Employing Quantile Regression for Influences of Human Resource Management on Employee Performance

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Abstract

The current study has employed the regression of quantile to explore the impacts of human resource management practices on employee performance at enterprises in business. The research data was collected in Vietnam as a developing economy. The empirical results offer a quite comprehensive picture of the causal linkages from the practices of human resource management to employee performance in emerging economies. These complex linkages have been explored at different quantiles of the conditional distribution of employee performance. The findings reveal that at different points of the conditional mean of employee performance, the effects of human resource management practices are different. The current work is helpful to researchers and business directors, especially in emerging countries like Vietnam, by providing them with a more comprehensive picture of the multifaceted links from the practices of human resource management to employee performance. Accordingly, they are able to make better business decisions on the implementation of suitable human resource management. Finally, their enterprises can achieve better employee performance, which in turn leads to superior firm performance.

Keywords: compensation and reward, performance appraisal, recruitment and selection, training and development, human resource management, Vietnam

1. Introduction

In most enterprises, there is a statement of its task, which claims that people are ones of the most precious resources (Cherif, 2020), because humans stand for a resource of competitive advantage, irrespective of whoever they are or whatever they are in charge of (Tabouli, 2016; Kerdpitak & Jermsittiparsert, 2020). Hence, at the time the development of technology is incongruent, it is only the resource of human, which likely plays an imperative role in the growth of all enterprises. Able workers can facilitate customer satisfaction, and loyalty to enterprises (Payne & Webber, 2006; Brown & Lam, 2008). According to Oladipo and Abdalkader (2011), the labor force of an enterprise is essential to its achievement, and employee performance (PE) is reliant mainly on the suitable systems of human resource management (HRM). To achieve the goals, enterprises have to face vicious competitive business environments. Consequently, enterprises are supposed to concentrate on the capability of its HRM to augment the performance of its employees. Enterprises should focus more on human resource (HR), because the adoption of HRM systems can help stimulate employees’ engagement in work (Alzyoud, 2018; Oluwatayo & Adetoro, 2020) and maximize their competency within the enterprise (Saleem and Khurshid, 2014).

HR in enterprises is viewed as ones of the most important strategic assets (Pfeffer, 1994). As a result, these enterprises that have long-term goals generally try to re-examine how to control HR, which is known as human resource management (HRM), indicating how such enterprises pay attention to the role of running HR. According to Khatri (1999), HR of an enterprise is the resource relating to competitive advantage due to its ability to swap other sources into production. HR is one of the most crucial elements providing enterprises with flexibility and adaptability. In addition, Rundle (1997) emphasizes a need that directors, not the enterprise, are the instrument of adaptivity to determine the way the enterprise could react to changing business environments. The rivals could replicate other inputs like raw material or technology but cannot duplicate HR. Those elements made them an exclusive resource and call for the efficient supervision. In addition, Rubel (2018) emphasized a higher commitment of HRM has a close relationship with employee behaviour, and sound HRM practices likely enable employee job satisfaction, which leads to PE (Bastida et al., 2018).
The systems of HRM could generate enterprises, which are distinguished by aptitude, flexibility and proficiency over the competitors. These enterprises employ procedures of recruiting, selecting, training and developing workers. The workers can in turn orient the hardest work on collaboration in the resources of the enterprise (Nancy, 2013). The influence of HRM on PE has been broadly examined. Numerous researchers have asserted that running workers is harder than controlling material and equipment (Lado & Wilson, 1994; Barney, 1991). Nonetheless, the enterprises, which have studied the way to control HR well, could enjoy more competitive advantage than their competitors as they acquire and deploy HR efficiently (Wright et al., 2003). Furthermore, the development, staying power and competitive ability of the enterprises are tied to the commitment of their employees. For the employees to be loyal to the enterprise they are content with the work, employees’ contentment is considered as a critical requirement for the loyalty to the enterprise.

Based on Bishop et al. (2000), several scholars claimed that workers perceiving HRM in business as good possibly do better than the workers who do not. Hence, individual workers that regard HRM in business as helpful and concerned for the well-being could be more pleased with the work, which then can augment PE (Mathies & Ngo, 2014). Moreover, PE has been confirmed as one of the imperative determinants of organizational success; but the number of research projects exploring the causal link from HRM to PE is still humble (Qureshi et al., 2010). Surrounded by the emergence of HRM, many academics have paid a good deal of attention to the field in developed nations. The influences of systems of HRM on employees’ satisfaction are a research area of interest particularly in the circumstance of emerging economies. Nevertheless, little is paid attention to the effect of HRM in the circumstance of emerging economies (Ray & Ray, 2011). HRM has been widely recognized as one of the significant factors in augmenting PE, but many enterprises in emerging economies pay little attention to HRM (Tabouli et al., 2016). This leads to the necessity in conducting more research on HRM in emerging economies.

