International Journal of Applied Research

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Study on role of technology in Human Resources management

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Abstract
In nowadays top leaders fully realize the power of technology tools for reaching business targets. The utilization of technological tools helps not only to fulfill defined company's goals but to optimize the work processes as well. Trends and results of the contemporary studies constantly confirm contribution of the technological tools in Human Resources (HR) area i.e. to accomplish assigned HR tasks by using the source of technological capabilities. The following paper gives a brief overview about possibilities of technological usage in HR field for measuring and tracking human capital and using the HR technological system generally.

Keywords: Information technology, Human Resources management, company's goals, recruiting, Human Resources development

1. Introduction

There is no underestimation of importance and effect of the Human Resources management at all. Lately, management of Human Resources and its needs are becoming the center of the attention of each individual employer in every organization. The orientation of company on human resources starts to be one of the key tasks of a strategic management and Human Resources play an important role in all strategic decisions. Managers of Human Resources ask for more strategic position of their department within the organization with the aim to get to the essence of the problem how to manage, to motivate and to increase the performance of organization. The importance of human potential for company increases proportionally with the speed of changes which appear in the business area because human capital represents a basic qualitative parameter of fruitfulness of any changes. Following that, Human Resources Management (HRM) must aim at achieving the competitiveness of the company in the field of HR by means of providing constant educational and training programs for personal development of employees.

It has been scientology proven that one of the supporting pillars which can contribute to the fulfillment of the personal policy is the usage of IT technologies in HR. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) - a catchall term for techniques associated with mobile communication, internet, new media and PCs - allow companies to improve their internal processes, core competencies, organizational structures as well as relevant markets on a global scale. ICT is spreading throughout every sector of the economy and has implications for almost every enterprise (Helfen and Krüger, 2002).

Human resource processes should be focused on the strategic objectives. These strategies are led to prepare an IT strategic plan that in turn translates into an appropriate human resource strategic plan in the field of IT as the Figure depicts (Sameni and Khoshalhan, 2006).

The Framework of It Human Resources Plan
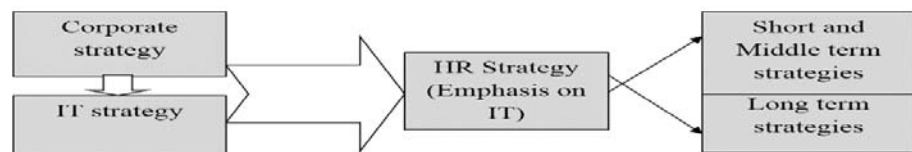
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Objectives of the Study

Experts opinion that one of the biggest impacts of technology on human resource management comes from the way in which technology alters industries and lifestyles. Keeping this view in mind an attempt is made to answer to the following questions.

➢ How technology is changing the HRM practices?
➢ How technology is changing the skill requirements of employees?
➢ What are the positive and negative impacts of changing the technology on employees as well as organizations?

Methodology of the Study

This paper has been prepared on the basis of available published articles, journals, books, internet, magazines, seminar papers on technology and HRM practices in various organizations all over the world.

Role of Technology in Changing the HRM Practices

Technology has changed the business world many times over. In the Information Age, the advent of computers and the Internet has increased that impact significantly. Many businesses cannot even function without the use of computer technology. This impact is seen in nearly all areas of business, including human resources, where technology continues to have a significant impact on HR practices.

Recruiting

One way in which human resources has been significantly impacted by technology is in the area of recruiting. Before the Internet, HR recruiters had to rely on print publications, such as newspapers, to post jobs and get prospects for open positions. Other methods such as networking also were used, but HR recruiters did not have the ability to post a job in one or more locations and have millions of people see it all at once. Technology has made recruiting more efficient and, in the hands of the right recruiter, more effective as well.

Training

Information technology makes it possible for human resources professionals to train new staff members in a more efficient manner as well. The ability to access company information and training programs from remote locations eliminates the need for trainers to work directly with new hires on all training. Some interaction will always be necessary on some level, of course, but training in virtual classrooms makes it possible for the HR professionals to train a large number of employees quickly and to assess their progress through computerized testing programs.

Data Storage and Retrieval

Human resources professionals generally process a considerable amount of paperwork and also have to keep much of that paperwork on file for a considerable period of time. The use of electronic imaging has made it possible for companies to store and retrieve files in an electronic format. Technology also makes it possible for human resources professionals to simply print the forms that are needed for employees. Printing on demand eliminates the need to dig through an endless number of files in the file cabinet to find what is needed.

Performance Management

Enhanced performance management is another by product of technological improvement. Human resources professionals can use computer technology to assess employee performance and also to get employee feedback to be used for the betterment of the organization. Various software programs make it possible for human resources professionals to examine employee performance using metrics to ensure that employees are meeting performance standards. Employees that don't measure up can be subjected to additional training or let go in favour a replacement who can come in and do the job.

Ethics and Employee Rights

Electronic surveillance of employees by employers is an issue that pits an organization's desire for control against an employee's right to privacy.

