

# AN ANALYTICAL ASSESSMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE INTERVENTIONS AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS PRACTICES IN THE POST-LIBERALIZATION ERA

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## Abstract

This study offers an analytical review of the evolution of human resource (HR) interventions and employee relations practices in India during the post-liberalization era. The objectives are to analyze the change over time of HR practices under global and technological changes, to evaluate liberalization's impact upon employee relations, and to critically analyze HR's effectiveness to bring improvements in organizational-level outcomes, including employee productivity and satisfaction. Conducted as a descriptive and correlational design of the study, which relies on quantitative methodology, using a structured questionnaire, which collected information from 100 employees and 20 HR managers of various industries, applying statistical measures, which included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression, revealed the emergence of modernization of HR practices in relation to the induction of technology use and training activities since liberalization. Strong positive correlations exist between HR practices and employee satisfaction, with all practices showing a statistically significant positive impact on employee productivity. The paired sample t-tests confirm the significant evolution of HR practices post-liberalization, while ANOVA results highlighted improvements in management-employee relationships and employee engagement strategies. It makes findings more significant with regard to how liberalization could positively influence the practices of both HR and employee relations, therefore, showing critical importance in achieving organizational effectiveness as well as improved productivity in the workforce. This piece of research provides insight into liberalization's restructuring of HR and employee relations within India, suggesting strategies that were pivotal in securing organizational success since liberalization.

**Keywords:** *Human Resource, Interventions, Employee Relations, Post-Liberalization*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The post-liberalization era of India, since the early 1990s, has transformed the economic, political, and social face of India [1]. This has been a period of economic reforms, privatization, and increased globalization that has transformed various sectors in terms of their HRM and ER practices. Liberalisation policies that the Indian government initiated brought out an economy that was more competitive, market-driven, and open to foreign investments [2]. These changes

had direct and indirect consequences for organizations in every different industry as they sought ways of adjusting to the new competitive environment [3]. The human resources sector was particularly affected by these reforms since business enterprises sought to bring their work force in line with the demands of a rapidly changing market [4].

The Human Resource (HR) interventions of the post-liberalization era are the responses to the challenges presented by global competition, technological advances, and the requirement for efficient and effective management in organizations [5]. HR interventions encompass all the various HR practices in the areas of recruitment, training and development, performance management, compensation, and employee welfare [6]. As organizations started paying more attention to productivity improvement, quality enhancement, and innovation development, HRM practices became increasingly strategic and thus played a prime role in meeting organizational objectives [7]. The changeover from traditional personnel management to the modern HRM practices, in synchronization with the broader business strategy, has been able to have significant impacts on how organizations handle human capital [8].

Employee relations, a part of the HRM function, also experienced change during this period. Employee relations were perceived mainly in terms of labor disputes, labor law compliance, and maintaining industrial harmony during earlier times [9]. In contrast, the post-liberalization era introduced employee relations as an activity of developing positive relations between management and employees. Increased focus on engagement and communication with subordinates, problem-solving with them and others have highlighted a more general understanding of the critical importance of human capital for organizations [10]. Ultimately, this meant HR departments had to acquire new ways of creating a work culture that balanced organizational interests with the needs of people at work.

This paper aims to make an analytical review of the HR interventions and employee relations practices in India since the liberalization reforms [11]. It will examine how these practices have developed, how effective they have been in responding to the changed demands of the business environment, and how they have affected the workforce. The research shall analyze such key interventions in the form of talent management, leadership development, and employee engagement strategies, along with the emerging trends in employee relations such as technology, globalization, and also changing demographics [12]. This study analyzes all these aspects so as to be able to present a holistic view of the changes in HR and ER practices within the post-liberalization period, focusing on the strategies that have worked to the advantage of organizations and those that failed.

