



Human Capital Insights

National Human Resources Development Council of Sri Lanka



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Message from the Chairman



It gives me pleasure to extend warm greetings to the readers of the first issue of the Human Capital Insights online magazine in 2021 which is published by the National Human Resources Development Council of Sri Lanka (NHRDC). NHRDC was established to assist the government in formulating and developing the policies on Human Resources Development giving priority in all the activities of Human Resources Development in the country under the Ministry of Public Services, Provincial Councils and Local Government. Thereby, NHRDC publishes this magazine by collecting articles from experts in various sectors annually to share the knowledge on human capital in the country.

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, currently, the people in Sri Lanka living through a challenging time which no one has left untouched. The present ongoing pandemic has effected the socio-economic activities in the country bringing some of them to give more attention. Peoples' day-to-day life routines and social activities have been changed into a new normal.

However, these challenges made NHRDC stronger more exposing it to new experiences. We are confident that our organization will make a positive contribution to the country in this critical situation.

NHRDC will continue to be a stronger institute amid the challenges you can rely on.

May Triple Gem Bless you!

K. R. Uduwawala
Chairman (Acting)
NHRDC

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A Great Challenge of an Entrepreneur: Managing Human Capital for Growth

Business Startups: Discussions on entrepreneurship have become a viral trend in every sector of society irrespective of the level of education, social class, age group and professions worldwide. This indicates that the importance of entrepreneurship in terms of socio-economic development has been recognized by all the people in the modern world while the impact of Covid19 pandemic caused to further strengthen the motives in entrepreneurship. Creating awareness about entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education and training, entrepreneurship initiatives and promotion programs, government and nongovernment support services, funding alternatives are some of the recent trends according to the observation in recent past. It seems that most discussions and initiatives are oriented to promote business startups by emphasizing the idea that entrepreneurship is the process of adding economic and social values through a combination of resources through the identification of opportunities and transforming creative ideas to commercially viable innovations managing the risk or uncertainty associated with the new initiative.

Government organizations, non-government organizations, education and training institutes, social groups including social media groups and some individuals are trying to create an impact on startup initiatives through different modes of encouragements. It is a good tendency for inculcating entrepreneurial culture in the country as the number of startups since some of the startup ventures with entrepreneurial and strategic aspirations will become global giants one day enabling them to make a large contribution to economic and social development. However, it needs to understand the ground reality of the startup businesses by searching the details on the survival and the growth of such startup businesses. Plenty of research has revealed that the failure rate of startup businesses quite high although most of the ambitious entrepreneurs start new ventures full of hope in their bright and colorful dreams.

Growth Problem: According to the study findings of Small Business Trends (<https://smallbiztrends.com/>), out of all small businesses started in 2014 in the USA 80 percent made it to the second year (2015); 70 percent made it to the third year (2016); 62 percent made it to the fourth year (2017) and 56 percent made it to the fifth year (2018). According to these statistics, 46 percent of businesses started in 2014 haven been disappeared after the fourth year of their starting up. This startup failure rate in developing countries is quite high according to the statistics due to the several contrarians they face in their contextual backgrounds. It is difficult to find any reliable source to find out reliable data source for the number of startup businesses and the failure rate although there is a large number of government sector institutions are responsible for the development of entrepreneurs in the country. According to the existing understanding, there should be a considerable failure rate among the startup businesses in Sri Lanka. Although some businesses are surviving after five years from the startup, most of them are underperforming or stagnated rather than growing.

Growth and HR: While there are several factors for startup failures, the impact of the lack of human resources management skills among entrepreneurs is the main focus of this article. Entrepreneurs are responsible for combining the production factors namely; land, labor, and capital effectively for purpose of solving social and economic problems while adding values through creativity and innovation. The labor was considered as a non-live factor in the initial stages of building and operating enterprises and the power of the human was not emphasized in the historical approaches in production and economic activities. This assumption is not valid in the modern organizational context and human cannot be just considered as the production factors which will combine with other non-live factors. The value of the human resource in the organization while paying attention to their thinking and imaginative skills, creativity, innovation as well as emotional human qualities are highly emphasized than only considering the physical labor of the human, sometimes counted only on the num-

ber of hours they worked in an organization. Human capital is explained by this magical power of thinking and its ability to transform thinking into action. This human capital is the most important and valuable source for ensuring the competitiveness of entrepreneurial businesses. The following figure shows three different stages that can be generally observed in the growth process of most micro and small startup businesses.



Owner worker/ Self-employment: All the entrepreneurs mostly believe in their own human capability in the initial stages of the business and start a business as micro or small scale businesses. This mode is good in the initial stages of the startup business since it helps to test the business model by minimizing the cost associated with human resources and reducing the risk associated with failure. Further, it allows the entrepreneur to learn everything about the business in a nutshell. An entrepreneur can develop his competency and trust in business operations and build a strong relationship which is very important to grow the business in the future as he/she is the main decision-maker as well as an implementer of the business plans at the ground level. Hence, being the overall player in the initial startup stages creates big strength for the entrepreneur as well as for the business and it will be an investment for the future of the business.

However, running business entrepreneurs on their own is not recommended for a growth-oriented business entity. Spending time on the entrepreneurs for physical labor requirements and daily routine operations is a waste if the business is ensured with a proven business model. Entrepreneurs need to hire people for such routinized jobs and supervise them for carrying out the operations after six months to one-year period and developing the confidence through testing the business model. Accordingly, entrepreneurs can have spare time for new thinking, developing strategies, exploring new opportunities as well as developing competencies through learning from different sources. Entrepreneurs need to expand their network and develop new relationships needed for growing the business with more formal entities such as government organizations and financial institutions as well as informal networks such as industry associates. Those are the second stage investments for growing the

business in the future. With this new recruitment of new Human Resources (HR) to the firm, the entrepreneurs are essentially required to improve their human resource management skills. Recruiting high-quality and competent human talents, getting the maximum contribution from the recruited HR while ensuring their satisfaction and motivation, planning for the growth of HR, and maintaining a supportive work environment are the main responsibilities of the human resources management role of the entrepreneurs. These best HR practices will help employees create a parent-children relationship through the charismatic leadership styles of the owners and it will be a lifelong strong bond between two parties.

Owner Manager: Recruitment of HR for the operational level work of the business facilitates the entrepreneurs to plan the growth of the business as trusted employees look after daily and routine functions as their own work. With this freedom, entrepreneurs need to find new market opportunities and create a competitive edge through their innovation and imaginative capabilities. When the businesses growing further through the ideas of the founding entrepreneurs it is compulsory to bring the talented human skills to the company who can go beyond the limits of knowledge and skills of both existing employees and the entrepreneurs. This category of employees is considered the human capital of the firm. They contribute to the firm with their knowledge than their physical labor. Acquiring or creating human capital is possible from two main sources such as internal human capital development and external human capital recruitments. **Internal HR Capital:** Internal human capital development is continuously happening in many modern organizations that are called as learning organizations. Entrepreneurs as well as employees recruited for operational routine work can improve their competencies through learning experiences as well as training and development. If such improvements occurred within the existing workforce that developed human capital in the organization should be used effectively to advance their careers within the organization. Operational level routine jobs should be transformed into automated systems as it is a proven substitute for physical labor in many countries. Otherwise, new personnel can be employed as trainees and interns under the experienced human capital while minimizing the physical labor-related costs. If the entrepreneur fails to recognize and utilize internally developed advanced human capital effectively, they will discourage and may tend to leave the firm. By the way, the leaving of the developed human capital cannot be total-

ly prevented and the people who are leaving the firm should not be punished and considered as enemies of the firm. Instead of such old behaviors, modern entrepreneurs are the well-wishers of such people who start a new life on their own.

