



HR practices & trends: Understanding global HR practices

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Abstract

Today the world of work is rapidly shifting. Human Resource Management (HRM), as a part of organization, must be prepared to deal with effects of varying world of work. Thus, for the HR people it is all about comprehending the ramification of globalization, corporate downsizing, changing skill requirements, the contingent work force, work-force diversity, continuous improvement initiatives, decentralized work sites, re-engineering and employee involvement. Companies today are having a global mix of the employees which requires understanding of the employees and their mindset as it is a tough task for HRD. Human Resource Management is a course of bringing people & organization together, so that the objectives of each other are met. The organizations in Indian are witnessing a change in systems, management cultures and philosophy due to the global alliance of Indian Organization. As globalization has been a challenging concern for the organization because IHRM (International Human Resource Management) has placed significant stress on number of functions & responsibilities, such as orientation, relocation, translation services to help employees adapt to new and different milieu outside their own country. Hence forth, the essential attention must be taken by HR Managers in devising procedures, maintaining the relationship, policies, motivational strategies, and stressing on value in administration. HR people need to do a lot of things in this regard. At the end HRD plays a vital role as a planner, initiator and executor in every organization. The paper thus discusses few emerging concepts, trends and practices of the HRM like tapping skills anytime & anywhere, managing people as a workforce of one, the rise of the extended workforce, HR driving the agile organization, reconfiguring the global talent landscape, workforce on demand, HR and people analytics, data driven and social media recruiting, HR technology solutions as enabler etc. The paper highlights on few of the most key HR initiatives and trends which the HRM function has to take care so as to make an organisation sustainable and gain success.

Keywords: HRM, talent, technology, HR practices, workforce

Introduction

There is growing awareness of the importance and role of Human Resources in defining an organisation's cutting edge. Today's competitive business climate presents the HRM function with a number of important challenges and opportunities. Dramatic progress in technology, new forms of employment, and focus on cost-cutting necessitates concomitant modifications in recruiting, selection, training, appraisals, rewards and other human resource practices. Present exploratory study examines the major factors that have brought about the need for innovations in human resource (HR) practices. Further, to understand the emerging trends and the nature of innovations in human resource practices, the study generated examples of innovative practices for each HR practice category. Since there is an increased pressure to measure HR effectiveness, present study also focused on identifying key employee and organisational outcomes that were likely influenced by innovative HR practices.

Human resource management (HRM) consists of an organization's policies, practices, and systems that influence employee behavior, attitude, and performance. Human resource management is an ever changing system as it responds to an ever-changing business environment. HRM is

one of the vital areas of overall business management and hence has to be comprehended well. Factually, it can be appropriately called as the backbone of an organisation since it provides the human capital without which it is simply not possible to conduct business. Changes in technology combined with a shift in industries' dynamics and attitudes of people have transformed the role of HR into a more demanding, more agile one along with a great shift in Hr theory and practices.

Hence, the human resources trends have been changing just as frequently as fashion, as the industry is constantly evolving, employees changing, regulations regularly adapting, as well as, businesses have to be flexible enough to keep up with them. The dynamic & shifting global environment has been giving birth to various HR concepts, thoughts, ideas, practices, strategies and polices etc.

Emerging trends in (HRD) human resource department

The field of HRM has been evolving constantly with new research and revamping old concepts & practices. Few of the emerging trends in human resource management can be understood by the concepts & practices which have been applied by the research professionals, practitioners and research scholars.

Tapping skills anytime & anywhere

The skills gaps are getting widened, and HR will be increasingly hard-pressed to make sure their organizations have the right talent. To do this, HR will need to quickly tap skills when they're needed-and where.

Thus "just-in-time" processes facilitate manufacturing Companies decreased costs and improve flexibility by getting materials delivered straight away before they're required for production. Likewise, HR organizations will need to build up a "just-in-time" workforce-one that allows them to instantly find and deploy skills when and where they're required in the business.

Managing people as a workforce of one

Customization is poised to renovate the way organizations handle their people. They will no longer consider their workforce as a single entity but instead, consider each employee as a "workforce of one," offering customized HR and talent management solutions.

