

HRM Practices Across Different Cultures: An Evidence-Based Study In France And Egypt

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Abstract.

Human Resource Management (HRM) conceptually encompasses policies, practices and systems that influence employee behaviour, attitudes and performance. The comparative research of HRM between France and Egypt, countries from different continents, Europe and Africa, used the literature study method with a descriptive-qualitative approach. The results showed significant differences in HRM practices between the two countries. France has an intuitive recruitment approach using multiple interview methods, while Egypt uses internal and informal recruitment. France focuses on internal relations in development, while Egypt involves government initiatives. Regarding termination of employment, France has a collective policy (RC), while Egypt is unstable in the tourism sector. Performance appraisal in France is subjective, while employees care more about procedural justice in Egypt. The compensation system in France involves fixed and flexible salaries, while Egypt has government regulations. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) regulations are stricter in France, reflecting cultural and labour law differences. Thus, cultural and legal differences create different frameworks in France and Egypt, influencing the implementation of HRM in each country.

Keywords: HRM Practices, Cross-Cultural Management, France, Egypt.

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1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices are central to organisational success, but their complexity is further revealed when applied across cultures. This research is rooted in the issue of different HRM practices in France and Egypt, two countries with contrasting cultural backgrounds. Identifying critical issues involves significant differences in recruitment, employee development, termination policies, performance appraisals, and compensation systems between the two countries.

The importance of effective human resource management in a global environment prompted this research. By exploring the differences in HRM practices in France and Egypt, we can gain a deep insight into how culture and labour laws affect the implementation of human resource policies. The results of this study can serve as a foundation for multinational companies and cross-cultural organisations in managing employees with a more sensitive approach to cultural differences.

In France, HRM developed rapidly since the late 1970s and has continued to grow since the 1980s and 1990s. As in most Western countries, companies in France had to adopt a management model that allowed them to bounce back from the depression of the Western economic model known as the "Trente Glorieuses", or the 30-year heyday after World War II.

Faced with economic, social, technological, and demographic changes, the French government took action to support businesses (Peretti, 2007). These include laws on the labour market, pensions, training, recruitment, employee savings plans, social dialogue, participation, and equal opportunities. In French businesses, this legal framework enables innovation in HRM practices. Examples include recruitment and selection focused on competence and flexibility; remuneration linked to seniority and dependent on employee performance; and competency development being a corporate priority (Bournois, 1992; Gooderham et al., 1999; Jenkins & Klarsfeld, 2002; Brewster, 2007).

In addition to French government intervention, other changes, such as union transformation, changing management styles, and cultural changes, also contributed to the emergence of SHRM (Bournois, 1992; Jenkins & Klarsfeld, 2002). In France, unions are no longer adversarial; they talk to managers as partners. This fact is supported by a more than 50% drop in membership - the union rate in 2005 was 8% - which has led to weak negotiations for French unions. In recent years, the mentality of French society has undergone many changes. Fun and success are now their top priorities. They have developed into pluralists, individualists, and hedonists (Peretti, 2007). Finally, there have been many changes in management styles. These include organisational development in 1970-1980, job enrichment in 1975-1980, quality circles in 1980-1985, and total quality in 1990 (Peretti, 2007).

Companies, managers, and employees have been exposed to more international influences in Egypt. This may have an impact on the employment standards and HR practices of Egyptian companies. Parnell and Hatem (1999) say that in recent years, Egypt has changed due to increased public exposure to the principles and beliefs held by inward investors and management approaches and business practices that make inward investments. Many Egyptian organisations focus on improving and measuring their effectiveness to increase productivity, reduce costs, and compete globally. Nydell (1996) states that various external pressures have influenced how Arab countries behave in the workplace. He finds explicitly the influence of Western technology and approaches to work, which demand the adoption of

Western values and social practices. According to Atiyyah (1993), more and more Arab managers are going to the West for education and participating in training programs and management conferences to teach them how to apply Western management methods and approaches in their companies. According to Kanungo and Jaeger's (1990) research, countries' socio-cultural profiles may become more individualistic and possibly more masculine as they develop economically. Rahmati (2000) argues that since the 1970s, work-related values, such as those associated with Hofstede's (1980) dimensions of masculinity or individualism, may have changed. El-Kot and Leat (2002) conducted a preliminary study of the work values of middle managers working in various companies, and the results showed tentative support for higher scores on the individualism and masculinity dimensions and relatively lower, though still high, scores on the power distance dimension compared to Hofstede's initial findings.

The influence of Western management practices and the need to compete internationally may have contributed to adopting practices incompatible with socio-cultural traditions. In addition, there is evidence that work-related values have evolved since Hofstede's (1980) early work and since economic liberalisation and opening to foreign investors. These findings support the assertion that it is difficult to deconstruct the various cultural and institutional influences (Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002) and that there is a mix of institutional and cultural contextual influences on national patterns of HRM practices and approaches (Budhwar, 2000; Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002; Tayeb, 1988; Huang, 2000; Sparrow & Wu, 1998).