External HR Capital: It is important to understand that internally developed capabilities of the entrepreneurs and existing employees are always not satisfying the growth requirements of the firm. Human nature sometimes restricts further capacity developments as a result of aging and some other physical as well as psychological barriers. Developed HR in other organizations, as well as the education system locally as well as internationally, will add new blood to the organizations. Those new recruitments add energy to organizations with new ideas, new knowledge related to technologies and modern social understanding than existing personnel in the organization. It will create a real change in the organization and make the atmosphere for de-freezing the present stuck in the mud situation while encouraging the out of box thinking. It will again create internal competition and help to reenergize existing employees also. However, such an introduction of new people creates a sock in the existing organizational culture and systems which will lead to dysfunctional conflicts sometimes. Hence, entrepreneurs need to manage such HR strategy very carefully to increase the overall performance of the organization and achieve the growth objectives of the firm successfully.

Strategic Thinker/Team Player: The entrepreneurs who create a competent human capital through internally developed as well as externally recruited talents get the chance to receive sufficient freedom from their business functions as competent people are handling the business with high responsibility. This will help entrepreneurs to engage in imaginative thinking and articulate the long term vision of the firm with great happiness about the success achieved so far. Continuous growth will be ensured with this wisdom of the entrepreneurs and they will contribute the creating the future world through their imaginations. One of the best examples is Elon Musk, who was recently announced as the world's second-richest person by Forbes ranking. He successfully ensured the growth of a few companies including the world-famous Tesla Company and now exploring space with a dream of building human colonies on Mars. This level of organizational growth is sometimes used by the entrepreneurs to retire from their entrepreneurial careers after selling their successful venture or transferring the

business to a public limited company to have a more relaxed and comfortable personal life. Some entrepreneurs, for example, Richard Branson (owner of Virgin Group), are still passionate to take a risk and be creative will become serial entrepreneurs who continuously start new ventures and grow. Hence, managing human capital wisely will ensure entrepreneurial growth and success and turns entrepreneurial dreams into realities.

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How crisis unleashes human power to do the extraordinary

COVID-19 has changed the world of work as we know it — from interactions, to decision-making, to getting through our day-to-day. Organizations have had to nurture adaptability and resilience rapidly among their workforces to help maintain business, while supporting their employees and maintaining trust.

Organizations have responded to these challenges in several ways. Yet, a common theme is emerging among those who appear to be thriving where others are simply surviving: their response is anchored in their purpose, their organizational values, and how leaders live these values, even in times of crisis, creating a culture that puts humans at the center.

-Three ways organizations need to transform to adapt to a future of work that is forever changed

Pre-crisis, most organizations had been on a path to a future of work that was more agile, digital and people centered, with an evolving skill need. COVID-19 has accelerated that journey. People services that were once considered “nice to have” are quickly being adopted and implemented. At the same time, organizations have recognized gaps in their people systems, rewards programs and organizational silos. In response, they are introducing new initiatives, such as launching mindfulness programs, initiating workforce scenario planning that considers skeleton crews, employee leasing and collective cooperation with competitors.

The extent to which the future of work changes directly correlates with how long the pandemic lasts. There is every indication it will persist for more than a “storm-type cycle” and that current working conditions will remain for an additional four to six months, or more. This will likely result in a new round of changes as organization adapt performance review cycles, counseling cycles, rating and pay cycles, training programs and hiring to a virtual setting.

With the crisis shocking our collective people, process, structure, culture and technology into new ways of working, there are three areas in which the future of work will likely change forever and for which organizations need to prepare.

1. Protecting and empowering people

An organization’s ability to pivot is tied to its purpose — the “North Star” that guides difficult decision-making. Purpose is woven into the fabric of its culture and the resiliency of its leaders. Leaders need to communicate with clarity and demonstrate a clear, well-defined and thoughtful approach to stabilize, transition and emerge. The key to success is to demonstrate true empathy, information and agility. Leaders need to understand that there is no one-size fits all approach. If leaders are paying attention, if they use change as a catalyst and inspire their people to act, this time of crisis can offer significant opportunities.

To do so, leaders need to recognize teams for their hard work, encourage connection and collaboration, and provide insights that are relevant and timely to support the evolving waves of the COVID-19 journey. This protection started with prioritizing physical wellbeing in the face of a pandemic. As the duration of volatility extends, the focus will broaden to also ensure the balance of financial, emotional and social wellbeing. Mindfulness will become a required attribute for leaders and become an automatic add to change management programs.

2. Maintaining capability and capacity

Organizations will reexamine their business strategy and operating models and change what, where and how work gets done. This will include business resilience planning, the ability to move work across the globe, a serious examination of automation, and a re-think of how to adjust for big swings in labor supply and demand. Organizations will rationalize geographies and office space, reimagine compensation and rewards, spans of control and work processes. They will also reconsider outsourcing. To make these shifts, organizations will have to develop new approaches for strategic and operational workforce planning, and rethink employee and contingent labor. At the same time, they will have to galvanize their culture and employee experience, in both physical and remote work environments.

3. Reimagining the digital workforce experience

Remote work and agile teaming happened at lightning speed in response to the crisis. Companies will have to fortify their capabilities to enable virtual teaming, document sharing, and simultaneous video and chat communications with a history function for teams to refer to. They will have to shift to digital processes to close the books, recruit and hire talent, and innovate on new products and services. Technology will also be at the heart of ensuring ongoing employee health/safety to support the return to work.

There are daily solutions emerging including new knowledgebase tools for policies, apps to support tracking health certifications, contact tracing to notify employees any new exposure, and learning modules to create interactive learning experiences. Organizations that will accelerate out of this crisis will preserve these new productivity gains. Cross functional collaboration (especially HR and IT) will need to continue to collaborate to enable these new ways of working to support the reimagined workforce, customer and business experiences.

Multiple sources of data will be integrated to provide new forms of command centers enabling leaders to make truly data driven decisions with AI.

-The pandemic is a catalyst, but unleashing the human power to do the extraordinary is timeless. Before COVID-19 had entered anyone's consciousness, EY had designed a new framework: the "Great Eight" traits that make humans extraordinary. These eight human capabilities, when activated in combination, will unleash the best of individuals, teams and therefore unleash organizations.

- 1.Trust
- 2.Meaningful purpose
- 3.Collective cooperation
- 4.Imagination
- 5.Resilience
- 6.Compassion
- 7.Happiness
- 8.Transformative practice

Throughout the crisis we have witnessed organizations unconsciously fostering these traits as they contend with the enormity of the pandemic's impact. Around the world, humans are collaborating with humans and using their imagination to create new solutions to save and improve lives.

For example, a Formula 1 racing team teamed with University College London engineers and clinicians

from University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (UCLH) to build a device that delivers oxygen to the lungs without needing a ventilator. This team then created the VentilatorChallengeUK Consortium, which included several additional automotive, aerospace, health care, technology and engineering companies.

A pandemic may have served as the catalyst, but the human power to do the extraordinary is timeless. When we emerge from this crisis, we will find ourselves operating in a very different world of work. We will have to recalibrate everything we do to unleash the full power of humans.

How do we unleash the power of trust, and enhance human connections and psychological safety in a physically-distanced world? How do we unleash the power of purpose to create a sense of belonging among colleagues who may only occasionally or even never physically meet? How do we unleash the power of collective cooperation through inclusive teaming in a much more distributed organizational construct? How do we unleash the power of imagination in an increasingly distracting work environment?

Organizations that keep employees at the center of these decisions while balancing financial and human capital will not only survive the crisis, but also accelerate their recovery and achieve a work environment that unleashes the full potential of their workforce well into the future.

