HRD Culture in Higher Educational Institutions of India: An Empirical Study

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Abstract:
Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) are facing challenges to attract and retain talented and competent workforce in a competitive technological, digital and industry 4.0 environments in India. HRD Culture is one of the important factors that influence the sustainable growth and success of these HEIs and a collective behavior of human resources towards the organizational norms, beliefs, values, and structure and HR practices. The present study has been undertaken to identify the important factors of HRD culture among the staff of select HEIs. Both primary and secondary data has been used in the study. The secondary data was collected through self developed questionnaire consisting of 16 items through survey method technique. The findings revealed that the four dimensions identified for the study i.e. Climate, HR practices, Commitment for Quality and Human Relations are fully measuring the HRD culture of these HEIs. The line managers chosen for population study of select HEIs are satisfied with HRD climate, HR practices, Commitment for Quality but partially satisfied with good Human Relations. The top management of these HEIs could use these work values and practices for distinctive and dynamic culture for the organizational effectiveness for optimum utilization of human resources. The study is limited to the select HEIs in India. The results of the study will add value in the field of HRD culture in the Institutions of higher Learning and enrich the knowledge of the policy makers to devise suitable strategies for improvement.

I. INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Development (HRD) is the most studied and emerged area of concern in Business organizations including Institutions of Higher Learning. HRD is a shared belief and process in which the members of the organization develop and involve a strategy by linking employees' growth and organization development (Dayal, 1989). Dayal also suggested that as per man-centered approach, HRD is a philosophy that has been shared by the management. The first and foremost responsibility is to train and develop its employees. The HRD policies and practices related to employees govern personnel and their welfare scheme.

Culture is the shared belief and values. This belief governs the employees in the workplace, their welfare activities for achievement of individual as well as organizational goals through work practices, policies and structure. For the management of better work culture, human contact and touch in managing people is must (Mishra &Misra, 1994). Therefore, the factors of HRD Culture such as trust, transparent communication, interpersonal relations and employee welfare are accorded top priority as reported by (Hassan et al., 2006). This belief enhances the discipline and supervision among the members and the management.

In the changing digital economy and industry 4.0 technologies, organization are increasingly competitive by developing human competencies which enable the employees to respond quickly and efficiently to organizational needs (Spangenberg et al., 1999). Performance of academic institutions can be measured in terms of "what are the goals we set and what are we able to achieve efficiently and effectively" (Liebetruth, 1997).

Today HEIs in India have become beacon of knowledge and provide talent and future leaders to the

business world not limited to India but across the globe. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the HRD Culture of these institutions. Keeping in mind, the Government of India is creating Institutions of Excellence with World Class infrastructure across the regions. In the transformation process, these HEIs require autonomous governance, focused funding and oversight, based on independent outcomes like Global Rankings. The overall contribution of these institutions for the intellectual, social and economic growth in the post independence era cannot be ignored. To become competitive, they require striving for matching their performance with the International standards. To achieve world class standards, these Institutions have to adopt the effective HR practices so that to transform its human resources as valuable human capital. Being the people centric institutions with the mandate of determination, coordination and maintenance of standards, they need to promote access, equity, quality, research and excellence in their performance which is directly attributed to HRD Culture of these Institutions.

There has been a remarkable growth of HEIs with 20 Universities and 500 Colleges since independence with the intake of 2.1 lakh students. Now there has been tremendous growth of 993 universities and 39931 Colleges, 10725 Standalone Institutions with the enrolment of 37.4 million with 14.16 Lakh teachers as on 31st March 2019. India's higher education is the third largest system in the world followed by China and the United States. Out of 993 Universities, 385 are privately managed, 47 are Central Universities, 298 are affiliating Universities with colleges attached to it. The 47 centrally funded Higher Educational Institutions or Central Universities are established by the Parliament of India with a specific mandate of dissemination of knowledge by providing teaching, research and development facilities, running courses in inter-disciplinary studies, and establish standards in the innovative practices of teaching-learning. As per the mandate given by the Government of India, these HEIs are supposed to be the Centres of Excellence and to play a key role in all round development of the society.

