

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – STRUCTURE AND ROLES

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this research paper is to acquire an understanding of human resource management – structure and roles. Within the organizations, human resources are regarded to render a significant contribution in the implementation of various tasks and functions. It is the human resources, who need to manage financial as well as technical resources in an efficient manner. In order to carry out their tasks and activities in an efficient manner, they generate awareness in terms of their job duties and need to up-grade their knowledge, skills and abilities. They need to conduct research, get enrolled in training and development programs within as well as outside the organization and establish effective communication terms with others within as well as outside the organization to carry out their tasks and activities in a well-organized manner and generate the desired outcomes. The main areas that have been taken into account in this research paper include, the development of the HRM concept, nature of human resource management, structure of human resource management, role of human resource management and classification of HR roles.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Managers, Organization, Practitioners, Roles, Structure

The concept of human resource management (HRM) has gained attention from the academics and practitioners alike since it first emerged during the mid-1980s. The overall aim of HRM is to ensure that the organization is able to achieve success through people. The HRM systems can be the source of organizational capabilities that allows the organization to learn and benefit from new opportunities. The HRM helps the organization to obtain and retain the skilled, committed and well-motivated workforce that it requires. The individuals, who are in supervisory and leadership positions need to make sure that when employees are recruited, they are to be provided with the information and knowledge that is necessary to carry out the job duties in a well-organized manner, achieve the desired goals and objectives and incur job satisfaction. It is necessary to develop high-performance work systems that would include recruitment and selection procedures, performance-contingent incentive compensation systems and management development and training activities (Chapter – 2, n.d.).

The development of high-commitment management practices that recognise that employees are valuable assets of the organization and contribute in the development of the climate of mutual trust and co-operation. In order to carry out one's roles in an effective manner, it is necessary for the individuals to work in co-ordination and integration. In the case of occurrence of conflicts and disagreements as well, the members of the organization need to ensure that they need to implement proper conflict resolution methods. When the members of the organization work in collaboration and promote teamwork, they are able to provide solutions to problems and challenges and carry out their job duties in a satisfactory manner. In order to

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promote enrichment of the organizational structure and facilitate the implementation of job duties, it is necessary to adopt an ethical approach to manage the employees that is based on concern for individuals, fairness and transparency. Maintenance of physical and psychological well-being of the workforce is crucial (Chapter – 2, n.d.).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HRM CONCEPT

The complete concept of HRM emerged in the middle of 1980s against the background of the prominent researchers and writers on management. These included Pascale and Athos (1981) and Peters and Waterman (1982), who produced list of attributes that led to the development of the concept of HRM. The concept of HRM has undergone through three stages. The initial concepts of HRM have been developed by American writers during the 1980s. During the late 1980s, the British writers also began to conduct research in this field. Third aspect is, the assimilation of HRM into the traditional personnel management. One of the first explicit statements of the HRM concept was made by the Michigan School. They held that HR systems and the organization structure should be managed in a manner that is congruent with the organizational strategy. Furthermore, there is explanation of the human resources cycle (Chapter – 2, n.d.).

In the human resources cycle, there are four generic processes or functions that are performed in various types of organizations. These are, selection of the workforce, appraisal, i.e. performance management, rewards and development. When there are vacancies within the organization, analysis is conducted in terms of the areas that when recruitment and selection of the individuals will take place, what educational qualifications, competencies and aptitude they should possess to generate the desired outcomes. Within the course of performance of job duties, it is vital on the part of the supervisors and managers to implement the performance appraisal methods. These methods render an important contribution in identifying the limitations and bringing about improvements. Therefore, it is necessary to implement these methods on regular basis. Rewarding of the employees is one of the important ways of motivating the employees. Within the organization, apart from salaries, it is necessary to make provision of benefits and incentives to the individuals and reward them for good performance (Chapter – 2, n.d.).

