
The Link between Organizational Change Management and Strategic Human Resource Development Management

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Abstract

The successful implementation of organizational changes depends on the effective integration of Organizational Change Management (OCM) and Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD), aligned with the organization's strategic planning goals. The problem addressed in this review study was the inconsistency in current research about how the OCM and SHRD are interrelated, leading to confusion when implementing certain practices and missing potential management opportunities. The purpose of this study was to explore how OCM and SHRD Management are related and propose a new framework for integrating both strategies effectively to improve organizational responsiveness, strength, and overall success. Data were collected using 52 scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles available via academic databases. Although most of the reviewed articles conveyed that OCM and SHRD are interwound, some discrepancies were found in how the aforementioned disciplines are affiliated. The results of this study indicate that OCM and SHRD collaborate to manage organizational change through proper communication, strategic alignment, and employee preparation. The findings of this study are significant for strategically creating successful organizations. Future research can include the impact of technology on human resource development or the role of human resources in digital transformation.

Keywords: Organizational Change, Management, Strategic Planning, Human Resource Development

1. Introduction

In today's fast-paced business world, Organizational Change Management (OCM) and Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD) are essential to achieve organizational success in a variety of initiatives including environmentally friendly and cost-effective management practices [1] [2]. Employees play a crucial role during organizational change [3]. Investing in human capital training and development can lead to a more motivated workforce, increased productivity, and organizational success [4]. Organizational change can be achieved through proper communication, strategic planning, and employee preparation [3]. This review study examines the relationship between OCM and SHRD, revealing how their implementation can improve organizational responsiveness, strength, and overall success. The following section of this study will include a literature review containing the definition of Strategic Human Resource Development and its connection with Organizational Change Management,

followed by the methodology for selecting and aggregating peer-reviewed journal articles relevant to both topics. Ultimately, common themes and issues in the described journal articles, a new model for effectively integrating both strategies, OCM and SHRD, and suggestions for further research will be provided.

2. Literature review

In the current business environment, Organizational Change Management (OCM) and Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD) are crucial for achieving success in various initiatives [36] [2] [37]. Investing in employee training and development leads to a more motivated workforce and increased productivity [38]. The lesson from the literature is that effective human resource practices can have a positive impact on organizations [38]. This study explores how implementing OCM and SHRD can improve organizational responsiveness and overall success while focusing on the connection between OCM and SHRD.

2.1 Strategic human resource development

Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD) is the strategic management of training, education, and development of organizational stakeholders to achieve the objectives of the organization [5] [6]. The role of SHRD is to develop human capital in a way that aligns with the organization's overall strategic planning goals. Specifically, this human capital should be a strategic competitive advantage for the organization in that the human capital is valuable when compared with the external environment, rare among the organization's competitors, difficult to reproduce, and non-substitutable with other types of resources [7].

2.2 The rationale for strategic planning

Garavan [8] stated that a strategic approach to human resource development (HRD) provides a competitive advantage. Strategic human resource development facilitates the development of knowledge and skills, physical and technical systems, managerial systems of development and education, and organizational values and norms, all of which are critical core capabilities in developing and sustaining competitive advantage. HRD further aids in change management by leveraging existing organizational capabilities and identifying and developing new capabilities [8]. According to Ehrlich [9], the number one principle for creating value in Human Resource Management, which would later also carry over to HRD, is that human resource strategy must align with the business strategy [10]. HRD professionals must align with the strategies, goals, and language of the greater organization to pursue initiatives that will be well-received and add value to the organization.

2.3 Strategic planning in organizations

Organizations are increasingly recognizing the benefits of including HRD at the strategic planning table and are reaping benefits for doing so [8]. A successful SHRD Management program must simultaneously perform its more traditional support role for business unit transactions as well as the strategic planning role [11]. McCracken & Wallace [12] identified the following nine measurable outcomes for organizations to successfully implement SHRD, which can be summarized and adapted into Table 1.

