

ALIGNING STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE TO ENHANCE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

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Abstract. *This article reveals a conceptual framework about the importance of aligning Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and its impact on organizational learning, as well as organizations culture that proposes some perceptions on how knowledge might occur at the organizational level to improve organizational excellence, i.e. Knowledge Skills and Abilities (KSAs). Research indicates that there are a number of studies that advocate the impact of SHRM and its influence on an organization that enhances an organization's capability and enables them to improve their organizational competency, i.e. excellence. Yet, on that point are some rare linkage between SHRM and sustainable organizational cultural practices that can provide a unique perspective to develop organizations effectiveness and spread out its excellence through prerequisite academic condition, suitable working condition, and potential motivation. Thus, the main aim of this article is to put emphasis on several approaches of organizational culture and strategic HRM, by integrating knowledge from diverse areas of organizational studies including organizational learning, and the distinctive design of human resource practices. In view of literature, this article confers that the best practices for accomplishing and sustaining organizational excellence could be enriched through the organizational culture and academic work experienced in recent years. Finally, this article highlighted on some propositions that nowadays organizations are not only fulfilling the facility and linking functions but also rationalizing academic work in order to sustain their reputation and competitiveness of the organization as a whole that accelerates organizational performance and competitive ability.*

Keywords: *competitiveness; human resources (HR); strategic human resource management (SHRM); organizational culture (OC); organizational excellence.*

Introduction

In order to survive and achieve competitive advantages, nowadays, it is crucial to all organizations to be in a position to innovate and integrate the new knowledge that enables them to ensure sustainability of organizational learning through aligning organizational culture and performance development. Today, the strategic part of HRM practices, perceptions as well as organizational work culture which was integrated within the organization stated that the success of the organizational performance lied in developing positive attitudes of individuals, groups, and organizations that mainly enhanced individual competence as well organizational competence through organizational learning. Moreover, currently, organizations realize the significance of strategic HRM to build strong technical infrastructures along with strong organizational culture (which could be bureaucratic, competitive and supportive). As it facilitates the retrieval and dissemination of knowledge especially where human resources are responsible for empowering the effect of recent trends in organizations and protecting against the unwanted effects of globalization. Hence, both the approaches of organizational capacity development strategy, i.e. Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and organizational culture have been viewed as a new perspective of enhancing organizational performance to sustain in long-run as well as to meet some of the global challenges.

The contemporary issue on strategic human resource management and organizational culture's positive effect of organizations excellence presents the general framework of the aforementioned research work. It begins with the theoretical basis for the development of a strategic HRM and strategic culture. Consequently, to address the debated issue, it is mandatory to highlight that since the beginning of 1980's, it has been observed that Human Resource (HR) experts (both the academic and professional) have been always under stress to augment on how to increase the competitive capacity of their organizations. In this circumstance, it also emphasizes the importance of increasing a strong culture within the organization which enables to enhance the organization's competitive strategy. Similarly, research also shows that during this transition period in the development of knowledge, the way by which those who possess this knowledge, i.e. employees are achieved can be considered as an important source of competitive advantage. Alternative, it can be said that strategic human resource management and organizational culture plays a vital role to heighten and maintain the level of performance and excellence of an organization. As, in today's competitive environment, organizational competency is continuously reflected on organization's culture and its HR practices, both of which influence the behavior of organizational members (Cabrera & Bonache, 1999, p.52). Relating to this issue, Chowa and Liu (2009) stated that organizational culture is one of the most vital aspects of the internal organizational environment that has a great influence on human resource management practices and its strategic activities. Similarly, several researchers (Yeung, Brockbank & Ulrich, 1991; Cabrera & Bonache, 1999) also emphasized that organizational culture is concerned with the symbols, rituals, social patterns and shared understanding of the employees that govern employee's individual as well as group behavior within the organization, which reflects on organizations competitiveness.

