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Evaluating the impact of human resource planning programs in addressing the strategic goal of the firm

Human
resource
planning
programs

An organizational perspective

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Abstract

Purpose – Today, the employees stand firm as an integral part of the organization and are a precious asset. They are willing to learn, accept challenges and strive hard to deliver their level best. The role of the employees has become pronounced and significant, and it is no more conventional. They are now taking up responsibilities in strategic planning and development of the organization. Thus, HR department plays a profuse role in planning for the human resource of the firm to optimize the utilization of their potentials that would help support and meet the business as well as strategic goal of the firm. These HR planning programs ensure managing people within a planned framework and make them develop their performance that becomes a source of sustained competitive advantage for the firm. The paper aims to discuss these issues.

Design/methodology/approach – A descriptive research has been conducted with cross-sectional survey through a formalized questionnaire. Multistage sampling has been used in the study. Primary data have been collected from different manufacturing industries of India. Exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis have been conducted on the hypothesized research model. Structural equation modeling has been done to specify the relation between the measured and latent variables.

Findings – The HR planning programs, namely, staffing plan and succession plan, yield a better result in addressing the strategic goal of the company. Succession plan, staffing plan and talent management strategies augment the efficacious performance of the firm. Effectual performance aids in gaining a competitive advantage for the firm in a substantial way. Job analysis and design have no impact in achieving the strategic intent of the organization.

Originality/value – The study gives a comprehensive scenario of the HR planning programs that can help the organization to meet and uphold their strategic goals. The study provides a model that can solidify and bind the organization toward securing organizational intent and leading a steadfast business process in this dynamic competitive marketplace.

Keywords Competitive advantage, Performance, Human resource planning, Strategic goal

Paper type Research paper

1. Prelude

Globalization of business has resulted in a greater mobilization of human resources. This phenomenon has led to effective management of human resources across the organization. In recent times, HR department plays a significant role in effectual utilization of its human resources, thereby attaining the desired organizational objectives. The different human resource management functions today have brought the people and organization together, improving productivity as well as creativity, and have facilitated value creation. Thus, HRM is proactive and its practices forms an inherent part of business strategy planning. Human resource planning (HRP) is one of such practices that help in forecasting and assessing the manpower requirement in an organization, aim at balancing demand and supply, allocation and reallocation of manpower, anticipate human resource problems and plan for the requisite programs so that the future need of manpower is met efficaciously (Bhattacharya, 2012).

HRP is no longer an option; it is imperative and has an exigent demand in any organization for its sustained growth and existence (Aswathappa and Dash, 2008).



HRP actions invigorate the management to look for fresh opportunities rather than going for downsizing. HR planning based on environmental scanning accumulates information pertaining to the availability of the workforce along with their categories of skills and forecasts the future HR requirements to realize the growth strategies of the organization and to sustain organizational capability. A systematic analysis of workforce inventory helps in assessing whether the people are optimally employed and their capacities are rightly utilized to meet the organizational intent (Jyothi and Venkatesh, 2012). HRP not only helps to discern people as resources, but it also augments the potentiality of the firm by congruously utilizing the competencies of the people (Chandra Sekhar, 2005). Companies that link the overall strategic plan to that of HRP well ahead are able to find and keep the right employees and stand successful in this aggressive market, as they have a possibility to compete for the talent. This sets forth a better strategic direction to fulfill the firm's goal (Armstrong and Mitchell, 2017). HRP ensures a proper evaluation of the organization's human resources and facilitates to identify and redress the existing gaps to suit the changing needs of the firm that would invariably reflect the organizational goals (Aquinas, 2006). HRP puts an effort to derive a good mix of people, utilize their talent in an effective way and facilitate the formulation of training plan, job design, career development plan so as to keep the firm competitive (Karia *et al.*, 2016). Through an improved analysis, HRP determines the right number of people at a proper time, who are proficient to work for the interest of the organization. It augments the developmental action of the firm and helps in planning for the long-term projects strategically (Das, 2013).

2. Rationale of the study

As organizations are entering into a hyper-competitive era, we are finding in them widened spans of control, flattened structures, teams, reduced formalizations, challenging environment and empowered employees. The tangible progress of an organization can be evident when it manages to stay a step ahead of its market. This is workable when strategies, goal and meaningful activities fortify one another. This real alignment helps in better tuning of a firm's operational planning. All of these links come together to create a meaningful work and beget sustained performance. But it has to be realized that the fulfillment of each strategic objective of the firm revolves around the ability and responsibility of the human resources of the organization. It is through a proper planning for the employees that a company can accelerate and improve its operational errand. HRP activities proactively enthuse and engage employees to utilize their talent and prowess in attaining the strategic aim of the firm, thereby contributing toward its core mission. HRP makes a positive difference in their employees' attitude and performance and it enkindles them to greatness. HRP is not just a doorway to bring wizards but it helps to meticulously fit the capable employees in the required jobs and aligns organizational process toward the strategic direction. HRP with its plethora of tasks like staffing, training, succession and career planning, job analysis and design plays a key strategic role in business decision. HRP can no more be perceived as a "silo" approach. It is an integral part that assists the firm to manage its staff strategically. Investing in HRP also helps the workforce in improvement of its efficiency. The changing workforce has revolutionized the definition of workplace and its workings. Today, the employees want to grow with that of the business. They need a feeling of purpose and belonging and want to play a constructive role in their work. They want to reap opportunities to explore new paths, which will increase their skill sets, making them an inspiring and creative workforce. Thus, it is essential to impart resilient and effective practices for the employees and advance the strategic goal of the organization. HRP augments such a purpose and enhances the success of an organization by providing plans and designing tasks for the qualitative and quantitative balance of employees in the firm. Therefore, HRP activities through

deployment of human resources not only empower the individual employees but also underpin the firm to attain its goal and aspirations. This alignment would create an organizational agility and it would help employees to perform at optimum levels. When employees are able to align their activities with that of organizational strategies, they would thrive in their work to generate potential outcomes. A consistent better performance would bring a sustained competitive advantage for the firm. Thus, to retain its competitive edge, it is essential to adopt HRP as its survival strategy, which is a fundamental part of the business planning process.