Table 1: Measurable outcomes for organizations to successfully implement strategic human resource development

Outcomes	Tactics
1. Incorporation of organizational missions and goals	Strategic human resource development (SHRD) to shape the business strategy.
2. Top management support	Active involvement of the top management in operational roles and personal growth.
3. Environmental scanning	Awareness of the external environment essential for SHRD – gathering info about opportunities and threats
4. Human resource development (HRD) policies and plans	Alignment of HRD plans and policies with business strategies, guiding business goals & implementing policies
5. Line management commitment and involvement	A collaborative partnership between HRD specialists and line managers, who should drive HR policies jointly with HR professionals.
6. Existence of complementary human resource management	Partnership between HRM and HRD professionals for aligning HRD strategy with HRM, impacting corporate objectives effectively.
7. Expanded trainer role	HRD professionals should act as innovators and consultants, not just trainers and managers, focusing on organizational change.
8. Recognition of culture	HRD plays a crucial role in developing and enhancing corporate culture.
9. Emphasis on evaluation	Result-oriented training evaluation, considering business needs including cost-effectiveness.

Note. Adapted from McCracken & Wallace [12]. Additional data adapted from Garavan [13], Garavan et al. [14], Harrison [15], Lee [16], and Torraco & Swanson [17].

According to Garavan [13], a supportive link between HRD and business strategy is crucial for institutional learning and transformation, as noted by Pedler et al. [18]. Garavan's enhanced model of SHRD includes training (reactive and administrative with a clear learning culture), HRD (systematic with a growing influence on corporate strategy, indicating strategic maturity and an evolving learning culture), and SHRD (proactive in shaping and responding to corporate strategy, indicating strategic maturity, all nine enhanced characteristics, and a robust learning culture). These strategies can help the organization's growth and development.

2.4 Organizational Change Management in SHRD

Strategic Human Resource Development Management is especially important during the process of organizational change [11]. In some literature, concepts of SHRD Management and Change Management even have been used interchangeably [19]. As the world changes, organizations around the globe view SHRD Management as a possibility for addressing change and turning it into a competitive advantage [19] [20] [21].

3. Problem Statement and Purpose of Study

The problem addressed in this review study was the inconsistency in current research about how the SHRM and OCM are interrelated, leading to confusion and missing potential management opportunities. The specific problem was that inconsistent information about the link between SHRM and OCM can cause some confusion for organizations when trying to implement both approaches simultaneously and not obtain the anticipated results. When some management strategies are not well-supported by research, the integration of SHRM and OCM may not be as successful, as planned in improving employees' satisfaction, performance, and motivation [22] [4] [3] [23].

The purpose of this study was to explore how organizational change management and human resource development are related and propose a new framework for integrating both strategies effectively to improve organizational responsiveness, strength, and overall success. A search for peer-reviewed literature uncovered common themes and issues regarding the two management disciplines. The following research questions inform this study:

1. How are the two disciplines discussed related to each other?
2. What common themes, if any, appear in the literature?
3. What common issues, if any, appear in the literature?
4. What other methods are needed to explore this topic?

4. Methods

To complete this review study, 52 articles were collected using scholarly peer-reviewed databases such as EBSCOhost, ProQuest, SAGE, and the authors' university online library. Terms used for the literature search were human resource, organizational change, management, strategic planning, human resource development, employee success, strategic HRD, change management, and relationship between organizational change management and human resource development. Results were limited by the parameters of peer-reviewed articles available online. The aforementioned search terms yielded 67 results. These results were manually reviewed for relevance to the topic of strategic HRD management and organizational change management. Several of the irrelevant search results were eliminated. Redundant

articles listed through different databases were eliminated, as were tertiary reviews or summaries of other articles included in the search results. Several articles were opened in a PDF format and the Ctrl-f function was used to search each for the phrase “change management,” and some of them only presented the phrase in the keywords or references, and they were also eliminated. The remaining articles were considered relevant to this literature review and discussed further in the following sections.

5. Findings

This study aimed to discover the relationship between Organizational Change Management (OCM) and Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD) Management. The problem addressed in this study was the lack of clarity in current research about how OCM and SHRD Management are interrelated. The findings of this study may help to identify innovative SHRM and OCM approaches to not only improve employees’ satisfaction and performance but also organizational success.