Organizations of all types have long outshined by treating customers as "markets of one," offering them customized & personalized buying experiences. The concept of customization and the technology that has made it possible & have fueled the rise of some of the greatest success stories of the past 25 years: Dell (custom personal computers), Amazon (book and other product recommendations just for you) and Netflix (movies that fit your profile), to name just a few.

But when it comes to managing talent, many organizations still use one-size-fits-all HR practices. Standardization of such practices has helped companies to achieve noteworthy goals including steadiness, competence and fairness and to gain a global view of their people.

Yet business and workforce trends are bullying organizations to break out of the older standard employment deal. People now expect-even demand-customization in the workplace because they have experienced it in their everyday lives as consumers. Meanwhile, shifting demographics have made workforces more varied in terms of age, gender and ethnicity, as well as life aspirations, cultural norms and core values. And with the augment of more complex knowledge work, jobs are becoming increasingly complex to standardize, and companies are struggling to find adequate qualified workers. All this will make today's generic, one-size-fits-all people practices shortly obsolete-if not detrimental to a company's bottom line.

Individualization

Treating employees as individuals and not as part of a group or segment will be more visible as a trend in 2016. The way organizations have been dealing with employees is still far behind the way organizations deal with clients, but there is movement. HR can have lots of input from marketing. Most of the organizations today still segment in very simple ways i.e. Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z, Managers and non-managers, young versus old, and so on. To design policies and career tracks many untested assumptions are being used today. Thus "People above 55 want to slow down" whereas "Gen Y wants more Worklife Balance". With the help of big data analysis and sophisticated algorithms, it has become effortless to detect and forecast individual preferences of employees, and organizations can act on the insights with tailored

interventions and programs.

The rise of the extended workforce

Organizations will visualize the new extended workforce: a inclusive network of outside contractors, outsourcing partners, vendors, and other non-traditional employees. HR will redefine its mission and go-ahead to make the most of the extended workforce's strategic worth.

In the future, organizational competitive success will entirely depend on a highly unlikely factor: workers those who are not employees at all. There are a growing numbers of people who momentarily lend companies their skills and knowledge in an ever changing and expanding network of freelancers, consultants, outsourcing partners, vendors and other types of nontraditional talent.

A lot of of these individuals are jobless, but not workless. Others have jobs in one organization but carry out work for another, existing in a multifaceted and complicated web of cross-organizational relationships that form a new supply chain of talent.

They facilitate organizations add-on their existing core set of employees with a highly mobile, dynamic workforce to meet up the challenges of a complex and turbulent business environment.

HR drives the agile organization

As the world becomes increasingly unpredictable, organizations that can become accustomed to shifting business conditions will surpass the competition. Human Resource will restructure itself so that the function becomes the critical driver of agility.

As organizations endeavour to be suppler, they will make over everything to become extra responsive and nimble – including their leadership, strategy, organizational structures, operations, marketing efforts and financial processes.

But responsive organizations won't just rely on just a few decision makers at the top to turn out to be more nimble. Rather, they will count on their whole workforce, those within and even beyond their borders, to proactively and sinuously respond to change. Thus the HR function and talent management that is primarily accountable for managing it will play a central role in driving organizational agility.

To become really agile, organizations will require to be capable to rapidly assemble and reassemble employees in teams based on changing industry & business requirements. And they will need flexible, agile workers who can solve problem and research to drive performance innovation and improvement, and who are capable of continuous learning to build up new & updated skills. In addition, workers will require to be armed with skills that enable them to be face and change competent, as change management will become less of a bolt-on activity propelled by HR and more of an embedded competency in all workers.

Talent management meets up the science of human behaviour

As new insights into brain science and human behavior emerge - and as analytics finally enable organizations to test hypotheses and form conclusions by analyzing a newly available treasure trove of data – HR will set up to arm itself

with the insights and tools of a scientist to drive better performance from their workforces.

Reconfiguring the global talent landscape

HR will transform to adapt to a more global world, including adopting new talent sourcing strategies to match talent with task all over the globe, and adopting new management methods, such as supporting mobile workforces across geographic barriers.

Digital radically disrupts HR

Technology, including social, gamification, cloud, mobile, big data and consumer applications, is transforming how people carry out their work-and how HR supports them in that effort.

As the globalization mandate persists to pick up speed, organizations must accept new talent sourcing policies and innovative talent pipeline management approaches.