This study will be helpful to channelize the skills and competencies of the university staff and bring quality in their functioning and execution of university affairs and it will support these HEIs in realising the vision to match their performance with the globally ranked universities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The culture has been one of the most studied dimensions due to its critical role in the context of organization development (Bollinger & Hofstede, 1987; Lopes &Reto, 1990; Quinn, 1991; Ferreira & Hill, 2008). The culture is developed with the values, rituals, traditions and beliefs of the organizations. It gives uniqueness and identity to the organizations. One can feel the DNA of the organization through its values and mutual assumptions jointly shared by its members. The stakeholders and its newly joined staff can feel the culture through its way and style of functioning. The culture enhances the ability, efficiency and capacity of the employees and the employers (Koch &Grath, 1996). Without the understanding of the organization and its functioning, it is difficult to work and take decisions on the problems such as arises due to merger and acquisitions and the risk of welcoming new institutions into the education sector.

Due to globalization, many foreign universities are entering in Indian education sector and posing challenges to Indian Education System for taking strategic decisions for improvement of university culture. To make the HRD Culture robust and innovative, the benchmarking is considered as a fundament tool for strategic thinking. The HRD concept as conceived by (Dr. Gurkhoo, 2019) is related to three core areas of humans as an individual or in a group form, the resources (tangible or intangible) that form the human development and these developments become the human capital when their competencies are developed. HRD climate refers to the concern of top management about the employees' development by providing the congenial work environment, freedom for experimentation, openness, team spirit, trust and welfare of employees (Hassan et al., 2005).

In a research study undertaken by (Hassan et al, 2006) in eight (ISO and non ISO) companies (n=239) to examine the role of HRD Practices on the organization climate of workers development. They found moderate climate and structural differences in HRD practices prevailing in different organizations. In quality oriented companies, higher means are found in comparison to non ISO Companies on some variables. The learning institutions promote the HR climate of employee development through the system of training, building capacities, recognition and information network. The quality culture is measured on the basis of career planning and development, guided performance and role

adequacy.

Singh (2005) conducted a comparative study of private and public sector organizations in India to examine the relationship of HRD Practices and beliefs of top management. He found that HR Practices (recruitment, planning and selection) are highly but negatively correlated in private sector institutions as they are working on the traditional philosophies of management such as managerial control. As the new management ideologies evolved, the old HR Practices as stated by (Barley &Kunda, 1992) never disappeared but new images and practices are central to the organizations even to the public sector organizations (considered as welfare institutions) due to competitive environment. The key issues emerged from the study found that the organizations have to change the culture which should be sensitive to employees existence and need to transform the workplace.

A study conducted by (Zairi, 1998) emphasizes to adopt world class HR practices of quality and excellence for optimizing the levels of employee performance so that the potential and capacity can be fully utilized.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As the HRD Culture consists of the management of human resources in the context of internal environment such as vision/mission/goals, structure, size, processes, practices, climate and external environment such as competition and quality, various models in this context (suggested by Tiwari &Saxena, 2012) are being considered for the instant study.

Harvard Model

This model is based to guide the management of human relations on various levels of employees and focus on the soft touch of human aspect. It concentrates on employee involvement and commitment, cost effective and competitive model and not based on control system (Beer et al., 1984).

Michigan Model

This model is referred by (Fombrum et al., 1984) focuses on hard touch and considering the humans like other resources while appointing on low cost and trained while using sparingly and exploit them fully as in the context of industry workers. Employees were compensated on the basis of selection, trained and rewarded on the basis of performance and appraisal system.

Guest Model

As conceived originally by (Guest, 1997) is based on strategic management of innovation, quality focus, cost effective and training to distinctive staff like managers.

