3	communication with management for better working condition	2 (17%)	4 (33%)		3 (25%)	3 (25%)	12 (100%)
4	Fight for job security	12 (100%)					12 (100%)
5	Grievances redressed by union				9 (75%)	3 (25%)	12 (100%)
6	Fight for more pay and allowances	3 (25%)	9 (75%)				12 (100%)

Source: primary data

It reveals the factors consider finding the role of trade union in HR management. The foremost factor about union bargaining power with management shows (83%) totally agreed that union have bargaining power. In case of guidance and support also majority of them agreed around 75%. The factor related to communication with management for better working condition they have two opinions that 50% agreed and another half did not agreed. 100% agreed with fight for job security. Grievances redressed by union factor also disagreed by employees. The empanel employees stated about fight for more pay and allowances is 25% highly agreed and 75% agreed.

FINDINGS

1. It is surprising that there is no HR Department on highly labour oriented organization, instead of HR department there exist personal management but employee's meant it as a HRM.
2. Out of 60 respondents a good percentage of respondents were retired employees the reason why total sum of 75% comes under, age group above 60. The majority of respondents work experience also has more than 30 years.
3. The respondents where qualified minimum of SSLC and there are respondents with graduation and post – graduation holders.
4. The perception of retired employees towards the HR practices considering two variable welfare measures and employment opportunity , in case of welfare measures the retirees employees are satisfies and agreed with them. But in case of employment opportunity leaving promotion activities all other factors considered here they are not agreed with HRM.
5. The perception of trade union role in HR practices union bargaining, guidance from union, communication with management, fight for job, fight for more pay and allowance they are agreed, but in case of grievance redressed they show disagreement with union.
6. Opinion regarding empanel employees regarding welfare measures and employment towards HRM practices taken to find the perception of both variable. The total factors used to find welfare measures the workers were satisfied and in case of employment opportunity the two factor promotion and pension they have neutral opinion and other two factors appointment and salary distribution not agreed by them
7. The findings regarding the perception of empanel employees towards the role of trade union in HR practices fight for job security and pay securing

shows cent percentage agreed option but other factors shows communicating and grievance redressed is not agreed by them.

SUGGESTIONS

The study shows the perception of employees especially the retired and empanel employee's both were experienced workers who were pass the journey in that institution but their opinion have much value and its good for the future of the institution. The first findings shows HRM is not there in KSRTC, instead there is a personal management only .HRM is highly required for the large employee oriented institution especially public sector and utility undertaking , it will restructure the sector. And the trade unionism and their presence will promote the institution to great extent.

CONCLUSION

In nutshell the role of trade union in HR management is not completely possible because participation of trade union in decision making and policy implementation is not allowed. According to the view point of previously employed members retired and empanel workers, it is clearly stating the welfare given is satisfactory. It is pleasant to note that workers have high perception and impression on their HRM welfare measures but in case of employment opportunity, trade union role is not fully agreed by employees

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