

Human Resource Management Practices and Organizational Growth of Employees' Cooperative

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ABSTRACT

Effective human resource management practices align workforce capabilities with organizational objectives and sustain growth. This study examined the relationship between human resource management practices, recruitment, selection, and placement, learning and development, performance management, rewards and recognition, and organizational growth in two employee cooperatives. Organizational growth was measured through organizational productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage. All 81 members of the board of directors, officers, managers, supervisors, and employees participated. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis to determine the extent and significance of relationships among variables.

Results showed that human resource management practices were generally well executed. Recruitment, selection, and placement received the highest rating due to non-discriminatory procedures and clear policies. Areas needing improvement included onboarding, training efficacy, performance evaluation, and rewards and recognition committees. Although post-training evaluations and recognition upgrades lagged, cooperatives showed strong training partnerships, defined profitability targets, and active regulatory coordination, indicating steady progress. Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between all human resource management practices and organizational growth, with rewards and recognition showing the strongest correlation. Regression analysis confirmed human resource management practices significantly influenced growth, with performance management and rewards and recognition as the strongest predictors. The study concludes that the strategic implementation of human resource management practices significantly contributes to cooperative growth. It is recommended that cooperatives institutionalize structured onboarding, enhance post-training evaluation processes, and develop transparent, timely recognition programs to sustain productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage in a dynamic business environment.

Keywords: *Human Resource Management Practices, Organizational Growth, Employees' Cooperative*

INTRODUCTION

Organizational growth is vital for the success and longevity of cooperatives, where managing and developing human resources is an essential factor. Human resource management practices play a strategic role in enhancing the competitive advantage and overall performance of cooperatives. However, their effectiveness depends on how they align with professionals to design and implement practices that attract, retain, and develop talent.

Correspondingly, several factors influence an organization's growth, with human resource management practices playing a significant role. These practices include recruitment, selection, and placement; learning and

development; performance management; and rewards and recognition. However, unlike regular corporate businesses, employee cooperatives rely not only on financial capital but also on the collective capacity and dedication of their members. The success of these cooperatives depends on how well they recruit competent people, train personnel, evaluate performance fairly, and provide real motivation and rewards. Previous research indicates that when human resource management methods are effectively established, these can increase employee engagement, productivity, and company identity (Chali & Lakatos, 2024; Kyenzi et al., 2020).

Moreover, 20,752 cooperatives are operating in the Philippines in 2023, with 12.4 million members and 312.3 thousand employees. In Region X, there were 1,166 registered cooperatives with 1,197,996 regular members and 15,448 employees (Cooperative Development Authority, 2023). In addition, to address global issues such as poverty, inequality, and economic instability, the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015). SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), which aims to promote equitable and sustainable economic growth and employment, aligns with this study.

Additionally, Padhi (2021) emphasized that human resource development in cooperative banks has been neglected over time, and the poor public image of cooperative bank employees affects their morale. Furthermore, in a systematic review of human resource management practices in cooperatives, Voigt and Oelsnitz (2024) noted that very few empirical studies have examined these human resource management systems. Additionally, their study also noted that most human resource management models are borrowed from investor-owned businesses rather than created for cooperative settings. Furthermore, studies on cooperatives give less attention to human resource management techniques and their relationship to productivity, profitability, and competitiveness, and instead concentrate more on governance and financial performance. (Aryal 2023; Chali & Lakatos, 2024). These research gaps highlight the importance of examining human resource management practices in organizations where workers may also be owners or members, and where democratic participation affects human resource decisions.

Moreover, although human resource management practices such as recruitment, selection and placement, learning and development, performance management, and rewards and recognition are widely recognized. Research evidence specifically examining these human resource practices within employees' cooperatives remains limited. This study aims to examine the relationship between human resource management practices and the organizational growth of employees' cooperatives, and the impact of these practices on their organizational growth.

METHODS

Research Design

The study used a quantitative correlational research design. This study investigated the relationship between human resource management practices, namely, recruitment, selection, and placement, learning and development, performance management, and rewards and recognition, and organizational growth as determined by organizational productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage. A correlational research design is appropriate for this study, as it aims to examine relationships among variables without manipulating them (Hassan, 2024; Privitera, 2018; Wilson & Joye, 2016). This design is suitable when experimental research is not feasible, allowing for an objective assessment of numerical data and providing insights into the strength and direction of the relationship between human resource management practices and organizational growth.

Research Locale

The study focused on two selected employees' cooperatives in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon: Bukidnon State University Employees Cooperative (BSU-EMC) and Malaybalay City Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative (MACEMPC). BSU-EMC is located at Bukidnon State University, along Fortich Street, and is registered with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA). It functions as a financial and social support

system for university employees through savings, credit, and other possible cooperative programs. On the other hand, MACEMPC is also registered with the CDA and is located at the City Agriculture Compound on National Road, Malaybalay City. It caters to the employees of the city government, offering financial assistance, savings, and loan services, and socio-economic support for its members.

Furthermore, both cooperatives are employee-based, multi-purpose, with membership composed of stable employee groups: BSU-EMC serving university employees, and MACEMPC serving city government employees. Additionally, both have structured operations, a role in employee welfare, and organizational stability, making them appropriate research locales for examining the relationship between human resource management practices and organizational growth, as well as the influence of these practices on the dependent variable.

The cooperatives are part of Malaybalay City's service sector, which dominates the local economy, accounting for 95.87% of businesses (City Government of Malaybalay, n.d.). The city's economy is mainly agricultural, with key products including rice, sugarcane, and livestock. The cooperatives serve university employees (BSU-EMC) and city government employees (MACEMPC), offering financial services and socio-economic support.