The four previously listed research questions were investigated using peer-reviewed journal articles gleaned from academic scholarly databases such as EBSCOhost, ProQuest, SAGE, and other online libraries. Terms used for the literature search were human resource, organizational change, management, strategic planning, human resource development, employee success, strategic HRD, change management, and relationship between organizational change management and human resource development. To review the findings of this study, the following section will be organized based on the aforementioned research questions:

5.1 How are the two disciplines discussed related to each other?

Each of the articles agreed Strategic HRD management and Change Management are important and intertwined disciplines. The specific relationship between the two disciplines varied among the articles but can be placed in six collectively exhaustive but not mutually exclusive categories. Two articles listed both Strategic HRD and Change Management as important topics for study in the field of HRD [24] [21]. Several articles identified SHRD initiatives as important tools in teaching Change Management skills to key employees [23] [25] [26] [27] [28]. Carlinger [26] and Antila [11] took SHRD’s role a step further, stating that SHRD should help in performing and promoting change management. Bruns [29] agreed with this sentiment but with the caveat that SHRD must have the support of top management for change to be effective. Three articles defined SHRD as a function of Change Management, existing to support Change Management initiatives [30] [20] [31]. Finally, several articles described Change Management as something that SHRD performs as an actual function of SHRD Management [25] [32] [33] [34] [19]. The discrepancies are substantial, and they pose a significant challenge to the fundamental existence of both disciplines.

5.2 What common themes, if any, appear in the literature?

The articles reviewed for this study covered a variety of themes, with commonalities in global reach, study purposes, and utilization of Strategic HRD. The articles focused on topics where Strategic HRD Management and Change Management overlap, with research originating from around the globe, including countries like Greece, Australia, Korea, the United States, the

United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, India, and the United Arab Emirates. Some other articles were seeking to incorporate HR principles into other fields. Kang [28] discussed the relationship between The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory of leadership and HRD. Alagaraja et al. [33] discussed the merging of HRD and Lean principles to improve strategic planning. Two other articles defined the curriculum for HRD programs in higher education [24] [21]. The global nature of the research indicates a strong need for further exploration in this field.

The majority of articles attempted to define and describe the role of an HR professional through various methods. While the focus was on strategic HRD, some articles looked at HR as a whole, while others considered HRD and SHRD as the same discipline. Researchers used interviews, surveys, case studies, and historical data to determine the value and competencies of SHRD professionals. There is no consensus on the precise role of SHRD, but researchers are working towards one.

The articles can be categorized based on whether they address SHRD at the individual, discipline, or situational level. Some articles focus on defining the role of an HR professional, while others discuss graduate programs in HRD and the development of training programs for HRD practitioners. They also describe the knowledge, skills, and techniques used by HRD practitioners, as well as the necessary competencies for an HRD practitioner in Canada [26] [30].

In contrast, only one of the articles addressed the discipline of HRD rather than the individual or a situation. Schaupp [23] sought to address the changing forms of HRD training over time and the dearth of research addressing these changes. The remaining articles addressed situations in HRD. These situations are discussed below, as a third common theme stems from the situations in the articles where Strategic HRD is used or suggested for use. Like the first theme of the article's nation of origin, this theme is also paradoxical in the commonality of the specific suggested situational use of SHRD, and it varies in each situational article. Kolachi [20] suggested using SHRD to help nations competitively brand themselves for improved human capital development. Bhatnagar and associates [19] described SHRD as a way to combat issues with rapid change in India, providing trust and belonging among employees. Bruns [29] discussed the importance of Strategic HRD in aligning administrative strategy in German local governments. Ellinger and Ellinger [27] saw SHRD as an agent for supply chain management skill-building in the U.S., and Mitsakis [32] explored the role of SHRD in the financial crisis in the banking industry in Greece. Antila [11] described the perceptions and realities of the role of SHRD as strategy contributors during international mergers and acquisitions. Finally, Kang [28] used Strategic HRD principles to improve the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) leadership model.

The list of stark differences in the reviewed journal articles continues. Keywords from the articles reviewed were combined and no discernable common threads emerged. Article keywords were so varied and unrelated that it seemed counterintuitive to believe the articles were all selected using two exact keyword search phrases. These differences indicate a need for research that intersects the disciplines of SHRD and Change Management.

5.3 What common issues, if any, appear in the literature?

Common issues found in the 30 articles selected for this study include the need for top management support in Strategic HRD initiatives and the ambiguity of discipline-related terms.

A common issue described in a strong majority of the articles is that management buy-in of HRD strategy is imperative for successful implementation, especially during change. Most articles at least mention this concept while some include management buy-in as an important variable in the study. The role of upper management in the success of Strategic HRD Management was discussed at length by Mitsakis [32] regarding the Greek banking sector around the time of the 2008 global economic crisis. This study found that regardless of the competency of the SHRD team, the employee perception of the efficacy of SHRD was low due to a lack of support and resources from upper management after the economic crisis.

