

An Appraisal of E-Human Resource Management Practices in Industrial Organisations: A Case Study of Patna Region

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Abstract

Any e-HRM installation exercise if taken up in the right perspective, keeping all the challenges in mind can take an organization a long way towards success. In companies which have successfully tackled these challenges e-HRM has made life easier for employees. Not to mention the enhancement in speed and efficiency of Human Resource transactions, lesser paperwork and cost effectiveness in the long run increased transparency in functions and a total systems approach has facilitated better control by top management: Some of the considerations for enhancing the effectiveness of e-HR systems include Creating an effective e-Statement, Standardizing and Centralizing HR administration in an in-house service center, Assessing and ensuring the flexibility of the e-HR technology, e-Recruitment. -Retirement, Developing Data-mining tools and others

The fact remains that e-HRM enables better management of every enterprise's most important competitive edge: the thinking, idea-generating customer-serving human resource. E-HRM eliminates redundant activities, provides more accurate and timely personnel information and- perhaps most important automates the time consuming, error-prone Human Resource paper trail. It leaves Human Resource professionals with more time to focus on strategic tasks and manage better the company's most important resource its people.

Key words: *E-Human Resource Management Practices, Employee Resistance, Industrial Organisations, Patna Region, Technological Obsolescence.*

Introduction

Today's economy of any country is focused on environmental wellbeing and sustainable development awareness. All over the globe people are displaying their keen interest in enduring this earth as a beautiful place to dwell in. Sustainable efforts for

preservation and conservation are being emphasized by the environmentalists, researchers and governments. International conferences on issues like global warming, climatic changes and carbon credit have resulted in the formation of specific treaties like Kyoto 1997, Bali 2007, Copenhagen 2009 and Paris Agreement 2016. These treaties have epitomized meticulous determination worldwide towards this end. In such prevalent conditions, the business organizations can no longer distance themselves from their environmental responsibilities.

Businessmen have to give due cognizance to this facet of their responsibility. otherwise, the whole world will suffer. In essence what actually differentiates this planet from rest of the celestial bodies in the universe is the presence of life. Pertinently, "Going Green" is need of the hour as it is indispensable for the survival of life on this earth. Nothing will remain intact if Green gets wiped out.

The biggest prospect for HR to add value to business is to play a vital role in the development and implementation of strategy. HR can gain significance by showing the vitality of human capital in the quest of an organization's strategies. **Ulrich (1999)** has argued that HR should move to the role of strategic business partner in addition to performing administrative and transactional role, being a 'change agent' and 'employee champion'.

The use of technology in HR is believed to be an opportunity for HR professionals to become strategic partners for the business. The assumption is that e-HR would allow HR to become more efficient and provide accurate information for decision making when and where they are needed. The association between e-HR and strategic partnering of the human resource function is that the e-HR system has the potential to allow HR department's time to focus on more strategic initiatives. If HR services can be delivered using technology, HR has access to data of strategic importance so that HR can contribute towards developing and implementing strategies.

It is believed that the adoption of this new technology has gradually evolved over the years and as a result will shape the typical HR job shifting the focus from administration to strategy development. The idea that technology can allow more time for practitioners who would otherwise have spent it on administrative tasks could focus on more strategic issues, has been frequently observed in the literature. Even 10 years ago, there was evidence that by automating as many processes as possible, HR was able to significantly reduce the time spent on routine administrative tasks, allowing HR staff time to concentrate on more strategic aspects of the HR role and to be seen as partners in a business. Research by **Watson Wyatt**

(2002) demonstrated that the most commonly recognized business benefit of e-HR is 'allowing HR to re-focus on becoming a strategic business partner.

The present study will focus on the policies, practices and systems that aim at making the employees of an organization green for the benefit of the individuals, society, natural environment and the businesses that comes under the radar of Green HRM. There are identified four roles viz. preservationist, conservationist, non-polluter and maker, for an employee to become a Green employee. Accordingly, the purpose of Green HRM is to create, enhance and retain green insights within each employee so that he can give his best on each of these roles. In Green HRM, various human resource practices like recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, compensation and training are devised in such a manner so as to create a workforce that comprehends and endorses green behavior in the organization. **Ahmad (2015)** voiced that Green HRM not only includes mindfulness towards environmental affairs but also stands for the social and economic well-being of both the organization and the employees within a wider outlook. It can be used to reduce carbon footprints as well as costs, better efficiencies, make green awareness existing among the employees and initiate green work life balance programs. Taking cue from the existing literature, the present study is an endeavour to provide simplified insights on some familiar Green HRM practices and their implementation in industrial organisations. Our focus will be on e-HRM practices in industrial organisations of Patna Region of Bihar State.