Consequently, to discourse the interdisciplinary discussions and considerations on the varied suitable ways for enhancing businesses, organizations competitive advantages, the European Commission (EC) took the initiative on investing in people and modernizing labor markets, as well as investing in knowledge and innovation and considered them as the most priority areas for the renewed Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs in the EU market (European Commission, 2008). Where, significant efforts have been made to transform the global economy towards more knowledge intensive activities, in order to strengthen the single market, increase job mobility, reinforce education and training, and incentivize more private, investment in research and innovation Accordingly, in 2005 the Commission adopted the European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (European Communities, 2005) setting out the roles and responsibilities of employees (researchers) and their employers and investors, and ways to make recruitment fairer and more transparent. Being conscious of this new perspective of enhancing the European charter and Code (C&C), many organizations realize the relevance of strategic HRM to build technological infrastructures and organizational culture that allow them to reposition and attract talented researchers for the dissemination of knowledge. Where HR is responsible for empowering the effect of recent trends in organizations and shielding them against the unwanted effects. Hence, SHRM is viewed as an eminent approach to meet the global challenges.

Therefore, aligning the importance of SHRM in relation to organizational culture and organizational performance development is noteworthy in this growing research interest in the field of organizational capacity development, i.e. organizational excellence. Its growth is being inhibited by rapid contextualization of HRM, its diverse inherent values, assumptions, devotions, and philosophies which are taken to ensure granted as an essential aspect of an organization to boost the level of its performance. Research shows, that in spite of, growing research interest in the crucial arena of strategic human resource management (SHRM), the understanding of the relationship between HR, appropriate organizational culture and business strategy is still very limited and not much effective in reality. For example, it can be stated that how organizational culture and HR practices strategic activities can be aligned? How do they combine to strengthen an organization's competitive advantage? In this paper, this study reveals two aspects to organize the philosophy and concept of SHRM, i.e. underlying the significance of implementing C&C's principle and enhancing the organizational performance as well as accomplishing the organizational excellence through organizational learning. It introduces the notion of the organizational learning process and offers some insights into how learning might occur at the organizational level in order to enhance organizational competency. On the other hand, it includes all the aspects of people management and process which can provide organizations effectiveness and enhance organization's performance through the right people, culture and leadership, i.e. (changes in academic work, changes in recruitment, employment and working conditions, and academics' perceptions of their professional), the right organization design, concept to adopt change management and appropriate working conditions, i.e. (Performance-driven organization) and the right people processes for capability development, i.e. (employees' are potentially motivate).

Theoretical perspective of strategic human resource management (SHRM) approach

To address the consequence of SHRM in a research organization, it is obligatory to emphasize that currently organizations' have to face always competitive challenges and turn them into organizations opportunities. Henceforth, the human resource management function is expected to design, tailor, and implement efficient systems to help internal employees' positive operational strategic actions. In this perspective, the function of human resource management acts as a service provider having an effective toolbox to support other managers and help them to attain their objectives in line with the organizational strategic goals and orientation (Moustaghfir, 2014). According to Dermol and Rakowska, (2014) the concept of SHRM fits well with the conception of HR strategy due to its ability to create long-term value for the research organizations performance development. It tries to highlight that SHRM in an organization facilitates performance development as Storey (2001), identified that HRM is a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic development of a highly committed and capable workforce. Where, they are using an array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques.

Similarly, it is necessary to refer that 'Human resource management' covers a vast array of activities and shows a huge range of variations across occupations, organizational levels, business units, firms, industries and societies' (Boxall, Purcell & Wright, 2007). Boxall discusses that the main characteristics of HRM can be: diverse (hard or soft); strategic; business-oriented; focus on mutuality – a state that exists when management and employees are interdependent and both benefit from this interdependency; take a unitary view – the belief that management and employees share the same concerns and it is therefore in both their interests to work together; treat people as assets or human capital. Furthermore, Su, Wright and Ulrich (2018), emphasized that over the past 20 years, the importance of strategic HRM generating higher organizational performance through better employee management which, has sparked great interest for researchers and managers. From the theoretical perspective of strategic HRM, Walton (1985) and Whitener (2001) represent the activities of human resource management (HRM) approaches can be categorized into two challenging sectors such as commitment and control. Concerning this matter, various scholars have a different opinion. Among them, Lepak et al. (2006), highlighted that the main aims of commitment approaches are to improve organizational performance by influencing employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs); motivation; and opportunities to contribute. Whereas, the primary goal of the control approach is to escalate employees' competence as well as their level of performance through their compliance and conformity without alleviating company rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures.

