

Human Resource Development Climate in IT Industry

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Human Resource Development (HRD) climate facilitates proper implementation of HRD systems in an organisation. The present study aimed at assessing the extent of HRD climate prevailing in IT industry in India. The information collected from 543 employees working in seventeen IT organisations forms the basis for this study. It is found that moderate HRD climate was prevailing in the IT the organisations. In comparison it is found that OCTAPAC Culture is more prevalent than the HRD mechanism and general HRD climate in the IT industry.

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Introduction

Human Resource Development (HRD) is a process by which the employees of an organization are helped, in a continuous, planned way to: 1) acquire or sharpen capabilities required to perform various functions associated with their present or expected future roles, 2) develop their general capabilities as individuals and discover and exploit their own potentials for their own and/or organizational development purposes, and 3) develop an organizational culture in which supervisor-subordinate relationships, teamwork, and collaboration among subunits are strong and contribute to the professional well being, motivation, and pride of employees (Rao 1985). Performance appraisal, potential appraisal, feedback and performance coaching, career planning, organisational development, training, rewards, employee welfare and human resource information are subsystems in the integrated HRD systems. An optimum level of developmental climate is essential for facilitating HRD. Recognizing the importance of HRD climate, Centre for HRD, Xavier Labour Relations Institute (XLRI) developed a 38-item HRD climate questionnaire to survey the

extent to which development climate exists in organisations.

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Review of Earlier Research

Using this instrument the first survey of HRD climate in Indian organizations was carried out by Rao and Abraham (1986) among 41 organizations in India. The study has found that the general HRD climate in the organizations appears to be at an average level. Venkateswaran (1997) made a study in a public sector undertaking in India and found that, to a large extent, a favourable HRD climate was prevalent in the organization under study. Srimannarayana (2001) identified below average level of HRD climate in a software organization in India. However, Agarwala (2002) found that the HRD climate was significantly more developmental in IT industry when compared to in the automobile industry. Mishra and Bhardwaj (2002) carried out a HRD climate survey in a private sector undertaking in India and concluded that the HRD climate in that organization was good. Rodrigues (2004) conducted a study in the engineering institutes in India and found the HRD climate a highly satisfactory one. The study conducted by Pillai (2008) on HRD climate in banks, identified that the HRD climate existing in banks as moderate. This study further found that a supportive HRD climate in banks stimulated the learning orientation of the employees working

therein. Based on the information collected from 42 organisations in India, Srimannarayana (2008) has found that moderate HRD climate was prevailing in the organisations in India.

The Present Study

The present study is an attempt to assess the extent of HRD climate prevailing in IT industry. The data have been collected for the present study from the employees of 17 IT companies operating in India. The questionnaires have been distributed randomly taking into consideration availability of employees and their interest to give responses to the questionnaires. 543 usable responses have been received. The data are analyzed quantitatively using percentages and mean scores with the help of SPSS.

Analysis

An attempt has been made here to present the analysis of HRD climate based on the responses of the sampled employees in IT industry on the three categories of HRD climate such as general HRD climate, OCTAPAC culture and HRD mechanisms. Comparative analysis and overall analysis follow.

General HRD Climate

The general HRD climate prevailing in the units under study is average.

In order to assess the general HRD climate prevailing in the organisations, 11

Table - 1 : General HRD Climate For IT Industry

| No. | Item | Mean | % |
|---------|--|------|-------|
| 1 | The top management of this organization goes out of its way to make sure that employees enjoy their work. | 3.18 | 54.50 |
| 2 | The top management believes that human resources are an extremely important resource and that they have to be treated more humanly. | 3.42 | 60.50 |
| 3 | Development of the subordinates is seen as an important part of their job by the managers/officers here. | 3.19 | 54.75 |
| 4 | The personnel policies in this organization facilitate employees development. | 3.20 | 55.00 |
| 5 | The top management is willing to invest a considerable part of their time and other resources to ensure the development of employees. | 3.07 | 51.75 |
| 6 | Senior officers/executive in this organization take active interest in their juniors and help them learn their job. | 3.13 | 53.25 |
| 7 | People lacking competence in doing their jobs are helped to acquire competence rather than being left unattended. | 3.10 | 52.50 |
| 8 | Managers in this organization believe that employee behavior can be changed and people can be developed at any stage of their life. | 3.19 | 54.75 |
| 11 | The psychological climate in this organization is very conducive to any employee interested in developing himself by acquiring new knowledge and skills. | 3.23 | 55.75 |
| 13 | The top management of this organization makes efforts to identify and utilize the potential of the employees. | 3.13 | 53.25 |
| 36 | The organization's future plans are made known to the managerial staff to help them develop their juniors and prepare them for future. | 3.14 | 53.50 |
| Overall | | 3.18 | 54.50 |

items are identified from the questionnaire and the responses of the sampled employees in the organizations have been calculated. The overall mean score for these 11 items put together is 3.18 on a 5-point scale. Therefore, it can be stated that the general HRD climate prevailing in the units under study is average (54.50%). The most important factor contributing to this seems to be the lack of top managements' willingness to invest a considerable part of their time and other resources to ensure the development of employees. However top man-

agement believes that human resources are extremely important and that they have to be treated more humanly. This indicates that the beliefs of management on human resources are not transferred into action.