Warwick Model

This model is focused on change and strategy developed by (Hendry & Pettigrew, 1990). It concentrates on the diagnostic path for developing the culture of human resources by identifying the internal and external organizational environment.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An empirical tool is developed to measure the work culture by assessing the subjective quality of working life of university's employees. To map the work culture, more than 300 samples through random sampling technique of the staff of select higher educational institutions were collected. Only the line managers among the targeted institutions were chosen for the study. On the basis of exhaustive literature review, a self administered questionnaire of 16 items on a three point likert scale keeping the terms from agree-2, partially agree -1 and disagree – 0 was prepared. The content of the questions was tested through the experts from industry and academia. The method of Survey Research is the most powerful cost effective technique to collect the samples from the key staff of line managers (Draugalis et el. 2008) especially to conduct the study for your own modified survey by (Salant and Dillman, 1994). Data was collected through random sampling technique. The questionnaires were distributed and collected physically by the researcher from the target respondents and ethically who volunteer to share the information. After continuous extraneous efforts, the researcher was able to get the sufficient samples. The sample wise data was transformed in .xls and .sav sheets in SPSS IBM version 20. After testing the reliability and the validity of the questionnaire, four dimensions were created through component varimax method. These identified dimensions were climate, HRD systems, commitment for quality and human relations. Psychometric properties found well and on acceptable limits. The mean score found satisfactory.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

On testing the questionnaire, the HRD Culture questionnaire was found valid and reliable with high Chronbach Alpha .923 and KMO value .857 at significant level of .000 which is better than the desired values

(Nunnally, 1978). Through the Factor analysis on SPSS 22.0 version, fourdimensions were inherited from the 16 items and exhibited in Fig.1 on conceptual model. These dimensions were defined as HRD Climate, HRM Practices, Commitment for Quality and Human Relations.
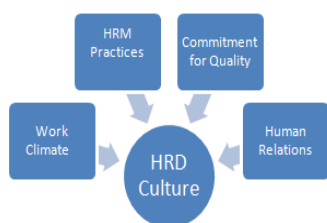

Fig.1   Conceptual Model for HRD Culture in Higher Educational Institutions

The first factor identified for the study was 'HRD Climate' which is an important factor and relates to the internal environment which affects the surrounding environment and creates healthy, safe, motivating and productive work environment and promotes efficiency (Jabasingh, 2014).As shown in Table-1 the factors of Climateplays a pivotal role in motivation and development of competencies of the employees. The system of work, the design of jobs, the working conditions, sharing of common vision/goal, openness, team orientation and cooperation is regarded as motivation climate. The culture of openness means you are willing to try new things, listen to new ideas and open for tolerance ambiguity and change (Warren Bennis, 1989). The healthy work climate increases the likelihood of their employees. They are committed to the organizations and show the positive attitude towards their job responsibilities and deliver a message that 'it is the best place to work'.

In a study undertaken by (Rodrigues and Lewlyn, 2004) on correlates of HRDC dimensions revealed that the teaching staff is satisfied with the HRD climate in the engineering institutions.   The culture of safety and security received higher rating as compared to training and development and interpersonal relationships.

Table-1: Culture Dimension - HRD Climate

	Factor	Factor loadings
Hrdc1	Healthy, safe & motivating	.610
Hrdc2	Clear cut policies and guidelines	.669
Hrdc3	Productive work	.673
Hrdc4	Sharing common perspective	.699
Hrdc5	Openness	.691
Hrdc6	Team orientation	.790
Hrdc7	Staff cooperation	.626

The second factor enumerated from the study was 'HRM Practices' as exhibited in Table-2. The Institution is generally committed to attract and retain talented staff and enforces proper control and discipline over the staff, performance of the employees are continuously evaluated and open feedback mechanism on the performance appraisal is adopted in my institution, risk taking in decision making process is generally encourages by the seniors, work is allotted as per the capacity and competency, proper coordination exists in all the sections, branches, departments of the institution and the staff proud to work for the institution as the work derives the employee to go to extra mile in achieving the objective. Work values influence the attitude and behavior and working pattern of the managers. Their goal is to get the things done through other people. This can be held possible by good relationship between the managers and staff. Hence work practices value the HRD Culture.