3. Related review of literature

3.1 Staffing plan

Proper selection and hiring of personnel on the basis of their knowledge, skills and abilities adds value to the firm. A proper staffing plan helps in deploying capabilities of the employees in the right direction based on the organizational need and assists them in attaining organizational objective (Ogedegbe, 2014). Staffing plan augments organizational policies and programs through an effective recruitment, selection, induction, training of the candidates, thereby making them more responsible toward their work and position that would promote organizational purpose (Maih, 2015). Staffing takes care of effective hiring of employees and helps them to utilize their full capabilities and skills toward fulfilling of the firm's intent. It provides a guidance to realize the organizational goals. The productive use of employees in the firm assists in gaining the firm's objective. The right selection of workforce, enriching of their potency through training and evaluation of their performance steadily leads the employees in securing the company's aim. Placing the right people in the right job not only enhances their efficiencies but also helps them fit into the organization's environment and ultimately leads them to arrive at the firm's goal (Saddam and Mansor, 2015). Just and upright recruitment strategies are vital for organization, as the quality of the employees plays a noteworthy role in satisfying the strategic goal of the organization at an effective cost. Identifying the vacancies in the company and finding and placing competent employees in the desired position ensure a systematic engagement of employees in achieving the goals of the firm. Staffing plan helps in attracting a pool of potential candidates as required and suitable to make correct decision, which would help in attainment of organizational object, thereby generating human capital advantage (Ekwoaba *et al.*, 2015). Hiring individuals with right skills, needed abilities and attitude affects the bottom line business outcomes and contributes considerably toward organizational objective and output (Saviour *et al.*, 2016). Choosing the right people for the right job ensures success for the organization in achieving its target. This leads to a good value system in the organization wherein employees are able to handle the work process effectively and efficiently (Balasubramanian, 2014). Staffing strategies help to fetch efficient workforce in a proper time and allow the business operations to carry on without impediments, thereby fulfilling the organizational needs (Aslam *et al.*, 2013). Staffing plan is an integral part of human resource management practice that drives the workforce to achieve sustainable goal of the firm through proper management of the individuals' competencies and by placing them in rightful positions. Thus, proper use of their skills and expertise impart value in achieving organizational goal and sustainability (Schroeder, 2012):

H1. Staffing plans have a significant impact in achieving the strategic goal of the firm.

3.2 Job analysis and design

A well-designed job helps to fit into the organizational goal and enriches workplace productivity. It has a significant influence on employee motivation and performance to

achieve the desired goal and outcome of the firm (Tufail *et al.*, 2017). Job design techniques enable the development of employees' skills, provide them with an exposure and facilitate participation in decision-making process of the firm. This results in improved attitude of employees toward their job that stimulates them to work effectively and responsibly, thereby satisfying the need of the organization in executing its objectives (Belias and Sklikas, 2013). Job design is one of the effective tools that provide autonomy, task significance, variety and identity in a job. This makes employees satisfied and makes them inclined to involve in the job to create a positive impact. This induces them to put forth their best potency in fulfilling the firm's goal (Zareen *et al.*, 2013). Job analysis through a proper job description and specification plans for the job so that the personnel can be placed, trained and developed as per the organizational requirement to attain the overall strategic plan. In a goal-driven organization, job analysis plays a crucial role in providing job-related information for the jobs to be staffed. Thus, it also assists in an efficient manpower planning, thereby aspiring to fulfill the company's goal (Okoye *et al.*, 2007). Duties and responsibilities of a job is an essential element in persuading an employee to contribute toward the organization. Job analysis through a collection of job-related data provides a specific description and a clear understanding of one's role in the job. It provides a guideline to their work to produce desired upshots. Together, it increases the value of the job and aids in securing the firm's goal (Sharif and Karim, 2017). A proactive job analysis process is essential, as it contributes toward the attitudinal and behavioral job performance outcomes. It inspires as well as impels employees to contribute considerably toward their job, thereby imparting a positive impact. Employees discharge their responsibilities efficaciously in performing their task, bestowing a pronounced organizational performance in reaching the organizational goal (Suthar *et al.*, 2014). Although the job design practices reframe the work to meet the specific skills of individuals and have an impact on job satisfaction of the employees, still the study reveals that a proper job design does not influence their organizational performance significantly (Ehsan, 2018):

H2. Job analysis and design have a significant impact in achieving the strategic goal of the firm.

3.3 Career planning and development

When an organization aligns career development activities of employees with their career goals, it sets forth to link that with the business strategies that contribute toward achieving organizational objectives. It reinforces the fact that employees are the valuable resources in the organization and should be facilitated with opportunities. This helps them and their work to remain aligned with the organization's purpose and intent (Lam *et al.*, 1999). Career planning and development involves individual and organizational responsibility that helps in implementation of organizational strategies. It is useful for organization, as it identifies the individual needs and matches them with the business needs to reach its goal. To achieve and maintain competitive advantage, career planning plays a critical role, which leads to an expected result for the organization (Antoniou, 2010). Career planning and development focuses on the balance between organizational and individual aspects. A proper career development plan leads to an effectual organizational plan (Baruch, 1996). Career planning activities helps to synthesize the need of the organization with that of the expectation of the employees. This motivates and encourages them, extracts their inner potential and contributes toward the productivity of the firm. As organizations guide them toward a clear path in which their individual aim is accomplished, employees realize the strategic corporate goals (Ritesh, 2014). Career development activities bring in a positive attitude among employees, and help them to achieve the best abilities and remain dedicated (Mikacic, 2015), which finally augments

their potency and ingenuity to support the attainment of the organizational goal (Avianti and Pitaloka, 2016). Career planning and development activities in an organization bring forth a competitive advantage for the firm through developing its employees, providing them support and opportunities to grow (Chetana and Das Mohapatra, 2017). Although the career development practices lead to a proactive engagement of the employees, they still remain unhappy with the career development system, as there is an absence of transparency and clarity in it. Employees have found a communication gap with their managers. Even opinions of employees are not taken into consideration and they remain de-motivated. Thus, employees do not find the assigned programs relevant or useful and these play no significant role in accomplishment of the strategic goal of the firm (Khan *et al.*, 2015):

H3. Career development plans have a significant impact in achieving the strategic goal of the firm.