OCTAPAC Culture

Openness, confrontation, trust, autonomy, proactivity, authenticity, and collaboration (OCTAPAC) culture is essential for facilitating HRD. Openness is present when employees feel free to dis-

Table 2: OCTAPAC Culture for IT Industry

| No. | Item | Mean | % |
|-----|---|------|-------|
| 7 | People lacking competence in doing their jobs are helped to acquire competence rather than being left unattended. | 3.10 | 52.50 |
| 9 | People in this organization are helpful to each other. | 3.51 | 62.75 |
| 10 | Employees in this organization are very informal and do not hesitate to discuss their personal problems with their supervisors. | 3.29 | 57.25 |
| 13 | The top management of this organization makes efforts to identify and utilize the potential of the employees. | 3.13 | 53.25 |
| 18 | People in this organization do not have any fixed mental impressions about each other. | 3.06 | 51.50 |
| 19 | Employees are encouraged to experiment with new methods and try out creative ideas. | 3.24 | 56.00 |
| 20 | When any employee makes a mistake his supervisors treat it with understanding and help him to learn from such mistakes rather than punishing him or discouraging him. | 3.27 | 56.75 |
| 22 | When behavior feedback is given to employees they take it seriously and use it for development. | 3.32 | 58.00 |
| 23 | Employees in this organization take pains to find out their strengths and weaknesses from their supervising officers or colleagues. | 3.06 | 51.50 |
| 24 | When employees are sponsored for training, they take it seriously and try to learn from the programmes they attend. | 3.38 | 59.50 |
| 25 | Employees returning from training programmes are given opportunities to try out what they have learnt. | 3.09 | 52.25 |
| 26 | Employees are sponsored for training programmes on the basis of genuine training needs. | 3.11 | 52.75 |
| 27 | People trust each other in this organization. | 3.41 | 60.25 |
| 28 | Employees are not afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their superiors. | 3.21 | 55.25 |
| 29 | Employees are not afraid to express or discuss their feelings with their subordinates. | 3.29 | 57.25 |
| 30 | Employees are encouraged to take initiative and do things on their own without having to wait for instructions from supervisors. | 3.19 | 54.75 |
| 31 | Delegation of authority to encourage juniors to develop handling higher responsibilities is quite common in this organization. | 3.21 | 55.25 |
| 32 | When seniors delegate authority to juniors, the juniors use it as an opportunity for development. | 3.4 | 60.00 |
| 33 | Team spirit is of high order in this organization. | 3.31 | 57.75 |
| 34 | When problems arise people discuss these problems openly and try to solve them rather than keep accusing each other behind the back. | 3.20 | 55.00 |
| 36 | The organization's future plans are made known to the managerial staff to help them develop their juniors and prepare them for future. | 3.14 | 53.50 |
| | Overall OCTAPAC Culture | 3.23 | 55.79 |

Table 3: HRD Mechanisms For IT Industry

| No. | Item | Mean | % |
|-----|--|------|-------|
| 7 | People lacking competence in doing their jobs are helped to acquire competence rather than being left unattended. | 3.10 | 52.50 |
| 12 | Seniors guide their juniors and prepare them for future responsibilities/roles they are likely to take up. | 3.19 | 54.75 |
| 13 | The top management of this organization makes efforts to identify and utilize the potential of the employees. | 3.13 | 53.25 |
| 14 | Promotion decisions are based on the suitability of the promotee rather than on favouritism. | 2.97 | 49.25 |
| 15 | There are mechanisms in this organization to reward any good work done or any contribution made by employees. | 3.25 | 56.25 |
| 16 | When an employee does good work his supervising officers take special care to appreciate it. | 3.25 | 56.25 |
| 17 | Performance appraisal reports in our organization are based on objective assessment and adequate information and not on favouritism. | 3.12 | 53.00 |
| 21 | Weaknesses of employees are communicated to them in a nonthreatening way. | 3.26 | 56.50 |
| 24 | When employees are sponsored for training, they take it seriously and try to learn from the programmes they attend. | 3.38 | 59.50 |
| 25 | Employees returning from training programmes are given opportunities to try out what they have learnt. | 3.09 | 52.25 |
| 26 | Employees are sponsored for training programmes on the basis of genuine training needs. | 3.11 | 52.75 |
| 35 | Career opportunities are pointed out to juniors by senior officers in the organization. | 3.10 | 52.50 |
| 36 | The organization's future plans are made known to the managerial staff to help them develop their juniors and prepare them for future. | 3.14 | 53.50 |
| 37 | This organization ensures employee welfare to such an extent that the employees can save a lot of their mental energy for work purposes. | 3.27 | 56.75 |
| 38 | Job-rotation in this organization facilitates employee development. | 2.99 | 49.75 |
| | Overall | 3.16 | 53.92 |