Companies have different HR policies and practices depending on their orientation, size, management, and other factors. Most companies in Egypt were state-owned and authoritarian-run during the 1950s and 60s when the state adopted a socialist economic approach. Starting in the mid-1970s, Egypt embarked on an open economy and encouraged the privatisation of companies. Although the labour laws (137/1981 and 91/1959) governing labour management at the time did not grant workers the right to strike, they received almost complete employment protection. For example, employees who had worked for more than one year could only be legally dismissed if they committed serious offences. Established rules and procedures carry out recruitment and promotion of public sector employees. Public sector companies are primarily subject to labour laws.

This research investigates the differences in HRM practices across cultures, specifically between France and Egypt. Doing so, we can understand the dynamics that guide HRM success or failure in different cultural contexts. The study results are expected to contribute to developing HRM theory across cultures and provide practical guidance for companies operating in multicultural contexts. However, this article only focuses on two countries, specifically France and Egypt. Therefore, this article has limitations because it may not represent the entire diversity of HRM practices worldwide. Therefore, considering France and Egypt's specific contexts, the study's results must be interpreted.

1.1 Cross-Cultural HRM Practices

Human Resource Management (HRM) can be conceptually defined as a range of policies, practices and systems that influence employee behaviour, attitudes and performance (Osman et al., 2011). In addition, it is considered an integrated strategic approach to recruiting, developing, and retaining employees (Armstrong, 2006, 2009). According to Lado and Wilson (1994), it consists of a collection of interrelated processes and activities used to attract, develop,

motivate, and retain HR to achieve organisational goals. Dessler and Tan (2006) consider human resource management responsible for designing policies relating to human resources. According to Williamson et al. (2008), HRM can be defined as the management of policies and practices relating to employees, encouraging them to use their abilities to achieve organisational goals. Based on this definition, HRM can be defined as management responsible for carrying out policies and practices relating to human resources necessary to achieve organisational goals.

Dessler and Tan (2006) state that human resource practices include determining human resource needs, recruitment, selection, training, compensation, performance evaluation, employee equality, business relations, health, and safety. According to Gardner et al. (2007), there are three main dimensions: skills and knowledge development practices (recruitment, training and development, selection, and communication); motivation practices (incentive plans, rewarding diversity, involvement in benefits, and performance management systems); and empowerment practices (participating in decision-making, information sharing and communication).

1.2 Recruitment

Recruitment practices cover various methods, including vacancy announcements through various channels such as company websites, recruitment websites, social media, or recruitment agencies. In addition, recruitment practices also involve the use of informal methods such as word-of-mouth and the use of recruitment consultants or job placement agencies. Recruitment practices in the article include a preference for filling vacancies from within the organisation ($M = 3.05$). Job skills are more critical in selection decisions than fit with organisational culture ($M = 2.55$) (Leat & El-Kot, 2007). In addition, Cenzo and Robbins's (1999) recruitment process is finding potential candidates for actual or anticipated organisational position vacancies. They also emphasised that recruitment is a liaison activity that connects people who need jobs with those looking for jobs. They identified that recruitment involves job analysis, job descriptions, and person specifications and emphasised the importance of recruitment evaluation and assessment to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the process. According to Remichi and Maussen (2017), recruitment is a series of mechanisms to select and recruit employees in public service organisations. Recruitment practice is one of the core activities in human resource management that needs to be planned and implemented efficiently and effectively for the organisation to succeed. They defined recruitment as finding potential candidates for actual or anticipated vacancies in organisational positions. They also emphasise the importance of recruitment evaluation and assessment to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the process (Heneman & Judge, 2005).

1.3 Development

According to Weil, A. and Woodall, J. (2003), the definition of human resource development (HRD) in companies in Eastern France includes activities such as competence management, job management, remuneration management, training, recruitment, integration, personal development, induction, staff mobility, job change, career management and skills development. Over time, a comparison of HRD between France and the UK by Olga Tregaskis and Françoise Dany (2016) revealed differences in access to management positions, government intervention in training, and training and organisational development practices. The French education system emphasises qualifications and intelligence, while the UK focuses

on experience and background. The French government takes a legislative approach to training, while the UK opts for a voluntary approach, as shown by data from the Price Waterhouse Cranfield survey. According to Tarek A. El Badawy and Nouzada Hady (2014), human resource development is considered a realistic and pervasive indicator of development as it is an essential condition for growth. In the economic context, HRD is a crucial factor for growth and changes in economic structure, especially in developing countries. This means that leaders and policymakers in these countries are interested in understanding the role and institutional issues related to HRD, as analysed in the Egyptian context.

