

Humanity and Talent Management: A Case Study on Healthcare Industry

Thejasvi Sheshadri,

Research Scholar,
CMR University,
Bangalore, India.

Dr. Aranganathan,

Associate Professor
School of Economics & Commerce
CMR University, Bangalore, India.

ABSTRACT

The healthcare sector is one of the few sections of the economy where business objectives and humane concerns are often at odds with one another. Along with compassion towards the patients, healthcare organisations should consider handling their talented employee base with due consideration to humanistic aspects, such as personal welfare and empowerment, work-life balance, etc. As healthcare professionals work under unmanageable workload and suffer from stress and fatigue, it is indeed fair to consider their situation from a humane perspective rather than from a productivity point of view. Humanistic talent management entails managing organisational talent by striking a balance between productivity and welfare, with emphasis on the dignity of human beings. As the healthcare sector grapples with human resource related issues, such as shortage of experts, employee turnover and lack of commitment, it is necessary to explore whether giving importance to humanity in talent management can help in boosting employee commitment and talent retention rates, which will subsequently benefit the performance of the organisations significantly. In the above context, the present study will present a comprehensive review of the research conducted so far on managing organisational talent, with a humane touch, especially in the healthcare industry. Research literature for the present study were obtained from different academic databases, such as JSTOR, Proquest, Google Scholar, Proquest, Scopus, etc. The papers were reviewed in detail and inferences were drawn regarding how talent management strategies can be devised to be more humane and how that can help in the retention of talented employees.

Keywords: Talent management, humanity, employee retention, commitment, productivity, employee welfare, workload.

INTRODUCTION:

Managing organisational talent in a comprehensive manner and using that as a means of retaining the skilled employee base has emerged as the new way of managing human resources (d'Ettorre and Greco, 2015). It is different from the hitherto employed human resource management in the sense that it considers employees from a welfare perspective, i.e., rather than considering them as resources, which can be “utilised” to obtain returns. Talent management aims to improve employee quality, help them grow in their career, improve their wellbeing, all of which will ultimately add value to the organisation, apart from having a positive impact on the performance and finances (Gajda, 2018). That way, talent management is more of an “employee oriented” approach compared to human resource management. One of the primary goals of talent management is improving the employee retention rate of organisations, i.e., reducing employee turnover and achieving a stable employee base (Clarkson, 2014).

Employee retention refers up to what extent an employer is able to avoid employees from quitting the organisation and it is indicated as the percentage of long-standing employees of an organisation out of the total number of employees (Turner, 2018). The higher the percentage, higher will be the number of employees who

willingly stay employed with an organisation and this has positive implications on the functional and financial performance of an organisation (Ulrich ad Dulebohn, 2015). Higher retention rates imply less time, efforts and money spent on scouting, on-boarding and training new employees and continuity of workflow. Thus, organisations consider retention as one of the most important aspects of managing their workforce, rather their talented employee base (Sullivan, 2014). This is where the principles of talent management converge with that of employee retention. While conventional human resource management practices attempt to get maximum returns from an employee, talent management practices aim at empowering the skilled employees, improving their productivity and job satisfaction, making them develop a sense of belonging and commitment towards their employer, and ultimately encouraging them “not” to quit the organisation (Beheshtifar and Ziaadini, 2012). Healthcare organisations across the globe are plagued by the issue of the shortage of expert personnel, owing to a variety of reasons, such as unavailability of skilled candidates, employee-migration due to the availability of better opportunities, inability of organisations to provide adequate facilities and lack of organisational commitment among the employees (Turner, 2018). As a result, there is a very strong competition in the global healthcare job market to attract, employ and retain talented employees (McDonnell et al., 2017). In this context, more and more healthcare organisations are on the lookout for better ways of managing their talent base, so as to encourage the skilled employees to stay with the organisation for a longer time (Montgomery and Oladapo, 2014). Providing opportunities for career development and helping them upgrade their skills are the most common talent management strategies used by organisations across different sectors worldwide and the same holds good for the healthcare industry.

In spite of the higher impetus provided to talent management and employee retention, the issue of the shortage of talented employees continues to haunt healthcare organisations, especially the large scale multi-speciality hospitals (Chin et al., 2017). Therefore, one begins to wonder whether the talent management practices in vogue lack something important, which has rendered them incapable of impacting the employees to the fullest. One of the primary reasons why healthcare professionals quit jobs is the work-related stress they are exposed to (d’Ettorre and Greco, 2015), as a result of the tremendous workloads they shoulder. Irrespective of the kind of facilities, amenities and training provided by the employers, the healthcare professionals burnout at a comparatively faster rate owing to occupational stress (Ingram and Glod, 2016; Khamisa et al., 2015). This is where the humanistic talent management perspective comes into the picture as they work in a very different situation, which calls for a taking talent management decision from a human dignity and welfare point of view. With this backdrop, the present paper explores the scope of bringing in a human welfare perspective to the talent management strategies of the healthcare Industry.