The notion of organizational culture

The concept of organizational culture is not a new approach, it has a long tradition and it has come of age. While speaking about organizational culture, at first we need to know what is meant by culture from the academic perspective point? Precisely, culture can be considered as a "lens" through which we view the world. It depends on individual's observation, i.e. what we see, how we make sense of what we see, how we express ourselves. Moreover, the concept of culture is a long and varied history. Mainly, it has been used by the layman as a word to indicate sophistication. More precisely, can be said

that earlier culture has been used by anthropologists to designate the customs and rituals that societies develop over the course of their history (Schein, 2004, p.7). In the management literature, the existence of culture within the organization has often created some inferences, which shows that having a culture within the organization is necessary for effective organizational performance and that the stronger the culture, the more effective the organization.

The synergetic effect of strategic HRM, organizational culture and organizational excellence

The background of this study draws upon various approaches and concepts concerning the strategic HRM that integrating the significance of Human Resource Strategy for business strategy – a gateway to achieving organizational excellence. Consequently, it is necessary to mention that this concept of enhancing organizational competitive advantage, is one of the most noteworthy initiative of European Commission (EC), under the European Research Area (ERA) in order to make researchers' careers more attractive, i.e.(smart), and increase the job facility, as well as support the mobility of researchers by standardizing the researchers' careers in the EU under one umbrella. Hence research organizations performance development approach includes a strategy and active development attitude to effectively respond to the changes in its external environment. Cascio (2015, p.423) considers that actually strategic human resource management' (SHRM) is the replication of excellent, orientation, and integration of a research organization's HRM system. Where human capital resources can most effectively contribute to its strategic research objectives.

Fumasoli, Goastellec & Kehm (2015) noted that recently a growing diversity has been observed within the academic profession and new professional roles dwelling a space, which is neither positioned in the core business of teaching and research nor at the top level management and leadership. It explores the perceptions of academic staff and representatives of institutional leadership about the variations in academic careers and academic work experienced. Where, they emphasize the importance of standardization and differentiation of academic career paths, impacts of new forms of quality management on academic work, changes in recruitment, employment and working conditions, and academics' perceptions of their professional contexts. Bryson (2004), states that during the 1990's, especially the changes in the Higher Education (HE) organization have been observed profoundly particularly in the UK. The impact of these changes was mainly on the working environment and the employment of academic staff within the organization.

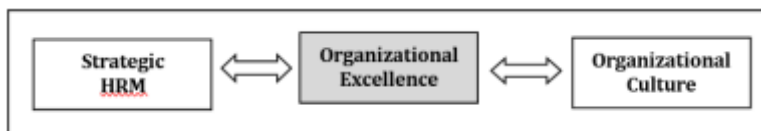


Figure 1. Aligning Strategic HRM and Organizational Culture on Organizational Excellence

To understand the synergetic effect of strategic HRM, organizational culture and organizational excellence, the above-mentioned Figure.1 illustrates the combined effort of organizational culture (OC) and organizational excellence (OE). Concerning this correlation, Qawasmeh, Darqal and Qawasmeh (2013) expressed that organizational culture is one of the most delicate means through which organizations can enhance and

achieve their excellence. In addition, they also emphasized that culture, have a strong influence on organizations overall performance. It doesn't matter whether the culture is strong or weak. Alternatively, organizational excellence is viewed as a continuing effort that all employees within an organization to make efforts to achieve. Therefore, organizational culture plays an important role in promoting organizational performance as well as enhancing organizational competitive capability in order to boost and sustain a long-lasting competitive advantage.

