Erudition and Learning: A Holistic Viewpoint of HRD

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Abstract

Erudition, education, training and development programmes promote learning and provide confidence in the learned person to apply his learning in the novel situation. Human resource development means to recognize the people as an important asset that contributes to the growth and development of business, in the same way as other physical assets contribute. HRD is a planned way of developing human resource. Human resource development is a system of developing in a continuous and planned way the competencies of individual employees, dyadic groups, teams and the total organization to achieve organizational objectives. Learning is a relatively enduring change in behaviour brought about as a consequence of experience. Change in behaviour may be both positive and negative thought the emphasis is placed on positive change. Development refers broadly to the nature and direction of change in employees through the process of training and education. The term HRD means those learning experiences which are organized, for a specified time, and designed to bring about the possibility of behavioural change. "Learning is the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and abilities that results in a relatively permanent change in behaviour".

Key words: Erudition, Training and Development, Learning, HRD

Introduction

Erudition, education and training promote learning and provide confidence in the leaned person to apply his learning in the novel situation. Education and training are means of learning which continue throughout human life enabling them to modify their behaviour more or less in a permanent way as a result of new perception, skill and other experience. Although learning is the common factor in among erudition, education and training programmes.

Human resource development (HRD) means to recognize the people as an important asset that contributes to the growth and development of business, in the same way as other physical assets contribute. Hence, human resource performance is always judged in terms of skills, expertise and abilities that result in higher efficiency, productivity, and lower cost. Globalization has created such an environment wherein it has become imperative for every organization to value and assess the human resources at every point and every stage. What has become inevitable is to harness and

develop the human resource or capital, which could contribute positively and constructively to the organization so that the organization could sustain its competitive advantage, which is sine-quo-non for survival of the organization.

HRD programs are divided into three main categories, viz., Erudition, Education, Training and Development. These three components are necessary in any organization for improving the quality of work of the employees at all levels, particularly in the scenario of the fast-changing technology, values, and environment.

i). Training is the act of increasing the knowledge and skill of an employee for doing a particular job. Training is a process of learning. Training is that part of leaning which essentially improves job related knowledge, skills and attitudes in a person and so can be said to be concerned with the work life of human beings. Training can also be explained as a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Its purpose in the work situation is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation.

ii). Development refers to a progressive series of changes in an orderly way. It is a process by which managerial personnel and the entire organization are helped to develop for future. Development involves acquisition of new capabilities - cognitive, affective and active. There are three behaviour dimensions involved in most of the capabilities. These are cognitive, affective and active. The 'Cognitive' dimension of a capability involves gaining of an understanding, knowledge, information and insight, in order to

perform the task. The 'Affective' dimension deals with gaining the motivation and desire to use the knowledge and understanding one has. The 'Active' dimension deals with the skill involved actually in performing the task. In the organizational context it involves, acquisition of capabilities (technical, managerial, behavioural and conceptual) that would enable a person to perform well the different functions associated with the role he is performing at a given point of time or the role he is likely to perform subsequently. For developing should himself be interested in developing his own capabilities.

iii). Education is concerned with increasing general knowledge and understanding of the total environment. Education is training people to do a different job. Education can only be evaluated when the learners move on to their future jobs or tasks. Education both formal and informal, is that part of learning which is concerned with developing general knowledge, understanding and background of our total environment and may continue throughout one's life. It can be defined as creating opportunities for individuals in societies to develop life-competencies, in order to cope with the changing world. It is an activity aimed at developing the knowledge, skill, values and understanding required in all aspects of life rather than knowledge and skill relating to only a limited field of activity. The purpose of education is to provide the conditions essential for young persons and adults to develop an understanding of the traditions and ideas influencing the society in which they live and to enable them to make a contribution to it. Without vision and flexibility in education, the people perish,

cultures perish, societies perish; as well as business perish.

Any development programme should have the following five objectives;

- To improve the job performance of the present position.

- To provide adequate cover in the event of un-expected short-term changes such as deaths, transfers, resignations or unanticipated developments.

- To raise the general level of thinking and understanding in all functions and at all levels in the organization.

- To provide supply of talent for the anticipated needs of future development. and,

- To extend the frontiers of knowledge in the understanding of management function.

The following have been identified as the important principles of development;

a) All development is self-development. It must be generated within the man himself. No amount of coercion can produce development in hostile or apathetic persons.

b) Development is highly individual. 'Einstein' expressed this thought by the phrase "uniqueness of the individual", there is no average man and no two people have exactly the same needs. There are many approaches to development, and different approaches work better with different types of persons.

c) Development of an individual is due to his day-to-day experience on the job. Therefore, one must emphasize the development of a man in his day-to-day work. Conversely, it is unwise for an individual to set his objectives too high or to concentrate on the job immediately above his own, if he has not satisfactorily mastered his present assignment.

d) Education is continuous. A person must strive constantly to improve himself using as many methods as possible. In other worlds, we need to "run hard to stand still in this changing world".

