

*Editorial*DOI URL: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jbssr.v8i1.56565>

Unleashing Organisational Effectiveness through Strategic HRD: A *Paradigm Shift*

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Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, organisational effectiveness, paradigm shift, strategic human resource development

In today's dynamic and highly competitive business landscape, organisations are constantly seeking ways to gain a sustainable competitive advantage. The role of human resources has evolved significantly, and strategic human resource development (SHRD) has emerged as a key driver in achieving organisational effectiveness. This write-up aims to analyse the critical interplay between strategic HRD and organisational effectiveness, presenting insights into the latest research and urging organisations to embrace this paradigm shift.

Symbiotic Relationship

There is a symbiotic relationship between strategic HRD and organisational effectiveness which organisation leaders and managers should understand and manage for future success. Developing human resources in an organisation has marked a paradigm shift, as it has emerged as strategic HRD (Garavan, 1991; Garvan, Heraty, & Barnicle, 1999; Garavan, 2007; Sthapit, 2014; Sthapit, 2021) which is different from ordinary HRD.

While Garavan (2007) and Sthapit (2014) advocated for strategizing HRD, Bennett and McWhorter (2021) emphasised on promoting virtual HRD practices to strategize HRD in the context of COVID-19 pandemic and on leveraging learning assets to prepare for

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the future, as organisations anticipate more digital transformation. With limited time to adjust to new working arrangements amid the pandemic times, many organisational leaders turned to HRD practitioners for assistance to implement agile workforce strategies (Yawson, 2020). The responsiveness of HRD to the COVID-19 pandemic is testament that HRD is not a static field; it has interdisciplinary roots that allow it to incorporate theory and practice towards attaining the goal of improving learning at work (McGuire, Germain, & Reynolds, 2021). Bierema (2020) and Liang et al (2022) explored how HRD would create a new normal through a bold, critical research inquiry that would interrogate exclusion, pursues organisational and social justice, and create humanly sustainable organisations and communities. It all requires organisations to make HRD truly strategic, so that it is made not only proactive, but also based on its long-term goal and environment analysis (Sthapit, 2014; Sthapit, 2021).

Strategic HRD encompasses a deliberate and proactive approach to aligning human resource initiatives with an organisation's strategic goals as well as with other functional management strategies (marketing, operations, and finance) and formulating strategies based on environmental analysis (Sthapit, 2014; Sthapit, July 2020; Sthapit, 2021). It essentially integrates human resource management practices with the organisation's strategic objectives and long-term goals. Strategic HRD encompasses activities such as talent management, employee training, management development, performance management, career and succession planning, and organisational development (Sthapit, 2019). Unlike traditional HRD practices, which focus solely on employee skill enhancement, strategic HRD seeks to bridge the gap between individual development and organisational objectives, resulting in enhanced employee performance and overall organisational effectiveness.

SHRD's contribution to OE

This paper argues that organisational effectiveness (OE) is to be enhanced through Strategic HRD. Organisational effectiveness is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various dimensions, such as productivity, innovation, employee engagement, and adaptability to change. Strategic HRD plays a pivotal role in enhancing these dimensions and ultimately improving an organisation's overall effectiveness. This write-up puts forth some keyways in which strategic HRD contributes to organisational effectiveness:

- *Talent Acquisition and Development:* Strategic HRD focuses on identifying and attracting top talent, aligning recruitment efforts with the organisation's strategic needs (Sthapit, 2014). Once hired, it nurtures and develops employees through training, mentoring, and career development programmes. By ensuring a regular, strong talent pipeline, strategic HRD fosters a skilled and adaptable workforce that positively impacts organisational effectiveness.
- *Knowledge Management and Learning Culture:* A learning culture is fundamental for organisations to stay ahead in a rapidly evolving world. Strategic HRD fosters a culture of continuous learning, knowledge sharing, and innovation (Sthapit, 2014).

It promotes learning initiatives such as seminars, workshops, e-learning platforms, and communities of practice. This knowledge-driven approach enhances employees' capabilities, fosters creativity, and stimulates organisational effectiveness.

- *Performance Management and Reward Systems:* Strategic HRD ensures that performance management systems are aligned with the organisation's strategic goals (Sthapit, 2019). It establishes clear performance expectations, provides timely feedback, coaching and mentoring, and rewards high performance. By fostering a performance-oriented culture, strategic HRD encourages employees to strive for excellence, leading to enhanced organisational effectiveness.
- *Change Management and Organisational Agility:* In today's VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) business environment, organisations must be agile and responsive to change (Sthapit, 2020 June; Sthapit, 2021 December). Strategic HRD equips employees with the necessary skills and mindset to adapt to change effectively. By providing change management training, facilitating communication, and promoting a supportive work environment, strategic HRD enables organisations to navigate change successfully, maintaining their effectiveness amidst uncertainty.
- *Leadership Development and Succession Planning:* Strategic HRD identifies and nurtures future leaders within the organisation. By implementing robust succession planning processes and leadership development programmes, organisations can ensure a steady pipeline of talent to fill critical roles. Effective leadership development not only strengthens organisational resilience but also aligns leadership competencies with the organisation's long-term strategic vision.

Conclusion

The interplay between strategic HRD and organisational effectiveness is undeniable. As organisations navigate an increasingly complex and volatile business landscape, strategic HRD has emerged as a catalyst for achieving organisational effectiveness. Modern organisations can optimise their human capital, enhance performance, and gain a competitive edge by aligning HRD practices with strategic goals and fostering a culture of continuous learning, innovation, and performance (Sthapit, 2014; Sthapit, July 2020; Sthapit, 2021); it paves the way for their future growth and prosperity. Organisations that recognise the strategic importance of HRD and proactively invest in developing their human capital stand a better chance of achieving sustained success. The time has come for organisations to embrace strategic HRD as an integral component of their overall strategic management approach.

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