Human Resource Management and Innovative Practices : Key Connections

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Abstract

The innovative practices and leadership theory of organizational performance emphasizes the sustained competitive advantages gained from production and economic development capabilities that are rare and hard to imitate. Under certain conditions, such capabilities become core competencies and tend to involve the human resources. There is not yet a standard research protocol for how to research key connections between HRM and innovative practices to catalyst the core competencies of leadership. Based on a review of existing studies on innovative practices and HRM from a variety of fields, a framework for studying key connections between these is proposed here based on four questions: does the HRM have a competitive advantage? If so, is it based on innovative practices? What is the nature of the specific core connections of competencies involved? Do the connections have core competencies, and if yes, what are they? Global changes in the rules of the public and private sectors and the dramatic advancements in technology have also strongly affected HRD needs. These evolving changes have important policy, institutional and programmatic implications. This article, therefore, places HRM in context of current concerns for the development of using innovative practices.
Keywords: Innovative practices, performance rationality, value creation, sharing initiative.

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1. INTRODUCTION

One standard, recommended human resource development practice is needs of front end assessment, whereby the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for job or task performance are identified and than used as the basis for assessing the extent to which innovative practices in the jobs possess. The HRM has been expanded to the broader concept of innovative practices as any characteristic of an individual that is casually related to criterion-referenced effective and superior performance in a job situation (Shuck et al., 2016). As such practices are more than learned knowledge management but include qualities such as motives, traits, self concept, values and so on. Because of the obvious connections to performance, innovative practices have been a theoretical and research focus in the HRD field for a number of years.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this review article is to propose the connections of HRM and innovative practice for identifying and assessing organizations core competencies using dimensions based view framework, particularly as that applies to HRD. There is no accepted or comprehensive framework for carrying out such a diagnoses, limiting HRD's ability to play the role of a strategic partner. Thus, this connection establishes foundations onto which specific review and analytic procedures for carrying out a diagnosis of firms' core competencies can be developed. As a result, these connections should enable HRD to play a greater strategic role in the direction and operation of the organization. In the first section, the traditional HRD approach to competency assessment will be reviewed to discuss the post modernism and innovative practices framework. Organizational performance and talent management connections will be discussed in second section. The third section provides an extended review of the methods and procedures proposed or used for assessing and diagnosing the HRD innovative practices for core competencies. This discussion is followed by two key issues in HRD core competency analysis in terms of value creation and sharing initiative of the firms. The concluding section presents an initial framework for assessing core competencies for the HRD professional and then the implications of the connections of HRM and innovative practices.

3. METHOD

This article reviews the core themes of HRD and innovative practices. HRD review international research journal which contains more than hundred interlinked scholarly articles were used to research comprehensive literature for developing reliability. Firstly, an electronic search for published research articles on four key words: organizational performance, innovative practices, value creation and sharing initiatives was conducted. Secondly, related books and chapters based on the titles of organizational performance, value creation, sharing initiative and other innovative practices were research on the website of refereed national and international journals. Approximately 38 relevant articles were selected and among them 15 related references were reviewed and cited for this article. Related articles published in HRD review was accessed on line and 29 articles found to be quoted and referred in this article. The review process of the relevant literature is intended to be comprehensive, but might not be exhaustive. The critical factors associated with the knowledge formation process and performance important was analyzed. To construct a genuinely integrated alliance among various perspectives, the subsequent core themes

were scrutinized are; post modernism innovative practices, organizational performance and talent management, value creation and sharing initiatives. To synchronies the procedures of each relevant perspective, the theory of human resource development has been more intensively explored in a holistic view. From more practical stand point, more focus has been given to the accumulation of innovative practices and human resource management for organizational performance improvement.

A. Post Modernism and Innovative Practices

Heeyoung Han, et al. (2009) argue that there are significant contribution of post modernism as an alternative perspective in theorizing and practicing in the HRD field. Post modernism might seem to be difficult, complex and even self contradictory. However, it is those paradoxes that provide the fundamental understanding of what we are saying and doing in HRD. Given the dynamics, complexities and impact of change at societal, organizational and individual levels, these paradoxes are essential for a broader understanding of HRD. Rejection of paradoxes has been taken for granted in the field, but they may come from the dominant thoughts that legitimate our material world and power relationship. Paradox determined by human rationality may be the only tool to reverse human misunderstanding of the world.

