Book Review

Human Resources Management in India: Emerging Issues and Challenges

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With the rapid changes in the business scenario in the recent past, organizations are forced to reorient themselves to meet the new challenges. Technological advances, global competition, demographic changes, information revolution and trends towards service society have changed the rules of the game significantly.

In such a scenario, organizations with similar set of resources can gain competitive advantage only through effective and efficient management of resources. Presently, human resources management is no more an administrative function but a growth-oriented professional function. Human resources managers have to face a number of challenges for managing the modern knowledge-oriented organizations. In the light of these, several new issues have emerged including talent management, outsourcing, performance management, online recruitment, emotional intelligence, team management and impact of information technology and communications.

The premise that people provide organizations with an important source of sustainable competitive advantage is established. The effective management of human capital, as a determinant of organizational performance, is thus accepted. Competition, technology, management and the rise of the new economy, have forced organizations to look for innovative strategies to gain the competitive edge. The role of human resources management in organizations has assumed significance in this context and has been evolving dramatically in recent years. The successful organizations are using human resources as a strategic partner, investing them with far-reaching transformational roles and responsibilities. This activity involves making the function of managing people the most prioritized activity in the organization and integrating all HR policies/programmes within
the framework of a company’s strategy. Indian organizations are increasingly turning to the HRM techniques to face the emerging challenges posed by liberalization and globalization.

HRM relates to formulation of strategies by business entities concerning selection, training and rewarding of their personnel. The subject has assumed added significance in the wake of liberalization and globalization trends sweeping across the world. In the face of intense competition unleashed by market-oriented reforms, firms are vying with each other to acquire competitive advantage to prosper in business and in many cases to survive in business. Every possible strategy is being applied to achieve the explicit and implicit objectives of the firm. HRM has emerged as an important ingredient of the policy mix to score points over the existing and potential competitors.

Human beings are the heartbeat of an organization. They are the brains trust and think tanks of future strategies. Intangible assets like human capital have to direct tangible and material resources innovatively to fulfil the objectives of any business entity. Vision sharing with employees with adequate empowerment constitutes an essential element of HRM strategy. A system of fair compensation for performance and provision of a good ‘work/life balance’ and succession planning become important in the context of the ‘war for talent’, rising salaries and growing levels of attrition, particularly in developing economies like India.

The HRM strategy highlights issues like talent identification, retention and engagement of employees. It has also brought out the need for a gap analysis and measures to fill the gaps in knowledge, talent, productivity and strategy leading to competence building and better position-person fit. A watch has to be kept on demand-supply mismatches and in-house development of multi-skilled personnel to enable companies to diversify, integrate and carry on multiple businesses. These issues call for taking new initiatives in the area of training, imparting skills and empowerment, competence mapping and career development.

The book under review contains 17 well-researched papers which provide deep insights into various dimensions of HRM in the Indian context. Authored by academicians and practitioners in the field of HRM, these papers will provide valuable inputs to teachers, students and others interested in the subject.

The contributors to this volume have covered a wide variety of subjects encompassing important issues like strategic HRM, talent management, garnering
competitive advantage through people, career development and succession planning as well as effective recruitment, engagement, retention and competence building strategies. Emphasis has also been laid on keeping employees enthused, empowered and truly engaged.

This book brings together a collection of papers showcasing the best practices and success stories relating to human resources management in Indian organizations. It provides a rich source of information for practitioners and scholars who wish to further their knowledge of HRM practices from an Indian point of view.

Overall, the book could be utilized as a HR tool kit for nurturing and effectively handing human resources by addressing the emerging issues and challenges of employees and employers. The book is a mixture of theory and practice of effective HR. The authors expect that the present book will attract scholars from academics and professionals from industries for its effective use and application.

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