



## **Impact of Electronic Human Resource Management on Employee Job Performance: A Conceptual Review**

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### **Abstract:**

*Competition has become demanding in the business environment over past few decades. As a result, gaining and retention of the competitive position within the market place has become one of the major concern in the business organizations. In order to achieve this objective, employee performance is vigorous for any organization and ultimately it will engender core competencies within the organization. Alongside, this study attempts to investigate how e-HRM has been utilized for employee performance. Paper followed an extensive literature review to form a discussion on theoretical and empirical contents related to e- HRM practices in employee performance. Paper endeavors to appreciate the application of ECG theory and management by objective theory to explain the theoretical foundation in the use of e- HRM for employee performance. The literature review was developed addressing to key sub contents related e- HRM and employee performance. It reviewed journal articles as the main source of information to organize the contents with empirical justifications. Finally, paper discusses the concepts of employee recruitment, training, performance and communication by applying e- HRM practices.*

**Keywords:** *e-Communication, e- HRM, Electronic Human Resource Management, Employee Performance, e-Training*

## 1. Introduction

Human resource is considered as one of the most valuable asset in an organization. With the globalization of business, human resource management has become more and more complex to control across the world (Celaya, 2015). As a result of fast moving technology and learning environment, it's challenging to stick to a concrete concept of managing human resource across the business and global. With the implementation of cloud based computing, it is slowly and steadily moving towards the HRM process (Willcocks, Venters and Whitely, 2013) while reducing the complexity of managing the human resource. As a result of cloud computing and using IT support in HRM, E-HRM has become more common and HRM activities become less complex when comparing to early years (Kumar, 2017).

With the implementation of cloud computing towards the e-HRM, HRM procedures have turn out to be easy. Thus, today most of the leading MNEs follow advanced e-HRM to manage human resource in an effective and efficient manner (Mathis & Jackson, 2009). However, as per the finding of Mishra (2010), cloud based e-HRM is surprisingly a new hurdle in HRM because it eases the work of HR professionals while minimizing cost and time associated with HR functions. So it is obvious that new cloud based e-HRM will directly impact on employee job performance (Bondarouk & Ruel, 2009). According to Gerardine and DeSanctis (1986), before 20th century most of the HRM functions were done manually by HR professionals and many organizations failed to process HRM functions towards the development of their organization because of the lack of existing knowledge and technology. Use of traditional methods lack the capability of capture employee attendance in real time hence it is unable to track employee punctuality which is considered as one of the main aspect of employee discipline (Othman et al, 2017). These kind of issues may affect to the employee job performance so e-HRM was introduced to cater those types of issues.

According to Celaya (2015), with the development of SHRM (Strategic Human Resource Management), the main concern for HRM professionals is to reduce employee cost while increasing the job performance. To obtain those objectives they move from their traditional HRM to web based HRMS. That is the revolutionary point of HRM because from that point onwards HRM professionals are fully aware about new trends in HRM and how it will affect to employee overall performance (Bondarouk & Ruel, 2009). However with the further

development of HRM towards the e-HRM, HRM functions become less complex and easy to handle while improving the overall employee and organizational performance. As a result of e-HRM, HR professionals are now more future oriented and one click away from become more effective (Lednick-Hall and Moritz, 2003). In this study it is decided discuss the purpose of the study and methodology, literature review and the discussion with conclusion and future directions.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Together with the brief including the empirical highlights on knowledge requirements in the field of e-HRM, this paper attempts to review employee job performance with regards to e- HRM. The importance of e- HRM has been referred in relation to many HR practices though, enough empirical examinations are yet to be found limited even within employee performance (Strohmeier, 2009). According to Ghosh and Tripathi (2018), previously there have been few HR functions automated through e-HRM. But however with the development of cloud based systems, more HR functions were automated while increasing the scope of e-HRM. Furthermore, there is still a need for, academic literature on e-HRM (Celaya 2015). Thus, this paper seeks to address a contribution to the literature on e- HRM and, in particular, the phenomenon of employee performance.

In addition to that, the researcher claims e- HRM practices require to be empirically tested in different organizational structures to disclose its influence on employee performance. Therefore, this paper endeavors to investigate how e- HRM has been found in empirical studies connected to employee performance. Additionally, this paper donates to prevailing knowledge as a conceptual review to synthesize how the e- HRM effects employee performance.

