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MANAGING ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH E-HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TOOL-E-LEARNING: INDIAN CASES A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract

This study has explored the concept of electronic human resource management (e-HRM) and its application especially focuses on electronic learning (e-learning) supported by the qualitative explanation. The data was collected from three organizations (banking industry, garment industry and educational institute) of India through interview approach and prepare the multiple case studies for examination the purpose of the study. E-HRM leads to increase in the efficiency and productivity of the employees which facilitated by e- learning process. Through the e-learning, employees are affianced in an assortment of activities such as rummage around any information, interact with facilitators or other learners and involve in online and interactive sessions etc., and hence augment their learning and performance of organization. Simulation and interactive learning is decidedly indispensable and valuable in generating the knowledge, skills and attitude of employees. This study provides the future direction to the researchers for

exploring this concept empirically. Further longitudinal study is also require to examine the difference between work attitude of generation X and generation Y towards e-HRM.

Keywords

E-learning, E-human Resource Management, Interview Approach, Multiple Case Studies, India

1. Introduction

“E-HRM is the planning, implementation and application of information systems for both networking and supporting actors in their shared performance of HR activities”-Strohmeier, 2007.

Human resource management (HRM) means to manage the human resources or to focus on planning, schemes and policies of employees for improving their productivity at individual level and organizational level (Masum, Azad, & Beh, 2016; Quillien & Olila, 1992). HRM department is mainly involved in activities such as recruitment, training and development, performance evaluation, compensation benefits, and giving rewards, etc., to employees in an organization (Krishnan, Liew, Yee, 2016). In this era of information technology, organizations are showing keen interest in adopting e-HRM, where technology and HRM practices are integrated for providing employees the opportunity of availing more self-service (Al Shobaki, Naser, Amuna, & El Talla, 2017; Strohmeier, 2007). E-HRM means using web-based technologies in organizations to automate and support services related to HRM such as e-recruitment, e-training, and e-selection, etc. It is facilitated by HR managers to arrange and plan all the activities related to employees with the help of e-HRM software which is sometimes outsourced by the organization. The employees mainly used the e-learning implementation as a means of availing self-service by assessing their appraisal, learning, personal developments, promotions and gathering information about the HR policies of any organization as well as applying for new jobs.

In this 21st century, technology has become an inherent part of our life and various companies have simplified their routine tasks with the help of computer and internet. E-HRM is used by various corporate organizations, educational institutes, and banking industry, etc., for improving the quality and performance of employees as well as for reducing the administrative burdens over them. Organization utilized the e-HRM application through the assimilation of technology with HR practices ((Parry, 2011). The main objectives of e-HRM are maintaining employee related information, providing information about the organizations' policies and their

jobs at reasonable cost, assisting in the plan of future promotional policies, and maintaining the security of data and personal privacy and all these effectively managed by e-learning (Buckley, Minette, Joy, & Michaels, 2004).

1.1 Objective of study

This study has explored the concept of e-HRM and its application especially focuses on e-learning supported by the qualitative explanation. Thus, this paper has emphasized on the utilization of e-HRM and its application through e-learning with the help of three organizations taken from India.

2. Literature Review

The term e-HRM was appearing in late 1990's when "e-commerce" introduced in the business environment (Olivas-Lujan, Ramirez, & Zapata-Cantu, 2007). In the previous literature, the interchangeable terms have been used such as business to employee (B2E) and "Virtual HR". Wyatt (2002) has surveyed the 649 US organizations and explained the B2E as ". . . the application of any technology enabling managers and employees to have direct access to HR and other workplace services for communication, performance, reporting, team management, knowledge management and learning in addition to administrative applications".

Due to information and communication technology, HRM have change completely, infuses with technology, and take the shape of e-HRM. The applications of e-HRM have brought the tremendous revolution in HRM department globally (Bondarouk & Ruël, 2009). Because of this e-HRM practices, HR professional have facilitate the work in organizations more efficiently and strategically (Gardner, Lepak, & Bartol, 2003; Shrivastava & Shaw, 2003). Now days the most essential tool to entering the digital world is e-learning. E-learning consulting defined this concept as "e-learning is the use of technology to enable people to learn anytime and anywhere. It can include training, the delivery of just-in-time information and guidance from experts". Through the e-learning, the employees feel comfortable to get any information and knowledge of various tools related to e-HRM. The previous literatures emphasized on the importance of e-HRM and e-learning in the organizations have been presented in the Table 1.

