

THE INFLUENCE OF HRM PRACTICES ON MANUFACTURING PERFORMANCE IN MALAYSIAN MANUFACTURING FIRMS

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ABSTRACT

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This study evaluated the relationship between compensation and performance, training and performance, and recruitment and performance on manufacturing' performance in manufacturing firms in Penang, Malaysia. A sample size of 222 respondents was taken from 28 electrical manufacturing firms with a 6322 population and 361 samples to examine the relationship. A questionnaire was designed for data collection to measure compensation and performance, training and performance, and recruitment and performance on employees' performance in manufacturing firms. A stratified sampling method was used, and the data was analyzed using SmartPls 3.7.8. The study showed that compensation and performance, training and performance, and recruitment and performance have a significant relationship with manufacturing' performance in manufacturing firms. However, the limitation of this study only covers electrical manufacturing firms. Suggested for future study focus on electronic, plastic, and fabricated manufacturing firms to be more effective in improving manufacturing

firms' performance.

KEYWORDS

HRM Practices, Compensation and Performance,
Training and Performance, Recruitment and
Performance, Manufacturing Performance.

1. Introduction

The economic environment is changing rapidly and these changes are characterized by phenomena such as globalization, changes in customer and investor demand, ever-increasing and product market competition. To compete successfully in this environment, organizations need to continuously improve their performance by reducing costs, innovating products and processes, and improving quality, productivity and speed to market. The people who make up the organization -human resources- are considered one of the most important resources for firms today. Human Resource Management has gone beyond the policy of gathering input to practices that produce output (Saptioratri, Budiono, Nurcahyo & Habiburrahman, 2020). Human resource management practices can create organizations that are smarter, more flexible, and more efficient than their competitors through the application of policies and practices that focus on the recruitment, selection, and training of skilled employees and directing their best efforts to collaborate within organizational resource groups. This can potentially consolidate organizational performance and create a competitive advantage as a result of the historical sensitivity of human resources and the complex society of policies and practices that competitors may not be able to mimic the diversity of manufacturing firms. The organization is focused on achieving superior Performance through the best use of talented human resources as strategic assets. Human Resource Management policies or strategies must now be aligned with business strategies for organizational success. Regardless of the amount of technology and mechanization developed, human resources remain the single most important resource of any success-oriented organization. After all, a successful business is built on the strength of extraordinary people (Adebanjo, Teh , Ahmed, Atay & Ractham,2020). Human Resource Management has now gained importance in terms of academics and business. It should therefore not be relegated to the background or left to a non-expert party. Human resource management practices can be defined as a set of organizational activities aimed at managing a group of human capital and ensuring that this capital is used towards the achievement of organizational objectives. Reduces performance when a combination of certain practices is inadvertently placed in the mix. So if we think of human resource management only as a service manager might provide in recruiting and selecting, evaluating, training, and compensating employees, then it is better to take a back seat to those who understand the influence of Human Resource Management on corporate performance to participate as intermediaries. Research has recorded a positive relationship between human resource management practices and corporate performance. Therefore, to stimulate corporate performance, management is required to develop skilled and talented

employees who can perform their duties successfully. Achieving better corporate performance requires the successful, effective and efficient exploitation of organizational resources and competencies to create and maintain a local and globally competitive position (Zhang, Ma & Yin, 2019). Human Resource Management policies on selection, training, performance appraisal, compensation, promotion, incentives, job design, participation, engagement, communication, and job security must be formulated and implemented by Human Resource Management who is the lead expert and assistant of line managers to achieve results following, efficiency, cooperation with management, cooperation among employees, motivation, commitment, satisfaction, retention, attendance, and others. The past literature review found a positive influence of human resource management practices (information sharing, extensive training, recruitment, compensation and incentives, status differences, job security, and decentralization and team utilization) on organizational performance on operational performance (quality, cost reduction, flexibility, deliverability, and commitment).

2. Research Objectives and Research Questions

2.1 Research Objectives

Objectives of the study covered:

1. To identify the relationship between compensation and performance on manufacturing performance.
2. To examine the relationship between training and performance on manufacturing performance.
3. To evaluate the relationship between recruitment and performance on manufacturing performance.

