



# LITERATURE REVIEW



## Contents

1. Abstract.....	2
2. Introduction .....	2
3. Literature and Critical Review .....	2
4. Conclusion.....	6
References.....	7

## **1. Abstract**

As time is passing, human resource management has become one of the most important strategic functions of the organisation. However, as from its start till now, many considers it as a support function which does not add value in the business. Therefore, there are various critics on the human resource. One of the criticism on the human resource says that it is leading towards the dehumanisation due to its practices like downsizing, rightsizing, reallocating and deployment. These human resource practices are having several short term benefits but in actual these lead towards the long term bad consequences for which human resource has to be blamed. This essay critically analyses this argument of Warren (2015). Using the secondary data and qualitative methods, this research has found that it is not the human resource function which is to be blamed for this. Every decision of human resource is now linked up with the strategy, therefore, it is not reasonable to blame human resource for dehumanisation.

## **2. Introduction**

Human resource management is one of the most important functions of the organisations. though, it has introduced many such practices which have proved successful for the organisational performance. However, as this is a support function, it is criticised by many people in a different manner. the purpose of this essay is to critically evaluate the statement which is presented by Warren (2015). According to Warren (2015), human resource can become the fall guy for the dehumanisation. Due to certain practices like downsizing, rightsizing, redeployment and reallocating, organisations have to suffer in the long run and human resource management is to be blamed for this. For analysing the given statement, this research has used the secondary research methods. It has collected the secondary data from recent journals and books. The qualitative research techniques are used where the collected secondary data is analysed using the content analysis technique. This essay starts with the basic introduction of the core terminologies used in the given statement. Then it critically analyses whether human resource is the fall guy or not.

## **3. Literature and Critical Review**

The dehumanisation is a process or behaviour which challenges the individuality of human beings. It is a disposition towards others in which others' individuality is taken care. Therefore, dehumanisation is known to be an act of treating inhumanely to other human beings. It is also the

opposite of personification where inanimate objects are endowed with the human qualities. So the dehumanisation is the act of dis-endowment of the human qualities (Bastian et al., 2013). In all of the contexts, it is a negative social norm which is not appreciated by the society members. It is decided by the social norms that which is acceptable and unacceptable in a society (Keith and Keith, 2013). So as per the societal norms, the act of dehumanisation is considered inhumane in almost all societies. When any social norm lose the acceptability, it is actually referred to the action of dehumanisation. As per the provided statement in this essay, it could be analysed that human resource management has become the fall guy for the dehumanisation. By this, it could be analysed that human resource is blamed for the act of dehumanisation and it is due to the few practices which has been introduced by the human resource managers in the contemporary environment (Bastian et al., 2012). As per the given statement, few human resource management practices have become common which are named as downsizing, rightsizing, reallocating and redeployments and these are considered as the reflection of dehumanised aspect of human resource.

According to Ho, Sambasivan and Liew (2013), downsizing refers to the reduction in the number of employees who are working on the operating payroll. Though layoff is also used for the reduction of employee but that refers to temporary downscaling of employees. On the other hand, the downsizing refers to the permanent downscaling of employees where there are no or very little chances of rehiring. Raza (2013) stated that though, there are several techniques which are used by the human resource management for the downsizing including the early retirement, golden handshakes, transfer to other companies, however, most commonly downsizing involves termination of a certain number of employees from the employment. Though, downsizing and rightsizing are often taken in a same manner, however, it is important to note that rightsizing is different from downsizing. According to Yu, Chern and Hsiao (2013), rightsizing is a proactive approach for managing the workforce of an organisation where leaders take the strategic decisions to increase or decrease the size of the workforce as per the market needs, alternative approaches, technologies and trends. With the focus on future, organisations opt for the approach of rightsizing to ensure that there are right number of people working in the organisation.

Referring back to the provided statement, there are various short term advantages of the downsizing and there are certain situations in which it is not possible to continue without the practice of downsizing. Hence, it is reasonable to state that downsizing do have short term

