Guest editorial

Re-structuring HR practices and theories for organizational transformation and sustainability

Welcome to the special issue on Re-structuring HR practices and theories for organizational transformation and sustainability

Businesses are undergoing a sea change in the present era, with digital being a driving force of change across industries. The pace of digital disruptions destabilizes traditional organizational structures and asks for new ways and strategies to conduct the business and manage its people for better output (Almqvist and Skoog, 2006; Bresciani *et al.*, 2021). Change management is appearing as the most persistent bottleneck to digital transformation. As technology adoption needs an hour in all digital things, changes in leadership and talent attributes along with people management practices, are crucial to sustain and survive in the coming future (Rincon-Roldan and Lopez-Cabrales, 2021; April Chang and Chun Huang, 2005). The evolution of the new world will witness exponential use of technology in the workplace, which is fundamentally transforming the ways organizations used to operate (Seeck and Diehl, 2017). Implications of the digital economy are evident from organizations becoming flatter and decision-making leaner, increasing mobility and flexibility to stay relevant, digital megatrends ranging from cyber to blockchain, data, social and mobile technology, managing multi-general workforce from millennials to minority of LGBTQ with varied work ethics and expectations, integrating work with life and management of emergence of digitally skilled and hyper-connected employees (Ehnert *et al.*, 2016; Rincon-Roldan and Lopez-Cabrales, 2021; Chowhan, 2016). Human resource (HR) has to revive its core and align itself to the evolving expectations in the digital era to stay relevant and sustain the organizations, which is possible through its novel people and talent management strategies (Bag *et al.*, 2021; Paul *et al.*, 2019). The HR function has to advance and come up with a new set of practices to carve out its space in the business world in the digital economy (Ehnert *et al.*, 2016). It has to overcome the challenges to design future workforce capabilities by integrating the right people into a dynamic organizational context through the ability to drive transformation by imbibing digital competencies in the existing employees and leaders (Paul *et al.*, 2019). To triumph over these challenges into opportunities, it is required that we lay stress on the 3 R's of business transformation, which is re-innovate, re-strategize and re-model with particular reference to the people management in the digital era.

Papers in the special issue

The special issue focused on various HR and OB interventions in the current scenario, considering organization agility and effectiveness. This issue also aims to understand the global necessities in this digital era and deliberate the strategies accordingly in the field of HRM and OB for continuing the journey towards sustainable development. In this regard, the special issue has invited articles based on conceptual, empirical, qualitative and mixed-method approaches to address the existing issues and develop novel insights on the selected themes for the issues.

In this way, through this special issue, we have contributed to an essential topic of discussion and debate by providing food for thought to scholars in the field to rethink and revisit the existing HR practices and come up with new systems to accommodate the ever-

changing business world. The articles selected in the special issue have addressed the literature gap. They have contributed by giving new perspectives via their research studies to the HR leaders and management thinkers and all stakeholders to revive the existing HR theories and practices to get better results and productivity and achieve the overall well-being of both people and the organization as a whole.

To begin with the paper "The effect of green HRM on employee green behaviours in higher education: the mediating mechanism of green work engagement," by Mohammed Aboramadan gave an excellent start to this special issue wherein the author proposed a model of the effects of green HR management employees in-role, extra-role and green innovative work behaviour (GIWB) taking social exchange theory into consideration in the higher education sector in Palestine. The author, in his study, further tested the mediating role of green work engagement (GWE) as a mediating variable in the relationship between green HRs management (GHRM) and employee green behaviours on both jobs demands resource model and social exchange theory. Using partial least squares-structural equation modelling as a data analysis technique on a sample of 208 respondents suggested that green HRs management (GHRM) was a significant predictor of employee in-role green behaviour, extra-role green behaviour and GIWB. Furthermore, GWE demonstrated to be a significant intervening mechanism to explain the relationships mentioned above. The study has provided novel insights for the policymakers in the higher education sector and how green HRs management can positively contribute to employee green outcomes. The study advocated that higher education institutions should work on going green and creating a roadmap for their staff to serve as environmental activists. Higher education organizations need to effectively and successfully implement green HRs management activities for better environmental management and promote employees' green behaviours. Higher education organizations must adopt sustainable green practices to assist employees in resolving environmental challenges and concerns. This may lead to the improved green performance of these organizations and the community as a whole. The author proposed that HR professionals in higher education should include green HRs management practices at the effect of green HRM at the top of their agenda, in addition to other HRM systems such as high-performance work practices and high-commitment HRM systems. Green HRs management practices should include clear green hiring policies, green training and development, a system of green performance evaluation and effective, rewarding green rewarding and compensation policies. This research strongly recommends that HR specialists and senior management in higher education establish core organizational concepts and principles when articulating green HRs management strategies.