Sampling Technique

This study used Total Population Sampling (TPS), a form of purposive sampling, to include all board members, officers, regular employees, supervisors, and managers of the two selected employee cooperatives. 81 individuals from the two selected employee cooperatives participated. Total Population Sampling (TPS) is suitable for small, clearly defined populations, allowing for thorough data collection and reducing sampling bias (Etikan et al., 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This approach ensures maximum representativeness and minimizes sampling error, providing a comprehensive understanding of human resource management practices and organizational growth in the cooperatives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human Resource Management Practices of the Employees' Cooperatives

The human resource management practices examined in this study were recruitment, selection, and placement; learning and development; performance management; and rewards and recognition. Correspondingly, Singh and Kassa (2016) defined human resource management as a set of managerial practices that include hiring, selection, training and development, performance management, compensation, and engagement. They noted that these practices play a major role in shaping employees' skill levels and motivation within organizations.

Table 1 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations for recruitment, selection, and placement based on respondents' answers. These indicators reflect the extent to which employees' cooperatives implement systematic hiring processes to attract, select, and assign personnel to appropriate positions. Recruitment, selection, and placement serve as the initial human resource management practices that establish the quality of human capital within the organization (Marnisah et al., 2021).

Table 1. *Human Resource Management Practices on the Employees' Cooperatives in terms of Recruitment, Selection, and Placement*

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
The Cooperative's recruitment, selection, and placement policies and procedures conform with relevant Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) directives.	4.68	0.50	Human resource management practice is highly manifested.
The Cooperative takes into consideration feedback from the regulatory bodies (e.g., CDA or external auditors) to support conformity with the recruitment and selection policies.	4.60	0.52	Human resource management practice is highly manifested.

The Cooperative has an approved staffing or workforce plan by the Board of Directors or General Assembly.	4.61	0.52	Human resource management practice is highly manifested.
The Cooperative begins recruitment upon a vacancy, following the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) guidelines, and uses an online platform to streamline the application process for greater efficiency and accessibility.	4.49	0.60	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative makes sure that its recruitment efforts are free from discriminatory practices and uphold equal opportunity based on gender, civil status, disability, ethnicity, religion, or other status.	4.66	0.50	Human resource management practice is highly manifested.
The Cooperative has an induction program which familiarizes new employees with their work responsibilities, cooperative culture, and internal rules and regulations.	4.43	0.72	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative implements and organizes an onboarding program to integrate new employees into their working roles and the policies and culture of the Cooperative.	4.38	0.74	Human resource management practice is manifested.
Overall Mean	4.55	0.59	Human resource management practice is highly manifested.

The results in Table 1 indicate a high level of agreement among respondents, with an overall mean score of 4.55 and a standard deviation of 0.59. Human resource management involves managing people to achieve desired organizational outcomes (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Saravanan and Ravichandran (2021) emphasized that a cooperative's success depends on its people; without effective human resource management practices, an organization often struggles to remain competitive.

The highest-rated practice was conformity with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), with a mean of 4.68 and a standard deviation of 0.50, which was followed by upholding equal opportunity regardless of gender, civil status, disability, ethnicity, religion, or other characteristics, which received a mean of 4.66 and a standard deviation of 0.50. In contrast, onboarding scored the lowest, with a mean of 4.38 and a standard deviation of 0.74. Saravanan and Ravichandran (2021) also noted that cooperative goals are achieved through the effective implementation of human resource management practices such as recruitment.

The overall mean of 4.55 suggests that respondents perceive recruitment, selection, and placement practices as effective, aligning with the existing literature, which affirms that these are core human resource management functions. Anwar and Abdullah (2021) found that in cooperative settings, hiring and retaining dedicated, knowledgeable staff enhances operational effectiveness, service delivery, and member satisfaction. Thakur (2024) added that proper placement strengthens this process by matching employees to roles that fit their skills and qualifications.

Recruitment, selection, and placement were highly manifested in the respondents' cooperatives. However, the lower onboarding score indicates a need to improve alignment with best practices. Cooperatives should strengthen onboarding programs to ensure employees understand organizational goals and that their skills are aligned with cooperative needs.

Table 2 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations for learning and development based on respondents' answers. These indicators measure the extent to which employees' cooperatives provide training programs, skills enhancement, and continuous learning opportunities for their workforce. Learning and development are critical human resource management practices that build employee competencies and adaptability, which directly contribute to organizational efficiency and competitive advantage (Aremu et al., 2024; Debasa, 2024).

Table 2. Human Resource Management Practices on the Employees' Cooperatives in terms of Learning and Development

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
The Cooperative has a Training and Development Committee or equivalent in place that works in accordance with Cooperative-approved policy.	4.45	0.64	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative looks to feedback from regulatory bodies or internal audits for ensuring Learning and Development policy compliance.	4.40	0.57	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative keeps a list of internal and external training courses to cater to the supervisory and staff development needs.	4.38	0.56	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative employs manual or computerized systems to administer and monitor Learning and Development records and data.	4.29	0.69	Human resource management practice is manifested.
Learning and Development updates and policies are communicated to all concerned employees via company communication mediums (e.g., HR memos, bulletin boards, cooperative meetings).	4.35	0.62	Human resource management practice is manifested.
Training programs offered by the Cooperative efficiently upgrade employees' competencies and improve work productivity.	4.23	0.67	Human resource management practice is manifested.
Overall Mean	4.35	0.62	Human resource management practice is manifested.

The results in Table 2 indicate a high level of agreement among respondents, with an overall mean score of 4.35 and a standard deviation of 0.62. Learning and development are crucial in cooperatives. Kumar (2023) noted that investing in training and development strengthens human capital, supports strategic objectives, and enhances profitability, productivity, and sustainable growth in employee-centered organizations, including cooperatives.