2.2 Research Questions of the Study

1. Is there any significant relationship between compensation and performance on manufacturing performance?
2. Is there any significant relationship between training and performance on manufacturing performance?
3. Is there any significant relationship between recruitment and performance on manufacturing performance?

3. Literature Review

3.1 Human Resource Management Practices

Human Resource Management Practice is an approach used in managing human resources. An organization can adopt a set of Human Resource Management Practices appropriate to its operating needs. The past literature review found that seven Human Resource Management Practices affect firm performance. These Human Resource Management Practices are job security, target selection, workplace teams, decentralization, high pay depending on organizational performance, employee training, reduction of status differences, and sharing of business information with employees. Faced with the pressures of intensive and complex competition, firms carefully study their organizational structure, particularly the way they

organize jobs (Aktar & Pangil,2019;Hee& Jing,2018). The shift in focus on the human part of this business requires the implementation of a continuous improvement Human Resource Management program. Firms have moved toward Strategic Human Resource Management to adopt tactical or optional patterns associated with relationship employment management. This explains the firm’s ability to manage human resources more effectively for better results. Globally competitive organizations rely on the uniqueness of their human resources and systems to manage human resources effectively to gain a competitive advantage. Human resources are not only key drivers and value creators of knowledge industry output, but they are also intellectual capital or infrastructure investments. Therefore, attracting, training, retaining, and motivating employees is a critical success determinant for any knowledge-based organization. Firms that aspire to achieve good performance need to ensure that their Human Resource Management practices are synergistic and consistent with their organizational strategy as well as their competitive strategy to stimulate employee and organizational performance. There is a lot of research trying to establish a positive relationship between Human Resource Management practices and performance firms (Mutua, Kinyili& Arasa,2017).Past literature reviews stated that Human Resource Management practices appear to be important and survey findings confirm this, although the direct relationship between investment and attention to Human Resource Management practices is often vague, and tends to vary according to population samples and measures used. Past studies have also raised doubts about the validity or some attempts through research to make a connection. In the current study, job security, recruitment, self-managed teams, performance-related pay, workforce training, status differentiation, and information sharing were used as indicators of human resource management practices. Furthermore, advanced technology and innovative manufacturing practices can improve operational performance in addition to the presence of necessary human resource management practices that can be used to form a consistent socio-technical system in the workplace (Otoo,2019;Qayyum, Zahid& Jamil,2019).

3.2 Compensation and Performance

Performance-based compensation is the dominant Human Resource Management practice used by firms to evaluate and reward employee actions. There is a consensus that performance-based compensation has a positive effect on employee and organizational performance. Employee motivation, based on accepted expectations, can provide a link between compensation and performance. Expectation theory argues that pay levels will affect employee performance when employees feel that there is a relationship between their efforts and performance and that employees get specific benefits if they perform well but growing empirical evidence suggests that not only wage levels are important, but wage structure as well (Tahar & Sofyani,2020;Saman,2020). Both performance-based compensation and merit-based promotion can be seen as ingredients in an organization’s incentive system that serves to promote individual performance and retention. Past literature developed a binary logit model of the relationship between two human resource practices (dependence on human capital and firm salary structure) with the use of non-monetary measures in compensation contracts through top manager bonuses. The results displayed that this relationship was

moderated by the firm’s salary structure. In particular, the relationship is stronger in firms that have adopted a hierarchical pay structure. These firms also have had a higher probability of relying on human resource measures. This study also got an examination of salaries in different structures as well as their effects on resource efficiency, patient care outcomes, and financial performance (Brasilio & Tridayanti,2020). The findings displayed that higher pay was associated with higher performance; however, the effect seems to be curved. The researchers emphasize the importance of an integrative approach to making decisions about compensation. Past studies have also examined the relationships among perceived charismatic CEOs, compensation package CEOs, and firm performance in a sample of Microsoft Corporation’s 1000 more employees over 10 years. The findings show that charismatic CEOs appear to be able to influence them through compensation packages and stock prices but there are no other indicators of firm performance. The study was also conducted through quantitative content analysis of narrative descriptions from 85 fast-growth firms and a comparison group of 85 slow-growth companies.