The development of increasingly sophisticated surveillance software only adds to the ethical dilemma of how far an organization should go in monitoring the behavior of employees who do their work on computers. For instance, the web activity of every one of Xerox's 92,000 employees-in countries around the world is routinely monitored by the company. In October 2006, Xerox fired 40 of its employees because they were caught in the act of surfing to forbidden web sites. The company's monitoring software recorded the unauthorized visits to shopping and pornography sites, and every minute they had spent at those sites

Motivating Knowledge Workers

Are there unique challenges to motivating knowledge workers in Bangladesh? The answer appears to be "yes". Knowledge workers appear to be more susceptible to distractions that can undermine their effort and reduce their productivity. And with access to the Internet, some of these workers play online games, trader stocks, shop, and search for another job. The average U.S. employee with Net access is spending 90 minutes each day visiting sites unrelated to his or her job. Recent estimates t indicate that 30 to 40 percent of lost worker productivity is due solely to cyber-loafing and this cyber- loafing is costing U.S. employers alone $ 54 billion a year. Ironically, it's these same workers, who often have skills which make them very marketable, and many realize their employers' dependence on these skills. As a result human resource managers are facing an unusual dilemma.

Paying Employees Market Value

It's becoming more difficult today for organizations to find and keep technical and professional employees. So many have implemented an extensive list of attractive incentives and benefits rarely seen by non-managerial employees in typical organizations: for instance, signing bonuses, stock options, cars, free health-club memberships, full-time onsite concierges, and cell phone bill subsidies. These incentives may benefit their recipients but there are downsides. One is the effect these rewards have one others who don't get them. The other is the increasing problem created by stock options. Specifically, while they look very good when a firm is growing and the stock market looks favourably on the company's future, stock options can de-motivate employees when condition turn negative.

Communications

The rules of communication are being rewritten. Because these rules are designed around comprehensive, integrated

information networks, communication is no longer constrained. Employees can communicate instantly anytime, with anyone, anywhere. At the Ford Motor Company, for instance, all of its 400,000 employees were given a home computer and Internet access for $ 5 a month. This will allow Ford Management to keep in close touch with its employees, and allow employees to easily communicate with each other and readily access company information and service.

These open communication systems break down historical organizational communication pattern flows. They also redefine how activities such as meetings, negotiations, supervision, and water-cooler talk are conducted. For instance, virtual meetings allow people in geographically dispersed locations to meet regularly. Moreover, it's now easier for employees in Charlotte and Singapore to covertly share company gossip than for those offline employees who work two cubicles apart. And employees in a number of industries even have web sites that are becoming electronic grapevines.

A Legal Concern

Organizations that use technology – especially the Internet and electronic mail-must address the potential for harassment, bias, discrimination, and offensive sexual behavior from Internet and e-mail abuses. There is increasing evidence that many employees fail to use the same constraints in electronic communications that they use in traditional work settings.

As one individual noted, human resource managers "all know that they can't hang up a Penthouse calendar in the workplace. They all know that they can't make a racist or sexist joke in the workplace. But those same people may think it's acceptable to send racist and sexist jokes via e-mail or download pornography at work. HRM must have policy that defines inappropriate electronic communications, reserves the right to monitor employee Internet and e-mail usage, and specifies disciplinary actions for violations.

Work-Life Balance

An increasing number of employees are putting in 12 hour-days, plus working 6 and 7 days a week. Many of today's dynamic organizations appear to be at the forefront of the trend toward workplace cultures. These organizations are increasingly expecting people to work 60 to 70 hours a week. Add in the ability of technology to blur the lines separating work and home plus the dramatic increase in two-career couples, and you have the ingredients for a potential crisis. People are increasingly finding that work is squeezing out personal lives. And many are questioning this lifestyle. Balancing work life and personal life is likely to become one of the most important upcoming issues for HRM.

IT Tools Usage In Some HR Field In %
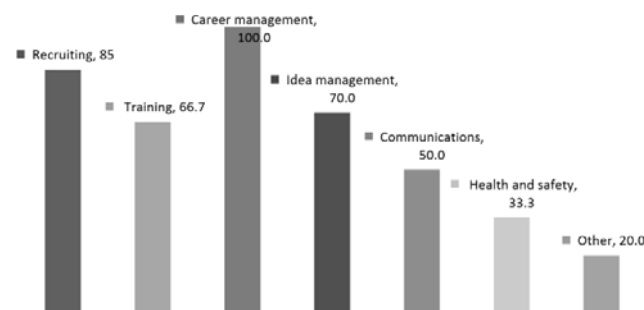
Role of Technology in Human Resource Management

Technology in Human Resource (HR) management is another application of companies using hardware and software to aid human activities. Companies use all types of technology in human resource management. A few different roles for the technology can be hiring and selecting employees for interviews, managing employee paperwork or benefits, and securing sensitive employee files. Many different types of hardware or software are available for this purpose. Companies can either use an external software package or create their own, depending on their needs.

Many companies now use Internet-based employee applications or other technology in human resource management for finding new employees. A significant benefit for online applications is the existence of knockout questions. These questions prevent unqualified individuals from making it too far through the employee application process. For example, if a company desires a certain level of education, an answer about earned college degrees may appear on employee applications. Those who answer "no" to the question will not be included on the list of potential interviews for a company's open job position.

