ABSTRACT

People constitute the most important organizational resource and the key to achieving high performance. The organizations striving to succeed in today’s highly competitive business environment tend to depend heavily on employee skills and commitment. Apparently, there is now substantial evidence about the fact that employees of an organization can be a source for competitive advantage and can determine the ultimate success of the organization. The challenge however, before the organizations now, is how to develop and sustain this competitive advantage. Grant (1996), Teece (1998), and, Teece et al., (1997) suggested that sustainability of advantage can reasonably be anticipated if a firm is able to continuously identify, upgrade, rejuvenate and reinvent valuable resources, and possess the ability to create an environment in which they can be self-reinforcing and enhancing in value and strength, thus causing the imitating firms sustain major cost disadvantages. Therefore, sustainability of competitive advantage does not only depend on the nature of resource bundles but at the same time, also on the firm’s ability to renew, reallocate, rejuvenate and redefine its resources to help them cope with the changing business environment. Consequently, to withstand competition, it is established for the organizations to ensure effective personnel policies and sound HRD climate, which is self-strengthening, self-rejuvenating, and, self-enhancing to brace the development of people.

Human resources are vital to any organization in the sense that all other physical resources like technology, building, machinery and material are brought to use as accorded by them. People offer their multifarious skills, capabilities, systems, practices, speed, language, bonding and behaviours, which are essential to the successful execution of a firm’s strategies. People are innately honoured with such gamut of skills, which if employed synergistically lead any organization to the new pinnacles of success. Concisely put forth, it is people who craft the strategies and execute them effectively and not the physical resources like technology, buildings, machinery and materials. Thus, it becomes imperative on the part of organizations to efficiently and effectively procure, manage, maintain and develop human resource for the better utilization of other resources and for the timely accomplishment of the organizational goals.
Hospitals are the premiere institutions of every state as the health of people is valued over everything. Therefore, being the most valuable public sector institution, engaged in helping the people to enjoy the blessings of long and healthy lives, there is nothing more rewarding than contributing towards its success.

The emphasis on managing and developing human resource in public sector health institutions is a recently perceived strategy, attracting substantial attention from the government. The efficient procurement, development and utilization of human resource in healthcare industry has become the key to excellent performance. However, the government hospitals today, are marked with a host number of challenges like lack of internal resources and poor mobilization of external resources, inadequate infra-structure, apathy of members towards management, lack of accountability, increasing sickness, dormancy, low level of professionalism, excessive government control, political interference, dominance of vested interests over the management, lack of human resource development, education and training. Therefore, against this backdrop, the present research is devoted to look forward towards the developmental climate and the various issues concerning human resources in the public sector hospitals of Kashmir.

Government is the largest provider of health care service to the people in Kashmir. The hospitals are mostly crowdy and the human resource extending services are not enough to satiate the demands. Moreover, the catastrophic floods that undertook the whole valley under its grip in September 2014, further added to the woes. The floods partially destroyed the infra-structure and machineries of most of the hospitals, leaving the government and hospital administration in a very hapless situation. Thus, keeping this in view, the study is directed towards evaluating and analyzing the perception of employee’s regarding the psychological climate, working conditions, management support and the inter-employee relationship within the hospitals of Kashmir that directly or indirectly influences the overall organizational performance.

Hospitals are like other business organizations that also function within a socio-economic, political and technological environment. The most important feature of this environment is that it does not remain static for a long and keeps on changing. Subsequent changes in technology, economic conditions, competition, social trends or world politics tend to occur and affect the functioning of hospitals. As a result, the various practices that were in use till yesterday may not work today. Accordingly, the
need for up-gradation of existing skills and learning of new skills/capabilities to perform duties by the employee’s may arise. Therefore, at this particular juncture, hospital organizations are required to facilitate a developmental climate that is self-reinforcing and rejuvenating to enhance and upgrade the skills, capabilities and potential of employees so as to make them competent with the dynamic and changing environment. In this direction, the present study is an attempt to seek employee’s perception regarding training culture, appraisal systems, and organizational development policies followed by the hospitals in Kashmir.

