



Role of Human Resource Management Practices in Enhancing Students' Performance: A Case of Public and Private Secondary Schools in Mbulu District, Tanzania

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Abstract: *This study assessed the role of human resources management (HRM) practices in enhancing students' performance in public and private secondary school in Mbulu district. The objectives of the study were, to investigate the influence of HRM practices on students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district and to identify the best HRM practices for enhancing students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district. This study adopted concurrent triangulation design and mixed-methods research design for a target population from 32 public secondary schools with 592 teachers and 32 head of schools; 7 private secondary schools with 147 teachers, 7 school heads, and one District Educational Officer (DEO) in Mbulu district. Stratified and random sampling was used to select 80 teachers while 8 heads of school and one DEO were interviewed. The university experts evaluated the instruments to determine content validity and the reliability test ($TQ=0.91$) was conducted by using Cronbach alpha. The collected, data were analysed using descriptive statistics in the SPSS version 25 and the result were presented in tables. The study found out that HR managers should focus on compensation and benefits that are competitive and attractive in retaining high-quality teachers and staff. Additionally, they should provide support to employees to ensure a smooth transition when necessary. In recommendation, the government and other stakeholders should support HRM for performance both in public and private secondary schools. Similarly, continuous evaluation and improvement of HRM practices based on feedback and self-assessment should also be prioritized.*

Keywords: *Human, Resource, Management, Schools, Performance, Practices*

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1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is an essential function in any organization, including secondary schools. According to Okafor (2018), Human resource refers to the

individuals, including teachers, administrators, support staff, and other personnel who work in institutions such as schools and contribute to the school's effectiveness in management, curriculum implementation and overall performance. The quality of these individuals and their ability to work together as a team has a significant impact

on student achievement and school performance (Arief, 2020). Therefore, human resources can be essential in creating school positive climate for fostering effective teaching and learning. According to Sukawati et al. (2020), HRM in a school context refers to the process of managing and developing the school's workforce, including teachers, administrative staff, support staff, and other employees. HRM is responsible for ensuring that the school has a qualified and effective workforce to achieve its goals and objectives. HRM is also responsible for creating a positive and supportive work environment that fosters employees' morale, engagement, and retention (Wesley and Sutner, 2022). Additionally, HRM is tasked with ensuring that the school is compliant with relevant labour laws and regulations. Therefore, HRM plays a crucial role in enhancing students' performance by ensuring that the school has the right people in the right roles.

According to Tanjung (2020) in developed countries like in England some HRM practices are common across both public and private schools. Both types of schools typically have formal recruitment and selection processes to identify qualified candidates for teaching and in administrative positions. They also offer professional development opportunities to support staff in enhancing their skills and knowledge. Performance management systems are used to assess employee performance and provide feedback for improvement. Knies et al. (2022) reported that HRM practices in public schools tend to be more structured and standardized, with clear job descriptions, salary scales, and performance evaluation procedures in place. Public schools often have more bureaucracy and administrative requirements to comply with, as they are accountable for a range of stakeholders such as parents, government agencies, and quality assurance officers, while HRM practices in private schools tend to be more flexible and individualized, with a greater emphasis on recruiting and retaining high-quality staff who can provide a unique and personalized learning experience for students.

Onyeche and Abanimebon (2020) pointed out that in African countries including Nigeria and South Africa, public schools are typically having more bureaucratic HRM practices than private schools. This is because public schools are usually governed by government regulations and policies that dictate HRM practices such as recruitment, selection, training, and performance management. Public schools may also have a more rigid

salary structure and promotion system based on seniority, rather than merit. The views of Blom et al. (2020), private schools tend to have more flexible and decentralized HRM practices. They have more autonomy to set their own HR policies and procedures, and they may be more likely to use performance-based incentives to reward and retain high-performing teachers. Private schools may also be more likely to invest in professional development opportunities for their staff to improve their skills and knowledge for better performance among teachers.

In East African countries, Ngotho (2018) observed that some HRM practices are common in both public and private schools such that the schools may offer training and development opportunities to their staff, including induction programs for new employees, on-the-job training, and professional development courses. Private schools may invest more in staff training and development to maintain their competitive advantage in the market. Also, Awan et al. (2020) observed that, in performance management, schools may have different methods for assessing and evaluating the performance of their staff. This may include regular performance reviews, setting targets and goals, and providing feedback to employees. Therefore, the HRM incentives can play a significant role to motivate and reward their staff for their performance.

