

## Human Resource Management in Higher Educational Institutions in India

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### Abstract

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a crucial role in improving educational quality, institutional performance, and overall effectiveness of the organisation. This research provides a comparative analysis of HRM practices in India public and private educational institutions, focusing on the main differences in how each sector manages its workforce. It focuses on five major HR functions: compensation, recruitment, performance appraisal, motivation and training. This research uses a mixed-method approach, combining both the quantitative and the qualitative data. Structured and semi-structured interviews and surveys were conducted with the teachers, administrators, and the HR professionals which differs across the various regions of the country which gathers thorough discrimination. Understanding these HR practices is important for improving employee retention and developing human capital in educational institutions. The study also examines how factors such as governance, institutional autonomy, and the policy frameworks shape the strategies of HR in each sector.

The analysis shows remarkable difference between both the sectors. Public institutions in contrasts guarantee more job security and steady pay checks. But their HR practices are less flexible and innovative due to official standards. While private institutions focus more on accountability, merit, performance-driven practices, encouraging flexibility and innovation in the management. However, they often offer less job security and place higher workload on the staff. While these differing HR approaches have significant suggestions such as institutional effectiveness and staff satisfaction. Based on these findings, this paper suggests a flexible HRM model that combines the stability of the public sector job guarantees with the quickness of private sector management. In alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP 2020), the research recommends organic HR reforms which focus on improving professional development, transparent performance appraisals, and greater autonomy for educators and leadership-driven excellence.

Keywords: HRM; Public and Private Institutions; Higher Educational Institutions, Reforms; NEP 2020.

### INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to the diplomatic approach for managing people effectively within an organization to help in gaining a competitive advantage (*Armstrong, 2014*). It is involved in controlling the human resources through organizing, planning and in directing organizational achievements. In the educational sector HRM plays a key role in securing that teaching and non-teaching staff are skilled, motivated and aligned with institutional goals. (*Dessler, 2017*). Educational Institutions highly depends on efficient systems of HRM to strengthen institutional performance, teaching quality and overall academic excellence. In India Private and Public educational institutions significantly differs in their HRM policies, structures and implementations. Private institutions focus on innovation, flexibility and performance-driven results, while public institutions focus more on government regulations, stability, equality and acceptance. These contrasting systems of both the sectors create different work environments which influence employee retention, institutional success and success of the employees. In the backdrop of the emerging systems of the education and its reforms which are being introduced under the NEP 2020, it becomes necessary to understand these differences of HRM. This comparative analysis studies how HRM practices training, recruitment, motivation, performance appraisal and compensation which differs in Private as well Public educational institutions, which further studies how these differences impact on educational quality and human capital development across India.

### **Research Objectives**

1. Understand key HRM practices which influence employee performance and the effectiveness of the educational institutions in India.
2. Comprehend skills for managing staff
3. Identify professionalism and ethical HR Practices
4. Understand HR Analytics and Technology in Higher Education

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research uses a mixed method approach which conducts a comparative analysis of HRM and also practices in Private and Public educational institutions in India. The study depends on both the primary and the secondary data to examine the main proportions of HR like development, training, recruitment, performance-appraisal, motivation and compensation. Primary data is collected with the help of Structured and semi-structured interviews with the help of teachers, administrators and the professionals of the HR field. From the selected states of the country. These methods help in making both the qualitative survey and quantitative analysis in institutional strategies and perceptions of the employees. Secondary data is collected with through government reports, policy documents, academic journals and the institutional publications to provide a deeper understanding of the practices of the HRM and the influences of the policies. The literature supports the recognition of the existing research gaps, best practices and the significance of the policy frameworks of NEP 2020. This survey uses descriptive and comparative techniques to evaluate similarities, differences and the effects of the HRM on the performance of the educational institutions and the satisfaction of the staff of the public and the private sectors.