Academic modesty, based on the belief that any theory of human beings cannot be truth, is one of the fruits of postmodernism. This does not mean that we should be pessimistic and stop pursing a theory for truth, but that we need to liberate ourselves from dominant thoughts, so that we continuously explore and search for truth. We might not be able to fully answer the various and complex questions in HRD, which might frustrate academic attempts in the field to do so. However, if we view HRD as state of being rather than an act of becoming, we will fail to come even close to understanding reality.

The concept of *dysfunctional organizational behavior* is relatively recent one and has been shown to be at common place in many organizations. Many of those behaviors have recently been illustrated in banking and financial organizations throughout the world and the lessons of the Enron case seen not to have been learned (Giroux, 2008). Human resource management not only is capable of conferring sustained competitive advantage in organizations but also is capable of counterproductive of dysfunctional work behavior (Levine 2010). Cliodhna Mackenzie et al. (2011) classify the dysfunctional behavior into three categories namely, individual team level, organizational level and institutional level dysfunctional behavior.

Alagaraja et al. (2015) describe that externalizing and sharing, interpreting and analyzing, negotiating and revising; and combing and creating are four process stages appear interestingly, in most of the models for *collaborative knowledge creation* in organization, HRD and learning sciences. The factors influencing collaborative knowledge creation are categorized by team emergent states, team composition inputs and team level inputs. The stages in collaborative knowledge creation mostly affected by these factors and the resulting challenges for open innovation teams of HRD.

Stephen Swailes (2016) conclude that motivation to transfer is essential for the transfer of training. Transfer motivation will benefit, if it adopts a multidisciplinary and multilevel perspective. Theories and models of work motivation, organizational behavior, educational technology and adult education can inspire further of employees' motivation to transfer training. A temporal

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perspective may be used to stimulate theory building and generation of appropriate interventions for HRD aimed at maintaining trainee's motivation to use learning in workplace.

Ascent (2014) observes some of the innovative HR practices and policies that have put in place by the best employers of 2013. Four measurable factors contribute to assess an organizational HR are: *high employee engagement, a compelling employer brand, effective leadership* and *high performance culture.*

Satyakam Mohanty (2013) points out that the use of information systems and software solutions is not new to HR teams. Yet, these tools have largely been addressing the operational elements of the function such as payroll, performance appraisal, attendance and recruitment. The only form of insight has been aggregating demographic and hard performance metrics into HR dashboards. The key goals of improving employee capabilities and driving better performance remain personal insight driven with an unprecedented amount of information now being captured by organizations. Big data opens up the possibilities for HR to collaborate with functions such as marketing and technology like never before. This way, the HR team adopts strategies that are business result oriented to become true strategic partners to the business of the future. Sunder Ramachandran (2013) finds that enterprise social networks (ESNs) are the future of communication and are being adopted in largest organizations as a tool to promote collaboration between meaningful conversations and meaningful people.

B. Organizational Performance and Talent Management

Andi Marston (2013) concludes that to drive organizational performance, strong talent management practices are critical. It requires the right framework of integrating a team member's needs with business priorities to develop a shared sense of purpose. Strong HRM is, of course, the key to striking this balance (Star et al. 2016). Managing talent involves a series planned collaborations at different phases of a team member's career in an organization, like*:*

*Attracting the right talent***;** The key to building a robust team is to start with a well defined process of planning and attracting the best talent pool. Organizations that offer the best work and a strong culture often attract top talent.

*On-boarding for success***;** The first 90 days are the most critical as the team member gradually assimilates into the culture of the organization. This is also a good time for a manager to build trust and set clear expectations that would help him or her align with the company's goals. An effective on-boarding plan should include the right network of peers, mentors, online training, classroom sessions and on the job training to help with this transition. Spending time to get to know others will help the team member feel connected and get work done.

*Continuous development***;** Meetings with team members should go beyond just evaluating performance against goals. There should be a specific process to discuss development through new skill, aspirations or hopefully both. A leader can adopt a coach mindset to guide team members to leverage their strengths. *Regular development discussions* always go a long way.

