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# INNOVATION THROUGH HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

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## ABSTRACT

Nowadays, organisations face cut-throat competition than ever before. Consequently, organisations burnish their human talents for responding to the needs of changing environment that enables the organizations to enhance adaptability, flexibility, competitive position and superior work performance. Notwithstanding, innovation is not easy but imperative. Intriguingly, people have different thinking, unique ideas and visions. In spite of the fact, the major problem is people often ask themselves several questions like what we do with innovative ideas and how to transform those ideas into realities that are fitsto organization. However, it is the human resource management responsibility to discover and inspire the people who have the creative and innovative mind and ideas and assist them to manifest their innovativeness that helps the organization to enhance the survival and growth. Thus, HR managers should focus on how to hire innovative employees and how to generate innovative ideas from employees. As well as how do transform the ideas into profitable realities. Moreover, HR managers should have the comprehensive understanding and knowledge about the significance of innovation today and furnish organizations' innovation through inspiring and retaining the most innovative people, consistently sharpening their skills and creating a solid culture for innovation and successive learning. This would accelerate the organization to distinguish itself. Hence, this is the part of a HR role. Innovation goes beyond technologies and needs collaboration form other areas to come together to accomplish the success. The present study fills lacunae by emphasizing the overriding role of human resource management practices fostering creative and innovative employees.

**Keywords:** Innovation, Human Resource Management, Culture, Organization, Technology, Ideas, Opportunities

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## Introduction

Recently, the concept of innovation has received much attention in human resource management and organizational studies (Amarakoon, Weerawardena, and Verreynne, 2018; Audenaert, Decramer, George, Verschuere, and Van Waeyenberg, 2019; Lee, Pak, Kim, and Li, 2019). HRM has recognized as a key strategic role in generating competitive advantage as firms strive to concur through employees since they can evolve their human resources to become valuable, rare, inimitable, and organized (Bateman and Snell, 2008; Kengatharan, 2019). HRM refers to “the policies, practices, and systems that influence employees’ behavior, attitudes, and performance (Noe et al. 2008). In essence employees are the key concept of success or failure of business.

The successive congruence of innovation and creativity arises from organizations recognizing that fittingly harnessed creativity can offer companies a competitive advantage (Porter, 1980). Employees performance, effectiveness, efficiency and productivity can be enriched through creating innovative environment that foster new ideas and new products. Antecedent studies have emphasized the significance of knowledge partaking for new knowledge creation and innovation (Kogut and Zander 1992; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Nonaka, Toyama and Nagata 2000; Wu and Cavusgil, 2006). It’s imperative to comprehend how and why human capital motivates innovation moreover, what deployment of human resource management practices, policies and programs inside the firm can produce anticipated level of innovative performance. Innovation encompasses both the process that harness new knowledge, technologies and the processes to create new products as well as new or revamped products themselves (porter, 1990). Innovation from the lens of economic sense is attained only with the first commercial transaction involving the novel products, process, systems or devise. However, the word innovation is used also to define the holistic process (Freeman and Soete 1997) and therefore, it acquires loftier importance in the actual globalized world. Consequently, when considering about meaning of innovation, the terms novelty, new ideas can be associated with the team (Glasberg and Ouerghemi, 2011).

Many characteristics of innovative organizations have been identified including industry structure, organization characteristics, organization processes, and institutional influences (Ahuja, Lampert, and Tandon, 2008). Theoretical approaches such as Knowledge management approach (Kengatharan, 2019; Darroch and McNaughton, 2002; Forrester, 2000; Hedlund, 1994; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995) and behavioral approach (Jackson and Schuler, 1995) also provide insight to defend the significant of HRM for innovation. However, Laursen and Foss (2003) said there are lack of focus of the field of relations between new HRM practices and innovation performance of the organizations.

Innovation can be enriched through HR practices. According to Chowhan, Pries, Mann (2017) they focused on four key HRM practices and three work organization practices. Such four key HRM practices highly qualified personnel, skill-enhancing practices, motivation-enhancing practices, opportunity-enhancing practices and three work organization practices integration and collaboration, introduction of organizational changes, use of technology these can assist the advancement of stable innovation.