1.4 Compensation

As an essential HRM action, compensation has many meanings. Companies use compensation to recruit, retain and motivate employees (McArthur, 2004). Performance and salary determine compensation, which can be financial in wages, salaries, incentives, bonuses, and benefits. Non-financial rewards include promotions, job titles, training, recognition, empowerment, appropriate business environment, vacations, feedback, social activities, and flexibility in working hours (Armstrong, 2006). Compensation increases employee satisfaction, achieves high-performance levels, and sustains organisational growth (Atteya, 2012). In addition, compensation increases employee motivation, skills development, capabilities, and productivity (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2009). According to HR practices, organisations should provide better compensation to attract and retain competent employees and encourage them to achieve organisational goals. This can result in a good combination of high performance, productivity, and improved employee morale. Furthermore, compensation can help employees acquire the entrepreneurial traits necessary to face future challenges and help companies achieve competitive strategic goals in a constantly changing business environment. In addition, Blazovich (2013) found that compensation improves firm performance. Souitaris (2002) found that human resources significantly influence an organisation's ability to develop new ideas.

1.5 Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

According to Hongadi and Praptiningsih (2006), occupational health and safety are requirements for increasing work productivity and are fundamental rights for every worker. Implementing occupational health and safety aims to create healthy, safe working conditions and maximise productivity (Andersson, 2015). A clean work environment is one of the factors in preventing or avoiding work accidents, and if the work environment is dirty, slippery and narrow, it can cause work accidents (Saputra & Mahaputra, 2022). The function of tools and machines used in work is also a form of occupational safety action (Putra et al., 2020). In implementing Occupational health and safety in the work environment human resource management is needed to implement and manage occupational health and safety optimally and well in the work environment.

1.6 Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is a process where an authorised person formulates an assessment, resulting in various consequences, on the value of several attributes of others, using appropriate instrumentation (Bourguignon, 2004). According to Bourguignon and Chiapello (2005), performance appraisal consists of three stages: instrumentation, evaluation, and consequence. The field of performance management itself is divided into two, namely institutional characteristics that refer to legislation, political economy traditions, industrial

relations and different economies (Festing et al. 1., 2012) and cultural characteristics that refer to Hofstede's national culture (2001) which divides national culture into six dimensions, namely power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-feminism, long-term-short-term orientation, and pleasure-restraint. Then, the success of the performance appraisal process, in addition to being influenced by reactions to essential aspects, is also likely to be influenced by the perceived level of fairness of the appraisal process (Jawahar, 2010). Saad (2014) mentions five factors related to the effectiveness of performance appraisals under consideration: regulatory objectives, procedural fairness, performance criteria, feedback, and participation in feedback sessions.

1.7 Layoff

Layoff is a form of employment termination carried out jointly between employers and employees (Signoretto, 2016). Moy & Sorrentino (1981) define layoff as an employee ending their working relationship with the company or organisation where they work. Research by Saad & Elshaer (2017) adds a new dimension by showing that layoffs refer to the decision to end the employment relationship between the company and the employee, which can occur in various contexts, such as the hospitality industry. High organisational politics, distributive justice in performance appraisals, and poor human resource management practices can influence layoffs. Therefore, layoffs cover various aspects, including the organisation's strategic decisions, fairness in performance appraisal, and the impact on the remaining employees after the layoffs are made.

2. Research Method

This research is a literature study with a descriptive-qualitative research type a literature study that seeks to describe cross-cultural human resource management (HRM) practices in 2 (two) countries in 2 (two) different continental regions. This literature study research uses various written sources such as journal/conference articles, websites on the internet, and documents relevant to the study in this research. A literature study is a method of data collection that is not aimed directly at the research subject and examines various documents valid for analysis. This study focuses on cross-cultural HRM practices in recruitment, development, compensation, OHS, performance appraisal, and layoffs.

Data processing in this study was carried out by (1) selecting data or information obtained from internet search results or literature studies on cross-cultural HRM practices as a whole; (2) conducting a comparison and conclusion process based on differences in 2 countries in 2 different continental regions.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 HRM Practices in France

3.1.1 Recruitment

The recruitment process in French companies tends to be more intuitive and interpretive, using multiple interview methods (Jacobo Ramirez, 2005). In addition, French managers tend to prefer to use tests for recruitment purposes; the multiple interview method used in France in the recruitment process tends to be more intuitive and interpretive. The multiple interview method is an approach in the recruitment process where a candidate is interviewed by two or more interviewers separately or simultaneously. This approach aims to gain a more comprehensive view of the candidate and allows for a more holistic evaluation. In a study

conducted by Shackleton and Newell (2007), the multiple interview method was used to understand better how HR policies and practices are implemented and perceived by HR managers and employees in French companies. Recruitment in France adheres to the *Concours* system, in which prospective employees must take entrance exams to enter certain higher education institutions or government institutions. This system emphasises the use of tests and exams as part of the recruitment process, reflecting the preference for using test methods in the recruitment process in France. In the recruitment process in France, the responsibility usually lies with the human resources manager (HR manager) or the company's human resources department. They are responsible for managing the recruitment process, including the posting of job vacancies, the selection of potential employees, and the conduct of entrance examinations. In addition, they may also cooperate with higher education institutions or certain government institutions in the recruitment process, especially in the *Concours* system implemented in France.