Precisely defined, Human Resource Development is all about enhancing personal growth and developing human potential so that the overall performance of an organization is improved. In other words, the essence of human resource development lies in enhancing the organizational performance particularly through personal capability development and learning. Thus, it won’t be wrong to state that the persistence of a sound HRD climate in any organization irrespective of size and type (i.e., whether manufacturing or service, trading or non-trading, profit or not for profit, public or private) is an essential prerequisite for the growth and development of its workforce in general and for the organization in particular. The improvement in organizational performance through learning, training and other development interventions is the basic underlying motive of the concept of human resource development. However, on the other hand, organizational performance is not only the factor of HRD rather; it is the outcome of various other inputs like men, material, machine and money when put together in a planned manner. Therefore, to figure out the significance of human resource development with respect to the organizational performance is never an easy task to perform. So, the present investigation is dedicated to bring into light the relationship between HRD climate and organizational performance in public-sector service organizations.

The basis of this research is that Human Resource development contributes significantly towards the performance of an organization. Like any other organizational asset, employee skills can be seen as core or peripheral asset (Quinn, 1992) which are vital to the competitive advantage of an organization (Porter, 1985) and often require continuous development. Organizations become dynamic and growth oriented if their people are dynamic and pro-active. HRD is a process of developing and unleashing human expertise through organization development and
personnel training and development for the purpose of improving performance (Swanson, 1995)

The study is a very conscious and honest effort to explore the linkage between various HRD sub-systems and organizational performance. It is an endeavour to statistically examine the relationship between HRD climate and performance. The focus of the study has been the public-health-care sector of Kashmir division of Jammu and Kashmir. The researcher has studied district hospitals. Although, having strategical importance in the overall healthcare structure of Kashmir, these hospitals figure amongst the very least studied and observed institutions of Kashmir. Noticeably, there are as many as twelve districts in the region and thus, the twelve district level hospitals. Considerably, ten of these district level healthcare institutions form the sample for this study. Moreover, the data for the study has been collected through primary as well as secondary sources both. However, the results of the study are to a large extent based on the survey information. The researcher surveyed all ten district-level health-care institutions of Kashmir for five months from May 01, 2015 to September 30, 2015 to gather the relevant information.

The researcher employed various statistical techniques to analyse the data and to arrive at the conclusion. The data after screening is put to reliability test to ensure internal consistency and reliability of various constructs measuring HRD climate and performance of hospitals in Kashmir. Principal component analysis is carried out on HRD climate variables to explore various underlying factors and to reduce the large size of variables to the minimum possible extent. Descriptive statistics like mean scores and standard deviations have been computed to decide whether there exists a satisfactory HRD climate in the hospitals and whether the performance of health-care in Kashmir is satisfactory. Independent two-group t-test and one-way ANOVA techniques have been conducted to explore differences of perception among employees with regard to their demographic background. Finally, to test the causal relationship between HRD climate and its components and performance of hospitals in Kashmir, multiple hierarchical regression analysis has been employed.

This study clarifies the effects of HRD climate on the performance of an organization, as all the dimensions of HRD climate i.e., Performance appraisal and reward, Feedback and Counselling, Potential appraisal and Career development, Employee welfare and QWL, Organization Development, and, Training and development have been found influencing organizational performance of hospitals in
The study confirms that organizational performance will be improved if HRD climate is bettered or improved. Thus, it supports Pareek and Rao (1981) that HRD system can contribute significantly to positive cultural changes, increased productivity, and excellence in organizations. The results of this study also maintain consistency with the findings of Ostroff (1992), Yousef (1998), Judge et al., (2001), Sangmook (2005).

The results suggest that people are an essential organizational resources and a cause of good organizational performance. It is the individuals working in an organization who become the basis for utilization of other resources. The growing realization among researchers is that the human resource is a valuable component for an organization attempting to develop strategic competitive advantage (Wright et al., 1991). Hospitals in Kashmir can be more successful with the delivery of their services when they value their employees and view them not as a cost but as an asset. The administration and the government officials at the helm of affairs are urged to have a better understanding of the significance of employees in public hospitals. In this way, the result of this study also supports the perspective of people-cantered management (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Pfeffer, 1994; Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Rainey, 1997; Pfeffer & Veiga 1999; Brewer & Seldom, 2000; Sangmook, 2005). Pfeffer (1998) opined that people-oriented practices increase employee satisfaction and commitment, and therefore, people work harder and improve business performance results. The public sector health-care institutions in Kashmir also need to provide people-cantered practices for promoting public employees’ job satisfaction, organizational commitment, public service motivation, and organizational citizenship behaviours so that the overall performance of the hospitals in Kashmir is improved.