Table1: *Viewpoint of different authors*

Authors and year	Contribution remarks
E-HRM	
Marler & Fisher, 2013	In this paper, integrative synthesis used by reviewing 40 studies published

Authors and year	Contribution remarks
	from 1999 to 2011. The authors have examined that strategic HRM predicts e-HRM and research in this field especially empirical studies required more study at macro level.
Parry & Tyson, 2011	The results emphasized that e-HRM is essential to increase efficiency, service delivery, standardization and organisational image, to empower managers and transform the HR functions strategically. The transformation of HR to e-HRM is possible because of HR dealing with lots of information related to organisation and consumes more time.
Strohmeier & Kabst, 2009	They have conducted the study in Europe on 2,336 organizations in twenty three European countries. By using logistic regression, found that two-third of all organizations has implemented the applications of e-HRM and its general determinants are size, work organization, and configuration of HRM.
Strohmeier, 2007; Cedar, 2004	They have explained that development and coordination of technology with HRM provide the more strategic role rather than an administrative one.
Clark, 2006	“e-HRM has meanwhile become a common organisational practice”
Strohmeier, 2006	He has elaborated the concept of e-HRM by explaining that implementation of technology in HRM produced the various results which effects their efficiency, effectiveness, strategic goals, planning, centralized, and decentralized functions etc.
Stone & Gueutal, 2005; Olivas-Luján, 2003	The applications of information and communication technology have transformed the HR functions in advance manner such as e-learning, e-performance management, e-planning, e-training, and e-compensation management etc.
Gardner et al., 2003	The researchers found that through survey that “HR professionals spent less time on routine tasks but had to spend additional time on information technology related activities and on developing information technology related qualifications “.
Lengnick-Hall & Moritz, 2003	The anticipation of HR departments in different organizations towards e-HRM are “be liberated from administrative shackles and able to focus more on developing intellectual capital, social capital, and managing knowledge to

Authors and year	Contribution remarks
	improve an organization's competitive advantage"
E-learning	
Agrawal, Agrawal, & Agarwal, 2016	This study surveyed the 298 students of four universities of India with the help of exploratory factor analysis and revealed that instructor's perspective, learner's perspective, information quality, service quality, supportive factors and system quality are essential for effective e-learning process.
Wu, Tennyson, & Hsia, 2010	This study collected the data from 212 participants through questionnaire and with the help of confirmatory factor analysis and partial least square method, the authors analyzed that computer self efficacy, content feature, interaction, learning environment, performance expectations and system functionality are the essential factors of blended e-learning which affected the satisfaction level of participants.
Sun, Tsai, Finger, Chen, & Yeh, 2008	This study explained the satisfaction of learners' affected by courses, design, environment, instructors, learners, and technology. The result emphasized on the way of organizations strategy to strengthen the e-learning applications and it also depends on attitude of instructor, course flexibility and course quality, perceived usefulness and ease of use, computer anxiety of learners and diversity in different activities.
Yang, 2003; Yang & Liu, 2007	E-learning encourages the concept of collaborative learning because of convenience and flexibility approach and also eliminates the geographical and cultural barriers during imparting the information to various learners. But it suffers from some limitations like absence of social interaction, high maintenance cost for the system as well as for preparing multimedia content materials.
Maki, Maki, Patterson, & Whittaker, 2000	The revealed that due to lack of interaction, students sometimes experiences the feelings of confusion and frustration due to this, they loosening their interest towards the topic.
Cantoni, Cellario, & Porta, 2004	Study shows that for the encouragement of e-learning, proper support of internet connectivity and digital technology are required.
Stalling, 2002	The previous studies elucidated the importance of e-learning at global level particularly in the education sector.

On the above discussion, it raises a research question of this study is:

RQ: Does the e-learning, tool of e-HRM will increase the effectiveness of the employees and organization?