The results showed that employee incentives distinguish fast growth from the slow growth of firms. Firms that are eager to achieve rapid growth provide their employees financially. Their study of foreign firms operating in Kedah, Malaysia found that the level of salary disclosed was significantly associated with firm performance for both managers and non-managers. In addition, encouraging merit-based managers is positively linked to firm performance while to be effective, compensation practices and policies must be aligned with organizational objectives. While performance-based compensation can motivate employees, sometimes employees perceive it as a management mechanism to control their behavior. In such cases, employees are less loyal and committed, so the compensation plan has the opposite result than desired. Incentives and stock options as part of their compensation package. In doing so, the firm manages to obtain high levels of performance from employees, gives employees the feeling that they have an ownership interest in the firm, attracts and retains high-quality employees, and shifts some of the firm’s business risk to employees (Jeff, Boakye, Sam, Ahinful & Nsor-Ambala, 2020; Dupe, Oedjoe, Tamunu, Sciences, Program,Street, City, Nusa & Indonesia, 2020). The results of this study also found that retention-oriented compensation is related to various measures of firm performance. Past literature review stated that high-tech firms displayed that the relationship between Human Resource practices and firm performance (sales growth and stock growth) was mediated through the social networks of their top managers. Executive compensation plays an important role in influencing the composition and interactions of the executive team. Incentive wages based on firm performance were found to increase commitment to organizational goals, employee cohesion, and collective orientation. Past studies have also stated that compensation is particularly important for small firms as it influences recruitment and retention efforts as well as signals legitimacy to external stakeholders. While most Human Resource Management Practices recommend effective incentive plans in reducing the turnover rate incentive plans related to increasing revenue, increasing profitability, and reducing costs have a positive impact on firm performance (Asriani, Lorensa, Saputri & Hidayati, 2020; Sumartono,Urumsah& Hamdani,2020).

3.3 Training and Performance

Training may be related to a firm’s performance in many ways. First, training programs increase the firm’s specificity of employee skills, which in turn, increases employee productivity and reduces job dissatisfaction resulting in employee turnover. Second, training and developing internal staff reduces the costs and risks of selecting, hiring, and internalizing people from the external labor market, which again increases employee productivity and reduces turnover. Training such as job security requires a certain level of reciprocity: A company that systematically trains and develops its employees supports them that their market value is growing better than other firms (Sultan, Khalil & Shah,2020;Barba,Aragon,Jimenez Jimenez & Sanz Valle,2019).This increases employee productivity and commitment and reduces turnover. Companies can also assist their employees in career planning. In doing so, the company encourages employees to take more responsibility for their development, including skills development seen as significant in the company. Past studies on the influence of employee training on small firms. They suggest that unstructured training, informal work instruction, and socialization are key components of the training process within a firm. The study also found that although there were various human resource and training programs as well as increased training budgets; only 16% of executives said they were very satisfied with the training function. Other studies on training in U.S. and European country management found that employee education and development had a significant impact on staff productivity and short-term and long-term indicators of organizational performance. The influence of training on organizational performance through a study of the role of organizational associations found that they negatively influence the use of these policies, as their use often requires unpleasant changes in the structure and management of employees, something that does not always suit associations. At the same time, it is strongly suggested the age of organizations in the application of these practices needs more attention because older organizations may be more difficult to accept innovative practices, provided other older and more tried practices will have a more powerful place capable of promising results. The better one (Zia-ur-Rehman, Ansari & Ali, 2020; Mehale, Govender & Mabaso, 2020).