The highest-rated practice was the presence of a Training and Development Committee, with a mean score of 4.45 and a standard deviation of 0.64, which was followed by the cooperative's consideration of feedback from regulatory bodies, with a mean of 4.40 and a standard deviation of 0.57. In contrast, the effectiveness of training programs scored the lowest, with a mean of 4.23 and a standard deviation of 0.67, suggesting room for improvement in maximizing the impact of training initiatives.

The overall mean of 4.35 indicates that respondents agree that learning and development practices in the cooperatives are effective, which aligns with the existing literature, which highlights learning and development as a critical element for organizational adaptation and competitiveness. Voo et al. (2018) and Chali and Lakatos (2024) emphasized that investing in staff training enables cooperatives to adapt, innovate, and diversify income sources in response to market changes. Kankariya (2022) found that employee training and development enhance skills, career growth, and job performance. Similarly, Ali (2024) reported that structured training initiatives, including continuous learning opportunities, skill-based workshops, and career development programs, significantly improve productivity, operational efficiency, and competitive advantage.

Learning and development were manifested in the respondents' cooperatives. However, the lower score for training program effectiveness suggests a need to strengthen these programs to boost employee competencies and productivity further.

Table 3 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations for performance management based on respondents' answers. These indicators assess the extent to which employees' cooperatives set performance standards, conduct evaluations, and provide feedback to employees. Performance management serves as a critical human resource management practice that aligns individual goals with organizational

objectives, thereby enhancing productivity and accountability within the cooperative (Kabari, 2021; Eneh & Awara, 2016).

Table 3. Human Resource Management Practices on the Employees' Cooperatives in terms of Performance Management

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
The Cooperative possesses a Performance Management Team (PMT) or assigned committee which carries out its functions and activities according to the Cooperative's internal policies and Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) guidelines.	4.25	0.69	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative relies on the feedback of the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) or other external bodies to check for compliance with its performance management policies.	4.40	0.63	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative keeps and facilitates ready access to all data and documents requested by the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) and other concerned authorities for performance management.	4.39	0.63	Human resource management practice is manifested.
Performance feedback is given to members or employees of the cooperative through normal channels, including one-on-one conferences, performance assessments, or group discussions, whenever needed.	4.14	0.72	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative orients employees and members to the target-setting process of the Cooperative.	4.31	0.67	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative educates everyone on Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) and other policies concerned about calibrating performance evaluations.	4.21	0.73	Human resource management practice is manifested.
Overall Mean	4.28	0.68	Human resource management practice is manifested.

The results in Table 3 indicate a high level of agreement among respondents, with an overall mean score of 4.28 and a standard deviation of 0.68. Performance management is a critical component of organizational success. Marnisah et al. (2021) emphasized that performance management is essential to developing capable, motivated employees who drive organizational success. Armstrong (2022) noted that while performance management is often treated as a formal system, the current trend is to view it as a natural part of everyday management rather than a process confined to annual appraisals.

The highest-rated practice was reliance on Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) feedback for compliance, with a mean score of 4.40 and a standard deviation of 0.63, which was followed by the cooperative's practice of maintaining and facilitating ready access to data and documents requested by the CDA and other authorities, with a mean of 4.39 and a standard deviation of 0.63. In contrast, feedback to members and employees received the lowest rating, with a mean of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 0.72, indicating an area for improvement in internal communication and performance support.

The overall mean of 4.28 suggests that respondents perceive performance management practices as effective. However, the lower performance feedback score highlights the need to strengthen internal communication and support systems. Lopez-Fernandez (2018) emphasized that effective performance management integrates clear goal setting, ongoing coaching, competency development, and fair appraisal mechanisms. Savandha et al. (2024) found that deficiencies in performance management systems, such as the absence of formal evaluation structures, inconsistent performance indicators, and limited feedback channels, make it difficult to monitor employee productivity and address performance gaps. The study of Savandha et al. (2024)

underscored the importance of structured performance management and recruitment practices for maintaining organizational clarity, sustainable operations, and employee accountability.

Table 4 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations for rewards and recognition based on respondents' answers. These indicators measure the extent to which employees' cooperatives implement compensation systems, incentives, and acknowledgment programs to motivate employees.

Table 4. Human Resource Management Practices on the Employees' Cooperatives in terms of Rewards and Recognition

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
There is a Rewards and Recognition Committee (R&R Committee) which is duly constituted and discharges functions based on the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) policy.	3.82	0.88	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative trusts in and adheres to comments from the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) or any other entity concerning the use of the recognition and rewards policy.	4.06	0.75	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative manages and maintains record keeping of the tracking of recognition and reward through a manual or electronic-based record management system.	3.97	0.81	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative employs manual or electronic records management in the maintenance of rewards and recognition (R&R) data and documents.	3.88	0.89	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative has selection and screening criteria and procedures to recognize members or employees for recognition and rewards in accordance with Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) policies and guidelines.	3.91	0.89	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative shares the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) and other related agencies' recognition and rewards policies and guidelines with all the members of the Cooperative.	3.96	0.75	Human resource management practice is manifested.
The Cooperative keeps records of, and informs all members or employees of, screening and selection criteria and procedures for its recognition and rewards programs.	3.96	0.79	Human resource management practice is manifested.
Overall Mean	3.94	0.82	Human resource management practice is manifested.

