



HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES AND THE LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY OF WOMEN TEAPLUCKERS IN PITIGALA AREA IN SOUTHERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA.

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Abstract: This study attempts to assess the dormant factors of human resource practices and provides a sturdier emphasis on the nature of such procedures in the cross-cultural setting. Based on that, it was recognized possible future guidelines for the progress of human resource management strategy and professional practice for the women teapluckers in tea small holding sector in Sri Lanka. The objective of this study was to determine the association between human resource practices and labor productivity of women teapluckers at Pitigala area in Southern province of Sri Lanka. In order to evaluate whether there is a link between the labor productivity and the human resource practices of tea estates, the bivariate analysis was conducted. The hypotheses testing was done using the results of Pearson's Product Movement Correlation analysis. Four hypotheses were concerned for relationship and two – tailed test was used in the correlation analysis with hundred women teapluckers. The results indicated values of 0.743, 0.777, -0.504 and 0.692 for relationship between human resource practices namely recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, and rewards and benefits with the labor productivity respectively. This research study contributes to the existing knowledge in a number of ways. Firstly, it confirms the existing structure of human resource practices scales in Sri Lanka. Secondly, this study supplemented the current information on human resource practices of women teapluckers in the small tea-holding sector. It was endorse the fact that this is a prominent issue at present in this industry. The government authorities at both national and regional levels, the regional plantation companies and the smallholders and their organizations are expected to make use of these findings and recommendations for improving competitiveness and progress in the tea smallholdings sector.

Index: Teaplucker, Human resource practices, Labor productivity, Training, Selection -

I. INTRODUCTION

On examination of the world economy, it reveals that historically plantations were started in the tropics to deliver raw materials to the industrialized nations of Europe and North America. Although many countries in the third world continue this process there are systems working against such practices. The economic liberalization in the 1990s brought about some structural changes on certain attributes of the plantation sector such as the employment pattern, divarication of production and balanced agricultural development (Sivaram, 2000). It is evident from review of major plantation crops that tea is one of the dominant products that is produced for both domestic and the export market. Literature reveals that tea is a beverage next to water that is highly consumed and cheapest in the world (ILO, 2019; Warnakulasuriya, 2017). In the world market tea is regarded as a natural beverage that competes with coffee, cocoa, and alcoholic drinks which too are natural beverages and formulated products like soft drinks (Department of Census and Statistics, Statistical Pocket Diary, 2018). Black tea and green tea are the two basic forms of tea. Few countries of the world, which demonstrated the highest export value income earnings in 2019 are presented in table 1.

The right-most column highlights the percentage change in worldwide tea exports from 2018 to 2019.

Table 1: Countries that Exported the Highest Dollar Value Worth of Tea -2019.

RANK	EXPORTER	TEA EXPORTS (US\$)	2018-1	Total tea exp
1.	China	\$2,025,787,000	+13.5%	31.8%
2.	India	\$802,984,000	+4.6%	12.6%
3.	Sri Lanka	\$721,273,000	-24.2%	11.3%
4.	Kenya	\$360,884,000	-73.7%	5.7%
5.	Poland	\$255,209,000	+25.6%	4%
6.	Germany	\$244,120,000	-5.5%	3.8%
7.	United Arab Emirates	\$161,776,000	-45.2%	2.5%
8.	United Kingdom	\$138,198,000	-1.6%	2.2%
9.	Japan	\$137,147,000	-3.7%	2%
10.	Taiwan	\$124,803,000	+11.2%	1.8%

1 to 10 of 157 entries
 (Source: www.worldstopexports.com).

As shown in the above table the fastest-growing tea exporters in 2018 to 2019 amid the top exporters were: China (31.8%), India (12.6%), and Sri Lanka (11.3%). The table indicates that other seven countries demonstrated lesser exports of tea sales as a result of high consumption in their countries. It is a significant feature that although Sri Lanka has listed a tea export value of -24.2% in 2018 to 2019, the total value of the export records as 11.3% value as the third highest tea exporter among the ten topmost countries.

It is evident that tea producing countries tend to promote ‘tea natural drinking,’ and the percentage of tea producing countries have improved this trend considerably over the last decade, leading to a declined amount of exports. The estimated world tea production – retentions – export is presented in figure1 below.