According to Ndikumana (2018), HRM practices in public and private schools in Tanzania vary depending on several factors such as organizational structure, resources available, and government regulations. Suta (2019) pointed out that public and private schools provide training and development opportunities for their staff to enhance their skills and knowledge. Public schools may offer more formal training programs through government-sponsored initiatives, while private schools may offer more informal training and development opportunities. Also, Matimbwa and Masue (2019) observed that, public and private schools evaluate their school performance to ensure they are meeting the required standards for quality education. Therefore, through performance appraisal as one of the HRM practices, the schools ensure that overall students' performance is achieved. The results of students' performance in the national examination for four years from four sampled private and public secondary schools have been presented in table 1.

Table 1: Students' Performance in 2022 in Selected Private and Public Secondary Schools Mbulu District Council

PUBLIC CATEGORY						PRIVATE CATEGORY					
DIVISION	I	II	III	IV	ZERO		I	II	III	IV	ZERO
School A	0	3	5	25	2	School E	25	14	0	0	0
School B	0	12	30	40	5	School F	0	1	7	18	6
School C	3	2	12	38	16	School G	14	46	35	1	0
School D	0	0	0	2	13	School H	0	7	10	5	0
PERCENTAGE	1.4%	8%	23%	55%	13%		21%	36%	28%	13%	3%

Source: MoEST(2022)

Table 1 shows variation in students' performance both in the sampled private and public secondary schools. In this case, the challenge might lie on the extent to which HRM practices is performed in public and private schools and their role on students' performance. The current study therefore sought to find out if HRM practices in secondary schools could contribute towards quality education by enhancing students' academic performance.

1.1 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What are the influences of HRM practices on students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district?
- ii. Which are the best HRM practices for enhancing students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

This study was grounded on the Human Resource Management (HRM) Theory. The early proponents of HRM Theory were Mary Parker Follett and Fredrick Taylor in 1900s where they wrote that, managers should facilitate communication and collaboration among employees (Peek, 2023). In 1920s Elton Mayo and colleagues noted that social interaction and attention from managers had a greater impact on productivity than physical working conditions (Ward, 2021). Human Resource Management Theory is a framework that outlines the principles and practices used by organizations to manage and develop their employees such as

recruitment, selection, training and development. Similarly, the theory outlines practices such as performance management, compensation and benefits, and employee relations (O'riordan, 2017). HRM theory aims to align the organization's goals and objectives with the needs and aspirations of its employees. It emphasizes the importance of treating employees as valuable assets and focusing on their well-being and development, rather than just as a means of production (Fahim and Gaber, 2018). This is to say that the theory aims to help organizations attract, retain, and develop high-performing employees by providing them with a supportive work environment, opportunities for growth and development, and fair compensation and rewards.

2.2 Application of the Theory to the Current Study

This study used HRM theory to identify and examine the key HRM practices that are most effective in motivating teachers and improving quality education in public and private secondary schools. The theory also guided this study to analyse the effectiveness of HRM practices applied in schools and how they effectively improve overall school performance. HRM also places a strong emphasis on employee development, training, and career growth, which can improve employee retention and create a more motivated and skilled workforce. Therefore, by recognizing the importance of building positive relationships between managers and employees, HRM theory provide an assurance on the increased job satisfaction and overall organisational effectiveness. In this study it emphasises the importance of HRM practices in motivating teachers and students for institution's improved performance.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

The research questions guided the researcher to review empirical studies under the following themes to: investigate the influence of HRM practices on students' performance in public and private secondary schools and the best HRM practices for enhancing students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district.

2.3.1 The Influence of HRM Practices on Students' Performance in Public and Private Secondary Schools

A study by Boon et al. (2019) conducted in Netherlands focused on a systematic review of HRM systems and their measurement. The study used systematic review in which the researchers analysed the development of HR systems research over time and identify important trends, explicitly linking conceptualization and measurement of the HR system. The findings suggest there is little knowledge about the "systems" element and how synergies and interactions in an HR system operate. The researchers offer actionable suggestions on how to advance HR systems research towards conceptual clarity and construct refinement, focusing both on how to conceptualize, measure, and combine practices in systems and on studying such systems at different levels of analysis.

