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Education as an Indicator for Human Resource Development

Qaim Raza Jaffry, Ph.D.

Fazalur Rahman, M.Sc., M Ed., M.Phil.

Muhammad Ajmal, Ph.D.

Nabi Bux Jumani, Ph.D.

Abstract

The present research was undertaken to study the contribution of some areas of education system towards the enhancement of human resource development (HRD) in schools/colleges. Four major areas of education system were taken for the research study, which could affect the HRD in the sample region, viz., primary education, secondary education, higher education, IT education and female education.

The data were mainly collected from heads, teachers, and students. In this study 10 heads, 63 teachers and 292 students participated. An *opinionnaire* was developed as an instrument of research which comprised 48 items.

It was found that all of these areas play a significant role in the promotion of HRD. The findings of this study show that both education and HRD are significantly correlated. The results of the present study indicated a strong correlation between; each item of HRD and the selected areas of education system in the research, each item constructed in the instrument with HRD, each area of education with each component of HRD, i.e., knowledge, social development and economic development. The study recommended that IT education and female education should be introduced to make it worthwhile for HRD.

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Qaim Raza Jaffry, Ph.D., Fazalur Rahman, M.Sc., M Ed., M.Phil., Muhammad Ajmal, Ph.D. and Nabi Bux Jumani, Ph.D.

Literature Review

The term 'HRD' was introduced to Miami conference of the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD) by Leonard Nadler held in 1969 and he subsequently provided a definition in 1970. Nadler and Nadler (1990) emphasized that there had been a significant number of people entering the HRD field and, therefore, they deserved to have a definition of the subject. At the same time he maintained that good HRD specialists see an input into most of the operational areas and therefore delimiting the field can also have adverse consequence for the profession.

HRD is a process of increasing the skills, stocks of knowledge and capacities of all human being actually available for economic and social development in the community (UNDP, 2000). The recognition that HRD is fed into most organizational areas was also noted by Galagan (1986) who described it as an omnivorous discipline, incorporating over the years almost any theory or practice that would serve the goal of learning in context of work. Like an amoeba, it has ingested and taken nourishment from whatever it deemed expedient in the social and behavioral sciences, in learning theory and business.

"HRD is the process of recruitment and retention of high quality people, who are best fitted to fulfill the objectives of organization, defining and measuring levels of performance and providing continuous opportunities for training and development" (NIPA, 2002, p. 38).

Hyder (1988, p.38) quoted some definitions of HRD as:

- "HRD is the total of skills, knowledge and capacities of all human beings actually or potentially available for economic and social development in a community." (UNDP)
- "HRD is defined as, "the total skills of population in relation to countries' development." (UNESCO)
- "The term HRD encompasses a broader field than mere skills acquisition or even training in general. It is based on an acknowledgement of the needs of the people to utilize the capacity to the full in the pursuit of gainful employment as well as job and personal satisfaction." (ILO)

HRD can be problematic particularly if an international perspective is taken because its interpretation and roles tend to vary from one country to another. There was a strong insistence that HRD does not equal training. If HRD is about learning and that learning is something, which occurs within an individual to cause development then the East, with its grace and wisdom, calls this flux "a becoming and an unfolding", the West, with its systems and structures, names it "HRD".

In fact, HRD is both an area of professional practice and an emerging interdisciplinary body of knowledge. The inter-relatedness of these two aspects makes HRD similar to the most other applied professions, most of which have emerged to meet some important social or organization

need. As the practice is established, the need arises to honor the knowledge gained in practice into some logical structure. Such activity helps legitimize the profession and increases the reliability of practice.

Frank (1998) investigated the theoretical base of HRD in order to distinguish it from other fields and identified three assumptions on which it is based:

- HRD is based on the research and theories drawn from the field of adult education and is different from the learning that occurs in children. Learning is based on creating the appropriate circumstances, in which adults can learn and thereby change behavior.
- HRD is concerned with improved performance within the work environment; it is not concerned with improving people's health or their personal relations with their family.
- HRD utilizes the theories of change and how these relate to the organization. Change affects individuals, groups and the organization where as HRD is predominantly concerned with the change of individuals.

There would thus appear to be a professional need to define the territory of HRD no matter how limited it may be, in order that those involved with it either as deliverers or receivers can have a reasonable understanding of what it encompasses. Some of the definitions of HRD as found in the related literature are given below:

Nadler (1990) says that HRD is an organized learning experience in a definite time period to increase the possibility of improving job performance. On the other hand, Chalofsky (1992) says that HRD is the study and practice, of increasing learning capacity of individuals, groups, and organizations through the development and application of learning based interventions for the purpose of optimizing human and organizational growth and effectiveness.

