Reflection essay on human resources management

Business, Human Resources

Introduction

Benson et al. (2002), points out that the adoption oftechnologyin the workplace raises solutions to previous Human Resources Management and development problems. However, they are also known to create new problems for the Human Resource department or personnel to address. In the past, the use of technology in HRD focused around training support, for example educational facilitating media. Currently, technological advancement combined with the support of HRD is used to increase job performance, enhance work-place learning, and facilitate institutional change and development.

However, these advancements come with challenges, including the level of access, due to disparities in the availability of software and equipment upgrade, slow uptake of technological innovations, and the affordability of technology facilities. Another challenge is that of the skills required for the deployment and the attitudes of users; this limits the uptake of IT facilities. Dickey et al. (1999) points out that the development and positioning of information technology in the workplace, particularly at local government centers, draws greatly from the organizational and the managerial issues of the workplace. Furthermore, they point out that despite the positive impacts of adopting IT usage in the workplace, there are challenges resulting from the deployment. These include that strategic planning should be effective, interdepartmental coordination should be at its best, and there is the need for strong expertise among the HR personnel in using the IT facilities, if the deployment process is to register effective results.

A broad study of the HRM process

The human resources management of an organization plays the role of administrating the human resources/ the workforce available for deployment. The functions of the HRM include the sourcing of staff, the selection of the right staff, training the staff to meet the duties of the organization, assessing their performance and rewarding their input towards the success of the organization. On the other hand, the adoption of IT in the workplace is done to influence the automation of certain functions of the organization, and reduce the human resource burden. IT in the workplace, also offers a more effective administration of resources and results, a reduction in operational costs as well as causing an improvement in the overall performance of the organization. The relationship between the adoption of IT and the focus of the HR is that, both seek to offer better results for the organization, through more specialized, easier and more manageable execution of the organization's duties (Taylor, Beechler & Napier, 1996).

The study by Benson et al. (2002) employs a working hypothesis framework as the study starts with an acknowledgement of the great influence of technological development and the use of IT facilities in the workplace. From adopting a working hypothesis framework the researchers were not able to explore the problem of adopting IT in the workplace as one that presents challenges to the HR personnel from other perspectives. For instance, by looking at the problem of the challenges of adopting IT facilities at the workplace, the researchers could have viewed the perspective of the increasing levels of usage of IT facilities among the general population.

Therefore, they would realize that the adoption of such facilities does not actually present a challenge to the HR personnel, but a call for the utilization of the IT skills of employees. Through adopting the framework, the researchers were also not able to shed more light on improvement areas, for example the improvement in organizationalcommunication, due to the adoption of IT facilities (Usunier, 1998). The strengths of adopting this framework was that the context of the problem was developed for the audience, where emphasis was placed on the need to address the challenges inhibiting the adoption of IT facilities at the workplace. An example is the need to invest in the required software and hardware. The framework was strong in that through the study, tenable theories were generated, regarding the correlation between adopting IT usage and the need to address limiting areas. For this reason, the study area was communicated effectively, creating the need for more in-depth studies. Through the framework, the hypothesis of the study was proved, showing the need to employ the use of IT facilities, based on consideration of the readiness of the human resource base and the entire organizational framework (Benson et al., 2002).

The study by Dickey et al. (1999) uses a problem definition framework, as the study particularly addresses the issues and the areas affecting the development and the deployment of IT facilities in the workplace. In defining this problem area further, the study identifies that the perceptions and the needs of administrators at local government centers influence the effectiveness of the information technology facilities adopted at the centers (Scandura & Williams, 2000).

The limitations of the framework include that its coverage was very shallow, restricting the study, mainly to definitions, which did not offer solid explanations into the association between the problems inhibiting the adoption of IT facilities and different workplace settings. Another limitation was that the study does not mention other variables like the IT skills of the administrators working at the local government centers, as this could possibly affect the success realized from the adoption of IT. These limitations disfavored the understanding of the issue of study (Scandura & Williams, 2000). The strengths of the framework, in developing an understanding of the issue are that the major variables within the study were identified, including the deployment of IT facilities and the needs and perspectives of administrators amongst others. Through the framework, the researchers focused on the area of local governments, eliminating the case of drawing inferences based on a wide area of study. Furthermore, the establishment of the direct correlation through the study, points out the need to research the issue at other organizational and workplace settings (Dickey et al., 1999).