A study conducted in Nigeria by Onyeche and Abanimebon (2020) researched on promoting HRM practices in public and private school in Nigeria. The study discovers that lack of exploring HRM techniques in public organizations in Nigeria are among the factors causing public organizations going moribund today; again, lack of sufficient budgetary allocation for training and development for public workforce. Hence, the research strongly recommended that public organizations, irrespective of numerical strength, must as a matter of urgency embrace effective HRM practice to enhance organizational performance and global competitiveness in order to grow and sustain public organizations.

In Ethiopia, Mahdere (2019) researched on the impact of HRM on organizational performance: The case of ethio-telecom. The study used 138 employees selected through simple random and purposive sampling. A structured questionnaire was used to generate the primary data from sample employees. Using regression analysis, this study found that there is a significant effect of organizational citizenship, employee development and compensation management on the perceived organizational

performance. Hence, the result shows that there is a positive relationship between HR practices (organizational citizenship, employee development and compensation management including training and rewards) and organizational performance in the context of developing economy.

A study by Suta (2019) was based on the human resource practices and performance of Tanzania local governments. The study used exploratory design with facts generated from interviews and focus group discussions. Findings revealed that, human resources practices influence performance in Local Government Authority (LGAs) through several ways including competence, commitment and working culture. LGAs obtain these HR practices through recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation, performance management and work environment. Finally, it is recommended that human resources practices and performance in LGAs is a two-way traffic that the government must make sure that it commits and assures that employees are supplied with all the expectations from the government to conform to the good practices influencing performance. Likewise, a study by Ringo and Jiang (2022) conducted in Tanzania revealed a positive and significant relationship between compensation and rewards, training and development, recruitment and selection, job design, and organizational performance. The study finds that because these HR activities have a favourable impact on organizational performance, managers must pay attention to them.

2.3.2 The Best HRM Practices for Enhancing Students' Performance in Public and Private Secondary Schools

A study conducted in the Philippines by Mondejar and Asio (2022) explored the HRM practices and job satisfaction: basis for development of a teacher retention framework. The investigators used a descriptive-correlation research design among 170 conveniently chosen respondents. The study revealed that private academic institutions practice recruitment and selection processes, evaluate employee performance, provide training and development, appropriate compensation, career planning opportunities, and employee safety, health, and welfare. Furthermore, respondents were satisfied with their supervisors, co-workers, working conditions, compensation and responsibilities; job itself, advancement, security, and recognition. The study concluded that, the association between HRM practices and job satisfaction is highly significant.

Quantitative research employing a cross-sectional survey design was conducted in Ghana by (Abraham et al.,

2018). The study explored the HRM practices and challenges of the catholic educational unit in Kumasi Metropolis, Ghana. Data was collected among 375 staff members using questionnaire and analysed quantitatively using means and standard deviations. It was established that the catholic educational unit in the metropolis has put in place diverse training and development programmes, appraisal practices, career planning and employee participation practices, rewards and compensation policies to enhance the performance of its staff. Among others, the study concluded that one of the key challenges of the HRM practices of the educational unit in the metropolis was related to ineffective supervision. The study therefore recommended that the unit should put necessary measures in place for effective monitoring and supervision of its staff.

In Rwanda, Placide et al. (2019) conducted a study on the influence of human resource management practices on employees' performance in construction organizations in Rwanda. The study used qualitative analysis with descriptive survey design and showed that HRM practices have a significant influence on employees' performance in construction organizations in Rwanda, whereby the failure of some firms to meet their goals is partly due to poor application of HRM practices, leading to poor employees' performance. The study suggested to the managers and employees to contribute in improving organizational HRM functions

In Tanzania, Matimbwa and Masue (2019) researched on usage and challenges of human resources information system in the Tanzanian public organizations. The study used a systematic qualitative synthesis using nomothetic-based content analysis. The study recommends that the government should increase budget allocations to ministries, department and agencies and local government authorities to ensure adequate procurement of facilities and development of skilled workforce in human resources information system and information Technology. Twesigye et al. (2022) agreed that there is a positive relationship between HR practices and organizational performance through several ways including competence, commitment and working culture.