McLagan and Suhadolnik (1989) described that HRD is an integrated use of training and development, career development, and organization development to improve individual and organizational effectiveness. Watkins (1989) cited that HRD is the field of study and practice, responsible for the fostering of a long-term work related learning capacity at the level of individual, group, and organizations. Further Stewart and McGoldrick (1996) described that HRD encompasses activities and processes, which have an impact on organizational and individual learning.

All the above definitions would appear to have been developed from a theoretical perspective. Human development is a development of the people, for the people and by the people. The development of the people means investing in hand capability whether in education or health or skill so that they can work productively and creatively. Development for the people means ensuring that the economic growth they generate is distributed widely and fairly.

The UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) has emerged as universally recognized yardstick for measuring the social progress of nation. The HDI has three indicators namely, life expectancy representing health, educational attainment representing knowledge and real GDP representing standard of living. It was further maintained that education is a nucleus to the HR. It may lead to the high productivity because the literate population can adopt modern techniques of production and highly educated population can lead to technological development. Education is a very vital plank for HRD as being repeatedly enunciated more as a platitude rather than as an accepted, practical philosophy. Education as investment particularly in the HR has been recognized recently.

Such a recognition raises various assumptions, planning dilemmas and urges the need for a clear cut analysis of various factors of educational planning for development of HR and chartering of well thought out strategies.

Education was viewed as an expensive social service rather than a means for socio economic development of a country. But, since the advent of industrial revolution and in the wake of scientific and technological era, this has died its own death. Today, when scientific knowledge and technological advancement have plunged into exploring the new horizons of the space, schooling is viewed as a special investment in HRD. It is the HR whose physical and mental capacity can alone change the socio economic and politico cultural structure of society and can contribute to an improved living of the people. HDI is based on the equal weight age of three factors:

- Purchasing power parity adjusted per capita GDP
- Literacy
- Life expectancy.

Education and training are at the center of planning for HR. The role of professional trainer as leader facilitator supported by the manager as deliverer of training is crucial to enable up-to-date experience to be passed on and for the line functions ownership of trainee to be assured. Finally, the importance of doing rather than knowing and of learning rather than teaching and the emphasis on competence based training is central to the planning of effective HR.

Role of Education in Economic Development

In the study of the relationship between education system and HRD, the role of education in economic development is highly significant and these both indicators of the economy are inter dependent. In the less developed countries including Pakistan, the expenditure on the expansion of education is quite small as compared to the other sectors of the economy. The positive relationship between education and economic development is now widely recognized.

In fact, the education and training are regarded as strategic variables in planning for economic development. The contribution of education to economic growth takes various forms and may be different from defense stages in the evaluation of the countries' economies.

Quantitatively speaking, an elementary education for the mass of the people in a society leads to great economic gains. People can learn through the written words and transmit as well as record their ideas more exactly. It enables them to keep accounts and assess the profitability of their business activities and alternatives ways of allocating their resources.

A literate population can be made to cooperate for beneficial economic activities more easily than an illiterate one. They can be thus more effectively under a plan as well as independently in the pursuits of their self-interest. The result is that an increase in expenditure of education sector produces very high returns.

- A sharp view in quality of education produces economic returns even when it is not possible to specify what skills and attributes would be created or precisely how they would be used. Thus a liberal education, which sharpens the intellect and broadens human sympathies, may be as productive as more narrowly specialized form of skill imparted through scientific and technological training. This points towards the danger of neglected human discipline and unduly diverting resources towards instructions in scientific and technological fields. Considering some of the middle income countries, their literacy rates will be relatively high and so will be per capita income, e.g., Malaysia and Brazil have literacy rates of 78 percent and 81 percent with per capita incomes of 2520 and 2940 dollars, respectively. The high-income countries such as, United State and Japan, have literacy rates above 95 percent with per capita income of 22240 and 26930 dollars respectively. Thus a high literacy leads to a high per capita income and the role of education in economic development becomes very significant (Saeed, 1999, p.243).

Major Issues in HRD Planning

Human Resource Planning (HRP) has been explained in a variety of ways:

HRP translates the organization's objectives into terms of the workers needed to meet these objectives.

- HRP systematically forecasts an organization's future demand for, and supply of employees.
- HRP is a little like navigation a ship (it) decides on a course and speeds toward destination, with the constant need to take further readings and make necessary adjustments in order to reach that destination.

