

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF HRD ORGANIZATIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF
STRATEGIC COMPETENCIES THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
LEARNING ORGANIZATION CONCEPTS**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how Human Resource Development (HRD) organizations contribute to developing members' strategic competencies by implementing learning organization concepts. Focus is placed on the HRD Communication Forum in the GIIC–KITIC Industrial Area of Deltamas—a collaborative platform for HR practitioners across various companies. Using a quantitative explanatory design, data were collected from active members via structured questionnaires. The research model incorporates HRD organizational contribution as the independent variable, organizational learning as a mediating variable, and strategic competency development as the dependent variable. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). Results indicate that HRD organizational contributions significantly and positively affect organizational learning, which in turn enhances members' strategic competencies. Furthermore, organizational learning partially mediates the relationship between HRD contribution and strategic competency development. These findings confirm that HRD forums can operate as effective non-formal learning organizations when learning principles are systematically embedded. Theoretically, this study strengthens the integrative link between HRD and learning organization theory in non-formal professional settings, while offering practical insights for human resource development in industrial zones.

Keywords: Human Resource Development; Learning Organization; Strategic Competency; Organizational Learning; HRD Forum

JEL Classification : J24, M14, O15

1. INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of globalization, technological disruption, and competitive pressure have significantly transformed how organizations manage and develop their human resources. In this context, organizational competitiveness is no longer determined solely by physical assets or technological superiority, but increasingly by the quality of human resources and their strategic competencies. Strategic competencies—such as systems thinking, adaptability, problem-solving, and innovative capacity—are essential for organizations to respond effectively to environmental changes and sustain long-term performance.

Consequently, Human Resource Development (HRD) has become a critical strategic function. HRD is no longer limited to administrative training; it is expected to play a proactive role in building learning capabilities that support organizational strategy. One influential concept supporting this perspective is the *learning organization*, popularized by Senge (1990), which emphasizes continuous learning, shared vision, team learning, mental models, and systems thinking as key drivers of organizational effectiveness.

While extensive research has examined the relationship between HRD practices and performance within formal settings (e.g., corporations and educational institutions), relatively limited attention has been paid to non-formal, inter-organizational learning platforms. One such platform is the HRD Communication Forum, which brings together HR practitioners from different companies within a specific industrial area to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and collectively address common HR challenges.

The HRD Communication Forum in the GIIC–KITIC Industrial Area of Deltamas represents a unique collaborative learning environment. Through regular meetings, workshops, discussions, and informal mentoring, the forum facilitates collective learning processes that can enhance members' strategic competencies. However, empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of such inter-organizational forums as learning organizations remains scarce.

Moreover, previous studies have often examined HRD and competency development as a direct relationship without adequately considering the mediating role of organizational learning mechanisms. Processes such as knowledge sharing, reflection, and collaborative problem-solving are essential to transform HRD initiatives into meaningful competency outcomes. Without these mechanisms, HRD activities may fail to produce sustainable strategic value.

To address these gaps, this study analyzes the contribution of HRD organizations to strategic competency development through the implementation of learning organization

concepts, positioning organizational learning as a mediating variable. By focusing on an industrial HRD forum, this research offers a novel perspective on HRD effectiveness beyond formal organizational boundaries. The findings provide both theoretical enrichment and practical guidance for HR development initiatives in similar industrial contexts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Human Resources Development (HRD)

Human Resources Development (HRD) refers to a systematic, planned effort to enhance individual and organizational learning capabilities to improve performance and achieve strategic objectives. Swanson and Holton (2001) define HRD as a process for developing expertise to improve performance across individual, process, and organizational levels. Nadler (1984) further emphasizes that HRD consists of organized, time-bound learning experiences provided by organizations to drive performance improvement.

In contemporary organizations, HRD plays a strategic role by aligning learning initiatives with business goals. Effective HRD enhances not only technical skills but also behavioral and cognitive competencies, such as leadership, decision-making, and adaptability. Potnuru et al. (2021) highlight that HRD initiatives supporting continuous learning and employee engagement significantly contribute to human capital development.