3. Methodology

This study adopted concurrent triangulation design. Concurrent triangulation design is a mixed-methods research design that combines both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods in parallel to address research questions or hypotheses (Bell and Schmidt 2022). In this design, the researcher collected

and analysed both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, and then integrated the results to provide a more complete understanding of the research questions. Target population was 32 public secondary schools with 592 teachers and 32 head of schools; 7 private secondary schools with 147 teachers, 7 school heads and one District Educational Officer (DEO) in Mbulu district. Therefore, the target population for this study was 779 individuals. Stratified and random sampling was used to select 80 teachers while 8 heads of school and one DEO were purposively selected (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Two university experts from HRM department evaluated the instruments to determine content validity and the reliability test (TQ=0.91) was conducted by using Cronbach alpha. Upon receiving research permit, the researcher visited the selected public and private secondary schools and informed school heads about the study and the commencement of data collection process. The researcher administered the data collection tools personally for collecting quantitative data and for interviews, the researcher booked an appointment with the interviewees without intimidating their schedule. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics in the SPSS version 23 and the results were presented in tables.

Mbulu district council was chosen because of unique characteristics like its mission to facilitate and coordinate the provision of quality education and social services to the communities through participation of different stakeholders (MoEST, 2022). Therefore, it is relevant to the researcher on the role of HRM practices in enhancing students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu District Council. The teachers were the targeted because they are the main human resources facilitating teaching and learning in secondary schools for school effectiveness in students' performance. Head of schools were the targeted because these are primary human resource managers in secondary schools; therefore, they are aware of HRM practices performed in secondary schools. The DEO also were the targeted because of the core responsibilities in ensuring human resources are available at school setting through practicing best HRM practices. These individuals were suitable for this study since they are main human resources enhancing students' performance in schools.

This study used Yamane formula to calculate its sample size because according to Uakarn et al. (2021) the formula is straightforward, simple to use and addresses issues of bias.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

n=sample size, N=target population, e=margin error (0.1)

$$n = \frac{779}{1+779(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{779}{1+779(0.01)}$$

$$n = \frac{779}{1+7.79}$$

$$n = \frac{779}{8.79}$$

$$n = 88.62 \approx 89$$

Table 3: Sample Size Frame

Respondents	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Teachers	80	Stratified Sampling
Head of Schools	8	Purposive Sampling
Educational Officer	1	Purposive Sampling
Total	89	

Source: Field Data (2023)

The researcher randomly selected 8 public secondary schools where 10(5 female and 5 male) teachers' representative samples from each stratum were obtained giving a total of 80 respondents. This ensured that, the sample is diverse and representative of the population. Similarly, one DEO, five school heads from private and five from public were purposively selected. This study used questionnaire to collect quantitative data for numerical description and interview guide to collect data qualitative data. Validity was established through judgment by two experts from HRM department whereas reliability was determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient Method (EL Hajjar, 2018). Reliability index, TQ; r=0.91, was obtained and according to George and Malley (2003) since it is greater than 0.5, the instruments were found to be fairly reliable for the study. Credibility

and dependability of qualitative data was established through detailed reporting of the research process. Descriptive statistics was used to analyses quantitative data in the SPSS version 23 and results were presented in tables, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on research questions and presented in narrative forms. The quantitative and qualitative results were later integrated (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

4. Results and Discussion

The findings were discussed according to the research questions.

4.1 Findings on the Influence of HRM Practices in Enhancing Students' Performance in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Mbulu District

Question one of this study was set to investigate the influence of HRM practices on students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district.

Questionnaires were administered to the sampled teachers who were required to agree or disagree with 11-items in a closed-ended questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale of strongly agree=5, agree=4, undecided=3, disagree=2 and strongly disagree=1. Table 2 presents the summary of the respondents' responses.

Table 2: Quantitative Results on the Influence of HRM Practices in Enhancing Students' Performance in Public and Private Secondary Schools

Influence of HRM practices on enhancing students' performance in school	Teachers: n=80 f (%)
i. Human resource practices such as employee autonomy enhances job satisfaction	69(86%)
ii. Recognizing and rewarding teachers' efforts improves working motivation	70(88%)
iii. Establish clear policies and procedures enhances conflict management	76(95%)
iv. Professional development programs and mentorship improves skills and teacher's quality	71(89%)
v. In-service training through workshops & seminars improves instructional quality	75(94%)
vi. Recruiting qualified teachers & providing continuous support enhances teacher's commitment toward students performance hence better academic outcomes	68(85%)
vii. Good HRM practices creates accountability	72(90%)
viii. Compensation and rewards enhances teacher competence and performance	67(84%)
ix. Teachers and staff understand expectations and align their efforts with school goals	73(91%)
x. Promotes strong and capable leadership at all levels of the school	66(83%)
xi. Overall quality education	74(93%)

f = frequency, % = percentages, values in brackets are percentage of teachers who agreed with the statement. Those with contrary opinion to the statement are implied.