3.4 Succession planning

The lack of competent and able persons in the leading positions leads to an unfulfillment of the strategic goal of the firm. Succession planning prevents disarrays in actuating organizational goals and purpose. It is a systematized process that prepares the successors with right skills, who, in turn, would be able to handle the business need and demands and move propitiously toward a realistic future (Adewale *et al.*, 2011). Succession planning helps in identifying and developing internal personnel with potential to fill the critical organizational position, meeting the organizational goals, living up to the standard, retaining intellectual asset so that targeted development takes place and help the firm to stay competitive in the marketplace (Esttedadi *et al.*, 2015). Succession planning is an effort to strategically manage and accomplish the organizational goals. It is an attempt to retain and evolve leadership proficiencies for the implementation of the organizational aim. It ensures stability in the operational process and among the workforce, assuring responsibilities among the personnel to coordinate with the strategic plan of the firm (Seniwoliba, 2015). Succession planning practice assesses the probable successors and equips them with necessary skills and experience, and aligns them with that of the business goal in order to attain strategic objectives of the firm. Effective implementation of the succession planning programs improves productivity and performance of the firm and contributes toward achievement of the organization's intent. It assists the successors to articulate a common vision and it provides a direction to reach the organizational goal in an integrated manner in bringing successful outcomes (Komora *et al.*, 2015). Prospective employees need continuous monitoring and mentoring to bring out their potentials and expertise. This further augments the successors to take initiatives, responsibilities and notable decisions for the firm, which would enable them to meet the business objectives and needs effectively. Succession planning activities adopt a comprehensive approach in guiding the capable individuals to come up and address critical situations, and creating solutions that would ultimately act as a strategy to fulfill the organizational goal and intention (Das and Pati, 2016):

H4. Succession planning has a significant impact in achieving the strategic goal of the firm.

3.5 Talent management

Talent management practices help in acquiring the right people and developing their competencies according to the business demands, which ultimately triggers the successful attainment of the organizational goal. This unique proactive approach utilizes the talent and makes them adept, motivated and engaged. This practice solidifies the inherent capability of

the firm to prosper and lead toward its strategic goal (Mohammed, 2015). Managing the talent pool has become one of the best global practices that provide a sustained competitive advantage to the firm. Existing talents and capacities are managed in integration with business strategy that ensures accountability and consistency in the organizational process and performance and moves ahead to meet the aim of the company (Lyria, 2013). Today, the organizations try to implement the best talent management practices, as these provide an opportunity for the employees to maximize their potential and contribute toward the value of the organization. Talent management strategies incorporate employees' involvement, align their systems, structure and activities with that of the strategic goal of the firm and encourage the talented employees to lead toward the organization mission with their unique and creative ideas and decisions (Sareen and Mishra, 2016). With the changing industry dynamics, talent management helps in retaining high-potential employees, thereby adding value to the organization. Talent management strategies enable those employees to become proactive and integrated into the company. Such strategies help in better alignment of employees with that of organizational goals, sustaining the firm in the long run (Pasha and Ahmed, 2017). Talent management programs play a significant role in accelerating competitiveness of the firm by identifying and developing employees having the capability and building a workforce that is determined to outperform. The linking of an individual goal with that of the corporate goals encourages employees to reinforce corporate values (Mangusho *et al.*, 2015). Talent management strategies aid in achieving long-term stability in the firm and help to remain competitive amidst doldrums. An integrated approach to talent management helps in meeting the future business need and proper execution of its strategic intent (Oladapo, 2014). Talent management practices help in successful identification of potential talents and augment the scientific knowledge and skills of those employees. Various aspects of talent management, such as mentoring, coaching, providing training and guiding the employees toward the organizational mission, have a positive impact on organizational outcomes (Mwanzi, Wamitu, Kiama, 2017):

H5. Talent management has a significant impact in achieving the strategic goal of the firm.

3.6 *Achieving strategic goal of the firm*

When employees goals are aligned with that of the strategic goal of the firm, they improve their work processes and utilize their entire potential. Thus, the motivated employees in achieving the goal of the organization contribute significantly toward the organizational performance. It results in an organizational growth and better productivity (Dobre, 2013). When an organization induces a sense of confidence among its members, a shared sense of vision is evolved that appeals them toward fulfillment of the broader objective. This leads to an integrated performance that maximizes organizational results (Trybou *et al.*, 2017). According to the goal approach, when employees in an organization agree on a specific goal, they drive toward it and become involved and remain committed to it. It imparts a positive effect on their performance and helps steer through an effective organizational performance (Ashraf and Kadir, 2012). The alignment of organizational objective with employees' skills, abilities and capacities leads to an improvement of the entire system. Their performance standard eventually gets enriched (Shah and Aslam, 2009). When personal goals align with that of organizational goals, the employees try to realize the firm's objectives and in the process, they become a valuable asset for the firm. Thus, employees remain committed, which leads to an increased action. They employ their potentials to the maximum, thereby resulting in performance at work (Saeed *et al.*, 2013):

H6. Achieving the strategic goal of the firm has a significant impact on its effective performance.

3.7 Effective performance

When an organization-based performance is measured by laying prominence on accomplishment of the organizational goal, efficacious working of the firm's internal processes is achieved (Ismail *et al.*, 2010). Firms that are able to create a sustained high performance level through a new extent of employee involvement and that guide and develop the human resources continuously contribute to form a basis for sustained competitive advantage for the firm (Srivastava *et al.*, 2013). When resources of the organization are properly deployed, it generates superior performance for the firm and competitive advantage is attained. Effective implementation of strategies leads to distinguished performance that fortifies competitive advantage of the company. When resources of the organization are efficaciously managed to accomplish organizational goals and objectives, the firm gains its competitive advantage (Othman *et al.*, 2014):

H7. Effective performance of the firm plays a significant role in maintaining the complete edge.

Based on the theoretical underpinnings, the hypothesized research model has been established, as shown in Figure 1.

4. Research gaps

Some meaningful issues and relationships between HRP programs and the organizational effectiveness have been revealed through the literature review. But it has been identified that only a few HRP programs, such as staffing plan and succession planning, have got due prominence in research in relation to their role in augmenting and securing the strategic goal of the organization. There is dearth of a comprehensive model in literature that includes some significant HRP programs, which in unison play a consequential role in achieving the goal of the firm and bestow a sustained competitive advantage for it. The study contributes to that identified gap. Most of the studies emphasize the role played by the certain HRP programs like talent management, job analysis and design only in the productivity and performance of the company. Their role toward realizing the organizational purpose and intent has not been rightly featured. Limited studies revealed the eminence of the achievement of strategic goal of the firm in securing effective performance. The method by which a company achieves its competitive edge over others through an effective performance has also not been dealt considerably. The study aims to provide a model that let us comprehend and feel the relevance and tenor of the HRP activities undertaken for the employees in order to build a strong and cogent organization through realization of its strategic goal and aspiration and by serving as a

