

Free literature review about human resource management: leadership and its influe...

[Business](#), [Management](#)



\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

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1. [Introduction](#) \n \t
2. [Review of Literature](#) \n \t
3. [Virtual Teams and Information Technology](#) \n \t
4. [Employee Development](#) \n \t
5. [Environmental Sustainability](#) \n \t
6. [Conclusion](#) \n \t
7. [References](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

Introduction

Practically every aspect of business has undergone a massive transformation over the past two decades as globalization and modernization fueled by technological advancement have engulfed the business landscape. As a result, significant change has been witnessed in a variety of business related areas that range from business operations and information technology, to strategic competitive positioning and human resource management.

Regardless of the area of business in question, it is the leadership that has come to play an integral role in the change and innovation process, which has enabled the business landscape as a whole to transform into the highly efficient, modernized and high-tech environment that exists today. One area of business that has witnessed a particularly profound transformation over the past two decades is that of Human Resource Management. In particular, the role of human resource management and its function in organizational

support has changed significantly in recent years. No longer does human resource management focus solely on employee hiring and firing, but rather, has grown to include a wide spectrum of activities that are devoted to maximizing the value of a firm's human capital. Of course the transformation of human resource management in the modern organization was not something that occurred overnight, as it was a long and arduous process that was fueled by strong transformational leaders who facilitated positive change through innovation continuous improvement. Due to the massive scope of change that has occurred within the field of human resources, many may find it difficult to hone in on a small handful that represent a more compelling or profound impact on the field, or an organization's ability to manage its human capital. Despite this, a wealth of scholarly literature exists that emphasizes areas of advancement within the human resource management discipline that have facilitated extraordinary change. Further, much of this literature emphasizes the importance of leadership as the driving force behind much of this change and innovation. To demonstrate this assessment, the following section will provide a detailed review of relevant literature that clearly describes three of the most prominent areas of human resource management in which leadership has made a profound impact on innovations throughout the field that benefit the modern business world. The three areas of human resource management that have been chosen as evidentiary support of HR leaders' influence on innovation include the emergence of virtual teams and information technology, employee development, and environmental sustainability. In the end, the prevailing literature offers a wealth of credible and scholarly research that sheds

valuable light on the complexity of modern human resource management, and the changing role of the leader within this discipline.

Review of Literature

One of the most effective tools in conducting academic research is that of the literature review, as it requires the researcher to examine prevailing literature within the specific field of interest in order to better understand the current body of knowledge with regard to the give topic. Certainly, it must be understood that the credibility and reliability of this understanding will hinge directly on the credibility and reliability of the research literature that is chosen for review. As a result, it is essential that a literature review be conducted utilizing only the most credible sources that are deemed valid, reputable, accurate, and scholarly by experts in the field. To ensure the quality of the following review of literature that seeks to examine human resource management leadership and its influence on innovation in business, only the most reputable sources were selected. As such, each source was closely examined in order to determine if it meant stringent quality criteria, as sources were only chosen from the most reputable publications such as peer reviewed journals and periodicals, academic text books, and government reports. In the end, the nearly dozen sources that are featured in the following literature review have proved their worth as an academic support, and as such, will ensure that the review of literature truly reflects the current body of knowledge regarding the area of human resource management.

Virtual Teams and Information Technology

One of the most incredible advancements to emerge in the early years of the 21st century is that of the virtual team and the team-based organization. In particular, globalization of the business world has led to the emergence of a fully integrated international marketplace where nations from all over the globe engage in trade and commerce with one another. The emergence of this international marketplace has led to a significant rise in multinational organization, as well as firms that operate in countries outside of their domestic nation. The increased prominence of international operations has been particularly difficult on the firm's human resources professionals as they struggled to develop and maintain an organizational workforce that can operate effectively and efficiently in a culturally diverse international landscape. In response to this struggle, HR leaders have had to adapt by facilitating change through innovation. One of the most prominent innovations to emerge as a result of HR leadership influence is the virtual team. According to Obeidat (2013), organizational leadership, as well as leaders in the area of human resource management have come to recognize the importance of finding effective ways to enhance the efficiency and capabilities of a workforce that is spread out across nations and across the globe.

There is a significant amount of research that supports the assertion that virtual teams and advancements in information technology represent the key to success of modern human resource management. Information technology has provided organizational leaders with a variety of capabilities that were once impossible, which has led to information technology playing an

instrumental role in the development of globalization and an international marketplace. Ultimately, it has been up to the leadership to determine the best ways to maximize the effectiveness and performance of the firm's human capital as organizations move to operate internationally. The added capabilities provided by advancements of information technology gave these leaders the tools that were necessary to facilitate international operations while also maintaining a highly functional workforce and maximizing operational efficiency. Additional research appears to support the importance of the role of information technology as the mechanism that essentially solved the most prominent issues relating the human resource management on an international scale. In particular, organizational leaders have utilized the enhanced capabilities provided by advancements to information technology to develop a virtual work platform that can facilitate team operations regardless of the geographical locations of the various team members. Due to the changing dynamics of international business, organizational leaders have come to recognize the importance of developing highly effective diverse teams that are able to maximize the performance of international operations. Often, however, facilitating such success requires knowledge and expertise within a variety of areas, including the fundamentals of conducting business in the nation or locality in question. Modern human resource professionals have recognized the difficulties in establishing effective teams that have been integrated with the knowledge and expertise that is necessary for international operations. As such, to establish effective teams that can meet these stringent criteria, organizational leaders have had to identify the strengths of their diverse

workforce, and then exploit that strength by developing teams that successfully incorporate these valuable skill sets. Leaders in human resources continue to turn to information technology as a key tool to facilitate innovation within organizational operations, particularly when such operations are on an international level. As information technology continues to advance over time, researchers have emphasized that organizational leaders must maintain an internal commitment to fully exploit these advancements in order to facilitate achievement of a firm's organizational goals. In recent years, a top goal of many organizations is to develop, maintain, and enhance the value of its human capital. In response, a great deal of prevailing literature reiterates the critical importance of information technology and virtual teams as an instrument to maximize the value of human capital and enhance the capabilities of human resources within the international business landscape . Based on the preponderance of evidence detailed above, it appears that leadership has had a tremendous influence on innovation as a response to the emergence of an increasingly diverse international marketplace. Further, the selection of information technology as the instrument of such innovation emphasizes the compelling nature of this change to the field of human resource management. It will be interesting to see how information technology will be used by HR leaders in the future to meet organizational strategic goals and maximize the value of their human capital.