In continuation, the study, "Performance appraisal justice and affective commitment: examining the moderating role of age and gender" by Shikha Rana and Shalini Singh, highlighted the importance of performance appraisal (PA) as one of the most crucial practices of HR management and discussed that PA affects the employees' attitude in the organizations. The authors investigated the relationship between PA justice and employees' affective commitment, moderating by age and gender in the Indian banking sector. The analysis was conducted on a sample of 298 bank employees using structural equation modelling. The results proposed that PA justice predicted the affective commitment of bank employees. The age and gender moderated the relationship between PA justice, and AC is high for older and female employees, which calls for formulating appropriate policies to increase commitment among the bank employees. The paper contributes new insights to the existing literature by examining the moderating effects of age and gender on the relationship of PA justice and AC in the Indian banking sector. The study showcased the rising importance of HR, day by day as they are the critical determinants of organizations

success, growth and sustenance. HR is the key driver for banks for long-term growth and sustenance. Effective HR practices enhance the morale, commitment and performance of employees. PA, which is also the most indispensable HR practice, discloses the employees' strengths and needs for development. If PA data is used to reinforce employees' strengths and improve the performance areas, morale, motivation, commitment and productivity will be raised. A transparent performance management (PM) process enhances the abilities and morale of HR.

In a study titled "Single-rating, multi-rating 360° PM and organizational outcomes: evidence from the UAE" by Mohamed Behery attempted to bridge the gap between Western theories and the under-researched non-western contexts by studying the characteristics of traditional and modern PM systems (PMSs) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Drawing on the expectancy theory, this study aimed to discuss the significant causal relationship between implementing single-rating, multi-rating 360° PM and organizational outcomes such as trust, commitment, satisfaction and intention to leave. The results from the data analysis from 439 employees depicted that uncertainty avoidance and power distance orientation mediates the relationship between PMSs and trust, commitment, job satisfaction and intention to leave, along with the effect of demographic factors. This study extends research on PM theories and models. Another important aspect of this study is that its model has been tested on the UAE's data, an underrepresented geographic region in the management literature. The present study and its proposed model emphasize that performance improvement is a function of designing an ideal appraisal system, either single-rating or multi-rating 360°. The current research proposes a relatively simple, transparent, quickly explained, and easy to understand and leads to perceptions of greater justice and fairness. The study suggests that HR managers may need to decide the uncertainty avoidance and power distance orientation of the new joiners to achieve the best possible fit with the organization. Finally, this study proposes that HR managers should look for ways to institutionalize a well-established PMS as a core organizational function. The author argued that an appraisal system constructed on the motivational framework like expectancy-based theory would also embrace explicit declarations of performance standards and expectations to comprehend what is expected and rewarded. The present study suggests that informal assessments and friendly feedback are an essential part of the system, especially in this period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Organizations today seek high engagement levels from their employees for their superior performance amid the highly competitive environment. To address this issue, author Naman Sharma in his article titled "Using positive deviance to enhance employee engagement: an interpretive structural modelling approach", examined the role of positive deviance facilitators (PDFs) in enhancing employee engagement at work. The study adopted the interpretive structural modelling (ISM) and Matrice d'Impacts Croisés-Multiplication Appliquée á un Classement (cross-impact matrix multiplication applied to classification) (MICMAC) analysis to understand the process of how positive deviance may fuel employee engagement in an organization – and understanding the subjective experience and learnings of experts involved in the field. Based on the opinions shared by industry and academia experts, a structural model was developed to understand the hierarchy and interactions among the eight PDFs leading towards employee engagement. The various positive deviance factors included in the structural model are individual differentiation, reference groups, creative/innovative mindset, HRM practices, group non-conformity, reward expectation, risk-taking intention and goal orientation. The study offers theoretical and practical implications and highlights the importance of HR management practices in fuelling positive deviance and employee engagement. The study suggested that the HRM

practices allow an employee to cultivate a risk-taking intention, leading to goal orientation. HR managers and top management must include such best practices from the industry, allowing employees to experiment with their routine tasks despite involving a certain degree of risk. This would boost their confidence that a positive deviation in the work approach can be rewarded, and their orientation towards the organizational goals would be enhanced. The study further proposed that allowing and arranging for the employees to interact with a diverse set of industry and academic experts (reference groups) leads to the possibility of developing a creative/innovative mindset which is an essential factor for positive deviance, and thus, needs to be encouraged by the management.

