

Talent Management - Practices by Indian IT Sector

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Abstract: *This paper sheds light on the Talent Management practices in some of the major IT companies in India. As one of the key challenges faced in the current business environment is to develop and maintain a competitive advantage, this paper discusses a few such innovative HR strategies adopted by the IT companies to attract and retain talent, such as offering jobs to people with vision and value congruence, enhancing the credibility of the organisation through brand building, providing opportunities for personal growth, creating a sense of ownership among employees through participation in decision making, creating entrepreneurial opportunities within the organisation, attracting employees to a serene lifestyle in peaceful and scenic location and providing attractive fringe benefits to employees. The research methodology adopted is compared using attributes and presented in a tabular representation where the secondary data is collected from journals, websites and books. The overall findings pertaining to talent management practices and human capital management are quite positive in the IT companies. Organisations having structured talent management strategies positively impact employees' pride in their organizations and willingness to recommend them as places to work and a deep understanding of business issues must include how workforce can best be managed.*

Keywords: *Career development, Collaborative platform, Continuous engagement, Talent pool, Work-life balance.*

Introduction

Knowledge and information are to be accepted as key capabilities if an organisation is to compete effectively and efficiently in a global atmosphere. Such process necessarily involves development of individual talent and ability. Other reason for developing talent is to be an innovative organisation. Innovation is related to creation, use, sharing and integration of knowledge. Doing business in the new economy demands recruitment and growth, and development of talent (Lles et al., 2010).

Talent management involves individual and organizational development in response to a changing and complex operating environment. Talent management is said to be an intricate set

of bonded human resource course that delivers an easy basic gain to an organization (Muriithi and Makau, 2017). It includes the creation and maintenance of a supportive, people-oriented organization culture. It is a complex collection of connected HR processes that delivers a simple fundamental benefit for any organization. It involves individual and organizational development in response to a changing and complex operating environment (Mandloi, 2014). Talent Management programmes benefit the organisation to understand employees' uniqueness which includes strengths and weaknesses. This will allow the organisation to allocate the right job to the right person so that their talents are applied in the most effective and efficient way to

achieve the organisation's goal as mentioned in an online article "Talent Management as a Tool for Successful Businesses".

Review of Literature

Talent is defined as "individuals who have the capability to make a significant difference to the current and future performance of the company" (Rath and Rath, 2014). Talent management is the firm's proficiency in recruiting (sourcing, attracting, selecting), getting board, developing, retaining and leveraging talent to achieve goals and execute organisational strategies as mentioned in Talent and Talent Management Insight (2014). It is a dynamic capacity determined by working culture, working conditions and talent development. Working culture refers to the pattern of working beliefs and values that are shared and assimilated by organisational members. Working conditions are shaped by the firm's policies on compensation and rewards, scheduling and workplace flexibility and work-life balance programs. Talent development is the firm's proficiency in stimulating, motivating and developing organisational talent (Collings and Melahi, 2009). Talent management describes the systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals who are of particular value to an organisation, either in view of their 'high potential' for the future or presently they are fulfilling business/operation-critical roles. Talent and talent management have rarely been as important to the success of organisations as they are today. The US Society for Human Resource Management (Morton, 2004) explained talent management as: 'the implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to increase workplace productivity by developing improved processes for attracting, developing, retaining and utilizing people with the required skills and aptitude to meet current and future business needs.' Talent Management is now a much broader 'essential management practice' covering organisational capability, individual development, performance enhancement, workforce planning and succession planning at multiple levels. Developing a talent strategy that is inclusive in its scale and scope is

at the heart of Human Resource Management and the role of people in delivering competitive advantage or organisational success at the heart of business management (Cappelli, 2008). A good strategy has at least three characteristics: it creates value, it is unique, and it cannot be imitated (Rana, 2017). A global and mobile workforce, multi-generational organisations and a more diverse, empowered workforce have changed the workplace. Talent professionals today work in a dynamic and ever changing environment that requires a skilful crafting of talent strategy if the organisation is going to maximise the potential of its workforce (Karunathilaka et al., 2015). A key to this will be an understanding of the context within which talent and talent management take place. This knowledge will help to underpin the development of a talent strategy (Heinen and O' Neill, 2004). We all know that teams with the best people perform at a higher level. Leading organizations know that exceptional business performance is driven by superior talent. People are the difference. Talent management is the strategy. Analyst research has proven that organizations using talent management strategies and solutions exhibit higher performance than their direct competitors and the market in general. From Fortune 100 global enterprise recruiting and performance management to small and medium business e-Recruiting, leading companies invest in talent management to select the best person for each job because they know success is powered by the total talent quality of their workforce.

Talent management requires strong executive support, along with systems and processes all directed towards having the right talent doing the right work at the right time (Lockwood, 2006). That's when talent truly drives higher business performance.

Why Talent Management is Essential for Businesses?

- It helps in developing leaders.
- It creates diversity at the workplace.
- It helps in growth and innovation within the organisation.
- It is the key for skill development.
- It increases productivity and helps in development of sound management practices.