Past studies have also examined the country’s original impact on the Human Resource practices of firms from the United States, Great Britain, Japan, and Hong Kong operating in Hong Kong. The results of the study indicate that structural and compensation retention-oriented training is related to various measures of firm performance. Other studies on human resource practices and organizational performance and their findings suggest that career development programs demonstrate an organization’s real interest in staff growth, which in turn, stimulates commitment and obedience, which, in turn, increases staff productivity and subsequently economic output. Studies on training have also been made on fast growth and slow growth firms. Fast growth firms are highly dependent on the abilities and efforts of their employees to maintain their growth-oriented strategies. Fast-growing firms use training programs to achieve their objectives and emphasize employee development to a much greater extent than those with slow -growth firms (McKay, Stellingwerff, Smith,Martin, Mujika, Goosey-Tolfrey, Sheppard & Burke,2020). Therefore, employee development training and practices are more common in fast-growth firms than in slow-growth firms. A study was

made on the changes in human resource development in Japan. It is noted that some companies and corporations have shifted towards a more strategic approach that emphasizes the impact of effective learning at both the individual and organizational levels on long-term organizational competitiveness. The study of the relationship between training and firm performance in UK medium-sized companies suggests that, in the context of smaller firms, it is necessary to broaden the concept of training to include education and training. The results of the study also found a relationship between the concepts of education, training, and performance of medium size. A study of the impact of corporate investment in expenditure reimbursement programs on employee turnover in large manufacturing companies. The results of the study indicate that tuition reimbursement programs as well as reimbursements for employees to obtain certificates and other qualifications have an overall positive effect on earnings. A study conducted to examine the manufacturing industry in Spain found that the quality of management practices related to product design and development, along with human resource practices, are the most important predictors of a firm's operating performance (Wu, Deng, Zhu & Shi, 2018; Demerouti, Veldhuis, Coombes & Hunter, 2019).

3.4 Recruitment and Performance

This practice can ensure that the right people, with the desired characteristics and knowledge, are in the right place so that they fit into the culture and climate of the organization. In addition, determining employee rights will reduce the cost of employee education and development. Past studies have found that hiring is a key profit-creating practice and Human Resource practice of high-performing companies and found that attracting and selecting the right employees increases employee productivity, improves organizational performance, and contributes to reducing turnover (Goza, Came & Emery-Whittington, 2020; Setiawan, Wakhyuni & Siregar, 2020). The results of this study suggest that the possibility of an indirect relationship between recruitment and organizational performance could be an internal bond between managers and employees that creates a culture of studying for productivity growth. Recruitment practices increase sales growth. In addition, an effective recruitment process ensures the presence of employees with the right qualifications, leads to the production of quality products, and in turn improves the economic performance of the firm. Found that from other studies on pre-employment testing as a key component of recruitment found that when hired, this test can select employees who stay in the company longer (Bruhn, Treweek, Duncan, Shearer, Cameron, Campbell, Innes, McRae & Cotton, 2019). Passing the pre-employment test may give applicants a stronger sense of belonging in the company, resulting in a higher level of commitment if working. This study points out that for small companies recruiting is often quite problematic. This can be due to several reasons such as limited financial and material resources. as well as jobs with unclear boundary responsibilities, which reduce their potential to hire qualified employees (Yusuf, 2020; Lin, Tarone & Eubanks, 2020).

3.5 Manufacturing Performance

Researchers have different opinions about performance. Manufacturing performance continues to be a controversial issue in management research. Past studies have found

equating performance with the well-known 3E; economics, efficiency, and effectiveness of specific activity programs. Manufacturing performance encompasses three specific areas of firm results; financial performance (profit, return on assets, return on investment), product market performance (sales, market share), and shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added). Manufacturing performance is the ability of a firm to achieve its goals by using resources effectively and efficiently (Chetthamrongchai & Jermsittiparsert, 2019; Park, Kim, No, Jeon & Kremer, 2020). We can place the performance of the firms as the output or the actual result of the firms as measured against the intended output. Goals and objectives. Performance should not be confused with productivity; productivity is a ratio that described the volume of work completed on an item in a given time. Performance is a broader indicator that can include productivity as well as quality, consistency, effectiveness, efficiency, and other factors. The study found that five main factors determine manufacturing performance, namely: Leadership style and environment, work design, manufacturing culture, motive model, and human resource policy. The concept of performance borders on both what has been achieved and how it has been achieved. Manufacturing performance can be measured in several different ways. The most obvious way to measure what has been achieved and the approach used in any study is by referring to key performance indicators (KPI) that are usually related to financial results (profitability) or productivity. Measuring ‘how’ is more difficult. It should rely heavily on a qualitative assessment of the capability or effectiveness of the firms (Al-Hyari, 2020; Buer, Semini, Strandhagen & Sgarbossa, 2020).