Due to the monopolistic structure, employee rigidity, resistance, and lack of innovation climate, employees are reluctant to perform innovatively the work they do in such organizations. New HRM practices (NHRM) can enrich the talented, motivated, committed, devoted, and innovative staff to foster innovation in organizations with an intent to enhance performance, productivity, efficiency and effectiveness consequently that leads to firm's survival and growth. Human factors and human resource management, are considered as a key element of innovation, since the human element is involved in the innovation process (Galbraith, 1984; Vrakking, 1990). However, human resource management has been, up to now there have been some empirical studies in recent years, their mostly focused on western countries, thus there is a gap in the literature, especially in empirical research in other contexts like Asian countries. The main objective of the study is to identify how HR practices associate with organizational innovation and to make some propositions that guide the directions for the research scholars.

## **Methodology**

Using search strategies, 114 research papers were identified in relation to innovation and human resource management. However, in line with previous studies, following criteria were followed in the selection of papers (Kengatharan, 2015): (a) a peer-reviewed journal published between 1990 and the present; and (b) Full text published in English. The full papers were garnered from reputed databases such as Proquest, Business Source Premier (EBSCOhost), Expanded Academic (Gale), Emerald, ISI Web Science, the Sloan Work and Family Research Network at Boston College, and Google Scholar.

## **Literature Review**

### **The concept of Innovation**

Porter (1990) identifies innovation as: 'a new way of doing things. Innovation is an inevitable element in fostering organizations to adapt to volatile changes and enhance competitive advantage. Innovation is often opined as a fundamental factor to an exponential standard of living, high quality of jobs, and better quality of life (Thomson and Webster, 2013). Innovation is unquestionably recognized as a crucial imperative for organizations in term of survival and growth (Dess and Picken, 2000). Innovation has the responsibility for improving the quality and letting down the prices of the products and services that have significantly enhance consumers lives. Through discovering novel solutions, alternatives, possibilities to eradicate problems, innovation ruins the existing market and transforms old into new ones (Hauser, Tellis, Griffin, 2006). Innovation is worthwhile for the superior performance of organizations since organizations can confront to uncertainties quicker and better at harnessing new products and market opportunities (Damanpour, 1991; Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle, 2011; Thornhill, 2006). Innovation performance could be investigated using the ideas of exploration and exploitation (Gupta and Singhal, 1993; Li and Kozhikode, 2008). Exploration encompasses discovering new knowledge, technologies and products, conversely,

exploitation involves using and revamping the existing knowledge, technologies and products (Greve. 2007; Li and Kozhikode, 2008).

Innovation could be known as when the texts of one category conquer the space of another category. Innovation comes about when the principles of one genre are reorganized as per the laws of another, and this 'other' genre organically enters the new structure and at the same time preserves a memory of its other system of encoding (Lotman, 1990). The word innovation has been adopted in literature to explain both the process that utilize the new knowledge, technologies and the process to create new products as well new or revamped products themselves (Porter 1990). According to Freeman and Soete (1997), as for the sense of economy, innovation is accomplished merely with the initial commercial transaction incorporating the new product, process system or devise, despite the term is harnessed also to described the whole process. Furthermore, inventions frequently happen while the innovation process and still more inventions and innovations may be made during the diffusion process. Organizations capitalized innovation in terms of greater productivity, creating new markets, loftier profit, and competitive advantage and ensures organizations survivals and growth (James, Leiblein and Lu, 2013). Veenendaal (2015) maintains that the requirement for innovation in firms should assist to reach competitive advantage, which leads to economic organizations

Furthermore, the disparity from invention is that also encapsulates the factor of commercialization, ascertaining the company success or failure.

Innovation could be known as a multi-level process whereby ideas are engendered and transformed by organizations into novel or refined products, services, technologies and processes that benefit the firm and its stockholders through enhancing its competitive position and ability to differentiate itself in the market place (West and Anderson, 1996; Wong, PohKam, Yuen and Erkko, 2005; Baregheh, Rowley and Sambrook, 2009). Innovation has been constantly explained as the adoption of idea or behavior that is new to the organization (Bon and Mustafa, 2013).

### **Linking Innovation with Human Resource management**

Organizations and innovation, which are more crucial as product development becomes more intrepid and paradigms more effective but demanding. The successive supremacy of innovation and creativity evolves from organizations perceiving that properly exploited creativity can provide companies competitive advantage (porter, 1980). There are no ideal HR practices, since in order to be effectual, HR practices should be persistent with other components of the organization, more specifically its strategy. Further, Kinnie, Swart, Hope-Hailey and Van Rossenberg (2012) they developed a paradigm on innovation and human resource management.

Laursen and Foss (2013) proposed that HR practices such as teamwork, delegation and performance-related pay will have a greater impact on innovation when they are used in combination. And they explained theoretically why HR practices improve the innovative activities of employees. They argued that an important characteristic of HRM is increased decentralization through delegating problem-solving to the shop floor.