3. Methodology

3.1 Data collection

The data was collected from the three organizations¹—one is a bank, second is an educational institute and last is a garment industry—from October, 2016 to December, 2016. These organizations are from Mathura and Agra region of India. With the help of convenience sampling, these organizations were considered and their views on e-HRM were collected through interview approach. The researchers collected the data from management level to employee level. The information gathered is reliable and free from any biases as interview method provides in-depth information about the research objective (McNamara, 1999).

3.2 Sampling method

The qualitative research has provided the in-depth understanding of the respondent position in society. It does not only focus on the specific open ended questions (Appendix A) asked by the researcher but tend to create new concepts and theories. Like the quantitative research, this research has also emphasized on the design, collect, analyze, and interpretation of data (Kreuger & Neuman, 2006). The interpretation has been validated with the existing theories as well as from the new theories and concepts build by researchers. The researchers are completely involved in the conversation with the respondent and also motivate him to get the information to fulfil the objective of study. From the interview approach, multiple case studies were prepared to explain the purpose of the study. The three case studies are sufficient to fulfil the objective of study as supported by Bertaux and Crable (2007) and Deakins and Freel (1998). The smaller in sample size in qualitative research provides the opportunity to researcher to investigate the aim of study in a more in-depth manner. The framework of this study is presented in Figure 1 and information about respondent is given in Figure 1.

¹Name of organization is changed and named as 'A', 'B' and 'C' to maintain their confidentiality

Table 2: Respondent's Information

Organization	Place	Sector	No. of employees
Organization A	Agra	Banking industry	50 employees
Organization B	Mathura	Education Institute	400 faculties and 5000 students
Organization C	Agra	Garment Industry	400 employees

(Source: Authors)