*Timely feedback***;** Every body wants to know how they are doing and where they can improve. *Leaders as advocates;* Organizations that focus on team member development have dedicated efforts from leaders to engage them in projects that are meaningful to their development. They actively advocate for their team and are continuously looking for creative challenges to leverage their potential.

Planning for succession; It is difficult to foresee the talent moves that can take place in the future. A good set of talent practices can ensure that you have the right team for the right job at the right time. It's critical for leaders and HR to set aside regular time to discuss the expected moves and critical capabilities that will be needed in that role. It is also important to think about succession from a team member's standpoint to ensure that the next move is one that will challenge and engage them. True success can be achieved only when the next role is right for both the team member and organization.

Leaders as engagers; Along with a good plan and effective conversation about it, a leader also needs to ensure that team members can bring their best selves to work every day. Letting them know that they revalued through recognition is critical to showing appreciation. We should also have to ensure that a team member's well being is taken care of both inside and outside of work. If our benefits package of support structure does not help them take care of issues outside of work, it could have an effect on their performance.

Aon Hewitt (2014) conducted a survey in 2013 through a newly designed model for defining best employers in China, Hong King, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. Four measurable factors: high employee engagement, a compelling employer brand, effective leadership and a high performance culture have been included in the survey. And finally, by the process of an audit of the short listed employers, the survey compiled and found that lowest engagement scores were observed in recognition, pay and career opportunities, indicating employee's hunger for growth, which are also the areas where the best employers scored much higher than the Indian average. Highest scores were noticed in health and well being, CSR and Co-workers, representing employee's growing preferences for work-life balance and social affiliation, It is important to support capability development for HR, so that it can contribute to business goals. The first step is to enable effective HR governance followed to define metrics that objectively measure the impact of people initiatives of business performance, the survey concludes.
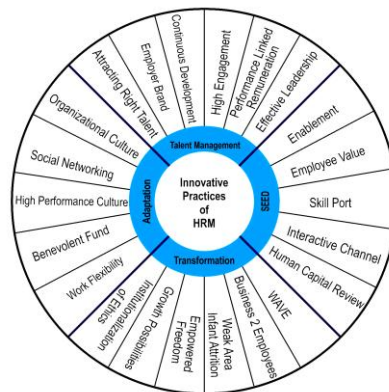

Fig. 1: Innovative Practices of HRM
SEED Denotes: Structured Employee Engagement and Development
WAVE Denotes: We are Valued and Empowered

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C. Innovative Practices

Structured Employee Engagement and Development (SEED) encompasses the quintessential 3Es of world class on-boarding namely; Enablement, Employees experience and Engagement (Surabhi Paliwal, 2013). SEED is a seamless on-boarding and as assimilation programme for new employees joining the organization. A transparent and an objective performance management system called a new *performance management system* has been adopted and used to drive a culture of performance in the company by inter-alia linking performance with pay.

Employee value proposition would be closely integrated with all existing HR practices, understood by all, agnostic to culture, language, continents, socio-economic strata, or age and could benefit the organization on a sustainable basis. *Skill port* for upcoming leaders and high potentials to get trained based on need, which has resulted in their enhanced leadership qualities. *Two-way interactive channel* called HR online, is a diligently architected platform to widen the communication reach and increase information access at the other end. It is an umbrella covering all HR practices and processes, which enable increased awareness and understanding of the same and thereby, facilitate enhanced delivery.

Care for life fund is essentially the classic employee benevolent fund, which is a purely voluntary, employee-funded and employee-managed programme. This fund provides financial support to employees and their families in times of unexpected and unforeseen emergencies. Millions of women in India from premier managerial and technical backgrounds have opted out of their career to take care of their families. Through *career by choice*, women with more than two years of relevant prior work experience can work flexibly with the company on live business projects ranging from six months to a year. *Performance linked variable remuneration* (PLVR) is a profit sharing mechanism unique to the company to enable employees to act as entrepreneurs.

U-Live is the company's internet portal designed and launched in 2013. It provides an intuitive, interactive and a feature rich platform for knowledge, collaboration and communication requirements of all the employee. *Human capital review* is the process of evaluating associates. performance over time and their career potential; identifying associates to prepare for future roles and building sufficient pools of talent for leadership roles across the company.