Source: Field Data (2023)

The data in table 2 shows that 86% of respondents agreed that HRM practices contribute to job satisfaction. The respondents revealed that effective HRM practices such as recognition of individual efforts, equal treatment of staff and employee autonomy with little supervision enhance teacher's job satisfaction, which is crucial for their motivation, engagement, and overall performance. The study by Placide et al. (2019) concluded that the association between HRM practices such as compensation and benefits and job satisfaction is highly significant such that when teachers are satisfied with their work, they are more likely to be committed to their responsibilities, resulting in improved students' performance. Ludwikowska (2022) in HRM theory stressed by emphasizing the importance of employee motivation and job satisfaction through HRM practices such as communication and collaboration, social interaction, employee autonomy, orientation and provision of basic needs for employee.

The results as indicated in table 2 revealed that 88% of respondents agreed HRM practices enhance working motivation. The study participants indicated that when schools implement effective HRM practices, such as providing professional development opportunities, recognizing and rewarding teachers' efforts, and creating a positive work environment, teachers become more motivated to perform at their best. In strengthening these findings Obwogi (2019) found out that some of the HR activities like feedback on performance and recommendation for training/coaching discourage brain drain and motivate teaching staff. Also, Burgess (2019) in human capital theory noted that, creating a culture of continuous learning and providing on-going support for teachers, schools can create a talented and motivated workforce that is committed to the success of the school and its students. Therefore, motivated teachers are likely to be more dedicated and proactive in their teaching, leading to improved students' performance.

In table 2, the data indicates that 95% of respondents reported that, HRM practices contribute to enhanced conflict management. It was revealed that, effective HRM practices can establish clear policies and procedures for resolving conflicts among teachers, students, or support staff members. The study by Twesigye et al. (2022) also found that although performance appraisals are carried out in the organization, the employees felt that they have not helped to achieve the designated objectives leading to inter and intra-personal conflict. It was recommended that, managers should be aware that in encouraging the use of external advertising, the organization can be opening up to getting a variety of applicants with diverse skills. Also, Geraldes (2019) in resource-based view theory posits that an organization's resources, capabilities and well-being are key determinants of its competitive

advantage and long-term success. Therefore, by ensuring well-being of the resources, schools can create a harmonious work environment, which fosters collaboration and positive relationships among all stakeholders.

In addition, table 2 shows that 89% of respondents acknowledged that HRM practices improve skills and teacher quality. It was found that schools that invest in professional development programs, mentorship, and on-going training opportunities for teachers can enhance their skills and knowledge. Correspondingly, HRM theory by Ludwikowska (2022) ascertains that providing on-going training and support for teachers, schools can improve the quality of instruction and create a culture of continuous learning. Also, the study by Onyeche and Abanimebon (2020) recommended that public organizations irrespective of numerical strength should as a matter of urgency embrace effective HRM practices to enhance organizational performance and global competitiveness in order to grow and sustain public organizations. Hence, when teachers continuously improve their competencies, it positively impacts the quality of education they provide, leading to improved students' performance.

The findings further revealed that 94% of respondents agreed that HRM practices contribute to better instructional quality. It was identified that, effective HRM practices can support teachers in developing and implementing innovative and effective teaching strategies. The study by Matimbwa and Masue (2019) observed that, public and private schools evaluate their school performance to ensure they are meeting the required standards for quality education. Likewise, Burgess (2019) in the human capital theory stressed that, providing on-going training and support for teachers, schools can improve the quality of instruction and create a culture of continuous learning. Therefore, by providing necessary resources, feedback, and support, schools can help teachers deliver high-quality instruction, resulting in improved student learning outcomes and overall students' performance.