The complexities of today's global business atmosphere are making it hard for companies to find the right talent. To thrive in this challenging environment, companies must realign their talent strategies with their global footprint. They must learn how to operate in global virtual teams comprising people who have a deep insight of cultural nuances, global awareness, and cross-cultural teaming and collaboration skills.

Presently, three main drivers are fueling globalization efforts which will influence the workforce of the future:

- **Global customer imperative:** Rising economies such as China, India and Brazil and their rising population provide a new market opportunity and tremendous prospective for growth.
- **Global talent imperative:** In many industries, the supply of talent is no longer where it used to be, and companies must now look for globally across all labour pools to fill up their talent pipelines.
- **Digital advances:** New social and collaboration tools, cloud computing, and advances in remote access enable many jobs to be easily carried out remotely. The digitization of occupation has also lowered the cost of business computing and global communications.

Social drives the democratization of work

As a substitute of depending on solutions dictated from the top of the organization, organizations will be populated with knowledge workers who harness social media to create solutions in concurrence with each other, thereby fundamentally disrupting organizational structures, hierarchy, and job titles.

HR must maneuver risk and privacy in a more intricate world

Human Resource need to take on strategies pertaining to risk management covering everything from protecting confidential information and data, to risks associated with turnover of talent or weak hiring. It will be one of the prime focuses of HR to see organisational goal is met through different interventions, processes and policies for organisational sustainability and stability.

HR extends its reach for seamless employee experiences

HR will develop from being an evidently defined, stand-alone

purpose that administers HR and talent management progression to one that spans disciplines and crosses boundaries to deliver cross-functional, holistic employee experiences.

Developing leadership

Today companies are fighting back with the issue concerning leadership development at all levels, leading many employers to resort to new and accelerated models.

Creating outstanding leaders remains extremely significant, ranking as the second biggest priority for HR today. While almost 90% of respondents cited it as either "important" or "very important", the findings also suggested that organisations have made little or no progress since last year: the capability gap for developing leaders has widened in every global region. (Reconfiguring the Global Talent Landscape Transcript, Report by Accenture Report, 2015)

Approaches to learning and development

Companies will be required to dynamically exploring innovative & new approaches to learning and development as they meet growing skills gaps.

The need to change and accelerate corporate learning was this year's third most important challenge to HR, with the number of companies rating Learning and Development (L&D) as "very important" tripling over the past year. But while the importance of the issue increased, HR's readiness to handle it weakened – just 40% of respondents said that their organisation was prepared for L&D in 2015, compared to 75% last year. (Reconfiguring the Global Talent Landscape Transcript, Report by Accenture Report, 2015)

Radical changes in culture and engagement

Organisations are continuing to identify the need to focus on corporate culture and radically improving employee engagement as this era intimidates to bring a catastrophe in retention and engagement.

Deloitte's researchers found that this year, culture and engagement were rated the most important issue overall, replacing leadership as the top priority. This highlights the necessity for leaders to get hold of a clear understanding of their company's culture, and re-examine each HR and talent program as a way to engage and empower their people. (Deloitte *Global Human Capital Trends 2015* report)

Workforce on demand

In organisations today, all the facades of the workforce are being managed sophisticatedly, including the hourly, contingent and contract workforces within organisations. The workforce capability would be an important issue today, representing that the demand for skills will impel a trend towards greater use of contingent, contract and hourly workers. It is imperative that employers who decide this alternative have the right policies, tools and processes in place so that they can source, assess and reward talent that is non-traditional within the organisations.

Reinventing HR

Today, HR is undergoing an extreme alteration to deliver greater business impact and impel innovation. The need to re-

skill HR itself has become one of the biggest issues for Human Capital management today.

HR and people analytics

Today very few organisations are actively executing talent analytics capabilities to tackle multifaceted requirements for business and talent.

HR ought to make “serious investments” in leveraging data when it is about making people decisions. People analytics is an approach which has been evolving over the past several years and it has the potential to change the way HR functions. But according to Deloitte, HR departments and organisations seem to be sluggish in developing the capabilities to take full advantage of its potential. (Deloitte *Global Human Capital Trends 2015* report)

People data all over

Over the forthcoming years, many organisations are anticipated to develop their HR data strategies by integrating and harnessing third party data about their people from platforms on social media.