The Indian IT industry is a major part of the country's economy. India holds a distinguished status for its capabilities in the outsourcing of information technology (IT) services and accounts for about 67 per cent of the global outsourcing market. Correspondingly, the industry's contribution to India's GDP has grown significantly over a period of time. This sector has been growing at an annual rate of 28 per cent per annum since 2001. Indian IT companies have globally established their edge in terms of cost advantage, availability of skilled manpower and the quality of services. Direct employment from the IT-BPM industry in India reached 3.9 million people in 2016-17. With such a huge number of employees working, it is essential for the right kind of HR practices to be in place. Due to this there is a more of job changing among the employees thus leading to a considerable rate of attrition. With people moving out, the intellectual capital of the organization reduces. So it is important to handle appropriately the available human resource within the organization. Though each organization has a set of HR practices, but each of them needs to be understood and improved upon so as to align accordingly what is best for their employees and their organization (Stahl et al., 2012).

Objectives of Study

- To study how far the Talent Management strategies are practiced in the Indian IT sector.
- To study how Talent Management practices help IT organisations to achieve their milestones along with competitive advantage.

Research Methodology

Organisations are compared using attributes. The HR strategies for different Indian IT companies are presented in a table. Valid conclusions are considered by taking account of critical focus area, awards, and recognitions and work life balance from the tabular representation.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Some major IT companies have given much importance and significance to talent management practices. Some of the Talent Management and HR strategies, practiced by Indian IT organisations are discussed here as under:

Talent Management at Infosys Limited:

Infosys Limited is an Indian multinational corporation that provides business consulting, information technology and outsourcing services. It has its headquarters in Bengaluru, India. Infosys was the second-largest Indian IT services company in 2016 by revenues. On January 12, 2017, its market capitalisation was \$34.38 billion. Infosys has a total of 193,383 employees as of 15 January 2016, of which 35 per cent were women. Its workforce consists of employees representing 122 nationalities working from 32 countries (37 countries as per the base location). Out of its total workforce, 93.8 per cent are software professionals, 17 per cent are working in its BPO arm and the remaining 6 per cent work for support and sales. The attrition rate of Infosys Ltd., excluding its subsidiaries, for 12 months ending 30 September 2015, was 14.2 per cent. During FY 2014-15, Infosys received 1,519,678 applications from prospective employees and had a gross addition of 53,386 employees, a 4 per cent hiring rate (Wikipedia data on Infosys, 2018).

Infosys Limited goes beyond the set boundaries of compensation, performance review, and development. They look at the employees' well-being holistically, to ensure timely interventions that help build a career that is long lasting and fruitful. They focus on listening to their employee feedback to make the right changes, thereby building a ground-up movement for most of them. Some of their initiatives are discussed as follows: There is an interactive programme to connect employees with the senior leaders called Zero Distance which minimises the gap between employees and the top leaders of the organisation. Further Global Hackathon is to inculcate the culture of rapid problem solving using technology. Zero Bench is an initiative to eliminate bench (bench is a term used in IT industry for an employee who is not allocated to a project). Using a collaborative platform called "Accelerate" they were able to bring work creators and work performers to collaborate to bring value to the organisation. Another big initiative in performance management system called iCount, which moved from the bell curve to focus on individual employee contribution and continuous feedback. In order to identify domain and technology experts

within the organisation and among fresh hires, Expert Track helps to spread ideas, innovation and improve collaboration. They have a digital platform to mobilize internal opportunities on career, learning and networks called Compass. Moreover, they have multiple channels to identify employee engagement requirements - ranging from platforms that encourage two-way communication to surveys and face-to-face discussions. Yammer Infosys' enterprise networking platform provides social and professional networking among employees across different time zones. Employees share information, thoughts and opinions with other like-minded people, and also post queries to which they get immediate response.

Infosys puts in efforts to make employment decisions based on merit and business needs. It exhibits a policy which prohibits harassment of any kind, including harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, race, religion, creed, colour, gender, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, marital status, age or any other basis protected by laws of the countries in which they operate. They have a programme called Health Assessment and Lifestyle Enrichment Programme (HALE) which addresses the rising concern regarding employee health and the impact of stress on the employees and their families.

A few other HR strategies involve "Freedom of Association" where they recognise the right to freedom of association through collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) as per the laws of the land. They provide policies, forums and support groups for hearing and addressing the concern of their employees and resolving their issues or conflict in a fair manner. Infosys have employee communication under which they have established multiple channels to engage employees across all levels. They have employee communication channels like 'townhalls' with leaders, organization-wide mailers, newsletters within unit, corporate intranet (Sparsh), TV channel (Infy TV), Radio Channel (Infy Radio), social networking hub, Yammer- the annual employee satisfaction survey, LITMUS (Let's interact on themes that matter to us), etc. They