Development of the workforce is a comprehensive concept. When the concept of development is taken into consideration, there are number of factors that are identified. These include, development of knowledge and competencies among them, which are necessary to achieve professional and personal goals. The development of conflict resolution, time management, decision making and communication skills are considered indispensable. These skills are necessary to retain one's jobs, incur job satisfaction and maintain good terms and relationships with others. Apart from these aspects, it is necessary to ensure that the workforce are well-equipped in terms of modern, scientific and innovative methods. Whether the organisation is engaged in production of goods or services, it is essential to generate information in terms of modern and technical methods. Changes are an integral part of the organization, which takes place in all spheres, i.e. managerial, administrative, clerical, technical, financial, and so forth. Hence, the human resources need to be well-trained to cope with changes.

NATURE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Human resource management is a management function that helps the managers to recruit, train and develop the members of the organization. HRM is concerned with the dimensions of the individuals within the organization. In understanding the nature of HRM, there are certain aspects that need to be taken into consideration. These have been stated as follows: (Unit – 1, n.d.).

HRM Involves the Application of Management Functions and Principles

Management functions and principles are applied to acquiring, developing, maintaining and providing remuneration to the employees within the organization. It is important on the part of management to possess an approachable nature and an amiable attitude. Furthermore, the workforce should be provided with the opportunities that would lead to their well-being and progression. The pay and remuneration should be in accordance to the job duties performed by the employees.

Decisions related to Employees must be integrated

Decision making is regarded as an integral part of the organization. When the decisions are made in terms of the working environmental conditions, it is apparent that they will influence the functioning of the organization as well. The individuals, who are in leadership positions are vested with the authority of making decisions. They may either use their own discretion or may seek ideas and suggestions from others. Therefore, it needs to be ensured that decisions on various aspects of the employees must be consistent with other decisions related to human resources.

Decisions made influence the Effectiveness of the Organizations

When the decisions are made it needs to be ensured that they are beneficial to the employees as well as the organization as a whole. The decisions made should influence the efficiency and effectiveness within the functioning of the organization. In some cases, the employees, who are in subordinate positions generate awareness in terms of certain ideas. Hence, they feel that they should consult their supervisors to bring about changes, which may be productive. Therefore, it can be stated that employees are required to make decisions, which would augment effectiveness, productivity and profitability.

HRM functions are not limited to only Business Organizations

The HRM functions are not only limited to business organizations but all other types of organizations. These may include, service, manufacturing, financial, charitable and so forth. This is comprehensively understood that when the human resources, employed in various types of organizations will make use of their skills and abilities, they will be able to render a significant contribution in performing all tasks and activities in a well-organized manner and generating the desired outcomes. It is entirely on the part of the human resources to augment their knowledge and abilities, so they can contribute diligently and conscientiously towards the attainment of organizational goals.

STRUCTURE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The structure of HRM is broad. The major activities that are part of the lives of the employees from the time they are hired within the organization till the time they leave the organization comes under the purview of HRM. The structure of HRM takes into consideration various areas, which have been stated as follows: (Unit – 1, n.d.).

Human Resource Planning

The objective of HR planning is to ensure that the organization has the right types of persons in the right place at the right time. When there are vacancies within the organizations and they need to be filled, the candidates should possess the essential qualifications that are suitable for the job. The HR planning prepares the human resources inventory with the viewpoint to assess present and future needs, availability and the areas of deficiencies in human resources. The HR planning forecast the demand and supply and identify the sources of selection. It is essential to formulate the strategies and approaches that may be both long-term as well as short-term, to meet the needs and requirements of human resources. In other words, it is necessary to develop the conditions within the working environment in such a manner that may stimulate the mind-sets of the employees and motivate them towards rendering an efficacious job performance.

Design of Organization and Job

Designing of the organization and job is an important task of laying down the organization structure, authority, relationships and responsibilities. The design of the organization and job takes into consideration the aspects of job specification, which identifies the attributes of the individuals, who will be most suitable for the jobs. Within the organization, the members are employed in various positions. The individuals, who are in leadership positions are vested with rights and have the authority of controlling the functioning of the organization and managing the workforce. It is essential for the members of the organization to form good terms and relationships with each other. As establishment of amiable terms will help them in the performance of their job duties in a well-organized manner. All the members of the organization are assigned various job duties, hence, they have certain job responsibilities, which they need to implement appropriately. Therefore, it can be stated that the designing of the organization and job helps in recruitment and training of suitable candidates to achieve organizational goals.

