

# Analyses of the Problems & Prospects of Human Resource Development in Developing Countries & Pakistan

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## Abstract

Human Resource Development (HRD) is one of the major issues being faced by developing countries in general and Pakistan in particular. HRD needs financial resources and technical capability which is almost nil in the development countries due to their economic backwardness. On the other hand, HRD play vital role in the economic development and prosperity of the nation because they HR is the hand, mind and eyes of the modern industrial societies. This short communication and review examined and analyzed the problems and prospects of HRD in Pakistan and come up with the conclusions that Pakistan must devise long term human resource development strategy to have far-reaching impact on Pakistan's sustained development. Likewise, developing managerial orthodoxy now posits the need of re-engineering of the organizations towards 'flat' hierarchical structures, an enlargement of job tasks and job autonomy, ideally centered on work teams.

**Keywords:** HRD, Problems, Prospects, Developing countries, Pakistan

## 1. Introduction

Human resource development (HRD) is widely recognized as the hallmark of human resource management (HRM) (Dawn, 2004). Modern organizations in public, private, NGOs and social sectors recognize the role and indispensability of HRD in creating, maintaining and benefiting from the increased performance of their workforce by establishing a well-structured development program (ILO, 2006).

Although, a report says "South Asian countries achieved remarkable results through human development as it is appreciated in The Human Development Report published in 1998 (Muzaffar, 2004)." It is however, very difficult to develop and implement well-equipped human development programs in the developing countries like Pakistan. In Pakistan, there are several problems, which hinder in the way of thinking about HRD and devising methods to invest in this aspect of the state resource.

The HRD problems have global as well as national and local dimensions. That is, some of the global problems are universal but many relate to the national and local conditions or context (Cheema, 2004). It is therefore, thinkable that unless national and local factors are identified, studied and analyzed the development and established of a customized human resource development program will be a wish list than real agenda.

For example, "while the cycle highlights the pivotal place of development, context will limit and constrain the design of policies, their implementation and the extent to which the HRD elements of the cycle can be integrated in reality (Bratton & Gold, 1999:275)." Likewise, ILO (2006) suggests that HRD is the development of people through education and training in a *national context* as well as within enterprises. HRD in an integrated sense also encompasses health care, nutrition, population policies and employment.

## 2. The Problems

Given both global and national dimensions of the HRD issues and prospects, every HRD policy has to be based on the recognition, analysis and due evaluation of several factors so that a customized HRD program could be envisaged and implemented effectively. Following are the major aspects of the topic in hand:

**2.1 Globalization:** One major trend with implications for HRD is globalization. It is fostered not only by technological change and the continually falling costs of communication and transport but also by the decisions of developing countries in Asia and the Pacific and elsewhere to embrace market oriented development strategies and to open their countries increasingly to the world economy. The world is thus fast becoming one interdependent global market place (ILO, 2006).

**2.2 Economic Restructuring:** Economic restructuring by countries with changing comparative advantage will be

another trend. Enterprises will also restructure regularly in the increasingly competitive marketplace as they seek to secure a competitive edge over their rivals. Thus as China moves into labor intensive manufacturing, it will compete with countries like Indonesia, and Thailand which will have to adjust by moving into medium technology manufacturing. Such restructuring will necessitate changes in education and training both at macro and enterprise levels.

**2.3 Changing Organizational Structures/Work Patterns:** Changing organizational structures and work patterns are another trend. The company of the future, according to Charles Handy, will be a shamrock organization. The shamrock organizations will have the following three elements:

1. a small and essential core group of professionals, technicians and managers;
2. a group of sub-contractors who produce goods and services which the core group does not have to; and
3. a growing group of temporary and part-time workers who are hired to provide specialized services or to help at peak workloads.