The results in Table 4 indicate a high level of agreement among respondents, with an overall mean score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.82. Eneh and Awara (2016) emphasized that effective rewards and recognition are critical human resource management practices for creating organizational values. Noor et al. (2020) noted that employee motivation can be enhanced through recognition, bonuses, and promotions, including basic forms of recognition such as Employee of the Month, Week, or Year awards. Furthermore, rewards and recognition are essential human resource management practices that reinforce desired behaviors, increase job satisfaction, and ultimately contribute to employee retention and organizational growth (Aremu et al., 2024).

The highest-rated item was adherence to CDA comments on rewards policy, with a mean score of 4.06 and a standard deviation of 0.75, which was followed by the cooperative's management and maintenance of records for tracking recognition and rewards, which had a mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.81, indicating a structured approach to documentation. In contrast, the existence of a Rewards and Recognition Committee received the lowest score, with a mean of 3.82 and a standard deviation of 0.88.

The overall mean of 3.94 suggests that respondents perceive rewards and recognition practices as effective, though this is the lowest among the human resource management domains measured. The low score for the Rewards and Recognition Committee indicates a need to strengthen its structure and implementation. Hariance et al. (2024) demonstrated that effective reward mechanisms foster collective identity, a sense of ownership, and enhance sustainability, productivity, and organizational resilience. Noor et al. (2020) also noted that aligning rewards and recognition with employee expectations can improve motivation and productivity. To improve outcomes, the cooperatives should strengthen their Rewards and Recognition Committee to better align these practices with employee expectations and performance.

Table 5 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations of overall human resource management practices in the employees' cooperatives, based on respondents' answers. This table summarizes the composite assessment of recruitment, selection, and placement; learning and development; performance management; and rewards and recognition as key dimensions of human resource management. Understanding the overall level of human resource management practices provides a general picture of how effectively the cooperative manages its human capital, which serves as the foundation for examining its relationship with organizational growth (Aremu et al., 2024).

Table 5. *Summary of Human Resource Management Practices on the Employees' Cooperatives*

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
1. Recruitment, Selection and Placement	4.55	0.59	Human resource management practice is highly manifested.
2. Learning and Development	4.35	0.62	Human resource management practice is manifested.
3. Performance Management	4.28	0.68	Human resource management practice is manifested.
4. Rewards and Recognition	3.94	0.82	Human resource management practice is manifested.
Overall Mean	4.28	0.68	Human resource management practice is manifested.

The results in Table 5 indicate that recruitment, selection, and placement received the highest rating among human resource management practices, with an overall mean score of 4.55 and a standard deviation of 0.59, which was followed by learning and development (mean = 4.35, standard deviation = 0.62), performance management (mean = 4.28, standard deviation = 0.68), and rewards and recognition (mean = 3.94, standard deviation = 0.82). The overall mean for human resource management practices is 4.28, with a standard deviation of 0.68, indicating that these practices are manifested in employees' cooperatives.

These findings align with existing literature. Singh and Kassa (2016) described human resource management as a set of managerial practices that include hiring, selection, training and development, performance management, compensation, and engagement. They noted that these practices shape employees' skill levels and motivation. Armstrong and Taylor (2023) defined human resource management practices as activities involved in managing and developing people and maintaining the employment relationship. Eneh and Awara (2016) emphasized that understanding the effectiveness of strategic human resource management practices, such as training, planning, rewards, recruitment, selection, and promotion, is essential for creating organizational value. Saravanan and Ravichandran (2021) also noted that human resource management has gained special significance in the cooperative sector, where goals are achieved through effective adjustments in workforce allocation, forecasting, recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation management.

Organizational Growth of the Employees' Cooperatives

The indicators of organizational growth for the employees' cooperatives used in this study were productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage. Organizational growth is commonly assessed along three dimensions that highlight the role of strategic human resource management in aligning human resource practices with business objectives (Eneh & Awara, 2016).

Table 6 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations for organizational productivity among employees' cooperatives, based on respondents' answers. Organizational productivity serves as a key indicator of organizational growth, as it reflects the organization's capacity to maximize resources and outputs (Kabari, 2021).

Table 6. Organizational Growth of the Employees' Cooperatives in terms of Organizational Productivity

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
The supervisors or unit heads team up with HR to determine and solve Learning and Development requirements aligned with the goals of the Cooperative to improve organizational development, member participation, and service delivery.	4.10	0.72	Organizational growth is evident.
The Cooperative tracks and evaluates training effectiveness in relation to organizational objectives and growth measures such as financial performance and service development.	3.97	0.83	Organizational growth is evident.
The Cooperative employs post-training assessment (e.g., feedback forms) to collect responses and enhance membership satisfaction and overall performance.	3.92	0.77	Organizational growth is evident.
Training agendas are planned with applicable content and practices to enhance organizational development, membership growth, and financial success.	4.01	0.68	Organizational growth is evident.
Cooperative sources or create learning materials and training aids from different references like internal guides, Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) materials, partner institutions, or web content.	4.04	0.73	Organizational growth is evident.
The Cooperative conducts training (classroom or virtual) following a pre-scheduled timetable, driving organizational growth, new services, and financial development.	4.14	0.68	Organizational growth is evident.
Conducts feedback with cooperative members and staff after training to enhance services and align them with growth targets.	4.00	0.81	Organizational growth is evident.
The Cooperative utilizes evaluation tools to gather participant feedback on training implementation and uses the analysis of these outcomes to drive continuous improvements in future training programs.	3.97	0.81	Organizational growth is evident.
The Cooperative has a register of accredited or prospective learning service providers that the Cooperative can hire for capacity-building purposes.	4.18	0.68	Organizational growth is evident.
Overall Mean	4.04	0.75	Organizational growth is evident.