Staffing

Staffing is the function of selection of right candidates in the right positions at the right time. It is regarded as one of the important functions. In order to lead to effective growth and development of the organization, achieve one's goals and objectives and incur job satisfaction, it is necessary to ensure that vacancies are filled with qualified and competent individuals. When there are vacancies within the organization, advertisements are usually displayed in newspapers or on the websites. The individuals look at the advertisements and when they feel, they possess

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the essential educational qualifications, skills and abilities, they apply for jobs. Through looking at the applications, the hiring authorities make the decision, which candidates are to be called for interviews. To carry out the staffing function appropriately, the hiring authorities need to implement the procedures, such as, written tests, interviews, group discussions and so forth that are necessary for selection. Therefore, these are the factors that need to be implemented to carry out the function of staffing in a suitable manner.

Training and Development

Training and development are important aspects that need to be taken into consideration in all organizations. In various types of organizations, including service and manufacturing and production, when employees are recruited, they need to go through training and development programs. The primary objective of training and development programs is to impart knowledge to the employees, so they are able to carry out their job duties in a well-organized and suitable manner. In these programs, the trainers need to ensure that they make use of appropriate instructional methods that would be in accordance to the job requirements and organizational goals. In various organizations, different kinds of training methods are made use of, such as, vestibule training, case studies, lecture methods, role playing, field visits and so forth. It depends upon the organization and job requirements that what types of training and development methods need to be implemented. The training and development programs render a significant contribution in augmenting the knowledge, skills and aptitude of human resources. They are attended by human resources upon joining the organization as well as within the course of performance of job duties.

Organizational Development

Organizational development is a technique of planned changes. It seeks to change the beliefs, attitudes, values and structures within the organization. When focusing on organizational development, there are number of aspects that need to be taken into account. These include, departments, personnel, management, administrative, technical, clerical functions, implementation of training and development programs and so forth. The human resources need to be aware of the changes that may take place in the external environmental conditions and conduct an analysis of the needs and requirements of the clients. Organizational development is a comprehensive strategy for making improvements within the organization. It is a long-range effort to lead to transformations, which would be worthwhile, and enhance the organization's problem solving and renewal process, particularly through a more efficient and integrative working environment. In order to bring about organizational development, it is essential for the human resources to inculcate the traits of diligence, resourcefulness and conscientiousness.

Compensation and Benefits

Compensation and benefits refers to the compensation, salary or other monetary and non-monetary benefits passed on by the organization to the employees. Compensation and benefits is an important aspect of HRM as it helps in motivating the workforce towards the performance of their job duties. Compensation refers to the pay or the exchange in monetary terms of the work

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performed by the employees and paid by the employers. This can be in the form of salary, wages and incentives. When the employees suffer from injuries or experience accidents at the workplace, then too compensation is paid to them by their employers. The four types of compensation for the employees are hourly compensation, salaries, commissions and bonuses. On the other hand, benefits refer to the exchange in value to the employees as part of their packages for the performance of job duties. Compensation and benefits are tangible, but there are intangible rewards, such as, recognition, work-life and development.

Employee Assistance

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a work site focused program that contributes in providing assistance in the identification and resolution of employee concerns, which may or may not have an effect upon their performance. The major concerns of the employees are in terms of various areas, such as, job expectations, other members of the organization, workload, stress, working hours, rules and policies and the overall working environmental conditions. Personal matters are also taken into consideration, including health, well-being, personal relationships, financial and legal matters, alcohol and drug dependency and anxiety. The primary objective of EAP is to make provision of strategies and methods for counselling and guidance. Counselling and guidance are regarded as indispensable aspects that make provision of information to the employees that would facilitate in providing solutions to their problems. Advice and information should be provided to the employees on a systematic and uniform basis (Newton, Hayday, & Barkworth, 2005).