Bhatnagar and associates [19] also emphasized the importance of the top management's role. This case study described SHRD as a way to make positive changes in organizations in India. As such, Bhatnagar and associates emphasized the importance of top management as change catalysts. They argue that Strategic HRD Management cannot successfully implement change without the change agents supporting it.

A second common issue in the research is that the definition of Strategic Human Resource Management still has several limitations in its definition of scope and function. Garavan, Costine, and Heraty [35] attempted to define SHRD as *The Emergence of Strategic Human Resource Development*. The authors did not yet refer to the discipline by the acronym SHRD, using language such as "HRD with a strategic focus," "strategic HRD," and "strategic-type HRD." The article stated, however, "many trainers find the phrase 'strategic human resource development' difficult to accept, preferring the 'softer' phrases such as 'employee development', or 'training and development'. However, the phrase now has considerable international currency and is used widely in the HRD literature to mean the planned learning and development of people as individuals and as groups to the benefit of the business as well as themselves." (p.4) The selected articles for this review of literature still do not come to a consensus on the exact nature of Strategic HRD Management, even having been written 6 to 25 years later. This paper discussed earlier the variation in how the articles disagreed on the relationship between SHRD and Change Management. The articles also disagreed on SHRD's role in policymaking, level of responsibility for the success or failure of organizations, need for leadership skills, power of influence, and breadth of cross-functionality.

5.4 What other methods are needed to explore this topic?

The ambiguity of the definition of the Strategic Human Resource Management discipline discussed above raises the need for further research into the purpose of this paper. This paper attempted to find journal articles where the topics of Strategic HRD Management and Change Management overlap by using exact search phrases. Since Strategic HRD as a discipline and Strategic HRD about Change Management has several interpretations in the 30 articles reviewed for this study, other articles may exist that include relevant topics but do not use the exact search term wording. Considering the research articles reviewed for this study, the authors of this study have created a framework to integrate OCM and HRD strategies for improving organizational performance and facilitating growth (see Fig. 1).