### **Methodology**

This paper follows a deductive approach in which arguments and explanations are essentially supported by empirical evidences and connected theoretical contents. It is endeavored to review empirical thoughts as an organized content on how e- HRM relates to employee performance in different contexts and literature review was deployed as the key research tool. Finally concluded the main remarks through suggesting key insights for the future research directions.

### **Literature Review**

This paper presents the literature review by mainly focusing on empirical overview on e- HRM and employee performance whereas explicit consideration is made towards the convergence on

e- HRM and its impact on employee performance. Additionally, content describes how e- HRM appeared as denoted in empirical studies.

### **e-HRM**

The term e-HRM is combination of two words. First 'e' stands for 'electronic' while term HRM can be defined as "the efficient and effective utilization of Human Resources in order to achieve goals of an organization" (Opatha, 1995). e-HRM can be well-defined as the effective utilization of HR functions via network or internet medium which are associated with organizations common goals and objectives (Strohmeier, 2009). So with the fast moving technology and evaluation of IT industry HRM is now moving towards more electronic human resource management (Mishra, 2010). There were number of definitions regarding the e-HRM and research studies showed that e-HRM mutually related with HRIS, Virtual HRM, Web based HRM and internet based HRM (Bondarouk and Ruel, 2009). In 1986, DeSanctis start off with an definition of HRIS as a "specialized information system within the traditional functional areas of the organization, designed to support the planning, administration, decision-making, and control activities of human resource management". HRIS definition was not used because it only consider about achieving organizational goals rather than the HRM functions and results. However after a decade later Haines and Petit (1997) indicated that HRIS is only used to acquire, store, capture, analyze and distribute its information about human resources. With this definition concept of E-HRM and HRIS appeared to be a two different concepts where the difference was the vastness and the out stretch of E-HRM (Bondarouk and Ruel, 2009).

According to the definitions of Lednick-Hall and Moritz (2003), e-HRM is synchronizing HR functions using internet. With this statement many argued that e-HRM is some kind of a supporting service that helps organizations HR administrative process to run smoothly (Bondarouk and Ruel, 2009). However with all these vice versa Voermans and Veldhoven (2007) specified that, "e-HRM could be narrowly defined as the administrative support of the HR function in organizations by using Internet technology". Later there were so many definitions added to the e-HRM and most of them were very similar to each other. Espinosa, Lujan-Mora and Milosz (2014) defined e-HRM as doing HRM activities via internet. Also according to their studies they found that "e" part is the reflection of electronic which means e-HRM is reflection of online HR. Online HR provides real-time information to the owners, managers and employees anywhere, anytime. According to Fisher (2010), e-HRM is implementing HR strategies, policies and practices based on web based technology. With the evaluation of HR from personnel administration to digitalization, most of the HR functions are now cloud based Ghosh and Tripathi, (2018). With the digitalization of HRM, HR functions were moved from manual work to internet based (e-based) work.

In 1980's Mainframe computers were invented and as a result of that HRM were more lent towards the personnel management (Ghosh and Tripathi, 2018). In early 1990s the term e-HRM was first introduced because of the invention of Client/Server computers. In that time e-HRM

concept was not broadly spread among the organizations and most of the HR professionals used network to just to fulfill the HR functions of their organization (Swart and Kinnie, 2003). However when it comes to 20<sup>th</sup> century the term e-HRM was very commonly used one in organizations. Also in early 2000s most organizations e-HRM practices were directly linked with their organizational goals and objectives. It shows how gradually the importance of e-HRM increased over the time (Rohi, 2017).

More recently the term e-HRM was referred as an ‘umbrella term’ which means e-HRM covers the all areas of HRM by integrating with information technology (Bondarouk and Ruel, 2009; Panayotopoulou et al., 2010). When this happens it brings some added value to the HR because all the managers and employees can take decisions with real time information based on e-HRM systems (Rohi, 2017). According to the findings of Gosh and Tripathi (2018) now e-HRM is moving towards the cloud based and mobile technology. Also they stated that with the advancement of technology managers and employees can easily access to HRIS and other ‘e’ related HRM systems through their mobile phones from anywhere in the world. Most importantly it eases the workload of managers while giving more detailed attention to employee job performance.