Union-Management Relations

In order to lead to effective growth and development of the organization, it is of utmost significance for the union and management to maintain amiable terms and relationships with each other. The management is vested with the authority and power to make decisions, direct and guide the employees in the right direction, implement leadership skills, formulate measures and programs and control the functioning of the organization. When they are carrying out these functions, they need to ensure their decisions, programs, measures and laws are beneficial to the employees and organization as a whole. On the other hand, on the part of the union, it is necessary to inculcate the traits of diligence, resourcefulness and conscientiousness. They need to develop interest and enthusiasm towards the performance of job duties to achieve professional and personal goals. In order to reinforce union-management relations, they need to inculcate the traits of morality and ethics and depict honesty, righteousness and truthfulness. The reinforcement of union-management relations renders a significant contribution in the achievement of organizational goals.

Personnel Research

Personnel are an integral part of the organization. Research conducted on personnel helps in identifying the aspects, which need to be improved. These include, job performance, knowledge and competencies, providing solutions to problems and challenges and so forth. The knowledge on behavioural science and industrial psychology puts emphasis upon the

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expectations of workers, aspirations and behaviour. The workforce have some expectations from the employers in return for the performance of their job duties. One of the most common expectations is, increase in pay and promotional opportunities. In order to acquire promotional opportunities and enrich their career prospects, it is apparent that they not only are required to carry out their job duties in accordance to the desired expectations, but they are also required to maintain sociable terms and relationships with their employers as well as other members. On the other hand, it is indispensable for the personnel to maintain good health, physically as well as psychologically. In organizations, there are provision of counselling and guidance facilities provided by expert counsellors, which help the workforce in providing solutions to their problems. Therefore, research is indispensable in leading to progression and well-being of the personnel and organization.

Usage of Technologies

With the advent of modernization and globalization, it is necessary to make use of technologies and modern and innovative methods in the implementation of tasks and activities. Advancements taking place in the technology of products and production methods have led to transformations in the working environment to a major extent. Hence, it can be stated that human resources need to be well-equipped with the usage of technologies to carry out their tasks and activities appropriately. Globalization of the economy has led to an increase in the competition manifold. Science of ergonomics gives better ideas of rendering a job performance in an efficient manner. Therefore, the research conducted on human resources is an unavoidable requirement. It needs to take special care by leading to improvements in the exchange of information through effective communication systems on a continuous basis, especially on morality, ethics and motivation. When the employees experience setbacks in making use of technologies, they attend training programs to augment their knowledge and skills. Therefore, it can be stated that usage of technologies are regarded as indispensable factors in enhancing productivity and profitability.

ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The role of HRM is to plan, develop and administer the policies, measures and programs that are designed to make optimum use of the organizations human resources. It is that part of the management, which is concerned with the individuals, employed within the organizations and their job duties. The role of HRM is primarily concerned with the implementation of job duties. When they are employed, they need to augment their knowledge and skills to carry out their job duties in an appropriate manner. The three important factors that need to be taken into consideration in implementing the roles efficiently and productively are, operative utilization of human resources, desirable working relationships among all the members of the organization and leading to development of human resources. Within the organization, the working environmental conditions need to be created in such a manner that employees feel motivated towards the performance of job duties (Unit – 1, n.d.).

HR professionals have incorporating roles. They are required to have thorough knowledge of the organization and job duties and should be able to cope up with problems and challenges. The ultimate goal of every individual is to develop the connection with the

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organization through rendering a wholehearted contribution towards the implementation of job duties. The first and the foremost role of the HR personnel is to impart information to the employees on a regular basis. In some cases, the job duties are difficult, which may enable the employees to feel vulnerable and apprehensive. In such cases, when they obtain support and assistance from their supervisors and managers, they will be able to achieve the desired outcomes. Therefore, it can be stated that individuals cannot carry out their job duties in seclusion. It is vital for them to obtain support and assistance and work in collaboration with other members of the organization.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGERS

The responsibilities of human resource managers have been stated as follows: (Unit – 1, n.d.).

1. To develop a thorough knowledge of corporate culture, plans and policies.
2. To act as an internal change agent and consultant.
3. To initiate change and act as an expert and facilitator.
4. To actively participate in the strategic formulation of the organization.
5. To maintain effective communication between the members of the organization with the external parties and organizations.
6. To identify and evolve HRD strategies in consonance with the overall business strategy.
7. To facilitate the development of various organizational teams and their working relationships with other teams and individuals.
8. To diagnose the problems and make provision of worthwhile and meaningful solutions to the problems and challenges experienced by human resources.
9. To provide co-ordination and support services for the delivery of HRD programs and services.
10. To evaluate the influence of an HRD intervention or to conduct research so as to identify, develop or test the changes that have taken place in the performance of the individuals.