Implementing the *Concours* system in French companies has positive and negative impacts. The positive impact is that this system can ensure that prospective employees who are recruited have passed a rigorous entrance examination, thus improving the quality of the company's workforce. In addition, the *Concours* system can also create clear standards in the recruitment process, thus minimising bias and discrimination in employee selection. Meanwhile, according to Remichi and Maussen (2017), the advantage of the recruitment process in France is the *Concours* system, a series of professional examinations organised by the state. It aims to evaluate the quality of candidates who want to work in public services. Only candidates who successfully pass the relevant exams can apply for positions in public administration. However, a weakness of the recruitment process in France is the underrepresentation of candidates with immigrant backgrounds and the mechanisms that lead to their exclusion.

However, the *Concours* system also has negative impacts. Strict selection processes and difficult entrance exams can limit access for potential employees who have potential and skills but may not be able to pass these exams. This can result in a lack of diversity in a company's workforce and limit opportunities for individuals who may have valuable talents and abilities (Ramirez, 2005).

3.1.2 Development

According to a journal by Weil and Woodall (2003), human resource development (HRD) processes in companies in Eastern France involve a diverse range of activities, such as competency management, job management, remuneration management, training, recruitment, integration, personal development, induction, staff mobility, job change, career management, individual and collective skills development, behaviour change, team development, staff motivation and reward. This process demonstrates a solid commitment to corporate strategy, with HRD activities essential to achieving business objectives, such as increased customer focus and satisfaction, competitiveness, leadership, innovation, and change implementation.

However, there are shortcomings related to the limited contribution to the strategic development of the company and the lack of engagement in international professional debates. Research suggests that HRD's contribution to corporate strategic development may be limited, and HRD's role as a "business partner" may be limited. In addition, French

discussions on HRD are not involved in scientific or professional debates in Europe or the United States, which may result in a lack of access to the latest developments in the field of HRD.

Another advantage is the role of line managers, which is considered necessary in French company human resource development. Nonetheless, there are drawbacks related to the limited contribution to the strategic development of the company and the lack of involvement in international professional debates.

3.1.3 Compensation

The compensation policies of French companies developed rapidly with the wage freeze in 1982. Following this wage freeze, the French government implemented a policy that cut the link between the consumer price index and wage levels, successfully slowing down the inflation rate. Therefore, businesses had room to move in two directions. The first difference in the 1980s was the shift from collective pay rises to individual pay rises. Today, management staff have this tendency (Lanciaux, 1990; Melessike, 1995; Naro, 1991; Roussel & Heneman, 1997). The concept of total compensation, which emerged in the 1990s, is the second. This concept optimises corporate culture, management practices, and employee expectations (Amadiou, 1995; Donnadiou, 1991; Sire & David, 1993). Individualised pay and compensation flexibility are the basis of the pay mix. This flexibility is obtained by increasing variable pay (such as bonuses, profit sharing...) and short- and medium-term deferred income (such as corporate savings plans, employee stock ownership, profit sharing...). This evolution has led to the corporate compensation system in France being based on three main elements: fixed pay, flexible pay and benefits.

Within this category, a fixed salary is compensation whose amount and payment are guaranteed (such as base salary, seniority bonus, 13th month, etc.). The second component is flexible pay, which includes variable pay and deferred income. Variable pay is compensation that varies in amount, and its distribution is uncertain (such as results-based pay, bonuses, incentives, overtime, etc.). Deferred income is an amount blocked for a specific time before it can be accessed. It can be used for company savings plans, employee share ownership, French profit sharing, etc. Flexible pay also includes payment forms to lower the ratio of fixed costs to variable labour costs (Sire & David, 1993). The third component of total compensation consists of four main components and regroups all the different types of benefits. The first component consists of allowances and reimbursement of additional expenses such as food, transportation, clothing, etc. The second component consists of other benefits and perks, such as goods and services that are discounted, provided, or offered to employees. The third component includes employee-related welfare and recreation programs. The fourth component is the health insurance program and pension program paid by the company.

There are labour laws, collective bargaining agreements, rules and regulations regarding the minimum salary levels employees must be guaranteed, and salary administration procedures. Companies can create compensation policies while still following the law due to the flexible legal framework.