Table -2 : Culture Dimension – HRM Practices

	Factor	Factor loadings
Hrmp1	control and discipline	.698
Hrmp2	performance appraisal & feedback system	.695
Hrmp3	risk in decision making	.496

Hrmp4	Capacity & competency	.736
Hrmp5	Coordination in all departments	.589
Hrmp6	Work involvement	.621

The third factor identified for the study was 'Commitment for Quality' as exhibited in Table-3. Based on the organizational goals, the tasks are identified and assigned to the working groups and teams. These teams collectively develop action plans and strategies to accomplish these tasks. On the basis of strategies to achieve the goals, the employee's performance is evaluated that specify their intended contribution for the success of an organization/university. These goals results the focus for work, development, evaluation and assessment of performances. To achieve these goals, the organizations foster a culture of commitment, control and support, development, teamwork and innovations through new ideal and risk taking and a commitment for capability and quality improvement.

Table-3: Culture Dimension – Commitment for Quality

	Factor	Factor loadings
CoQ1	Commitment of quality improvement	.698
CoQ 2	Commitment of capability improvement	.695

The fourth factor enumerated for the study was 'Human Relations at Workplace' as exhibited in Table-4. The interpersonal relations depend upon the structure and processes of the organization as to how people interact with each other, how the communication and its style flow and how power relationships are defined (Hall, 1987). The organizational structure reflects the choices based on value system of the company (Quinn, 1988). Human relations directly affect the employees' abilities and drive to success. Competitive processes give rise to cooperation and collaboration and make relations effective but sometimes lead to conflict within groups. The values of effective human relations influence the attitude and behavior of the managers. Managers' aim is to plan and get the work done from the subordinates. The subordinates function with the cooperation with their peers while sharing of data and information. If the relations are good, the tasks and activities will be carried out smoothly and effectively by the organizational

members. Therefore, the culture that values human relations influences to achieve the goals and organizational success positively.

Table-4: Culture Dimension – Human Relations at Workplace

	Factor	Factor loadings
Hrw1	Relations between seniors and subordinates	.753

The mean and standard deviation of the HRD Climate (M=1.56, S.D. .439), HRM Practices (M=1.42, S.D.=.455) and Commitment for Quality orientation (M=1.70, S.D.= .462) and Human Relations is found as (M=1.60, S.D.= .529). The results revealed that the target respondents are satisfied with the HRD Climate, Commitment for Quality orientation and Human Relations but partially satisfied with the HRM practices prevailing in these institutions.

VI. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Managers at all levels should be trained to improve their skills to resolve problems, manage conflict resolution and delegation of powers and responsibilities. The HR practices of quality and excellence optimize the employees performance levels so that the human's potential can be fully exploited. The managers should keep in touch with the latest developments of good HR practices. Previous systems and traditions of the organization should be given importance while framing new policies for employees' welfare.

VII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

Very few studies on HRD Culture of work values and work practices in the Indian context were carried out. This study made a novel attempt in this direction especially in higher education system which is under the transformation stage for quality and excellence. Research on other valuable factors on structure, size, vision, goals and leadership and the causal effect of performance and

satisfaction may be considered for future studies. The investigatedkey factors can also be studied further by the future researchers in other educational institutions.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The HEIs should make their HRD Culture robust through innovative best HR practices with dedication so that they keep themselves ahead of their competitors. They should cultivate the culture of human resource development through competitive advantage, commitment for quality and excellence, goodhuman relations, freedom in work and employee satisfaction by evolving smart IT enabled university campuses. The HR practices should be monitored and analyzed from time to time through their employee surveys and strong need to involve the line managers while designing and devising the employee oriented policies.

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