A community investment initiative programme is designed to involve employees in the corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Through this programme the organization supports various NGO's that work towards community initiatives for women, children, environment and health. Any week of the year may be declared as *appreciation week* to express gratitude to all employees for their continuous efforts to serve the customers globally. *Cross exposure and international work experience program* provides local talent an opportunity to work aboard and gain international work experience and build strong employer branding and loyalty. This initiative supports the company's ambition to be a truly global company with global talent and builds a quality pipeline of talent resources across regions and divisions. *We are valued and empowered* (WAVE) is a platform to capture team member's opinions and empower them to come forward and jointly make the employer a great and chosen place to work at WAVE is a journey that uses the *principles of self managed teams*.

With the help of *business to employee* (B2E) portals, the IT-enabled HR has helped to achieve a high level of computerization in the HR processes in all spheres of activities, by developing an wide

information system in enterprises continuous updating of knowledge and benefiting all levels of management as well as knowledge workers. *Corporate mentoring initiative program* has been implemented in 2014. In line with the objectives of the perspective plan-2030 and the need for cultural change, corporate HRD has started a new intervention for developing formal mentor-mentee relationship at ONGC.

The yearly attrition analysis for the financial year 2006-07 revealed that around 68 per cent of the new joiners left TAFE within two years of joining. Having identified the *weak area-infant attrition*, the HR team brainstormed and identified the key areas, which are of concern to new joiners and designed and administered an online questionnaire to 400 employees. Based on the feedback, focus group classifications were organized to further fine-tune the response. The mechanism used by TAFE is called *recently joined employee survey* (RJES) did at the end of 30-90-180 days of new joiners.

Ankit Shree Ram (2014) observes that learning ability, ability to reinvent, courage and the ability to accurately anticipate the future become a vital competency for HR, leaders and decision makers. Employers willing to rethink their own ideas adapt faster to the needs of the changing environment around them. These rethinkers are more solution-oriented in their thought process and more inclusive in their style of operations. Additionally, they work with the long-term success of the organization in mind. They evaluate any situation from a bird's, perspective when flying over a clifft-it would increase its flight and allow it to take off to reach greater heights than fall down to its end. However, standing meetings improve productivity through the collaboration in groups by increasing engagement resulting physiologically activating and get people's bodies ready to work.

A better understanding to the effects of social networks on expatriate performance is also likely to impact HRD interventions that aim at organizational development (OD). Boundary spanning activities often are an important part of the expatriate's performance requirements. The aim of boundary spanning is ultimately for the organization to gain access to alternative resources, often in the form of new knowledge or innovation. As these potentially lead to change in the organization, the expatriate performing boundary-spanning activities also takes on the role of a change agent. Because social network characteristics are likely to be proximal indicator of expatriate boundary-spanning activities, OD interventions should target the development of diverse and sparse expatriate social networks. This could be achieved both through HRD/OD practices that formally establish network ties, such as team building, or though HRD practices that support the expatriate's capabilities to build these ties, for example, mentoring and coaching.

Ritu Kocher (2014), observed that the HR function is working very closely with businesses to gain and deliver the competitive advantage in the market place and hence employees perceive HR function as a powerful entity today. In a country like India, where we are spoilt by freedom, have forgotten to draw the line and are willing to play with the law, it is a huge responsibility for HR to de-risk and future-proof the organizations. HR people are conscience keepers and watchdogs of the organization, they still become friends and confidants and be the perfect bridge between employees and the management.

Swati Prakash (2013), finds that corporate objectives of growth, profitability, high performance and market dominance are very often at odds with employees aspirations of a dream job,

individual empowerment freedom to work at one's own pace, great learning possibilities, good compensation and growth possibilities. The Key is to make every employee wanted cared for. It is a difficult objective as human being react very differently, have different needs at various times and would want individual attention, which is not possible at all time. Focusing on growth and profitability, which are essential for survival as a business, globalizing operations to ensure business success and reduce risks, diversifying business risks to ensure that they can be competitive, are the key aspects which Indian HR are rightly adopting in big organisation.

