

Amrita B school faculty's case study on Aravind Eye Care published by SHRM

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The Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) in India has recently published a case study on unique HR practices followed at Aravind Eye Care Systems (AECS). The case study has been authored by Dr. Rani G. Priyadarshini, Associate Professor (OB and HR) at the Amrita School of Business, Coimbatore.

The organization follows unique HR practices. It trains mid-level ophthalmic personnel, mostly women from villages, who are trained in a two-year course. These women never had the chance to go to college, now they get the opportunity to enter the work stream as mid-tier technicians.

“The HR policies practiced here have been AECS’s trump card,” affirmed Dr. Priyadarshini.

“Integration of facilities and support systems ensure that a surgeon here can perform 2,000 surgeries per year against the global average of around 500,” she noted. “Surgeons perform six to eight operations per hour on an assembly line basis with the support of internally-trained mid-level ophthalmic personnel.”

“AECS has well-evolved in-house training operations. Currently, it runs programs to develop ophthalmologists, paramedics, eye care managers and support service personnel. It was accredited to offer diplomas in ophthalmology in 1982, and subsequently recognized to offer MS in ophthalmology in 1986. Since 1988, it has also been offering fellowship programs in various disciplines of eye care,” she added.

Dr. Priyadarshini further stated, “While structured training programs have kept up a steady supply of new personnel, continuous education has helped existing workers widen their skills. There is a low rate of attrition. Not only that, there is a sizeable waiting list of applicants.”

“AECS recruits without commercial media advertisements. It advertises its personnel needs through announcements during camps and referrals through employees. Currently, 338 medical officers and consultants, 1,313 mid-level ophthalmic personnel and 496 administrative staff are on AECS’s rolls.”

Dr. Priyadarshini added, “On joining the work stream, each employee quickly realizes the importance of the founder’s values. This breeds a spirit of involvement and accountability. It goes a long way toward building up a fierce brand loyalty. Effective compensation systems and welfare measures back up the high moral ground and help retain employees. Overall, it is clear that the hospital’s self-sustaining and organic HR template draws and retains the best medical talent.”

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