Introducing more teamwork and more job rotation are other HR practices that can lead to more innovative behavior by assembling increased and more varied knowledge and by increasing knowledge sharing among employees. According to the study Edralin (2008), hypothesized that innovative practices in the employee relations function of HRM is the most significant predictor of employee job involvement and organizational commitment. Moreover, it encapsulates of innovative HRM practices in terms of recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation, performance management, employee relations, leads to job involvement and organizational commitment consequently organization maximizing productivity, customer satisfaction, reduced absenteeism and turnover, and increased organizational citizenship behavior. There is a finding in the theoretical literature about the importance of using external source of recruitment to achieve an innovation strategy (Miles and snow, 1984; Olian and Rynes, 1984; Schuler and Jackson, 1987), although, Radharam and Arvey (1994) finding support the relationship between innovation and recruitment from outside the company.

The most pertinent HRM practices for firms striving to create a competitive advantage based on innovation shall be different to those practices relevant for firms searching other short of competitive advantage (Dalota, Perju, 2010) said that HRM determines and revamps, to an extreme extent, the aptitudes, capacities and attitudes, it appears clear that it becomes a prominent element in development of innovation activities. Furthermore, he identified in the management discipline, a wide range of variable influencing on organizational innovation like having a vision of what the organization intends to be, seeking for opportunities, experiences and technological potentialities, pursuing market orientation, market development and segmentation and the promotion and management of creative resources.

Human factors and human resource management are today recognized fundamental elements of effectual innovation. Discontinuous change needs discontinuous thinking. If the new way of things is going to be different from the old, not just a modification on it, subsequently we need to look at everything in a new way (Dalota, 2013), innovation and human resource management play a progressively imperative role in sustaining "leading edge" competitiveness for organizations in terms of drastic change and lofty rivalry. Although he identified the variables that dramatically influencing organizational innovation; having a vision of what the firm wants to be, seeking for opportunities, experience and technological potential, pursuing market orientation, market development, segmentation, advancement and management of creative resources.

Dalota (2013) gives Porter's (1980) the successive hegemony of innovation and creativity arises from organizations perceiving that rightly utilized creativity can provide organizations a competitive advantage. According to (Paauwe and Boselie, 2005) HRM can be more effective in improving innovation performance if organizations have unique HR practices for different group of individuals.

**HRM practices for innovation***Miles and Snow's model*

*THIS MODEL represents the development of market type human resource management system for prospectors firm that is firm, characterized by the search for new market and product, which are therefore, innovators.*

- **Recruitment-** Emphasis; “buy”, Hiring exclusively from outside the organization, selection may involve pre- employment psychological testing, very employment security given, little if any socialization taking, Place within the organization
- **Training-** Skills identification and acquisition limited training programs
- **Development and internal career opportunities and performance appraisal-** Very little use of internal career ladders, result oriented procedure, Identification of staffing needs, Performance evaluations, Cross sectional comparisons, Oriented toward performance, External competitiveness
- **Compensation-** Total compensation heavily, oriented towards incentives and driven by recruitment needs
- **Other HRM practices-** Low employee participation, Implicit job analysis, Job enrichment

*Schuler and Jackson's model*

Schuler and Jackson (1987) establish a connection between HRM practices and three types of strategies such as costs, quality and innovation, defined from Porter's (1980)

Classification of competitive strategies.

- **Recruitment-** external sources of recruitment, technical and research competencies, high employment security.
- **Training-** board application, employee is responsible for learning, Jobs that allow employees to develop skills that can be used in other positions in the firm.
- **Development and internal career opportunities and performance appraisal-** board career paths, mandatory competency growth, process and result criteria, performance appraisals that are more likely to reflect longer term and group-based achievements.
- **Compensation** - many incentives, internal equity, low pay rates but employees are allowed to be stockholders and have more freedom to choose the mix of components that make up their package.
- **Other HRM practices-** high employee participation, implicit job analysis, job enrichment, cross functional teams, communication; feedback on new product sales.

*Source; (Jimenez, Jimenez, Sanz-Valle,2005).*

According to (Gupta, Singhal, 1993) identified HR functions that foster innovation and creativity;

- Human resource planning- human resource planning incorporates accessing employees needs and selecting and hiring qualified people in order to achieve short and long-term corporate goals to. To stimulate organizational innovation and creativity.
- Reward system- many companies have implemented in-house reward systems that motivate employees to achieve goals of innovation, productivity, and profitability.