### **Research Statement**

This research focuses on further studies of how HRM practices vary across both the public and the private sectors of the country. It also shows how these studies effect on employee motivation, performance and success of the educational institutions of the country. It focuses on the needs of balancing the strategies of the HRM that combines the sustainability, equity, and the innovation. The study also addresses the challenges such as job security, policy rigidity and the limited professional development opportunities. Ultimately it finds to guide educational policy makers and administrators towards adopting the sustainable, inclusive and an effective, HRM reforms that aligns with the goals of NEP 2020.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

HRM in educational institutions includes practices, policies, and systems that attracts, plans, developments, motivates and holds the employees who delivers research, teaching and service functions. In an Indian context like represented by a large, diversified educational system, across Private and Public sectors such as HRM has emerged as a key factor of educational quality and institutional effectiveness. The highlighting division between Private and Public institutions is marked by the differences in regulatory constraints, financing, governance frames, and an organisational culture, which in turn shapes the HRM practices and the outcomes. Simultaneously policy reforms, particularly the NEP 2020 highlights enhanced teaching capacity, institutional autonomy, and systematic reforms that carries significant suggestions for HRM across both the Private and Public sectors. This literature review combines empirical evidence, theoretical perspectives, and policy documents to see the current state of the HRM in Indian school and higher education, also contrasts private and public sector which practices across the aspects of HR which also identifies the gaps which is relevant for the future research and the policy. The review also separates the cross-national scholarship where it brightens the mechanisms and also uses Indian studies and policy sources to set the analysis.

### **Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks**

Scholars who study HRM in education also draws on different hypothetical views, strategic HRM, (alignment of HR practices with institutional strategy), human capital theory (investment in staff as investment in future institutional outputs), an organisational cultural theory (shared values shaping behaviour), and an institutional theory (impacts of determining and official pressures). Strategic HRM highlights how recruitment, development, appraisal, and reward systems support institutional missions and performance objectives. Institutional theory

highlights why public institutions often demonstrate compliance like oriented HR systems, while private institutions adopt market-driven, flexible arrangements responding to competitive pressures. Organizational culture approaches explain the persistent behaviour norms in universities and schools that influence the up intake of HR innovations (e.g., cooperative versus managerial models). These frameworks guide comparative analyses, offering explanations for differences in HR outcomes across public and private institutions and helping to interpret the implications of reform measures like NEP 2020 that strive for autonomy and capacity building. HRM Functions in Educational Institutions.

### **HRM Functions in Educational Institutions: Key Dimensions**

#### **HRM literature on education typically organises inquiry around five core functions:**

recruitment and selection; training and professional development; performance appraisal and promotion; motivation and engagement; and compensation and terms of service. Below we combine empirical findings and policy-relevant observations for each area, giving attention to sectoral contrasts.

#### **Recruitment and Selection**

Recruitment processes in public institutions are frequently formalised and regulated: selection criteria, examinations, and statutory qualifications govern hiring, especially for faculty posts in central and state-run universities and government schools. Procedures aim at merit, transparency, and equity but can be slow, inflexible, and officially constrained. By contrast, private institutions such as ranging from elite private universities to small private colleges and schools often enjoy greater autonomy to define selection criteria, use market-based hiring, and respond quickly to staffing needs. This flexibility can enable strategic hires (e.g., industry experienced faculty) but also produces diversity in standards, with some private institutions lacking healthy selection protocols. The irregularity of teacher recruitment across the country and at different levels is a big challenge in India, directing national initiatives such as the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) and revived call for standardized recruitment frameworks.

#### **Training and Professional Development**

A growing body of research highlights variations in continuous professional development (CPD) between sectors. Public institutions provide in service trainings, workshops, and required capacity, building programmes often linked to state academic bodies; however, these can be unpredictable and not always aligned with classroom needs or emerging pedagogic technologies. Private institutions, especially well-resourced ones, more frequently invest in ongoing CPD, personalised training, and partnerships for pedagogic innovation. However, many private and smaller public institutions face resource constraints that limit meaningful professional development. NEP 2020's focuses on teacher capacity building, competency-based assessments, and continuous professional growth offers an institutional motivation to expand and standardise CPD across sectors.

#### **Performance Appraisal and Promotion:**

Performance appraisal systems are centrally linked to HR practices and its outcomes. Studies find that public sector appraisal systems in India are often based on seniority, official and less and less tied to measurable performance, limiting incentives for pedagogical innovation and research productivity. Private institutions more commonly adopt performance-linked appraisals, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), student feedback systems, and based on merit promotions tied to defined outputs; yet implementation quality varies widely. Recent bibliometric and observed analyses of higher education appraisals indicate rising attention to appraisal reform but also underscore gaps in the reliability and fairness of appraisal mechanisms across institutions. Strengthening transparent, balanced appraisal systems that combine formative feedback with summative accountability remains a repetitive recommendation.

