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A Study on HRM as a Change Agent in Digital Transformation in the Business Administration Sector in Pune, India

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ABSTRACT

In the present digital age, organizations are embracing new technologies at a fast pace to enhance performance and remain competitive. Technology, however, cannot guarantee success employee engagement and change management are also crucial. This study examines the contribution of Human Resource Management (HRM) as a change agent to facilitate digital change in the business administration sector. The study is centered on how HR practices such as training, communication, and leadership support contribute to employee preparedness and organizational success. Data were gathered from 50 employees and HR professionals in sample firms using a structured questionnaire. The results indicate that proactive HR intervention results in improved employee adaptability and smoother digital changes. The study also identifies key challenges such as the absence of training, inadequate communication, and resistance from employees. Statistical software such as T-tests and regression was employed to verify the correlation between HR efforts and transformational outcomes. The results validate the hypothesis that HR is a major driver of successful digital change. This work offers valuable insights for industry, policymakers, and scholars on how to develop HR strategies in digital times

KEY WORDS: Human Resource Management (HRM), Change Agent, Digital Transformation, Business Administration, Employee Readiness.

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving environment, adopting new technologies offers numerous benefits to companies looking to improve their productivity and remain competitive in the market. This process is referred to as digital transformation. It encompasses automation, artificial intelligence, and cloud systems, which all accelerate and enhance effectiveness in the workplace. However, this cannot be all about technology, for any organization to be successful, acceptance and adaptability to change is a prerequisite. In any organization, the human resource department handles these issues and plays an essential role in the changes that are taking place.

We can agree that HRM has grown beyond employee recruitment, selection, and retention. It has added value by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations in coping with change. During transitions, processes as problem resolution, employee motivation, and providing appropriate training need to be tackled by HR. In the era of business service delivery, the HR function becomes critical because service delivery almost wholly relies on people and their skills. Digital transformation is more successful with strong HR leadership during transitions.

HRM minimizes change-related fears, enhances inter-team communication, and fosters a culture of curiosity and innovation among employees willing to learn as a change agent. Addressing employee concerns in strategies aligned with digital objectives alongside leaders is part of an HR professional's role. This study will examine relevancy of the above mentioned functions of HR

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. In what ways does the Human Resources department assist staff in adapting to new technological changes within the organization?
2. What are the challenges with regard to human resources that arise when attempting to implement digital changes within the company's structure?
3. Which strategies and mechanisms does the human resource department utilize to ensure that the processes involved in the digital transformation are streamlined and accomplished efficiently?
4. What is the influence of Human Resources on digital change as to how it impacts the productivity and morale of workforce?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Reilly (2003)** : The human resource (HR) department plans and prepares employees for future changes driven by technology. The focus is on training and skill development.
- **Khan et al. (2018)** : There is no need to purchase new technologies; a shift in mindset is required. This culture is instilled through training and support provided by HR.
- **Mahmut Demir (2020)** : In the case of government agencies, the HR department spearheads a digital transformation by providing guidance to employees. Communication and instruction are the primary functions.
- **Bersin (2017)** : The use of technology for things such as e-learning and workforce analytics should be incorporated in HR practices. These facilitate change and help in enhancing performance.
- **Parry & Battista (2019)** : Change is often met with resistance from employees. HR takes measures to ensure that fears of change are mitigated. Participation through training and open dialogue instills a sense of inclusion.

RESEARCH GAP

Citation	Research design	Objectives	Key findings / limitations
Reilly (2003)	Qualitative Conceptual	To explore workforce planning in changing environments.	HR is key to future planning but lacks focus on digital skills and tools.
Khan et al.(2018)	Empirical / Case Study	To study the role of HR in developing digital culture.	HR helps build a digital mindset, but study limited to IT firms only.
Mahmut Demir (2020)	Survey / Public Sector Analysis	To analyse HR's role in e-government initiatives.	HR supports communication and training, but lacks data from the private sector.
Bersin (2017)	Analytical / Industry Report	To discuss how digital tools can improve HR performance.	Suggested use of digital HR tools, but lacks real-world testing or company-level cases.
Parry & Battista (2019)	Mixed Method	To identify employee resistance in digital transformation.	HR can reduce resistance, but the study used a small sample size and focused on Europe.