The use of non-financial measures in measuring performance in Human Resource Management studies is most preferred as recommended by some human resource management practices. Therefore, this study uses non-financial performance measures because financial measures indicated problems that exist when measuring Human Resource performance. For example, this study stated that financial measured view tangible capital as a major source of competitive advantage, it is clear that human-related activities are shown as costs (Hartini & Ciptomulyono, 2019; Qureshi, Al-Rasiah, Al-Ghazali, Haider, Jambari, Iswan, & Sasmoko, 2019). Therefore, the Human Resource Management function is considered as a cost center; then the employee is seen as a liability. Second, financial measured lead to a short-term orientation on the part of firms with respect to human resource management. Third, accounting data only provided an aggregate financial picture of actual business processes. Finally, financial measurement focuses on resource utilization in a short period of time while Human Resource Management practices take longer to show its impact. However, it should be noted that non-financial measured ultimately lead to effective financial performance for the firms (Realyvasquez, Maldonado-Macias, Garcia-Alcaraz & Blanco-Fernández, 2019; Lundgren, Turanoglu-Bekar, Barring, Stahre, Skoogh, Johansson & Hedman, 2020).

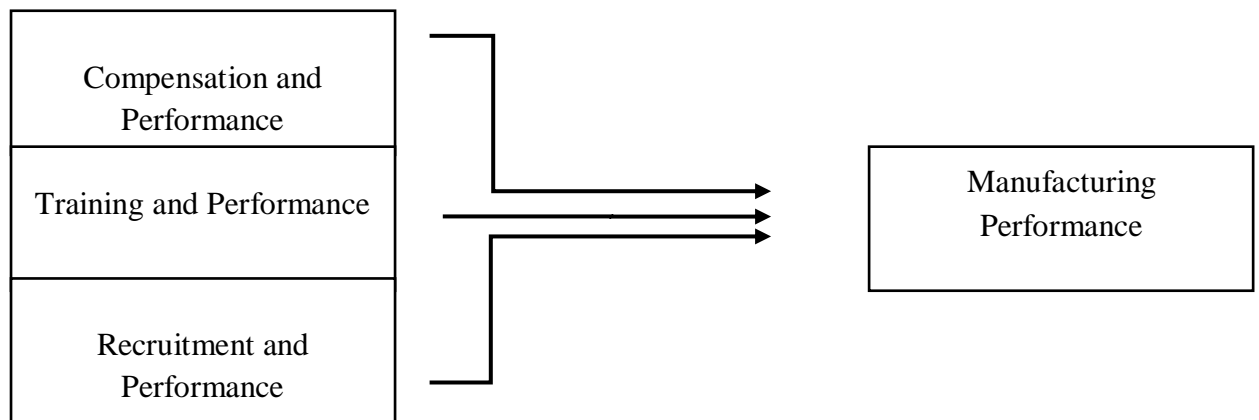
4. Conceptual Framework

4.1 Independent Variables

- Compensation and Performance
- Training and Performance
- Recruitment and Performance

4.2 Dependent Variable

- Manufacturing Performance



4.3 Hypothesis Development

H1. There is significant relationship between compensation and performance on manufacturing performance

H2. There is significant relationship between training and performance on manufacturing performance

H3. There is significant relationship between recruitment and performance on manufacturing performance.

5. Data Analysis

5.1 Participants

The data was collected from 28 electrical manufacturing firms, 361 questionnaires were distributed and 222 questionnaires were analysis among the employees. The respondents were selected using the stratified sampling technique.

5.2 Measurement Scale

Questionnaires are designed in Linkert Scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree).

