

## Chapter 6

# An Investigation of E–HRM Practices in Indian Tourism and Hospitality Industry

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### ABSTRACT

*Since the 1980s, there has been a rapid shift towards the application of information technology (IT) for business processes. Information technology is recognised as a critical driver of transition of human resource management role from an administrative to a strategic business partner. This strategic role not only adds a valuable dimension to the HRM function but also changes the competencies demanded for the success of HR professionals. The purpose of this chapter is to identify most significant E-HRM practices adopted by the Indian hospitality industry. Data were collected from the HR managers of hospitality enterprises in India. A survey methodology was chosen because it was deemed to be the most efficient way of reaching a large number of respondents, whereas the data required facilitated the use of a mail-administered questionnaire with close-ended questions. A set of 33 E-HRM practices items was initially generated from a review of management research.*

### INTRODUCTION

The 1980s was known as an era of information technology. Since the 1980s there has been a rapid shift towards the application of information technology (IT) for business processes. Most of the businesses became more conscious towards cost savings, improving service delivery and improve efficiency by streamlining processes and practices with the use of IT. Indeed, in recent years business seems to be more difficult and complex and IT systems have become prerequisites for

their sustaining, survival and growth. The rapid developments in Information technology systems demand changes in organisational structures especially in tourism & hospitality industry where IT has made dent in big way. In fact, being a winner in the IT era, tourism & hospitality organisations requires deploying the right mix of information, people and infrastructure. Thus, understanding how people use information and knowledge is essential for tourism & hospitality firms and is a key to their strategy development.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-8268-9.ch006

During recent decade, tourism and hospitality industry has made a remarkable progress in terms of revenue generation, GDP, employment, tourist arrival and balance of payment for more than three dozen countries (WTO, 2013). Interestingly, industry-wide improvements are being made in the areas of quality service, customer satisfaction and retention of calibre. Moreover, tourism and hospitality creates special benefits, both concerning the reconstruction of the national economy of many countries having a high touristic potential, and also due to the fact that according to the WTO evaluations, the touristic industry stands first in the world from the contribution to the work force employment point of view (WTO, 2013).

Tourism & hospitality is an industry with an intensive labour market, which is based on people i.e. employee is responsible to transform the charm and attractions of tourist destinations into real tourist experience (Ramona, Roxana, & Tanasie, 2009). In the last years, many companies have responded to the high growth in the tourism & hospitality industry, crediting on the development of innovative HR practices. - Thus, shaping organization is essential and required task for any management to produce a qualitative and reliable product for their customers. Today, every organisation uses human resource management (HRM) for internal management and efficient utilization of resource to produce a better and new technological product for their customers. Moreover, HRM is an art of managing people at work in such a manner that they give best to the organization. Recently, electronic human resource management (e-HRM) has emerged to respond to the change in management functions coupled with business changes. Electronic human resource management (e-HRM) as an Implementation Support System (ISS) for understanding the better skills, creative abilities and talents of human resources at each level.

According to Armstrong (2003) e-HR provides information required to manage HR processes. These may be core employee database and pay-

roll systems but can be extended to include such systems as recruitment, e-learning, performance management and reward. The system may be web-based, enabling access to be remote or online and at any time. E-HRM has been defined as “a way of implementing HR strategies, policies and practices in organisations through a conscious and directed support of and/or with the full use of web-technology-based channels” (Ruel, Bondarouk & Looise, 2004). Furthermore, Karakanian (2000) views e-HR as the overall HR strategy which shifts from the HR department and is redistributed to other organizational units and trusted business partners, in a way which integrates HR activities with other corporate processes. Similarly, Thite and Kavanagh, (2008) E-HRM can be used for both transactional activities and transformational activities that add value to the organization viz-a-viz manage HR across the whole employee lifecycle.

Bondarouk and Ruël (2009) define e-HRM as: an umbrella term covering all possible integration mechanisms and contents between HRM and Information Technologies aiming at creating value within and across organizations for targeted employees and management.

This definition suggests the integration of four aspects of e- HRM (Bondarouk & Ruël 2009):

1. **Content of E-HRM:** Focuses on the type of HR practices and IT use, and the correspondence between them.
2. **Implementation of E-HRM:** Focuses on the process of adoption and appropriation of E-HRM by organization's members.
3. **Targeted Employees and Managers:** Focuses on specific stakeholder groups. As the modern HR organization exceeds both the HR department, and even the whole organization, a new approach needs to focus on line-management and employees that are actively involved in using E-HRM applications.

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