In an exciting study on leadership in the contemporary world, titled "Narcissism, toxic work culture and abusive supervision: a double-edged sword escalating organizational deviance" by Mansi Tiwari and Rimjhim Jha deliberated about the widespread abusive leadership and supervision problem in the workplace, which is spreading poison of negativity among all the people facing this, as it is highly intoxicated. The study results indicate that narcissism highly influences organizational deviance, raising the toxic work culture and abusive supervision. The study proposed that narcissistic traits in leaders then turn into a complicated situation for employees to decide whether to stay in the organization or leave. If these intentions are not developing, it leads to deviance on the part of employees. This study contributes to the outcome where leaders could understand the impact of how their excess self-love turns against workplace peace and results in high deviance. The study further suggests that a negative environment, toxic work culture, and abusive supervision are bad for followers or employees and a disaster for the narcissistic leaders and abusive to their team, resulting in no loyalty or trustworthiness. Skilled employees will not prefer the leadership of such leaders. As a result, the leaders will be surrounded by batterers and flatterers who will never give wise advice to their leaders for their personal advantages. Further, it affects leaders' productivity as well. For this, it was suggested that leaders should focus on their emotional quotient.

The article "Transforming people practices by restructuring job engagement practices for generation z: An empirical study" by Deepika Pandita and Amresh Kumar touched on the issue of job engagement in multinationals, consulting organizations and widespread business houses in recent years. Job engagement is one of the most concerning topics for most organizations as employees are essential, and companies nowadays struggle to keep them engaged. The authors attempted to develop the readers' understanding of the transforming role of (JOB) drivers, specifically for Gen Z in information technology. Companies across India. It measured the association of JOB and perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, and co-worker relationship with an extraordinary reference to Gen Z. The paper ponders on three critical aspects that help engage employees. Firstly, it is vital that the employees feel that the organization supports them by valuing their goals and values. They feel engaged if their opinions are cared for and loved. Secondly, it is also crucial for the employees to get support from their managers in their well-being, and their views are counted and given importance. Finally, as these employees work in teams, the company needs to create a seamless culture of working and trusting each other in a group. Consequentially from a wide-ranging study of present and looming JOB tactics, the outcomes may aid establishments and policymakers in advancing and improving HRs policies in engaging Gen Z who have started entering the organizations.

The research article having a title "Organizational resilience and employee performance in COVID-19 pandemic: the mediating effect of emotional intelligence" by Aastha Dhoopar, Priyanka Sihag, Anil Kumar and Ashok Kumar Suhag discussed

the role of organizational resilience (OReg) and emotional intelligence (EI) in enhancing employee performance amidst ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The study involves 390 samples of teaching and non-teaching professionals working in higher educational institutions (HEIs) from different HEIs located in India. The collected data was further analysed using regression analysis, factor analysis, structural equation modelling. The findings of the current study suggest that organizational adaptability, capability, crisis policies, EI and resilient culture play critical roles in retention and improvement of the performance level of employees during a crisis. Therefore, the HEIs should consider these organizational factors and the individual development of their employees' skills in this lean and tough period to handle post-pandemic effects better and more efficiently. The study results also provide incredible insights on how performance levels can be improved by taking care of individual emotional needs like (self-management, social awareness, self-awareness and relationship management) in the pandemic. Thus, proposing that factors about individual EI should be taken care of by an organization to improve performance and productivity.

Followed by an article titled "Green supply chain management and organizational culture: a bibliometric analysis based on Scopus data (2001–2020)" by Jamal El-Baz and Sadia Iddik attempted to understand the relationship between green supply chain management (GSCM) and organizational culture. The findings showed that only a few researchers conducted the most influential studies. The publications within the field started to increase during 2012–2020, majorly from USA and UK universities having a robust research contribution amongst all, and seven core publishing journals lead the field such as cleaner of production and sustainability. The content analysis revealed some aspects and shed light on two main topics: organizational culture as a driver or a barrier towards GSCM; and the organizational culture contribution role on the impact of GSCM on performance. The study plays an essential role for managers and firms. Also, the study has contributed to increasing the understanding of the role of cultural factors in implementing the GSCM practices and getting the highest benefits from them.

Conclusions

The disruptions happening in the present world have called for re-looking and revising the existing organizational practices to sustain and survive in the future. This can be achieved by looking at the present realities and adopting the new methods and frameworks by being more agile and adaptive. The need to build a sustainable world calls for sustainable business practices and approaches to addressing the ever-changing and dynamic business requirements. Adopting design thinking coupled with a flexible and resilient attitude with a people-centric approach will take organizations a long way and help them realize their goals in the future.

We expect that the research on HR issues of organizations and the management will continue to explore how business firms can revive themselves and gain competitive advantage by improvising on their existing HR practices, which will undoubtedly help the organizations manage their HRs will keep them engaged. The organization would be able to transform its redundant policies and framework and develop more sustainable and effective systems to exist in the ever-increasing competitive world. All the articles included in this special issue provide a fascinating insight into the organizations' existing phenomenon on varied HR issues and challenges by emphasizing the crucial aspects and involving vital elements that will open new doors to future investigations in the given field. Finally, each paper has highlighted and addressed the various issues. The factors that impact the

sustainability and effectiveness of the businesses have provided the theoretical and practical implications using diverse research methods for evolving theory on organizational re-structuring and transformation and achieving sustainability.

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Further reading

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