Changing Skills of Human Resource Professionals and Challenges in Employee Retention in the Age of Great Resignations: An Analysis of Trends and Factors

¹Dr. Deepthi Kuppuswamy

¹Assistant Professor, Avanthi Degree and PG College, Dilshuknagar, Hyderabad.

Abstract

In these times of Great Resignations, the skill sets of the Human Resource (HR) professionals are undergoing a paradigm shift to ensure the right employee retention. It is also the time that the skillsets of the HR professionals are being tested in the organization's success rate in employee retention. There are many emerging trends in the HR practice that are redefining the HR profession in the post-pandemic era that is replete with the sagas of employee low morale and work from home related issues. It has become vital for the organizations and the HR professionals to have a serious rethink over the professional skillsets and to fully understand the new trends that are ushering in sweeping changes at all levels. It is has also become critical for the HR to understand the factors, causes and consequences that are heralding some unprecedented changes in the field of human resource management. This paper strives to present the research-based findings related to the changing domain nature of the HR with a special focus on the emerging trends in the field.

Keywords: Human Resources, skillsets, trends in HR, Great Resignation, retention.

INTRODUCTION

The times in business and workplaces have become more volatile than ever. It has also become increasingly unpredictable about the organization's success and it has brought in greater and significant role for the HR to assume in these of volatility and unpredictability.

It is being touted that HR has to assume a critical role and it has become crucial in the functioning and organizations' success more than ever in the history. There are many challenges like the spiraling inflation all over the world threatening to break the economies in many cases, while there are persistent challenges in different areas in the post-pandemic era that has brought in unprecedented changes in the way the employees work and the way the functioning of the organizations deals with new situations. There are all-round disruptions in the supply chain and thus resulting in the talent shortage at all levels to cope with the technology-based new work environs.

Table 1: *The 6 issues driving HR technology issues*

		In Percentage
1	Find, attract, retain talent	58%
2	Developing employees full potential	43%
3	Improving the employee experience	42%
4	Creating collaborative work environments	40%
5	Workforce planning	38%
6	Ensuring well being, diversity and inclusion	34%

All these conditions are thrusting the driving force role upon the HR wing thus making the life

more challenging and more exploring for the HR professionals, who are in the urgent need of rethinking of new strategies and challenges about their professional functioning.

The research questions: Is the HR facing some real challenge, the way it functions. Another vital research question is that how to decipher the challenge of changing HR trends to have sustained and successful functioning of the HR as a central role in the organizational functioning.
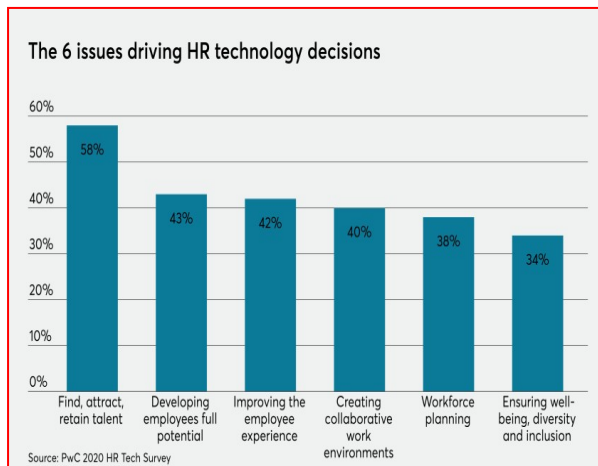
The major development in the organizational function all of the globe is that the HR has further strengthened its strategic and crucial position in the decision-making function of the organizations and it is construed and believe that it was vital for the businesses to survive and stay afloat in the pandemic induced challenging times.

Further it is also envisaged that there needs to be emphasis on expanding the activity of the HR to enable the C-Suite players to handle the new, emerging, and challenges of complex in nature. This effectively means, the HR needs to foray into new areas of business.

In view of the fast changing dynamics in the field of business at the global level and the organizational practices, it is animated for the HR wing to push the envelope to usher in greater positive values that are expected to bring in desired changes as the fast changing business conditions and challenges necessitate them.

It must be understood that that change is not only sudden and sweeping, but also continuous resulting in unforeseen changes in the field of business and the practice of the HR. However, the abrupt shifting towards the remote working

or work from home conditions, coupled with the successive lockdowns and COVID-induced disruptions in the work and life, sudden focus on health concerns and marching towards the stated Great Reopening after a serious bout of Great Resignations and the serious shortage of right talent, the focus is on the changing trends of the HR profession and practice to deal with these unforeseen challenges.

There is also all-round realization about being one step ahead to deal with the changes and cope with the shift in working conditions thus redefining the conditions for the HR.

The HR focus is increasingly getting towards the best employee retention amidst the conditions like economic activities disruption, business disruption, physical interaction disruption, unprecedented quits from the organizations and the morale concerning issues of the employees.