Research methodologies

Benson et al. (2002) use a descriptive qualitative methodology, as they carry out a detailed description of the specific situation, mainly by sourcing information from document reviews. For example, they have presented a detailed account on the changing functions of Human Resource Development personnel, the increased need for innovation and the continually changing management strategies. Through their review of literature, the researchers explore sources like Malhotra (1998), Reich (2000), and Friedman (1999) as

well as other sources (Benson et al., 2002, p. 392-393). Through the review of the different sources about the challenges facing the adoption of IT in the workplace, they deeply explore the digital workplace, organizational change and development, IT tools and the challenges presented by IT to HRD personnel. The wide coverage shows that the methodology was used effectively, as it portrays the problem area clearly (Scandura & Williams, 2000).

The advantages of the methodology is that it is featured in many other studies which demonstrated the correlation between IT usage and increased HRD tasks, which serve as challenges to the HR. The methodology explores literature on different areas of interest, demonstrating that it considered other perspectives, thus increased the credibility of the inferences (Benson et al., 2002, p. 401). The limitations include that the study over-relies on literature review, demonstrating the replication of information, which reduced the credibility of the information communicated by undermining the need to offer new information (Scandura & Williams, 2000).

Dickey et al. (1999) used a cross-sectional study; regression analysis methodology, as the study focuses on developing a quantifiable analysis of the strong association between the variables under study. Strategies included the creation of an IT coverage database, interviewof executives, and the development of a survey. These include the development and the deployment of IT facilities in the workplace, and the limiting effect of the perceptions, and needs of HR personnel, among other organizational and managerial issues that are directly related to the deployment of IT facilities

at local government centers, and the effectiveness realized. In developing the scope of the methodology, the researchers identify three areas, which greatly determine the effectiveness of IT deployment: strategic planning, interdepartmental coordination and the skills levels of executives (Dickey et al., 1999, p. 54).

The advantage of the study is that it gathered all descriptive data in support of the relationship under study, through the modes of a database coverage, interviews and the deployment of a study survey. Through these different sets of data, the inferences were supported, thus fostering the understanding of the issue. The coverage of the study was also a demonstration of the factual nature of the data, as the surveys were distributed to all IT professionals and administrators in Virginia. This reduced the levels of information biasness, for example, in the case it was collected from a few local government centers. The wider coverage offered better coverage of the dynamics of IT usage (Scandura & Williams, 2000). The limitations of the study include that the study relied on data collection methods, which do not offer guarantee of feedback, for instance the database coverage and the interviews, which were used as the basis for the development of the survey. The study also relied on descriptive as opposed to inferential techniques of analysis, due to the non-random distinctiveness of the sample population. Based on these areas of limitation, the credibility of the information is compromised (Dickey et al., 1999).

Through the two sources, a number of new and contemporary issues are expressed. These include that the varied needs and the perceptions of HR

administrators can influence the creation and the deployment of IT at the work place, either positively or negatively. The sources also establish a direct correlation between organizational and managerial issues and the implementation needs for different workplace settings. Through these sources, it is also pointed out that for effective deployment of IT at the workplace, a number of factors play a significant role. The factors include strategic planning over the deployment, the interdepartmental coordination at the workplace, and the expertise of HR personnel among other staffs (Dickey et al., 1999). Through these sources, new concepts are communicated, including that the use of IT at the workplace has changed from a training tool to a system for enhancing learning, addressing the expanding role of the HR, enhancing performance, and facilitating institutional change and development (Vanderbroeck, 1992).

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that the sources greatly inform HR personnel and administrators planning to deploy IT at the workplace, as they outline the benefits of the deployment alongside the challenges. In developing the field of HRM, the two studies inform HR personnel that more is required from their administration – than planning for the creation and the deployment of the IT facilities, so as to enhance the work of employees, as the case may seem to be. For example, they point out the need for administratoreducation, to enhance their acceptance of the deployment; the need to streamline organizational and managerial practices, to allow for effective deployment; the need to plan strategically, prior to the deployment; the need for

excellent interdepartmental coordination, and the value of training HR personnel and employees prior to the deployment of IT.

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