Employee paperwork for new and existing hires is often a time-consuming process. Technology in human resource management allows a company to find new ways of handling paperwork relating to employee hires and benefits. For example, all new hires may need to fill out paperwork for medical, dental, retirement, or other benefits. The use of an online enrollment system is common and beneficial. A company can create an intranet that all employees can access in order to fill out documents, review current benefits, or handle other tasks related to specific benefits.

Companies must have secure environments for storing employee documents. While all companies typically have specific storage rooms devoted to this purpose, technology in human resource management can also be beneficial. Here, encrypted spreadsheets or other software packages allow companies to restrict access to payroll or other sensitive documents. The use of outside payroll services may result in a company using an external website for transferring sensitive documents. Technology often helps a company prevent theft from payroll documents through comprised transfer methods.

Technology in human resource methods is not without its drawbacks. Moving traditional activities from a manual to technological process can be time-consuming and expensive. Additionally, the potential for hardware or software to fail is also a problem that a company may need to consider. Being prepared for all technological issues is a must as failure to properly handle employee data can result in heavy fines or penalties.

Today the world is globalizing. In the globalize world, technology is creating a situation where human resource management must begin to search for mobile and skilled employees capable of successfully performing their duties in a foreign land.

The technology of cars and airplanes modified the transportation industry. Automobile and aviation companies grew, creating a demand for more employees and training. Railroad companies were affected by the same technology. HR departments in these companies had to reduce the workforce and create early retirement systems.

The introduction of computers into banks changed employment needs. Before computers, HR specialists

recruited large numbers of unskilled and semiskilled employees. Computers, however, required highly skilled programmers and systems analysts. Robot is a more common and sophisticated technology and it affects organizational productivity and the quality of work life for employees. The good news is that hazardous and boring jobs have been taken over by robots. Dangerous jobs- such as working with toxic chemicals and paints have changed by substituting robots for people. Similarly, highly repetitive assembly tasks increasingly have been taken over by robots during the late 1990s. Productivity and quality are likely to improve, but the huge costs are involved with the robots.

The Impact of Information Technology on the HR Function Transformation

Information technology is expected to improve the performance of Human Resource Management (HRM) by shifting its focus from administration or personnel management to strategic HRM. The strategic role of HRM is supposed to add value to the HR function, and leads the essence of HR function to transform. This study examines HR function, HR function transformation and Human Resource Information Technology (HRIT), by investigating the role of HRIT playing in HR function transformation process, and the interrelationship between them. The research consists two parts: a theoretical review and a meta-analysis of empirical data. For both parts, all the research data comes from peer-review academic papers, and 43 of them are used. In the theoretical chapter, HR function, HR function transformation and HRIT are conceptualized. Firstly, the HR professional is moving from operational level to strategic and managerial levels. Line managers have taken an important part of HR function. Secondly, HR function transformation is a business process that changes the HR tasks and expands the involvement of actors in HR function, and that makes HRM concentrate more on strategic, value-creating activities for the long-term business objective. Thirdly, HRIT is supporting and forcing the traditional HR function to transform, and changes the way of management. However, HR professionals need to pay attention to deal with the drawbacks brought by HRIT, which might leads negative effect on both social interaction and information accuracy. In the second part, the analysis of empirical evidence provides insight into the practice role of HRIT in HR transformation. The empirical evidence shows that the devolution and decentralization of HR function is leading to role dissonance between HR professionals and line managers, and the HR professionals do not always focus on strategic issue but still put attention to daily managerial and operational tasks. On the other hand, the HRIT is considered as indispensable parts on supporting HR function transformation. It is because HRIT provides the platform and opportunity for HR function transformation and shifts the traditional HR function to technology-based new function.

Negative Impacts on Employees and Organizations in Changing the Technology

➢ Due to the technological changes job opportunities may shrink so that a large number of employees become unemployed.
➢ Lack of ample knowledge about modern technology the employees can't enter into the job which job he/she is desired.
➢ In underdeveloped and developing countries organizations sometimes can't Recruit the required number of technical knowledge oriented employees to perform their organizational activities.

Conclusion
From the above discussion, it is clear that technology has had a positive effect on the internal operations of organizations. But it has also changed the way of human resource manager's work. They work in, and provide support in what have become integrative communication centers. By linking computers, telephones, fax machines, copiers, printers, robots and the like, information can be disseminated quickly. With that information, human resource plans can be better facilitated, decisions can be made faster, jobs may be more clearly defined, and communications with both the external community and employees can be enhanced.

Today the world is free. In the free world, sophisticated technologies are frequently creating and involving with the existing technology. This sophisticated technology places new requirements on human resource managers. For instance, human resource managers must ensure that employees could be able to handle these technologies with more effectively and efficiently. In order for human resource to meet these goals, they must carefully recruiting and selecting employees and train themselves in order to operate these sophisticated technologies. Side by side employees should enhance their technological knowledge in order to get the job in the highly sophisticated technology dependent world.

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