In order to fine tune the scope of the study, the following objectives were framed.

1. To understand the necessity for bringing in a humanistic perspective to the talent management strategies of healthcare organisations.
2. To evaluate the means through which a humane point of view could be incorporated into talent management.
3. To study the benefits and challenges of humanistic talent management.

A variety of research studies pertaining to a variety of aspects, such as organisational justice, human dignity, new ways of working, human capital management, etc. were referred to and reviewed to achieve the objectives.

NEED FOR A HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVE TO TALENT MANAGEMENT:

Any discussion on talent management strategies is invariably linked with the organisational goal of employee retention as they both deal with the handling of human capital and involve social negotiations between the employees and the employers (Ehnert, 2012). The talent management strategies of healthcare organisations are unique in the sense that they need to balance the objectives of the organisation and welfare of the healthcare professionals (Antony and Balu, 2018). Further, as the healthcare job market is highly competitive with organisations vying for the best talent (Searcey et al., 2015), it is becoming more and more obvious that organisations have no choice but implement the best strategies to attract, reward, retain and harness the best talent in the market.

Mapping the growth of the human resource management discourse, Wright and McMahan (2011) observed that with the emergence of a globalised technology based economy, business houses worldwide, realised the importance of considering their employees as their assets, or capital, which by definition yields returns. As a result, employers began attaching higher value for the recruitment of the right employees, training them well and harnessing their abilities for the benefit of the organisation (Marchington, 2015). However, this approach was problematic, according to (Becker, 2008) as it looked at the entire matter from a business and a profit perspective with minimal regard to employee welfare. This called for a revamp of recruitment, training and other employee

oriented policies from a holistic perspective, which gave rise to the concept of talent management where the long term value that an employee adds to the organisation is emphasised over the returns they generate as such (Clarkson, 2014). Therefore, talent management could be understood as a humanistic way of managing the employees and therefore it is easier to bring in a human perspective into those strategies.

Concurring with the above opinion, (Turner, 2018), in a study on the talent retention in the healthcare industry finds the need to see talent management as the coming together of the concepts of human capital, social relationships and labour market dynamics. This implies that healthcare talent management is a mix of human, social and economic considerations. Further, Plint (2016) highlights the inherent human nature of the healthcare sector through his study of the career related perceptions of dietetic health professionals in the USA, wherein it was found that the health care providers preferred humane job outcomes, such as serving the patients better, doing one's job well and being appreciated as experts, over remuneration and career growth. Therefore, it can be conveniently assumed that the healthcare industry by design is humanity oriented, therefore it is only fair to expect that the employees are treated with due consideration to human dignity (Lucas, 2015).

Traditionally, effectiveness of healthcare organisations has been seen from a purely management/ owner perspective, wherein financial performance and satisfaction of the patient are considered paramount (Naiker et al., 2018). However, there is a need to consider the concerns and wellbeing of the employees as well. In a study by Cleveland (2015) on respect for humanity at the workplace, it was observed that a humanistic talent management approach should balance the needs and preferences of the employees and the performance of the organisation. Similar views on the treatment of employees have been expressed by Wright and McMahan (2011), who argued that humanistic perspective can be brought into the talent management mechanism by adopting an ecological approach, wherein all the aspects of human development are considered.

In a unique study by Law et al (2011), it was observed that organisations can make their workplaces sensitive towards employees by respecting diverse opinions, identities, health and safety of their employees, which is one of the ways of 'humanising' the workplace. Further, Tripp and Bies (2010) found that organisations which do not consider the needs and opinions of employees seriously and do not treat them in a humane manner will suffer law suites and associated losses. In this context, it is all the more necessary on the part of organisations to incorporate humanistic concerns into their employee policies if they want to ensure a smooth workflow and better results (Boudreau and Ziskin, 2011).

METHODS AND IMPLICATIONS OF HUMANISTIC TALENT MANAGEMENT:

Healthcare is in itself a very unique, yet complicated discipline, considering the fact that it basically originated in order to serve the mankind (Ingram and Glod, 2016). However, with the passage of time, the healthcare industry has evolved into one of the dominant sectors of the global economy and has been providing employment opportunities to a good number of professionals (Montgomery and Oladapo, 2014). As the healthcare professionals are required to deal with their job roles from both a humanistic and medical standpoint, most of them burnout really fast (Khamisa et al., 2015). During those circumstances, considering their situation using human values of empathy, compassion and sensitivity benefits organisations in a multitude of ways.