It was established that 85% of respondents agreed that HRM practices enhances teacher's commitment towards students' performance hence better academic outcomes. This finding indicated that when schools implement effective HRM practices, such as recruiting qualified teachers, providing on-going support and professional development, and promoting a positive school culture, it positively influences students' academic performance. In relation to this, Suta (2019) recommended that human resources practices and performance is a two-way traffic that the government must make sure that it commits and assures that employees are supplied with all the expectations from the government to conform to the good

practices influencing performance. In the context of greater accountability 90% of respondents identified that HRM practices promote greater accountability. The respondents agreed that effective HRM practices such as compensation and rewards can establish clear performance expectations, evaluate teachers' performance regularly, and provide feedback for improvement. The findings by Ringo and Jiang (2022) resonates with the current finding by revealing a positive and significant relationship between compensation and rewards, training and development, recruitment and selection, job design, and organizational performance as well as employee accountability. Also, in resource-based theory Utami and Alamanos (2022) posited that organisations can gain a competitive advantage by leveraging their internal resources and capabilities. Therefore, when teachers are held accountable for their actions and performance, it fosters a culture of responsibility and professionalism which contributes to students' performance.

Regarding the theme on the influence of HRM practices on students' performance, the interviewees reported that, there is a significant influence on the students' performance in public and private secondary schools based on HRM practices. The respondents summarised that:

HRM practices such as providing on-going seminars are crucial for enhancing teacher's competence and performance. Also, the school quality assurance is also the HRM practice to ensure overall school performance such as effective teaching and learning as well as students' academic achievement (personal interview with DEO on 17th May, 2023).

The excerpt from the respondent confirms that when schools have well-implemented human resource management practices, it ensures that teachers are adequately supported, trained, and motivated. This, in turn, enhances their teaching effectiveness and ultimately improves the overall quality of education delivered in the schools.

Further responses from Head of School (HoS) during the interviews put forth the following views:

Actually, HRM practices such as school inspection, recognitions are important to the development of school infrastructure, school resources, improved workforce, and fulfilment of duties and responsibilities (personal interview with HoS on 17th May 2023).

When responsibilities are fulfilled, it enhances accountability and ensures that everyone is working towards a common objective, which ultimately contributes to the effectiveness of both public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district. To align with these findings' studies have shown that HR practices such as training and development, performance management, performance appraisal, and empowerment positively affect teachers' performance (Mella and Mnjokava, 2022). Also, according to Sothy (2019) HRM practices encompass a range of activities, including recruitment, selection, training and development, performance management, compensation, and employee relations. This is to say that effective HRM practices contribute to the quality of teaching, the motivation and retention of teachers, and the overall performance of schools.

4.2 Best HRM Practices for Enhancing Effectiveness of Public and Private Secondary Schools

The second question sought to determine the best HRM practices for enhancing students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district. Questionnaires were administered to the sampled teachers who were required to agree or disagree with 10-items in a closed-ended questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale of strongly agree=5, agree=4, undecided=3, disagree=2 and strongly disagree=1. Table 3 presents the summary of the respondents' responses and the results of quantitative findings through questionnaires.

Table 3: Best HRM Practices for Enhancing Students’ Performance in Public and Private Secondary Schools

Best HRM practices for Enhancing Students’ Performance	Teachers: n=80 f (%)
i. Selecting, recruiting and retaining qualified staff	76(95%)
ii. Providing on-going Training and professional Development	79(99%)
iii. Promoting a positive work environment	77(96%)
iv. Offering competitive compensation and benefits	75(94%)
v. Evaluating performance and providing feedback	72(90%)
vi. Fostering collaboration and teamwork	74(93%)
vii. Encouraging innovation and creativity	78(98%)
viii. Become a good listener	70 (88%)
ix. Provide a room for self-assessment among employees	71(89%)
x. Acknowledging even a little success	73(91%)

f = frequency, % = percentages, values in brackets are percentage of teachers who agreed with the statement. Those with contrary opinion to the statement are implied.

Source: Field Data (2023)

The results in table 3 show that 95% of respondents agreed that selecting, recruiting and retaining qualified staff is among the best HRM practices for enhancing students’ performance in public and private secondary schools. Qualified teachers possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to deliver high-quality education to students. Hiring qualified staff increases the likelihood of positive student outcomes and enhances the school's reputation. Also, according to Wesley and Sutner (2022), HRM is responsible for ensuring that the school has a qualified and effective workforce to achieve its goals and objectives. In addition, Boon et al. (2019) in resource-based view theory noted that recruiting and hiring talented and skilled teachers and support staff members who possess specialized knowledge, skills, and experience that are aligned with the goals of the educational institution will enhance students’ performance. Therefore, through ensuring that the recruitment and selection process focuses on hiring qualified staff, schools can improve their overall performance.