Understanding organizational culture and its relation to strategic HRM

In this changeover condition, the notion of 'human resource management' has become a key aspect of enhancing research organizations competitiveness through aligning organizational culture, which should be an integral factor when considering SHRM. Research shows that the significance of the association of HR along with the organizational culture both act as a source of competitive advantage that enables research organizations to enhance and influence on an organization's development strategy (Harrison & Bazy, 2017). Moreover, from the scientific perspective point, organizational culture is perceived and considered as a principle that maintaining the connections with the mission, vision and a strategy, of an organization's structure and size, the management's activities, or functions within an organization (Kosiorek & Szczepańska, 2016). Similarly, Gupta (2011), also mentioned that organizational culture has a great influence in creating and maintaining a high performance oriented research organization effectiveness within the same culture and cross cultures.

Consequently, human resource management professionals use the term "strategic human resource management" to convey their thinking that effective strategic HRM contributes to organizations effectiveness. It also indicates the significance of their interrelationships with other elements comprising an organizational system, including elements in the organization's internal and external environment as well as the multiple stakeholders who evaluate the organization's effectiveness and determine its long-term survival (Jackson, Randall & Kaifeng, 2014). Several studies (Schein, 1990; Morris, Davis, & Allen, 1993; Zahra, Hayton & Salvato, 2004) recognized that organization's culture exemplifies the coherent pattern of values and beliefs that has evolved as successful solutions to past challenges. Furthermore, culture represents a significant relative aspect that can foster flexible knowledge-sharing behaviors of the employees within the organization, which is influenced by the strategic aspects of HRM (as cited in Hayton & Macchitella, 2013).

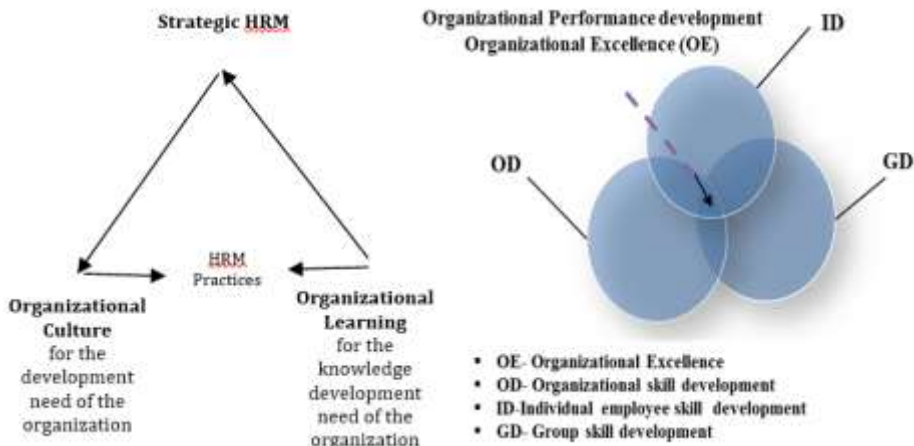


Figure 2. Strategic HRM and Organizational Culture's influence on Organizational Excellence

Figure 2 represents the inter-related effect of strategic HRM, organizational culture and organizational leanings collective strength that enables an organization to strengthen its organizational excellence (OE). It demonstrates that the way an organization can improve its level of performance through organizational skill development (Know-how), individual employee's skill development (human resources development) and group skill development (organizational competence) Concerning this co-relation, Saha et al. (2016) described that organizational performance development in relation with strategic HRM and organizational learning objectives which is the inter-related effect of both individual employee competency (performance) and organizational competency (top and middle management involvement) that leads to develop organizational success and performance indicators for sustainable development of competitive advantage. In spite of these references to a broader understanding about organizational performance in association with the dynamics of the top and middle management, Floyd and Wooldridge (1992) argue that middle management involvement in strategy improves performance by refining the quality of strategic decisions. Where these decisions in combination result in a superior organizational strategy development that empowers organizational performance.