The study also provided for the demographic characteristics of the respondents which were expected to influence organizational performance. Subsequently, to reduce the possibility of such spurious statistical influence the researcher measured demographic control variables: gender, age, job, experience, and, salary. Accordingly, in conformity with the problem, the researcher used hierarchical multiple regression (Cohen & Cohen 1983) and entered all the demographic variables into the model in the first step. The results revealed statistically significant impact of various control variables on the organizational performance.
Besides exploring the relationship between HRD climate and organizational performance, the primary concern of this research has been to study and analyse the existing status of HRD climate and performance of sampled healthcare organizations of Kashmir. The study found the existence of a good HRD climate and equally satisfying performance of health-care sector of Kashmir. The employees in general demonstrated a favourable attitude towards developmental policies being in practice in sample studied hospitals and looked contentious towards their work and the organization as a whole. However the results indicate substantial scope for improvement in the existing HRD structure of hospitals as well as in various factors affecting performance. It is recommended that in order to further strengthen the job related behaviours of employees for better and efficient performance, hospital authorities should patch out and focus on the areas that dissatisfy employees in health-care. The present study observed the following few grey areas requiring concern:

1. Most of the employees have shown disagreement with the reward system in hospitals and have complained that good performances are not fairly acknowledged and rewarded.
2. The top management in health-care has been found doing usual things and are less concerned about how to make employees stay at work more joyous and comfortable.
3. The overall training and development culture is found above par however, employees are seen dissatisfied with the efforts been made to identify, upgrade and utilize the potential of employees in hospitals.
4. Employees in health-care significantly differ in their perception with regard to their demographical character. The management is thus, suggested to pay due attention to these differences and take decisions accordingly.
5. Employees with lower salaries have shown agreement with the prevailing developmental climate and performance of health-care sector of Kashmir while the highly paid employees are found dissatisfied. The highly paid employees mostly include senior staff with many years of experience.

Health-care is a service based industry which employs people to sell its services. However, to keep these people intact with the changing requirements of the complex business environment, they must continuously be developed. Therefore, to ensure the continuous development of the human resource it is necessary for the firms to create a system within the system which is self-reinforcing, self-enhancing to
update, upgrade, rejuvenate, and re-invent new skills, learning and knowledge within people to help them maintain pace with the dynamic business environment. Hospitals in Kashmir must focus on ensuring a congenial developmental climate which is conducive to work and supportive for employees. The top managements are required to invest considerable amount of time and efforts to make sure that employees enjoy their work. They should also put in lot of efforts to identify and utilize the potential of employees. Training is an important tool to help people update their skills and also attain new skills. Management should go out of the way to identify training needs of the employees and ensure skill development via sponsored development programmes.

Research is a systematic way to uncover the truth. It is a sequential process which follows a step wise approach to reach to the conclusion. This particular research has been carried out with a view to explore the relationship between the existing developmental climate at the organisation and the performance of such organization. The study has been conducted in ten district-level healthcare institutes of Kashmir (J&K). At the outset in chapter first, the researcher provides a brief introduction to the topic and describes the various objectives behind conducting this particular research. The same chapter discussed in detail the research methodology to be followed by the researcher to get to the conclusions. The second chapter of the thesis has been devoted to the review of existing body of literature. The primary aim of this section has been to know: What has already been done? and, What is there yet to be explored? The chapter analysed the gap in the existing literature and provided a direction to the present research.

The chapter third of the study deliberates deep upon the concept, evolution, history, and, foundations of human resource development. It brings into light the underlying theory and the core beliefs of human resource development as a field of study, though various criticisms attached to it and its future has also been discussed. The fourth chapter ponders some light on human resource development climate, organizational performance and their relationships, and also discusses in detail the concept of hospital, various kinds of hospitals and their ownerships. It also provides a brief account of evolution of hospitals in Kashmir and gives an overview of the structure of healthcare in the region.
The fifth chapter contains the analysis and interpretation part of the study. It exhibits the application of various statistical procedures on the data and their interpretations. Accordingly, the various hypotheses made for the study in the first chapter are tested in this chapter and the results are discussed in the light of earlier research. The final chapter is about the summary of findings, conclusions and suggestions. It brings into light, in a very lucid form, the outcome of this research. In consequence, on the basis of findings of this study conclusions about the phenomenon concerned are drawn and various suggestions regarding the problem have been made in this section. Subsequently, a note on various limitations of the study and directions for future research concludes the last chapter.

The study has been endeavoured to underpin the weak links in the development culture of hospitals in Kashmir and offer suitable solutions to rectify them off. It was an examination of existing HRD climate and performance of healthcare in Kashmir and more importantly, an effort to reveal the extent to which a good system of HRD affects organizational performance. The findings of the study may be of immense importance to both academics as well as hospital administration in their way to creating and sustaining competitive advantage via competitive human capital.