ROLES PLAYED BY HR PRACTITIONERS

The roles played by HR practitioners vary on a comprehensive basis in accordance to the extent to which they are generalists, i.e. HR director or HR manager or specialist, i.e. the head of learning and development, head of talent management or the head of reward. The level at which they work, i.e. strategic, executive and administrative, needs of the organization, the framework in which they work and their own capabilities. The role can be proactive, reactive or a mixture of both. There are number of issues that have an effect upon the roles of the HR individuals. These comprise of gaining support and commitment, role ambiguity, role conflict, morality, ethics and professionalism (The Role of the HR practitioner, n.d.). These have been stated as follows: (Unit – 1, n.d.).

1. To identify the issues and trends concerning the organization's external and internal human resources to the attention of strategic makers and to recommend the strategies, which may be worthwhile and assisting during the long-term period as well. The primary objective of the strategies is to support the organizational excellence and endurance.
2. To design and prepare the HR systems and actions for the implementation, so they can have maximum influence on the organizational performance and development. The designing and preparation of the HR systems is a process that has to get carried out on a continuous basis. The reason being, changes do take place within the external as well as the internal environmental conditions. Therefore, in order to effectively cope up changes, it is necessary to design and prepare the HR systems.
3. To facilitate the development and implementation of strategies for bringing about transformations within the organization with the main objective of pursuing values and visions. In order to achieve organizational goals, it is essential to formulate values and vision, which may provide ideas to the individuals to carry out their job duties wholeheartedly.
4. To form positive terms and relationships with the customers by making provision of best services to make effective use of resources to the maximum and create commitment among human resources, who provide support to the organization in meeting the needs and requirements of the customers and carrying out job duties in a well-organized manner.
5. To identify the learning needs to design and develop the structured learning programs and materials to help augment learning for the individuals and groups. When employees are recruited within the organization, they may be experienced, but in spite of experience, they are required to undergo the training and development programs, which may enable them to augment knowledge and understanding, particularly in terms of organization and performance of job duties.
6. To enable the individuals and groups to work in new situations and to bring about transformations in their viewpoints and perspectives, so the individuals in leadership positions move from authoritarian to the participative roles of leaderships. In other words, instead of exercising authority, they participated with the main objective of promoting well-being and enhancing productivity and profitability.
7. The employees need to be assisted to assess their knowledge and competencies. Furthermore, they need to be well-aware of their goals and objectives. In order to lead to progression, the human resources need to be well-aware of methods and techniques that would be effectual and beneficial to them in the implementation of job duties. Therefore, it is essential to assess their knowledge and competencies and bring about improvements within the period of time.
8. It is comprehensively understood that in some cases, particularly when two or more individuals are working on a project, they need support and assistance from each other. One of the important roles is to develop effective communication skills. Development of effective communication skills enables the individuals to provide necessary information to the individuals in terms of various aspects that are necessary

to enrich the functioning of the organization and achieve professional and personal goals.

9. The assessment of the HRD practices and programs and their impact and communication of the results, which may enable the members of the organization to cope with problems and challenges. In other words, support and assistance is available to the employees to provide solutions to their problems. Research has indicated that within the course of time, transformations do take place within the organization. Therefore, in order to ensure that transformations prove to be beneficial to the organization, assessment of HRD practices and programs is crucial.
10. The HR practitioners are required to possess an amiable and approachable nature. The employees usually approach their supervisors and managers with various types of problems and concerns. Therefore, it is essential for the HR practitioners to communicate with them in an effective manner. They need to listen to their grievances and provide solutions to their problems and concerns. This is one of the important ways of arousing interest and enthusiasm towards the performance of job duties.

CLASSIFICATION OF HR ROLES

The HR roles are classified into three main types, administrative, operational and employee advocate role and strategic role. These have been stated as follows: (Unit – 1, n.d.).

ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE OF HR

The administrative role of the HR management has been oriented to the administration and record-keeping, including the essential paperwork and policy implementation. Major changes have taken place in the administrative role of human resources. These changes involve the implementation of various types of technologies and outsourcing. Technologies have rendered a significant contribution in the implementation of tasks and functions in a smooth and manageable manner. When the individuals are not well-equipped with the usage of technologies, they are required to undergo training programs to augment their knowledge and understanding. The individuals are able to carry out various tasks and functions in a less time consuming manner. Technology is being used in most of the HR functions from employment applications and employee benefits enrolments to e-learning using internet-based resources. Many HR administrative functions are being outsourced to vendors. The outsourcing of HR administrative activities has grown dramatically in HR areas, such as, employee assistance, counselling, retirement planning, benefits administration, payroll services and outplacement services.

Operational and Employee Advocate Role

HR managers are required to manage most of the HR activities in line with the strategies and operations that have been identified by the management to provide solutions to issues and concerns that have been experienced by the employees. HR often has been viewed as an employee advocate within the organizations. Employee advocacy helps to ensure just and equitable treatment for the employees, irrespective of personal background and circumstances.

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The operational role requires the HR professionals to co-operate with various departmental and operating managers and supervisors to identify and implement the needed programs and policies within the organization. Operational activities are strategic in nature. Compliance with equal employment opportunity and other laws need to be ensured, employment applications are processed and recruitment and selection of the human resources takes place through interviews, written tests and other selection methods. Furthermore, information is provided to them in terms of the working environmental conditions and their questions related to wages and benefits are answered. Therefore, it can be stated that for the implementation of tasks and activities, HR manager matches the HR activities with the strategies of the organization.

Strategic Role

The role of the HR as the strategic business partner is often described as rendering a significant contribution to the strategic directions and the success of the organization. This means that the HR is involved in devising of the methods and strategies that would lead to productivity and profitability. The planning of resources is regarded to be of utmost significance. As it is comprehensively believed that financial resources are regarded indispensable in order to carry out various functions, bring about transformations and lead to improvements. Hence, it is vital for the human resources to adequately manage financial resources. In the implementation of strategic role of HR, the members of the organization need to carry out the managerial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling (Chapter 1, n.d.). Planning is the function that involves bridging the gap from where one is in the present and where one has to be in future. Organizing involves forming and establishing the human resources to achieve organizational goals. Staffing is recruiting the right individuals in the right position at the right time. Leading is guiding and directing the individuals in the right direction and controlling is implementation of methods and approaches, which involves monitoring the tasks and activities of the individuals. Hence, strategic role is crucial, which enables the individuals to acquire knowledge in terms of managerial functions.

CONCLUSION

When acquiring an understanding of human resource management, structure and roles are important aspects, which needs to be taken into consideration. In the nature of human resource management, the main areas, which are taken into account are, HRM involves the application of management functions and principles, decisions related to employees must be integrated, decisions made influence the effectiveness of the organizations and HRM functions are not limited to only business organizations. Structure of human resource management is comprehensive, which takes into account number of factors, these are, human resource planning, design of organization and job, staffing, training and development, organizational development, compensation and benefits, employee assistance, union-management relations, personnel research and usage of technologies. In order to carry out these functions in an appropriate manner, the members need to conduct proper analysis, especially of the areas, which need to be improved and generate awareness in terms of the factors needed to enrich the structure of the organization.

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In the role of human resource management, the members need to work effectively towards honing their skills and abilities, so they are able to carry out their roles satisfactorily. The role of HRM is to design, develop and manage the strategies, procedures and programs to make optimum use of human resources. The members of the organization are assigned various types of job duties in accordance to their educational qualifications, competencies and abilities. When they are assigned job duties, they need to ensure they work efficiently and develop interest and enthusiasm. Apart from inculcation of the traits of diligence, resourcefulness and conscientiousness, the employees need to develop effective communication skills with other members. As effective communication not only helps them to provide solutions to problems and challenges, but they are able to incur job satisfaction as well. Finally, it can be stated that in order to enhance the structure of the organization, the members need to carry out their roles satisfactorily.

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