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Inside-out and Outside-in Approaches in Thinking: What is Appropriate for Human Resource Development

If our thinking is inside-out, we tend to contemplate with an issue as we see it at first and then explore solutions within that initial mindset. Outside-in thinking, by contrast, tends to see the issue from multiple perspectives leading through external events or triggers. The Inside-out approach is guided by the belief that the inner strengths and capabilities of the organization will make the institution prevail. The Outside-in approach is directed by the belief that customer value creation, customer orientation and customer experiences are the keys to a firm's success. What needs to be clarified is the difference between these two approaches when looked at from a customer's point of view. This article attempts to shed some light on these two aspects, as their appropriateness will depend on the pluses and minuses of each of them.

Inside-out thinking broadly sets our focus on processes, systems, tools, and products that are designed and implemented based on internal thinking and intuition. The customer's needs, wants, tasks, and perspectives do not play a major role in this type of thinking. Herein, we make decisions because we think it is what is best more for the business/organization, than for customer/user. We are pushed by the basic thinking that we know what is best for the customers. Conversely, outside-in thinking depicts that we look at our business from the customer's perspective, and consequently, design processes, tools, and products and make decisions based on what is best for the customer, and what meets the customer's needs. We make decisions because we know it is what is best for our target segments. The reason being that we are open to listen to them, and we make every attempt to understand them as well as the tasks we perform.

Inside-out Approach (ISOA) – Emphasis on Firm-specific Internal Resources and Capabilities. As spelt out briefly in the introduction, ISOA means that the long-term stakeholder value is a significant factor will make the organization prevail. This focuses on firm-specific internal resources and capabilities. The success of this

approach is based on a firm's ability to leverage and deploy its existing capabilities through inside-out processes. It starts within the firm and looks outward. As literature sources of economics and strategic management have indicated, ISOA is an internally oriented strategic position, where the focus lies on how a firm achieves superior performance by developing and deploying strategic firm-specific resources that are Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-substitutable (VRIN). The organization uses its internal resource base to neutralize threats/challenges that arise in the external environment, as well as to exploit opportunities. These resources are often idiosyncratic and embodied in the form of tacit knowledge within the eco-system of the firm. Research studies have laid higher emphasis on the ISOA to examine the function of resources in creating competitive advantage through innovation performance of companies.

Through a systematic review of organizational innovation literature, Crossan and Apaydin (2010) introduce Organization Dynamic Capabilities (ODC) which define as the processes through which firms integrate, reconfigure, renew, and recreate resources and capabilities over time, that play a key role in enhancing an organization's innovation performance. They propose that ODCs reside in five types of managerial levers:

- i. Organizational mission and explicit innovation strategy
- ii. Resource allocation (e.g., absolute and relative R & D intensity, commitment to differentiated funding, annual turnover of resources, and slack resources);
- iii. Structure and systems (e.g., organizational complexity and administrative intensity, formalization, specialization, and centralization; fit among organizational design and type of innovation, and number of employees);

iv. Knowledge management systems (e.g., formal idea-generation tools, external links with universities, the quality of these links, formal information-gathering, and customer contact time and frequency); and

v. Organizational culture (e.g., a clearly stated, attainable, and valuable shared vision; promoting autonomy; calculated risk-taking; motivation; and the attractiveness of the organizational climate).

ISOA: Need to Observe Key Capabilities

Organizations that adopt ISOA strategy need to observe their key capabilities by examining, what they are good at: making and/or selling? Once these strengths are identified, the organization makes these products and uses substantial marketing to convince users to buy them. Apple uses the popularly known as the “Golden Circle” marketing method. As per Simon Sinek (2009) traditional marketing methods start with “WHAT” (activities) then followed by the “HOW” (strategies/processes) and ending with the “WHY” (purpose). This process of Apple starts with “Why”: the central conviction of why the organization exists. The development of such a powerful core-belief system is what attracts the unconventional practice. Once Apple was able to establish this powerful central message, they were able to sell more than just computers. They do not use customer surveys to develop products, and Steve Jobs, founder (1955-2011) once said that Alexander Bell did not conduct customer focused group-studies before he invented the telephone. Do Organizations Get Good Insight by Asking Customers? Henry Ford is another great example. He has said “if I would ask people what they want they would come back to me with a faster horse.” The horse is the people’s reference point, and what makes the answer may be very rational, and therefore, it’s not very innovative. This questions raises the issue whether organizations are in a position to get good insights by asking customers. It is believed that one cannot just ask customers directly what they want as most consumers do not know what they really want until producers show it to them. It indicates that we need to perform things in a different and more innovative and creative way to win the customers rather than follow a mundane practice.

ISOA Works Well in Relatively Well-developed Markets?

Another argument is that the ISOA works well in relatively well-developed markets where the customers’ needs and wants undergo a slow change. Companies that produce the majority of the foods, including

poultry, beef, sugar, flour, etc, are a case in point. Given that market shifts for these items are slower, firms in such industries focus on applying new technologies that allow them to safely manufacture these food items faster and/or cheaper. While an ISOA generally works well, it may fail if organizations become so internally fixated that they overestimate what they are good at, underestimate the offerings of their rivals or miss changes in the industry.

Finite and Infinite Games – An Analogy

One of Simon Sinek’s (2019) new books discusses the idea of an infinite game which has a direct connection to the ISOA. The concept of finite and infinite games has been previously articulated by James Carse (1986). In finite games, like football or chess, the players are known, the rules are fixed, and the end-point is clear. The winners and losers are easily identified. In infinite games, like business or politics or life itself, the players come and go, the rules are changeable, and there is no defined end-point. There are no winners or losers in an infinite game; there is only ahead and behind. The more we explore in the finite and infinite spheres, the more we see as infinite games all around us. In this context, ISOA triggers us to overcome many of the challenges that organizations face, simply because leaders around us are playing with a finite mindset in an infinite game. The leaders, who embrace an infinite mindset, tend to build stronger, more innovative and inspiring organizations. Simon emphasizes the fact that leaders who have an infinite mind set have the resilience to thrive in an ever-changing world, while their competitors fall by the wayside. Ultimately, they are in a smarter position to lead the rest.

Outside-in Approach (OSIA) - Long-term Stakeholder Value, a Significant Factor

From an OSIA, long-term stakeholder value is a significant factor, namely, listening and providing value to customers and serving them get their jobs done better than the competition, while creating a continuous customer experience. The ideal organizational philosophy is market-and customer-oriented. The targeted customer segments – buyers as well as users – are the source of inspiration and development. There is also a strong acceptance that if the customers are not satisfied with the solutions offered, there will be issue for the business, and the shareholder value will weaken. The OSIA centers on knowledge and resources that reside outside the firm—such as customers, suppliers, competitors, and end-product market positions. perspective, firms integrate knowledge and capabilities from external sources through an OSIA in developing

successful innovations.

Significance of External Environment

Day (1994) defines a market-oriented organization as flexible and adaptable but maintaining a primary focus on the external environment. An OSIA enables businesses to achieve competitive advantage by anticipating market requirements ahead of rivals, thus establishing long-term relationships with the stakeholders. An OSIA also generates knowledge about communicated and underlying customer needs, as well as competitors' capabilities, strategies, and products, while emphasizing superior value for customers, the importance of the end-product's market position, and the position's direct relationship with future returns. In contrast to the ISOA, this perspective centers outside the firm, towards the markets in which it competes, suggesting that the resources arise from a firm's interaction with entities in its external environment. Under OSIA, the Johnson & Johnson Company can be considered as one of the best examples that uses this type of strategy. In the company's planning process, each division has to prepare a strategic plan in relation to its competitors. They are compelled to inquire about competitors, and what they are really doing. Competitors are not merely the organization's existing competition; they are also the emerging competitors. They should study the expected disruptions and other potential market entries which would finally enter the market to compete with current chains. For example, Dell Computer has a similar strategy.