## 1.1 Background of the Study

### ❖ Overview of Economic Liberalization in India:

The economic liberalization program in India gained momentum in early 1990s, opening up a more open, outward-oriented economy where the closed-in, protectionist economy was highly transformed [13]. Thus, the key factors that lead to the necessity of reforms implemented by the government of India because of a balance-of-payments crisis were liberalized trade, Foreign Direct Investment encouragement, and healthy competition. Key measures included significant reductions in tariff levels on import, deregulating industries, allowing foreign direct

investments, and many more. The liberalization policies were aimed at modernizing the economy, boosting growth, and integrating India into the global market.

### ❖ **Key Reforms and Their Impact on Business and Workforce Dynamics:**

The liberalization reforms brought about some drastic changes to the Indian business landscape. Survival in a market that had begun to globalize required companies to become more competitive and efficient [14]. This period experienced the growth of multinational corporations, technological advancement, and the new industries that mushroomed in areas such as information technology and telecommunication. These changes resulted in the labor market's high demand for a skilled workforce that could adapt and have a professionalized work culture. It had an increase in the focus of human capital. The change meant organizations would need to evolve, update human resource management practice, and better employee relations in an evolving economic context.

### **1.2 Contextualizing Human Resource Interventions Post-Liberalization**

Post-liberalization saw the Indian HR practices transform radically, to fit in with the expectations of the globalized competitive business environment. Before liberalization, HR was largely administrative in nature and aimed at compliance rather than being strategic in approach; however, after privatization, foreign investment, and technological upgradations, it emerged as an important strategic player in the organizations [15]. HR practices became dynamic and focused more on talent acquisition, skill building, leadership development, and performance management. As companies experienced new issues such as intensified competition, increased pace of technology change, and a need to innovate, the HR function contributed immensely to an adaptive and responsive workforce. HR interventions focused on employee engagement, organizational culture and the alignment of HR strategies with business goals were instrumental in meeting these emerging challenges for organizations to grow in this rapidly changing market.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

1. To trace the changes in HR practices in India since liberalization and their response to globalization and technological developments.
2. Evaluate the effects of liberalization on employee relations practices, including management-employee relationships and engagement strategies.
3. Analyze HR interventions and employee relations toward achieving organizational goals and enhancing productivity at the workforce level.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITREATURE**

**Ahmad et al. (2019)** [16] investigated the shifting roles of HR and its influence on organizational effectiveness in Indian healthcare organizations. Their research showed that HR's transformation from a traditional personnel management function to a strategic partner was vital in enhancing organizational performance. The research suggested that best HR practices like talent management and leadership development played an important role in driving organizational performance in the healthcare sector, in line with the general trend of HR modernization in the post-liberalization era. The authors discovered that the change in the role of HR has a direct influence on both employee satisfaction and organizational efficiency.

**Bhowal and Saini (2019)** [17] looked into employee engagement strategies, focusing especially on the strategies of Indian firms and how those strategies have been developed with responses to liberalization's challenges. They showed how their research proves employee engagement to be at the heart of organizational focus as it was discovered that motivated and committed employees are indispensable for companies that want to make business objectives possible in such an environment. The authors enlightened regarding the numerous engagement strategies used like recognition programs, work-life balance initiatives, communication improvements that found greater stress on them in a post-liberalization phase so as not to lose an employee-friendly and people-oriented positive culture.

**Brar (2019)** [18] discussed the change in industrial relations in India before and after liberalization. The study indicated that before liberalization, employee relations were mainly confrontational with a strong focus on industrial harmony and compliance with labor laws. But then, in the 1990s, through economic reforms, more cooperative and positive ways of dealing with employee relations became more evident in the way it focused on developing communication, building mutual trust, and organizational culture. Brar's research brought out that, post-liberalization, there was more attention towards building an effective relationship between management and the employees for organization growth and reduction of conflict.