3.1.4 Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

In the context of OHS in France, business leaders face a case law framework consisting of multiple jurisdictions with the power to intervene on various grounds (Thomas Audiffren et al., 2012). France has strict regulations regarding OHS, including protecting workers against

the risk of occupational accidents and exposure to hazardous materials. Materials or raw materials or production products that contain hazardous materials according to their respective properties and characteristics, such as chemicals containing hazardous substances that can cause irritation, human poisoning, environmental pollution and fire (Ramli, 2010). HR management is responsible for ensuring compliance with all these regulations. This includes drafting safety policies, regular training, and closely monitoring working conditions. According to article L.4121-1 of the existing labour law in France, the workplace safety imperative requires all employers to implement measures designed to guarantee the safety and protect the health of their employees Legifrance (2018).

HR management in France also often emphasises OHS training for all levels of workers. This training aims to comply with regulations and create safety awareness and culture in the workplace. Workers in France are generally involved in safety efforts, and companies provide regular training to ensure good understanding and compliance.

3.1.5 Performance Appraisals

In terms of institutional characteristics, France is a labour law country with significant flexibility for employers in assessing and evaluating the performance of their employees (Festing & Barzantny, 2008). In addition, France is a country with relatively high power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism (Hofstede, 2001). These things make the elite system prevail in France (D'Iribarne, 2007., Brunstein, 1995). This elite system applies to education, administration, organisational management, and society. D'Iribarne (2007) mentions that individuals from 'Grandes écoles' will be more privileged to work and get positive appraisals. Attendance at a particular school can determine future career paths, as educational and intellectual credentials serve as customised hierarchical discriminators. For example, suppose an individual evaluated comes from a prestigious social class background and higher education based on French perceptions and national rankings. In that case, their performance assessment will be more positive because it is a priori considered more favourable. If the person being evaluated has the same background as the person doing the evaluation, the tendency to get a positive result will be higher. This shows that the performance assessment is subjective.

According to Bourguignon (1998), subjective performance appraisal elements are essential in performance evaluation. Performance appraisals conducted based on subjective matters sometimes limit the motivation of individuals with high-performance potential. The result may be that an organisation withdraws from people's performance within its own company. Milman et al. (2002) explained that societies with high power distance usually use a top-down management style, while societies with low power distance support employee empowerment and participation. In France, the distance between managers and their subordinates is essential. France has a high power distance culture (Festing & Barzantny, 2008). So, power is built on social status and intellectual superiority.

Employees in France care about performance appraisals; they focus on the instrument and evaluation stages rather than the consequences stage (Bacouel-Jentjens & Brandl, 2015). Employees in France think that performance appraisal instrumentation is too complicated and time-consuming. In addition, they criticise the Anglo-Saxon instrumentation tool mainly because it uses English in the assessment. They also criticised the transparency of the instrumentation stage. This criticism confirms Festing and Barzantny's (2008) statement that

France has a high power distance. This high power distance leads to superiors' goals, so employees seem to have no participation (Bacouel-Jentjens & Brandl, 2015).

3.1.6 Layoff

According to Signoretto (2016), the termination process in French companies promotes using mutually agreed contract termination (RC). As a form of contract termination, RC is decided jointly between employers and employees without justification, as in dismissal. Its main advantage is that it provides additional flexibility for employers, while employees who experience mutually agreed contract termination can also obtain unemployment insurance and severance pay equivalent to dismissal.

Despite these benefits, Signoretto highlights the weaknesses of the termination process in France. Using mutually agreed contract termination may reduce the difficulty of termination for employers. However, it also has the potential to reduce the cost uncertainty associated with the possibility of termination being deemed unfair. In addition, special provisions, such as RCs, add complexity to the employment dynamics in France.

Moy and Sorrentino (1981) add another dimension by highlighting the positive and negative impacts of termination practices in France. Although people on layoff are not counted as unemployed, this can lower the recorded unemployment rate. However, the negative impact is that it inaccurately reflects the number of people out of work and actively seeking work. With mutually agreed contract terminations and unemployment statistical considerations, implementing termination policies in France creates a complex dynamic between employer flexibility and the accuracy of labour statistics at the national level.

3.2 HRM Practices in Egypt

3.2.1 Recruitment

Recruitment practices in Egypt show the existence of practices specific to the country's context, the use of different methods for different types of jobs, and the division of responsibilities between HR specialists and line management in the recruitment and selection process (El-Kot & Leat, 2008). The study also highlighted the influence of the Egyptian national context on these practices and the implications for organisations operating in Egypt. Their results also show that there is still a preference for internal and informal recruitment methods and extensive use of external mechanisms to attract candidates. The use of tests as a selection method is more dominant for non-managerial positions, and there is a trend of increasing recruitment and selection responsibilities being given to line management. Line management refers to managers or supervisors at the operational level who are directly responsible for managing employees and day-to-day operations. In the context of the article mentioned, line management has increasing responsibilities in Egypt's employee recruitment and selection process. Research shows that recruitment and selection responsibilities are increasingly being given to line management, indicating a devolution of these responsibilities to line management. This may indicate the influence of globalisation and the transfer of Western models and knowledge. Egypt's organisations must know this trend and adjust their recruitment and selection practices accordingly.