All the above explanations contain similar features – a strategic, long-term approach; a comprehensive staffing plan, covering all HR activities from recruitment through training, development and career management, to the separation of employees by retirement and retrenchment; and a close relationship with organizational strategies and objectives.

It implies that human resource planning is a dynamic process, involving the need for frequent modifications or changes of direction, in response to changing economic, political, social and organization conditions.

Some writers have further suggested that HR plans include both ‘intended’ and ‘unintended’ aspects, and that the process involves a blend of science and art. Its overall purpose is to ensure the effective management of human resources by providing the required quantity and quality of employees where and when necessary.

HRP in practice integrates an organization’s major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole. Towards this goal, HRP needs to undertake a systematic process of analyzing organizational strategies and goals; conducting both external and internal environmental analyses (environmental scanning); and subsequently, making a ‘strategic choice’ about the nature of HRM processes appropriate to identified organizational outcomes.

Essentially, human resource planning is concerned with matching labour demand and labour supply projections within the internal and external contexts of organizations. Increasingly, human resource planners, rather than devising their plans in isolation, are involving organizational managers, employees, customers and suppliers in the formulation of their HR plans.

Practices in Pakistan

The importance of planning of HRD and its effective utilization within the overall economic development process is well recognized. But the actual practices in Pakistan, suffer from a number of weaknesses.

Pakistan has been undertaking manpower planning and research since long focusing largely on estimation of demands and supplies of different categories of manpower. The results of manpower planning and research exercises have been used for providing indications to the educational planners and administrators for determining appropriate educational program in the country.

In the past, inconsistency existed between the manpower developmental program and structure of economy. The manpower plans were not integrated properly into the economic plans. Therefore, serious problems and frustrations have arisen from the mismatch between education and employment opportunities. There are wide spread policies and program in respect of HRD and utilization in the country.

These developments have brought to the forefront need for comprehensive policies and program for HRP to ensure efficiency in HRD and utilization. Therefore, it is high time that issues in the area of HRDP got a pragmatic treatment.

A Two-Stage Exercise

Planning for HRD is generally viewed as a two-stage exercise, which is in vogue in Pakistan since long.

In the first stage, the focus is on employment issues, which is to analyze the scope for increasing employment opportunities through appropriate policy adjustments and detailed analysis of factors, which retard employment growth. An attempt is made to answer the question regarding sector-wise prospective employment generation and its growth during a particular time period.

In the second stage, there is manpower planning in which an exercise is carried out, which pertains to skill identification and its composition to make projections of incremental employment by different types of skilled labour. This is done mainly for those sectors of the economy where physical targets can possibly be estimated with some degree of confidence. This is then matched with the expected increase in the supply of skills to identify imbalances, and to suggest measures to reduce the imbalances.

Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of the study were:

1. To study the present day contribution of various areas of education towards the three components of HRD, namely knowledge, social development, and economic development.
2. To explore the level of significance of difference of variables namely gender, age, sector of service and qualification for the contribution of various areas of education towards the enhancement of HRD.

Research Method

The study based on public opinion survey.

Sample of Study

The sample consisted of 10 head teachers, 63 teachers and 292 students as indicated in table below:

Stratum	Sex	
	Male	Female
Heads (N=10)	4	6

Teachers (N=63)	29	34
Students (N=292)	134	158

Instrument

A self constructed *opinionnaire* was used as an instrument of the research, which was designed in the light of the objectives of the study. It based on five points Likert scale. In this research study, 16 areas of the education system were selected to study their contribution towards HRD as already discussed in chapter one.

Three items were developed from each area of education system, focusing on the components of knowledge, social development and economic development respectively, which were the main components of the definition of HRD in the research.

In this way, 48 items (16 areas multiplied by 3 components of HRD) were prepared in the light of the objectives and hypotheses; each item was required to be responded on self-designed five points rating scale with categories reflecting the extent of agreement or disagreement with each statement. There were five options (rating scale) for all the items. The rating scales were categorized as, strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree.

Data Analysis

Non parametric statistical technique was used to analyze the data. Reliability and the validity were calculated. The statistical averages and inter-correlation were calculated between the four variables taken for the study. For observing the frequency differences between the variables and each item, the Chi-square statistical analysis was carried out. This test is used to estimate the likelihood that some factors/variables other than chance account for the observed relationship.

The Chi-square test for independence is used in situations where two categorical variables exist. In this test, the expected frequencies and observed frequencies are used for evaluating Chi-square.