Methodology

This study principally addressed the amalgamation of both empirical evidence and inductive reasoning of strategic HRM and organizational culture. The empirical argument represents the methods of gaining knowledge. Generally, inductive reasoning shows the level of sustenance in the form of probabilistic reasoning and the source of most scientific theories founded on the contemporary approaches of strategic HRM.

Definition of strategic human resource management used in this study

The definition of 'Strategic HRM' has been used in this research based on the impact of human resource management and human resource (HR) practices and its strategic activities, strategic planning, and skills on organizational capacity development. The primary aim of this study is not an examination of different scholar's opinion and disagreeing with the basis of organizational capacity development that has been moved

and examining the comparative relationship from organizational culture and its influence on organizational competitiveness. Where, HR strategies has become the major driving forces of business performance and the process that take into consideration such valuable assets which are managed, developed, and motivate a key core capability. The significances of this study marked the key dimensions and distinctive features of Strategic HRM and Organizational culture approach, its benefits and objectives of organizational learning, strategic HR practices among motivated performance-oriented organizations' different priorities, and characteristics that simplify the sustainable organizational learning and organizational effectiveness.

Results and discussion

This study was steered to describe the potential contribution of strategic HRM and its distinctive features that enable organizations to enhance their competitive capability (individual, group and organizational) and level of performance in relation to the implementation of organizational culture and organizational learning strategies, i.e. (know-what, know-why, know-how, and know-who). Conferring with the findings of evolutionary economics, organizational behavior and HRM literature have generally given a relative perspective to us about the theoretical aspects of SHRM and the key components of organizational culture which have a positive impact on organizational performance development and enhance competitive advantage. The below-mentioned Figure 3 exemplifies that HRM approach as a vital strategic driving force that raises sustainable organizational learning and improves the organizational performance. In addition, the presence of organizational culture components and attributes also enables organizations to meet the recent trends of business, which complement and facilitate the organizational capacity development strategy through active participation or involvement within the organization. Alternatively, strategic human resource management reinforces managerial skills such as individual, group, and organizational competence in an organization through improving organizational learning including individual, group, and organizational learning and human resources development which leads to promoting competitive capability and business growth due to their inherent competences.

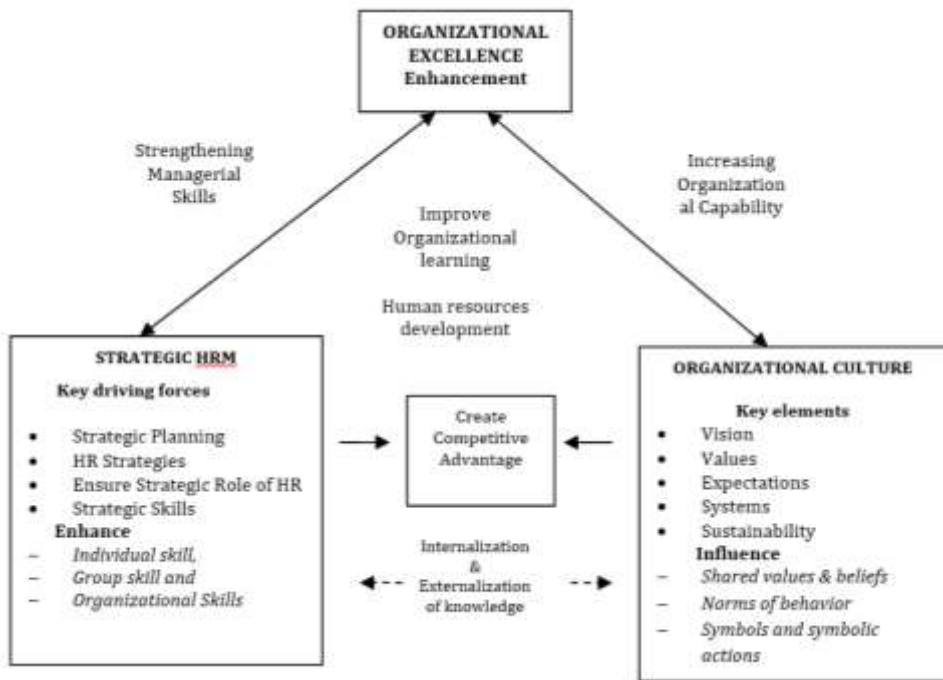


Figure 3. Thematic Model of Organizational Excellence Enhancement in relation with Strategic HRM and Organizational Culture