Recruitment practices in Egypt rely more on internal/informal recruitment methods for middle and top managerial positions. Internal/informal recruitment methods refer to sources that do not involve formal processes, such as mass media advertising or external recruitment agencies. These methods include employee references, internal promotions, and recruitment

through personal networks or information from company insiders (Aziz, 2010). The application of selection methods in Egypt has both positive and negative impacts. The positive impact is the increased involvement of line management in the recruitment and selection process, which can help organisations make more informed decisions regarding the staff working directly under them. However, the negative impact is the potential mismatch between the selection practices implemented and the labour market conditions and legal environment in Egypt, which may affect the effectiveness of the selection process.

3.2.2 Development

According to an article by Tarek A. El Badawy and Nouzada Hady (2014), the development process in Egyptian companies involves various government initiatives and related institutions. Some of the initiatives mentioned in the article include the establishment of research and development (R&D) centres, the creation of a Smart City to house companies and employees, the establishment of an Industrial Training Council (ITC) to fill the skills gap, and the revitalisation and development of the Supreme Council for Human Resources. All these initiatives aim to improve human resources and technology for sustainable development in Egypt.

However, Egypt's corporate development process has some weaknesses. One of them is the existence of inefficiencies at the institutional level, including inefficient policy integration, duplication of efforts and functions, lack of transparency in information dissemination, and laws and regulations that limit change and development. In addition, Egypt also suffers from weak institutions, which is reflected in Egypt's ranking in the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), which shows the country's weak institutions. Other issues include labour market shortages, institutions facilitating the transition from education to employment, and a lack of investment in labour-intensive sectors. In addition, the economic policies adopted by the government are also considered unsuccessful in addressing unemployment and poverty. The existing advantages of the enterprise development process in Egypt include the government's and relevant institutions' initiatives in establishing research and development (R&D) centres, a Smart City to house companies and employees, and an Industrial Training Council (ITC).

3.2.3 Compensation

El-Kot (2016) found that the government regulates minimum and maximum incomes, as well as minimum and maximum salaries, across all industries in Egypt and most Arab countries and that salaries reflect employees' experience, age, and position. Most compensation is base pay, but additional bonuses and incentives may be based on position, seniority level and type of work. According to Let and El-Kot (2007), cultural influences suggest that an appropriate compensation system in Egypt should be standardised, relationships should be prioritised over performance, team or group work should be emphasised over individuals, and seniority and hierarchy should be emphasised. They found evidence of a pay structure based on job evaluation rather than skills and evidence of salary increases linked to performance rather than seniority.

In the public sector in Egypt, the overall compensation system is divided into two parts: wages and non-wages. These non-wage rewards can be monetary, in-kind or otherwise. From 1991/92 to 1999/2000, most of the increase in public expenditure has been absorbed by wage and salary increases. This occurred due to a significant increase in students graduating from the free education system and an overly generous government hiring system.

The "Certificate Pricing" system determines wages in companies and government administrations. This system categorises employees based on their educational certificates. From this point, state law focuses in detail on the compensation system as it covers the minimum wage, cost-of-living allowances, the introduction of various job categories, areas of specialisation, the qualifications required for each job, and the corresponding wage range. As a result, the wage system is inflexible (El-Ehwany & Metwally, 2000). This suggests that since the 60s, governments and public sector companies have used a unified wage structure. This structure organises wages based on education rather than job content, except in some public sectors, such as the Suez Canal Authority and the Petroleum Authority (Handoussa & El-Oraby, 2004). As mentioned above, these additional payments can differ from agency to agency depending on the incentive scheme used and the position of the unit head. The main problem, however, is that these non-wage payments, as mentioned earlier, are not performance-based; they are more like compensation to civil servants for the constant price increases due to their tight nominal wages.

3.2.4 Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

Implementing human resource management (HRM) in Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in Egypt reflects the country's specific challenges and context. Preventing accidents and implementing safety programs in the work environment will not be successful without the support and participation of top management in manufacturing companies and organisations (Randiwella & Dongoran, 2023). Management must be committed to OHS as an essential part of successfully achieving goals, fulfilling formalities and creating a safe and healthy environment (Kurnia, 2020). Egypt has a few OHS-related regulations, but implementation and compliance sometimes face obstacles.

According to (Amal et al., 2012), Many workplaces in Egypt investigated by the team do not have employee training programs. Therefore, no orientation is conducted for new or existing employees. In addition, there is a lack of health facilities and hygiene standards at project sites. Furthermore, equipment inspection and maintenance schedules are often missed after an accident. Young workers usually do not follow safe working procedures. This could be because they are not used to or neglect to wear personal equipment.