Objectives of the Study

The present study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

- To analyse the status of Green HRM practices in the organizations,
- To provide suggestions to the organization for successful implementation of these Green HRM Practices and
- To analyse the awareness level of the employees about the Green HRM practices.

Research Methodology

The study is analytical in nature. Data has been collected from secondary sources like

- Books,
- Journals/Magazines/Periodicals,
- Reports-Governmental and Non-governmental,
- Unpublished Thesis and Dissertations,
- Discussion Papers and Working Papers,

- Monographs and References Annuals,
- Economic Dailies and Newspapers,
- Websites etc.

In order to appraise e-HRM practices in industrial organization, we have collected some primary data from Patna Region of Bihar State. For the sake of simplicity, a sample size of three hundred clerical and managerial staff of industrial organisations of Patna Region have been contacted for getting response. A well-structured questionnaire has been administered on them containing two parts. First part having coverage of personal details and second devoted to information related with aspects of e-HRM practices. In addition to this, informal interviews have been conducted with various levels of HR managers.

Data thus collected have been analysed and interpreted with the help of suitable mathematical and statistical tools and techniques like

- I. Ratio,
- II. Averages,
- III. Percentage,
- IV. Trend Analysis,
- V. Comparative Statements,
- VI. Bar Graphs,
- VII. Pie Charts etc.

Plan of Work

Our study has been divided into the following Five Chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This is the introductory chapter. It contains statement of the research problem, objectives and rationale of the study followed by methodology and plan of work.

Chapter 2: Historical Overview of e-HRM

Three trends dramatically impact HRM. The first is the increasing diversity of the labour force in terms of age, gender, race and ethnicity. HRM concerns evolve from EEO and affirmative action to “managing diversity”. A second trend is the globalization of business and the accompanying technological revolution. These factors have led to dramatic changes in transportation, communication, and labour markets. HRM concerns and concepts must be integrated into the overall strategic planning of the firm in order to cope with rapid change,

intense competition, and pressure for increased efficiency. Accordingly, this chapter has been devoted to make coverage of different aspects of e-HRM.

Chapter 3: e-HRM Practices in India

Recently, technology has become an important part of our daily life. Organization are being challenged to become more flexible in every aspect. One of the most challenging department is HR. HR has to respond to increasing competition for global talent and workforce, shifts in employer relationship and rapid advances in technology. A number of HR processes, such as human resource planning, performance management, training and compensation would be managed efficiently to provide a piece of better information for managerial decision.

Chapter 4: Obstacles in Applying e-HRM in An Organization

The big trend that is driving the other trends is the disruption of business models. Most of the big business companies are going through reinventing their business revolving around digital challenges and change, driven either by competition or an opportunity to improve what they are doing. In this chapter, different obstacles which are being faced while applying e-HRM in an organization have been presented.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Suggestions

E-HRM practices can lead to innumerable efficiency gains if they are utilized effectively. This technological changes can made remarkable strides in Indian companies. Through the companies are employing a basic tools of HR management and applications through digital mode will lead to upgrade their technology by E-HRM. On the other side, HR managers are not happy with implementation of electronic mode of transaction with employees.

This is the last chapter of the study. This chapter contains summary of the work followed by a number of valuable suggestions which may prove helpful for industrial organisations in the context of e-HRM practices.

Challenges in E-HRM Practices

This study focuses on unravelling the specific challenges that organizations operating in the organisation confront in their pursuit of effective IHR management through electronic means. The journey through these challenges begins with addressing data security concerns and acknowledging the ever-present threat of cyber security breaches in the handling of sensitive employee information. Technological advancements, while a driving force in

industry, pose a paradoxical challenge, as the rapid evolution of technology can render HRM systems obsolete without timely updates. In the information technology sector, challenges in e-HRM practices include:

- **Data Security Concerns:** Managing sensitive employee data electronically raises concerns about data security and privacy breaches, necessitating robust security measures to safeguard information.
- **Technological Obsolescence:** Rapid advancements in technology may lead to the obsolescence of e-HRM systems, requiring continuous updates to stay aligned with industry trends and maintain effectiveness.
- **Employee Resistance:** Some employees may resist the transition to electronic HR practices due to unfamiliarity or concerns about job security, requiring effective change management strategies.
- **Integration Issues:** Integrating e-HRM systems with existing organizational processes and legacy systems can be complex, requiring seamless integration to avoid disruptions and ensure data consistency.
- **Training and Skill Gaps:** Employees and HR staff may need training to effectively use e-HRM tools, and skill gaps can arise, hindering the optimal utilization of electronic HR resources.
- **Legal and Compliance Challenges:** Adhering to diverse and evolving labor laws, data protection regulations, and industry-specific compliance requirements poses challenges in e-HRM implementation.
- **Costs of Implementation and Maintenance:** Initial setup costs and ongoing maintenance expenses of e-HRM systems can be substantial, impacting the financial feasibility of some organizations.
- **Globalization Issues:** Multinational IT companies face challenges in managing a diverse workforce across various locations, requiring e-HRM systems that can accommodate global HR practices and cultural differences.
- **Data Accuracy and Quality:** Maintaining accurate and high-quality data is crucial for effective decision-making. Inaccurate or incomplete data can lead to errors in HR processes.
- **User Experience Design:** Ensuring a user-friendly interface and experience in e-HRM systems is essential to encourage widespread adoption and effective use by employees and HR professionals.

Addressing these challenges requires a strategic approach, continuous evaluation of technology trends, and a commitment to ongoing training and development in the rapidly evolving field of e-HRM in the Indian context.

Suggestions

A careful consideration of all the outlined issues is Imperative before undertaking any e-HRM venture. Some of the important factors to be considered before going in for any e-HRM venture are highlighted hereunder:

- **Planning for employee and organizational issues from the outset:** Most companies understand the need to address potential issues when implementing large-scale, cutting-edge initiatives. But many companies may underestimate the importance of preparing their organizations for small to mid-sized projects too. The Key to Success lies in seeking stakeholder engagement and buy-in, assessing organizational impact and creating communication and training plans
- **Assessing the Flexibility of the HR Technology:** Reduce the risk of technology obsolescence by assessing the flexibility of the solution prior to implementation. Ensure that the solution is flexible enough to adapt to changing needs in the future.
- **Service Delivery Applications:** To serve more employees, companies should move to manager self-service and a service centre approach or outsource their processes and systems. To keep the processes and systems in-house, implement help desk for HR and to outsource partner with a vendor with state-of-the-art self service offerings
- **HR Service Centers-** Investments to Consider: One needs to consider the advantages of separating out HR administration from more strategic work and of standardizing and centralizing this activity in an in-house HR service centre. In this context the issues that need to be addressed are managing the transition, staffing the service centre and the role of technology. Actionable measures give companies information that can be used to determine future strategies. By analysing call patterns and topics, companies gain insight into employees top concerns. This information can then be used to develop targeted programs to resolve problems before they cause harm.
- **Outsourcing HR administration:** The business case for outsourcing HR administration centers on the potential for cost savings to be delivered by

investment in e-enabling HR transactions and processes. Outsourcing HR administration is a major project for any organization and requires careful planning. Freed from the HR administrative workload, a company's newly streamlined HR function can act more strategically both in policy formulation and in business partner roles.

- **Creating an Effective Statement:** a Primer: Communicating the value of investment in employee compensation, health insurance, pension plans and other benefits is crucial for engaging and motivating employees. Web-based total compensation statements, or statements, are important tools for increasing employees' benefits awareness. When properly designed and implemented, they improve employees' knowledge and satisfaction while reducing HR's administrative workload and costs
- **Use of Case Management Tools for Compensation Planning:** Simple to use and relatively low-cost, case management tools help to reduce call volume, improve response times and better manage large- scale employee events. Adding advanced case management tools or upgrading the existing system can considerably add to the capability to track and manage Individual and group transactions from start to finish.
- **E-Recruitment:** With the advent of the World Wide Web, there has been a paradigm shift in the ways companies recruit the world over. Some of the advantages of Internet Recruiting are Hires Top Talent, Lowers Recruiting Costs, Telescoping Recruiting Lead Time, Enlarged Candidate Pool, Phenomenal Geographical Reach, Choosing Job-Sites and Managing Job Postings. Creating a Killer Job Posting, Multi-site Resume Harvesting
- **E- Retirement:** A company can improve the perceived value of pension benefits so that the costs are aligned with that value in the eyes of employees. The best bet is to help employees calculate today's value of their pension benefit so they have an informed view of their future benefits. Offer an online pension "estimator" delivered from a web site with simple, easy-to-use navigation.
- **Data mining tools:** Data mining tools use regression and other analytic techniques to discover and report correlations and trends among sets of data. To get the most from data mining processes, organizations should improve data accuracy, establish global standards and emphasize actionable insight.