According to the Opatha (2011) the generic purpose of HRM is to ‘Generate and retain an appropriate and contented human force, which gives the maximum individual contribution to organizational success & progress of success’. To achieve that generic purpose HR functions must aligned with organizational goals and objectives. Before the invention of e-HRM most of the HR functions were done manually by HR professionals (Gerardine and DeSanctis, 1986). It was very time consuming and massive process. Because of that most HR professionals were unable to achieve their generic purpose of hrm. However with the invention of electronic HRM, HRM process becomes for effective and more aligned with organization goals and objectives (Gosh and Tripathi, 2018). Ruel et al (2004) stated that the role of e-HRM is to provide technical or networking assistant to conduct HRM functions via internet. E-HRM functions have very similarities with HR functions. With the use of e-HRM technology many HR professionals tend to develop HR strategies, policies and practices based on the network. The term ‘e’ (electronic) refers to providing kind of support service to achieve the generic purpose of HRM. These evidence suggests that the role of e-HRM is to provide technical assistant via network to process HR functions (e-recruiting, e-training & development, e-communication, e-performance appraisal etc) to achieve the generic purpose of HRM (Ruel et al., 2004). Also with the use of e-HRM, there will be lesser professionals needed for the organizations and it will eliminates the “HR middleman” and also the employment cost which affet to the generic purpose of HRM.

With the implementation of e-HRM many organizations tried to use that technology in their organizations. Because of the initial cost of e-HRM system small firms stayed away from e-HRM while big companies heavily invested in e-HRM. According to the Brown, (2002) the main reason behind the heavy investment in e-HRM was the complexity of manual HR handling. Also he stated that using feasibility tests many companies forced to invest in e-HRM because it was

the only option to stay away from more time consuming manual HR process. Strohmeier, (2007) believes that e-HRM provides better information responsiveness and more autonomy in information while reducing the administrative burden. Also he believes that e-HRM improves the accuracy and the quality of HRM activities. According to the Ruël, (2004) he observed that because of e-HRM the responsibility of HR staff had been delegated to the line managers and employees.

### **Employee Performance**

According to previous studies employee performance places a vital role in any organization. Organization's overall success depends on its employees' performance; poor employee performance is detrimental to the organization's overall success. According to Perrin's Global Workforce Study (2003) it stated employee performance as, employees' willingness and ability to help their company succeed, largely by providing considerable effort on a continuous basis. Furthermore employee job performance can be distinct as the job related activities expected of an employee and how well those activities were obtained by them (Business Dictionary 2017). Performance is based on quantity of output/outcomes, quality of product, readiness of product, presence or attendance on the job, efficiency of the work completed and effectiveness of work completed (Mathis and Jackson, 2009). According to findings of Thao & Hwand (2015) they stated employee performance as the successful completion of work allocated to a selected individual or individuals and measured by a supervisor with pre-defined guidelines and standards while efficient utilization of available resources in dynamic environment.

It is true that the success of an organization is depending on its employee performance. If their employees didn't perform well organizations won't be able to reach their desired destinations. According to the Arnold and Wilmar (2008) they stated that because of recent changes, managers would agree that employees make a substantial difference when it comes to innovation, organizational performance, competitiveness, and overall business. Employee performance places a significant role in every organization. In the absence of employee performance, it is hard to expect organizational production, success, growth or survival. Employee performance is of utmost importance for organizations to survive and also deliver their level best. Satisfied employees are the ones who are able to perform their best towards their organization and stick to it even in the worst scenario. In order to make employees satisfied organizations use many forces and occupational health and safety is one of them. Job performance has been conceptualized as performance of specific dimensions (Neda et al. 2009). According to the studies of Neda et al. (2009), some dimensions to measure employee performance such as quantity of work, quality of work, deliver of time /timeliness, effectiveness of communication and knowledge and skill in work.

### **ERG theory**

Clayton Alderfer was the one who developed this ERG theory in 1972. He simplified Maslow's Need Hierarchy into a subset of three needs: Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG).

a. Existence At the lowest level is the need to stay alive and safe, now and in the foreseeable future. When we have satisfied existence needs, we feel safe and physically comfortable.

b. Relatedness At the next level, once we are safe and secure, we consider our social needs. We are now interested in relationships with other people and what they think of us. When we are related, we feel a sense of identity and position within our immediate society.

c. Growth At the highest level, we seek to grow, be creative for ourselves and our environment. When we are successfully growing, we feel a sense of wholeness, achievement and fulfillment.