3.2.5 Performance Appraisal

In research conducted by Saad (2014), it is known that employees in the Egyptian tourism sector assess that all items in the procedural justice variable are considered unfair; only one variable is considered fair. Namely, the variable that performance appraisal procedures have been consistently applied. Then, for the criteria variable, most respondents felt that all items in the criteria variable were used in almost every performance appraisal. In the feedback variable, 31.3% of respondents felt no feedback discussion between management and employees, while 36% felt otherwise. Finally, in the employee participation variable, it was found that employees in the Egyptian tourism sector were somewhat dissatisfied with participation in feedback sessions.

The success of the performance appraisal process, in addition to being influenced by reactions to essential aspects, is also likely to be influenced by the perceived fairness of the appraisal process (Jawaher, 2010). Five factors were associated with the effectiveness of performance appraisals considered in Saad's (2014) study: setting objectives, procedural fairness, performance criteria, feedback, and participation in feedback sessions. Saad's (2014)

research supports the assertion that employees in the Egyptian tourism sector can clearly understand the purpose of the performance appraisal process. Companies in the Egyptian tourism sector tend to use performance appraisals as a tool for development rather than setting human resource budgets, allocating resources, and promoting or dismissing employees.

Most employees in the Egyptian tourism sector are concerned about the fairness of procedures in the performance appraisal process (Saad, 2014). Dobbins et al. (1993) and Lawler (1994) revealed that employee perceptions of an unfair process negatively correlate with employee trust in the system, satisfaction, and motivation. So, an unfair performance appraisal process can be the basis for negative attitudes in the workplace. The performance appraisal in the hospitality sector revealed by Zaitouni (2015) found that employees' assessment of procedural, interpersonal and informational justice showed a positive and significant relationship with the supervisor's perceived competency assessment. The results of research conducted by Zaitouni (2015) explained that managers must support employees so that they can do their jobs better. Perceptions of organisational justice in appraisal determine employee satisfaction (Sudin, 2011). Therefore, if employees in the Egyptian hospitality sector feel fairness during performance appraisal, their productivity will increase.

3.2.6 Layoff

Human resource management (HRM) practices in Egypt, as revealed in a journal by Saad & Elshaer (2017), tend to face challenges regarding distributive justice in performance appraisals and high levels of organisational politics. The results show that termination in the Egyptian hospitality industry can be influenced by factors such as high organisational politics, discrimination due to nepotism, corruption, and bureaucracy. High organisational politics can negatively impact the validity of termination decisions, primarily through the distribution of fairness in performance appraisals.

In this context, Anter & Atia's (2014) study highlighted the tendency in the Egyptian tourism sector to conduct random terminations without following stable rules and policies. Such actions can harm employee loyalty and employee production on the job. The impact of an unstable and random termination system in the Egyptian tourism sector can create uncertainty that is detrimental to the industry.

The importance of stable policies in termination to support Egypt's tourism sector is emphasised by Anter & Atia. The conclusion can be drawn that more structured and fair termination practices can help minimise the negative impact on employee loyalty and productivity on the job, which in turn can support the overall development of Egypt's tourism sector.

3.3 Differences in HRM Practices in France and Egypt

There are differences in HRM practices in France and Egypt based on various indicators. In terms of recruitment, French companies tend to be more intuitive and interpretive, using multiple interview methods. The multiple interview method used in France in the recruitment process tends to be more intuitive and interpretive. Recruitment in France follows the contours system, where prospective employees must take entrance exams to enter certain higher education institutions or government institutions. This system emphasises the use of tests and exams as part of the recruitment process, reflecting the preference for using test methods in the recruitment process in France. Application of the Concours system in

companies. While Egypt uses internal and informal recruitment methods, it also extensively uses external mechanisms to attract candidates. The use of tests as a selection method is more dominant for non-managerial positions, and there is a trend of increasing recruitment and selection responsibilities being given to line management. Internal/informal recruitment methods refer to sources that do not involve formal processes, such as mass media advertising or external recruitment agencies. These methods include employee references, internal promotions, and recruitment through personal networks or information from company insiders. Recruitment practices in Egypt vary depending on the type of job, with a preference towards traditional methods for managerial roles and more emphasis on testing for other positions.

Then, regarding development, Egypt emphasises government initiatives and related institutions, such as establishing research and development (R&D) centres, creating Smart Cities, and creating Industrial Training Councils (ITCs) to improve human resources and technology for sustainable development. However, weaknesses were seen at the institutional level, with inefficiencies, lack of transparency, and laws restricting change. Eastern France, on the other hand, features a wide range of activities in the human resource development (HRD) process, such as competency management, training, and remuneration management. Despite showing a solid commitment to corporate strategy, France faces the obstacles of limited HRD contribution to strategic development, lack of involvement in international debates, and lack of access to the latest developments in the field of HRD.