The external people data has shaped a new globe of employee data beyond the corporate environment. It is now crucial and valuable for companies to understand to analyze, observe, manage, and take benefit of this data for improved recruitment process, hiring, retention, leadership development and above all organisational development.

Generality of work

Companies are anticipated to make the work environments simpler and practices easy as a response to increasing system and “information overload” complications. The initiative and journey towards simplifying work environment will be a long-term undertaking, which is just at its beginning. This will necessitate renovating the work environment and implementing design thinking to facilitate employees focus and relieve strain & stress.

Machines as talent

The utilization of machines to analyze, read, speak, and make decisions that is Cognitive computing has been affecting work at all levels. Some consider that many jobs will be put an end. Thus, HR teams must reflect on how to assist in redesigning jobs as we all can work in collaboration with computers in almost every role.

The rising presence and growth of intelligent software is challenging organisations to rethink the way they have been working and the skills their employees need for success. In the report “Reconfiguring the Global Talent Landscape Transcript, by Accenture, 2015 reveals six “key findings”, which outline the changes HR will need to manage:

- “Softer” areas such as culture and engagement, leadership, and development will continue to be urgent priorities.
- Leadership and learning have dramatically increased in importance, but the capability gap is widening.
- HR organisations and HR skills are failing to keep up with business needs.
- HR technology systems are a growing market, but their promise may be largely unfulfilled.
- Talent and people analytics are a high priority and a

tremendous opportunity, but progress is slow.

- Simplification is an emerging theme; HR is part of the problem.

Data driven and social media recruiting

Data-driven recruiting will definitely be a trend that will gain more momentum. Getting access to data is becoming trouble-free and cheaper with innovative technology and professional network platforms. Talent acquisition leaders can support themselves with data and become very strategic in their decisions. For example, making talent pools using data helps recruiters to enhance their understanding of the market and be more competent. At the same time social media has already become popular for recruitment. Most of the small businesses will be make use of social media updates and blog posts to stand out and assist them exert a pull on the top talent. According to Deloitte recently unveiled its *Global Human Capital Trends 2015* report, it’s anticipated that 58 percent of employees are more likely to apply to a company that uses social media.

Focus on the human side of the business

In today's dynamic business environment most of the organisations with the ability to thrive are struggling because they don't empower people or tap into their full potential. While success in the 20th century was driven by process, structure and encouraging people to function more like machines, success in the future requires HR to make more of the human side of business. Human beings have developed to deal with uncertainty through teamwork, cooperation, collaboration and using conflict in a constructive manner. Businesses need to support their people to develop mindsets geared towards connection, conversation and experimentation. Businesses also require redefining how they view fear and failure.

Reinventing performance reviews

The hottest topic as of now is reinventing performance reviews, including dropping performance ratings. Different companies like Accenture, Deloitte and others have already done it. GE is piloting the same.

Accenture Research wing has identified 10 business trends that will radically reshape HR in the next five years:

1. Rise of the extended workforce. Companies will be increasingly composed of an ever-shifting, global network of contractors, business partners and outsourcing providers. As talent stretches beyond the confines of the company, HR teams may have to pay as much attention to people outside of the organisation as to those inside.
2. Managing individuals. Instead of managing a workforce with a one-size-fits-all approach, HR will treat each employee as a “workforce of one” with unique needs and preferences, and will customize employee incentives accordingly.
3. Technology advances radically disrupt HR. Technology will integrate talent management into the fabric of everyday business. HR IT will become a vital component of an organisation characterized by social media, cloud computing, mobility, and Big Data.
4. The global talent map loses its borders. With a mismatch