To justify, the key elements of organizational culture’s influences on organizations capacity development, it is also necessary to identify whether the strategic quality of HRM can really enhance the organizational excellence or not that encourage organizational performance augmentation (competence). It is essential to differentiate, whether organizational competence can be regarded as an important component for achieving the competitive advantage or not; whether organizational culture, its distinctive components as well as the strategic activities of human resources can really shield and strengthen the organizational coordination and consolidation (i.e. operational activities and managerial skills) or not; whether the initiatives provided by the HR system in the organizations are effective or not.

Regarding this issue, researcher (Schuler, 1992; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Chow & Liu, 2009) have observed that the value of strategic HRM and its impact on organizational effectiveness with the presence of organizational culture become more magnified as it enables organization’s ability to create and maintain a link between the internal and external demands of an organization. In addition, the perspective of SHRM emphasizes the necessity to achieve coordination and integration between organizational culture, HR systems, a business strategy that influences on organizational performance.

Based on the issue of organizational culture and its impact on human resource management (HRM) leads to the recognition of two important research assumptions or RAs.

- RP1, emphasizes that organizational culture and strategic HRM practices are one of the most significant factors in organizational performance development, i.e.(excellence). Conferring, in this argument several scholars have numerous opinions. Among them, Chow, Teo & Chew (2013), Darwish, Singh & Mohamed (2013), Su et al. (2018) pointed out that there is a significant relationship between strategic HRM and organizational performance development Concurrently, Colakoglu, Lepak and Hong (2006) also explained that to review the presentation of an organizational performance, there is no stable system that is existing. Actually, it depends on the inherent capabilities of prevailing human resources practices as well as organizational work culture within the organization in order to gain the competitive advantage.
- RA2 indicates that organizational performance in terms of individual, group and organizational competitive capability is achievable through organization's activities, especially, from the organizational cultural impact that based on shared values, belief, norms, and action-based perspective. This RA, mainly emphasized that individual employee's proficiency (KSAs) creates value through their individual creativity as well as the existence of a quality working environment (work culture). Saha et al (2016), highlighted that human resources management enables organizations or firms to understand the value of internal and external customers, competitors' knowledge, products, technology, and sources of competitive advantage. It is essential to ensure that the success of any organization which is based on the belief that an organization gains a competitive advantage by using its people effectively and efficiently.

Conclusions and implications

To conclude, it is essential to accentuate the fact that at the present time, the manifestation of strategic human resource management concept, as well as the significance of organizational culture, has been aligned with the perception of organizational performance development strategy. It is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of HR systems, organizational behavior and constitutes a standardized working environment, i.e. effective organizational culture according to C&C, which acts as a vital stimulant for attaining organizational excellence.

Finally, this study recommended that organizational capability development enhances internal commutations strategy in a relationship with the organizational culture and sustainable organizational learning. Therefore, to accomplish organizations effectiveness that enhances sustainable organizational learning; this study suggested some propositions which, shows that it is important for the HR strategy of the organization to be taken on a comparable alignment to ensure not only the organization's success but also its sustainability.

Therefore, there is a critical need for business leaders to assess their expertise (innovative skills and abilities) constantly to determine whether the appropriate expertise required to accomplish the business strategies exist within the organization or not; if not, then how is it possible to identify the skills for developing the current employees within the organization to perform better according to the level required for the organization to be competitive. To solve this problem about how organizations can successfully deal with an unpredictable and constantly changing environment, as the current study tries to provide some valuable insights.

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