Employee Development

Another key area that has been emphasized extensively in prevailing literature is the use of education and training as a means of maximizing the value of human capital. In decade's past, organizational leaders failed to recognize the true value of their workforce as a primary mechanism of value generation, and as an invaluable link in the firm's value chain. Prevailing literature reflects, however, that sentiment towards human capital has changed significantly in recent years as organizational leaders have begun to recognize the impact that human resource development can have on an organization's ability to generate revenue. Importantly, the task of continuous development of an organization's workforce has fallen to the firm's human resources activity. This responsibility for continuous development has required HR leaders to develop ways in which to effectively assess the skills and abilities that require development within each employee, and then target identified shortcomings for further development. The increased ferocity of the competitive landscape that accompanies the international market has placed additional pressures on HR leaders to find effective ways in which to develop their workforce so as to strengthen the firm's competitive position and maximize the efficiency and productivity of the organization's employees.

Kossek (1987) backs up these findings with an even earlier study when employee development was only discussed on a theoretical basis as many organizational leaders did not feel that the extensive investment of organizational resources on the workforce would yield a suitable return.

Fortunately, leaders in human resource management have been able to

open the eyes of strategic leaders to recognize the value-adding properties of employee development.

According to much of the most recent literature, the prominence and organizational success of employee development is as a result of the innovation of the human resource element, and in particular, HR leaders. It has been the leaders of HR that have examined the prevailing level of knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to determine the best ways to develop the workforce so as to facilitate achievement of the firm's strategic goals. To demonstrate this, prominent research has outlined the importance of HR leadership in the function of workforce development. In particular, HR leaders within an organization are generally tasked with the responsibility to develop and manage comprehensive training and education programs that provide employees with the resources they need to effectively hone their skills, improve perceived weaknesses, and exploit their strengths.

Soliman (2011) provides further evidence to support the importance of workforce development in maximizing the competitive position of the modern organization. As a function of human resource management, Soliman also emphasizes that HR leaders deserve much of the credit for the strength of an organization's workforce, as the continued development and enhancement of employees is facilitated by the innovations of HR leadership. As a result of these innovations, organization's today view their human resources much differently than in the past, by viewing each employee as an investment rather than a cost. Those organizations that are able to successfully make this distinction have been rewarded by possessing a workforce that is committed to the organization's strategic goals and

objective, and is adequately trained with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to ensure success of these goals and objectives.

Environmental Sustainability

One of the latest trends to emerge in prevailing literature in the various fields of business including human resources, is that of environmental sustainability. Over the past decade, a great deal of attention has been placed on the environmental impact of business as the earth's populations soars to new heights and the strain on existing natural resources has intensified. In addition, the impact of business operations on the environment has risen to attention of top political figures, including the United States President, which has ultimately placed the issue of environmental sustainability at the forefront of the general public. As a result, today's organizations have begun to feel mounting pressures from key stakeholders, including the organization's shareholders and customer base, to pursue environmental sustainability within their operations. Of course, as the issue of environmental sustainability increased in prominence among organizational leaders, so too did the question of how organization would be able to adapt and modify their operations to promote environmental sustainability without causing any negative implications for operational performance or profitability.

According to available literature, much of the task of effectively integrating environmental sustainability into the organization's operations has been assigned to the activity of human resource. This assignment of responsibility further demonstrates the changing role of human resources in the

organizational setting as it clearly encompasses much more than it had even a few short decades ago. Ultimately, HR leaders have been required to turn to innovation once again in order to facilitate positive change by incorporating environmental sustainability as a key element of the organizational culture. One area that HR leaders first turned during the integration process is emphasized in the literature as the firm's code of ethics. In particular, researchers have emphasized that environmental sustainability must be accepted by organizational leaders as a mutually beneficial endeavor, as well as a function of ethical behavior. This fundamental change in thinking among organizational leaders has done a great deal in facilitating development of strong relationships between the organization and its key stakeholders. It is important to note, however, that without the efforts of HR leaders to influence innovation so as to integrate environmental sustainability into the organizational culture, the level of commitment that is seen today with regard to environmental conservation, sustainability and social responsibility would not nearly be as prevalent.

Conclusion

The review of literature that is outlined above provides valuable insights regarding the leadership influence on innovation in business within the field of human resources. In particular, substantial evidence was presented that effectively demonstrates the importance of HR leaders in facilitating innovations throughout the contemporary international business world. In particular, prevailing literature outlined the role of HR leaders in facilitating improvement through the use of virtual teams and information technology,

workforce development, and environmental sustainability. The literature further demonstrated that it was HR leaders that influenced such innovations in order to maximize the value of the organization's human capital and to strengthen the organization's strategic competitive position, which represent factors of tremendous importance in the 21st century business landscape. As such, the literature reviewed within the preceding section emphasizes that within the realm of human resources, leaders have had an invaluable and instrumental influence on innovation, one which helped organizations to grow stronger and better prepared to quickly response to the volatile conditions that exist within the international marketplace that exists today.

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