Compensation in France and Egypt has considerable differences. The corporate compensation system in France is based on three main elements: fixed salary, flexible salary and benefits. There are labour laws, collective bargaining agreements, rules and regulations regarding the minimum salary level employees must guarantee, and salary administration procedures. Companies can create compensation policies while still following the law due to the flexible legal framework. Meanwhile, in the Egyptian compensation system, the government regulates minimum and maximum earnings and minimum and maximum salaries across all industries in Egypt. Most compensation is based on base wages, but additional bonuses and incentives may be based on position, seniority level, and type of work. Cultural influences suggest that an appropriate compensation system in Egypt should be standardised.

There are differences in the existing OHS in France and Egypt. The OHS regulatory framework in France stands out with its stringent regulations that form a solid basis for HR management practices that focus on worker welfare. In contrast, Egypt tends to have a more varied approach to OHS implementation, which is reflected in a regulatory framework that may be less stringent. Furthermore, the approach to OHS education and training in France is more structured, providing a solid foundation for effective HR management practices. In Egypt, variations in training implementation and worker awareness of OHS may result in differences in HRM practices in different industry sectors. Also, the level of worker awareness and company support plays a significant role in the effectiveness of OHS-related HRM practices in these two countries.

When looking at HRM practices in terms of performance appraisal described in some of the literature, there are differences between France and Egypt. In the French context, the country's institutional characteristics, such as flexibility in labour laws, create an environment

where employers can assess and evaluate employee performance. Employees in France care about performance appraisals, focusing on the instrument and evaluation stages rather than the consequence stage. They also criticise transparency in the instrumentation stage. The French culture of high-power distance and individualistic tendencies provides the foundation for an elite system that dominates various sectors, including education, administration, and organisational management. Thus, power is built on social status and intellectual superiority. These things make performance appraisals in France subjective, limiting the motivation of individuals with high-performance potential. On the other hand, Egypt, particularly in the tourism sector, shows different dynamics in performance appraisal. Employees in this sector experience procedural justice concerns, with perceptions of unfairness on several aspects of procedural justice variables. Employee perceptions of fairness can affect satisfaction, motivation and trust in the system. Despite these concerns, the literature review shows that employees in Egypt, particularly in the tourism sector, can clearly understand the purpose of the performance appraisal process. Furthermore, in the hospitality sector, a positive relationship was seen between employees' procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice ratings and supervisors' competency ratings. Thus, if employees in Egypt feel fair during performance appraisals, their productivity will increase.

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices related to layoffs in France and Egypt also show notable differences. In France, Signoretto (2016) notes a mutually agreed contract termination (RC) policy, where employers and employees can terminate employment without the need to justify it. While RC provides flexibility for employers, it also has the potential to create cost uncertainty and complexity in labour dynamics. On the other hand, in Egypt, Saad and Elshaer (2017) highlighted challenges in HRM mainly related to high organisational politics and discrimination in performance appraisal in the hospitality industry. Anter & Atia's (2014) research shows the tendency of the Egyptian tourism sector to conduct random and unstable layoffs, which can be detrimental to employee loyalty and productivity on the job. The fundamental difference between the two countries lies in France's more structured and fairer HRM approach, where layoffs can occur without justification but involve mutual agreement. In Egypt, the main challenges are organisational politics and unstable layoff policies, which can create adverse uncertainty in the tourism sector. Thus, cultural differences and labour laws create different frameworks in the two countries, affecting the implementation of HRM practices related to layoffs.

4. Conclusion

To determine their main differences, this article compares specific HRM practices in France and Egypt regarding recruitment, development, layoff, performance appraisal, compensation, and OHS. To realise the purpose of this paper, the research was conducted through a descriptive-qualitative literature review that sought to describe cross-cultural human resource management (HRM) practices in France and Egypt.

The study found significant differences in HRM context and practices in France and Egypt. In France, recruitment practices tend to be more intuitive and interpretive with more use of multiple interview methods, while in Egypt, more use of internal and informal recruitment methods. In France, there is a mutually agreed contract termination policy (RC), whereas, in Egypt, unstable layoff policies can create adverse uncertainty in the tourism sector. Performance appraisals in France tend to be subjective, whereas in Egypt, employees

experience concerns over procedural fairness. The compensation system in France is based on three main elements: fixed salary, flexible salary, and benefits, whereas in Egypt, the government regulates the minimum and maximum income. The OHS regulatory framework in France is more stringent than in Egypt, reflected in the regulatory framework, which may be less stringent. Thus, cultural differences and labour laws create different frameworks in the two countries, affecting the implementation of HRM practices.

France and Egypt's historical and cultural backgrounds can explain the differences in the areas studied. In recent years, the mentality of French society has undergone many changes. Fun and success are now their top priorities. They have developed into pluralists, individualists, and hedonists. In Egypt, a mix of institutional and cultural contextual influences on national HRM practice patterns and approaches makes it challenging to deconstruct the various cultural and institutional influences. These facts influence HRM practices. A longitudinal study is recommended to see the changes in both countries.

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