They have built its initial marketplace success with a strong OSIA. Orthodox wisdom pronounces that large, powerful customers provide lower profit margins precisely because they are so big and powerful. But Dell earned higher margins from its large "relationship" customers—because it is used an OSIA succinctly. Dell later ran into trouble. It did not adapt well as customers and technologies changed—and it certainly did not anticipate these changes.

Two Paths to Strategy

George S. Day and Christine Moorman called them the two paths to strategy in their book *Strategy from the Outside-In: Profiting from Customer Value*. Is it ISOA or OSIA? Some companies that had once been OSIA faltered later unable to sustain good OSIA habits. Tesco can be considered as one example – the OSIA transformed the U.K. grocery chain from a mediocre performer that was losing market share each year to the leading grocery retailer in the country, known for its strong focus on customers. However, industry re-

ports indicate that they were not able to keep their accomplishment continuing, as currently a strong threat is posed by Waitrose, Aldi and Lidl who are doing a better trade at the consumer level, applying years of research, Day and Moorman illustrate that an OSIA requires constant vigilance and focus on four customer value imperatives; namely,

- i. be a customer value leader;
- ii. innovate new value for customers;
- iii. capitalize on the customer as an asset; and
- iv. capitalize on the brand as an asset.

Only companies that operate with an OSIA from the C-suite to the front lines can expect to maximize and profit from customer value. The strategy of OSIA puts you ahead of the competition.

Amazon is a fascinating case for OSIA. In essence, rather than dwelling on what they were good at, selling books, they inquired 'Who are our customers and what do they need?' By shifting their focus, they were able to leverage their brand to seize opportunities in other areas. It is a new standard for OSIA brand strategy. They began as an online bookshop, and built an exceptionally strong brand around it. But they put themselves in their customer's shoes, and asked what else their customer-base wanted. This allowed them to propagate into the Kindle, and then into cloud computing, web services for their channel partners and massive online retailing of a range of products outside their initial offering. This is how some organizations see the changes, look at the needs of their customers, and adapt. Social media would be a good source of information in shaping the OSIA strategy. Organizations closely study social media and pick up trends in the external environment. That is one way of finding out customers' likes and dislikes and responding accordingly.

Need for a Management Model Embracing Continuous Change

In the book *Sense and Respond*, Jeff Gothelf and Josh Seiden (2017), leading tech experts and founders of the global Lean UX movement, vividly show how these companies operate, highlighting the new mindset and skills needed to lead and manage them, and to continuously innovate within them. It states that we need a management model that doesn't merely account for, but actually embraces, continuous change. Yet the truth is, most organizations continue to rely on outmoded, industrial-era operational models. They structure their teams, manage their people, and evolve their organizational cultures in the oft-trodden ways. Now, organizations are emerging, and thriving,

based on their capacity to sense and respond instantly to customer and employee behaviours. This shows that companies should be able to read and react to a fast-changing environment, and respond to new customer behaviours which are primarily an OSIA. Based on an in-depth empirical research on thousands of companies, McKinsey Partners Chris Bradley, Martin Hirt, and Sven Smit (2019) provide a data-driven “outside view” to overcome social dynamics, and create effective strategies in their book on Strategy Beyond the Hockey Stick. This book offers ten performance levers that dramatically increase our chances to outperform competitors and create breakout growth in the context of OSIA.

What Works versus What Doesn't?

Strategy – A History book written by Lawrence Freedman (2013) set a fascinating insight for us to select either ISOA or OSIA. His impressive historical journey shows that strategy is not only about analysis, positioning, clever planning and effective implementation, but also about the experiences, convictions and beliefs of the people behind it. It is built on ideologies, belief systems, mental constructs, etc., as that govern the way goals are pursued to meet an end. Subsequently, binding to one ideology almost makes us immune to the arguments at the other end of the spectrum, and even immune to change. Elisabet Lagerstedt, the Founder, CEO, and Executive Consultant at Inquentia Group, proposes two simple questions one could ask to evaluate whether organizations lean more towards an ISOA or OSIA.

Question one: Whether we know about our targeted customer segments, what needs and behaviours they have, how best to solve their relevant problems, and what kind of value you provide them?

Question two: Whether there is a strong fit between our target segments' needs, our value proposition, our overall business model, internal processes and a customer-oriented organizational culture, with focus on creating value for our customers?

Do we feel that it is a fundamental necessity to run a successful business? As per this classification, if the answer is yes, there is a high probability that organizations lean towards an OSIA, whereas if the answer is no, it is more probable that organizations lean towards an ISOA.

Drucker: OSIA Predominantly Important for Knowledge-based Innovation Drucker (1985) proposes that

the need for OSIA is predominantly important for knowledge-based innovation, such as those seen in most high-tech firms/industries. It may seem paradoxical, but knowledge-based innovation is more market-dependent than any other kind of innovation. Sharp analysis of the needs, and above all, the capabilities of the intended user are essential. Thus, OSIA is particularly important for high-tech firms, where the ISOA based on technology capability, that creates innovation in the first place, can take on a higher standing relative to that of the needed OSIA marketing competence. Such a preference can lead to rigidity, and be a barrier to innovation performance.

As per the nature of the industry it becomes clear that we need to play our game of choosing ISOA or OSIA. Let me keep it open to explore further. However, if we pay our attention on the HR strategy in an organization, in essence, some firms create functions that are almost entirely internally focused on the HR function, while other firms attempt to have their focus out of the function and toward the people of the firm. Some organizations make the connections from the HR function, through the people, to the business. A few other organizations represent an unconventional shift in this perspective, rather than starting with HR, and linking forward to the business, they begin their process and thinking with the business, and that drives the HR strategy. Whether in HR or business strategy, it is compelling to follow OSIA as a better option



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Placing Gen Z in the Driving Seat of Change



There is nothing more sustainable than investing in the confidence and capacities of creative and energetic youth in their formative years. In many countries, youth lacks appropriate channels to fully engage in development efforts and practices. However, young people still want to contribute to the progress of their communities. There are many occasions where they have proposed innovative solutions that have driven social progress and inspired political change as well.

According to the United Nations (UN) “provided with the necessary skills and opportunities needed to reach their potential, young people can be a driving force for supporting the development and contributing to peace and security” (United Nations, 2019). In other words, education is a key element for youth development and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Gen Z Education

In 2013, young people worldwide confirmed the importance of a good education through the UN’s MY-World2015 Survey. In one question, the survey asked citizens to vote for the top 6 out of 16 issues that were most important to them and their families – from better healthcare to clean water and sanitation, to freedom from discrimination. The results from this question showed that over 5 million young people aged between 16 and 30 around the world highlighted that

a good education is one of the most important things for them and their families. In addition, almost 67% of respondents replied that a good education is an important aspect of their life. The results of this survey were used in planning the post-2015 process, defining the Agenda 2030 and creating the Sustainable Development Goals. (UN My World Analytics 2015)

The Solution: Entrepreneurship

The chance for young men and women to enroll in a university or a higher educational institute, and receive training to have a stable job has important implications for future economic growth, development, and stability. If overlooked, youth unemployment has the potential to have significant and serious social consequences, both at the individual and macro-economic level. Meanwhile, youth unemployment can lead to social exclusion and unrest. One possible way to address youth unemployment is to support young people in creating their own businesses. Gen Z has the interest and potential to become self-employed. Gen Zers are more likely to prefer self-employment than adults and are more likely to believe that self-employment is feasible.

One of the most promising solutions to youth unemployment is youth entrepreneurship or self-employment. The 21st century is considered by many to be the “age of the entrepreneur,” which creates a friendly environment for young people to start their businesses. However, studies show that there is a significant gap between youth wanting to start a business or be self-employed and actually doing it. Gen Z (the new generation born in between 19915-2012) needs lots of support from educational institutes and business community to ignite their talents and to create their own startups.