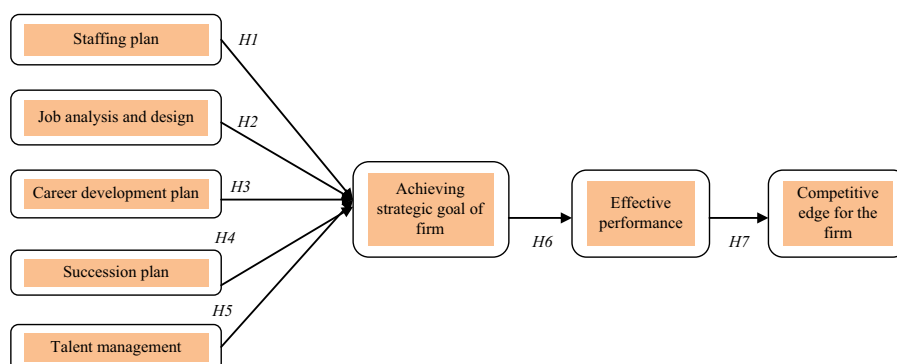


Figure 1.
Hypothesized
research model

competitive advantage. There is a paucity of relevant studies depicting such a paradigm or picture. Most of the studies unveiled the customary significance of HRP (as a whole) in an organization without drawing attention to its upshots toward a business and its power to bring an advantage to the firm. Furthermore, studies relating to it have not been conducted in manufacturing units of West Bengal. So far, the studies have been conducted in general or have been underlining a case of a particular company.

5. Research objectives

The following research objectives have been set for the study:

- (1) to ascertain and underline the impact of HRP programs in meeting the strategic goal of an organization; and
- (2) to analyze the process by which attainment of strategic goal of the firm generates effectual organizational performance for the organization, triggering competitive advantage for it.

6. Research methodology

6.1 Research design

The research has been designed as it provides a logical and systematic plan that directs toward the study and its objectives. It is blueprint that frames the methods and strategies to be adopted for gathering, measurement and analysis of data (Krishnaswami and Ranganatham, 2018) and helps to translate the idealized design into practical working means (Bhandarkar and Wilkinson, 2015).

Research approach. As the study involves an explicit definition of the problem, formation of hypotheses and collection of structured data (Bajpai, 2013), and is carried with a particular objective to derive a well-defined conclusion (Pannerselvam, 2016), descriptive research has been conducted with a cross-sectional survey as the study is carried out on a specific portion of population at a single moment in time (Chawla and Sondhi, 2016).

Database. The current study is based on the primary data that are collected from different HR personnel (respondents) from different manufacturing industries of West Bengal, India.

Time frame of study. The period of the study in which the survey was conducted was from May 2018 to September 2018.

Identifying the variables. Identifying and defining the variables help to investigate exhaustively, study the underlying relationship and drive the research process. In this study, 22 variables have been identified and refined for the survey.

Design of questionnaire. Questionnaire designs form an integral part of the survey and are the first point of contact with that of the respondents. Formal structured and standardized questions have been used, as hypothesis needs to be tested empirically, statistical analysis needs to be conducted and inference needs to be drawn (Mohan, 2016). For better tabulation and data comparison, 22 close-ended questions have been formed. A five-point Likert scale has been used to measure the degree of favorable or unfavorableness toward the issue (Kothari, 2004a, b).

Pilot survey. A pilot test has been conducted with the questionnaire discussed above. The questionnaire needs to be tested, which would explore the issues that would have an adverse effect on the survey. Identifying those issues would lead to a significant improvement in the questionnaire (Taylor *et al.*, 2016). Thus, a pilot test has been conducted to test the feasibility of the analysis and to provide the groundwork (Hassan *et al.*, 2006). The questionnaire was pre-tested on 50 HR personnel, out of which 41 respondents have provided a positive feedback. The response rate was 82 percent. Internal consistency reliability has been used to assess the reliabilities of the dimensions through Cronbach's α and it was found to be 0.781.

6.2 Sampling design

Sampling design is a precise plan that helps in acquiring sample from a given population. It is to be decided before data are collected and it provides a technique that can be embraced in selecting items for the sample (Kothari and Garg, 2019a, b).

Area of research. The study has been conducted in the state of West Bengal. Four divisions have been chosen randomly from among the five divisions of Bengal and the study is restricted to these four divisions, namely, Burdwan, Medinipur, Presidency and Jalpaiguri. Only the manufacturing units and industries within these divisions are chosen for the survey.

Sample size. The researchers have assured the respondents that responses provided will be kept confidential in the future. Researchers used two-staged data collection method, which contains the pre-tested method with 50 respondents and then the full-fledged testing with 252 samples to conduct the study. To conduct the pilot study, 50 respondents have been selected and 41 respondents have provided the positive outcome. Here, 40 out of 50 are having 80 percent of p -value and 20 percent of $(1-p)$ value:

$$SS = \frac{Z_{c,1}^2 \times (p) \times (1-p)}{C^2},$$

where SS is the sample size; $Z_{c,1}^2$ is square of the confidence level in standard error units (here Z-value for the 95% confidence interval = 1.96); p is the estimated proportion of success, i.e. 80 percent; $q = 1 - p$, or the estimated proportion of failures = 20 percent; and C^2 is the square of the maximum allowance for error between the true proportion and the sample proportion:

$$SS = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.80 \times 0.20}{(0.05)^2} = 245.86 = 246(\text{approx}).$$

From the above formula, researchers have found 246 to be the sample size and, accordingly, 300 questionnaires have been distributed amongst respondents. Then, 252 properly filled questionnaires have been returned back to the researchers. The ultimate sample size is 252, which is derived from the statistical formula with the population being infinite (Kothari, 2004a, b).

Sampling technique. The sampling technique employed in selecting the sample in this study is multistage sampling that has been done sequentially across two or more hierarchical stages (Kulkarni, 2015) pertaining to a large geographic area. It is a successful random sampling of units that are randomly selected (Thamilarasan, 2015) (Table I).

6.3 Data collection

In social research, there are three kinds of data collection – through surveys and interviews, observation or by studying the document (Flick, 2017). One most common form of data collection is through questionnaire, which has been used in the study for receiving comparable answers from the respondents through survey method, and it has given a chance to collect data at one time. Data that have been collected from a primary resource are

Division	Location	Respondents
Burdwan	(3 districts × 5 cities × 5 companies)	75
Medinipur	(3 districts × 5 cities × 5 companies)	75
Presidency	(3 districts × 5 cities × 5 companies)	75
Jalpaiguri	(3 districts × 5 cities × 5 companies)	75

Table I.
Area break-up

known as the primary data (Mishra and Alok, 2011), and for this study, data have been collected from different HR personnel belonging to various manufacturing industries of West Bengal. In total, 300 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 252 filled-up responses were received. The response rate was 84 percent (Table II).