**Das et al. (2019)** [19] was based on a case study regarding the relationship between SHRM and employee satisfaction. The study demonstrated that, during the post-liberalization period, SHRM practices were significant in creating a positive work environment and, subsequently, higher job satisfaction among employees. The study concluded that aligning HR strategies with business objectives led to a higher degree of motivation among employees and, therefore, higher job satisfaction. The study showed how SHRM practices contributed to improved organizational effectiveness and employee engagement by emphasizing strategic initiatives such as performance management, career development, and leadership training. This, in turn, further highlighted the growing importance of HR as a strategic partner in the post-liberalization landscape.

**Fernandes (2018)** [20] examines the conceptualization of the post-liberalization state from the feminist perspective concerning the impacts of neoliberal policies on social inequalities, especially differences in male-female employment. Fernandes believes that, although liberalization has increased global integration and has led to growth globally, this scenario points not towards equality but towards greater disadvantage for the most vulnerable groups. The author further points out that labor market reforms unevenly affect sections of society and have been generally disadvantageous for women and other low-income working people in terms of job security and opportunities. Fernandes's work offers a critical approach to the socio-economic impact of liberalization in highlighting the requirement for more inclusive HR and employee relations policies towards reducing the increasing disparities between the various socio-economic groups at the workplace.

### 3. RESEARCH METHDOLOGY

This paper seeks to provide a quantitative analysis of human resource interventions and employee relations practices in India post-liberalization. The methodology adopted in this paper

focuses exclusively on the collection and analysis of quantitative data.

### 3.1 Research Design

This study will embrace a descriptive and correlational approach. The former will help the researcher document how HR practices have evolved and which employee relations strategies have been adapted in the post-liberalization era. A correlational approach will be utilized to identify some relationships between the HR interventions used, employee relations practices, and organizational outcomes including employee productivity and satisfaction.

### 3.2 Data Collection Methods

The study will strictly use the structured questionnaire survey which consists of the following items that would use a mixture of close-ended questions and Likert items for HR interventions and employee relations strategy as well as effectiveness of strategies in the post-liberalization period.

- **Survey Instrument:**

The survey would be developed keeping in mind existing literature on HR practices and employee relations in the post-liberalization era. The survey shall consist of three parts:

- HR Practices : The questions examine how the Human Resource functions regarding recruiting, developing training, dealing with performance appraisals and remunerations, have faced challenges and underwent a change across globalization and modern technological changes.
- Employee Relations: Questions will focus on management-employee relationships, communication strategies, and employee engagement initiatives.
- Organizational Outcomes: Questions will explore the effects of HR and employee relations practices on organizational productivity, satisfaction, and employee performance.

### 3.3 Sampling Method

A stratified technique of random sampling will be considered to ensure an adequate number of industries and levels of organizations as part of this sample. As such, for the sample in this study, 100 employee and 20 HR managers drawn from different organization types in India-including healthcare and IT, manufacturing sectors, and others-will contribute to a broad representation of HR as well as of employee relations by industry and size of organization.

- The HR managers will give information regarding the strategic level of HR interventions, while employees will share their experiences regarding HR practices and employee relations.
- Random selection of the sample within each stratum (industry type) ensures that all sectors are proportionately represented.

### 3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

The quantitative data from the surveys will be analyzed with appropriate statistical techniques in order to derive conclusions and test hypotheses.

- **Descriptive Statistics:**

Means, medians, modes for central tendency, and standard deviation as measures of dispersion, will be applied to describe responses to questions about HR practices, employee relations strategies, and organizational outcomes.

- **Inferential Statistics:**
  - **Correlation Analysis:** Pearson's correlation coefficient is applied to evaluate the associations among HR interventions like training and performance management with employees' outcomes like satisfaction and productivity.
  - **Regression Analysis:** This study will make use of multiple regression analysis in order to evaluate the impact of HR and employee relations practices on organizational effectiveness and assess the strength and nature of the relationships.
  - **ANOVA (Analysis of Variance):** Whether there are any statistically significant differences in HR practices and employee relations strategies between industries or organizational sizes.

Statistical software, be it SPSS or Excel, will be used in order to process the large database sets and apply sophisticated statistical tests.