There are different means through which humanistic talent management can be brought into effect in healthcare organisations. Yaya et al (2018), in their study brought out the different ways of being humane while managing the talent. According to the authors, organisations should keep track of the skills and expertise of individual employees and should take measures to harness those skills effectively, which will bring in a sense of importance and confidence among employees and fulfils one of the human needs, i.e., the need to feel a sense of self-worth. Similarly, Pirson (2015) in their study of humanistic ways of managing an organisation opine that organisations should shift their focus from quantitative aspects of business to normative and ethical aspects and all their employment policies should aim at upholding the dignity of human beings. Concurring with these opinions, (Gelens et. al, 2013) also opined that organisations need to begin assessing their talent management strategies in terms of their impact on their employee base instead of looking at it from a profit-loss perspective. The authors also opined that a humanistic perspective can also be brought in by implementing fair practices at the workplace, thereby promoting equality and organisational justice.

Bal (2017) found in his study on incorporating human dignity in their employee management practices that by respecting, safeguarding and supporting the employees' dignity as human beings, organisations can achieve several long-standing benefits, such as improvement in the organisational commitment and employee's intention to stay employed with the organisation. Similarly, (Ryan, 2015) in his study of justice at the workplace found that organisations which implement fair procedures of performance evaluation and dispute settlement, bring about a sense of satisfaction among their employees, which eventually improves their on-job

performance. These findings were justified by an earlier research conducted by Masterson (2001) wherein it was found that when organisations are fair in their handling of their employees, the employees' perception and commitment towards the organisation improves, which not only impacts their own productivity, but also influences them to stay with the organisation.

Another way of 'humanising' talent management is to respect the very identity and individuality of the employees, i.e., by respecting and accepting diverse employees (Jonsen and Ozbilgin, 2014). Diversity is nothing but the differences in various attributes that individuals identify with and it could range from something as basic as gender and colour, to as vast as nationality and race (Ozbilgin et al., 2011). Khan (2014) observed in his research study on the implementation of diversity management that organisations can embrace the inherent diversity among their employees by devising egalitarian and just policies for recruitment, promotion, payment, etc. Similarly, (Sabharwal, 2014) also observed that by thinking beyond the biases of cast, gender, colour, religion, physical abilities, ethno-geographical backgrounds, sexual and affectional orientation, political views, etc., organisations could improve the workplace experiences of their employees. Inclusion of diversity at the workplace is being seen as one of the most sensible moves an organisation can make (Madera, 2013), as it indicates their commitment towards respecting individuals for what they are. This results in a sense of self-respect and belonging among the employees, which improves their satisfaction with work and organisational commitment (Kapoor and Solomon, 2011; Vui-Yee, 2016) and ultimately results in employee retention.

Elucidating the benefits of diversity-inclusion, (Walters, 2015) observed that a versatile workforce with diverse employees could help organisations to devise efficient business strategies, as they will be able to consider an opportunity from different angles. For instance, if a marketing agency has employees from different ethnicities, they will be able to develop promotion campaigns, which would reach people from different ethnic backgrounds, thereby improving the market penetration of the organisation. Another study by Nishii (2013) on gender diversity at workplace found that by accommodating gender diversity organisations can make their workspaces friendly and cordial, which improves employee job satisfaction and results in low staff turnover. In concurrence with the above, (Chrobot-Mason and Aramovich, 2013) found that when employers treat their staff equally irrespective of diversity, their commitment towards the employer improves and their intention to quit reduces automatically.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN HUMANISTIC TALENT MANAGEMENT IN THE HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY:

Several challenges impede the process of humanistic talent management in the health care industry (Gajda, 2018). One issue could be the misunderstanding of the intent of balancing organisational objectives and employee welfare, i.e., as stated by Wright (2011) in his study of human capital, it is possible that leaders implementing the talent management strategies take the "human" aspect of these strategies for granted and continue to consider the employees as "assets" that can be controlled and harnessed, not empowered and nurtured. Top and Tekingunduz (2018) opined that as healthcare organisations are constrained for time and function in stressful situations, they often fail to treat their employees in a humane manner. This aspect has been lucidly explained by Chin et al (2017), who found that nurses work in environments where there is no regard for fair treatment of the employees, which results in increased intention to quit among the staff.