7. Data analysis and interpretations

7.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

The survey has been carried out in 20 manufacturing companies of West Bengal. Employees belonging to different HR categories participated in the survey. Their demographic profiles have been highlighted in Table III.

7.2 Reliability of the data

The reliability of the data is to be measured to test the consistency and stability of data. Cronbach's α is a reliability coefficient that is used to measure the internal consistency of the data. It furnishes a very good estimate of the internal consistency and homogeneity of the items tested (Mangal and Mangal, 2018). A high correlation coefficient specifies a high internal consistency. The closer the Cronbach's α is to 1, the higher is the internal consistency (Krishnaswamy *et al.*, 2007). In our study, the overall reliability α coefficient was 0.893, which signifies a good level of internal reliability (Table IV).

7.3 KMO and Bartlett's test

It is essential to obtain validity of the obtained reduction of data. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test show the adequacy of the data for factor analysis (Pandya *et al.*, 2016). The KMO test measures the sampling adequacy for each variable and highlights the degree of inter correlations among the variables. If the value of KMO statistics is greater than 0.80, then it is considered meritorious (Kaiser, 1970), and thereby factor analysis can be used. The overall KMO was found to be 0.893, meeting the requirement for factor analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity test indicates the overall statistical significance of the correlations among the

Division	District	City	Respondents	Total	Filled-up responses
Burdwan	Hooghly	Srerampur	15	75	68
		Chinsurah	15		
		Chandannagar	15		
Medinipur	Purba Bardhaman	Bardhaman	15	75	67
		Paschim Bardhaman	Durgapur		
	Paschim Medinipur	Haldia	15		
		Salboni	15		
	Purulia	Kharagpur	15		
Presidency	Howrah	Jhalda	15	75	61
		Purulia	15		
	North 24 parganas	Uluberia	15		
		Ashoknagar	15		
		Kamarhati	15		
Jalpaiguri	South 24 parganas	Baranagar	15	75	56
		Maheshtala	15		
	Jalpaiguri	Siliguri	15		
		Mekhliganj	15		
		Jalpaiguri	15		
Cooch Behar	Alipurduar	Jaigaon	15	300	252
	Tufanganj	15			
Total					

Table II.
Location-wise
break-up

variables within a correlation matrix (Kothari and Garg, 2019a, b), which is indicated by the p -value ($p = 0.000$) corresponding to the χ^2 statistic ($= 6,983.241$). Since the p -value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, there is a statistically significant interrelationship between variables (taking a 95% level of significance, $\alpha = 0.05$) (Table V).

Panel A: gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	193	76.59
Female	59	23.41
Total	252	

Panel B: age group

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
30–40 years	54	21.43
41–50 years	106	42.06
51–60 years	92	36.51
Total	252	

Panel C: designation

Designation	Frequency	Percentage
HR Generalists	69	27.38
Recruitment Specialists	21	8.33
HR Officer	82	32.54
Training Manager	28	11.11
HR Manager	46	18.25
HR Director	6	2.38
Total	252	

Panel D: educational qualification

Educational qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Graduate	38	15.08
Postgraduate	31	12.30
Professional Degree	183	72.62
Total	252	

Panel E: monthly income

Monthly income	Frequency	Percentage
30,000–50,000	103	40.87
50,001–70,000	60	23.81
70,001–90,000	47	18.65
90,001–110,000	22	8.73
110,001–130,000	14	5.56
131,000–150,000	6	2.38
Total	252	

Table III.
Demographic profile

Cronbach's α	No. of items
0.893	22

Table IV.
Overall reliability

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.862
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. χ^2	6,983.241
	df	326
	Sig.	0.000

Table V.
KMO and
Bartlett's test

After perceiving all the appropriateness of the data, we may proceed for factor analysis. Principal component analysis was employed for deriving the factors based on latent root criterion (i.e. eigenvalue > 1). Eigenvalue is the sum of squares of all factor loadings of all the variables considered in the study. The variance explained by the factor shall depend on the eigenvalue (Veeraraghavan and Shetgovekar, 2016). The factors with an eigenvalue of 1.0 or above have been considered for our analysis. The percentage of variance (indicator) explains how well the total factor solution accounts for what the variables represent collectively. The study shows that the indicator for present solution accounted for 74.27 percent of total variations extracting eight (eight) underlying factors from 22 variables.

7.4 Identifying significant factor loadings

Factor analysis has been used for data reduction for identifying the representative variables from a large set of variables and for creating a new manageable set of variables. Data summarization identifies the underlying factors and each variable that contributes to the factors (loadings). Factor matrix has been computed using rotational method to provide simple and significant factor solutions. Varimax rotation approach has been selected, as it simplifies the factor matrix and maximizes the sum of variances of the loadings of the factors, providing a clear separation of the factors (Hair *et al.*, 2017a, b). Factor loading represents the correlation between a variable and its factor. But these factor loadings have considerably a larger standard error, and thus factor loadings should be assessed at a stricter level. Factor loadings of 0.50 or above are practically significant (Asthana and Bhushan, 2016). Factor loadings of 0.5 and above are considered for this study (Table VI).

Variables	Factors							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Q15	0.908							
Q8	0.893							
Q5	0.854							
Q16		0.923						
Q21		0.876						
Q18		0.813						
Q4			0.897					
Q2			0.842					
Q20			0.769					
Q7				0.864				
Q11				0.791				
Q19				0.729				
Q6					0.881			
Q10					0.803			
Q13					0.768			
Q1						0.817		
Q12						0.752		
Q22						0.703		
Q3							0.774	
Q9							0.718	
Q14								0.823
Q17								0.709
Variance explained	19.236	15.397	12.968	10.483	8.694	4.369	2.128	1.003
Cumulative	21.423	34.633	47.601	58.084	66.778	71.147	73.275	74.278
Cronbach's α	0.898	0.903	0.887	0.881	0.907	0.876	0.891	0.879

Table VI. Result of factor analysis

7.5 Labeling of factors

When the acceptable factor matrix is derived in which all the variables have significant factor loadings, an attempt is made to name or label the factors that reflect the variables loaded to that factor and provide a meaning to it (Hair *et al.*, 2017a, b). From the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), eight factors have been extracted and these are named as staffing plan (SP), job analysis and job design (JAD), career development plan (CDP), succession plan (SCP), talent management (TM), achieve strategic goal of firm (ASG), effective performance of firm (EP) and competitive edge of the firm (CE) (Table VII).