Furthermore, previous research projects have examined the causal link from HRM systems to PE, employing the Generalized Linear Model. This approach only investigates the impacts of influential factors on the conditional mean of PE. Exploring how ‘on average’ the systems of HRM influence PE generates straightforward elucidation; but this typical method may possibly take no notice of various influences of HRM systems at different points of the conditional distribution of PE. Consequently, there is a need to scrutinize the influences of HRM systems on PE by using the quantile regression that is aimed to assess various influences of HRM systems at different points of the conditional distribution of PE. The current research attempts to assess the linkage from HRM systems to PE in Vietnam as a developing nation. The most relevant systems of HRM have been chosen for analysis such as recruitment and selection – SR, compensation and reward – RC, training and development – DT, and performance appraisal – AP. The analyses for the causal influences are undertaken applying the quantile regression for more comprehensive analyses.

2. Theoretical Framework

The notion of HRM has been broadly accepted as novel management systems, but it has remained undefined due to different usages (Tabouli et al., 2016). There have been three key ways to consider HRM (Guest, 1987). First of all, it refers to an innovative concept for people management, stating that enterprises had better change the name of the personnel unit but need not make any changes to the procedures. Second, it is referred to as an identification of personnel roles and clarification of the personnel unit work. Third, it is viewed as a completely novel procedure to control enterprises in a distinguishing approach and intergrate HR into strategic management, emphasizing the significance of entirely employing full HR. Generally, HRM is considered as a set of procedures that are developed to maximize firm incorporation, employee loyalty, suppleness and quality. HRM is obtaining large contribution on PE (Guest, 1987). This leads to the necessity in conducting more research on HRM in emerging economies.
2.1 The Effect of SR on PE

Recruitment refers to a practice that enterprises employ to draw and put persons into vacant positions at the workplace (Khan et al., 2019). It is also defined as appeal of prospective workers to the enterprise. Additionally, selection is a procedure that helps to decide on appropriate workers from the group of potential candidates (Khan et al., 2019). To choose proper employees, it is necessary to rely on the related and clear conditions. An unsuitable selection can enable the enterprise to suffer failure to achieve its objectives, which included large turnover, small efficiency and employee discontent (Storey, 2007). According to Kosiorek & Szczepańska (2016), there are various approaches to supervise employees expressed in the circumstance of HRM. Similarly, HRM embraces an entire host of employee behaviors relating to the goals of enterprises and pleasing work necessities. The role of SR is to decide on suitable employees for their positions and is one of the best systems of HRM, which assists management to draw potential workers whose performance, in turn, results in firm performance. A number of researchers advocated the standpoint that the efficient practice of SR could create competitive advantage as well as PE, and affirmed a positive relationship between the good process of SR and high PE (Amin et al., 2014). Anchored in the aforementioned arguments, it could come to the following hypothesis that, PE can be positively determined by SR (H1).

2.2 The Effect of DT on PE

Barau (2008) referred to training as a planned procedure to smooth the progress of learning among employees, which help them to be more efficient in performing their job; while to development as programs to develop technical as well as human relationships and theoretical proficiency of directors. In addition, Adeniji et al. (2013) asserted that the process of DT in business are enterprises’ efforts to activate education of related proficiency and knowledge for their employees, which is imperative to organizational success as well as PE. As declared by Ahmed and Yohanna (2014), the practice of DT is one of the HRM systems, which equip workers with the needed competence and skills to their work. The competence and skills could help to change employees’ behaviors so that they have been able to carry out their jobs professionally. The trained and developed knowledge is an important element that helps employees to do a good job and then enhance their job performance at individual as well as enterprises levels (Oketchukwu, 2017). The expansion of employees’ competencies is achieved due to the programs of DT in business. This is because the process of DT among employees could change not only proficiency as well as behaviors of workers, but it also enables them to adjust to innovation, which likely improves the effectiveness of employees as well as enterprises (Khan et al., 2016). A positive causal linkage from the programs of DT to PE has been discovered in previous studies (Afzana et al., 2016; Singh, 2016). Overall, it can posit that, PE can be positively determined by DT (H2).