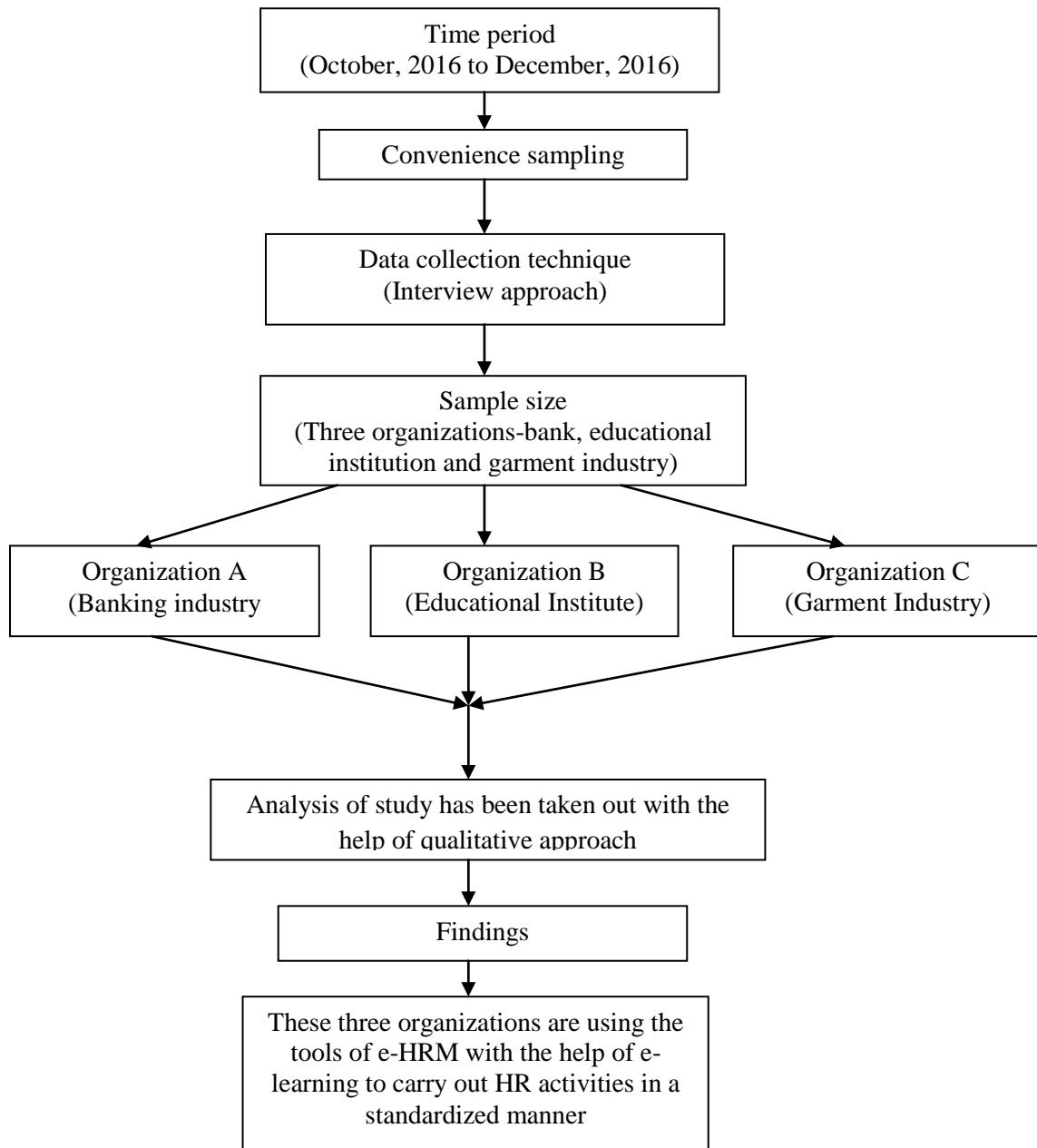


Figure1: Framework of study

(Source: Authors)

4. Brief of Case Studies

4.1 Organization A

Organization A is related to banking industry. In 2000, this bank was started in Agra, India with 10 employees. Now it consists of 50 employees with well-equipped facilities. The researcher directly approached the manager to know about his views on tools or services related to the implementation of e-HRM in organization. The manager said that “*e-HRM provides various tools like e-recruitment, e-learning, e-training, and e-performance management system, etc., that reduce the time, cost, and work of HRM department*”. Initially, when the HRM services were replaced by e-HRM, the employees of this organization resisted the changes related to the implementation of these services. However, subsequently through e-learning, they realized that this technology is not for decreasing the number of employees but for improving the efficiency and performance of employees as well as the organization. The employees also agreed on the benefits of e-HRM, and one of employee said that “*e-learning provides the opportunity to the employees to interact with experts and enhance their learning and education and also reduce the confusion towards e-HRM*”.

4.2 Organization B

Organization B is an educational institute situated in Mathura, India. Upon enquiring about the implementation of e-HRM services to top management, they laughed and said “*In this technological era, we can't imagine any work without internet. E-learning definitely improves our efficiency but side by side make them dependent on it. We maintain the data of every faculty through e-employee profile, salary through e-payroll system, and performance of employees through e-performance management system and trained on this through e-learning*”. This organization has 400 faculties and 5000 students, so for maintaining the record of each individual they require electronically equipped system. The institution provides online education and training to students as well as faculties through e-learning and e-training facilities to improve their skills and competencies for surviving in this competitive world.

4.3 Organization C

This organization was initiated in 2010 in the region of Agra, India. Based on garment industry, 400 employees are employed belongs to different regions of India. Maintaining the work force diversity in the organization, owner has also made the record of all the employees in the organization. Owner quoted that, “*It is so difficult to maintain the information of all the employees without the e-HRM application. Whenever I demand from my HR department about*

any information of any employee, they send me one link and password, and say to me sir, you can access this link and get the information about any employee.” According to him, the knowledge about applications of e-HRM imparted through e-learning and this bring the positive work attitudes in employees towards work. Now they feel more satisfied and their effectiveness and efficiency were also improved. Through e- learning, it is possible to the organization to impart the knowledge to various employees in a less time and in more effective manner. E-learning is one of the essential tools of the e-HRM which makes all other applications easy and accessible to the employees to increase their performance.