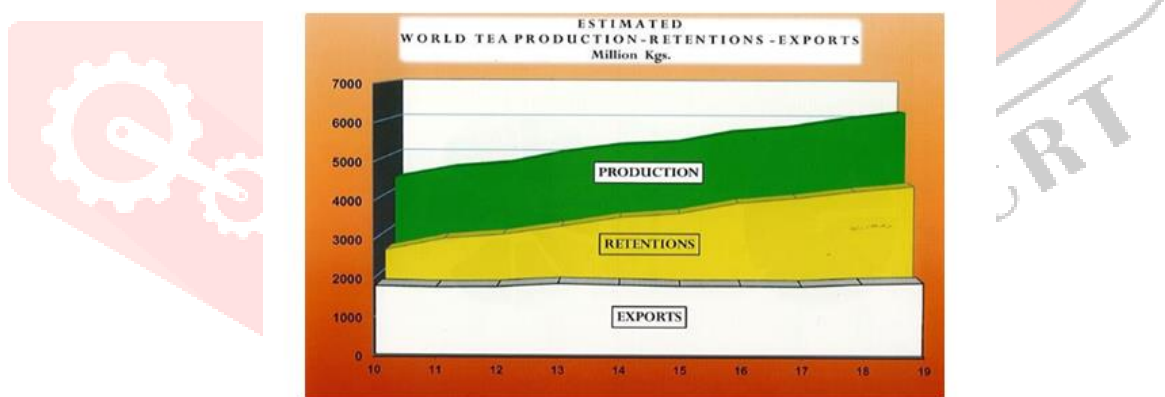


Figure 1: Estimated World Tea Production – Retentions – Export
 (Source: ITC, 2019)

Although export led industrialization is making a noteworthy progress in diversifying its economic base, Sri Lanka’s economy remains agrarian (Sivaram, 2000). The Sri Lankan export tea production presents in the table 2 below

Table 2: The Sri Lanka Export Tea – (MT)

Country	2019	2020 -MT
Sri Lanka	292.6	265.5 -45.4%

(Source: ITC, 2019)

The tea Exports of Sri Lanka for the period of January to December 2020 amounted 265.5 MT as against 292.6 MT of January-December 2019, indicating a decline of 27.0 MT.

Details of Sri Lanka tea export for January - December 2020 are listed below in table 3.

Table 3: Sri Lanka Tea Export Details in 2020

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY (MT)
Bulk	118,251
Tea in Packets	118,176
Tea In Bags	22,173
Instant Tea	2,843
Green Tea	4,126
TOTAL	265,569

(Sri Lanka Tea Export Association, 2020)

Major tea importers in Sri Lanka are listed below table 4.

Table 4: Major Importers of Sri Lanka Tea - 2020

Country	2020	2019
Turkey	38,866	39,087
Iraq	33,377	38,408
Russia	29,608	29,068
Iran	15,127	22,263
China	14,123	11,870
Azerbaijan	10,303	11,721
Syria	9,536	10,985
Chile	9,419	7,231
U.a.e	8,670	9,901
Libya	7,806	12,329

(Source: Sri Lanka Customs, 2018)

The present-day situation of Tea Small Holdings is a tireless struggle with major revolutionary developments and high technological trends around the globe, mainly globalization, deregulation, demographic changes and an accelerating array of production systems (Othman, 2009). The technology and knowledge-based society have been resulted by these improvements where human capital is vital to commercial survival. The basic structure of tea Production process presented in the figure 2