Table 3 further indicates that 99% of respondents agreed that providing on-going training and professional development is also among the best HRM practices for enhancing effectiveness of public and private secondary schools. The respondents reported that offering continuous training and professional development opportunities to teachers helps them stay updated with the latest teaching methods, educational research, and technology. This finding is supported by Obwogi (2019) established that since HR activities like feedback on performance and recommendation for training/coaching are poor, there is a need to address human resource gaps as well as encourage continuous professional development of the teaching staff.

In the context of promoting a positive work environment 96% of respondents agreed that a positive work environment fosters teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. When teachers feel valued, supported, and respected, they are more likely to be engaged and committed to their work. Therefore, a positive work environment also promotes effective collaboration, communication, and teamwork among staff

members, leading to improved school performance. In relation to HRM theory Fahim and Gaber (2018) noted that it is crucial for organizations to attract, retain, and develop high-performing employees by providing them with a supportive work environment, opportunities for growth and development, and fair compensation and rewards. Furthermore, the study by Matimbwa and Masue (2019) recommends the government should increase budget allocations to education sector to ensure adequate procurement of facilities, infrastructure and development of skilled workforce.

Also, in table 3 the data shows that 94% of respondents revealed that providing competitive compensation and benefits is also best HRM practices for enhancing performance of public and private secondary schools as it is crucial for attracting and retaining talented teachers. Adequate pay and benefits demonstrate that the school values its employees and recognizes their contributions. The study by Abraham et al. (2018) concluded that among others rewards and compensation policies to enhance the performance of its staff. Competitive compensation helps attract highly qualified candidates, while fair benefits packages contribute to teacher satisfaction and reduce turnover. Also, Boon et al. (2019) in the resource-based view theory pointed out that offering competitive compensation and benefits packages to attract and retain top talent in the field of education. This indicates that, satisfied teachers are more likely to be effective in their roles, positively impacting school on performance.

The results in table 3 shows that 93% of respondents pointed out that collaboration and teamwork among teachers are among the best HRM practices for enhancing performance of public and private secondary schools as it creates a supportive and collaborative learning environment. When teachers collaborate, they can share best practices, exchange ideas, and collectively problem-solve to enhance student learning outcomes. In the context of encouraging innovation and creativity 98% of respondents agreed that encouraging innovation and creativity among teachers promotes a dynamic and engaging learning environment. When teachers are empowered to explore new teaching methods, technologies, and instructional strategies, they can adapt their approaches to meet diverse student needs effectively. Also, the study by Twesigye, et al. (2022) recommended that managers should be aware that in encouraging the use of external advertising, the organization can be opening up to getting a variety of applicants with diverse skills and technology. Moreover, in human capital theory, according to Ross et al. (2021) investing in education, training, appraisals and other forms of human capital development can increase an individual's productivity and earning potential. Hence, embracing innovation fosters a culture of continuous improvement, stimulating student

engagement and positively impacting school effectiveness.

The study indicated that 88% of respondents reported that being a good listener is also the best way on HRM practices for enhancing effectiveness of public and private secondary schools as it is essential for effective communication and building positive relationships with teachers. When school leaders actively listen to teachers' concerns, ideas, and feedback, it fosters trust and a sense of inclusivity.

During the interviews, one respondent observed that:

School supervisors should listen to their co-workers and address pertinent issues raised such as working conditions, inadequate teaching/learning materials, compensation and responsibilities; job itself, advancement, security, and recognition. This in turn will enhance teacher morale, engagement, and job satisfaction thereby contributing to improved school performance (personal interview with DEO on 19th May, 2023).

The response from the respondent clearly leverages the importance of communication and listening in managing institutions of learning. Good HRM practices provide more autonomy to workers to set their own HR policies and procedures, and they may be more likely to use performance-based incentives to reward and retain high-performing teachers. This shows that when teachers are aware that their opinion will be considered in making decision, they take ownership of events taking place in school and they are more likely to be proactive and motivated, leading to enhanced school performance.