Significance of Erudition

Erudition is extensive knowledge acquired chiefly from books i.e., bookish learning. Erudition is nothing but learning, education, knowledge, scholarship, letters, lore, academic knowledge. Knowledge acquired by study, learning, instruction, and research. Erudition is the depth, polish and breadth that are applied to education from further readings and understanding of literary works. The Latin word education means to "lead out" from ignorance; hence an educated person has come to think critically and logically. An erudite person has both deep and broad familiarity with a certain subject, often gained through study and extensive reading of the subjects' literature rather than formal scholarship. For example a Lawyer is learned and knows the law intimately and thoroughly. A Lawyer who is also erudite may additionally know the history of the law in detail, as well as the laws of other culture.

Erudition the act of instructing; the result of thorough instruction; the state of being erudite or learned; the acquisitions gained by extensive reading or study; particularly; learning in literature or criticism. Education refers to the process of acculturating individuals

into the society. Erudition is the depth, polish and breadth that education confers. An erudite person has both deep and broad familiarity with general subject and is usually knowledgeable in a particular subject by virtue of study.

Employees are the most important and valuable resources of any organization. Dynamic employees can build progressive and growth-oriented organizations. Effective employees can contribute to the effectiveness of the organization. Competent and motivated employees can make things happen and enable an organization to achieve its goals. Therefore, organizations should continuously ensure that the dynamism, effectiveness, competency, and motivation of its employees remain at a high level. Human resource development is a continuous process to ensure the development of employee dynamism, effectiveness, competencies and motivation in a systematic and planned manner. HRD has multiple goals. These include employees' competency development and motivation development and organizational climate development.

HRD is a planned way of developing human resource. Human resource development is a system of developing in a continuous and planned way the competencies of individual employees, dyadic groups, teams and the total organization to achieve organizational objectives. It attempts at the maximization of congruence between individuals and organization and develops the organizational culture in which superior-subordinate relationships, teamwork and collaboration among various organizational units become strong.

HRD consists of these three Cs: Competencies, Commitment and Culture.

All these are needed to make an organization function well. Without Competencies, many tasks of the organization may not be completed cost-effectively or with optimal efficiency. Without commitment, they may not be done at all or are done at such a slow pace that they lose relevance. Commitment is indicated by work effort, zeal, involvement and enjoyment of the work or the job. Commitment building and its management are very much a human resource function. Without an appropriate culture, organizations cannot last long. Culture provides the sustaining force and spirit for organizations to live. It provides the oxygen needed for them to survive. Its utility comes to the fore especially when organizations are in trouble. HRD is nothing but human capability or competency development. Competency development are three parts i.e., technical competency, managerial competency, behaviour competency.

Human resource development in the organizational context is a process by which the employees of an organization are helped, in a continuous, planned way, to:

i). Acquire or sharpen capabilities required to perform various functions associated with their present or expected future roles;

ii). Develop their general capabilities as individuals and discover and exploit their own inner potentials for their own and organizational development purposes; and

iii). Develop an organizational culture in which superior-subordinate relationships, team work, and collaboration among sub-units are strong and contribute to the professional well-

being, motivation, and pride of employees.

HRD is a process, not merely a set of mechanisms. The mechanisms such as performance appraisal, counselling, training, and organizational development interventions are used to initiate, facilitate, and promote this process in a continuous way. Because the process has no limit, the mechanisms may need to be examined periodically to see whether they are promoting or hindering the process. Organizations can facilities this process of development by planning for it, by allocating organizational resources for the purpose, and by exemplifying an HRD philosophy that values human beings and promotes their development.

The HRD agenda should focus on helping the organization to achieve the competitive advantage and to cope up with the changes in a competitive environment. In essence, the HRD has a paramount role to play in making the industry better through superior quality or service, by being able to sense and satisfy customer requirements fast than competitors.