Figure 02: Basic Structure of the Tea Industry in Sri Lanka

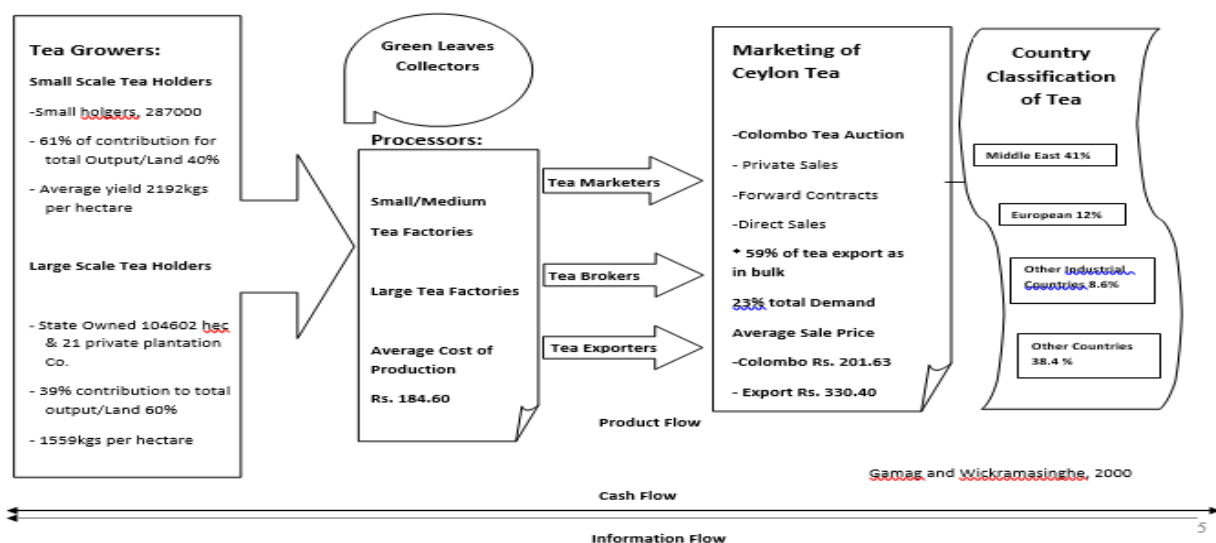


Figure 2: The Basic Structure of the Tea Industry

Tea small estates are searching for talented employees progressively, in order to suit the high technological and service oriented society (Zheng, 2009). Successfully motivating, satisfying and retaining highly innovative and effective employees, who can withstand the estates merging and arrangement in the many agricultural sectors established in this new paradigm are the current concerns of human resource practicing (Jain, Giga & Cooper, 2009; Petrescu & Simmons, 2008;). It is evident that 80 per cent of business experts and multinational corporations are now of the view that issues relevant to the human resources more crucial than ever. Furthermore, 68 per cent hold the view of retaining talented employees being vital than recruiting new ones (Chew, 2004). Some business leaders and companies based on this fact, tend to make exceptional efforts to retain and acquire topmost talent, which denotes a vital change in the relationship between the employer and the employee. Fundamentally, many organizations have now identified human resource practices as symbolic of competitive and strategic advantage (Hassan, 2007; Chew, 2004). Further, many scholars and experts consider human resource practice to be a persistent source of competitive advantage for organizations functioning in a global economy (Zheng, 2009;). In line with this, many futuristic organizations are inclined to create a positive and vibrant organizational environment via human resource practices, in order to retain and sustain treasured employees (Chew & Chan, 2008; Milne, 2007). Creating a good ambience between the organization values and the individual employee is an important function in human resources. Furthermore, allowing staff members to have sufficient training and development is another significant task. Establishing a performance related justifiable compensation system that rewards the suitable members is an essential requirement in management. Literature also identifies recognition of employees' contributions and efforts in the performance appraisal stage while assigning them with fitting, interesting and challenging tasks are few other human resource practices (Yeganeh & Su, 2008; Chew & Chan, 2008). Employees' attitude could be improved by influencing their behaviors and skills through these practices and policies (Mosadeghrad, Ferlie & Rosenberg, 2008 Chew & Chan, 2008).

The tea manufacturing process consist of several stages with regard to labour productivity. As stated by Sivaram (1996), tea plucking is the most domineering among these based on gauges used for judging the production efficiency of the tea industry, and the plucker productivity represents the quantity of green tea leaves harvested per person per day. In Sri Lanka plucker productivity is 17 kg to 20 kg person-day for the estate sector and 20 kg to 24 kg person-day for the private small holdings sector, although Kenya records an average of 40-50 kg person-day (Sivaram, 1996). Different teapluckers show significant variability in the quantity of leaves plucked by them. Jain et al. (1996) indicates that the reasons for the above differences are the physical condition as well as the fitness of thepluckers, actual plucking methods and motion patterns. Nevertheless, the type of clone, plucking intervals, climate factors, the elevation and various field practices implemented by the management also influences theplucker productivity (Sivaram and Herath, 1996).

Around 20-24 kg of green tea leaves from 8 am to 2 pm (ILO, 2019) is the average yield per plucker and the effective plucking time is 3.3 hours. However idling on the field, transportation of pluckers to distant fields, lunch and water breaks at sites are some of the actions of a labourer during the afore mentioned work hours. (Venkatakrishnan and Sankar, 1999). Therefore, the quality time employed for actual plucking is about 50%-60% of the total time. Daily routine work of a teaplucker presented in the figure 3.

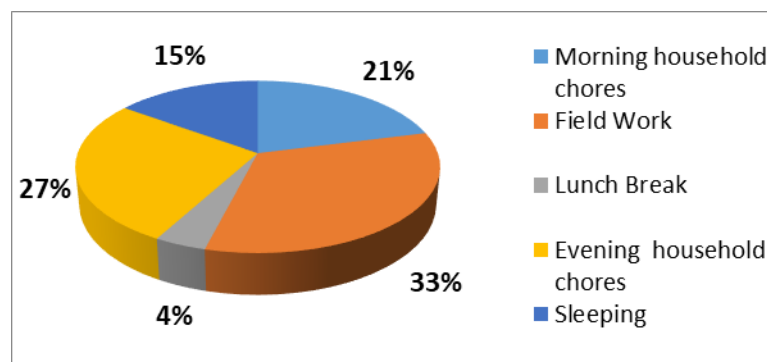


Figure 3: Day to Day Routine Work of a Teaplucker

Hechavarría, Bullough, Brush and Edelman (2019) state that based on the highest contribution to the national income, women teapluckers are identified as a major component of economic and social development in the developing countries. Besides women who possess certain skilled abilities and others with highly competent training in the field are also regarded to be female strength of the estate works (Ass, Gashi, and Gashi, 2019). Human resource practices are regarded as a major factor that can enhance their productivity. Taking this into consideration the objective of the study is to examine the relationship between human resource practices and labor productivity of women teapluckers in Pitigala area in the Southern province, Sri Lanka. Hence, the requirement of this study is to determine what actions be done in order to tackle the main problems and challenges facing the human resource practices to improve women teapluckers Productivity in Pitigala area in Southern province, Sri Lanka. On gender basis both men and women work at the tea states. Nevertheless, the women earn a lower daily payment generally than men as usual as in other industries. Daily wages in the sector by women presented in the table 5 as below.