The implication of Alderfer (1972) ERG theory to the e-HRM is that organizations need to design user friendly e-HRM systems which are easy to understand to the employees. When the systems are user friendly both employees and organizations can able to achieve their desired goals and objectives. When there is an effective e-HRM system employees will perform well because employees are satisfied and they can work on their own with minimum supervision. Having an advance technology will not always make employees comfortable. To get 100% from those technological advancements it should be user friendly and well communicated to the fellow workers.

### **Management by objectives theory (MBO)**

Management by objectives (MBO) theory was very popular among organizations because it improves the overall performance in organizations. MBO is a personnel management technique which encourages managers and employees to sat together and establish future goals and objectives for a specific period. Through MBO managers and employees forecast, record and monitor future goals of organization. After the planning those goals and objectives it will translates into personal goals and communicate to the each and every employee.

The connection of Druckers' MBO theory to the e-HRM is that organizations need to design effective human resource management system to predict and communicate organizational goals and objectives to its employees. With the development of IT industry and technology e-HRM was born and from that point onwards managing human resource and communicate with them becomes much easier than it was. For example with development of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems now both managers and employees can log into the ERP system from anywhere to discuss and forecast organizations future goals. Earlier to conduct MBO both managers and employees need to get together to a certain location. With the implementation of e-HRM now there is no geographical barrier to managers and employees to conduct MBO. Also to communicate those goals and objectives now management can use intra e-mailing system which is a subset of e-communication.

## **Discussion**

### **e-HRM and employee job performance**

HRM is all about managing human resource to achieve organizational goals and objectives (Opatha, 1995). Organization goals and objectives are mainly based on employee performance. So it reveals that there is a direct impact of HRM on employee job performance. As mentioned earlier the main objective of e-HRM is to provide network assistant to conduct HRM process very smoothly. With the time HRM moves from manual HRM to internet based HRM and now the benefits of those e-HRM has been used by employees.

The main objective of implementing an e-HRM system is to improve the overall organization performance (Al-Hmouze, 2016). To achieve that overall organization performance, employees need give their maximum effort to organization. According to the studies of Kumar (2017) he stated that before the implementation of e-HRM system manual HR process seems to be very annoying for both employee and HR department. In that time HR professionals took long time to complete HR administrative work because of the lack of resources. Because of that employees have to spend lot of time in HR department to get their work (Ex – salary issues, attendance issues, over time issues, holiday issues and grievances etc.) done. When employees spend lot of time in their employment related matters it will gradually affect to their job performance and it will directly impact on overall organizations performance (Othman et al, 2017). To overcome those issues in early 1990s e-HRM was introduced and currently most of organizations following this network based system. In present world thanks to e-HRM, most of the organizations are now following e-HRM system to manage their HR process such as e-recruitment, e-training, e-performance management and e-communication etc.

### **e-recruitment and e-training on employee performance**

E-recruitment also known as online recruitment is the process of finding suitable candidates to fill available vacancies in an organization via internet (Epstein, 2003). Normally different companies use different techniques to attract employees to their organizations. Nowadays many organizations use recruitment websites, social media and online ads to publish their recruitment advertisements (Dhamija, 2012). In past most of the companies used posters, banners, leaflets and paper advertisements to post their jobs. Even though organizations received CVs it took long time to receive those CVs. However with the implementation of e-recruitment organizations instantly received CVs via email. Because of that hr professionals can work with more efficient while job candidates can send their CVs without wasting any time. Also according to the Dhamija (2012) e-recruitment and analyze candidates profiles via internet and can shortlist them according to the wish of organization. Thanks to network based recruitment organizations can easily attract candidates with minimum effort and it will indirectly improve the performance of employees.



The main focus of training is to help employees to develop their skills which are needed to perform specific tasks Goldstein and Ford (2002). E-training does this in an online environment. Speeches, demonstrations, videos, text documents, and other materials can be used as e-training methods. E-training is a very useful method of providing training for employees. Employees who are living in abroad can easily participate for a training program via Skype or other social network. Thanks to e-training employees don't want travel for lecture halls or training class rooms. They can easily participate for training program via their smartphones and laptop. Because of those facilities employees can save lot of precious time and it will impact on their performance too (Arsovski, Stefanovic and Arsovski, 2015).