D. Value Creation and Sharing Initiative

Marianne F.F. and Wendy E.A. Ruona (2008), find that today many human resource professionals are facing with the responsibilities of implementing ethics initiatives in the work place. The integration of ethics is becoming an aspect of organizational life to counter unethical conduct, enhance the organizations reputation and stimulate the attraction and retention of talent. Leadership, infrastructure, stakeholders and organizational culture emerge as key components in the institutionalization of ethics. These components represent a broad spectrum of activities that together promote the institutionalization process. There is also a macro perspective on critical levels available to HRM who could be instrumental in developing these areas to promote ethics. Although these components are often addressed separately, when integrated in a holistic approach, organizations are more apt to reap desirable results.

Jia Wang et al. (2009), argue that a strategic approach to HRD is an imperative in the globalization era. A strategic perspective involves designing and implementing HRD policies and practices to ensure that a firm's human capital contributes to the achievement of business objectives.

Garvan (2007), developed a model of Standard Human Resource Development (SHRD) which includes three major constructs of HRD functions and the stakeholders. And four levels of context shape the SHRD activities are: the global context; the organizational context including strategy, structure, culture and leadership; the job; and the individual. The model also outlines three characteristics of SHRD: focus, orientation and strategies. Furthermore, the model acknowledges the importance of multiple stakeholders that have emerged in the design, development and implementation of SHRD, both internal and external to the organization. These four key levels of SHRD identified key issues at each level, encourage HRD specialists and those responsible for crises management in organization to become more cognizant of that SHRD can play in the effective management of crisis and crisis preparedness. Theories of crisis management might expand their current boundaries to incorporate the SHRD contribution. The model proposes a particular way to view the capability and learning issues that are relevant to crisis management.

Claire Gubbins (2009), explores the emergence and increasing importance of social networking competency for HRD professional's efforts at successfully engaged in new roles. Globalization encompasses a multiplicity of issues, including the growth in global, multinational and transnational organizations developments in technology, mergers, acquisions and strategic alliances. Forces of globalization are changing the work environment and roles played by HRD professionals. Social capital and social networking have become increasingly important.

Alexandre Ardichvili and Douglas Jondle (2009), find that the discussion of issues, associated with ethical or unethical behaviour in business organization, has become prominent in human resource development literature in recent years. To achieve sustainable results, the efforts need to

be supported by the creation of a dynamic and constantly evolving program of ethical education and training for employees on all levels of the organization. This includes the incorporation of ethics in leadership development programs, creation of mentoring and career development programs that foster ethical culture, development and strengthen of ethical decision making skills, the creation and review of codes of ethics or codes of conduct and succession planning focused on sustaining the ethical culture already created. A impact on organization can only be achieved, if the organizational values are fully integrated into all HRD interventions and day to day operations. Because values develop and strengthen in interactions and through personal example, HRD practitioners being among the most visible carriers and promoters of organizational values, must act as role models of ethical behaviour within the organization. Therefore, as suggested by Hatcher (2002), new models for HRD work should incorporate not only considerations of economic outcomes and individual, group or organizational performance and efficiency, but also outcomes, related to business organization's impact on society, community and the environment.

Swati Dutta (2011), finds that human developments and efficiency levels are important for economic development of the states in India. The low levels of human development in the particular state could be the result of various factors, such as the topography and hilly terrain which makes some areas inaccessible, poor expansion of economic opportunities, immigration, ethnic turmoil and insurgency. However, most of these states have efficiently utilized their resources in health and education; and operating with the most productive scale size. On investigating the determinants of efficiency, she concludes that road connectivity is a positive significant factor in determining efficiency levels. Along with road connectivity, expenditure on social sectors, fund allocations to local bodies and states own tax revenue have positive significant impacts on determining efficiency levels. On the contrary, crime and corruption have significant negative impacts on efficiency levels of states human development achievement. The topography of the region, historical factors and initial endowments may also have significant impacts an efficiency levels.

Priya C Nair (2013), explores a new leadership model that is gaining prominence in India and finds that there is a shift towards sharing leadership responsibilities among capable individuals as organizations realize that without having shared leadership, inclusive growth is not possible. Maturity of the organization, quality of people, clarity of vision, effective communication, innovation etc. are factors that need to be taken care of before going in for shared leadership. Achieving team alignment to common goals is the most significant challenge that has to be overcome. The organization must have a high-spirited workforce, employee friendly HR policies; and a strong and passionate leader who could actually work with the employees and management to pull off this kind of initiative in the organization's interest. With changing business scenarios and complex market situations the demands on leadership are humongous and hence, it could be too burdensome for a single person to shoulder, so sharing could just be the right way forward.