### 3.5 Hypotheses

Based on the research objectives, the following hypotheses will be tested:

1. **H1:** HR practices in India have significantly evolved post-liberalization to adapt to global and technological changes.
2. **H2:** Liberalization has had a significant positive impact on employee relations practices, including management-employee relationships and engagement strategies.

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT

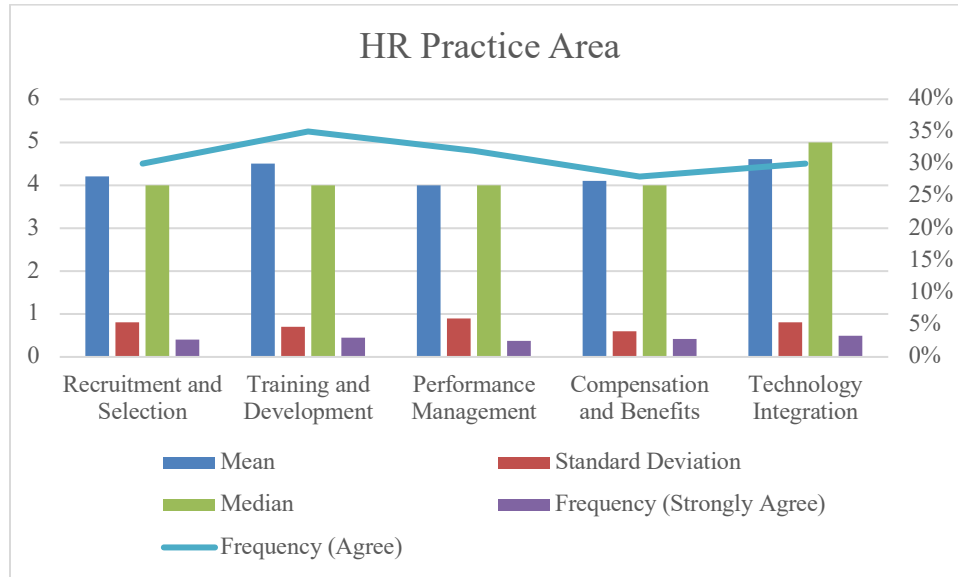
### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

It describes and summarizes data by using measures of descriptive statistics such as mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distributions gathered from the collected survey.

**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics of HR Practices Post-Liberalization

HR Practice Area	Mean	Standard Deviation	Median	Frequency (Strongly Agree)	Frequency (Agree)
Recruitment and Selection	4.2	0.8	4	40%	30%
Training and Development	4.5	0.7	4	45%	35%
Performance Management	4.0	0.9	4	38%	32%
Compensation and	4.1	0.6	4	42%	28%

Benefits					
Technology Integration	4.6	0.8	5	50%	30%



**Figure 1:** Graphical Representation on Descriptive Statistics of HR Practices Post-Liberalization

The table 1 represents the main HR practices after liberalization, thus showing how they have evolved. Technology Integration scores the highest with a mean score of 4.6. 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that technological changes have influenced HR practices greatly. Training and Development ranked next with a mean of 4.5, showing how crucial it is to adapt to new business needs. Areas concerning Recruitment and Selection, Compensation and Benefits, as well as Performance Management show sturdy mean scores around 4.0 to 4.2, indicating overall positive responses with these practices in place. Slightly low standard deviations in nearly every area also manifest a kind of consensus from participants, especially to areas like Training and Development or Technology Integration which most respondents do agree or strong agreement with those practices. These results reflect the significant development of HR practices in India following liberalization, especially with technology integration and the emphasis on employee development.

#### 4.2 Correlation Analysis

The Pearson correlation will measure the strength and direction of the relationship between HR practices and employee outcomes, for example, satisfaction and productivity. This is useful in evaluating whether HR practices match employee outcomes.