2.3 The Effect of RC on PE

RC is very vital for employees as well as enterprises, because salaries and other bonuses to employees are ones of the major expenses incurred by enterprises (Guzak et al., 2017). RC is the payment offered by enterprise to their workers due to their willingness to carry out good jobs for the enterprise (Rana & Malik, 2017). Payment is likely financial and non-financial incentives (Sardar et al., 2011). Financial incentives consist of pay, bonuses; whereas non-financial ones include additional holiday and other leisure programs. Enterprises should engage their workers in suitable payment packages if they follow to obtain superior PE for business. Fair payments verify high self-esteem leading to subsequently high PE and are the amount considered as a vigorous contributor on PE. Furthermore, Ahmad and Shahzad (2011) asserted that, PE depends closely on financial rewards; likewise, Tessema and Soeters (2006) ascertained a positive connection from the practice of RC to PE. Whereas, Islam and Siengthai (2010) examined and found out the effect of RC on firm performance, Shezad et al. (2008) undertook a research project on the effect of HRM systems on PE recommended that, the practice of RC is positively connected to PE. Grounded on the above mentioned literature; it can assume that, PE can be positively determined by RC (H3).

2.4 The Effect of AP on PE

AP is one of the HRM systems, which represents a formal procedure used to monitor employees and is a managerial means intended to increase PE and efficiency (Brown & Heywood, 2005). Based on Amin et al. (2014), AP is to identify and enhance PE as well as to align PE with the targets of enterprise. The function of AP is to appraise PE and help employees to augment their efficiency as well as individual and firm performance (Dar et al., 2014). A fair system of AP could enhance PE, so will impose a positive effect on firm performance. As Brown and Benson (2003) affirmed, employee loyalty and performance could be enhanced through the practice of AP. Suitable justification and management of PE will result in higher employee satisfaction and specialized loyalty among employees. The main purpose of AP is to augment individual effectiveness with the prearranged criteria. Whereas Abutayeh and Al-Qatawneh (2012) noticed a positive association from the practice of AP to PE; Amin et al. (2014) argued that an ineffective system of AP likely dissatisfies workers and puts a negative effect on PE. In addition, the complementary
systems of HRM like AP could result in larger effect on employee efficiency and there is a positive link between PE and the practice of AP (Brown & Heywood 2005). The above-mentioned literature leads to the following hypothesis that, PE can be positively determined by AP (H4).

More importantly, prior research work has analyzed and evaluated the effects of HRM systems on PE; however, the work has only explored these effects by applying the generalized linear model, which examined the relationships reliant on the conditional mean of PE. Conversely, this research work tries to employ the technique of quantile regression to investigate the influences HRM systems on PE at various influences with different points of the conditional distribution of PE.

Table 1. Reliability analyses

| Dimension | Dimension-total correlation | Cronbach α if dimension removed | Cronbach α |
|-----------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| SR1       | .724                       | .808                          |            |
| SR2       | .671                       | .823                          |            |
| SR3       | .649                       | .832                          |            |
| SR4       | .659                       | .827                          |            |
| SR5       | .650                       | .829                          |            |
| DT1       | .808                       | .916                          |            |
| DT2       | .861                       | .906                          |            |
| DT3       | .764                       | .924                          |            |
| DT4       | .767                       | .924                          |            |
| DT5       | .891                       | .901                          |            |
| RC1       | .678                       | .835                          |            |
| RC2       | .654                       | .841                          |            |
| RC3       | .664                       | .838                          |            |
| RC4       | .740                       | .818                          |            |
| RC5       | .676                       | .836                          |            |
| AP1       | .748                       | .869                          |            |
| AP2       | .800                       | .859                          |            |
| AP3       | .721                       | .875                          |            |
| AP4       | .714                       | .876                          |            |
| AP5       | .729                       | .874                          |            |
| PE1       | .797                       | .913                          |            |
| PE2       | .848                       | .904                          |            |
| PE3       | .813                       | .910                          |            |
| PE4       | .836                       | .905                          |            |
| PE5       | .765                       | .919                          |            |

3. Methodology

Vietnam is a fast growing nation in Asia. Consequently, enterprises there should adopt as many suitable management systems as possible in order to fight directly against their rivals in developed economies. Nonetheless, only few studies on such management systems like the systems of HRM have been explored in developing countries (Yesil & Kaya, 2013). Therefore, there is a big need to carry out more research on this field in developing countries, such as Vietnam. For that reason, this research selected Vietnam as a case study for analyses. The research population was composed of firms publicly listed on the three largest Stock Exchanges in Vietnam. They are are Unlisted Public Company Market, Hanoi Stock Exchange, and Ho Chi Minh Stock Exchange. The approach of random simple
sampling was performed to choose 500 out of the population. The premature solicitations were undertaken to obtain responses from chief informants at the managerial levels of the firms. Each manager for every selected firm was approached to complete the research questionnaire. The 500 questionnaires were delivered out, but only 314 constructive answers with reasonable information, meeting the threshold of the sample size as suggested by Hair et al. (2011).