Barriers and Challenges

Traditional education systems do not prepare young people to become entrepreneurs. Scholars consider that teaching entrepreneurship means teaching a mind-set, which is more easily said than done. Young

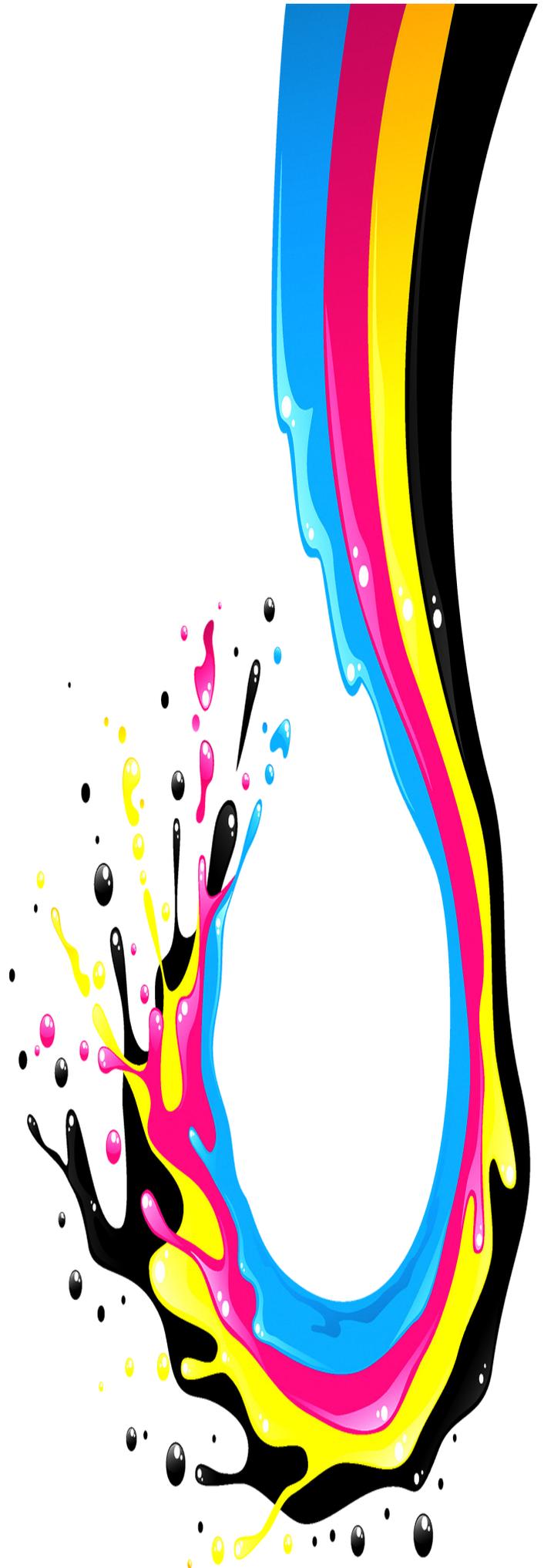
people face information asymmetry in both pre- and post-startups. Young people may simply be unaware of the potential of entrepreneurship, their entrepreneurial aptitude, or the skills needed to be an entrepreneur. This is where they need help from business community, Government and non-governmental institutes, business chambers and educational institutes. There are many barriers faced by young entrepreneurs. These include an underdeveloped entrepreneurial mindset, lack of practical experience, lack of awareness about entrepreneurship opportunities negative social attitudes, traditional education not teaching entrepreneurship skills, lack of prior work experience and entrepreneurial resources, financial resources, limited business networks, market barriers, including bank financing. Financing is one of the main problems for entrepreneurs because they do not have enough personal funds to build a successful business. Financiers are often biased and many decide not to fund youth-led enterprises.

Gen Z : The Key to Sustainable Change

It is no secret that young people are at the forefront of lasting, sustainable change. According to the UN Youth Envoy, young people make up 2.4 billion of the world's population. In Sri Lanka, 4.5 million young people have the potential to ignite change and create a better future. However, when it comes to opportunities for growth and development to access skills to lead everyone towards a better future, young people are often left out of the equation. It is high time for policy makers and educationists in Sri Lanka to address the issue seriously and make the Gen Z in to our main stream of development efforts and practices. National Project of NIBM vishwa Pasala is such an effort of NIBM to make Gen Z a vibrant segment of the



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Human Resources Development (HRD) Challenges during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The challenges of the globalization and new technological developments have forced organizations to change the way of managing business and required to adapt to new strategies for their survival and growth. Thus, the role of Human Resource Management (HRM) has been changing dramatically. Being innovative and responsive to changing business environments require greater flexibility. The trend towards the elastic company is affecting the Human Resource (HR) function too (Bernardin and Russel, 1998). [Bernardin, H. J. and Russel, J. A., Human Resource Management: An Experimental Approach, Irwin McGraw Hill, 2nd ed. 1998. p. 47.] This trend has inevitably led organizations to focus attention on the Human Resource Development (HRD) to build new capabilities to manage these challenges effectively. As such HRD professionals need to develop employees at all levels in order to enhance capabilities of them to bridge the skill gap.

Today we are faced with the worst pandemic of the history of mankind and COVID-19 has not spared almost any country in the world from the giants, USA, China, France, Italy and India to the poorest countries such as Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi and Niger. As reported in numerous articles by the economists and other intellectuals it is much difficult to make predictions of the impact of COVID-19 globally, because it will much depend on the spread of the disease and the measurers respective countries will take to fight against the deadly pandemic. As such the situation in our country, Sri Lanka, will also be similar to that of other countries, especially as same as developing economies, or may be even worse than some of them. This is mainly due to the fact that Sri Lanka was not performing well in terms of economic development during the recent past. While law makers are addressing those issues at the macro level, as HR professionals we have a huge responsibility in supporting both firm and the staff through the pandemic. In that context HRD professionals have to play a more crucial role not only to address the emerging issues but many other current issues as well.

The pandemic has not only disrupted the human life in all aspects, but paved way for significant behavioral changes in everyone. Term 'New Normal' became the buzz word in all COVID-19 prevention campaigns. Much discussed 'Future of Work' [International Labour Organization (ILO) Centenary Declaration for the 'Future of Work' adopted by the ILO conference in 2019 identified four pillars; technological innovations, demographic shift, environmental and climate change and globalization, that would change the nature and future of work] in many 'International Forums' and the transformations in the work place became a reality sooner than expected. 'Technological Innovations' were one of the topics discussed under the future of work and how organizations should transform their workforce by re-skilling, up-skilling and redeployment. Most of the organizations were not ready for the change due to various reasons including, financial constraints and resistance to change by employees. Nevertheless, under new normal situation organizations were compelled to introduce radical changes to their operations such as scale down their operations, temporary closure of offices, flex employee levels, assigning new responsibilities, and facilitate remote working etc. It is inevitable that there would be skill gaps to be addressed. Still organizations are in the recovery process and need to develop its staff to cope up with challenges in this new age of work. Rapidly changing business environment requires that the employee possess knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) needed to cope up with the emerging challenges to be competitive in the market. Especially IT literacy has become the most important skill for everyone not only for the organizational life even for their personal life as well. During the pandemic situation social media platforms became very active and even ordinary citizens had to use their 'Smart Phone' to order their essentials on line. Therefore HRD professional should take initiatives to re-skill and up-skill employees to be comfortable in their new working environment.

This is not a new phenomenon for HR and HRD professionals always lead the search for ways to enhance the effectiveness of employees in their jobs today and prepare them for tomorrow. Importance of training and development has been recognized by both academics and industrialists. Training is seen as a major catalytic force for augmenting human productivity in all spheres of development (Kumar and Singh, 1996). [Kumara, B. and Singh, D., Training Needs of Rural Trainers for Professional Development; Indian Journal of Training and Development, Vol. 26, No. 3 (July – September 1996)]

However training and development and the learning environment has been completely changed and e-learning platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Classroom have taken over from the conventional classroom type face to face training methods. Although they have been extensively used in developed countries, developing country like Sri Lanka has enormous challenges in applying new technology. IT literacy, financial constraints, infrastructure facilities and attitudes of people are the main constraints in adopting technological changes. Irrespective of those constraints COVID-19 has forced us to adopt the new technology.