advantages therefore human resource managers take such steps. In the last few decades, many public sector organisations have undergone the step of downsizing. Unfortunately, the research conducted up till now has come up with the conclusion that this is the downsizing that has devastating impact of the organisations in the long run. The short term issues do create many long term problems for the organisations (Kishore, Nair and Kiran, 2013). According to Neves (2014), it is being observed that when managers actually downsize their workforce, they start spending time on those employees who are terminated. They help them in career development and counselling. Indeed, they do need such support. But in this process, the employees who are not laid off are actually in great problem. These are the people who need the attention of human resource management, but these are often neglected. These employee suffer from many problems. For example, their job responsibilities are now completely shuffled and along with the work impact, there are many emotional impacts on the employees who are retained with the organisation (Mousazadeh et al., 2013). Mentioning few of the long term affects of the downsizing leads towards the arguments that downsizing results in the feeling in retained employees that their top management has no commitment for their functions. Employees start to become confused about the priorities of the organisation (Tetteh, 2013). They have to suffer because of the increased workloads. They often feel confused about their mandate. It is also analysed that retained employees develop a sense of being betrayed by their managers and executives (De Gama et al., 2012). There is a high propensity to develop the sense of distrust among all workforce. This is considered that there is no need to do the long term planning for the organisation as they could have to leave the organisation anytime. After such practices of the human resource management department, all employees start feeling unappreciated and undervalued (Gandolfi and Littler, 2012). Nevertheless, such measures of human resource department also have the operational problems. When there are frequent measures of downsizing and rightsizing, employees become risk averse hence there is lesser tendency of employees towards the innovation as they know that any unsuccessful idea could lead towards their termination in the next wave of downsizing and rightsizing (Chopadeand Vidyapeeth, 2012). Though, conflict could be productive, sometimes, but when such waves become common, it could be analysed that only destructive conflicts occur among employees which eventually reduces the organisational performance (Otsyulah and Nasibi, 2015). Moreover, such human resource management initiatives results in the internal competition for resources of the

organisation. Likewise, there is fewer efforts for teamwork and everyone starts working for protecting himself/herself from the such human resource management practices. As mentioned by Luan, Tien and Chi (2013), the service level decreases while the public hostility increases. From this, it could be analysed that such measures do have short term advantages for the organisations but the disadvantages lasts for many years. The disturbance is created for many years. Therefore, analysing the long term consequences of the downsizing and rightsizing, it is reasonable to blame that the practice of downsizing and rightsizing may lead to adverse consequences for the organisations in the long run (Tsai and Yen, 2015). However, this fact should not be neglected that any decision of human resource management is based on the decision which is trickled down from the business strategy. Moreover, to be more specific about the rightsizing which is a strategic decision, it could not be said that human resource management function is something which is leading towards dehumanization. If any action is taken by the human resource, it has the strategic importance and it is not without the specific aim which eventually leads towards the fulfilment of business objectives. There are various institutional determinants of the downsizing and rightsizing and human resource is only implementing the decisions which are eventually required for the successful functioning of all other departments (Muñoz-Bullónand Sánchez-Bueno, 2014).

Like downsizing, reallocation and redeployment are the strategies which are related to the process of moving people within the organisation. The movement of employees from one unit to another is also part of reallocation and redeployment. So basically whenever there is an excess at one place and shortage in another place within an organisation, human resource management helps to fill the gap by moving the employees from one position to another (Cascio, 2015). Human resource identifies the excess and shortage area and after matching the skills and competencies of the employees, the gap is minimised with the help of movement of employees. this is a measure which helps in human talent development as the employability of employees also improves and they become able to learn new skills and competencies (Bal, Kooijand De Jong, 2013). The practice of human resource related to reallocation or deployment of employees do not do anything which is against the social norms. Though, employees might have to face the problem for a short period of time as it takes time to adjust in the new job and position. However, it should not be forgotten that the purpose of this human resource strategy is never related with any process which treats human as inanimate objects (Zhang, Xue and Dhaliwal,

2016). For example, as told by McInnes et al., (2013) the purpose of deployment or reallocating is to do more with the less employees. so it does not mean that human beings are dehumanized but it means that human resource strategy is leading towards the improved efficiency of the business which is the need of every business. Human resource strategies are always aligned with the business strategy, and business strategy fulfilment leads towards the fulfilment of needs of all stakeholders involving the shareholders. There is not a single decision of human resource managers which is taken without its linkage with the business strategy. If this is the requirement of business strategy to take any decision, only the human resource strategy is devised to achieve the overall business objectives (Truss, Mankin and Kelliher, 2012).

#### **4. Conclusion**

In this essay, it is concluded that human resource cannot be blamed for the long term consequences of the practices like downsizing, rightsizing, deployment and reallocation. Though, these all are the practices of human resource management, but this fact cannot be overlooked that decisions of human resource are never taken in the isolation. There is always a strategic linkage among its decisions and business strategy. If anything is to be blamed for the dehumanization, it could not be human resource alone. Every business function need is associated with the human resource strategies. There is an interlink between all business functions and analysing the business needs such decisions are taken by the human resource. Therefore, it is not reasonable to completely blame the human resource for the dehumanization, given that the human resource strategy has the linkage with the business strategy.