#### **Motivation, Engagement, and Work Conditions:**

Employee motivation in education is influenced by job security, recognition, workload, autonomy, and organizational support. Public sector employment offers comparatively greater job security, clearly defined pay scales, and pension benefits such as factors that improves long-term retention but may not sufficiently incentivise

performance. Private sector often gives rewards for the best performances and also offers career advancement opportunities but these often comes with unstable job contracts, with loads of teaching works and also limits the social protection specifically in lower private institutions. Studies also reveals the need to balance security with the incentives for best performances, for example: Through contractual stability which also compliments the clear productivity career paths.

**Compensation, Benefits, and Terms of Service:**

Private institutions offer variable compensation packages; top-tier private universities may offer competitive salaries, research grants, and industry linked perks, while smaller institutions often struggle to match public-sector benefits while Pay structures in public institutions are decided by government pay commissions and statutory rules, ensuring parity and benefits but sometimes fading competitive private salaries. Differences in compensations also affects recruitment choices, employee retention and the flexibility of the skilled education sectors.

**Public vs Private: Institutional Contexts and HRM Implications:**

**Governance, Regulation, and Organizational Autonomy:**

Private institutions specifically the ones which are autonomous universities and well-off private colleges, uses greater flexibility of the management, which enables quick decisions of the HR but also raises concerns the equity, quality assurance and the oversight. NEP 2020's drive for the categorisation of the institutions, graded autonomy, and simplification of the regulatory which focuses to evaluate this balance, potentially supporting public institutions to achieve operational flexible warfare, and the private institutions to co-ordinate with quality frameworks, while public institutions are enclosed in a policy framework that manages risks through conflicts (promotions, appointments, reporting and finance), restricting the decision -making skill. This rigidity explains continuous practices of the HR which is directed towards the standardisation and the fairness but less towards innovation.

**Organizational Culture and Academic Profession:**

Private institutions may take up the managerial logics focusing on the efficiency and the targets. While public institutions often stick to the co-ordinated norms that values the academic freedom and the process of consultation. Cross-national study suggests the possibility of mutual learning. Like for example: Public sector commits to academic freedom and equity which can guide the private institutions for better HR practices while private sector performance direction can inform public sector reforms. This cultural difference affects HR practices (e.g., acceptance of performance metrics, adoption of managerial appraisal systems) and helps explain resistance to top-down HR reforms in some contexts.

**Resource variation and Equity Considerations:**

Resource variation such as financial, infrastructural and human capital like shape HR capacities. Elite private universities may compete globally for talent; many public colleges and small private institutions compete for stability and survival. Equity considerations arise when market-driven HRM risks excluding mission-sensitive objectives (e.g., access, affirmative action). Policy frameworks must therefore enclose safe guards to prevent HR practices that prioritize profitability over educational missions, especially in for-profit private providers. NEP 2020 is the dominant recent policy shaping HRM discourse in India. Its key HR relevant propositions include: expanding access and GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) targets; professionalising teacher education and continuous capacity building; promoting institutional autonomy and academic reforms; incentivising research and multidisciplinary teaching; and strengthening governance and leadership development. For HRM, NEP 2020 implies an expanded role for strategic recruitment (to meet multidisciplinary, research-active faculty needs), systemic CPD, improved appraisal systems linked to teaching, learning and research outcomes, and new leadership/management competencies. Implementation roadmaps by sectoral bodies (e.g., Association of Indian Universities guidance) and institutional responses reflect varied readiness: well-resourced institutions are introducing and testing new reforms, while many public institutions and smaller private colleges face capacity gaps that must be addressed through targeted funding, training, and regulatory clarity.

**Empirical Evidence from India: Patterns, Trends, and Case Studies:**

**Empirical studies on HRM in Indian education reveal recurring patterns:**

**Diversity:** Numerous studies show wide variability in HR practices across institutions, not merely a binary public/private divide but variation within sectors (elite vs. nonelite, autonomous vs. affiliated). Liability and the Difference in price: Research focuses on the limitations in the systems of appraisal in the public educational institutions, which also includes heavy dependence on seniority and insufficient links of the results for the students. Efforts are made to increase the system of appraisal but are still unequal.

**Lack of skills:** Many institutions have informed about the gaps in the continuous professional development, specially in the integration of the technology, innovations in the pedagogy, and in the supervision of the research. NEP 2020 training programmes often aims to scale at CPD, but still challenges of resourcing and implementation remains the same.

**Employee longevity:** Studies often questions about the stability of the teachers, which points towards the irreversibility of the better pay and the recognition for the same. But it also suggests that job opportunities, job security, work environment, and also the leadership qualities which are equally important. Private sectors can attract the employees through skills and better pay but may lose staff due to insecure work conditions and contracts.