The results in Table 6 indicate a high level of agreement among respondents, with an overall mean score of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 0.75. Ngwenya and Aigbavboa (2016) noted that specific human resource management practices enhance organizational productivity.

The highest-rated item was maintaining a register of accredited learning providers, with a mean score of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.68, which was followed by the cooperative's conduct of training programs, with a mean score of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 0.68. In contrast, post-training assessment scored the lowest,

with a mean of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 0.77, suggesting that not all employees' cooperatives consistently implement post-training evaluations, or that respondents vary in their awareness of such practices.

Existing literature supports these findings. Kyenzi et al. (2020) found that motivation strategies, including incentives, recognition, and supportive supervision, strengthen employee engagement and improve productivity outcomes. Tarfasa (2024) reported that training and development, recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, and reward systems collectively shape employees' contributions to cooperative operations. Umoh and Acho (2023) noted that directly involving employees in decision-making improves work performance and productivity, thereby enhancing commitment, engagement, and motivation. Oshogbunu et al. (2022) emphasized that human resource management practices enhance productivity, competitive advantage, and organizational growth, and that setting clear, measurable, and collaboratively established objectives improves employee accountability, focus, and performance.

The overall mean of 4.04 indicates that respondents perceive organizational productivity as evident and effective in their cooperatives. The findings suggest that productivity requires a holistic approach that aligns organizational culture, internal processes, strategic goals, and human resources. To further improve employee and member satisfaction and performance, cooperatives should strengthen post-training assessments.

Table 7 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations for profitability among employees' cooperatives, based on respondents' answers. These values reflect respondents' perceptions and evaluations of the variables measured in the study. This table assesses the extent to which cooperatives generate financial gains, sustain operations, and achieve economic viability. Profitability is a fundamental indicator of organizational growth, as it measures the cooperative's financial performance and capacity to reinvest for future development (Kabari, 2021).

Table 7. Organizational Growth of Employees' Cooperatives in terms of Profitability

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
The Cooperative process of setting goals establishes success indicators that assist in individual and unit performance, and discussions and agreements are made with the employee.	4.13	0.66	Organizational growth is evident.
The Cooperative utilizes tools (e.g., performance tracking sheets, CDA templates) to monitor individual and team performance.	4.04	0.70	Organizational growth is evident.
The HR or PM Officer of the Cooperative can describe the tools or processes employed for tracking individual performance, ensuring its alignment with profitability objectives.	4.00	0.74	Organizational growth is evident.
The process of performance review by the Cooperative follows CDA regulations and other governing policies and ensures effective review that promotes profitability.	4.12	0.71	Organizational growth is evident.
The HR or PM Officer can explain how measures of performance are assessed to meet Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) standards, emphasizing results of performance which promote profitability.	4.06	0.64	Organizational growth is evident.
Overall Mean	4.07	0.69	Organizational growth is evident.

The results in Table 7 indicate a high level of agreement among respondents, with an overall mean score of 4.07 and a standard deviation of 0.69. Musoke and Nyonyintono (2017) emphasized that profitability is the primary objective of all business operations, as it indicates whether the effort invested in generating revenue is justified and helps identify organizational strengths and weaknesses. They also noted that without profitability, a business cannot sustain itself in the long run.

The highest-rated item was the goal-setting process, with a mean score of 4.13 and a standard deviation of 0.66, followed by compliance with the performance review process of the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), with a mean score of 4.12 and a standard deviation of 0.71. The lowest-rated item was the human resource

officer’s ability to describe tools for tracking individual performance, with a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.74. The relatively lower mean and greater variability suggest that this practice is not consistently applied across all cooperatives.

Respondents agreed that profitability is evident within the employees’ cooperatives. Key strengths include goal setting and regulatory compliance, while the main weakness lies in human resource officers’ capacity to describe performance-tracking tools. Sala-Ríos (2023) noted that although research on firm profitability is extensive, empirical analyses of cooperatives remain scarce and largely concentrated on credit and primary-sector cooperatives. Morgate et al. (2024) examined working capital management practices and profitability among multi-purpose cooperatives in Laguna. They found a significant relationship between the two, supporting the view that internal financial management capabilities are crucial drivers of cooperative performance. Their study also emphasized that internal management practices, including human resource management and financial systems, contribute to organizational growth.

Abbasi and Delghandi (2015) found that internal organizational factors, such as management practices, financial policies, and resource allocation, significantly influence firms’ leverage decisions and financial performance. When these practices align with strategic goals, they enhance operational sustainability, profitability, and competitive advantage. Similarly, Chali and Lakatos (2024) and Martini et al. (2017) indicated that modern human resource management practices directly affect financial performance by linking employee engagement to retention, product quality, and profitability.

Table 8 presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations for competitive advantage among employees’ cooperatives, based on respondents’ answers. These values reflect respondents’ perceptions and evaluations of the variables measured in the study. This table evaluates the extent to which cooperatives maintain uniqueness, superior service quality, and market position compared to other organizations. Competitive advantage is a critical indicator of organizational growth, as it reflects the cooperative’s ability to sustain performance and differentiate itself in the market (Eneh & Awara, 2016).

This table evaluates the extent to which cooperatives maintain uniqueness, superior service quality, and market position through coordination with regulatory agencies, effective monitoring systems, alignment with CDA guidelines, and structured reward programs. Competitive advantage is a critical indicator of organizational growth, as it reflects the cooperative’s ability to sustain performance and differentiate itself in the market (Eneh & Awara, 2016). Higher ratings indicate that cooperatives effectively maintain competitiveness. This is achieved by staying updated with CDA issuances, utilizing monitoring systems, and formulating loyalty-based reward programs, which help attract members and ensure financial stability. These values reflect respondents’ perceptions of the variables measured in the study.