In the present situation, especially in the service industry, most of the organizations have taken the advantage of technological changes and it's a blessing in disguise for them. All of us are well aware that changing of attitudes is the most challenging and difficult task in HRD. Employees are very uncomfortable in a new working environment and always suspicious of losing jobs and their rights when new technology is introduced. In the present scenario workplace harmony has been disturbed and the interactions among fellow workers have almost come to standstill. Remote working and working from home may affect the productivity and quality of the work and might have adverse impact on mental health of employees as well. These are new challenges for HR professionals and they need to analyse the ground situation very closely in order to identify attitudinal and behavioral changes of employees. First they need to build confidence among employees and facilitate the smooth transition to the 'new normal' situation. HRD programs should be focused on both enhancing IT skills and improving soft skills with a view to make them comfortable in the new working environment. There should be new ways of maintaining inter personal relationships, may be through social media platforms.

It is often seen that employees and their representatives including social activists criticize and blame employers for fishing in troubled water and taking undue advantages of the situation. It is the responsibility of the HR professionals to play a very active and strategic role in this regard. Professor Dave Ulrich said that "HR professionals play a strategic partner role when they have the ability to translate business strategy into action". In this context HR professionals' role is of two fold. While supporting the business operations by providing a highly productive workforce HR professionals should be able to assist the management in winning the confidence of all stake holders especially the employees and their representatives.

During the pandemic period of one year except for a few sectors, almost every industry was affected badly by the COVID-19. Now the situation has improved and except for a few industries including the hospitality industry others have recovered to a certain extent. In this regard organizations have adopted various measures to address numerous issues faced by them while the government provided several incentives to support the survival and recovery process. It is now high time to assess whether the measures adopted by the industrialists and the government are adequate in the long run. In other words it is of paramount importance to understand the macro situation and the changes required at the highest level.

With the unexpected changes under the new normal situation, some of the job roles became obsolete and redundant. Many skill gaps emerged and up skilling and reskilling programs have been introduced to cope up with the situation. Most of these programs are meant to address immediate challenges and may be as contingency plans. As discussed earlier not only in business organizations, but in the education sector from primary level to undergraduate and postgraduate level, all lectures/teaching sessions are conducted on e-learning platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Classroom. It is evident in most of the cases both resource persons and the recipients do not possess adequate IT literacy and are not comfortable in the new teaching and learning environment.

Due to rapid changes in the environment life style of every one has taken a dramatic turn and some of them could not cope up with the emerging challenges. This has resulted in 'Mental Health Issues' and has become a serious concern in some situations. While enhancing the technical skills of our young generation we

need to keep a close eye on their behavioral changes as well. In rapidly changing world, it will be a challenge for the organization and the society to maintain the equilibrium of the mindset between rapidly advancing technology and the understanding of the human cognition. As such it will be a professional imperative for employers and relevant authorities at national level to change and shape the attitude of people especially the youth in order to create a conducive mindset and positive values among people. This is not only a challenging task but also a difficult exercise that cannot be initiated at the organizational level. In this context human resource development challenges at the country level are enormous and need immediate attention of the hierarchy.

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*Bernardin, H. J. and Russel, J. A., Human Resource Management: An Experimental Approach, Irwin MworkcGraw Hill, 2nd ed. 1998. p. 47.

International Labour Organization (ILO) Centenary Declaration for the 'Future of Work' adopted by the ILO conference in 2019 identified four pillars; technological innovations, demographic shift, environmental and climate change and globalization, that would change the nature and future

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Human Resources For Health In Sri Lanka: An overview of key areas

INTRODUCTION

The health workforce can be defined as “all people engaged in actions whose primary intent is to enhance health”. Within many health care systems worldwide, increased attention is being focused on human resource management (HRM). Over the years, human resource has been recognized as the key health system input, perhaps more important than the other two major inputs, namely physical capital and consumables.

The last two decades have seen growing awareness that inadequate human resources are among the most important barriers to improving access to healthcare in developing countries; that while more money and drugs are being mobilized, the human foundation for all health action, the workforce, remains under-recognized and under-appreciated.

In 2016, the 69th World Health Assembly formally adopted the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030, which envisages accelerated progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by ensuring equitable access to health workers within strengthened health systems (1)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF THE HEALTH WORKFORCE

Health workers in Sri Lanka are mainly educated and trained through domestic public education programmes conducted either by the state-funded universities or the Ministry of Health.

The domestic education of medical professionals is almost completely funded through the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Ministry of Higher Education, which have oversight of the 11 of the 12 state funded medical schools; the 12th medical school being part of the Kotelawala Defence University (KDU), is under the Ministry of Defence.

The universities under the UGC are fully financed by the government and undergraduate students are not required to pay any tuition fees. This zero tuition policy, matched with guaranteed employment in the

state sector for all medical graduates, relatively high wages and a large set of benefits for medical officers, combined with the possibility of dual employment in public and private sectors, makes studying Medicine a very attractive option. Since the number of places to study Medicine in the state funded universities under the UGC has remained relatively static (at about 1,100 – 1,200) over the last decade, the latter factors have probably contributed towards a marked increase in the number of Sri Lankan students who have chosen to pay tuition fees and study Medicine abroad.

Foreign medical graduates are required to pass a licensing examination conducted by the Sri Lanka Medical Council (Examination for Registration to Practice Medicine, ERPM) before they are granted registration to practice Medicine in Sri Lanka. The number of candidates completing the ERPM has doubled, from just over 100 in 2010 and 2011, to an average of more than 200 per year in the four-year period 2014 – 2017. Thus, foreign medical graduates now comprise about 15% of new entrants to the medical workforce. Moreover, based on estimates of students currently studying Medicine overseas, a recently published system dynamics model of the medical workforce in Sri Lanka predicted that this figure will rise to about 500 by 2023/24 (2). Domestic production of medical graduates is also set to rise substantially in the next few years, with 150 - 200 graduates a year from the now-defunct SAIMT and KDU, and another 200-250 from three new state medical faculties.

The training of nurses for employment in the Ministry of Health, is conducted in 18 Nurse Training Schools (NTS) run by the same Ministry. Those who complete the 3-year training programme offered by the NTS are awarded a Diploma, since the Ministry of Health has no degree awarding institutions under its purview. All nursing diploma holders trained by the Ministry of Health have thus far been automatically absorbed to Government service.

Six of the state-funded universities now offer BSc Nursing degree programmes, with a combined annual intake of about 350 (3). Although there is a clear international distinction between recognition of nurs-

ing degrees obtained at a university, and nursing diplomas, in Sri Lanka, they are considered equivalent and follow the same pay structure.

On a more positive development, currently UGC is working to establish a separate Nursing university and utilize the training facilities (nursing schools) of the Ministry of Health to train students. Hence it could be assumed that in future Sri Lanka will produce only graduate nurses.

The large private hospitals have created their own training programmes for nurse assistants. However the private sector training programmes and the nurses trained by them remain unrecognized by the Nursing Council of Sri Lanka and by the Ministry of Health for employment purposes.(4)

Training for the five Professions Supplementary to Medicine (PSM) categories (Radiographers, Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs), Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Pharmacists), and Paramedical personnel, including Primary Health Care providers (Public Health Inspectors and Public Health Midwives) are also done by the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry of Health pays a relatively substantial monthly allowance of around Rs 36,000/ for all students (Nursing, PSM and Paramedical) during the training period.