5. Analysis of Case Studies

The objective of HRM can be more enhanced with the implementation of e-HRM through the expansion of global orientation of human resource function. E-HRM has improved the efficiency of employees at each level because it involves low cost and time and further increases the pace of different HR processes. It has operational, relational, and transformational impact on the growth of organization which is maintained through the relationship between employees and management with the assistance of web based technology that also keeps the connectivity with competitive market. This relationship and connectivity through e learning allows sharing of the useful information between and outside the organization by maintaining the standardization of HR functions for ensuring precise decision making.

These three organizations are using the tools of e-HRM with the help of e-learning to carry out HR activities in a standardized manner. The management level of these organizations quoted that *“In this scenario, if we not adapt or walk with the technology, than our organization is lagging behind in this competitive business world”*. The analysis of case studies reveals that:

- E-learning helps in accessing the HR functions with the help of internet or web based technologies (Agrawal, Agarwal, & Agrawal, 2017).
- It reduces the burden of administrative functions, increases the relational aspect between the employer and employees, and brings transformational changes in the organization.
- It increases the efficiency of HR department as it involves low cost and less time for achieving the organizational goals.
- It enhances the functions through improving the quality and implementing strategic role to HRM services (Parry, 2011).

- It helps in implementing various tools such as e-recruitment, e-selection, e-performance management system, e-compensation system, e-employee profile, etc.
- E-learning provides the online learning facility to all which includes field experts as well as employees (Ettinger, Holton, & Blass, 2006; Kankia, 2016).

The information about various application of e-HRM like e-employee profile maintains the data of every employee in the database of organization; e-performance management system helps the management to evaluate the performance of employees for attaining the desired goals; e-recruitment saves the time and cost of the organization in selecting the individual and further helps in creating the pool of talent for the organization and all these are possible because of proper training imparted to employees through e-learning.

The information shared by National Research Business Institute, 23% of employees abscond their organization because of need of development opportunities and training. Due to this, organization has suffered from not able to retain talented employees, face expenses of recruitment and training, and lost productivity, etc. The fact is that present employees need to equip with technology so that able to survive in present information technology scenario and make a shift in culture of the organization (Longstreet & Winkley, 2011).

6. Conclusion

The exploitation of technology for integrating the HR functions becomes the intense need of every organization for achieving their success in the competitive world. Even the smaller organizations are using the e-HRM applications for facilitating the automated pay roll system, electronically managing attendance system, creating talent pool through e-recruitment and e-selection by providing training through e-learning so that they can enhance the productivity of employees within the organizations.

Technology is created and controlled by human beings, thus the ways of reaping and constructing the technology for the benefit of individuals, organizations, society, and nations are also dependent on us. E-learning applications geared to encourage the learning and performance of employees and organization. E-learning based training have been facilitate the knowledge, skills, and behavior of employees in various ways such as development of positive and problem solving attitude, communication, decision making, and interpersonal capabilities, functional and technical knowledge also (Laskaris, 2015). Learning is part of human being that's why it is also essential for the employees. In continuing this context, Deloitte has conducted leadership

development programmes for the performance of employees, each having the individual social media-style home page where they access the online related activities, Exact Target, marketing software company also emphasized on e-learning applications by facilitating the online training sessions (Peterson, 2015).

6.1 Future research and limitations of study

This study contributes theoretically to the field of e-learning and e-HRM, but there are few limitations which can be considered in future research. It has qualitatively presented the concept; hence quantitative research needs to be carried out with large sample size for exploring more clarity and validity about the applications of e-HRM through e-learning. Further longitudinal study is also required to examine the difference between work attitude of generation X and generation Y.

“Technological optimistic voices want us to believe that from a technical perspective, the IT possibilities for HRM are endless: in principal all HR processes can be supported by IT. E-HRM is the relatively new term for this IT supported HRM, especially through the use of web technology”. (Ruël, Bondarouk, & Looise, 2004)

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Appendix A: Question asked to conduct interview

1. Does your organization implement the e-human resource management?
2. Are you feel comfortable with the application of e-human resource management i.e. e-learning?
3. How you are aware from the different tools of electronic human resource management?
4. Does the e-learning impact on your performance and organization?