Also, the results show that acknowledging even a little success is among the best agreed HRM practices by 91% of respondents. It was agreed that recognizing and acknowledging even small successes of teachers is crucial for maintaining morale and motivation. Celebrating achievements, whether big or small, reinforces a positive school culture and fosters a sense of accomplishment among teachers. When teachers feel appreciated and valued for their efforts, it boosts their confidence and encourages continued dedication to their work. The study by Aktar and Islam (2019) strengthens that growing recognition of the potential of HRM increase students' outcomes through the increased involvement, empowerment, motivation and acknowledging success. Therefore, recognizing and acknowledging success contributes to a positive work environment, teacher satisfaction, and ultimately school performance.

On the other hand, regarding the best ways on enhancing HRM Practices for school performance in Mbulu District,

the study found that there are best strategies on HRM practices for enhancing school performance. In this regard the respondents commented that:

In ensuring HRM practices are effective and they provide positive outcome to the school performance, it is important to abide with educational rules and regulations such that, the practices should be structured and standardised with transparency and openness (personal interview with DEO on 19th May, 2023).

The study established that when schools have well-implemented HRM practices, it ensures that teachers are adequately supported, trained, and motivated. This, in turn, enhances their teaching effectiveness and ultimately improves the overall quality of education delivered in the schools.

On the same breath, another the respondents remarked that:

There should be proper collective agreement between employer and employee as this would enhance the applicability of HRM practices in a sense that, the agreement would solve unnecessary conflicts and ensuring that there is greater job performance with better accomplishment of the intended goals (personal interview with HoS on 20th May, 2023).

Although performance appraisals are carried out in the organization, the employees felt that they have not helped to achieve the designated objectives. Similarly, proper collective agreement between employer and employee should be encouraged in order to improve the work of school heads in managing teachers. These findings are strengthened by Twesigye et al. (2022) that recommended that, managers should be aware that in encouraging the use of external advertising, the organization can be opening up to getting a variety of applicants with diverse skills and this will help in fulfilling the designated objectives.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the current study, the following conclusions were drawn:

There is a significant influence of HRM practices on students' performance of public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district. These practices have a positive impact on various aspects of school functioning, such as

job satisfaction, working motivation, conflict management, skills development, teacher quality, instructional quality, academic outcomes, accountability, and teacher competence. Therefore, it is important to implement effective HRM practices to create a conducive learning environment and enhance overall school performance.

Likewise, it is better to adopt the key strategies for enhancing HRM practices and improving students' performance in public and private secondary schools in Mbulu district. By adopting the identified best ways such as recruiting and selecting qualified staff, providing on-going training and professional development, promoting a positive work environment, offering competitive compensation and benefits, evaluating performance and providing feedback, fostering collaboration and teamwork, encouraging innovation and creativity. Moreover, being attentive to employee feedback and self-assessment, acknowledging even small successes, adhering to collective agreements, complying with educational rules and regulations, and maintaining transparency and openness of implementing HRM practices will enable schools in the district can create a positive environment for students, teachers, and staff which eventually will enhance their performance.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers should actively participate in on-going training and professional development programmes to enhance their skills and quality of instruction. They should strive for job satisfaction and maintain a high level of motivation, as these factors contribute to the performance of HRM practices. They should embrace collaboration with colleagues and engage in conflict management practices to create a harmonious work environment.
2. Students should benefit from HRM practices that improve instructional quality, leading to better academic outcomes. They should take advantage of the training and development opportunities provided by the schools to enhance their skills and knowledge. Students should strive for greater accountability in their own learning and actively engage in the educational process. They should also communicate their expectations and concerns to teachers and staff, fostering a productive and supportive learning environment.

3. Non-teaching staff should actively participate in conflict resolution processes and promote positive employee relations. Their dedication and fulfillment of duties and responsibilities contribute to the overall effectiveness of HRM practices.
4. HR managers should ensure that HRM practices are performed effectively by establishing standardized processes and procedures. They should develop a comprehensive workforce planning strategy to meet the staffing needs of the schools. HR managers should also focus on compensation and benefits that are competitive and attractive in retaining high-quality teachers and staff. Additionally, they should provide support in employee exit management to ensure a smooth transition when necessary.
5. The government and other stakeholders should support human resource managers by providing conducive working environment in order to enhance performance both in public and private secondary schools.
6. Continuous evaluation and improvement of HRM practices based on feedback and self-assessment should also be prioritized.

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