5.3 Data Analysis

The data obtained were studied using Smart PLS version 3.7.8 to discuss the findings obtained. Smart PLS is highly recommended by statistical scholars in producing accurate analysis of the cause and effect relationship of each variable. Smart PLS is also referred to as a large multivariate analysis technique in social and psychological research. Smart PLS is capable of analyzing measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation.

Table 1 shown the Loading, Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each construct studied and the lowest value is 0.5091 and the highest value is 0.5307. These values are greater than 0.5 (> 0.5), confirming that the study construct is able

**“THE INFLUENCE OF HRM PRACTICES ON MANUFACTURING PERFORMANCE IN
MALAYSIAN MANUFACTURING FIRMS.”**

to explain the mean change of variance within the items (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Gefen & Straub, 2005; Henseler, Ringle & Sinkovics, 2009).

Table 1
Loading, CR & AVE Results

	<i>Loading</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>AVE</i>
Compensation and Performance		0.8824	0.5184
CP1	0.7413		
CP2	0.7864		
CP3	0.8032		
CP4	0.6886		
CP5	0.7391		
CP6	0.6075		
CP7	0.6535		
Training and Performance		0.8611	0.5307
TP1	0.7600		
TP2	0.6854		
TP4	0.7845		
TP5	0.8199		
TP6	0.7895		
TP7	0.8044		
Recruitment and Performance		0.8782	0.5091
RP1	0.7623		
RP2	0.7677		
RP3	0.7653		
RP4	0.7751		
RP5	0.7642		
RP6	0.7721		
RP7	0.7113		
Manufacturing Performance		0.8824	0.5195
MP1	0.7690		
MP2	0.7302		
MP3	0.8188		
MP4	0.7911		
MP5	0.7677		
MP6	0.7631		
MP8	0.7583		

“THE INFLUENCE OF HRM PRACTICES ON MANUFACTURING PERFORMANCE IN MALAYSIAN MANUFACTURING FIRMS.”