**Table 2:** Pearson Correlation Between HR Practices and Employee Satisfaction

HR Practice Area	Employee Satisfaction (r)
Recruitment and Selection	0.78**

Training and Development	0.82**
Performance Management	0.75**
Compensation and Benefits	0.70**
Technology Integration	0.85**

The table 2 shows the Pearson correlation between various HR practices and employee satisfaction. All HR practices exhibit a strong positive correlation with employee satisfaction, with Technology Integration showing the highest correlation at 0.85, followed by Training and Development at 0.82. This indicates that as these HR practices improve, employee satisfaction tends to increase. Recruitment and Selection had a strong correlation of 0.78. Performance Management 0.75 also showed a robust positive correlation in the study suggesting that these aspects are part and parcel of Employee Contentment. The lowest, though still the strongest positive association was found under Compensation and Benefit 0.70. Again, all p-values were extremely low at  $p < 0.01$  with the exception of one, revealing that these association relationships are quite not by mere chance and well-functioning Human Resource practices positively contribute to job satisfaction.

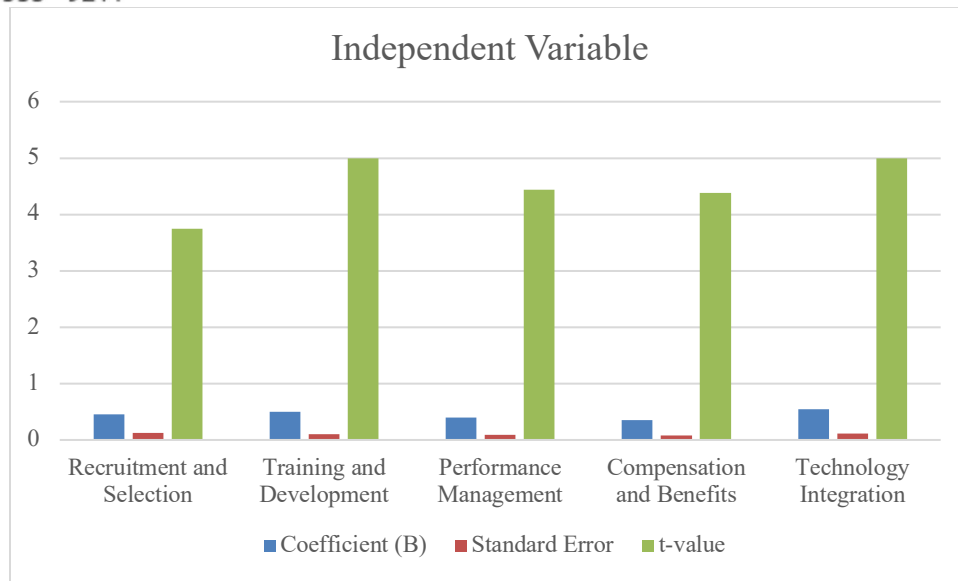
#### 4.3 Regression Analysis

To test the impact of HR practices on organizational outcomes such as employee productivity, multiple regression analysis will be used.

**Table 3:** Regression Analysis – Impact of HR Practices on Employee Productivity

Independent Variable	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Recruitment and Selection	0.45	0.12	3.75	0.0001
Training and Development	0.50	0.10	5.00	0.0000
Performance Management	0.40	0.09	4.44	0.0000
Compensation and Benefits	0.35	0.08	4.38	0.0000
Technology Integration	0.55	0.11	5.00	0.0000





**Figure 2:** Regression Analysis – Impact of HR Practices on Employee Productivity

The regression results in all practices are statistically positive effects on the employees' productivity because the p-values are all below 0.05. The highest coefficient for Technology Integration at 0.55 indicated it to have the most positive impact on productivity. This was followed by Training and Development (0.50) and Performance Management (0.40) showing strong contribution towards productivity as well. Other factors that have noticeable, albeit smaller impacts, are Recruitment and Selection (0.45) and Compensation and Benefits (0.35). Results from these findings only emphasize the importance of well-implemented HR practices in enhancing employee productivity within organizations.