7.6 Fit indices and path diagram

Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) is a software through which the path diagram amongst different variables and their relationship has been exposed. The structural equation modeling through AMOS takes a confirmatory (i.e. hypothesis testing) approach in analyzing the structural theory (Byrne, 2010). The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has been used to find out the interrelationship between the variables and their significance. Before the CFA, EFA has been conducted and from there, eight factors have been extracted, and after that with the help of eight factors, the path analysis model has been developed. The CFA model found out the fit indices and from the data, it can be concluded that the model is fit (Table VIII).

It has been found out from all the fit indices that the model values are under the acceptable ranges. The chi square index will help to adjust the model path and it may give a better result on it. In CMIN/DF, we have found that the value is 1.362 and it is well below the recommended value 3. The values of GFI and AGFI (which is goodness of fit and adjusted goodness of fit) mainly vary from 0 to 1 and as per the recommended value, it is well above 0.9. Here, the GFI and AGFI values are 0.912 and 0.903, which means the model is a good fit. The value of root mean square error of approximation is 0.052, which is well below the recommended value 0.06. Normed fit index and comparative fit index values are also well above value 0.9, hence claiming the model to be fit.

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Factor 8
Staffing plan	Job analysis and job design	Career development plan	Succession plan	Talent management	Achieve strategic goal of firm	Effective performance of firm	Competitive edge of the firm
Q15	Q16	Q4	Q7	Q6	Q1	Q3	Q14
Q8	Q21	Q2	Q11	Q10	Q12	Q9	Q17
Q5	Q18	Q20	Q19	Q13	Q22		

Table VII.
Labeling of factors

Fit indices	Recommended values	Structural model values
CMIN/df	< 3.0	1.362
GFI	> 0.9	0.928
AGFI	> 0.9	0.903
NFI	> 0.9	0.917
CFI	> 0.9	0.909
TLI	> 0.9	0.915
RFI	> 0.9	0.912
PCFI	> 0.9	0.922
PNFI	> 0.9	0.906
RMSEA	< 0.06	0.052
RMR	< 0.05	0.016

Table VIII.
Fit indices in the structural equation model

Figure 2 has shown the path diagram with the help of the AMOS v21 software that reveals the relationship amongst the various variables.

7.7 Validity testing and path analysis

In the structural equation modeling, researchers have checked the validity of different variables and have found it valid. The construct validity has been explained with convergent and divergent validity. The CR values, which are termed as construct reliabilities, are having values more than 0.7 and it also emphasizes that the values are reliable. The average variance extracted (AVE) is having the values more than 0.5. It has also been found from the result that CR value is greater than AVE values, and thus it can be interpreted that it supports convergent validity. It also clarifies that $MSV < AVE$, $ASV < AVE$ and the square root of AVE values is greater than co-relation between construct values, so it proves divergent validity also (Tables IX–XI).

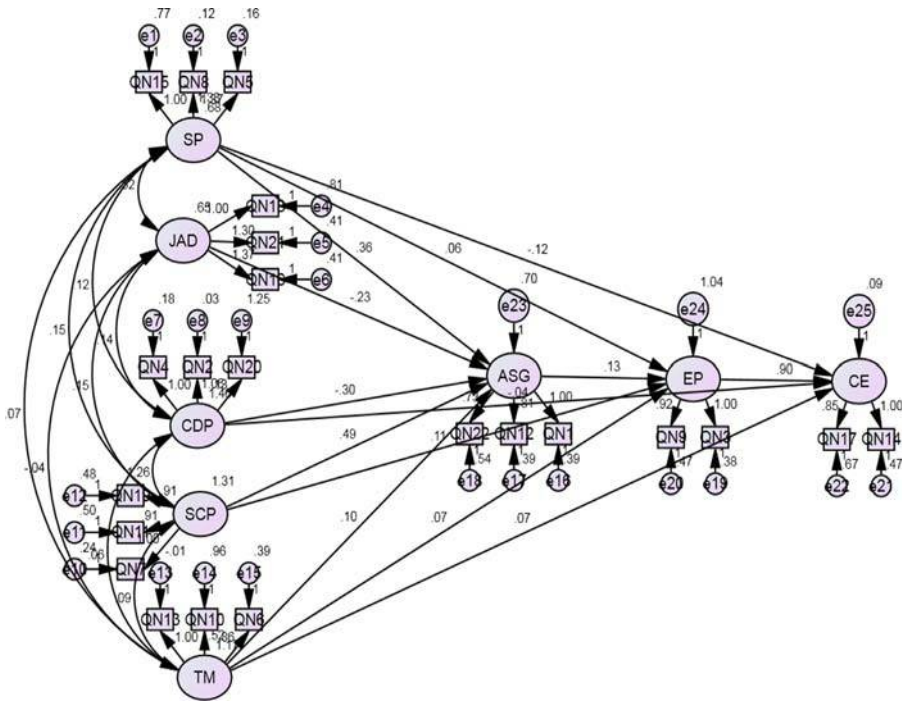


Figure 2. Hypothesized structural model

Factors	Construct reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Maximum shared variance (MSV)	Average shared variance (ASV)
SP	0.916	0.832	0.289	0.196
JAD	0.894	0.817	0.265	0.172
CDP	0.903	0.781	0.254	0.154
SCP	0.908	0.818	0.281	0.192
TM	0.911	0.806	0.259	0.164
ASG	0.897	0.787	0.244	0.148
EP	0.899	0.834	0.301	0.198
CE	0.901	0.823	0.293	0.175

Table IX. Result of measurement model

The path analysis of structural model illustrated that effective performance of firm is the most influencing factor for competitive edge of the firm. Succession planning is the most influencing factor for achieving strategic goal of the firm. The unstandardized regression estimate and CR value are both high in all the above-mentioned cases and quite significant at 1 percent significance level. Staffing plan and talent management are the next most influencing factors for achieving strategic goal of firm. It is also observed from the study that job analysis and job design and career development plan are not having any impact in achieving the strategic goal of the firm.

8. Findings and discussion

The research discloses the following major findings.