- between areas of supply and demand of jobs globally, companies will be composed of highly diverse workforces. HR will need to adopt new recruitment strategies to effectively match talent with task across the world.
5. HR drives the agile organisation. The world is becoming increasingly unpredictable and organisations that can adapt to changing business conditions will outperform the competition. HR will fundamentally reshape itself to enable new organisations designed around nimble and responsive talent.
 6. Talent management meets the science of human behaviour. As new discoveries into brain science and human behaviour are emerging – and companies are using analytics to achieve improved results – HR will begin to arm itself with the tools and insights of a scientist to achieve better performances from their workforces.
 7. Social media drives the democratization of work. Social media is pervading the workplace and making it easier for employees to exchange information and ideas online. HR will need to play a vital role in helping build effective organisational cultures that support this, as well as incentives and processes for knowledge sharing, innovation and engagement.
 8. HR must navigate risk and privacy in a more complex world. As the internet continues to break down information barriers, HR will adopt risk management strategies covering everything from protecting confidential information and data, to risks associated with weak hiring or turnover of talent.
 9. HR expands its reach to deliver seamless employee experiences. HR will evolve from being a clearly defined, stand-alone function to one that collaborates closely with other parts of the business, such as IT, strategy and marketing, to deliver well-rounded HR and talent

management processes.

10. Tapping skills anytime, anywhere. Skills gaps are widening and HR will be increasingly hard pressed to ensure their organisations have the right people. HR will need to develop initiatives to be able to quickly tap skills when and where they are needed.

Utilization of HR technology solutions as enabler for business strategy

Technology has been playing a vital role in accomplishing the goals of an organisation. The ISG Survey on Industry Trends in HR Technology and Service Delivery, March 2014 reveals that there has been a positive impact for organizations meeting their business case for adoption of innovative and emerging technologies, including unified human capital management, SaaS and integrated talent management initiatives.

ISG’s recent Industry Trends in Human Resources Technology and Service Delivery survey reveals some of the interesting trends in the Human Resources Outsourcing (HRO) marketplace. Technology now plays a vital role in enabling HR organizations to move from personnel management to being an enabler of business strategy execution. HR executives are no longer absorbed with the ground-level issues like people getting paid on time. They are now more focused on aligning HR functions to strategic business goals.

The survey highlights the key focus areas for improvement considered by the HR professionals. One-third of respondents feel that their HR organizations’ key focus area for improvement in 2014-16 is strategic alignment to the business. This is followed by other areas like talent acquisition and driving business process improvements. The figure below explains the rate of adoption of HR technology