Ritu Mehrotra (2013), organizations have shifted their focus to employee issues at a large level to learn whether the employee is actually excited about the work or just dragging himself/herself to office. This has become a great concern for employers as it affects the productivity of the entire

workforce, thus, negatively influencing the overall growth of the firm. Every organization in these days is crystal clear about the fact that what can support them in the long run are ideas and not hierarchy in order to keep pace with the changing work culture. Companies are striving to provide a healthy work life balance to their employees and incorporate the culture of freedom at the workplace at the optimum level. Many renowned corporations believe in allotting the employees a decent amount of time span in which they are free to follow their passions other than work, which gives way to innovation, productivity and rejuvenation of employees and establish a win-win situation.

It is healthy for everyone to aspire to be a leader in their field of expertise (Marshall Goldsmith Dr., 2014). There is absolutely nothing wrong with being a follower. Subramaniam Kalpathi (2014), finds that work place conversations are powerful tools to engage and motivate a multi generational work force. However, very few organizations capitalize on the virtue of promoting such meaningful, transformational interactions among their employees. In a knowledge economy, we are driven by three factors: meaningful work, other's acknowledgement and the amount of effort we have put into accomplish a task. Ignoring the performance of people is almost as bad as shredding their effort before their eyes.

The most common function to hold past time responsibility for corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability is HR, in India and globally. However, in India, significantly higher number of companies holds HR responsible for CSR and sustainability, compared to the global result (Ankita Shree Ram, 2014 a)
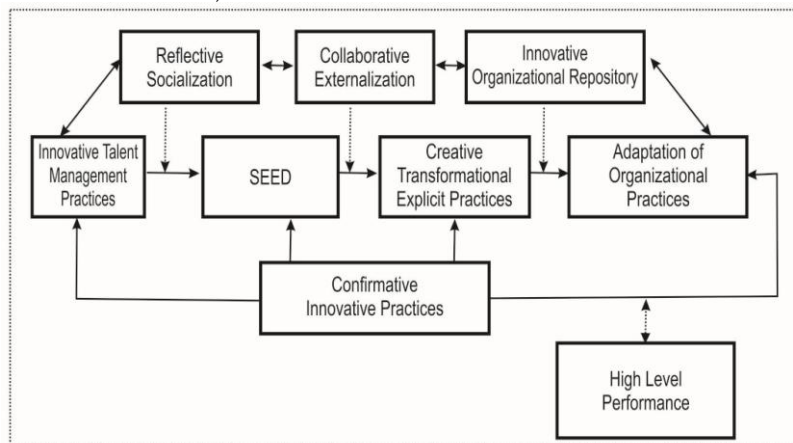

Fig. 2: Modes and Implications of Innovative Practices
SEED Denotes: Structured Employee Engagement and Development

Amit Malik (2014), finds that in the ever-changing organizational fabric, there is a shift in outlook and expectations regarding values, ethos, culture and career aspirations. The work force today, demands clear direction, accessibility of technology, instant feedback and instant gratification, this making work a means to an end. Achievement of this end, be it a personal goal or professional achievement, is critical in the retention of employees; and organizations have no choice but to embrace technology to make it happen.

4. CONCLUSION

This article has provided a critical discussion on HRM's lack of innovative practices and debated on its theoretical framework. Innovation is steeped in a masculine rational tradition that is preventing consideration of alternative conceptualizations of the field and perpetuating inequities. HRD's masculine rational blinders are putting the field at risk of becoming co-opted into dominance practices that are preventing it from fulfill its goal of humanistic facilitating development and change. HRD's lack of self-critique or openness to alternative models may result in it becoming irrelevant, shallow and unable to address the core potential currents that dictate organizational behaviour, life, change, learning and performance.

This article has also attempted to unsettle our understanding of HRD and see the consequences of narrow conceptions of the traditional field through innovative experience of HRD professionals and HRD recipients. HRD's skewed focused toward traditional, managerial and monetary interests results in abandonment of its humanitarian roots and prevents the field of innovations from serving as the organization conscience, change agent or employee advocate and innovate. This state of affairs is a call for new ways of defining and doing HRD that are more critical, inclusive and responsible along with accountability.

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