Abstract

The concept of HRM perceptions is a growing interest in the literature, as one of the antecedents of HRM outcomes. Regrettably, not only the rigorous aspect of perception is interesting in this field (what you think) but also the effective perception is of interest (how you feel about it). In this study we propose a scale for measuring satisfaction with the perceptions of the HRM practices, 4.34 item Likert-type scale was developed considering literature review, to assess subjects' satisfaction with human resources practices in a healthcare setting. Scaled reflections were held and a survey encompassing all workers from a hospital was conducted, both with a sample of 162 subjects. Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis were performed, reliability was tested using Cronbach’s alpha. This scale presents good psychometric properties with alpha values that range from 0.71 to 0.86. Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis demonstrated that the scale presents very good fit (Chi-Square = 461.06, RMSEA = 0.07). The present study represents a first approach in the usage of this scale and despite having a large sample, respondents originated from a single institution. This study presents a pertinent scale towards measuring a written explicit construct of the worker-organization relationship. The scale is parsimonious and results are promising. There seems to be very little research on how subjects feel about the HRM practices. This construct, very much in line with more recent studies concerning worker perceptions can be exceptionally interesting in the context of the worker-organization relationship.

Introduction

Satisfaction with Human Resources Issues Management Questionnaire was created for a study in a hospital setting, where this type of satisfaction was being tested and related with performance related self-efficacy. This scale was based on items of (2006) and 47% of the 150 HRM practices in healthcare organizations, namely hospitals. The authors explore these dimensions of impactful HRM practices following (2006) with high commitment to high performance related self-efficacy:

- Performance appraisal/management
- Training
- Decentralisation
- Participatory mechanisms
- Team-based structures
- Employment security
- Staffing (recruitment/selection)
- Compensation

The result was a 24 item long, five-point (from "very dissatisfied" (1) to "very satisfied" (5)) Likert type original scale.

Method

Data was collected in January 2002 in a large Hospital in the north of Portugal that employs circa 2000 workers, using both paper and electronic format. Upon format was used when asking questions that preferred this method as they had been used in previous version of the instrument with envelopes so that responses could be sealed and anonymity ensured. Electronic questionnaires were divulged in the Hospital’s intranet in order to improve the participation rate. The instrument was done by the Hospital’s staff, and apart from the two aforementioned dimensions, it also included another dimension, "H" related to quality in the service rendered by the Hospital.

Sample is composed of a total of 162 subjects, with ages of respondents between 21 and 64 years old (mean ± standard deviation = 46.5 ± 8.5 years, standard deviation = 20.5± 6 years). These respondents were female (42.8%) and non-workers (2.9 ± standard deviation = 3 years) in terms of the job. The distribution of staff per job group is shown in Figure 1.

In terms of seniority, a large range between less than a year up to 30 years (mean ± standard deviation = 12.0 ± 8.6 years), when a significant amount of workers (74%) have an effective contract lived with no predetermined ending date of the bond with the organization. When it comes to schooling, 17% of subjects have a school level inferior to the mandatory Portuguese level (9th year), 28.6% attended or graduated from middle school, 42.5% attended or graduated from College and 14.7% have post graduate school education (Masters, Doctorate, etc.).

Analysis

Instrument-related procedures aim at ensuring the quality of the measurement of latent variables in the study and are an essential part of the best effort to ensure that right constructs are being measured. Instrument-related procedures in this study include construct validity and reliability testing. Construct validity estimates the ability of an instrument to measure the underlying construct of interest (Bentler & Bono, 2006). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) has traditionally been employed by researchers as a way to determine the number of underlying dimensions in a data set (Hair, 1995; cil in Bollen, J.S. & Carroll, 2002) by grouping together variables that are correlated (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007). Factor analysis is a multivariate analysis procedure that attempts to identify any underlying “factors” that are responsible for the covariance among a group of variables. The goal of factor analysis is typically to reduce the number of variables used to explain a relationship to determine which variables share a relationship. Like a regression model, a factor is a linear combination of a group of variables (items) combined to represent a scale measure of a concept. To successfully use a factor analysis, though, the variables must represent indicators of some common underlying dimension or concept such that they can be grouped together theoretically as well as mathematically.

Reliability

The scale and its dimensions presented high levels of reliability, with a values of 0.80 and 0.82 for the 4-item subscales (information (5 items) = 0.84; performance appraisal (4) items = 0.83; service cooperation (5) items = 0.84; recruitment and selection (3) items = 0.84; teamwork (2 items) = 0.84; pay (3) items = 0.84; training (2) items = 0.86).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

When presented to the confirmatory procedures that piled the goodness of fit indices values obtained for this model structure indicating satisfactory results for all the estimated indices (Table 2).

Table 2 - Goodness of fit indices obtained in the confirmatory factor analysis of the SHRIMQ

Comparing the SHRMQ, the hypothesized dimensions were almost integrally present to be valid in the present sample of the eight originally constructed dimensions were also defined as defined and 2 dimensions (non-based structure and team-based cooperation) fused into a single one (teamwork). Thus, seven components were extracted using principal components analysis with varimax rotation, accounting for 77.9% of the variance. Commonality values tended to be high, with a cut off point of 0.31 (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007) for inclusion of a variable in interpretation of a factor. Two items were removed from the analysis since they either loaded very weakly or in more than one factor (a difference lower than 0.10). Loadings of variables on factors and communals are shown in Table 1, as well as the explained variances of each subscales. Variables are ordered and grouped by size of loading to facilitate interpretation.

Results

Concerning the SHRMQ, the hypothesized dimensions were almost integrally present to be valid in the present sample of the eight originally constructed dimensions were defined as defined and 2 dimensions (non-based structure and team-based cooperation) fused into a single one (teamwork). Thus, seven components were extracted using principal components analysis with varimax rotation, accounting for 77.9% of the variance. Commonality values tended to be high, with a cut off point of 0.31 (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007) for inclusion of a variable in interpretation of a factor. Two items were removed from the analysis since they either loaded very weakly or in more than one factor (a difference lower than 0.10). Loadings of variables on factors and communals are shown in Table 1, as well as the explained variances of each subscales. Variables are ordered and grouped by size of loading to facilitate interpretation.

Table 1: Exploratory factor analysis based on correlations among the items of the SHRIMQ and communality values for each item.

Table: Exploratory factor analysis of the HRMQ model obtained with the exploratory factor analysis procedure.

Discussion & Future Research

Results show that the scale is reliable and appropriate for the measurement of satisfaction with human resources management related issues; the exploratory factor analysis shows that there is a high level of explained variance and a clear distinction of factors, whereas the confirmatory factor analysis shows a good fit of the model with the present sample. The scale seems to be solid and results confirm the scale’s design for the most part, allowing researchers to assess workers levels of satisfaction in the global scale as well as different sets of subscales.

However, this is mainly the central study of this scale, this study uses one single organization as a sample and this instrument needs to be used in other contexts/samples in order to produce external validity results and properly confirm its structure and reliability.

References


Figure 1 - Proportion of staff in different job functions.