- Performance appraisal- precisely evaluating and rewarding employee performance is the key to effective human resource management. Moreover, an organizations performance appraisal and reward system foster employee behavior.
- Career management- this strategy matches an employee's long-term career goals with the organizations goals through continuing education and training that motivate innovation.

HR policies and practices would help to foster innovation (Bos-Nehles and Janssen. 2015). They discovered organizational climate and eight HR policies and practices were conducive to innovation they are namely, work autonomy, task composition, job demands, feedback on performance, job security, job rotation, training and development, and reward. A few of these factors were more superior influence than others in fostering innovation, and the way they achieved their effects also fluctuated.

Notwithstanding, they have found that limited evidence of HR driving change through the alignment of practice with innovation as a business goal. This is because of four major constrains. There are differences of opinion on the ability of HR practices to deliver, rigidities between conflicting goals, HR is often already encouraging a practice for other reasons than stimulating innovation, and HR practices can be seen as being connected to innovation, the change has sometimes been led more by senior management than by HR.

Cook, Saini and Hocknull,(2010) in their study of innovation in Indian organizations viewed some more distinct HR policies and practices. They are itemized in the sequence of frequency whereby they were embraced as training and development, suggestion schemes, employee recognition awards, quality initiatives, performance appraisal, performance-related pay, performance/merit-based promotion, learning organization, employee engagement initiatives, knowledge management, employee welfare schemes, empowerment, management/leadership development, profit-sharing, career development planning; recruiting creative employees; and autonomy.

Bos-Nehles and Janssen (2015) synopsis the evidence and find 'an extensive literature' that indicates a 'positive link between HRM and innovation'. According to their cluster analysis result the theoretical foundations are learning and evolution; execution of innovation; and leadership, creativity and learning. Moreover, the clusters indicate studies on core concepts, knowledge and capability, learning for resource development and human resources for innovation (Fernandes, Galina and Dobelin,2018).

Innovative work behavior can be characterized as the deliberate creation, introduction and application of novel ideas inside a work role, group or organization, in order to advantage role performance, the group and the organization (Janssen, 2000). Bos-Nehles, Renkema, and Janssen (2017) said that employees have the ability to introduce innovations since they are in successive connection with processes and products and can diagnose modifications and opportunities for fresh developments. Notwithstanding innovation merely happens if employees dedicate in activities aimed at creating and executing ideas.

Constantly innovation is viewed as the outcome of corporation and team work (Van Looy, Martens, and Debackere, 2005). Notwithstanding, innovation is vastly in the hand of individuals in organizations; individuals play a major role in every innovation since they are the holders and processors of ideas (Van de Ven, 1986).

## Conclusion and Recommendation

Anchored in the theoretical and empirical evidence, the study confirms the needs well thought out of human resource management practices for creating innovative workforce in any organizations. HR can contribute to innovation efforts in organizations along a wide spectrum. Without human resources and their devotion in an organization, innovation would be impossible. Hence, it is obvious that the employees play a crucial important role when considering about innovation. In addition, the present study warrants the application of the corporate principles of driving out process and ensuring its ideal policies and practices that foster innovation.

It has been diagnosed that building and reinforcing employees' job involvement and organizational commitment would energize the ability to gain competitive advantage and to ensure superior work performance. Notwithstanding this can be achieving merely through formulating and implementing strategic innovative HRM policies and practices. For intense, organization should create the relevant and viable work atmosphere for successive learning and innovation. Moreover, Managers should consistently have the foresight regarding advances in technology to determine how these changes can enable innovation in their organizations.

Wide range of new HR innovative practices can be harnessed to foster innovation such like, improving and impacting culture and employee wellbeing, employee engagement soft wares, gamification, peer-to-peer recognition, mental health coaching, holistic view of employees, personalization, focus on immersive learning and development, remote-friendly work arrangements, develop mentorship programs to engage employee participation, create new feedback and evaluation Standards to develop employees, rethinking the standard workspace to keep things intriguing, introduce AI to enhance HR operations, and improve their work-life experience.

The present study has many practical implications per se. First, the management and the practitioners should reinforce the best HRM practices promoting a creative and innovation workplace atmosphere. Second, the future research scholars should empirically proof the relationship between HRM practices and innovation across many organizations and different cultures. Further, the present study also lays emphasis on the importance of HRM practices in recruiting and recruiting prospective candidates. Finally, it behooves HR managers and practitioner to design the best strategies to retain talents for longer.

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