The Chi-square test is appropriate when the data represent a nominal scale, and the categories may be true categories. Expected frequencies are usually the frequencies, which would be expected if the groups were equal. The Chi- square test merely evaluates the probability of observed relationship results from chance with estimated relationship. Chi-square test showed the significance level of the opinion differences between the variables and each area of education system taken for the research study.

Consistency of the instrument was determined through computation of Alpha coefficient. Alpha coefficient was calculated for all components of HRD, i.e., knowledge, social development and economic development, calculated through computer using the following formula, which is shown in Table 2:

Table 2 Reliability of HRD and Its Components

HRD and its components	No of Items	Alpha Coefficient
HRD	48	0.96
Knowledge	16	0.91
Social Development	16	0.89
Economic Development	16	0.87

Reliability and validity were determined by pilot testing on a sample of 145 (not included in the main study). The items, which showed too low correlation, i-e., $r < 0.357$ and $p > .05$, were dropped.

Table 3 Correlation among areas of Education and Components of HRD

Areas of Education	Components of HRD		
	Knowledge	Social Development	Economic Development
Primary Education	.592**	.595**	.574**
Higher Education	.794**	.782**	.758**
IT Education	.709**	.710**	.717**
Female Education	.690**	.696**	.633**

**Correlation is significant at 0.05 level.

The table revealed a significant correlation among different areas of education and components of HRD.

Table 4 Chi-Squares and p-Values among Component of HRD and Area of Education

Areas	Component of HRD		
	Knowledge	Social Development	Economic Development
	Chi-Square	Chi-Square	Chi-Square
Primary Education	8.70 (p<.07)	6.51 (ns)	6.05(ns)
Higher Education	21.07 (p<.00)	9.89 (p<.04)	2.95 (ns)
IT Education	4.92(ns)	5.09 (ns)	6.12 (ns)
Female Education	1.83(ns)	3.60 (ns)	6.74 (ns)

Table 4 shows that primary Education and higher Education correlated with knowledge component of HRD while IT education has impact on social development.

Table 5 Problems identified by the respondents (N=256)

Problems	Frequency	Percentage
outdated curriculum	209	82

Poor HRM and HRP	205	80
Inadequate teacher training	203	79
social taboos	188	73
illiteracy	176	69
Lack of infrastructure	172	67
Defective examination system	170	66
Medium of instruction	161	59
political interference	158	62
Lack of IT facilities	138	54
High dropout rate	112	44

Table 5 shows majority of the respondents were of the view that outdated curriculum, poor HRM and HRP, inadequate teacher training, social taboos, illiteracy, lack of infrastructure, defective examination system, political interference, lack of IT facilities and high dropout rate were the major problems.

Conclusion/Recommendations

The findings of this study show that both education and HRD are significantly correlated. The findings of this research help in the overall study of the education system towards the positively changed human behaviour. The findings provide a basis for decision-making and policy formulating in the organizational environment of education system in order to enhance its production – HR. It supports to improve education materials and programs so as to speed up the process of HRD through accelerating knowledge, social development, and economic development in Pakistan.

The results of the present study indicated a strong correlation between; each item of HRD and the selected areas of education system in the research, each item constructed in the instrument with HRD, each area of education with each component of HRD, i.e., knowledge, social development and economic development.

The following specific conclusions may be drawn based on the descriptive and inferential analysis of the data and the findings of the study:

1. Areas of primary and secondary education are enhancing the components of knowledge and social development of HRD.
2. Female education shows a favorable trend in the components of social development and economic development of HRD.
3. Higher education promotes knowledge of HRD.
4. IT education is giving rise to economic development of HRD.

The study recommends that:

1. As the area of IT education contributes positively towards economic development, therefore IT education should be introduced to make it worthwhile for HRD.
2. The area of female education contributes positively in the components of social development and economic development, it is, therefore recommended that the area of female education may be improved in the light of the current changes taking place globally.

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Qaim Raza Jaffry, Ph.D.
Visiting Faculty
Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad
Islamabad, Pakistan

Fazalur Rahman, M.Sc., M Ed., M.Phil.
Department of Early Childhood & Elementary Teacher Education
Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad
Islamabad, Pakistan
fazalaiou@yahoo.com

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Qaim Raza Jaffry, Ph.D., Fazalur Rahman, M.Sc., M Ed., M.Phil., Muhammad Ajmal, Ph.D. and Nabi Bux Jumani, Ph.D.

Muhammad Ajmal, Ph.D.
Department of Distance and Nonformal Education
Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad
Islamabad, Pakistan
drajmal@aiou.edu.pk

Nabi Bux Jumani, Ph.D.
International Islamic University Islamabad
Islamabad, Pakistan
nbjumani@yahoo.com