Table 8. Organizational Growth of the Employees’ Cooperatives in terms of Competitive Advantage

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
The Cooperative regularly coordinates with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) or other regulatory agencies to stay updated on performance management issuances and conducts periodic feedback meetings with stakeholders to review practices.	4.27	0.60	Organizational growth is evident.
The Cooperative utilizes a manual or electronic system for monitoring performance management information, aiding efficiency and competitive advantage.	4.14	0.64	Organizational growth is evident.
Cooperative keeps all employees and members up to date on Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) guidelines and other applicable performance management policies, increasing alignment and competitive advantage.	4.19	0.63	Organizational growth is evident.

The Cooperative updates its roster of recognition and reward programs on a regular basis, aligning with Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) guidelines and aiding its competitive edge.	3.95	0.76	Organizational growth is evident.
Cooperative formulates recognition and reward programs that emphasize employees' loyalty and performance, enhancing its competitive strength.	3.94	0.80	Organizational growth is evident.
Overall Mean	4.10	0.69	Organizational growth is evident.

The results in Table 8 indicate a high level of agreement among respondents, with an overall mean score of 4.10 and a standard deviation of 0.69. Farida and Setiawan (2022) argued that competitive advantage is central to a company's performance in a competitive market. They noted that a company's advantage stems from the value it provides to buyers and can be achieved by pursuing one of Porter's three generic strategies. Competitive advantage emerges from the coordination of multiple activities involved in designing, creating, marketing, delivering, and supporting a product or service. It represents a position in which an organization consistently outperforms its competitors.

The highest-rated item was coordination with the CDA and responsiveness to stakeholder feedback, with a mean score of 4.27 and a standard deviation of 0.60, which was followed by keeping employees and members updated on CDA guidelines, with a mean score of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.63. In contrast, the lowest-rated item was the updating of recognition and reward programs, with a mean score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.80. The relatively higher standard deviation suggests that this practice is not uniformly implemented across cooperatives, reflecting variability in the consistency and effectiveness of rewards and recognition programs.

Respondents agreed that competitive advantage is evident within employees' cooperatives. Strengths include coordination with the CDA and effective communication of guidelines, while the main weakness is inconsistent updates to recognition and rewards programs. Ibrahim and Primiana (2015) found that strategic competitive advantage significantly influences cooperative performance and carries important implications for organizational success. Othman et al. (2018) noted that developing human capital, implementing effective management practices, and fostering collaboration enable cooperatives to differentiate themselves and maintain long-term competitiveness. Saravanan and Ravichandran (2021) similarly emphasized that strategic human resource management interventions are critical for improving profitability, sustaining growth, and achieving competitive advantage in cooperative and employee-centered organizations. Strengthening the updating of recognition and reward programs to align with CDA guidelines can further enhance competitive advantage.

Table 9 presents the summary of mean scores, standard deviations, and qualitative interpretations for organizational growth indicators among employees' cooperatives, based on respondents' answers. This table summarizes the respondents' overall assessment of organizational productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage as measures of organizational growth. Organizational growth reflects the cooperative's ability to expand, improve efficiency, and maintain operational sustainability, which are essential for long-term success (Eneh & Awara, 2016).

Table 9. *Summary of Organizational Growth of the Employees' Cooperatives*

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualifying Statement
1. Organizational Productivity	4.04	0.75	Organizational growth is evident.
2. Profitability	4.07	0.69	Organizational growth is evident.
3. Competitive Advantage	4.10	0.69	Organizational growth is evident.
Overall Mean	4.07	0.71	Organizational growth is evident.

The results in Table 9 indicate that competitive advantage was the highest-rated indicator of organizational growth, with an overall mean score of 4.10 and a standard deviation of 0.69, which was followed by profitability (mean score of 4.07, standard deviation of 0.69) and organizational productivity (mean score of 4.04, standard deviation of 0.75). The overall mean score for organizational growth indicators is 4.07, with a standard deviation of 0.71, indicating that organizational growth in employees' cooperatives is evident.

Managing organizational growth poses challenges, since business owners must guide their organizations through different stages of expansion (Sophia & Owuor, 2015). Organizational growth serves as a key indicator of effectiveness for both small and large businesses and remains a fundamental concern for practicing managers (Ahmadi et al., 2024). It can be assessed through productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage, which highlights the role of strategic human resource management in aligning human resource practices with business objectives (Eneh & Awara, 2016).

When human resource management practices are systematically integrated with organizational strategy, growth is supported through improved financial performance, operational efficiency, and sustained competitive advantage (Eneh & Awara, 2016). Organizational growth also benefits from practices that support continuous learning, anticipate workforce needs, and maintain high employee engagement factors that contribute to competitive advantage and improved productivity (Prakash et al., 2024). In cooperatives, growth is driven by human resource management systems that foster competence development, employee engagement, and motivation, thereby producing competitive advantage (Chali & Lakatos, 2024).

Organizational growth is further advanced when human resource management is viewed not merely as an administrative function, but as a strategic driver (Eneh & Awara, 2016). Comprehensive practices, including training and development, recruitment and selection, performance management, and reward systems, significantly support organizational growth (de Brito & Oliveira, 2016). In cooperative enterprises, effective human resource management practices also enhance profitability, productivity, and sustainability (Chali & Lakatos, 2024).

Correlation Analysis Between Human Resource Management Practices and Organizational Growth of Employees' Cooperatives

Correspondingly, the International Cooperative Alliance (2024) defines a cooperative as an autonomous association of people voluntarily united to meet common economic, social, and cultural needs. This people-centered nature makes human resource management critical to achieving organizational growth. Kabari (2021) found a very strong relationship between organizational growth and human resource practices, noting that growth also depends on the effective use of human resources and on minimizing waste from poor utilization.