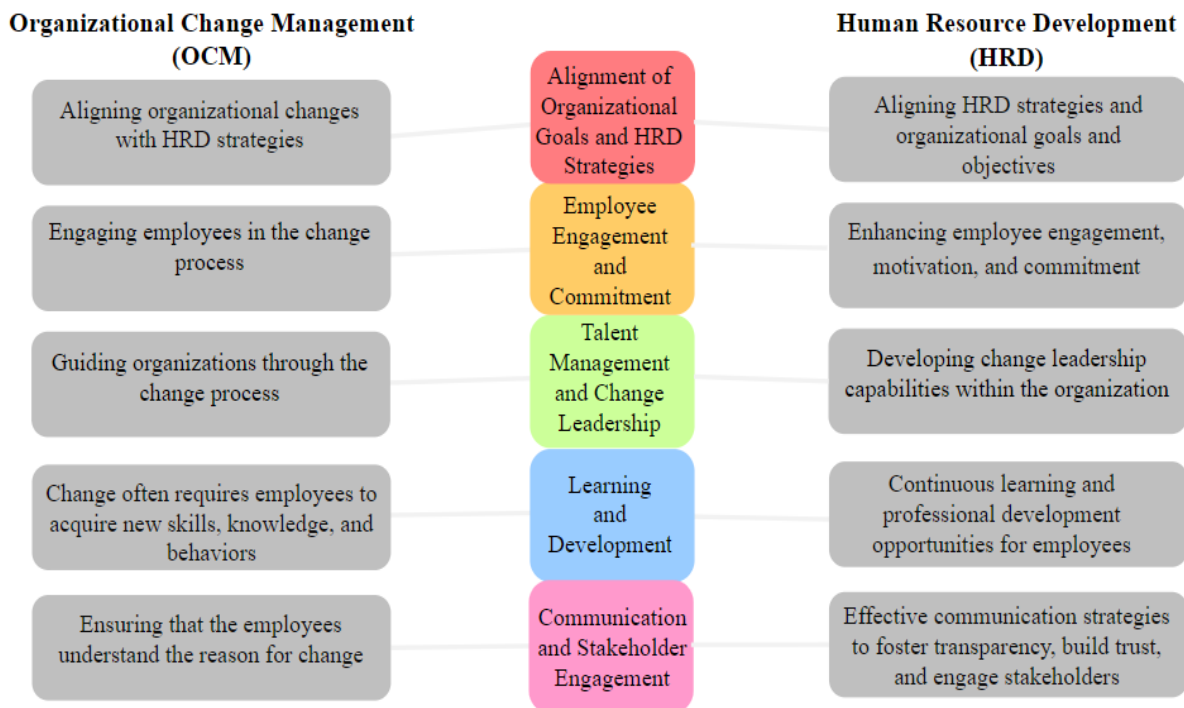


Figure 1: The link between organizational change management and human resource development.

Note. Organizational change management and human resource development data adapted from [7] [4] [31] [3], and [36].

Effective Organizational Change Management (OCM) requires aligning organizational changes with Human Resource Development (HRD) strategies to ensure employees have the necessary skills and competencies to adapt to new processes, technologies, or structures. Likewise, Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD) Management involves aligning human resource development strategies with organizational goals and objectives including talent management, leadership development, and training programs to enhance employees' skills and capabilities. Additionally, engaging employees in the change process is crucial for successful implementation. HRD strategies can facilitate this step by ensuring employees are well-prepared and motivated to embrace change. Strategic HRD should focus on enhancing employee engagement, motivation, and commitment through training, career development opportunities, and performance management systems. Furthermore, effective change leadership is essential for guiding organizations through the change process. HRD plays a critical role in identifying, developing, and supporting change leaders who can inspire and mobilize employees during times of change. To strategically manage HRD, change leadership capabilities within the organization should be developed while identifying and nurturing talent that can drive and lead change initiatives. Moreover, organizational change often requires employees to acquire new skills, knowledge, and behaviors. HRD initiatives such as training programs, workshops, and coaching can support employees' learning and development needs during periods of organizational change. SHRD focuses on continuous learning and development to ensure that employees have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their roles effectively and contribute to organizational success. Ultimately, communication is a critical component of change management, ensuring that employees understand the reasons for change, their role in the change process, and the benefits of the proposed changes. HRD

can support OCM by developing communication plans and strategies to foster transparency, build trust, and engage stakeholders in HRD initiatives.

6. Conclusions and future research

The problem addressed in this study was the lack of clarity in current research about how OCM and SHRD Management are interrelated, leading to confusion when implementing certain practices and missing potential management opportunities. The purpose of this study was to explore how OCM and SHRD Management are related and propose a new framework for integrating both strategies effectively to improve organizational responsiveness, strength, and overall success. After reviewing 52 journal articles, specific data were collected using 30 scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles available online via academic databases.

Based on the literature reviewed for this study, the relationship between Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD) and Change Management appears to be complex and not fully understood. The literature review covered a wide range of topics, industries, and purposes across ten countries. As a result, precise and contemporary definitions of SHRD, especially concerning Change Management, should be revised while improving theoretical and practical definitions in these areas.

An initial search into the relationship between SHRD and Change Management revealed studies connecting Human Resource Management (HRM) to Change Management and the role of Human Resources (HR) in Change Management. Further exploration of this intersection could benefit from broadening the search terms to include HRD, workforce development, performance management, training, development, change agent, organizational change, and change.

The reviewed journal articles emphasized the critical role of employees during organizational change and its impact on organizational performance. Therefore, providing employees with relevant training and professional development opportunities is essential. Investing in the development of employee's skills and competencies can lead to improved organizational performance, benefiting both the employees and the organization as a whole in the long term. Future research could also explore the impact of technology on human resource development or the role of HR in digital transformation.

Ultimately, the authors of this study created a framework indicating the link between Organizational Change Management (OCM) and Human Resource Development (HRD), which are interrelated concepts that focus on improving organizational performance. Strategic HRD Management aligns human resource development strategies with organizational goals, while OCM ensures that changes are aligned with HRD strategies to help employees adapt. HRD facilitates change leadership, talent management, learning and development, communication, and stakeholder engagement. Together, OCM and HRD create a synergistic relationship that enables organizations to navigate change, build resilient and adaptive cultures, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage [7] [4] [31] [3] [36].

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