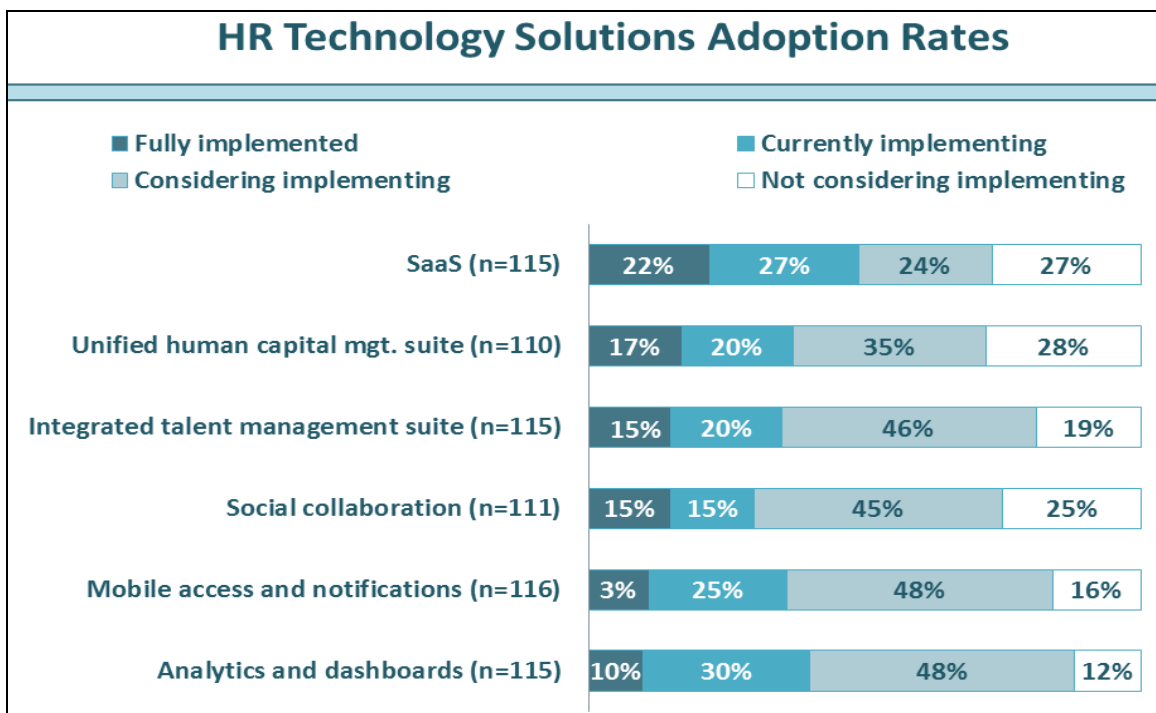


Fig 1

Focus on holistic human resources

Recruiting or talent management involves more than just hiring and hiring. It includes HR administrative tasks, engagement, training, culture and most importantly finding the right fitment. Thus, all these are significant in order to be effective in all aspects of human resources from strategic to administrative and everything in between. It is what makes HR so challenging for senior leaders to take hold of and manage as there are many shades of human resources.

Thus focus cannot be just on recruitment but skills, the environment, the culture, resources, funding and structure of the organization. Hence HR needs to have holistic view today.

Decentralized work sites

Gradually, work sites are becoming more decentralized these days. The telecommuting capabilities have made it possible for the employees to be located at any place on the globe and, with this option; the employers today no longer have to consider locating a business near the work force. Thus, telecommuting has presented an opportunity for a business in a high cost area to have its work done in an area where lower wages prevail.

A work site which is decentralized also provides opportunities that may meet the requirements of the diversified workforce. Hence, those who have got disabilities or family responsibilities like child care may prefer to work in their homes instead of traveling to the organization's facility. A decentralized work site presents a challenge for HRM. And, much of the issues and challenges revolve around training managers about how to establish and ensure appropriate work excellence and on-time completion. Work at home policy may also need HRM to rethink its compensation terms and procedures. The issue here is whether to pay on an hourly basis, on a salary base, or by the job performed. But it is to be understood that employees in decentralized work sites are full time employees of the organization as opposed to conditional & contingent workers. It will also be the responsibility of the organization to assure the health and safety of the decentralized work force.

Employees become brand advocates

Companies have discovered their own employees can be advocates for their brand and are finding out this is good for business. Employee advocacy programs, which encourage employees to share updates about the business on their own social media accounts, have grown by 191% since 2013 and are due to continue to increase in 2016. According to research conducted by Edelman Trust Barometer, 49% of people believe a company's employees rank higher in perception than the CEO, Founder, or PR department, 50% of employees already shared content about the company on their social channels, and importantly, 58% believe that socially engaged employees are more likely to attract new talent to the company. Content shared by employees gets eight times more engagement than content shared by brand channels and is re-shared 25 times more frequently.

The era of big data

Big data is a term that describes any voluminous amount of unstructured, semi-structured and structured data that has the potential to be explored for information. It is tremendously large data sets which can be explored computationally to reveal trends, patterns, and associations, particularly relating to human behaviour and interactions. It is being used in two different ways. Recruiters are using analytics to foresee what kind of employees will do best in a job on one hand; say by finding the correlation between academic performance and employee productivity while on the other hand, with big data generating so much information that the responsibility is on HR to present all that information in a way that becomes comprehensible and engaging.

Social media and employer branding

Today some of the best positioned organisations feel the need to establish themselves as brands which are high in demand to work for. This process can better be led by the HRM function, which makes use of the social media to reach out to people. We all know that social media facilitates two-way communication which can make it possible for organisations to quantify the results of their branding activities in a much better and improved manner.

Generation Z & Millennials on move

Generation Z are the individuals born between 1995 and 2010. Generation Z workers have started to enter the workforce as interns and entry-level employees, and they are going to go fast. It is the HR function to get in on the action by snatching up highly talented Generation Z people before competitors hire them.

At the same time, the Millennials are now moving into leadership positions. According to a study by Elance oDesk, 27 percent of Millennials already work in managerial positions, and in ten years that number will increase to 47 percent. But Millennials may not be adequately trained to handle the tasks.

Reinventing HR

Deloitte's third annual Global Human Capital Trends 2015: Leading in the New World of Work report highlights how the majority of organisations are still failing to take action to improve their culture and are potentially jeopardizing future growth.