Table 5: Tea - Daily Wages by Sector by Women (Informal)

Tea Industry	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Female (Rs.)	300	434	628	842	1000	1100

(Source: Central Bank, 2019)

The above wage trends were observed in the tea industry related labour market in Sri Lanka as shown in the above table. In order to improve productivity of women teapluckers, different tools can be used. Human resource practices are referred to as one of the main factors to increase the productivity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reviews of secondary data obtained from similar research and publications, will be analytically presented in this section. Few theories were used in the discussion and overview of selected constructs presented in relation to the study in the tea industry to improve productivity, especially labour productivity of women teapluckers.

Theoretical background of the study: It is evident that tea is one of the vital agricultural commodities in Sri Lanka, which fetches a significant quantity of export earning in addition to generating employment opportunities for individuals in several districts (ILO, 2019; Perera, 2014). Many human resource professionals have incorporated different models or theories of management, to assist in achieving the responsibilities given to them by many industries including tea, that have become popular in the last few decades (Convertino, 2008). The soft and hard theories are the most widely adopted two theories of human resources. Based on control through commitment (Theory Y) is the soft theory, and the one created on notions of limited control (Theory X) is hard theory (Convertino, 2008). Teapluckers' needs are satisfied and encourages their attitudes by applying suitable practices of soft human resource which results in improving estate commitment and enhance productivity. In contrast, hard human resource practice is basically connected with the women teapluckers' efficient utilization and focuses on the measurable, quantifiable, and tactical business features of handling them similar to any other economic factor (Edgar and Geare, 2005; Convertino, 2008). The soft theory referred to as developmental humanism, categorized and highlights the importance on the significant incorporation between the business objectives and human resource policies while it treats employees as valuable and critical assets, withstand the competitive advantage via employee commitment, skills, adaptability, and productivity (Edgar and Geare, 2005; Convertino, 2008). Effective corporation among workers and their estates through good human resource practices lead to accomplish this (Convertino, 2008). Alternatively, hard human resource practice which is considered as utilitarian instrumentalism, comprises few features. Its main emphasis is on business tactics with close incorporation of policies and practices, employees to be a factor in the production process who are passive assets, and treating employees as an expense of the business but not as a competitive advantage. (Convertino, 2008; Edgar and Geare, 2005) These are usually referred to as Theory Y and Theory X management styles while there are hybrid versions with combinations of both theories in the estates too (Convertino, 2008).

Productivity

Productivity can be explained as measure of the technical or engineering efficiency of production (Sri Lanka Tea Board, 2015; Jain et al., 1996). In countries like Sri Lanka, the infrastructural and attitudinal aspects act as a barrier to implement and practice the concepts which lead to enhance the productivity (Nandasena, 1999; Opatha, 1995; Udayanga, 2004, 2009). In the production process productivity measures the output per unit of input. Fundamentally, labor productivity is measured as ratio of output per labor-hour, and input. The labor productivity consists of several stages in the tea manufacturing process (Sivaram, 2000). Therefore, the emphasis relies on quantitative metrics of input, and sometimes output. Productivity is different from measure of allocative efficiency, which contemplates both the monetary value (price) of the product and the cost of inputs used, while the metrics of process of profitability too are distinct. Productivity process presented in figure 4 and process of productivity comprise some steps to follow:

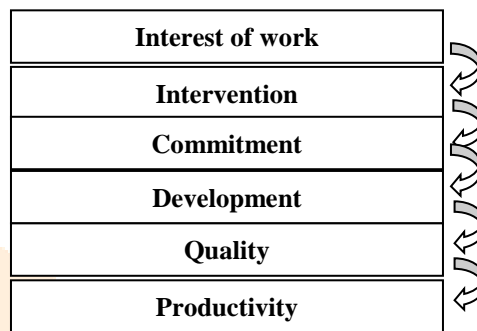


Figure 4: Process of Productivity

The interest of the employee is required to be created or intervened for the success of the work. The desired level of the intervention leads to maximum level of commitment to accomplish the improved quality of the work.

By increasing the teaplucker productivity, which is the weight of green leaves in kilograms, plucked for a day is one of the methods to enhance the productivity of the tea plantation. Effective plucking time (EPT) and the speed of plucking decides the plucker productivity. EPT is the actual time the pluckers spend on plucking leaves. Furthermore, various tools and methods can be used to improve productivity in the estate work. Few of the areas presented in the figure 5 below



Figure 5: Various Tools and Methods to Improve Productivity

Some of the concepts that are ideal in conceptual and theoretical backgrounds have been identified in this section. Many of the following concepts are successfully tried out in Japan in a practical environment considering the main ability of the infrastructure leading towards productivity. However, it is a challenge to implement and practice similar concepts which helps improve the productivity, in countries like Sri Lanka, due to the infrastructural and attitudinal aspects.

The productivity is described in literature as Cause and effect diagram (Kaoru Ishikawa), Five (5) S Systems, Pareto Principal, Kaizen (Japanese for "improvement" or "change for the better" method Adams, 1982; Anonymous, 1998; Bandara, 2002). Kaizen aims to eliminate waste (see lean manufacturing) by improving standardized activities and processes. Kaizen was introduced in many Japanese institutes soon after the Second World War, partly influenced by American business and quality management teachers who visited the country. Since then this method has expanded throughout the world. Kaizen can be implemented by people at all levels of an organization, from the chief executive officer (CEO) to the external stakeholders when aspirate.