The above facts shows that HRM needs to be improved in the Indian educational system, which focuses on the capacity of the institutions, job opportunities, policy frameworks and professional culture.

**Indian Insights and Comparative Perspectives:**

In India's educational sector the practices of HR differ notably between public and private educational institutions due to the differences in governance, funding, and systems of the responsibility. Private educational institutions on the other hand focuses more on autonomous and market-driven approaches. They enjoy in the hiring of the faculties, in the evaluation systems of the performance and the compensation packages. Several private schools, colleges and the universities focus on the efficiency, innovation and the competitiveness, which offers merit-based promotions, continuous professional development opportunities and on the salaries which are based on the incentives. However, there are still concerns regarding inefficient pay structures, contractual employment, and high employee turnover due to the pressures of the competition.

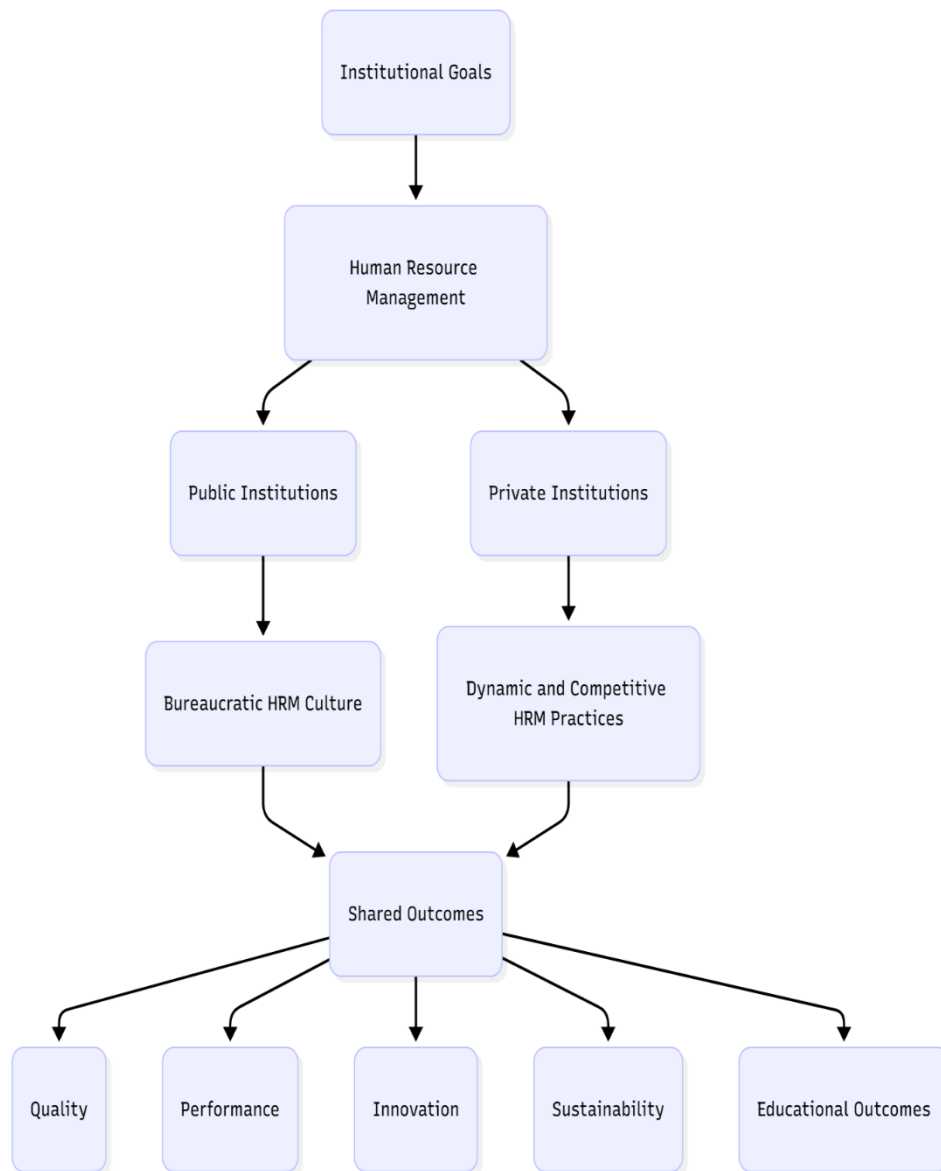
Public institutions like government schools, state universities, and the central state universities which operates under strict policy frameworks, guided by the University Grants Commission (UGC) norms, under the rules of the service of the state and few national policies such as NEP 2020. As a result recruitment, promotions, and the salaries follow official procedures, providing job security, fixed-pay scales and the professional development plan. However, the public sector often limits slow-decision making, flexibility, and the limits the scope for merit-based rewards.