#### 4.4 Hypothesis Testing

Two hypotheses will be tested using t-tests or ANOVA for comparing mean values and regression analysis for determining significance.

**Hypothesis 1: HR practices have evolved significantly post-liberalization.**

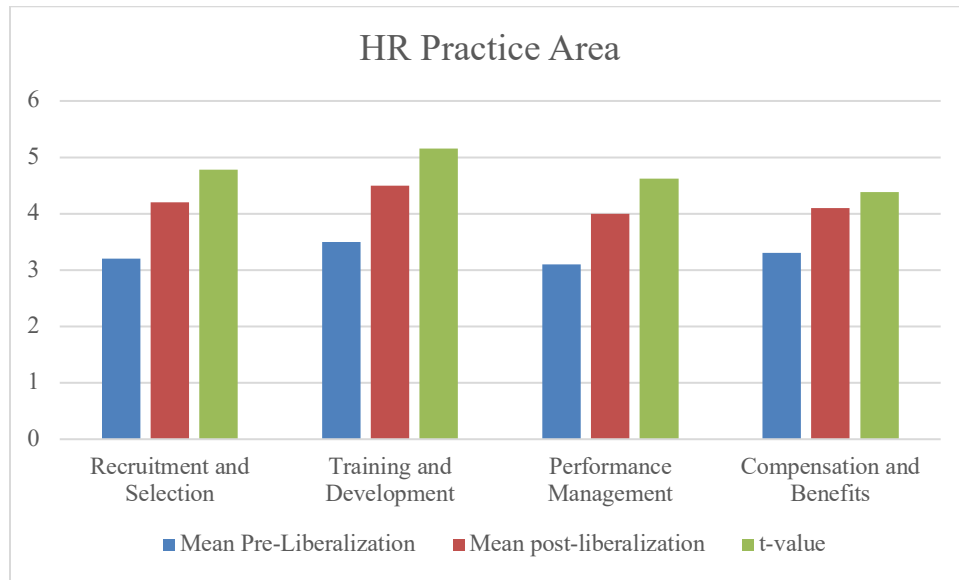
**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significant difference in HR practices pre- and post-liberalization.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** HR practices have significantly evolved post-liberalization.

**Table 4:** Paired Sample t-test for HR Practices Pre- and Post-Liberalization

HR Practice Area	Mean Pre-Liberalization	Mean post-liberalization	t-value	p-value
Recruitment and Selection	3.2	4.2	4.78	0.000
Training and Development	3.5	4.5	5.16	0.000
Performance Management	3.1	4.0	4.62	0.000

Compensation and Benefits	3.3	4.1	4.38	0.000
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**Figure 3:** Graphical Representation on Paired Sample t-test for HR Practices Pre- and Post-Liberalization

The paired sample t-test showed the existence of differences in the levels of HR practices pre-liberalization compared with post-liberalization levels on all fields. The p-values for the aforementioned HR practices - Recruitment and Selection, Training and Development, Performance Management, Compensation, and Benefits-all are at least less than 0.05, therefore implying that there was a necessity to reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that HR practices have developed much after liberalization, with improvements in all areas, especially in Training and Development (mean increase of 1.0) and Performance Management (mean increase of 0.9). These results validate the positive effect of liberalization on HR practices in India.

**Hypothesis 2:** Liberalization has positively impacted employee relations practices.

**Null Hypothesis (H0):** There is no significant impact of liberalization on employee relations practices.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1):** Liberalization has positively impacted employee relations practices.