From the analysis, it has been observed that among the five HRP programs that have been identified, succession planning plays the most significant and impressive role in achieving the strategic goal of the organization. It is vital for an organization, as it is able to retain intellectual capital for the future, thereby developing the appropriate leaders for tomorrow, who will help the business grow. It is the critical component of the business strategy to bring a meaningful change in the organization. It helps the high-performing individual to remain focused toward a positive business outlook. The accomplishment of strategic goal remarkably affects the effective performance of the firm. It ensures a combined effort and provides a direction to the employees to reach a position where the organizational goal is satisfied along with their individual needs.

	SP	JAD	CDP	SCP	TM	ASG	EP	CE
SP	<i>0.912</i>							
JAD	0.231	<i>0.904</i>						
CDP	-0.196	0.191	<i>0.884</i>					
SCP	0.246	-0.187	0.236	<i>0.904</i>				
TM	-0.138	0.203	0.301	-0.423	<i>0.898</i>			
ASG	0.196	0.211	-0.254	0.381	0.299	<i>0.887</i>		
EP	-0.214	-0.197	0.185	0.323	0.196	0.423	<i>0.913</i>	
CE	-0.189	0.168	0.039	0.276	-0.034	-0.279	0.098	<i>0.907</i>

Note: Diagonal elements are square root of AVE

Table X.
Squared correlations
between factors

Measurement path	Hypothesis	Regression estimate	CR	p-value	Result
ASG ← SP	H1	0.356	2.383	0.017	Accepted
ASG ← JAD	H2	-0.231	-1.484	0.138	Rejected
ASG ← CDP	H3	-0.302	-1.870	0.062	Rejected
ASG ← SCP	H4	0.495	2.785	0.005	Accepted
ASG ← TM	H5	0.104	1.781	***	Accepted
EP ← ASG	H6	0.126	1.390	***	Accepted
EP ← SCP	Created	0.111	1.633	0.008	Accepted
EP ← TM	Created	0.068	1.014	***	Accepted
EP ← SP	Created	0.059	0.639	***	Accepted
CE ← EP	H7	0.896	13.034	***	Accepted
CE ← TM	Created	0.069	1.537	0.001	Accepted
CE ← CDP	Created	-0.043	-1.041	0.298	Rejected
CE ← SP	Created	-0.124	-2.002	0.045	Accepted

Notes: Staffing plan, SP; job analysis and job design, JAD; career development plan, CDP; succession plan, SCP; talent management, TM; achieve strategic goal of firm, ASG; effective performance of firm, EP; competitive edge of the firm, CE. Significant at 1 and 5 percent significance levels. ***p-values are 0.000

Table XI.
Path analysis of
structural model

Thus, employees remain motivated and exert more endeavors toward realizing the goal of the firm. Achieving the organizational goal inspires them to deliver superior results. It helps them to plan better and organize their performance levels, which leads them toward prosperity. A pronounced role of effective performance of the firm has been identified in gaining the competitive advantage for the firm. A fruitful performance leads to the need for a continual innovation, making the employees more engaged, bringing more collaboration within teams that ultimately help to stand firm among the turbulent business changes, thereby bringing sustainability to it. Effective performances build an inherent strength in the organization that refines the competitive advantage. It has been prominent in the analysis that staffing plan, succession planning and talent management strategies also have a meaningful impact on the effective performance of the firm. The above-mentioned HRP programs foster the motivational aspect of employees. These activities and plans empower employees to perform better. It provides opportunities to enhance their skills and attitudes, bolster their self-confidence and promote participation, thus helping to contribute toward organizational performance in a worthwhile manner. Talent management activities do have an influence in securing competitive advantage for the firm. On the contrary, staffing plan has a negative impact on the competitive advantage of the organization. Career planning and development shows no significance in attaining the competitive advantage for the firm.

9. Managerial implications

As we are moving toward an era of global business, we are leaving behind the dominated workforce conversation and structured rules. Employees are no more ready to assess themselves as a cog in a wheel. They want to voice their version and they expect their caliber and potency to be utilized efficaciously, which would significantly contribute toward the organizational goal and mission. HRP practices play a significant role in this specific part, which propels the workforce to bring out their best for the organization and helps in aligning their individual goals with that of the organization's intent. This would lead the organization to achieve its strategic goal and stand as a competitive advantage for the firm. A proper staffing plan can fetch competent employees who would contribute to carve the company's future and uphold the desired image of the company in the marketplace. This optimal staffing regime helps in managing the workforce turnover issues beforehand and in reducing conflict. Staffing activities corroborate the supply of required manpower, thereby facilitating the expansion programs of a company. When an organization develops a career path program for its employees and reviews it on an ongoing basis, it improves their morale and satisfies their esteem needs. This also leads them to explore their abilities too. Employees feel driven to advance their career. Most often, it has been observed that employees receive a career advancement plan, undertake potential training sessions and are eager to build their career in some other organization. Sometimes, the career planning programs are stereotypical and lack clarity. Thus, skill enhancement of the employees cannot be done properly, as there is an "unclear expectation." The programs are not even evaluated in terms of its effectiveness on the employees. Such a practice can seldom help to attain the strategic goal of a firm. Eventually, efficacy in their performance cannot be noticed. A lack of structured communication process often makes the career development programs unsuccessful. Employees cannot connect and remain uninvolved, which restrains a firm to achieve the competitive edge. Similarly, job analysis and design require adequate time and acute analysis to post an employee with relevant activities as per his or her qualifications and competencies. Frequently, it has been observed that when employees are assigned jobs on the basis of a proper job analysis, they do not want to involve in any other aspect of the organization that is not correlated with their work. They remain confined with their portion of task and fail to work in teams, which again stand as a barrier in accomplishing organizational goal. Every employee in an organization stands unique and is

equipped with some expertise. Superiors need to explore, develop and nurture those hidden qualities of employees to derive the best results from them. Amidst the ever-growing skills' shortage, technological advancements and evolving dynamics, organization needs to focus on its talents and its valuable resources to succeed in this competitive era. Nowadays, the research and development segment, the creative boutiques and strategic planning bodies are in dire need of talents. In this war for talent, the executives of the company must generate a collaborative approach with an open communication system so that a culture of innovation and productivity can grow. Encouraging free flow of ideas from the employees, having trust and respect for their work, measuring the performance on their outcomes, ensuring a work-life balance culture would help in managing the precious resources and talents of an organization. Such an ambience would assist the professionals to create new value for their customers with ingenious ideas. It would help the planning officers to develop effective policies, invigorate researchers to unfold and advance inventions and augment co-creation to produce a valued outcome. Together with talent management, succession planning practice in corporate houses not only identifies future leaders, but also helps in maintaining brand identity, making the successor understand the company's brand promise. This helps the successor to set the realistic goals for innovation and growth. This practice of systematic deployment of employees helps in obtaining the best potentials from them in fulfilling strategic business goals, refurbishing the business operations and satisfying and retaining the clients amidst the market turbulence. Thus, HRP practices make an organization to invest in employees and to evolve them as valuable assets for the firm, helping to overcome the employees' resistance to change and hence leading to an overall business success and sustainability.