Labor Productivity

Productivity and Human resources are interdependent where the increase of labour productivity will have an obligatory effect on the overall productivity. A committed and devoted labour force is necessary for productivity as all the greatest principals, excellent work processes and methodologies will go waste without the presence of the correct attributes of labour. The quality of the laborers is the vital key to this, specially the self-actualization, innovative input and satisfaction can be instantly achieved with the right attitude.

Workforce productivity can be identified as the amount of goods and services that a labourer produces in a given amount of time

$$\text{Labour Productivity} = \frac{\text{Labour Output}}{\text{Labour Input}}$$

The changes in the link between output and the hours expended in producing that output measures the indexes of output per hour measure.

Human Resource Practices

The Sri Lankan tea sector has a workforce of over 2.5 million and categorized as the largest employer in the country (Paul, 2017). The literature on management, mainly the effect of human resource practices on productivity in the tea estates have been increased during the past two decades. (Petrescu & Simmons, 2008). Tea industries face highly complicated business environment, such as occurrences of internationalization, market deregulation, increase of product-market high competition and high demand of teapluckers (Falkenburg & Schyns, 2007) that have taken place as a result of the rapid transforming global economy. Tea industries need to continuously improve their productivity by practices such as enhancing growth, improving quality, reducing costs and maintain effective workforce in order to compete effectively. (Hassan, 2007; Chang & Huang, 2005).

In order to function estate productively, the human resource capital need to be carefully managed (Mosadeghrad et al., 2008). Although human resource practices were once considered to be of lower priority in many industries, its importance in achieving estates' goals has developed intensely in the past few decades. These activities are aimed towards attracting, developing, and maintaining efficient human capital in order to achieve the objectives of the estates (Davies, 2010). Its significance arise from legal complications as well as from the acknowledgement of human resources as a valuable possession that work towards the improvement of industry competitiveness. The fact that this adds value to the industry is its function in most direct sense. (El-Jardali, Tchaghchagian & Jamal, 2009). Several aspects relevant to the human resource practices are discussed in the study, based on the literature.

Recruitment and Selection

Identification of an organization's human resource needs is designed by successful human resource planning and the organization should act to meet these through the staffing function (Heraty and Morley, 1998). Staffing process has the aim to locate, select, acquire and place the human resources required to achieve organizational and human plans (Moory, 2010). Recruitment and selection are two main components of staffing function. The competences and inclinations of potential candidates are matched against the demands and rewards characteristic in a given job by recruiting and selection. (Othman, 2009). Recruiting focuses on the process of looking for and attracting a stream of individuals out of which suitable candidates can be selected for the job vacancies. The difference between the predicted human resource requirements and the competencies available within the organization, determines the amount of recruitment an organization should attend to (Heraty and Morley, 1998). In this process, potential candidates are traced and inspire them to apply for current or expected job openings while enlightening the applicants with regard to the competencies needed to implement the job successfully (Heraty and Morley, 1998). Estate sector, has the noteworthy aspect of the recruitment and selection focusing on the tea field's experiences and abilities of the teapluckers (Sivaram, 2000). Very often, the priority is given to the young women teapluckers. The management receives a large number of applications and supervisors and the volume often astounds other managers. However, it is normally reduced to a manageable number of qualified candidates rather than having a bulk of unsuitable pluckers in the fields.

Recruitment processes attempt to arrange for a competent group of pluckers for the selectors to choose (El-Kot and Leat, 2008; Carless, 2007; Anderson, 2003). In order to have effective recruiting it is necessary to recognize from where and how suitable individuals could be obtained to the estates. Naming individuals with the requirements of the estates, on personal relationships and recommendations by the experienced members in the field, are the main sources of recruiting. Based on the recommendations of the supervisors and the quality of the estates' work, the method of observing the work takes place. Present teapluckers are aware of the method of plucking and work for the estates to obtain the maximum harvest from the fields. Although board notices and internal memos are not published, some organizations practice computerized job-posting systems enabling workers to find information from the managements of the estates. It necessitates workers' applications and resumes filled by the officers of the estates, to fulfill requirements. A reasonable quantity of suitable candidates are available for the vacancy, if the recruitment process is successful, while the next assignment would be the selection of the most appropriate individuals from this group (El-Jardali et al., 2009).

Through selection process, individuals who have required qualifications are chosen to fill an existing or projected job opening. The best candidate or candidates for jobs are identified from a group of qualified candidates listed by recruiting process which is known as selection (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2007; Chew, 2004). In general, these two processes are similar to other plantation industry practice than other organizations. Information in relation to group of qualified plucking persons are gathered and skills of each teaplucker are evaluated during recruiting process to make decisions appropriately for employment as teaplucker of the estate.

