Knowledge Management Involvement in Improving Human Resource Management of Organizations

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Introduction

The primary focus of human resources management is to match the job profile with the skill set of the people, in order the achieve the organization's goals, whereas knowledge management at a primary level, aims at harnessing the existing knowledge in the organization through knowledge creation, acquisition, storage, sharing and implementation, to create a competitive advantage and at a more advanced level focuses on increasing organizational learning.

As described in (Danish et al, 2012) following issues have been identified as of the absence of proper knowledge management practices. Such as; Difficulties of managing changes within organization (death, retirement, transfer, promotion), Work repetition, Waste of time and money and inability to manage work, in the absence of expertise.

Similar to organizational HR functions to maintain best workforce for the company, poor knowledge management practices could make difficulties. In the absence of the subject expertise, other staff members are unable to perform a smooth maintenance within the department. Hence, all other employees could be dissatisfied and demotivated. If the subject expert had shared the knowledge with subordinates and stored that knowledge effectively, then the situation would be controllable for the department. Therefore, it is important to explore the knowledge management practices that could be integrated with the HR functions in order to perform an improved level of service towards the company and the employees.

Literature review

Knowledge Management
Knowledge Management is about developing, sharing and applying knowledge within the firm to gain and sustain a competitive advantage (Edvardsson, 2008). It is also defined as a conscious strategy of getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time and helping people share and put information into action in ways that strive to improve organizational performance. (Girard, 2015)

Knowledge Management in Organizations

Knowledge in organizations takes many forms such as the competencies and capabilities of employees, the knowledge about its customers and suppliers, know-how of conducting certain processes, the systems used in the company for leveraging performance and intellectual properties owned by the company such as; copyrights, licenses, patents and so on. (North et al, 2014). Focusing on the question "Is knowledge management important for an organization?", Omotayo suggests, "when you know better, you do better". Therefore, in order to succeed in the corporate world and put your business on top, the company needs to possess the best management of knowledge. (Omotayo, 2015).

Role of Knowledge Management in Human Resource activities

KM theories exist which suppose KM practices such as knowledge acquisition, storage, creation, sharing and implementation play a critical role in achieving high level of human resource performance and finally improving sustainable competitive advantage (Gholami et al, 2013). In (Svetlik et al, 2007), if HRM is about managing people effectively and if people's most valuable resource is knowledge, then HRM and KM are obviously interrelated.

Many activities are being shared between KM and HRM. For instance, Knowledge acquisition is about recruiting outstanding people and about helping them learn and grow as individuals and as professionals to perform their maximum to the company (Wenger et al., 2002).

KM is about capturing, distributing, and archiving intellectual capital in a way that encourages knowledge sharing and collaboration in the organization, which makes a world of difference to successfully training new hires ("How Better Knowledge Management Improves Training", 2016). Focusing on knowledge creation for performance appraisals, experts can get together for brain storming sessions to customize performance evaluation methods for the organization, elaborating how knowledge creation could be used as a brainstorming session to improve performance management of the company (El Farr, 2011).

Problem Statement

As described in (Danish et al, 2012), following issues have been identified as a result of the absence of proper knowledge management practices. They are, difficulties of managing changes within organization (death, retirement, transfer, promotion), work repetition, waste of time and money and inability to manage work in the absence of expertise. Within the tenure of the employees, they make

quite a considerable amount of knowledge within themselves over the time with experience. At a time of sudden changes such as deaths, transfers, retirements and promotions, a particular position becomes vacant and the organization is unable to utilize the knowledge of that position any further. Consequently, it will cause the organization to work repetitions, waste of time and money as well as inabilities to manage the intended work load on time to satisfy orders and customers. This happens because the organization will have to train a new person to manage the change, and it would take a considerable time period for the new recruit to reach its learning curve and perform as similar to the previous employee.

Matching the above situation to organizational human resource management functions to maintain best workforce for the company, poor knowledge management practices could definitely make difficulties for human resource management department too. In an absence of the subject expertise, other staff members are unable to perform a smooth maintenance within the department. Hence, all other employees who wish to obtain services from the department could be dissatisfied and demotivated. If the subject expert had shared the knowledge with subordinates and stored that knowledge in an effective manner, then the situation would be controllable for the department. Even though many researches have been emerged in the fields of knowledge management and human resource management, how knowledge management functions could be utilized in human resource management for its improvements is rarely tested. Hence, this research attempts to examine how knowledge management practices could be involved in human resource management for its improvements along with the below described methodology and analysis.

Research Question and Hypothesis

Considering the problem, a research question was generated as; "Does knowledge management practices have an involvement to improve human resource management of organizations?" Knowledge management is identified as independent variable whereas HRM would be test for dependent variable. Hence, following hypotheses have been exemplified. Selection and Recruitment: (H1 – KM practices have an involvement with improving effectiveness of recruitment and selection). Performance Appraisal: (H2 – KM practices have a relationship with performance management). Training and Development: (H3 – KM practices have a relationship with improving effectiveness of training and development). Rewards and Compensation: (H4 – KM practices have a relationship with improving effectiveness of rewards and compensation).

Methodology

Based on the conceptual framework, a questionnaire was developed in order to execute a quantitative survey along with 44 questions under three sections to cover demographic data, second section to question how KM impacts on HRM under four key result areas and third section on five KM practices selected for the dependant variable. Pilot tests were carried out with the opinions obtained from three HR field experts and two doctorial personnel.