- **Investing in Portal Technology:** While the potential expansion of employee portal and intranet budgets is welcome news, capitalizing on it requires careful prioritization of resources. Personalization and smart search capabilities are two investments that companies should consider. Personalization gives employees the information they need without requiring them to sift through materials they don't and also helps company's direct communications and messaging to specific employee groups. By putting strong, "smart" search engines in place, companies help employees find the information they need, when they need it, with a minimum of effort.
- **Best Practices of HR Portals:** Here are some suggestions from companies that have been successful getting a portal up and running
 - Company site should be designed as an employee-centric site, which means that the tools and applications should be user-friendly, easy-to-navigate and intuitive.
 - Facilitate communication between technical and content people.
 - Devise a simple prototype of an HR module, Implement it, and then work with end users to expand the functionality of the system
 - Personalize or customize wherever possible
 - Develop a process for content ownership and updating.
 - Evaluate processes before automating them instead of automating an inefficient process. reengineer it and then automate it.
 - Provide self-service access for everyone.
 - "Advertise" new content. Be creative in introducing new features
 - "Brand" the company site, Give the HR site a name and identity to help employees perceive it as the "go to" place
 - Develop ways to attract and retain talented Web designers.
 - Create a fall back resource in form of a "help desk to answer questions about Web tools and features and to direct the users to needed Web information.
- **E-learning:** Many organizations are now adopting a blended approach to learning and development. This is based on the recognition that e-learning is just one of many forms of training delivery, all of which have a role to play in providing employees with essential knowledge and understanding.

The greatest strength of e-learning lies in its potential to provide a consistent level of training when and wherever it is needed.

- **HR intranets:** HR intranets are playing an important role in reshaping the e-HR function. They play a pivotal role in providing Business-to-employee services. They provide their three main target groups employees, Line managers and the HR function itself with a single point of access to a suite of online HR applications and to an authoritative source of HR policy and guidance.
- **Internet & e-mail policies:** It is essential for employers to develop robust security procedures for their IT systems and to spell out to employees what is considered acceptable and unacceptable in terms of their e-mail and Internet use at work, whether this is for business or personal reasons.
- **Web 2.0 and Social Networking Applications:** Best practice organizations continuously explore new technologies and apply when warranted. Studies have shown that early adopters using social networking for recruiting and branding had double the Sales Growth of those without
- **Strategic HCM Applications:** Focus new implementation work on strategic HCM applications to improve financial performance. This can be done in the following ways- Deploying an integrated talent management solution to achieve the lowest total cost of ownership possible: Implementing competency management should be at the heart of any talent management strategy. When it comes to business intelligence, first start with a metrics and analytics strategy and then move quickly to implement a solution- middleware to extract, transform, and load data into dashboards usable by decision makers at the very minimum, Consider adoption of Web 2.0 technologies to increase collaboration within the workforce and increase engagement with remote and Generation Y employees.

A careful analysis and evaluation of the various options available, by an organization planning to introduce e-technology based HR systems, can go a long way in enhancing the effectiveness of such systems.

Conclusion

The big trend that is driving the other trends is the disruption of business models. Most of the big business companies are going through reinventing their businesses revolving

around digital challenges and change, driven either by competition or an opportunity to improve what they're doing.

HRM has got prime importance in today's business organizations. There is an adequate supply of labor in the labor market, but question arises in terms of „skilled labor“. Hence, the importance is given to the selection of right employees for the right positions. Organizations are now realizing and focusing on the value of good employees because they make a difference through their job performance. Over the past three decades human resources process and procedure have been supported by everything from file folder of systems to automation, web based technology by using multiple systems and data base to single version. The emergence of internet as widespread means of communication, production and commerce has elevated important parts of the information and communication with knowledge based economy to new economy. The term new economy has been used interchangeably with the term “knowledge economy” this chapter focusing on challenges and issues of E-HRM practices in Indian companies.

The study has unravelled the intricate dynamics surrounding data security, technological obsolescence, employee resistance, integration complexities, training needs, legal considerations, and financial implications associated with implementing e-HRM systems in the organisation. As organizations strive to harness the benefits of electronic HR practices in this rapidly evolving sector, it is evident that strategic considerations are paramount. The findings underscore the critical importance of addressing data security concerns through robust protective measures and staying agile in the face of technological advancements to mitigate the risks of obsolescence. This research serves as a foundational guide for organizations navigating the digital frontier of electronic human resources management. Strategic navigation of these challenges is imperative for organizations seeking to optimize electronic HR practices in the dynamic realm, ensuring a harmonious integration of technology and human resources for sustained success. By addressing these challenges head-on, organizations can forge a path towards optimized eHRM practices, fostering a symbiotic relationship between technology and human capital in the pursuit of organizational success.

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