Training and Development

Warnakulasuriya (2017) states that the influx of the twenty-first century marks a vital landmark for Sri Lankan scholars, practitioners and specialists to create the future of training and development in tea smallholdings. A distinctive area of worker training can be identified as communication which is essential for the growing diversity of today's employees that includes a comprehensive assortment of skills and talents that are required for doing estate works. Altarawneh (2009) also is of the view that training and development can be regarded as the most important device or sub-system of human relation growth as it tend to enhance, increase and modify the capabilities, competencies and knowledge of teapluckers and managers allowing to perform their duties in a more inventive and effective ways. These practices also lead to enhancing individual and estate productivity.

Since training and development have critical and dynamic contribution in increasing job and estate productivity, Altarawneh (2009) and Mann (1996) inquires that on providing continuous investment for training and development programs, whether such strategies are sufficiently effective to give a positive impact on industry competitiveness in Sri Lanka. This query comes up in many countries, and specially in Sri Lanka, as the time spent on training and development is regarded as a waste and an pointless process in the estates (Sivaram, 2000). This study offers few benchmarks in contrast, to which the usefulness of a training program can be assessed. On determining the training needs the objectives of training are fixed and training programs are developed along with the appropriate training method, either on-the-job or outside (Robertson, 2002). Thereafter the individuals are selected for the training. The training process requires administration of selecting the training location, the facilities, accessibility, comforts, equipment and timing (Deery, 2008). Finally, evaluation of the training need to be done at different stages during the process and employees too required to be assessed by matching their newly developed skills with the skills demarcated within the objectives of the training program (Altarawneh, 2009).

Performance Appraisal

At present, many establishments show an interest on employees' productivity and performance to survive and sustain competitive nature following technological trends and innovative improvements. Although, performance appraisal has an important part in human resource, it still has system failures (Wright, 2002). However, the performance appraisal system and performance management evaluation continue to be crucial areas in the field of human resource (Abu-Doleh and Weir, 2007). In Sri Lanka, the performance appraisal system has not been acknowledged as a priority and is not fully valued. Further, Sri Lankan estate management continue to show disapproval and undesirable approaches towards this practice. However,

performance appraisal sustains as a complex part of research under human resource practice, and is demarcated as the most extensive area of research in the history of management (Prowse and Prowse, 2009; Grubb, 2007). This important practice is identified as an assessment procedure done intermittently to evaluate employee performance and output.

Decisions on Employee's work conditions (rewards, promotions and termination), can be done based on performance appraisal while it can also be used to counsel employees for efficient work standards and to recognize training and development requirements. Abu-Doleh and Weir (2007) states that the performance appraisal practice is conducted once a year in most Sri Lankan institutes, and the manager is basically responsible for guiding and carrying out the assessment scheme. It is also evident that the performance appraisal system in the Sri Lankan private sector displays a higher and important influence on promotions, retaining, lay-offs and ascertaining employee's training needs in comparison with the public sector. The performance appraisal system in the Sri Lankan tea smallholding requires a more effective research emphasis in addition to enforcing suitable performance assessment than done by the managers in the present.

Rewards and Benefits

The workplace relations in tea business have the cultural and social biases where individuals are trained to treat their supervisors, managers or leaders, with respect, showing loyalty and obligation irrespective of their actual emotions. Employment regulations and rules have been issued in writing by the government, valid to the estate sector too. All employment features and matters from the employment contract up to reward, EPF, ETF and other benefits are stated in these regulations except pension practices. The government in the Sri Lankan context, adopts and controls the minimum levels of wages and salaries for all categories of employees (Al-Husan and James, 2003). The worker's experience, age and position are normally considered in the reward system. The majority of workers are eligible for bonuses and incentives, based on their position, age and type of work in addition to the basic salary. Although the modern economic reforms have introduced international and foreign investment that resulted in new methods of paying and rewarding (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2006), the fundamental cultural issues continue to be effective. In an attempt to create association between the Sri Lankan salary system, international standards and an employee's contributions, the reward system is linked with worker's productivity and performance. Furthermore, with a view to recruit and motivate skilled workers and to preserve the knowledge of gifted teapluckers, other different rewards have been introduced (Al-Husan and James, 2003; Al-Faleh, 1987). Recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal and rewards and benefits are human resource practices that influence the productivity of the estate (Al-Husan et al, 2009). It is the view that majority of the line supervisors and managers cannot be fully responsible, as they do not possess the skills and confidence to handle these tasks.

III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A fair number of small tea holdings bearing unique characteristics of different tea varieties are found in the southern province of Sri Lanka, which are maintained based on their specific methods (Weir & Abu-Doleh, 1997). Five tea small holding estates from the area were selected for this study. The individual teapluckers served as the units of analysis and a sample of teapluckers were selected to obtain the required information. This research aims to examine the effect of human resource practices on the factors mentioned above in an attempt to fill the existing knowledge gap (Huselid, 1995).

The literature reviews of the study indicated the relationship between human resource practices and the labor productivity. Based on the information, the conceptual framework is design. The conceptual framework of the study present in the figure 6 as follows.