There is a major shift on the way, how we work and the focus is more on redefining and redesigning the workplaces and digital work mode and the relationship with the work is also undergoing a major change and the changing landscape of the workplaces, while creation of digital workplaces is witnessing a major spurt.

All these challenges like the great resignations, digital workplaces, changing dynamics of employee with the organization, supply chain disruptions, redefining of the work-life balances and morale issues coupled with the organizational loyalty questions are very critical in the entire newly emerging scenario. And no wonder, all these changing dynamics pose a serious challenge and pressure on the HR wings of the organizations.

Need for innovation to cope with the changing trends:

These fasting changing dynamics and the emerging trends necessitated the innovation in the approach of the HR and its leadership to come up with the innovative solutions to deal with the situations for the organizational functioning and sustainability. It has become clear that the solutions like one-size- fits for all are no longer valid in this rapid changing HR eco-system to contribute for the wellbeing of the organization. It is like venturing into the unknown horizons and the uncharted waters and

there is a special emphasis to understand some key trends in the domain of the HR and deciphering the vital changes in the domain that redefine the future of the HR is critical to the professionals and the organizations.

Table 2: *Challenges ahead*

When asked, HR Leaders say these are among the top hurdles facing their organizations		In Percentage
1	Hiring and retention	60%
2	Employee engagement for remote workers	18%
3	Compliance management	16%
4	Improving the employee experience	13%
5	Boosting Company Culture	12%
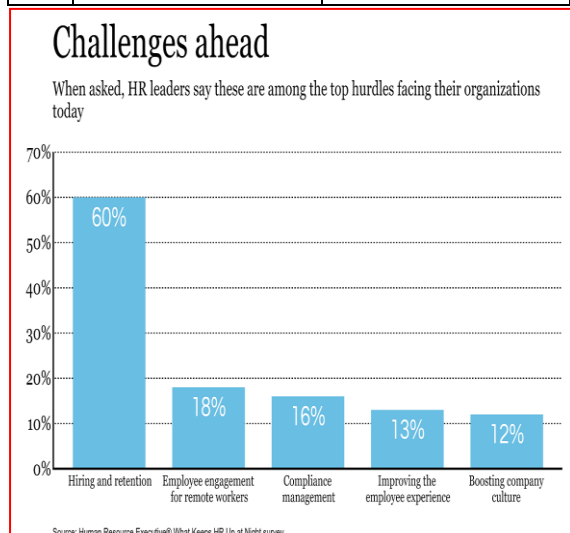
It is argued that HR need to cater to the organizations from a critical perspective of thoughtful about the field in terms of the products instead of the projects so as to create more value and greater business impact with this kind of paradigm shift in the outlook of the

professional in terms of its functioning with the organization.

The pandemic has necessitated the organizations to go for the remote work and work from home thus resulting in a definite disconnect between the office and the employee. There is a focus and emphasis on flexibility and it is a new challenge and necessity for the HR to ensure the effective collaboration among different teams in the organization to meet the end result and in consonance with the organizational goals.

Table 3: *Workplace factors that matter*

What employees say they care about most from their employer		In Percentage
1	Culture and values	24%
2	Senior Leadership	22%
3	Career Opportuities	20%
4	Business Outlook	15%
5	Work-life Balance	13%
6	Compensation and Benefits	12%

There must be a deeper understanding of the staff and their characteristics and actually what they require from the organization and this calls for the application of techniques and strategies from the design thinking and its principles that call for human-centred outcomes and solutions that result in the personal touch with the engaging kind of experience and for this anlaysing and acting upon the feedback of the employees is at the crux of the strategy.
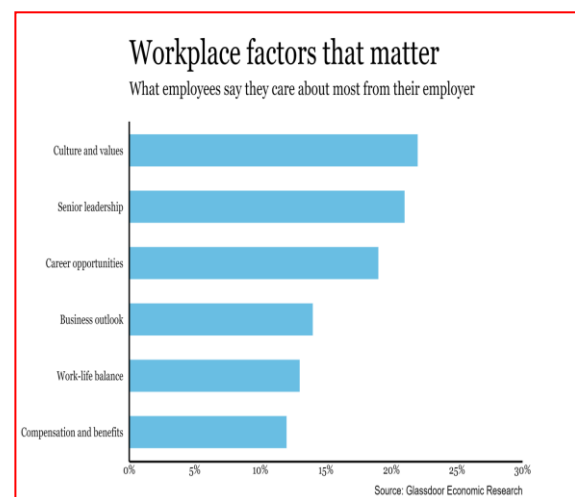
Serious respect and concrete measures on the feedback of the employees is expected to result in solid outcomes in the expected manner, as the studies pointed out.

Constant expansion of the talent pool is turning out to be critical in the ever changing employee-driven market in new post-Covid conditions. While focusing on hiring from the outer market, the HR needs to focus and sharpen the talent pool available within the organization that they have already hired.

Another major trend is to give greater importance to the career-advancement of the employees so as to make them positive and optimistic about their potential prospects in the organizational and this helps them relate with the organizational goals. It is also vital that they need to be enabled to have better career experiences and these needs to be given as one of the top priority task by the HR wing in the organization.