Organisations encounter several hurdles while implementing their diversity management strategies. The most common kind of challenge to diversity has been elaborated in a research study by Bedi et al (2014), wherein it was found that employees can develop a negative attitude towards their colleagues from diverse backgrounds, which could result in conflicts at workplaces. Similarly, Patrick and Kumar (2012) found that inadequate information among the employees regarding the importance of accepting diversity could cause miscommunication and hostility in the workplace. Further, incorporating humane ways of talent management can also be expensive for some organisations, especially startups, as a result of which employers might not be keen in considering it. This point was elucidated in a study (Dike, 2013) wherein it was found that organisations incur higher expenses for the implementation of diversity-inclusion, such as cost of training the employees, the cost of making the organisation disabled-friendly, etc., owing to which organisations avoid such changes.

CONCLUSION:

This paper undertook an objective review of research studies conducted so far regarding the humane way of managing organisational talent in the healthcare industry. The subject was explored from a simplistic perspective, wherein the need, implications and challenges of humanistic management of healthcare talent was explored. An objective review of existing literature indicated that looking at talent management from a

humanistic perspective is an achievable objective, as talent management in general is a human/people oriented approach and the healthcare industry mostly functions on the humanistic values of compassion, care, empathy and sensitivity. It was found that humanistic perspectives can be brought into the talent management discourse in different ways, the most common of which is by implementing fair and just practices across the organisation. Besides, embracing the inherent diversity among the employees and eliminating discrimination based on a variety of grounds were found to be the other ways of 'humanizing' talent management. Further, the review yielded that the humanistic management of talent can result in a variety of benefits for an organisation, such as boosting the employee performance, satisfaction and commitment towards the organisation, which can eventually reduce staff turnover. However, humanistic talent management strategies are not free of challenges and pitfalls, as it is easier to overlook delicate humanistic concerns in a highly competitive field, such as the healthcare industry, but considering most of the existing talent management strategies have failed to solve the issue of employee turnover in the industry, making way for humanity is the best option organisations have. There is significant scope for further research studies on humane ways of managing talent management across healthcare organisations, especially in the Indian context, considering the enormity of the healthcare market, the natural diversity of the employee base and the seemingly conventional employee policies of organisations. Major drawback of the study is unavailability of studies specific to humanistic talent management in the healthcare industry, which also indicates a tremendous scope for further research. The paper does not claim to have studied the phenomenon from all the points of view and the interpretations made herein are not essentially flawless; however, the paper has indeed one of the limited attempts to consider treating healthcare employees with utmost regard to the inherent dignity of human beings.

REFERENCES:

- Almaaitah, M. F., Harada, Y., & Sakdan, M. F. (2017). The Influence of Organizational Climate as a Mediator on the Relationship between Human Resource Practices and Employee Retention, *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 55(1), 81-91.
- Antony, M., & Balu, L. (2018). Human Resource Management Issues in Hospital with regards to Manjunath Hospital, *Human Resource Management*.
- Bal, P. M., & de Jong, S. B. (2017). From human resource management to human dignity development: A dignity perspective on HRM and the role of workplace democracy, In *Dignity and the Organization* (pp. 173-195). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Becker, G.S. (2008). Human capital, The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics, Library of Economics and Liberty. Retrieved from the WorldWide Web: <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/>
- Bedi, P., Lakra, P., & Gupta, E. (2014). Workforce diversity management: Biggest challenge or opportunity for 21st century organizations, *Journal of Business and Management*, 16(4), 102-107.
- Beheshtifar, M., & Ziaadini, M. (2012). To promote job involvement via talent management, *Science Series Data Report*, 4(1), 44-47.
- Boudreau, J. W., & Ziskin, I. (2011). The future of HR and effective organizations, *Organizational Dynamics*, 40(4), 255.
- Chin, W., Guo, Y. L. L., Hung, Y. J., Hsieh, Y. T., Wang, L. J., & Shiao, J. S. C. (2017). Workplace justice and intention to leave the nursing profession, *Nursing Ethics*, 0969733016687160.
- Chrobot-Mason, D., & Aramovich, N. P. (2013). The psychological benefits of creating an affirming climate for workplace diversity, *Group & Organization Management*, 38(6), 659-689.
- Clarkson, G. P. (2014). Twenty-first century employment relationships: The case for an altruistic model, *Human Resource Management*, 53(2), 253-269.
- Cleveland, J. N., Byrne, Z. S., & Cavanagh, T. M. (2015). The future of HR is RH: Respect for humanity at work, *Human Resource Management Review*, 25(2), 146-161.
- d'Ettorre, G., & Greco, M. (2015). Healthcare work and organizational interventions to prevent work-related stress in Brindisi, Italy. *Safety and health at work*, 6(1), 35-38.
- Dike, P. (2013). The impact of workplace diversity on organisations, *Degree Programme in International Business*.
- Ehnert, I., & Harry, W. (2012). Recent developments and future prospects on sustainable human resource management: Introduction to the special issue, *Management Revue*, 221-238.
- Gajda, D. (2018). Talent management in the context of mindful organizing and organizational mindfulness, *Journal of Positive Management*, 8(3), 42-57.
- Gelens, J., Dries, N., Hofmans, J., & Pepermans, R. (2013). The role of perceived organizational justice in