The world of business has undergone tremendous changes in the recent years. The era of control, regulations and restrictions have gone and paved way to an open economy. Liberalization, Globalization, Privatization have become the buzzword of today and the entire business seems to be going for these. New products are hitting the market every day, price is becoming an important factor in all purchase decisions, advertising blitz is sweeping the whole nation by storm, and attractive sales promotion schemes are luring the customers to the counter in all possible ways. Aggressive competition strategies are being adopted by companies each trying to outwit others and there seems to be a fierce battle going on for supremacy in the market place. The consequence of this turbulence in the market has resulted in shortening of the product life cycle, fragmentation of the market, and supply exceeding the demand. The rate of change in the market is clearly outstripping the rate of change in the companies. In such a changed competitive scenario, it is imperative that only those companies, which will be able to outsmart competition through better satisfaction of their customers, will be able to survive. This competitive superiority of a company to be able to sustain superiority in the market would be reflected as combination of superior customer value and lower delivery cost. These essential generic positional advantages would be derived from relative superiority in knowledge, skill and resources, business can deploy. To that extent it would be the competence of man power that would ultimately give the organization the competitive edge. And history of rise and downfall of different business enterprises have proved beyond an iota of doubt that it would be the "men behind the machine" or "people" whose competence would pronounce the success of failure of an organization.

A lot is being talked about Globalisation of Indian industries. The captions of industry and HRD professionals have been saying that Indian managers would have to be turned into international managers particularly in the context of MNCs coming to India. The Indian mind has always been cosmopolitan in character and Indians have been adjusting themselves to the various situations all over the globe with a great ease. It is thus expected that the Indian manager in the context of

globalization of the industry would not find it difficult to contribute effectively.

Major adjustment in the external and internal environments necessities organizational change. Once the need for change is recognized, the process of determining training, education, and development needs begin. After stating the process's objectives, management can determine the appropriate methods and media for accomplishing them. Various methods and media are available; the selection depends on the nature of HRD goals. Naturally, HRD must be continuously evaluated in order to properly facilitate change and accomplish organizational objective. The most common function of an HRD process revolves around training. Increasingly, training departments are being considered as profit centres. Training, as with al HRD function requires continuous revaluation.

The outcomes of HRD are four-fold, viz., to the organization, to the individuals, to the groups and to the society. HRD benefits the organization by developing the employees and make them ready to accept responsibilities, welcome change, adapt to change, enables the implementation of the programmes of total quality management, maintenance of sound human relations, and increase in productivity and profitability. The HRD also benefits individuals in achieving of potentials, increase in performance, fulfilling their needs and enhancing social and psychological status. The HRD helps the groups in the form of increase in co-operation, increase in collaboration and team effectiveness. Further, it helps the society in the form of developing human resource and increased contribution of human resource to the society.

Process of Learning

The term HRD means those learning experiences which are organized, for a specified time, and designed to bring about the possibility of behavioural change. "Learning is the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and abilities that results in a relatively permanent change in behaviour". Learning is a relatively permanent change in behaviour, it occurs as a result of practice or experience training. The term "learning experience" refers to purposeful or intentional learning, not incidental learning.

Learning is a relatively enduring change in behaviour brought about as a consequence of experience. Change in behaviour may be both positive and negative thought the emphasis is placed on positive change. Development refers broadly to the nature and direction of change in employees through the process of training and education. Thus, development also involves learning with positive consequence. More specifically, learning and development culture is the set of assumptions, beliefs, and norms about learning and development of employees that are commonly shared by organizational members. Senge has differentiated between adaptive learning and generative learning. Adaptive learning merely involves adaptation to environmental changes while generative learning embraces creativity and innovation and also relates to anticipation of environmental changes. Adaptive learning is single-loop learning that involves correcting errors against set norms.

Learning is a process which includes three phases-unfreezing, changing and refreezing. A trainee must be unfrozen before he can be influenced. All supports for the undesirable old

attitudes must be removed and the environment should be conditioned with the new attitudes to be acquired. Once the trainee has been unfrozen in attitudes areas in which e is strongly committed; the influence of the training programme is most likely to occur by one of the two processes-identification and internalization in identification the trainee finds one or two models in his social environment and learns new attitudes by identifying with them and trying to become like them. In internalization he confronts new situation with an experimental attitude and develops for himself attitude which are appropriate to the situation and which remove whatever problem he faces, his choice of attitude remains ultimately his own in terms of what works for him; given the situation in which he finds himself, refreezing refers to the process by which the newly acquired attitude comes to be integrated into the trainees personality and on-going relationships. If the new attitude has been internalising because it has been fitted naturally into the individual's personality if it has been learned through identification. It will persist only so long as the trainee's relationship with the original influence model persists unless new surrogate models are found or social support and reinforcement is obtained for expressions of the new attitude.

According to Management Guru Peter F. Drucker, "Knowledge is the only meaningful resource today". For, access to other resources is no longer limited. Crucially, it is the people who will bring knowledge into the organization and hence the importance of people in the new paradigm of business.