NEP 2020 forces both the public and the private sector towards reform by encouraging staff empowerment, independence and transparent HR systems, still performance remains unequal. While public institutions often face official limitations. While on the other hand private institutions struggle with regularizing HR practices.

A key element lies in talent management. Public institutions attract those who prefers job security, stability, government benefits and long- term academic jobs. While private institutions attract high salaried jobs, better infrastructure, incentive -based hikes and faster career professional development but in return the employees face greater performance pressure. Professional development also differs in both the sectors as public sector institutions often relies on trainings sponsored by the government while private sector institutions focus continuously on the upskilling of the employees which is often co-ordinated with the goals of the institutions.

Thus, HRM in Indian educational system often shows two different philosophies such as public institutions focusing on stability and government rules while private institutions focusing more on flexibility, innovation and productivity. Understanding these differences is necessary for making balanced HRM models that deepens educational quality across India.

Diagram on: Organisational Structures and HRM Impact on Outcomes



### HRM Model Diagram

The above diagram shows that how HRM works together to help an educational institution to achieve its goals. It explains that how the activities of HR and also shows that how each stage contributes for the good outcomes of the teachers and the other remaining staff.

#### 1. Institutional Goals (Top of the Diagram)

Every educational institution private or public have goals such as improving performance, guaranteeing equality, and improving quality. Only these mentioned goals guide all other HRM activities.

#### 2. Core HRM Functions (Middle of the Diagram)

Below are the important HR processes that shows how significantly the institution manages its employees.

- **Recruitment & Selection:**

Hiring and finding right staff and teachers

- **Training & Development:**  
Enhancing skills through mentoring, courses, workshops, etc.
- **Performance Appraisal:**  
Comparing Staff performance through reviews, feedbacks or assessments.

The above three functions work simultaneously and influence each other.

### **3. Compensation & Motivation (Connecting Stage)**

After appraisal, training and recruitment the other important factor is how employees are motivated and rewarded. Incentives, recognition, salary and career opportunities often help in keeping staff committed and satisfied.

### **4. HR Outcomes (Bottom of the Diagram)**

When Human Resources practices work with effectiveness, then the institution achieves positive results such as:

- Higher employee
- Greater job satisfaction
- Better overall staff performance

The above results often support the goals of the institutions guaranteeing continuous improvements.

### **5. Indian Context and State-Level Differences**

**Below are the Indian States which significantly vary in educational HRM:**

- **Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu:** Strong teacher training systems
- **Delhi:** Quality-focused teacher recruitment and accountability.
- **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh:** High teacher vacancies, contract-based hiring
- **Maharashtra, Gujarat:** Rapid private sector expansion

The above internal differences provide comparative wealth without international standards.

### **6. HRM and Educational Reforms: Impact of NEP 2020**

NEP 2020 has reshaped HRM importance

- Focuses on faculty autonomy
- Creation of Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs)
- Flexibility in recruitment and promotion
- Outcomes-based performance evaluation
- Improves faculty development
- Integration of digital pedagogy

Public institutions face constraints while private institutions have responded faster.

### **7. Challenges and Opportunities in Indian HRM**

#### **Common Challenges**

- Faculty shortages
- Low research productivity

- Poor industry–academia linkages
- Burnout and demotivation

#### **Opportunities**

- Digital learning
- HR analytics
- Competency-based hiring
- Outcomes-based teaching
- Collaborative governance

### **8. Co-ordination and Gaps in Existing Literature**

#### **Most literature highlights:**

- Rigidity in public-sector HRM
- Commercialization risks in private-sector HRM
- Lack of research on Remote HRM models
- Commercialization risks in private-sector HRM
- Limited experimental research comparing state-wise HRM variations

The above research completes the gaps by providing a comparative HRM analysis which is stable in Indian fundamentals.

### **9. Conclusion**

HRM is the important aspect of equality, sustainability and innovation in Indian educational system. Private institutions promote passion and competition but face challenges of job security and transparency. A remote HRM model that blends accountability, autonomy, stability, and performance incentives appears most suitable for future reforms aligned with NEP 2020, while public institutions beat in equity and stability but often struggles with flexibility.

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