**Table 5:** One-way ANOVA for Impact on Employee Relations Practices

Factor	Mean Pre-Liberalization	Mean post-liberalization	F-value	p-value
Management-Employee Relationship	3.3	4.2	6.25	0.000
Employee Engagement Strategies	3.4	4.3	5.80	0.000

Results from the one-way ANOVA indicate that, overall, liberalization has had a positive impact on employee relations practices. Both Management-Employee Relationship and Employee Engagement Strategies are more highly valued after liberalization compared to before liberalization as both have p-values below 0.05. The null is hence rejected with F-values of 6.25 for Management-Employee Relationship and 5.80 for Employee Engagement Strategies indicating that differences between the pre- and post-liberalization means are statistically significant. This implies that liberalization has been critical in improving the management-employee relations and fortifying employee engagement strategies.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore the profound influence of liberalization on HR practices and employee relations in India, showing both significant improvements and strategic adjustments in response to global and technological shifts.

The descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis reveal the changes in HR practices after liberalization, especially in Technology Integration and Training and Development. The mean scores for these practices, with relatively low standard deviations, indicate that employees and HR managers have a broad consensus that these areas have undergone significant change. This means that HR functions have remarkably evolved to meet globalization and technological demands, with Technology Integration as the most rated. This could be due to the fact that most business operations currently rely on the use of technology, including HR software, online recruitment sites, and performance management systems.

This strongly positive correlation of HR practices and employee satisfaction implies that such developed practices lead directly to positive outcomes for the employee. The technology integration and training and development have the highest scores, reflecting the manner in which contemporary HR intervention improves job satisfaction, fosters skill building, and aligns the employee toward the goals of the organization. Consistent high correlations of all HR practices, including Performance Management and Recruitment and Selection, suggest that the role of HR in influencing employee satisfaction and productivity is critical to the success of the organization.

The regression analysis thus restates this view by showing a positive and significant impact that HR practices have on employee productivity. Technology Integration has the highest coefficient, thus being the most influential and followed by Training and Development. This means that, by implementing technology and continuous employee development, organizations are expected to witness significant changes in workforce productivity. This analysis's results also yield several findings, which relate to the critical role that HR is expected to play in driving performance outcomes in organizations.

Hypothesis testing, particularly the paired sample t-test and one-way ANOVA, also supports the central argument of this study: HR practices and employee relations have significantly evolved post-liberalization. The results of the paired sample t-test show significant changes in HR practices across key areas, with post-liberalization mean scores being substantially higher than pre-liberalization scores. This underlines the effectiveness of liberalization policies in

transforming HR interventions to align with contemporary business needs. Additionally, the results by ANOVA show liberalization has improved significantly and positively related aspects involving employee relation practice, namely on management employee and employee engagement policy. Results generally indicate liberalization has, by far improved practices in the firm's human resources but equally in the way practices are manifested or expressed about managerial-employee communications.

It indicates that there has been marked transformation in Indian HR and Employee relations practices over time, caused largely by the impact of liberalization. Enhanced HR interventions associated with better relationships between management and employees reflect greater sensitivity to developments on the international arena. The findings also emphasize the role of HR in driving productivity and employee satisfaction, making it an essential factor in the competitive success of organizations in the post-liberalization era. Future research could explore the long-term effects of these changes on organizational culture and employee retention.

## 6. Conclusion

It can thus be strongly noted that liberalization has fundamentally altered the HR practices and employee relations within India to their significant enhancement concerning the Technology Integration, Training, and Development as well as Engagement of employees. Changes within and across borders or due to global and technological advancement have straight-way impacted HR practice development in line with evidence reflected through a high correlation of those practices with worker satisfaction as well as substantial enhancement in employee productivity. The paired sample t-tests and ANOVA prove the fact that, post liberalization, there have been significant changes in HR practices and employee relations in terms of significant improvements in the management-employee relationship and engagement strategies of the employees. In this way, the significance of HR functions becomes evident to create a high-performance organization and an aligned organizational strategy with employee's needs. The study underlines that liberalization has catalyzed not only the adaptation of HR practices toward meeting global demands but also the creation of a more collaborative and efficient work environment. Moving forward, organizations must continue to leverage these evolved HR interventions to stay competitive, while further research could explore the long-term impact on organizational culture and employee retention.

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