"As demand for talent picks up, the balance of power in business is rapidly shifting from the employer to the employee. In this new world of work, organisations need to re-imagine the way they manage people and come up with new, out-of-the-box ideas to make themselves relevant."

The report highlighted a gap between what business leaders want and the capabilities of HR to deliver, as suggested by the capability gap analytics found across regions and in different countries (figure 2).

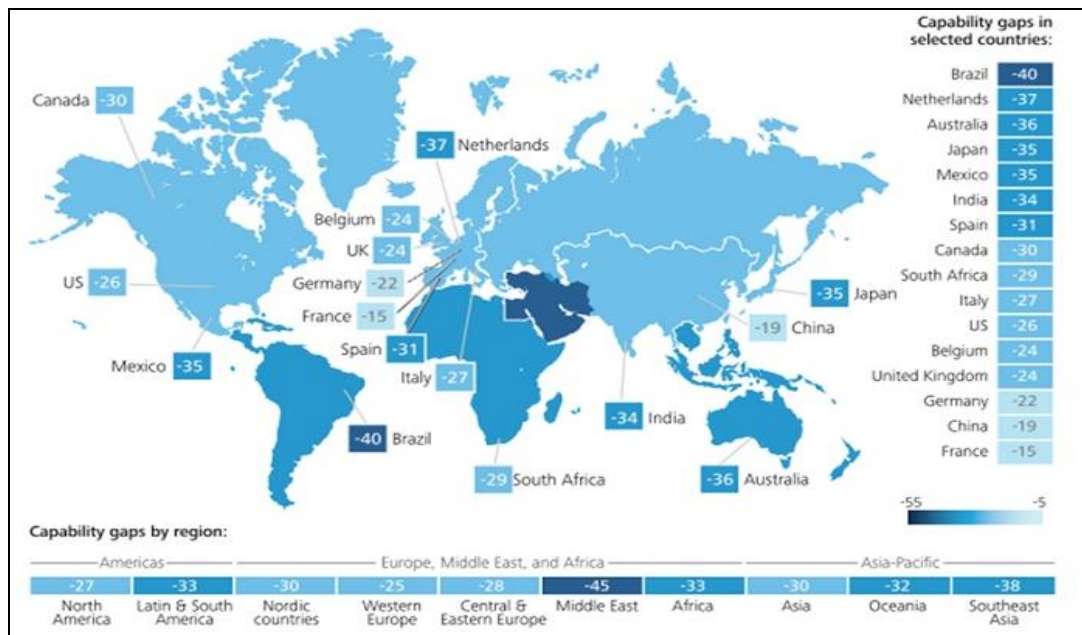


Fig 2: HR Capability gap by region

In addition to workers' changing expectations of employers, skills needed on the job are changing faster than ever. Organisations are quickly falling behind on developing the right skills across all levels. There is an urgent need for organisations to re-evaluate their learning programs and treat leadership development as a long-term investment, rather than a discretionary training spend item when times are favourable. "Today's senior HR leaders must be innovative and business-savvy, plus be able to bring the HR team together so it evolves into an integrated business function. Research shows almost 40% of HR leaders come from the business not from HR."

Conclusion

HRM is no different than other facets of a business in being able to deliver essential benefits to an organisation. When reviewing an HRM function. It becomes apparent that a number of business procedures and processes have an impact on the effectiveness of employee efforts and capability in delivering services or product to customers. Those who work in Human Resource are not only responsible for hiring & firing, they also have the responsibility to nurture a peoples' environment. It's true that any individual who works in HR Dept. "Must be a people person". Change has become imperative with the current push towards strategies that engage employees, attract top talent and contribute to the bottom. The HRM should build competitive edge and advantage by building strong organizations, strong leaders, strong teams, managers & employees. If HR is to be professed as an important enabler of business strategies it needs to be seen by quantifiable contributions to the bottom line through reducing expenses or revenue generation, risk mitigation and talent management. The HR people are to be a lot more creative in the way they plan, strategize and implement things. Today, the "one size fits all" approach doesn't work anymore. HRM today needs to be talent of tomorrow by adopting new concepts, policy & processes. The world is changing very fast and same is the case of technology, people and processes and

to thrive in this changing world HRM & HR professional need to understand the change and manage the same by process innovation & revamping various HR thoughts.

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