The state universities also have a limited intake for four-year Bachelor's degrees in Pharmacy, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Physiotherapy, Radiography and Speech & Hearing Sciences (3). This shift from training of allied health personnel within the health services, to university-level education, reflects a global change.

THE ACTIVE HEALTH WORKFORCE

An aggregate density of 4.45 physicians, nurses and midwives per 1,000 population has been identified by WHO as the workforce threshold required for 25% achievement of a composite SDG index which consists of 12 tracer indicators for UHC (1). This WHO threshold suggests that Sri Lanka requires a total of at least 102,000 physicians, nurses and midwives.

The latest figures available at HR unit of the Ministry of Health as of June 2020, the Line Ministry and Provincial Councils employed 22,097 doctors; 44,174 nurses (including nursing students); 8,687 midwives (5). These figures suggest that Sri Lanka had an aggregate density of only 3.44 physicians, nurses and midwives per 1,000 population in 2020.

However, since this figure includes only Ministry of Health employees, the true rate is probably somewhat higher since there are other contributors to the health workforce. There is limited information on the workforce in the private sector, but it has been estimated that around 3,050 doctors are either full time general medical practitioners or are employed full time in the private sector, while the defence establishment has about 320 medical practitioners, and the university system has about 625 medically qualified persons in their permanent cadre, thus bringing up the total number of doctors working in Sri Lanka to approximately 26,000 (2). Since there are negligible numbers of fully qualified nurses and midwives in the private sector, it would appear that the total number of physicians, nurses and midwives in Sri Lanka adds up to about 79,000 at present – a shortfall of approximately 23,000 physicians, nurses and midwives. It is estimated that each year, the Ministry of Health recruits about 1,300-1400 medical officers and dental surgeons, 275 medical specialists, 3,000 nurses and 1,000 paramedical staff into the system (2). Since this works out to an average of about 4,500 more physicians, nurses and midwives a year, then it is possible that the gap may be met in approximately 5 –6 years.

However, the outbound migration of health workers from Sri Lanka must also be taken into account. It has been estimated that in 2010, there were about 5,700 Sri Lankan born medical professionals working in high income countries belonging to the OECD (4), the equivalent of about 25% of the current medical workforce in Sri Lanka. Given that undergraduate and postgraduate medical education in Sri Lanka is funded by the state, this migration of trained professionals represents a substantial loss of investment. Job opportunities in countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia are largely dependent on their migration policies, and are subject to change from time to time. For example, the decision of the UK to leave the European Union has dramatically increased job opportunities for Sri Lankan doctors in the UK.

Data on the outflow of trained nurses is sparse, but it appears to be low, perhaps because the large majority of nurses in Sri Lanka hold diplomas rather than degrees. The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment is said to actively encourage the migration of skilled manpower which includes doctors, nurses and paramedics as a policy to augment the amount of remittances sent back to Sri Lanka.

The annual report on the labour force survey conducted in 2016 by the Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka states that only about 142,000 of over 3.5 million persons employed in the service sector in Sri Lanka are engaged in health and social work (6). This means that jobs in health and social service work comprise only about 2% of all employment in Sri Lanka, compared with the OECD average of 11% (4). Labour force survey statistics also show that the growth of jobs in the health and social sector in Sri Lanka has been slow compared to other service sectors such as education and public administration.

CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

The overall picture that emerges from all of the above is one of significant underutilization of the economic potential of the health workforce in Sri Lanka. However, any plans to exploit this underutilized potential in the health sector, through either public or private investment, must address the following key issues:

1. Training of nurses and other health workers has been largely restricted to the Ministry of Health so far, but these training schools currently operate at maximum capacity, and intake cannot be increased without major investments in improved infrastructure and more teaching staff.

2. The Ministry of Health has to play a key role in identifying the health workforce requirements for the country as whole, while allowing for loss of trained personnel as a result of migration. This should encompass expansion in delivery of preventative and curative health care through both public and private sectors.

3. The Ministry of Higher Education should play a key role in expansion of educational opportunities for all health professions. This includes incentivizing the private sector to establish higher education institutions for the education and training of nurses and other health workers.

Addressing these issues will require substantial investments by the state and private sectors. However, investments made in supporting the expansion of opportunities in Sri Lanka for high quality education of health professionals will result in a larger, more highly skilled, health labour force. This will undoubtedly pay dividends in the years to come, through a stronger health sector in the economy of the country and improved health indices for all Sri Lankans.

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National HRD: What's in it for Sri Lanka?

National HRD is emerging research agenda based on the country case studies, done in the countries that practice NHRD. This new research agenda was started in 2001 by McLean. With that, NHRD has been rapidly developing and challenging the traditional HRD. Even NHRD was criticized for its scope, definition, theoretical basis, and theory development methodology.

However, today, NHRD has been an accepted research area, and still evolving to encompass many country case studies to contribute to this evolving theory. NHRD theory is applied in nature and has been developed based on the practical experiences around the world. Specially, NHRD has contributed to achieve Human Development Goals and Millennium Development Goals earlier, and today's Sustainable Development Goals, apart from its contribution each country to economic and national growth and development.

NHRD as a Research Agenda

In the journey of NHRD development, it's important to consider the notable landmarks of its development as summarized in the table below.

NHRD Development Events	Authors
Investigating the roots of NHRD in 'Harbison and Mayers' (H&M), work (1964) under development economics since	Paprock and others (2006)
Learning from early studies, prior to NHRD theory development studies	McLean and others (1990, 2000, 1981)
Emergence of NHRD	McLean (2000, 200, 2004)
Defining NHRD	McLean (2004)
Doing NHRD country case studies	Authors from 21 countries
Delineating NHRD theoretical models	McLean, Cunningham and others (2004; 2006; 2007)
Debating over NHRD validity	Wang and others (2008); McLean and others (2008)
Doing NHRD corroborating studies	McLean, and others (2011)
Linking HCD studies to NHRD	Osman Gani and others (2009; 2010; 2011)
Doing NHRD review studies	Devadas (2009, 2010); War and others (2008); McLean and others (2007, 2008)
Doing contemporary NHRD studies	Nagarathnam (2016), (Devadas, 2016; 2021)

NHRD was first defined by McLean as:

“Human Resources Development is ‘any process or activity that, either initially or over the long term, has the potential to develop ... work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an

organization, community, nation or, ultimately, the whole of humanity” (2001, p. 322).

Later, NHRD definitions were developed for individual countries, especially in 2004 and 2006. Few other definitions that summarized the country case studies were also presented (Ex. Devadas, 2009; 2013).

Nature of NHRD Adoption in the Practice

NHRD journey, so far, presents that NHRD is:

1.a practical domain already exists, specially in the countries of recently developed and progressing countries, as a national level initiative for human resources or people development, aimed at national development;

2.a foundation for resolving national challenges and achieving development goals in countries;

3. in the top priority of country national planning, hence it comes under the top apex of the core national planning hierarchy. Thus, it comes, under the prime ministers' scope or under the central planning unit or the national planning unit of the country;

4.Sometimes, misinterpreted just as a response for human resource management in the public and private organizations;

5. Categorized wrongly under a ministry that is responsible only for workforce and public service. However, NHRD, under its main purpose, considers the population from ‘cradle’ to ‘grave’.

NHRD research agenda has so far presented the experience of countries that have been implementing NHRD as a national policy. Countries like, South Korea, Singapore, and Malaysia within the south-east Asia context; India within the South Asia; Kenya, South Africa, and Morocco within the African context; Mexico and Brazil in the Latin American Context, Canada in the North America; St. Lucia in the Caribbean islands; the Pacific Islands; China from the socialists' world; and the United Kingdom from the Europe are such countries for good examples of NHRD policy implementation. literature. However, NHRD adds findings from many country case stud-

ies, time to time, while it encourages further to share such new knowledge from different country contexts. NHRD literature further provides NHRD's desired outcomes; problems and challenges; attributes of excellent NHRD; similarities and dissimilarities among NHRD country models; NHRD's practical implications; and theoretical basis for NHRD research.