## References

- Bal, P.M., Kooij, D.T. and De Jong, S.B., 2013. How do developmental and accommodative HRM enhance employee engagement and commitment? The role of psychological contract and SOC strategies. *Journal of Management Studies*, 50(4), pp.545-572.
- Bastian, B., Jetten, J., Chen, H., Radke, H.R., Harding, J.F. and Fasoli, F., 2013. Losing our humanity the self-dehumanizing consequences of social ostracism. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 39(2), pp.156-169.
- Bastian, B., Jetten, J., Chen, H., Radke, H.R., Harding, J.F. and Fasoli, F., 2012. Personality and Social Psychology.
- Cascio, W.F., 2015. Alternatives to Downsizing: Efforts in Responsible Restructuring. *EPRN*.
- Chopade, P. and Vidyapeeth, B., 2012. An Impact of Rightsizing on Existing Employees' Commitment and Morale: Study of Indian IT Companies. *International Journal of Management and Social Sciences Research*, pp.6-10.
- De Gama, N., McKenna, S. and Peticca-Harris, A., 2012. Ethics and HRM: Theoretical and conceptual analysis. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 111(1), pp.97-108.
- Gandolfi, F. and Littler, C.R., 2012. Downsizing is dead; long live the downsizing phenomenon: Conceptualizing the phases of cost-cutting. *Journal of Management & Organisation*, 18(03), pp.334-345.
- Ho, J.A., Sambasivan, M. and Liew, E.Y., 2013. The relationship between job insecurity, shock, and turnover intention, amongst survivors of organisational downsizing. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 21(spec. June), pp.101-114.
- Kishore, K., Nair, A. and Kiran, V., 2013. Psychological impact on employees during downsizing and rightsizing. *Circulation in more than 70 countries*, p.33.
- Keith, H. and Keith, K.D., 2013. *Intellectual Disability: Ethics, Dehumanization and a New Moral Community*. John Wiley & Sons.



- Luan, C.J., Tien, C. and Chi, Y.C., 2013. Downsizing to the wrong size? A study of the impact of downsizing on firm performance during an economic downturn. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(7), pp.1519-1535.
- McInnes, M.M., Ozturk, O.D., McDermott, S. and Mann, J., 2013. Doing More with Less: Improved Targeting of Social Programs for Maximum Impact. Available at SSRN 1737490.
- Muñoz-Bullón, F. and Sánchez-Bueno, M.J., 2014. Institutional determinants of downsizing. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 24(1), pp.111-128.
- Mousazadeh, Y., Jannati, A., JabbariBeiramy, H., AsghariJafarabadi, M. and Ebadi, A., 2013. Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Methods of Hospitals' Downsizing: A Narrative Systematic Review. *Health PromotPerspect*, 3(2), pp.276-287.
- Neves, P., 2014. Taking it out on survivors: Submissive employees, downsizing, and abusive supervision. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology*, 87(3), pp.507-534.
- Otsyulah, J.O. and Nasibi, M., 2015. Effect of Rightsizing on Productivity of Mumias Sugar Company in Kenya. *The International Journal of Business & Management*, 3(3), p.319.
- Raza, Z., 2013. *The Impact of Downsizing on Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL)* (Doctoral dissertation, © Lahore School of Economics).
- Tetteh, M., 2013. *Employee Perception of Rightsizing on Survivors' Attitude and Commitment in Corporate Organisations in Ghana* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Ghana).
- Truss, C., Mankin, D. and Kelliher, C., 2012. *Strategic human resource management*. Oxford University Press.
- Tsai, P.C. and Yen, Y.F., 2015. Development of institutional downsizing theory: evidence from the MNC downsizing strategy and HRM practices in Taiwan. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 26(3-4), pp.248-262.
- Yu, M.M., Chern, C.C. and Hsiao, B., 2013. Human resource rightsizing using centralized data envelopment analysis: Evidence from Taiwan's Airports. *Omega*, 41(1), pp.119-130

Zhang, C., Xue, L. and Dhaliwal, J., 2016. Alignments between the depth and breadth of inter-organisational systems deployment and their impact on firm performance. *Information & Management*, 53(1), pp.79-90.