**2.4 Rapid Knowledge Obsolescence:** The exponential growth of knowledge and the rapid change of science and technology is another global trend. Knowledge is doubling every 7-10 years. The resultant relatively rapid obsolescence of knowledge and skills have implications for HRD. The Week-End Australian newspaper contacted education experts in a range of fields to estimate the shelf-life of Australian undergraduate degrees. The shelf-life of the degrees were estimated as follows:

- 1 year for computer science
- 2 years for electrical engineering
- 3 years for accounting and general medical practice
- 4 years for business
- 5 years for civil engineering and biotechnology
- 10 years for dentistry and surgery
- 15 years for architecture.

### 3. The Prospects

The research asserts that the education and training issues and challenges must be dealt with from the perspective of employers and their organizations (ILO, 2006). As identified by Bratton & Gold (1999:274) that by using the basic HRM cycle (selection, performance, appraisal, reward & HRD), one can identify and place new employees in appropriate training and development programs).

In 1999 SAARC countries established SAARC Human Resource Development Centre (SHRDC) with the aim to undertake research, impart training and disseminate information on HRD-related issues and Pakistan realizing the importance of human development, offered to host the centre of HRD in Islamabad. From 12-28 Sept 2003 a training course for poverty alleviation was organized by SHRDC, participants of this course were from; Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Nepal but India was conspicuously absent from training program. Course on vocational and technical education and training was also run by SHRDC in year 2003 (Muzaffar, 2004).

One major trend with implications for HRD is globalization. It is fostered not only by technological change and the continually falling costs of communication and transport but also by the decisions of developing countries in Asia and the Pacific and elsewhere to embrace market oriented development strategies and to open their countries increasingly to the world economy. The world is thus fast becoming one interdependent global market place (Cascio, 1997).

There is a range of training and development models that are suited to organizations' intentions in relation to their environment. They introduced two HRD training models a. ad hoc: Meeting HRD needs as they arise and b. Planned maintenance: HRD carried out to keep the organization in shape but not seen as making a central contribution (Fonda & Heyes, 1986).

To enlist workers' full potential and to produce behavior and attitudes considered necessary for competitive advantage requires three aspects for managerial control to change:

1. Organizational and job design,
2. Organizational culture and
3. Personnel policies (Bratton & Gold, 1999: 4).

### 4. Research Methods

Literature survey was carried out from the relevant sources of the existing research. ATLAS.ti, a computer based software was used for qualitative data analysis. The main concepts, variables and sentences were entered into ATLAS.ti for coding and extraction of quotes and memos. Experts in qualitative research use different tools e.g. examining, categorizing, tabulating and recombining for data analysis. In this study, we have used hermeneutics (James, 1992), discourse (Max, 1990) and heuristic (Moustakas, 1990) for data analyses to find the fact and to

draw conclusions from the data.

#### 4. Discussion

As international alliances become a competitive necessity, executives will need to be trained to make such collaboration successful. Often the success of such international alliances require skills in managing the people related issues involved with two enterprises, each with its own culture and operating systems and procedures, coming to work together (ILO, 2006). The HRM cycle demands for creating “an internal labor market with links to organization structure and strategy (Bratton & Gold, 1999:275).

Information technology and the advances in and the falling cost of telecommunications mean that it is no longer critical to site offices or companies near the customers. The workforce has become more mobile. One impact on work patterns that is emerging is relationship organizations or virtual corporations. A virtual corporation is an organization which uses information technology to link various independent companies, suppliers, customers and even competitors in a temporary organization to share skills and costs and access to one another's markets (Bratton & Geffery, 1999:4). The virtual organization has a very small core with many resources supported from the outside but without a physical set up (Cascio, 1997).

#### 5. Conclusions

President says human resource development strategy to have far-reaching impact on Pakistan's sustained development (President, 2004). No systematic study has been undertaken of the skills needed by enterprises in developing countries of Asia and the Pacific in the 21st century (ILO, 2006). The developing managerial orthodoxy now posits the need re-engineering of the organizations towards ‘flat’ hierarchical structures, an enlargement of job tasks and job autonomy, ideally centered on work teams.

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