### **e-performance management and e-communication on employee performance**

E-performance management can be defined as a web-based tool, which designed to measure the employee performance (Ravisha and Pakkeerappa, 2015). Because of e-performance management managers can easily conduct performance appraisals of employees. With the use of e-performance management systems organizations can capture employee performance through that and when it comes to performance evaluation organizations can use this e-performance management system to evaluate employee performance. It is a fair method because without any favouration e-performance system can measure the overall performance at the end of the year. It is true that having a good performance management system improve organizational performance by managing the performance of teams and individuals (Ravisha and Pakkeerappa, 2015). Thanks to e-performance management organizations now can correctly and accurately measure the performance of employees. According to the (Caligiuri, 2000) e-performance management is kind of competency based reward system. The one who have more competencies will be rewarded more and because of that employees will encourage to improve their performance to get more rewards.

E-communication can be defined as a system used to send or retrieve messages through computer or Internet connections (Engsbo and Sandhu, 2007). With the development of technology communication becomes an important aspect in every organization. According to the study of Engsbo and Sandhu (2007) they stated today most of the organizations use different kinds of communication tools ranging from simple e-mails to more complex electronic document management (EDM) systems and enterprise resource planning (ERP). With the use of these e-communication methods employees can now easily and quickly share their information with each other. To get instant feedback and real time information employees can use these e-communication methods. As long as employees use these e-communication methods it will improve the overall organization performance while improving the employee performance and because of that reason e-communication regarded as one of the important aspect of modern business (Raulea and Raulea, 2014).

## Conclusion and Future Research Directions

With the implementation of cloud computing towards the e-HRM, HRM process becomes easy and as a result of that, today most of the leading MNEs following this advanced e-HRM to manage their human resource in an effective and efficient manner. As a result of cloud computing and using IT support in HRM, E-HRM becomes more popular and HRM activities become less complex when comparing to its early years (Kumar, 2017).

With the development of SHRM (Strategic Human Resource Management), the main concern for HRM professionals is to reduce employee cost while increasing the job performance. To obtain those objectives they move from their traditional HRM to web based HRMS. That is the revolutionary point of HRM because from that point onwards HRM professionals are fully aware about new trends in HRM and how it will affect to employee overall performance.

According to Ghosh and Tripathi (2018), previously there have been few HR functions automated through e-HRM. But however with the development of cloud based systems, more HR functions were automated while increasing the scope of e-HRM. It is one of the highlighted points in this research area because with that automation of many HR functions, HRM becomes more global subject and it will directly involve to the employee job performance. So by investigating this research paper one can be able identify the connection of e-HRM towards the employee job performance.

e-HRM can be defined as conducting HR functions using internet. With this statement many argue that e-HRM is some kind of a supporting service which helps organizations HR administrative process to run it smoothly (Bondarouk & Ruel, 2009). Employee performance is identified as employees' readiness and ability to help their company's success, by providing substantial effort on a incessant basis. Furthermore employee job performance can be distinct as the job related activities expected of an employee and how well those activities were obtained by them. The author highlights four main dimensions of e- HRM as e- recruitment, e-training, e-performance management and e- communication and the impact of each dimension on employee performance is discussed. Furthermore the author has discussed existing theories such as ERG theory and Management by objectives theory which determine the impact of e-HRM on employee job performance separately. As explained by Othman et al (2017), e- HRM has a

significant effect on employee performance branding but there's still a research gap to identify the relationship in between the two concepts.

There is only a limited number of studies conceded out on “e- HRM and employee performance” and therefore to fill the literature gap more research studies, conceptual frameworks, articles need to be carried out on this regard. Researchers may conduct further research to explore more into the effects of different types of e- HRM practices on both employee performance and its effects on the organizational performance. Additionally, e- HRM practices are promptly growing, energetically altering and increasingly mounting platforms. Conclusively, we highlights the knowledge required on investigating effectiveness of e- HRM as a strategy in increasing employee performance with reference to different categories of uses.



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