Table no. 01 Research Gap

Conceptual Model

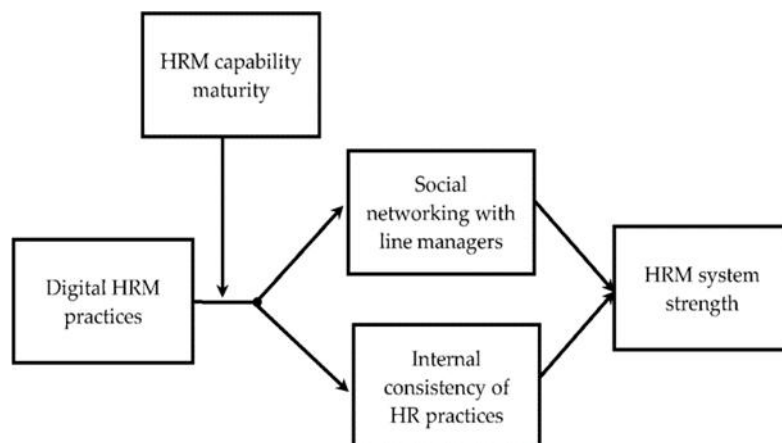


Fig no . 1 Conceptual Model

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Digital change is becoming essential for all organizations which aspire to develop and compete in today's rapidly changing globe. Most businesses are implementing new technology such as automation, cloud computing, and digital tools to enhance their operations. However, introducing new technology is not sufficient humans have to be prepared to operate it. Human Resource Management (HRM) is instrumental in making employees

aware of and accepting changes. HR leads employees through training, open communication, and encouragement to minimize fear or uncertainty. This study explores the role of HR as a change agent and driving effective digital transformation in the work environment.

- HRM serves as an intermediary between management and employees during digital transitions.
- HR assists personnel with digital training and fosters a positive mindset toward new technologies.
- By enhancing communication and lessening resistance, HR facilitates seamless transformation.
- A robust HR role enhances employee self-confidence, satisfaction, and performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

a. Method

There is a mixed method used in this study that combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches to better understand the role of HRM as a change agent in digital change.

Quantitative Method:

There will be a structured questionnaire that will be used to gather data from HR professionals and employees. The data will be analyzed employing statistical tools such as percentages, charts, and tables to identify trends and patterns.

b. Sampling Technique

This research employs a convenience sampling technique, whereby respondents are chosen based on their willingness and availability to participate.

The population consists of HR experts and employees from business administration organizations who engage in digital transformation processes

c. Variable Description

Variable Type	Variable	Description
Independent	HRM Practices	Training, communication, leadership, and digital tools utilized by HR.
Mediating	HRM as a Change Agent	The function of HR in leading, guiding, and managing workers through change.
Dependent	Digital Transformation Success	Indicates the extent to which the organization succeeds in digital endeavors and enhancements.
Moderating	Employee Readiness for Change	Represents the degree to which workers are prepared and willing to embrace digital transformation.
Control	Organization Type / Sector	Business administration sector context applied to control and target the study.

Table no. 02 Variable description

d. Sample Size

Total Firms: 2 business administration companies

Respondents: Respondents will be HR experts and employees who are directly engaged in digital transformation activities in their organizations.

50 respondents shall be chosen through convenience sampling, depending on their availability and willingness to take part in the study.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire reveals that HR professionals are making greater use of digital tools in recruitment, and most respondents testified to regular use. However, one of the greatest challenges is the lack of skills and budgetary constraints preventing easy digital change. Respondents believe that HRM needs to invest more in training, support, and re-orienting the mindsets of employees to make easy digital change. Access to and knowledge of technology are a big hindrance, especially in developing regions. Despite these limitations, most respondents are keen on using pre-existing HR digital models. This indicates that HRM has great potential to act as a change agent in enabling digital change in firms.

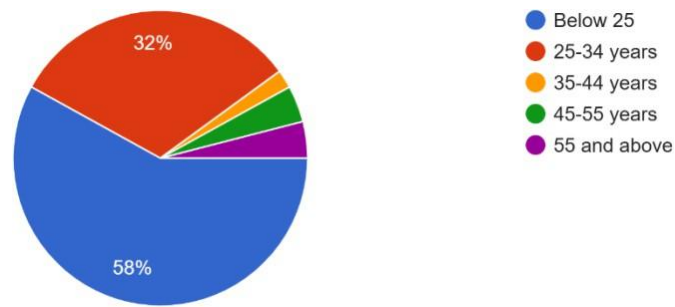


Figure. No. 2 Showing Demographic profile of responded

Interpretation

The majority of the respondents, 58%, are aged below 25, indicating that the survey was dominated by youth. The second place category, 32%, is aged between 25 and 34, indicating moderate response from young working adults. There is very little response from the categories 35–44, 45–55, and aged 55 and above, indicating minimum response from old groups. This data shows a trend of a youthful population in the responses.