The statistical analysis was carried out via Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20.0). Reliability test was then implemented to test the relatedness using Cronbach's alpha, and then the questionnaire was distributed to gather dater after examining an alpha greater than 0.7.

After obtaining data from 150 HR personnel in five organizations, correlation analysis and regression analysis were performed to examine relationship between independent and dependant variables.

Results and Discussions

Table. 1 below highlights the relationship independent variables (KM functions) have with the dependent variable (HRM function) through analyzing the Pearson correlation coefficient. Accordingly, knowledge acquisition, knowledge storage, knowledge sharing and knowledge implementation show positive coefficients showing there is an association between those knowledge management practices and the HR functions of recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management and compensation management along with 0.541, 0.528, 0.457, 0.550 of highest coefficients respectively.

Table 1. Pearson Correlation Analysis

HRM	Knowledge creation	Knowledge acquisition	Knowledge storage	Knowledge sharing	Knowledge implement.
Recruitment & Selection	.413**	.388**	.541**	.374**	.333**
T & D	.466**	.520**	.498**	.363**	.520**
Performance mgt.	.467**	.451**	.457**	.407**	.437**
Rewards mgt.	.487**	.517**	.550**	.527**	.490**
** correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 – tailed)					

Table 2. Regression Coefficient Analysis

Dependent variable: Recruitment and selection			Dependent variable: Training & Development		
Model	Standard Coefficients Beta	Sig.	Model	Standard Coefficients Beta	Sig.

Model	Standard Coefficients Beta	Sig.	Model	Standard Coefficients Beta	Sig.
(constant)		.001	(constant)		.003
Knowledge creation	.174	.040	Knowledge creation	.174	.031
Knowledge acquisition	.092	.334	Knowledge acquisition	.280	.002
Knowledge storage	.432	.000	Knowledge storage	.184	.036
Knowledge sharing	.101	.269	Knowledge sharing	-.086	.323
Knowledge implementation	-.124	.201	Knowledge implementation	.205	.028

Dependent variable: Compensation Management			Dependent variable: Performance Management		
Model	**Standard Coefficients Beta**	**Sig.**	**Model**	**Standard Coefficients Beta**	**Sig.**
(constant)		.538	(constant)		.013
Knowledge creation	.178	.022	Knowledge creation	.233	.006
Knowledge acquisition	.143	.105	Knowledge acquisition	.150	.120
Knowledge storage	.255	.003	Knowledge storage	.171	.065
Knowledge sharing	.215	.011	Knowledge sharing	.089	.337
Knowledge implementation	.043	.635	Knowledge implementation	.080	417

According to Table 2, the regression coefficients beta values of all the independent variables are statistically significant. As the results of the regression analysis, the highest magnitude represents the knowledge storage variable having a coefficient beta value of 0.432 suggesting that there is a positive relationship between knowledge storage and recruitment management variables. As a consequence of this relationship, a unit change in the former variable would mean a corresponding change of 43% in the latter variable, validating the hypothesis H1. The next highest magnitude of 0.280, which is significant at 0.01 level, belongs to knowledge acquisition variable. The positive relationship between this independent variable and the dependent variable training and development indicate that a unitary increase or decrease in knowledge acquisition variable would lead to increase or decrease productivity by 28% respectively. This confirms the hypothesis H2. Knowledge creation variable on the other hand, accounts for a magnitude of 0.233 emphasizing a positive relationship, which would lead to mean 23% corresponding change in performance management as a result of a unitary change in the said variable, hence confirming the hypothesis H3. Signifying the lowest coefficient

beta of 0.215, spotlights that the positive relationship would result in 22% corresponding change in compensation management in case of a unitary change with regards to knowledge sharing. This relationship corroborates the hypothesis H4.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In simple terms, the knowledge adds value to the company and that knowledge is created by employees. Hence, the HR functions of a company could also be performed in an improved way, as of utilizing knowledge management and knowledge management practices. At this point, knowing that the knowledge is created by human and effective management of human is the responsibility of HRM department, utilizing best practices of KM to improve HR functions can enable a better workforce with better competencies for the company. Therefore, many KM techniques could be used along with HR functions under five aspects of KM; knowledge creation, acquisition, storage, sharing and implementing. Such as; brainstorming sessions to share knowledge, regular meetings inside the company, knowledge sharing sessions after training, maintain effective databases for each function, internal magazines and notices, cross functional teams. As of them, if turned into their involvement with HR functions, maintaining effective databases comes in the form of knowledge storage to facilitate many important facts related to HR functions. Meetings, cross functional teams and brainstorming sessions relate to knowledge creation, acquisition and sharing to come up with better ways of doing HR functions, share the existing best practices and pass that knowledge down through the line. In this context, following conclusions could be highlighted. (i) KM in HRM is becoming a popular research topic, (ii) organizations face difficulties due to lack of KM practices in HRM such as low reuse of knowledge, work duplication, difficulty of managing in the absence of expert and the costs. (iii) impact of knowledge creation, sharing, acquisition, storage and implementation on HR function are the reasons for using KM in HRM, (iv) explicit knowledge can make a greater involvement in improving HR functions due to availability and ease of accessing rather tacit knowledge which needs more time and effort in transferring knowledge (v) there is a considerable involvement between KM and HRM, (vi) KM best practices could be utilized in HR functions.

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