NHRD Framework for Sri Lanka: A New Need?

Sri Lanka, as it does not involve in national planning, does not have NHRD policy or plan. This absence can be highlighted as the root cause for Sri Lanka's stagnation and for the fast progress of the development of countries like South Korea, Singapore, and Malaysia that surpassed Sri Lanka though they were behind us in 1950's.

This raises a series of questions for Sri Lanka to re-think about their development missions and adopting a right NHRD framework:

1. Why does Sri Lanka does not have its national policy and planning to drive the country? How can it be developed?
2. Why does the country not have an HRD policy?
3. How should NHRD policy be developed in Sri Lanka? What should it be included?
4. Where should the NHRD mission of the country be placed?
5. Has Sri Lanka identified the real scope of NHRD of the country?
6. Are their right structures and mechanisms for NHRD planning and implementation within the country?
7. Is the role of NHRDC Sri Lanka the ideal arm to cater to the country's NHRD mission?
8. Has the NHRDC Sri Lanka rightly placed with right empowerment? Does its positioning under Public Service Provincial Council and Local Government empowers NHRDC to realize its goals?
9. What are the problems and challenges, faced by NHRD mission in Sri Lanka? How can they be resolved?

10. What are the remedies to be taken to rightly align the NHRD role to contribute to the country's development?

Answers for these questions should be generated using the right expertise in the field of HRD and national HRD, locally and in abroad. Further, the HRD education should be made popular to align the country to a 'development' paradigm rather 'getting stuck to a 'management paradigm' that is currently overemphasized through 'human resource management' that articulates HRD wrongly as a part of HRM.

In this regard, a foresighted research agenda, and education and training in HRD and NHRD should be widely promoted with right structural mechanism for NHRD practice within the country.

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Wellness Vs. Wellbeing

What's the need of the hour in 2021?

We hear the words burn out, stress, longer workdays, extended screen time, multiple platforms and anxiety. But what does this all mean? As an HR Professional what can you do about it? And most importantly where - do you start?

There are a few pointers I've penned down, which might be helpful for professionals to navigate this uncertain time.

1.The words wellness and wellbeing are used interchangeably, however, do we know the difference? wellness has a lot to do with physical wellness, whereas wellbeing takes a more holistic or 'whole' approach including the mental, physical, financials etc.

2.If we focus on wellbeing, which is more holistic who is accountable for this? is it one person or many people? Wellbeing is not just about one person or one wellbeing policy. I strongly support the view that wellbeing starts with the leadership, then the organization and of course the individual too. All three need to integrate in order to achieve true and authentic wellbeing. From a leadership perspective, what is the culture you drive towards? – do you set meetings outside of work hours? do you expect people to reply you after work hours? do you give your team the psychological safety to come to you if they have a problem? and if they can't actually deliver what's needed/keep to deadlines/ or if something is going on in their personal lives, does your team open up to you? If you are a leader these are the questions you should ask yourself.

In an organizational context, do your processes and policies support employee wellbeing? Does the organization demand a 10-hour workday or is it 8 hours? Do you encourage people to take their leave? do you provide counselling facilities? Most importantly is employee wellbeing a role in your organization?

As an individual you too have a role to play. Practice self-discipline, and communicate during tough times, it may be with your supervisor or even counsellor – take the time to clearly voice out your needs. -. Many of us forget to book some time on our calendar just for ourselves. We are so focused on the daily grind and

with getting things done that we often never set apart the time for ourselves.

3.What does wellbeing entail? It entails physical, mental, emotional, financial, social etc.

4.Many organizations feel wellbeing can be addressed by sporadic programs or interventions. However, this won't deliver a long-term solution, it must be a strategy and most importantly you need to have a champion to drive it. A strategy would be to get in some experts to set up the foundation which you can build within the organization.

5.The world of work has changed. It no more requires you to come into office. It's about getting the work done irrespective of location. However, this adds in a layer of complexity and can blur the lines of work and life. However, is work-life balance still applicable? Is it work-life integration and then how does that affect wellbeing?

Here are some of my thoughts on how organizations and individuals can take the first steps towards creating an environment that fosters wellbeing:

Organizations

- Pulse check on wellbeing (survey)
- Highlight the importance of wellbeing to the leadership/management and further stress on how it links to employee productivity
- Look for experts in the field of wellbeing who can advice/help the organization to build a sustainable strategy

- Until a strategy is in place, it's good to check with employees what they think wellbeing encapsulates (which can be done via a pulse survey), and then educate employees on wellbeing, and the steps they can take as individuals initially.

Individuals

- Set time apart in your calendar for yourself - this can be your exercise time, time for journaling, or for you to do anything for yourself such as self-care
- Demarcate your calendar in terms of your work time

and personal time. It might be your individual choice to see if there are time slots that integrate both. i.e: would you attend a meeting or listen to a webinar whilst on your treadmill?

-Learn to pause this is something you learn with coaching, even if you hear something, take 3 deep breaths, pause and respond - it definitely helps you gather your thoughts!

-Mindfulness, mediation, gratitude, exercise, nutrition; there are multiple apps that can help you along these lines.

If you would like to know more about wellbeing please feel free to contact me, I can certainly try to help or put you in touch with some experts on the Topic. Also don't forget to leave your thoughts on the comments section – I would love to hear them.



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Training and Development in today's organizational context in HR view

Training and Development is a continuous process of identifying and developing knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees to enhance their productivity and contribution.

It is a cost for the organization. But still organizations are investing desirable amount of money in the process of continuous training. According to the view of Sir Richard Branson CEO of Virgin Group Ltd training is an integral part of the business management. He says that "Train people well enough so they can leave. Treat them well enough so they don't have to." If an organization trains its staff well, the return on investment is greater than the invested capital. Training may impact the continuous development of the organization and the employee wellbeing. Training employees may develop the employee as an individual. In the same way knowledge, skill and attitude has a direct impact on the organization as well. Employees are the greatest asset of the organization. It is mentioned in the five M's in management as a resource.

If a production company bought new machinery to the workstation without giving proper training for employees it may cause severe hazards. Sometimes it may cause permanent disabilities to the people and even death also can be happened. In such an incident, the organization has to bear a huge cost to recover the cost of that loss. Organizations have to bear the loss of production cost, insurance and trust of the buyers. If the trust of the buyers is lost, a reasonable time period may be needed to build up the trust of the buyer.

A major impact of today's organizational context is sending employees for training which are not relevant to the current job description or the future career development of the employees. Training managers must have a sound knowledge about their employee's capabilities and their capacities. It is the duty of the Training Manager to identify the gaps of the trainees and send them to the training which are relevant to fill the gaps.

To get the maximum outcome from the training, the organization must give the relevant training to suit the employees. Another impact of the training and development is employees think that all the employees of the organization must be trained in equal manner. Training is not a right of an employee to have an equal benefit as each and every employee of the organization. Training is not a right of an employee to have equality.

Training is a process where employees must get the required skills, knowledge and attitudes which lack in a particular employee to deliver the current duties and responsibilities. As an example if an organization has managers who lack managerial skills, it is needed to send them to the training where they can learn about managerial and leadership skills.

If an organization wants to manage the emotional intelligence of the staff members, it can give training on emotional intelligence. If the training manager decided not to send a particular employee to training it doesn't convey that particular employee is not given an opportunity to be trained. It shows that the particular employee doesn't have any area to be improved and he is at a level where organizational needs are met. Training is not a prestige or a right, it is an opportunity given by the organization to fill the skill gaps of the employees through training.



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