10. Limitations of the study and further scope of research

Although the study reveals a comprehensive picture of the impact of HRP programs, it is still subject to certain constraints. The research is limited to the manufacturing industries in the state of West Bengal with a sample size of 252 only. An expansive survey would have imparted a profound glimpse of the scenario, as the study is restricted to the state of Bengal and the factors identified cannot be generalized for the entire country. The respondents holding key positions in the industry were reluctant in responding to a certain extent, which might have an impact on the research findings. The study has identified five HRP programs that aid in accomplishment of the strategic goal of the firm. A much more detailed exploration may come up with new relevant HRP programs that would reinforce the accomplishment of the strategic intent of the firm. Further studies can be conducted in different states and in different sectors to analyze and bring out the consequences of the HRP programs in reaching the goals of the organization. The researchers can also draw a comparative model between two regions to make the study pervasive.

11. Conclusion

Wendell L. French, an eminent author, has rightly defined HRP as – “the process of assessing the organization's human resources needs in the light of organizational goals and making plans to ensure that a competent, stable workforce is employed.” HRP truly helps the management of the organization with its human resource requirements and assists in utilizing its human resource capacities. An organization, in order to sustain its business and values over time, needs to realize that the nature of the workforce is changing. It is becoming global and diverse. In this competitive playing field, human resource needs to be harnessed to augment its contribution toward ameliorating the qualitative advantage of the firm. HRP, thus, plays a pivotal role in effective utilization of the potential, skills, capacities and abilities of these employees, and paves a path for an efficacious motivational process. HRP programs help in considerable planning for the employees of the organization, in increasing human

capital efficiency, in providing them with an identity and in having a profound impact on the organization's bottom line. HRP not only determines the future human resource needs, but also helps in maximizing the performance of the employees through its various action programs. Apart from determining the qualitative and quantitative gaps in the workforce, undertaking of HRP programs provides a cohesive workplace environment that makes them enthusiastic, productive, high performing, fully engaged and committed. Thus, HRP programs solidify the employees' roles and responsibilities, intensify their relations and empower the organization to reach its strategic goals. HRP practices finally help in maintaining a finely tuned workforce, which eventually provides a sustained competitive advantage for the firm.

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Factors	Q	Statements					
		SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neutral, A = agree, SA = strongly agree	SD	D	N	A	SA
Staffing plan	Q15	Organization analyzes the current manpower inventory and ensures right number of people with right skills to fulfill the company's strategic goals	1	2	3	4	5
	Q8	Organization constantly manages the surplus or shortage of manpower and determines future personnel need for achievement of the goals of the firm	1	2	3	4	5
	Q5	Organization is concerned with development of critical competence skills and attitudes among its employees suited to achieve firm's purpose	1	2	3	4	5
Job analysis and job design	Q16	Job description and specifications are properly laid down, which guides the employer to effectively screen, identify and recruit the best candidates to implement business plans	1	2	3	4	5
	Q21	Job analysis contributes to a proper utilization of human resources, making them productive, accountable and responsible toward achieving firm's intent	1	2	3	4	5
	Q18	Organization arranges and shapes the duties and responsibilities of a job so that employees get a better insight into operations so that target of the tasks assigned can be fulfilled	1	2	3	4	5
Career development plan	Q4	Structured workshops are designed to help employees to match their specific career objectives with that of company's need	1	2	3	4	5
	Q2	Organization provides self-assessment tools, clear competency profiles through which employees can map their progress and can be guided to reach organizational goals	1	2	3	4	5
	Q20	Organization provides vital services and information to employees and designs their career paths to reach their goals that align with organizational objectives	1	2	3	4	5
Succession plan	Q7	Organization constantly identifies the high-potential employees who can collaborate and make strategic decisions and meaningful changes to fulfill organizational plans	1	2	3	4	5
	Q11	Organization provides a systematic effort to develop intellectual capital and leadership qualities for the future among the individuals who are aligned with organizational goals	1	2	3	4	5
	Q19	Organization addresses the difference between average and superior performances of the individuals and creates a roadmap alongside for them, together with mentoring and training assistance	1	2	3	4	5
Talent management	Q6	Employees having the required skill set, competencies and knowledge to do a job are prepared and helped to develop their capabilities, efficiencies and productivity to integrate with the strategic plan	1	2	3	4	5
	Q10	Organization provides employees good promotional prospects, better environment, improves their organizational roles to satisfy their need of self-development so that they can give their best	1	2	3	4	5
	Q13	Organization constantly motivates, encourages and optimizes its talent resources to keep the employees' morale upbeat that would help them to proactively participate to achieve the goal	1	2	3	4	5
Achieve strategic goal of firm	Q1	Achieving the strategic goal of the firm improves the current competence of the employees and eventually increases the firm's performance	1	2	3	4	5

Table AI.
Original scales items

(continued)

Human
resource
planning
programs

Factors	Q	Statements					
		SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neutral, A = agree, SA = strongly agree	SD	D	N	A	SA
Effective performance of firm	Q12	Integration and achievement of individual and organizational goal ensures employee engagement, empowerment and commitment that drive toward dynamic performance	1	2	3	4	5
	Q22	Attaining the goal of the firm helps to manage further challenges and risks, to find new insights and to create value, thereby enhancing the degree of overall performance	1	2	3	4	5
	Q3	Superior performance of the firm leads to quality and efficient outcome with an excellence that refines the competitive edge of the firm	1	2	3	4	5
	Q9	Effective performance of the firm help builds skill, dynamic capabilities and leadership qualities among the employees, making the venture sustainable	1	2	3	4	5
Competitive edge of the firm	Q14	Organization through its different plans and programs tries to achieve a value-creating strategy that upgrades its resources and nurtures the competitive advantage of the firm	1	2	3	4	5
	Q17	Company through its different HRP activities obtains the strength and competencies of its HR resources, who help to render efficient, quality and innovative services to the business to sustain competitive edge	1	2	3	4	5

Table AI.

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