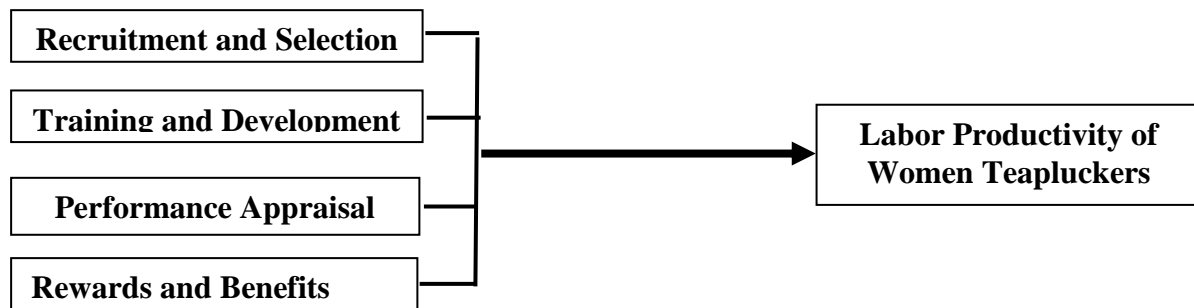


Figure 6: Conceptual Framework

Given this discussion, the following hypotheses was proposed.

H1: There is a statistical positive significant relationship between Recruitment and Selection and the Labor Productivity of women teapluckers at Pitigala area in Southern Province, Sri Lanka.

H2: There is a statistical positive significant relationship between Training and Development and the Labor Productivity of women teapluckers at Pitigala area in Southern Province, Sri Lanka.

H3: There is a statistical positive significant relationship between Performance Appraisal and the Labor Productivity of women teapluckers at Pitigala area in Southern Province, Sri Lanka.

H4: There is a statistical positive significant relationship between Rewards and benefits and the Labor Productivity of women teapluckers at Pitigala area in Southern Province, Sri Lanka.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Both primary and secondary data were collected for this study. Primary data were collected by a survey using a detailed questionnaire, unstructured interviews held with officials and field observations. This research study aims to investigate the relationship between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable. Hence, the bivariate analysis was carried out to assess whether there is any relationship between the labor productivity and the human resource practices. The statistical techniques of Correlation Analysis was used in the analysis.

Pairs of Variables with Correlation Analysis

The magnitude and the direction of the relationship between two variables were measured by correlation analysis (Fieldman, 2007). The correlation analysis finds the degree of relationship among the variables (Lew. 2010). The correlation coefficient, shown by “r” (between -1 and +1) expresses the amount of the closeness of the relationship between the two variables. A high correlation between two variables does not show any mulico-relational relationship Therefore, the correlation analysis intends to gauge the extent and the direction of the association between two of variables. The Correlation analysis was done to investigate relationship between human resource practices and labor productivity using the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation with two-tailed test of significance.

Correlation between recruitment and selection factor and Labor Productivity

The results of the Pearson’s correlation indicates that, there exists a positive significant relationship between these two variables. The correlations are in sequence, which indicates that it supports the fact that the parameters and the output measured are satisfactory. It shows in table 6 below.

Table 6: Correlation between Recruitment and Selection and Labor Productivity

Pearson Correlation	0.743
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation between the variables is expressed to be 0.743, which is positive. It indicates a positive relationship is present between recruitment and selection factor and Labour Productivity. The correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed) and it shows that the observed relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, statistical evidence exists to confirm that recruitment and selection factor has a positive relationship with Labour Productivity. Literature highlights that several research are compatible with this finding (Lew, 2010).

Correlation between Training and Development and Labor Productivity

The results of the Pearson's correlation shows that, Training and development Factors have a positive significant relationship with Labor Productivity. This shows in the table 7 as follows.

Table 7: Correlation between Training and Development and Labor Productivity

Pearson Correlation	0.777
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The two variables indicate a Pearson correlation of 0.777, which is positive. This shows that Training and development Factors have a positive relationship with Labor Productivity. Further, as correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed) the relationship is statistically significant. Thus, statistical evidence exists to prove that Training and development Factors have a positive relationship with Labor Productivity (Samaraweera, 2013; Schneider, 2000).

Correlation between Performance appraisal and Labor Productivity

A negative significant relationship is shown between Performance Appraisal factors and Labor Productivity as per the results of the Pearson's correlation. The point that the correlations are inline strengthens the finding that the parameters and the output measured are not satisfactory. It is shown in table 8 below.

Table 8: Correlation between Performance Appraisal and Labor Productivity

Pearson Correlation	-0.504
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation between the two variables is shown as 0.504, which is negative. This indicates a negative relationship between Performance Appraisal factors and Labour Productivity. Since the correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed), the observed relationship is statistically significant. Hence, there is statistical evidence to confirm that Performance Appraisal factors have a negative relationship with Labour Productivity. Literature too provides some research that is in agreement with this finding (Fieldman, 2010).

Correlation between Rewards and Benefits and Labor Productivity

The results of the Pearson's correlation shows that Rewards and Compensation Factors have a positive significant relationship with Labor Productivity. This is shown in the table 9 as follows.