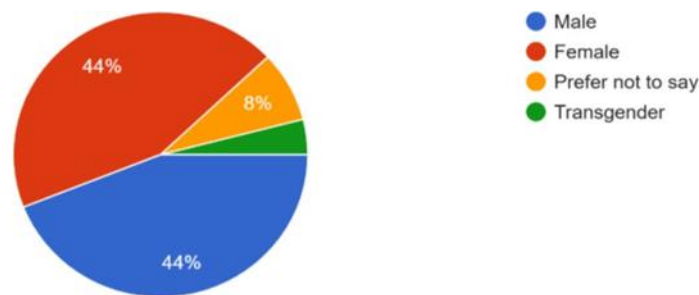


Fig No.3: Showing gender representation

Interpretation

Both male and female respondents are represented in equal measure, with both having 44% representation among the total population. 8% did not wish to disclose their gender, while an infinitesimally small percent are transgender. This shows a balanced presence of male and female respondents, with a slight representation of gender diversity.

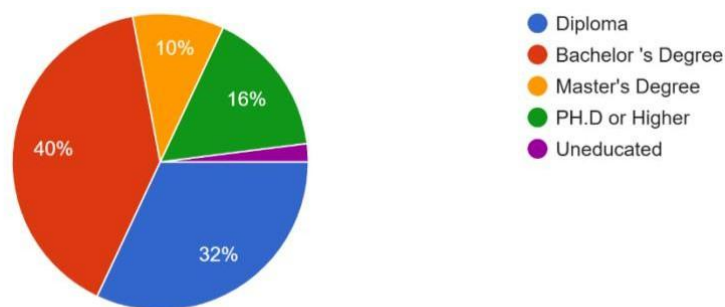


Fig No.4: Showing Education Qualification

Interpretation

The greatest proportion, 40%, have a Bachelor's degree, followed by 32% with a Diploma. About 16% have a Ph.D. or higher, and 10% have a Master's degree. Few participants are illiterate. By and large, the findings reveal that the participants are highly educated, with a large proportion of graduates and diploma holders.

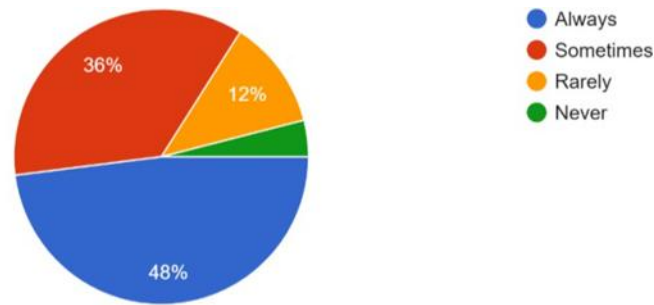


Fig No.5: Showing often are digital tools used in hiring

Interpretation

The majority, 48%, responded that digital tools are always used in hiring, and 36% responded that they are used sometimes. Only 12% responded that they are used seldom, and an extremely low 4% responded that digital tools are never used. This suggests that digital hiring tools are used in general, with the majority of organizations using them always.

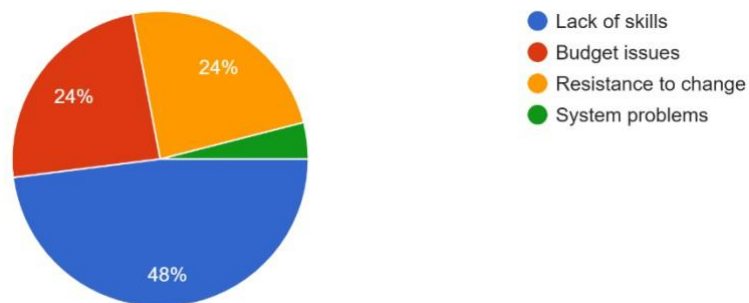


Fig No.6: Showing the biggest challenge in using digital HR

Interpretation

The most significant challenge, according to 48% of the respondents, is the shortage of skills. Budget, resistance to change, and each of these were mentioned by 24% of the respondents. System issues were the greatest challenge according to a mere 4% of the respondents. This indicates that skill gaps remain the most significant challenge to effective application of digital HR.