- shaping the outcomes of talent management: A research agenda, *Human Resource Management Review*, 23(4), 341-353.
- Ingram, T., & Glod, W. (2016). Talent management in healthcare organizations-qualitative research results, *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 39, 339-346.
- Jonsen, K., & Özbilgin, M. (2014). *Models of global diversity management, Diversity at work: the practice of inclusion*, San Francisco, CA: Published by Jossey-Bass, 364-390.
- Kapoor, C., & Solomon, N. (2011). Understanding and managing generational differences in the workplace, *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 3(4), 308-318.
- Khamisa, N., Oldenburg, B., Peltzer, K., & Ilic, D. (2015). Work related stress, burnout, job satisfaction and general health of nurses, *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 12(1), 652-666.
- Khan, S. S. (2015). Strategic Diversity Management through Recruitment and Selection: A Communication Based Perspective.
- Law, R., Dollard, M. F., Tuckey, M. R., & Dormann, C. (2011). Psychosocial safety climate as a lead indicator of workplace bullying and harassment, job resources, psychological health and employee engagement, *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, 43(5), 1782-1793.
- Lucas, K. (2015). Workplace dignity: Communicating inherent, earned, and remediated dignity, *Journal of Management Studies*, 52(5), 621-646.
- Madera, J. M. (2013). Best practices in diversity management in customer service organizations: an investigation of top companies cited by Diversity Inc, *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 54(2), 124-135.
- Marchington, M. (2015). Human resource management (HRM): Too busy looking up to see where it is going longer term?, *Human Resource Management Review*, 25(2), 176-187.
- McDonnell, A., Collings, D. G., Mellahi, K., & Schuler, R. (2017). Talent management: a systematic review and future prospects. *European Journal of International Management*, 11(1), 86-128.
- Montgomery, E. G., & Oladapo, V. (2014). Talent management vulnerability in global healthcare value chains: A general systems theory perspective. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 5(4), 173.
- Naiker, U., FitzGerald, G., Dulhunty, J. M., & Rosemann, M. (2018). Factors affecting the performance of public out-patient services. *Australian Health Review*.
- Nishii, L. H. (2013). The benefits of climate for inclusion for gender-diverse groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(6), 1754-1774.
- Özbilgin, M. F., Beauregard, T. A., Tatli, A., & Bell, M. P. (2011). Work-life, diversity and intersectionality: a critical review and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(2), 177-198.
- Patrick, H. A., & Kumar, V. R. (2012). Managing workplace diversity: Issues and challenges. *Sage Open*, 2(2), 2158244012444615
- Pirson, M. (2015). Conceptualizing Humanistic Management as an Alternative to Managing in A Post Crisis World. *Human Systems Management*, 34(1), 1-4.
- Ryan, A. M., & Wessel, J. L. (2015). Implications of a changing workforce and workplace for justice perceptions and expectations. *Human Resource Management Review*, 25(2), 162-175.
- Sabharwal, M. (2014). Is diversity management sufficient? Organizational inclusion to further performance. *Public Personnel Management*, 43(2), 197-217.
- Searcey, D. I. O. N. N. E., Porter, E. D. U. A. R. D. O., & Gebeloff, R. O. B. E. R. T. (2015). Health care opens stable career path, taken mainly by women. *New York Times*.
- Sullivan, J. (2014). A walk through the HR department of 2020. *Workforce Solutions Review*, 7-9.
- Top, M., & Tekingunduz, S. (2018). The Effect of Organizational Justice and Trust on Job Stress in Hospital Organizations. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*.
- Tripp, T. M., & Bies, R. J. (2010). "Righteous" anger and revenge in the workplace: The fantasies, the feuds, the forgiveness. In *International handbook of anger* (pp. 413-431). Springer, New York, NY.
- Turner, P. (2018). Retaining Talent in Health Sector Organisations. In *Talent Management in Healthcare* (pp. 285-313). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Ulrich, D., & Dulebohn, J. H. (2015). Are we there yet? What's next for HR?. *Human Resource Management Review*, 25(2), 188-204