Table 10 presents the Pearson correlation analysis between human resource management practices and organizational growth of employees' cooperatives. It examines the direction, strength, and significance of the relationship between human resource management practices and the indicators of organizational growth to determine if improvements in human resource management practices are associated with higher organizational growth (Eneh & Awara, 2016).

Establishing correlation is crucial in identifying which human resource management practices are significantly linked to organizational productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage. Significant positive correlations indicate that stronger implementation of human resource management practices is associated with better organizational growth outcomes. The correlation results provide a preliminary basis for conducting regression analysis to determine the predictive influence of human resource management practices on organizational growth.

Table 10. *Correlation Analysis Between Human Resource Management Practices and Organizational Growth of Employees' Cooperatives*

Independent Variable	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Degree	Remark
Recruitment	.465**	<.001	Moderate	Significant
Learning Dev	.611**	<.001	Strong	Significant
Perf_Man	.736**	<.001	Strong	Significant
Rewards	.804**	<.001	Very Strong	Significant

Dependent Variable: Organizational growth of employees' cooperative

Table 10 displays the correlation coefficients between the four human resource management practice indicators and organizational growth in employees' cooperatives. All practices showed statistically significant positive relationships with organizational growth (p -values $< .001$), indicating that the results are unlikely to have occurred by chance. Recruitment, selection, and placement showed a moderate positive correlation with organizational growth ($r = .465$, $p < .001$), suggesting that effective recruitment contributes to growth, often indirectly by improving workforce quality, which in turn enhances productivity and competitiveness. Yadav et al. (2021) found that well-structured recruitment and selection practices enhance motivation, employee competence, and retention, directly supporting organizational growth.

Furthermore, learning and development demonstrated a strong positive correlation ($r = .611$, $p < .001$), indicating that skill enhancement and continuous capability building are closely tied to cooperative expansion and improved market positioning. Ali (2024) emphasized that effective training and development improve individual performance and contribute to operational efficiency, competitive advantage, and growth. Kankariya (2022) similarly noted that accessible training programs and effective communication enhance individual competencies and overall productivity.

Performance management showed a strong positive relationship with organizational growth ($r = .736$, $p < .001$), supporting the view that clear performance metrics, regular evaluations, and constructive feedback elevate organizational outcomes. de Brito and Oliveira (2016) found that comprehensive human resource management approaches, including training and development, recruitment and selection, performance management, and rewards systems, significantly contribute to growth. Dela Cruz and Cabaluna (2022) similarly reported that these practices positively influence commitment, productivity, and overall performance.

Rewards and recognition had the strongest correlation with organizational growth ($r = .804$, $p < .001$), indicating a very strong relationship. In practice, this suggests that while all human resource management practices contribute to growth, rewards and recognition may be the most immediate lever for rapid performance improvements. However, the strong correlations among learning and development, performance management, and human resource management also highlight the need for a balanced human resource management strategy. Sustained growth likely requires integrating these practices: recruitment builds the talent base, learning and development enhance capabilities, performance management aligns individual efforts with organizational goals, and rewards and recognition sustain motivation and retention.

These findings provide strong empirical support for the proposition that human resource management practices are not only administratively necessary but strategically critical for the growth of employees' cooperatives. Eneh and Awara (2016) found that strategic human resource management practices have a positive and significant influence on organizational growth and can serve as a source of sustained competitive advantage when managers develop valuable resources and competencies. Aryal and Singh (2023) and Salman et al. (2020) likewise recognized the critical role of human resource management in organizational success and high performance. Saravanan and Ravichandran (2021) noted that without effective human resource management practices, organizations struggle to compete. They emphasized that cooperative goals are achieved through effective workforce allocation, forecasting, recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation management.

Correspondingly, Marangu et al. (2016) found that training and development, recruitment and selection, and performance appraisal positively affect cooperative growth by improving employee skills, productivity, and motivation. Ndubuisi and Ugwu (2021) reported that innovative human resource management practices help organizations respond to dynamic environments, maintain productivity, and improve workforce competencies. Chelimo and Ouma (2017) reinforced that in employee-centered organizations and cooperatives, effective human resource management practices build human capital and contribute to financial performance, operational efficiency, and sustainable growth. Mulolli and Boskovska (2020) further showed that human resource management practices, such as recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, training and development, and rewards systems, positively impact employee productivity, organizational outcomes, and engagement, which, in turn, enhance financial performance and support sustainable growth.

Bootstrap Regression Analysis on Organizational Growth of Employees' Cooperatives

To examine the relationship between human resource management practices and organizational growth, this study employs bootstrap regression analysis. This method strengthens statistical inference when sample sizes are limited. It provides more reliable evidence on how recruitment, selection and placement, learning and development, performance management, and rewards and recognition influence organizational growth. Moreover, organizational growth is strengthened when human resources function as strategic partners rather than administrative support, a relationship that Aremu et al. (2024) found to lead to stronger operational outcomes, improved financial performance, and higher productivity.

Table 11 presents the bootstrap regression analysis on organizational growth of employees' cooperatives. It assesses the predictive influence of human resource management practices on organizational growth by testing the significance of recruitment, selection, and placement; learning and development; performance management; and rewards and recognition. Correspondingly, Oshogbunu et al. (2022) emphasized that human resource management practices enhance productivity, competitive advantage, and organizational growth, and that setting clear, measurable, and collaboratively established objectives improves employee accountability, focus, and performance. In addition, in cooperative enterprises, effective human resource management practices also enhance profitability, productivity, and sustainability (Chali & Lakatos, 2024).