cuss their ideas, activities, and feelings with each other. Through confrontation problems and issues are brought out into the open with a view to solving them rather than hiding them for fear of hurting or getting hurt. Trust is taking people at their face value and believing what they say. Autonomy is giving freedom to let people work independently with responsibility. Proactivity is encouraging employees to take initiative and risk. Au-

thenticity is the tendency on the part of the people to do what they say. Collaboration is to accept interdependencies, to be helpful to each other, and work as teams. (Rao & Abraham 1986) . The overall OCTAPAC culture in the organizations under study seems to be moderate with 55.79% (mean score: 3.23). On the positive side, employees working in the IT industry seem to be helpful to each other. When seniors delegate authority

to juniors, the juniors seems to use it as an opportunity for development. Among OCTAPAC aspects, it seems that collaboration among employees, openness and authenticity are better placed comparing to proactivity, trust and autonomy.

HRD Mechanisms

Implementation of HRD mechanisms such as training, performance appraisal and feedback, potential appraisal, career planning, rewards, and employee welfare has been examined in this study. The items relating to HRD mechanisms in the questionnaire were administered among the employees aiming at measuring the extent of implementing HRD mechanisms seriously. 15 items have been identified in the questionnaire, which deals with the implementation of HRD mechanisms. The analysis of the responses to all these items put together indicates that moderate degree of implementation of HRD mechanisms (mean score: 3.16; 53.92%) has been prevalent in the IT industry. HRM mechanism-wise analysis is presented below:

Moderate degree of implementation of HRD mechanisms has been prevalent in the IT industry.

Training is one of the most important subsystems of human resource development. It is generally carried out either formally or informally in almost all organisations irrespective of the size of the units. There is a provision for on the job and off the job training in all the units under study. A majority of the respon-

dents of the present study have mentioned that when employees in their units are sponsored for training, they take it seriously and try to learn from the programme they attend. The overall score (3.19) of the items relating to training indicates an average implementation of training in the units under study.

Performance Appraisal & Feedback of some type is practiced in most organisations all over the world (Rao 1985). All organisations in this study appraise the employee performance periodically using assessment forms. A majority of the respondents of the study have mentioned that in the process of giving feedback the weaknesses of the employees are communicated in a non-threatening way. Performance appraisal in their organisations is based on objective assessment and adequate information. The overall score of all the items pertaining to this aspect, put together has been calculated as 3.19, which indicates an average implementation of Performance appraisal and feedback mechanisms.

Potential Appraisal & Career Planning: In organisations that subscribe to HRD, the potential (career enhancement possibilities) of every employee is assessed periodically (Rao 1985). The young people joining the organisations are ambitious and career oriented. Career planning and development can become an effective tool for development of the employees and a key factor in HRD system. The item 'the top management of this organisation makes efforts to identify and utilise the potential of the employees' has secured an overall mean

score of 3.09 that indicates an average climate that has been prevalent in the IT industry.

Rewards & Employee Welfare systems are designed to attract, retain, motivate and maintain high standards of performance (Kanungo 1986). Recognising and rewarding employee performance is one of the aspects of HRD. The overall score of the two items relating to rewards has been calculated as 3.25 indicating a moderate situation has been prevalent with regard to mechanisms in the IT industry to reward any good work done or any contribution made by employees and taking special care to appreciate it by supervising officers.

Overall Analysis

Average HRD climate has been prevalent in the IT organisations surveyed.

The overall mean score of HRD climate in the industry put together has been calculated as 3.21 (55.19%). This means that an average HRD climate has been prevalent in the IT organisations surveyed. However, cooperation among the people, making use of delegation for development by juniors, learning from mistakes, open discussion of feelings with the subordinates, and attending training programmes when sponsored seriously with an intention to learn have secured 60 percent or more.

The impediments seem to be lack of information about the future plans of the

units, which is required to plan career, and subsequent little help for career development, absence of job rotation for employee development, little concern for employee welfare and promotions, lack of enough personnel policies that facilitate employee development, and little concern of the top management for developing employees.

Conclusion

Job rotation does not facilitate employee development.

Category wise analysis leads to the conclusion that OCTAPAC culture has been more prevalent than HRD mechanisms and general HRD climate. Training and performance appraisal appear to be more mature practices rather than career planning, rewards and employee welfare. Based on the overall analysis it can be concluded that an average HRD climate has been prevalent in the IT industry. On the positive side, it has been observed that people help each other in the organisations, they make use of delegation of authority for development, they attend training programmes seriously, and when feedback is given the employees take it for the development purpose. However, there are impediments for high HRD climate that are identified in this study. Job rotation does not facilitate employee development. Though the top management believes that human resources are an extremely important resource, it does not seem to be investing considerable part of their time and other resources to ensure the development of employees.

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