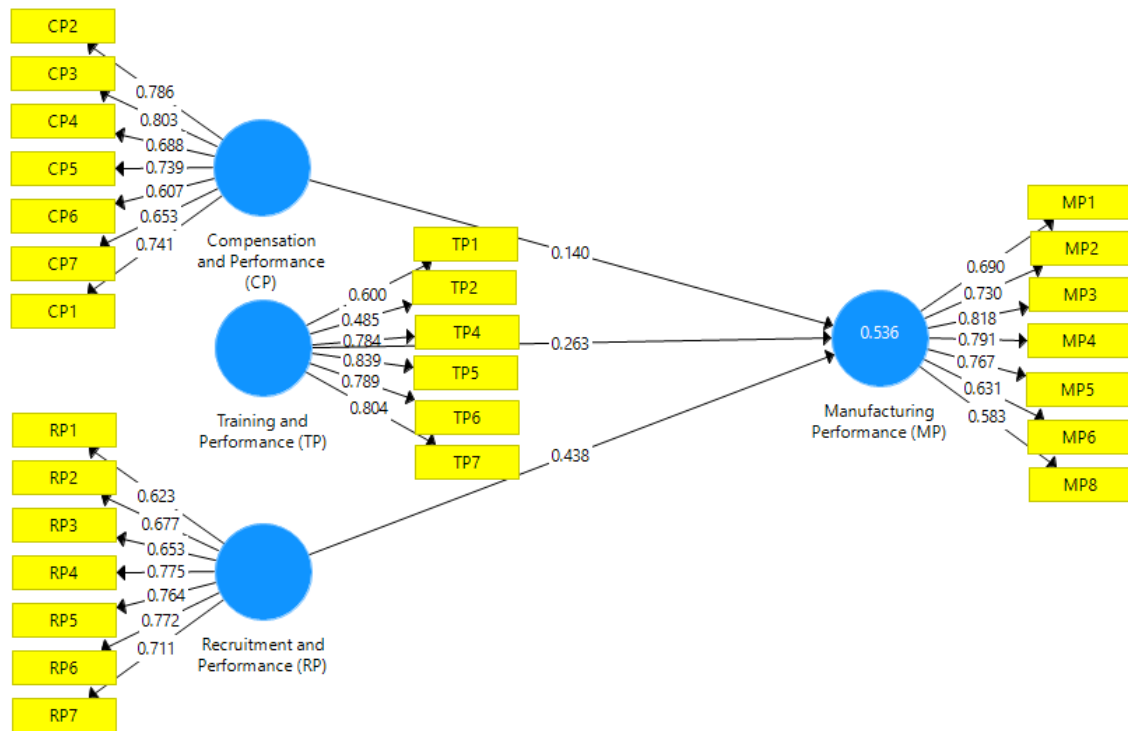


Figure 1: Structural Model Direct Effects

The discriminant validity test was measured using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criterion test and cross-loading (Henseler et al., 2009). Table 2 below shows the output from the HTMT analysis. The results can be calculated easily using the formula (Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2015).

Table 2, Discriminate Validity

Constructs	CP	MP	RP	TP
CP	0.7202			
MP	0.4924	0.7203		
RP	0.4644	0.6822	0.7134	
TP	0.5652	0.6408	0.6804	0.7288

Note: Values in Bold face are the square root values of average variance extracted

5.4 Assessment of Structural Model

The findings for testing this direct effect model using Smart PLS software package version 3.7.8 through the structural equation model. This measurement aims to test the direct effect model and the effective model of the mediated variable. Therefore, empirical evidence has been used to construct a direct effect model, as shown in Figure 3.

Table 3. Summary of Hypotheses

Relationship	Summary of Hypotheses				
	beta	Std Error	T-Value	P-Value	Decision

**“THE INFLUENCE OF HRM PRACTICES ON MANUFACTURING PERFORMANCE IN
MALAYSIAN MANUFACTURING FIRMS.”**

CP-> EP	0.2422	0.07392	0.9138.	0.0000	Significant
TP->EP	0.4456	0.09043	0.2004	0.0000	Significant
RP->EP	0.2624	0.82464	0.8476	0.0000	Significant

6. Result

6.1 Compensation and Performance

The results obtained showed that compensation and performance variable significantly affects manufacturing' performance in manufacturing firms ($\beta = 0.2422$; $t = 2.9138$; $p = 0.0000$). H1 Accepted. The results also showed that compensation and performance contributed 14.0% ($R^2 = 0.140$) to manufacturing' performance in manufacturing firms.

6.2 Training and Performance

The results obtained showed that training and performance variable significantly affects manufacturing' performance in manufacturing firms ($\beta = 0.4456$; $t = 3.2004$; $p = 0.0000$). H2 Accepted. The results also showed that training and performance contributed 26.3% ($R^2 = 0.263$) to manufacturing' performance in manufacturing firms.

6.3 Recruitment and Performance

The results obtained showed that recruitment and performance variable significantly affects manufacturing' performance in manufacturing firms ($\beta = 0.2624$; $t = 4.8476$; $p = 0.0000$). H3 Accepted. The results also showed that recruitment and performance contributed 43.8% ($R^2 = 0.438$) to manufacturing' performance in manufacturing firms.

7. Conclusions

The study concluded that compensation, training, and recruitment have a positive relationship with the performance of manufacturing firms in Penang, Malaysia. Human Resource Management practices have been adopted by firms to achieve positive performance. Based on the results of the research study, the overall impact of Human Resource Management practices (compensation, training, and recruitment) on the performance of manufacturing firms has a positive impact on overall manufacturing performance. The research study questions were positively confirmed. Given that Human Resource Management practices have become one of the most popular ways to improve performance in manufacturing firms in recent years based on empirical evidence, research results provide evidence for this statement and support future research studies relevant to this study.

8. Recommendations

The study makes some recommendations. First, the study recommends that manufacturing firms should ensure that there is adequate compensation as this is likely to positively affect performance as revealed the research study. Research results also showed that performance is positively related to training, hence manufacturing firms should increase employee training to rip off the benefits of trained employees. Research studies recommend that recruitment should be enhanced as it shows it affects performance.

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