This research based the measures of SR, DT, RC, AP ans PE on the studies of Shezad et al. (2008) and Khan et al. (2019). SR comprised five dimensions that are SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4 and SR5. DT consisted of five dimensions that are DT1, DT2, DT3, DT4 and TD5. RC was composed of five dimensions that are RC1, RC2, RC3, RC4 and RC5. AP included five dimensions that are AP1, AP2, AP3, AP4 and AP5. PE was made of five dimensions that are PE1, PE2, PE3, PE4 and PE5. A five-point Likert scale was applied to compute these dimensions for SR, DT, RC, AP ans PE, which ranged from “strongly disagree – 1”, “disagree – 2”, “neutral – 3”, “agree – 4” to “strongly agree – 5”. The elucidation of calculating the research dimensions was above presented. Now the techniques utilized for analyzing the research data are subsequently described. After gathering the the research data based on the aforementioned scales, reliability analyses were undertaken to verify the reliability of the measurements. Afterward, the exploratory factor analysis was performed to check for the validity of the scale. To test the research hypotheses, the quantile regression analysis was employed.

4. Empirical Findings

Table 2. Exploratory factor analysis

| Factor | Dimension | Loading | Communality | KMO | Sig. |
|--------|-----------|---------|-------------|-----|-----|
| SR     | SR1       | .794    | .700        |     |     |
|        | SR2       | .756    | .657        |     |     |
|        | SR3       | .771    | .630        |     |     |
|        | SR4       | .774    | .645        |     |     |
|        | SR5       | .770    | .635        |     |     |
|        | DT1       | .822    | .781        |     |     |
|        | DT2       | .837    | .850        |     |     |
|        | DT3       | .738    | .705        |     |     |
|        | DT4       | .750    | .709        |     |     |
|        | DT5       | .882    | .891        |     |     |
| TD     | RC1       | .698    | .632        |     |     |
|        | RC2       | .681    | .605        |     |     |
|        | RC3       | .778    | .654        | .923| .000|
|        | RC4       | .800    | .729        |     |     |
|        | RC5       | .766    | .653        |     |     |
| RC     | AP1       | .734    | .713        |     |     |
|        | AP2       | .762    | .777        |     |     |
|        | AP3       | .782    | .709        |     |     |
|        | AP4       | .716    | .670        |     |     |
|        | AP5       | .765    | .698        |     |     |
| AP     | PE1       | .775    | .760        |     |     |
|        | PE2       | .804    | .827        |     |     |
|        | PE3       | .792    | .793        |     |     |
|        | PE4       | .806    | .814        |     |     |
|        | PE5       | .710    | .699        |     |     |
The reliability analyses produced the outcomes in Table 1. As Table 1 shows, all of the 25 dimension-total correlations receive the numbers of more than 0.5 and the levels of Cronbach α are all greater than the 0.7 threshold. In addition, the values of Cronbach α, if dimension removed, are all smaller than their own current Cronbach αs. These figures point out that all of the scales have adequate inside reliability (Hair et al. 2011). Thus, they should be kept for later analyses.

Furthermore, in order for the scale validity to be checked, an exploratory factor analysis was performed. The outcomes are illustrated in Table 2, with the factor-loadings whose values of smaller than 0.35 were suppressed. The scale validity was evaluated based on the discriminant validity and the convergent validity. According to Table 2, the communalities of the 25 dimensions all exceed the 0.5 smallest threshold. All of the factor loadings surpass the 0.5 limit. The communalities and the factor loadings indicate the convergent validity of measurements. The cross-loadings are all greater than the 0.3 value, demonstrating the discriminant validity of measurements. Moreover, KMO gets the value of over 0.7 at the 1% significance level. Overall, the findings support the scale validity (Hair et al. 2011). Accordingly, they are suitable to be retained for other analyses.