Principles of Learning

The employee's learning is an important process of human resource development. It is the process whereby employees learn the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours needed in order to perform their jobs effectively. The following principles should be followed if a training programme is to be effective.

- Learning must be need based
- Learning requires cooperation
- Learning results from experience
- Learning emotional and intellectual
- Learning can't be imposed
- Learning driven by learner's motivation
- Learning should be a goal-oriented
- Learning is a cumulative process
- Learning is closely related to attention and concentration

Learning Patterns

Trainers need some understanding of the patterns in which new skills are learned. The employee is likely to find himself unusually clumsy during the early stages of learning. This can be called discouraging stage. After the employee adjusts himself to the environment, he learns at the fast rate. A 'plateau' develops after the lapse of more training time due to a loss of motivation and lack of break in training schedule and time. The trainee reaches the next stage when he is motivated by the trainer and some break or pause in time and training process is given. The trainee at this stage learns at a fast rate. Special repetition of the course leads the trainee to reach the stage of over-learning. Learning rarely takes place at a constant

rate. It varies according to the difficulty of the task, ability of the individual and physical factors. However, the rate of learning varies from one individual to another.

Individuals can also learn by observing what happens to other people and just by being told about something, as well as by direct experiences. So, for example much of what we have learned comes from watching models- parents, teachers, peers, motion pictures, television performances bosses and so forth. We can learn this view both through observation and direct experience.

The Climate for Learning:

Conducive climate is highly essential for serious participation, attentiveness, creation of interest, and sincerity of learner. Climate for learning consists of working conditions, relationship with other trainers, and trainers/ instructors, conditions for relaxation, freedom, scope for social interaction, and formation of social groups.

Conducive climate for learning should be provided in view of its significance in training. It consists of ideal physical and psychological environment. Ideal physical environment, consisting of suitable locations with space, adequate accommodation, audio-visual aids, air conditioning, ventilation, lighting and other facilities like canteen, facilities for relaxation, should be provided. Ideal psychological environment, consisting business atmosphere, friendly environment, frequent communication, follow-up regarding performance and progress, enthusiastic, helpful and broad minded trainer etc., should be created and

provided. Provision for measuring learner's progress through tests should also be made in order to regulate, correct and follow-up the training programmes.

E-Learning

In the 'knowledge economy' people are expected to become proficient 'knowledge workers', performing effectively in virtual teams, while being both innovative and flexible. They are expected to network and share knowledge with their colleagues. A new generation of e-learning technology can now be readily harnessed to maximize employee performance, while making the appropriate knowledge available to them, in the right amount, at the time. E-learning (distance mode) technologies enable organizations to support the complete Human Value Cycle (HVC): recruit, assess, train, test, certify, and retain.

The key to e-learning success is maintaining a focus on everyone working in the organization, not just direct employees- modern organizations are an amalgam of employees, contractors, business partners, suppliers, etc. By putting the right combination of e-learning, collaboration, knowledge, communications and processing tools in the hands of employees, many of the barriers to high performance can be overcome.

E-learning tools ensure that a skills gap identified in one part of the solution can be met by tools in another. Similarly, e-learning management tools that support collaboration focus on one outcome-improving the performance of the workforce. High-performance organizations are innovators that invest in tools that will give them a competitive edge. They don't wait for widespread

business acceptance- they are the "early adopters". This early adopter mentality enables their employees to become more responsive to customers and more flexible.

Conclusion

The future strategic business plan of an industry will have major impact on human process in the context of challenges emerging out of global competition. Organizations that have world-class ambitions will need to nurture the leverage in the human resource for achieving competitive edge. The business compulsions will force the industry to adapt mechanism of fast decision making which will play a momentous role in the context of the challenges emerging from changes in business environment globally. Global competitiveness can be achieved not through the best technologies and plants, but by effectively harnessing the human resources to perform at global standards.

As a transition, the human resource function is beginning to play a role much broader in scope, much stronger in its impact, and much more permanent in its effect. The continuously rising need for competitiveness will influence continuously changing role boundaries for human resource management. The ability to learn faster than the competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage an organization will ever get. The organizations which will succeed in future will be those which adapt strategies to have major impact on human processes.

Successful organizations pay adequate attention to their HRD functions. If the full benefits of HRD are to be experienced, it must be introduced as a total system within the organization. In addition, the commitment of the top management to the HRD systems and its willingness to invest time and other resources is crucial; top management must make it obvious that the human resources of the organization are its most important resources. The values of openness, trust, mutually, collaboration, and enthusiasm within the system should be recognized by every member of the organization. If implemented properly, integrated HRD systems can contribute significantly to positive cultural changes, increased productivity, and excellence in organizations.

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