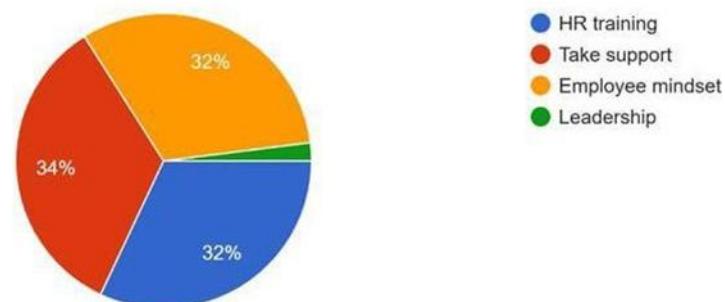


Fig No.7: Showing area needs more focus for better digital HR

Interpretation

Most, 34%, believe that sufficient support is most important. HR training and attitude also rank as equally important areas, each attracting 32% of the vote. Only 2% of the respondents are of the opinion that leadership must take priority. What this indicates is that reviving support systems, training, and attitude building are essential to the success of digital HR.

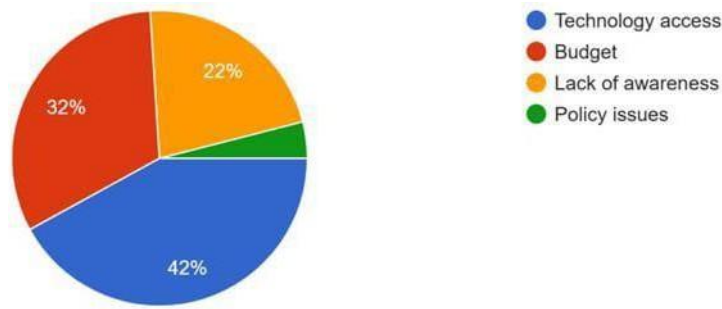


Fig No.8: Showing the barrier to digital HR in developing countries

Interpretation

The greatest challenge, 42%, is limited access to technology. Budget constraints are also among the greatest challenges, 32%. Second, 22% claimed lack of awareness, but only 4% claimed policy challenges. The chart shows that finance and technology constraints are the greatest hurdles to digital HR adoption for these regions.

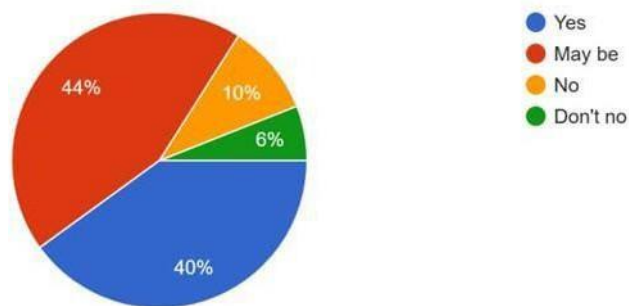


Fig No.9: Showing use a ready-made HR digitalization framework

Interpretation

A 44% of the majority responded with "Maybe", and 40% responded positively with "Yes". Only 10% responded with "No", and only 6% with "Don't know". This shows that although most are ready to adopt such frameworks, there is still some hesitation or need for further information before a final choice can be made.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusion

There remains a disconnect in HRM as a change agent of digital transformation in business administration. Organizations that identify HR proactively and engage them in digital planning, training, and communication with employees have enhanced performance and an easier transition. Strong HR function combined with successful strategic programs and employee engagement are the catalysts for successful digital transformation.

B. Limitations

It is limited to a few Pune-based business administration firms, and therefore the findings cannot be applied to other regions or sectors.

Data are cross-sectional, not accounting for long-term effect. They are subjective and may have personal bias.

C. Implications for Industry:

- Firms should actively involve HR in digital transformation by giving them leadership, training, and communication tools.
- HR must carry out awareness sessions to minimize resistance to new systems.
- Provide incentives and support to organizations adopting digital HR practices and technologies. Market digital skill-building courses to HR professionals for government.
- Promote further field research on the strategic position of HR in digital transformation within industries. Encourage comparative study of technology industries and human industries for academia.

D. Future Recommendations

Incorporate digital transformation training as a routine component of HR development programs.

Apply digital HR technology (e-learning, analytics, feedback systems) to track progress. Promote partnerships with digital advisors or platforms to enable HR-led change in small and medium-sized organizations.

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