Table 9: Correlation between Rewards and Benefits and Labor Productivity

Pearson Correlation	0.692
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation between the two variables is shown as 0.692, which is positive. Therefore, Rewards and Compensation factors have a positive relationship with Labour productivity. Further, this relationship is statistically significant since correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed). Hence, statistical evidence

proves Rewards and Compensation factors are positively related with Labor Productivity (Samaraweera, 2013; Schneider, 2000).

Hypotheses Testing

The results of Pearson's Product Movement Correlation analysis were used for the hypotheses testing. Four hypotheses were considered for the relationship and two – tailed test was conducted for the correlation analysis. The results showed that three hypotheses designate statistical positive relationships with the labor productivity of women teapluckers while performance appraisal has indicated -0.504 value of negative average link with the labor productivity. These results reveal that the existing recruitment and selection process, Training and development and rewards and benefits factors of the women teapluckers in the relevant area has a good relationship with the labor productivity of the tea small holding showing higher than 0.6 value of association.

A study discussed the human resource practices with the context of Sri Lanka, finds that many estate workers are dissatisfied because of a lack of job security at the estates, less than fair treatment than other job categories and because the estate does not value and pay attention to workers suggestions and grievances (Sivaram. 2000). Moreover, the tea small holding still needs more research and development on the cultural issues that arise between human resource practices and the labor productivity (Shallal, 2011). In Sri Lankan tea industry especially in the small holdings the employee recruitment and selection process is largely inadequate and needs effective attention if it is to enhance and support the competitive advantage of the estates, it represents (Altarawneh, 2009;). This is reflected by the job analysis process and resulting job descriptions being often carried out and produced, but never referred to in the recruitment and selection process. Indeed, most teapluckers are not even aware of, or even ask about, their job descriptions. This is because it seems that the job description is produced simply as a part of the personnel administration process, that is, for bureaucratic and routine procedures (Budhwar and Mellahi, 2006).

A growing body of work argues for the implementation of inclusive work practices, which can improve the skills, abilities and knowledge of an organization's present and potential employees. Such practices also promote high levels of performance and can be applied to all aspects of human resource, such as employee recruitment and selection, training and development and performance appraisal and compensation (Edgar & Geare, 2005). Further, solid human resource practices increase estate workers' motivation, enhance their commitment and satisfaction, reduce staff shrinkage and increase retention of talented personnel, whilst encouraging non-performers to leave the organization (Petrescu & Simmons, 2008; Mosadeghrad et al., 2008)

Conclusion and Recommendation

Bivariate analysis was conducted for this study to find out whether there is any relationship between human resource practices and Labor productivity of women teapluckers in the tea small holding at Pitigala area in Southern province in Sri Lanka.

The study identified the research problem as whether there is the relationship among human resource practices and the Labor Productivity of teapluckers of tea industry in Sri Lanka. Conceptual framework was developed to test the relationship of Labor Productivity with the specified independent variables on the available theoretical information. The findings revealed that except Performance Appraisal, other three independent variables have positive relationship with Labor Productivity of the teapluckers of the tea industry in Sri Lanka. If more research is conducted on the tea industry with reference to the relationship between Labor Productivity and available attractive job opportunities, it could minimize the gap in theoretical knowledge prevalent within the industry. Likewise, studies on the relationship between Labor Productivity with recruitment and selection, training and development and rewards and compensation would also be vital to the women teapluckers in the tea smallholding at Pitigala area in Southern province in Sri Lanka.

The findings of this research study play a vital role in the theoretical as well as practical arena in order to improve labor productivity of teapluckers of this industry. These could lead to enhance the labor productivity of the teapluckers of the Tea industry to greater extent if the relevant programs are implemented successfully. These aspects could be taken into consideration by the tea industry in order to

improve the labor productivity of the teapluckers to obtain their maximum contribution to accomplish the industry objectives, Attractive job opportunities within the industry are required for uplifting the living standards of the labor force. It is also timely to focus on the global requirements considering the rapid changes of market needs, while supporting research based on new technology. Another essential need of the teapluckers in the estates is to create job satisfaction and professionalism in the tea industry by introducing new technologies in harvesting green leaves in a more qualitative manner. It is clear that the new trends of the teapluckers can be initiated by the necessary training and development in addition to using semi automation during the process to uplift the overall productivity. These recommendations relate to the human resource practices enabling to enhance the labor productivity from the current low levels exhibited in the tea industry.

Future Implication

Further, research studies are suggested to carryout to examine the relationship between these factors and Labor Productivity of teapluckers in tea industry in Sri Lanka. In the context of researching the relationship between these two constructs, essentiality future researchers may have to encounter serious difficulties in measuring the variables, as there is no qualitatively measurement instruments correctly developed.

This research contributes to the specific audience in numerous ways. It authenticates the formation of human resource practices in specific areas of tea estates in Sri Lanka and it improves the acknowledgement of human resource practices of women teapluckres in the tea small holding sector and suggests that this is a prevailing issue at present. The findings and recommendations of this can be used by government authorities at both national and regional levels, the regional plantation companies and the smallholders as well as their organizations for increasing competitiveness and progress in the tea smallholdings sector in Sri Lanka.

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