Chapter 7

Understanding the Need for Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD)

ABSTRACT

Chapter seven provides information to help HRD scholars, professionals, and practitioners better understand the need for strategic human resource development (SHRD). The struggle of comparing people to technology and respectfully integrating people and technology in the workplace continues to be debated to the detriment of individual and organizational success. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed how far behind HRD scholars, professionals, and practitioners are when needed to integrate and enhance the relationship between people and technology in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION

Strategic human resource development (SHRD) has been researched and defined by several authors (Alagaraja, 2013; Becker et al., 2001; Beer & Spector, 1989; Ericson, 2006; Garavan, 1991, 2007; Garavan et al., 1995, 2016; Gilley & Eggland, 1989; Gilley & Maycunich, 2000; Grieves, 2003; Harrison, 1993, 1997; Lee, 2003; Nadler & Wiggs, 1986; Rothwell & Kazanas, 1991; Tseng & McLean, 2008). Garavan (1991) suggested nine SHRD key characteristics suggested by Garavan (1991) are: (1) integration with organizational missions and goals; (2) top management support; (3)

environmental scanning; (4) HRD plans and policies; (5) line manager commitment and involvement; (6) existence of complementary HRM activities; (7) expanded trainer role; (8) recognition of culture; and (9) emphasis on evaluation. Garavan et al. (2016) further expanded on the topic of SHRD by examining the Dynamic capabilities of SHRD by suggesting Dynamic SHRD capabilities (DSHRDC) and a DSHRDC framework consisting of enabling factors, specific components, underlying processes, and unique SHRD dynamic capabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has spotlighted the need for strategic human resource development (SHRD) and the DSHRDC framework. The area of technology became an indispensable necessity for human survival during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic when human-human interaction was a life-threatening endeavor. Human-machine and machine-machine interactions became the norm and remain an integral part of organization functionality. Technology needs to be a focus of SHRD.

"Man and machine are as essential to organizational prosperity as air and water is to living" (Hughes & Gosney, 2012, p.759). HRD researchers have published very few empirical articles on people and technology in organizations (Githens et al., 2008). HRD publications only mention computer technology used to administer training, facilitate communication, and/or to track training results (Bennett, 2022; Githens et al., 2008; Werner & DeSimone, 2012). Githens, et al. (2008) noted that the technology areas addressed in the five primary HRD publications between the years 2000-2006 were "educational technology (86), … virtual teams (18), and workers, knowledge management, and other, had less than ten articles each" (p. 203). HRD is the leading educational field of study for training and development, and they are behind on researching and understanding how AI, robots (Pham et al., 2018), machine learning, ChatGPT, and other technologies are affecting employees in the workplace (Righetti et al., 2019; Ruiner et al., 2023; Vrontis et al., 2022). Kim (2022) has conducted some research to provide HRD scholars, practitioners, and professionals with insights on human-machine interactions when dealing with robots.

The main three areas of focus within the field of HRD has been training and development, career development, and organization development (OD) (Mankin, 2001; Swanson & Holton, 2001). The field is expanding into to areas including critical HRD, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), strategic HRD, evaluation, and cross-cultural HRD. Technology is still not included as a main area of focus. The global recession with its high number of unemployed

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