Driving innovation and transformation is also another core task of the HR in the organizational functioning. The employees must be made to feel like the enablers of the organization and they need to be encouraged to scale up their performance and innovate and learn thus they would galvanize the functioning of the organization, to drive the transformation at all levels needs to be taken as a priority task.

It is also important to make the organization future-ready with the right set of motivation, and make them agile and dynamic for an altogether challenging situation and for this HR constantly needs to be monitoring the changes and the organization's pulse and its future-preparedness in fast changing work and economic conditions.

Digital push is required to be give priority in the organizational set up as the organizatons are likely to work in digital mode in future and with the constant threat of lockdowns and disruptions in all activities of life. It is pointed that in developed countries like the USA, around 30 per cent of the workforce prefer to work from home in the post-pandemic era too and this underscores the need for greater collaborative effort in the digital environs.

The HR must ensure that different wings of the organization emerge as the digital-savvy and cope with the challenges, while expanding their services in the digital domain too. If the employees feel out of place to work in the digital world and digital enabled work environment, it is should be taken as a priority to make them learn and impart the necessary skillsets to enable them to be relevant in the digital work environments. There must be a push from the employers to respond to the needs and expectations of the employees so as to feel belongingness to the organization and thus winning their unquestionable loyalty towards the organization.

There should be a sustained focus on the People Analytics as there is a great potential to understand the conditions and workout new strategies as the people analytic has a huge potential to make solid impact on HR policies and strategies ultimately leading better results and profits to the organization.

There is a palpable shift in the expectations and relationship of the employees towards their organization in the post-pandemic era work culture, this calls for the better value propositioning for the employees on the part of the organization so as to ensure their better morale and to aver the possible disengagement with the organization. In other words, this is to rightly highlight the impactful and acceptable rewards to the staff in these changing times. In a way, the employee-centric rewards are vital to win them over and make them equal partners in achieving the common goals of the organization.

HR Staff Ratios by Org Size & Performance
(All Industry Sectors, All Geo Structures)

Organization Size	HR FTEs per 100 Employees	
	High Performers	Low Performers
1-99	6.13 (1 for every 16.3 ees)	4.36 (1 for every 22.9 ees)
100-999	1.89 (1 for every 53.0 ees)	1.66 (1 for every 60.2 ees)
1,000-9,999	1.36 (1 for every 73.3 ees)	1.19 (1 for every 84.0 ees)
10,000-49,999	0.98 (1 for every 101.8 ees)	1.00 (1 for every 99.6 ees)
50,000 or more	0.72 (1 for every 138.9 ees)	0.98 (1 for every 102.4 ees)

There is also a major shift in the thinking that the organizations must be prepared in advance along with the employees for multitudes of future prospects and for this it is of prime importance

to map the skillsets of the internal staff and commensurate their performance in a suitable way.

Through all these measures and coupled with the organization-specific solutions will enable the HR to maintain a healthy and more than healthy employee retention ration in these times of great resignations with the all-pervasive disruptions looming large to shatter the organizational health.

Conclusion:

Though the Great Resignation was a phenomenon occurred prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pandemic has definitely intensified the voluntary quitting of jobs thus resulting in an agglomerated condition of the Great Resignation. In these challenging, employee retention has become key and talent pool retention and winning their loyalty, while combining the goal of ensuring their belongingness to the organization have become major challenges to the HR professionals and wings. This paper concludes that better grasp of the changing trends in the domain of the HR are vital to come up with the innovating solutions in the fast changing workplaces and the kind of conditions to work in digital workplaces. Some of the key trends were discussed to give a lucid idea about the changing field of HR to come up with better employee retention strategies.

References

[1] Allen, D. G., Van Scotter, J. R., &Otondo, R. F. (2004). Recruitment communication media: Impact on prehire outcomes. Personal Psychology, 57(1), 143–171.

[2] Baron, J. N., & Kreps, D. M. (1999). Strategic human resources: Frameworks for general managers. New York, NY: Wiley.

[3] Biswas, S., &Bhatnagar, J. (2013). Mediator analysis of employee engagement: Role of perceived organizational support, P-O fit, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers, 38(1), 27–40.

[4] Guest, D. E. (1997). Human resource management and performance: A review and research agMaurer, S. D., & Liu, Y. (2007). Developing effective e-recruiting Websites: Insights for managers from marketers. Business Horizons, 50(4), 305–314. doi:10.1016/j.bushor.2007.01.002enda. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 8(3), 263–276.

[5] Orlitzky, M. (2007). Recruitment strategy. In P. Boxall, J. Purcell, & P. Wright (Eds.), The Oxford handbook of human resource management. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

[6] https://www.aihr.com/resources/AIHR_HR_Trends_Report_2022.pdf

[7] https://thepeoplemanagement.com/hr-trends-in-2022-aparna-sharma-consulting-editor-the-people-management/