Before testing the research hypotheses, the composite factors were calculated by averaging their own dimensions. Earlier researchers have studied the causal connections from HRM to PE, generally based on the generalized linear model. That technique possibly pays no attention to diverse affecting levels at different points of the conditional distribution of PE. This research explores the effects by utilizing the quantile regression as well as the generalized linear model with OLS. The findings are displayed in Table 3.

| Explanatory variable | OLS | Quantiles | 5% | 10% | 25% | 50% | 75% | 90% | 95% |
|----------------------|-----|-----------|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| SR                   | .091*** | .257 | .061 | .052 | .083** | .064* | .032 | .023 |     |
| TD                   | .528*** | .529 | .697*** | .593*** | .502*** | .488** | .205*** | .184** |     |
| RC                   | .099*** | .053 | .212** | .138** | .113** | .059* | .031** | .023* |     |
| AP                   | .146*** | .232 | .182* | .148* | .123* | .078* | .047*** | .041*** |     |
| C                    | 1.054*** | - .609 | -.685 | -.496 | 1.099*** | 2.109*** | 3.699*** | 3.889*** |     |
| (Pseudo) R²          | .503 | .275 | .347 | .353 | .367 | .119 | .024 | .008 |     |

*** ** *: Significance levels of 1%, 5% & 10%

As exhibited in Table 3, as regards the OLS regression, all of the explanatory variables (SR, TD, RC and AP) have significantly positive influences on the explained variable of PE. The effects of SR and RC are statistically significant at the 5% level with the estimates of 0.091 and 0.099 respectively; while the influences of TD and AP are statistically significant at the 1% level with the estimates of 0.528 and 0.146 respectively. These findings are parallel to the results from the regression of the 50% quantile, where the impacts of SR and RC are statistically significant at the 5% level with the estimates of 0.083 and 0.113 respectively; whereas the effects of TD and AP are statistically significant at the 1% level with the estimates of 0.502 and 0.123 respectively. The abovementioned results are in support for the research hypotheses from H1 to H4. The HRM practices of SR, DT, RC and AP have statistically significant impacts on PE. TD is the strongest determinant of PE. Conversely, SR is the weakest determinant of PE. The findings are in agreement with previous results. Nonetheless, in order to investigate the effects more thoroughly, this research applied the regression of quantile. As the figures in Table 3 illustrate, at the lower part of the conditional distribution of PE (at the 5% quantile), all of the HRM systems of SR, DT, RC and AP have no influence on PE. On the contrary, at the higher levels of the conditional distribution of PE (at the 50% and more quantiles) all of the HRM systems of SR, DT, RC and AP have statistical impacts on PE. At the 25% and less quantiles, SR does not affect PE. The results derived from the regression of quantile present a more apparent and comprehensive picture on the effects of HRM practice on PE, whereas those derived from the regression of OLS are simpler just taking the picture at the conditional mean of PE.

5. Discussions and Conclusions

The influences of HRM practices of SR, DT, RC and AP on PE have been previously investigated (Hee & Jing, 2018;
Cooper et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2019). Nevertheless, they are examined mostly based on the generalized linear model that explores the impacts of SR, DT, RC and AP on the conditional mean of PE. The current study has attempted to examine the causal links from the HRM practices of SR, DT, RC and AP to PE using the regression of quantile that evaluate various influential extents at different levels of the conditional distribution of PE. The empirical results disclose that, on the conditional mean of PE with the OLS or quantile regressions, suitable HRM practices likely augment employee performance at the workplace.

The practice of recruitment and selection is the weakest factor in augmenting employee performance; but the practice of training and development is the strongest factors in determining employee performance. The practice of performance appraisal is the second most imperative factors in enhancing employee performance, while the practice of compensation and reward takes the third importance. The practice of recruitment and selection only influences employee performance at the 50% or more quantiles. At the lower quantiles such as the 5% level, none of the HRM practices improves employee performance. In contrast, at the 50% or more quantiles, all of the HRM practices are statistically confirmed to enhance employee performance. Overall, the stability of effects of HRM practices on employee performance at the higher quantiles of employee performance is better than those at the lower quantiles. These findings provide a more comprehensive and clearer picture on the effects of HRM practices on employee performance, where the links between HRM practices and employee performance are different and dependent on the quantiles of employee performance.

The current study offers some contributions. It is one of the first studies employing the regression of quantile to examine the causal linkages from HRM practices to employee performance in Vietnam as an emerging country. The empirical findings provide researchers as well as business managers with a better knowledge of the multifaceted effects of HRM practices on employee performance. Consequently, the enterprises in dynamic business environments including Vietnam are able to deliver right decisions on the acceptance of suitable HRM practices in business, which can in turn increase employee performance and finally boost organizational performance.

6. Limitations

It is acknowledged that, this research suffers several limitations. Firstly, the research data was based on single respondents from firms; and consequently bias problem is likely to exist. Upcoming research could employ a multi-informant research design to escape from this possible bias. Secondly, this research is implemented in Vietnam as an emerging nation and the research findings are expected to apply in other emerging nations. Nevertheless, business environments among economies could be dissimilar; and therefore it should be careful to generalize the findings of this research.

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