Table 11. *Bootstrap Regression Analysis on Organizational Growth of Employees' Cooperatives*

Model	B	Bootstrap				
		Bias	Std. Error	p-value	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
(Constant)	0.37	-0.018	0.343	0.296	-0.27	1.065
Recruitment	0.06	0.009	0.096	0.516	-0.107	0.276
Learning and Development	0.161	-0.007	0.113	0.149	-0.079	0.358
Performance Management	0.259	0.003	0.094	0.012	0.085	0.447
Rewards and Recognition	0.41	-0.001	0.061	<.001	0.285	0.524
R = .858 R-square = .737		Std. Error = .282	F = 50.395	p-value = .000		

The bootstrap regression analysis revealed that the combination of recruitment, learning and development, performance management, and rewards and recognition explained a substantial portion of the variance in organizational growth ($R^2 = .737$), which indicates that approximately 73.7% of the differences in growth levels among employees' cooperatives can be accounted for by variations in these human resource management practices. The high multiple correlation coefficient ($R = .858$) reflects a strong overall relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable.

The resulting predictive model can be expressed as:

$$Y = 0.37 + .259 * \text{Performance_Management} + 0.410 * \text{Rewards and Recognition}$$

In this equation, Performance Management ($B = 0.259$, $p = .012$) and Rewards and Recognition ($B = 0.410$, $p < .001$) emerged as statistically significant predictors, with rewards and recognition exerting the strongest influence, which suggests that when cooperatives strengthen performance evaluation systems and implement effective reward mechanisms, measurable organizational growth is more likely.

Although recruitment ($B = 0.060$, $p = .516$) and learning and development ($B = 0.161$, $p = .149$) showed non-significant effects in the regression model, their moderate-to-strong bivariate correlations indicate that they still contribute to growth indirectly, likely by enhancing the quality of human capital, which performance management and rewards systems then leverage to produce higher organizational outcomes.

In practical terms, this model suggests that employee cooperatives should maintain balanced human resource management strategies, while emphasis on improving performance management and developing attractive, equitable reward systems. As indicated by the regression coefficients, these two areas are the most direct levers for accelerating organizational growth in the short- to medium-term.

Reward systems also improve organizational productivity. Tarfasa (2024) pointed out that both financial and non-financial reward systems play a vital role in employee commitment and motivation, which ultimately enhances overall productivity. Umoh and Acho (2023) found that employee involvement in decision-making directly improves work performance and productivity, thereby strengthening commitment, engagement, and motivation. Oshogbunu et al. (2022) emphasized that human resource management practices enhance productivity, competitive advantage, and organizational growth, and that setting clear, measurable, and collaboratively established objectives improves employee accountability, focus, and performance.

In addition, Mulia and Sholikhah (2024) similarly found that practices such as training and development, recruitment and selection, performance management, and reward systems significantly improve employee motivation, efficiency, and commitment. Aligning these practices with organizational objectives further enhances operational effectiveness and workforce competencies, thereby improving productivity and organizational growth.

Summary

This study examined the relationship between human resource management practices, recruitment, selection, and placement, learning and development, performance management, and rewards and recognition as indicators of organizational growth in two employee cooperatives, measured through organizational productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage. Using a total population of 81 officers, managers, board members, supervisors, and employees, data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis. Results showed that human resource management practices were generally well-executed, with recruitment, selection, and placement rated highest. At the same time, onboarding, training efficacy, performance evaluation, and rewards and recognition committees needed improvement. Correlation and regression analysis revealed significant positive relationships between all human resource management practices and organizational growth, with rewards and recognition having the strongest correlation, and performance management and rewards and recognition emerging as the most significant predictors. The findings imply that strengthening feedback mechanisms, training assessment, and recognition systems can enhance employee motivation and performance. The study concludes that strategic implementation of human resource management practices significantly contributes to cooperative growth, and recommends institutionalizing structured onboarding, enhancing post-training evaluation, and developing transparent, timely recognition programs to sustain productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between human resource management practices and organizational growth in two employee cooperatives. The human resource management practices examined included recruitment, selection, and placement; learning and development; performance management; and rewards and recognition. Organizational growth was measured through productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between human resource management practices and organizational growth in two employee cooperatives. Specifically, it examined how recruitment, selection, and placement, learning and development, performance management, and rewards and recognition contribute to organizational productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage.

The findings showed that human resource management practices were generally well-implemented, with recruitment, selection, and placement rated highest due to clear policies and adherence to CDA guidelines. Areas such as onboarding, training effectiveness, feedback delivery, and the functioning of rewards and recognition committees were found to be weaker. Organizational growth was evident across all indicators, though gaps remained in post-training assessment, tracking individual contributions to profitability, and updating recognition programs. Correlation and regression analysis confirmed that all human resource management practices had significant positive relationships with organizational growth, with rewards and recognition emerging as the strongest predictor.

These results imply that human resource management practices are not merely administrative functions but strategic drivers of cooperative growth. When implemented effectively, they enhance employee motivation, engagement, and performance, thereby improving productivity and competitiveness. The study highlights that weaknesses in feedback mechanisms, training evaluation, and recognition systems limit the full potential of human capital in cooperatives.

In conclusion, the strategic implementation of human resource management practices significantly contributes to the growth and resilience of employees' cooperatives. It is recommended that cooperatives institutionalize structured onboarding, strengthen post-training evaluation, and develop transparent, timely recognition programs aligned with CDA guidelines. By adopting a balanced human resource management strategy, cooperatives can sustain productivity, profitability, and competitive advantage in a dynamic business environment.

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