Within HRD forums, organizational contributions are reflected through providing learning opportunities, facilitating knowledge exchange, offering leadership support, and creating a collaborative learning culture. These contributions enable members to access diverse perspectives and practical insights that may not be available within their own organizations.

Learning Organization and Organizational Learning

The concept of the learning organization originates primarily from the work of Senge (1990), who identified five core disciplines: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking. A learning organization continuously expands its capacity to shape its future through collective learning.

Garvin (1993) complements this perspective by defining a learning organization as an entity skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, as well as modifying its behavior to reflect new insights. Consequently, organizational learning acts as the operational mechanism that enacts these principles.

In non-formal settings such as HRD forums, organizational learning occurs through interactive discussion, experience sharing, collaborative problem-solving, and reflective practice. As Marquardt (2002) emphasizes, learning organizations transcend structural boundaries, enabling learning across broader organizational and professional networks.

Strategic Competency Development

Strategic competencies are integrated sets of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable individuals to contribute to organizational strategy and long-term competitiveness. Berger and Berger (2007) argue that strategic competencies distinguish high-performing organizations by aligning talent development with strategic priorities. Palan (2007) further notes that competency-based human resource management provides a structured framework for identifying, developing, and evaluating competencies critical to organizational success.

The Competency-Based Human Resource Management (CB-HRM) approach underscores the importance of linking competency development with organizational learning and human resource development (HRD) initiatives. McClelland (1973) pioneered the idea that competencies predict performance better than traditional measures of intelligence, reinforcing the relevance of competency-based development models.

Drawing on the reviewed literature, this study proposes a conceptual framework in which organizational HRD contribution influences strategic competency development directly and indirectly through organizational learning. Positioned as a mediating variable, organizational learning facilitates the transformation of HRD activities into strategic competency outcomes. This framework reflects the integrative relationship between HRD, learning organization principles, and competency development.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative explanatory research design to analyze the causal relationships between HRD organizational contribution, organizational learning, and strategic competency development. A quantitative approach was selected because it allows for objective measurement of relationships among variables and enables hypothesis testing using statistical techniques. The explanatory design is appropriate for examining both direct and indirect (mediating) effects within a structured research model.

Population and Sample

The population of this research consists of all active members of the HRD Communication Forum in the GIIC–KITIC Industrial Area of Deltamas. This forum includes HR practitioners from various companies who regularly participate in HR-related discussions, training programs, and collaborative activities. A purposive sampling technique was applied, with the main criteria being members who actively engaged in forum activities during the last one year.

The determination of sample size followed the guideline proposed by Hair et al. (2010), which suggests a minimum of five to ten respondents per indicator variable for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. Based on this criterion, a total of 45 respondents were considered adequate and met the minimum requirements for SEM-PLS analysis.

Data Collection Technique

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed based on established theoretical constructs and previous empirical studies. The questionnaire consisted of three main sections corresponding to the research variables:

1. **HRD Organizational Contribution (X)**, measured through indicators such as facilitation of training activities, managerial support, availability of learning resources, and opportunities for knowledge sharing.
2. **Organizational Learning (M)**, measured based on the five disciplines of the learning organization proposed by Senge (1990), namely personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking, as well as knowledge creation and transfer as suggested by Garvin (1993).
3. **Strategic Competency Development (Y)**, measured using indicators derived from the Competency-Based Human Resource Management (CB-HRM) framework, including strategic thinking, adaptability, leadership capability, and problem-solving skills (Palan, 2007; Berger & Berger, 2007).

All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), allowing respondents to express their perceptions of each indicator.

Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. SEM-PLS was chosen

due to its suitability for exploratory research models, its ability to handle complex relationships, and its robustness when applied to relatively small sample sizes (Hair et al., 2019).

The analysis procedure consisted of three main stages: (1) evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to assess indicator validity and reliability, (2) evaluation of the structural model (inner model) to examine the significance of relationships among variables, and (3) mediation analysis to test the indirect effect of HRD organizational contribution on strategic competency development through organizational learning using the bootstrapping method.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

A total of 45 respondents participated in this study, all of whom were active members of the HRD Communication Forum in the GIIC–KITIC Industrial Area of Deltamas. The majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree (73%), while the remaining respondents had either a diploma or a master's degree. In terms of work experience, 58% of respondents had more than five years of experience in the human resources field, indicating a relatively high level of professional maturity.

The respondents were actively involved in various forum activities, including training programs, regular discussion sessions, seminars, and collaborative HR development initiatives. This level of participation reflects a strong exposure to learning processes within the forum environment.

Measurement Model (Outer Model) Evaluation

The results of the measurement model evaluation indicate that all indicators have loading factor values greater than 0.70, demonstrating strong convergent validity. Reliability testing shows that Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all constructs exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating internal consistency.

Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for HRD organizational contribution, organizational learning, and strategic competency development are all above 0.50, confirming adequate discriminant validity. These results suggest that the measurement instruments used in this study are both valid and reliable.

Structural Model (Inner Model) Evaluation

The structural model analysis reveals several significant relationships among the research variables. The path coefficient from HRD organizational contribution to

organizational learning is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.62, p < 0.001$), indicating that higher HRD contributions are associated with stronger learning processes within the forum.

The relationship between organizational learning and strategic competency development is also positive and significant ($\beta = 0.54, p < 0.001$). In addition, the direct effect of HRD organizational contribution on strategic competency development remains significant ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.05$). The R-square value for organizational learning is 0.39, while the R-square value for strategic competency development is 0.58, indicating that the model explains a substantial proportion of variance in the dependent variables.

Mediation Analysis

The mediation analysis was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SEM-PLS. The results indicate that organizational learning significantly mediates the relationship between HRD organizational contribution and strategic competency development ($p < 0.001$). This mediation effect is partial, as the direct relationship between HRD contribution and strategic competency development remains statistically significant. These findings confirm the critical role of organizational learning as a mechanism that strengthens the effectiveness of HRD initiatives.

The findings of this study provide empirical support for the argument that HRD organizational contributions play a crucial role in enhancing strategic competency development through learning organization mechanisms. The significant effect of HRD contribution on organizational learning aligns with Senge's (1990) theory, which emphasizes the importance of shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking in fostering continuous learning.

The significant mediation role of organizational learning indicates that HRD activities are most effective when embedded within a structured learning process. Knowledge sharing, reflective discussions, and collaborative problem-solving within the HRD forum enable members to internalize learning experiences and translate them into strategic competencies. These findings are consistent with previous studies by Potnuru et al. (2021) and Subramanian and Suresh (2022), which highlight the importance of organizational learning in human capital development.

Moreover, the results demonstrate that HRD forums can function as non-formal learning organizations that transcend organizational boundaries. This expands the application of learning organization theory beyond traditional organizational settings and highlights the strategic value of professional networks in HR development.

6. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concludes that HRD organizational contribution has a significant positive effect on the development of strategic competencies, both directly and indirectly through organizational learning. Organizational learning serves as a key mediating mechanism that transforms HRD initiatives into sustainable competency outcomes.

The findings contribute to the literature on HRD and learning organizations by extending existing theoretical models to non-formal professional contexts. The integrative framework proposed in this study provides a theoretical basis for understanding HRD effectiveness in collaborative learning platforms.

From a practical perspective, HRD forums are encouraged to institutionalize learning organization practices, such as structured knowledge sharing, reflective learning sessions, and collaborative problem-solving. The adoption of digital knowledge management platforms is also recommended to support sustainable learning.

This study is limited by its focus on a single HRD forum and its reliance on a quantitative approach. Future research may employ qualitative or mixed-method designs to explore learning dynamics in greater depth and expand the scope to different industrial sectors and regions.

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