celebrate success and excellence by awarding the teams and individuals who embody excellence. Infosys believes and helps its employees to attain personal as well as professional goals by adopting significance HR policies that support work life balance like paid maternity leave, extended maternity leave, sabbatical for personal reasons, paternity leave, adoption leave, part-time, flexi hours, selective telecommuting, work from satellite offices and work from home. Infosys makes an attempt to balance employee career aspirations and business needs by instituting a unique Talent fulfilment function - a central organization-wide talent management function which plans their talent needs, improve employee morale through continuous engagement and re-skill the workforce to the changing business needs. A dedicated team of Delivery and HR professionals, as part of this function, engage with every member moving into the central talent pool after their project expiry. Employees in the talent pool have an opportunity to express their aspirations, constraints, expectations and record them in the Talent Management System. The talent fulfilment teams across the world access this system to identify the right talent based on the skill and availability and map them for their requirements. This function also focuses on forecasting the talent needs and planning for the same, ensures timely allocation of the talents to the projects, streamlining employee movements across units and locations, planning for re-skilling and providing inputs for retention. In recent times they have launched "Accelerate", a collaborative platform to ensure that employees who are between projects are positively engaged by creating opportunities in real-time projects across the organisation (Infosys Sustainability Report, 2015-16).

At Infosys, they consistently strive to deliver innovative services to clients and deliver shareholder value to all stakeholders. The awards won by Infosys span the gamut from industry to corporate governance and more. The 2014 Asian Most Admired Knowledge Enterprises (MAKE) award has been presented to Infosys. They are the only Indian company to have won the award 12 times, the first one being in the year 2000. Infosys

was honoured at Asia's Best Companies 2016 awards. It has been ranked a "Leader in the Winner's Circle - Excellent at Innovation and Execution," in HfS's Research Blueprint: Design Thinking in the As-A-service Economy, 2016. It has been ranked among Asia's Most Admired Brands 2014 by World Consulting & Research Corporation (WCRC), a leading brand rating and ranking company. Infosys features among the top 50 in the list of 100 brands from Asia that are noted for their loyalty, innovation, product category, brand aesthetics and design, among global consumers in 2015. Infosys has been named the IT Services Provider of the Year - Banking Financial Services and Insurance Sector by Frost and Sullivan, during the 2015 Frost & Sullivan India ICT Awards. The award acknowledges companies that have demonstrated outstanding performance in the Information and Communications Technology sector in India. It has been cited as a Leader and Star Performer in the 2014 Everest Group PEAK Matrix for life sciences IT outsourcing in 2014 (Infosys Limited website, 2018).

Talent Management at Tech-Mahindra:

Tech Mahindra Limited is an Indian multinational provider of information technology (IT), networking technology solutions and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) to the telecommunications industry. Its headquarters is at Pune and it has its registered office in Mumbai. Part of the Mahindra Group, Tech Mahindra is a US\$4.5 billion company with over 115,900 employees across 90 countries. It provides services to customers which include Fortune 500 companies. Tech Mahindra was ranked fifth in India's software services (IT) firms as mentioned in (Wikipedia data on Tech Mahindra, 2018).

Tech Mahindra places significant emphasis on training and grooming employees at all levels with a long-term perspective of developing the right competencies. These competencies would help individuals drive escalation in their careers, realize their potential and support their continued employment and post-retirement phase. Tech Mahindra focuses on excellence, innovation and continuous learning. This attracts some of the best

talent in the industry and the company focuses on retaining them through giving the best possible benefits at their place of work. All mandatory benefits like provident fund, healthcare options like hospitalization, disability and invalidity coverage, life insurance and accident insurance, parental leave, paid leave, travel and relocation benefits, retirement benefits, stock options, etc. are provided for permanent employees. Compensation levels are merit-based, determined by qualification, experience levels and special skills and does not discriminate on the basis of any diversity. They recognize associates as individuals or as part of a team for exceptional performance which helps the organization in pursuing its strategic goals and objectives. Tech Mahindra aspires to create a culture of rewarding excellence and appreciation amongst colleagues at the workplace, thereby building an organization where quality and merit are encouraged and recognized instantaneously.

Some of the awards as discussed are specially planned to recognise and distinguish talented employees. Special Praise on Time (SPOT) is a peer-to-peer award. Any associate can give this award to another. There is no bar for Unit, Band and Location nor approvals required to authorize this award. Bravo is awarded by the supervisor for successful completion of a one-time task beyond the call of duty impacting the Team / Project. Pat on the Back (POB) is awarded for successful completion of a one-time task beyond the call of duty impacting the Unit / Group. Associate of the Month is awarded for exemplary performance demonstrated throughout a given month impacting a Group/Cluster or at Organization level. Grand Salute is a quarterly award to an individual who has demonstrated high level of competence in managing the Process and Technology pillars or People and Process pillars. For an outstanding team that has exhibited outstanding performance over an assignment or project leading to exceptional customer feedback, business/ process improvement or significant value-add to the organization, Best Team award is given. Long Service award is conferred on associates who have completed five, ten, fifteen, twenty and twenty-five uninterrupted years of

service. Tech Mahindra strives to attract and retain the best talent in the industry and their specialized skills are greatly valued in the industry globally. The organization tries to offer the best possible benefits to the associates and ensures that the associates' interests are largely protected.

Tech Mahindra believes that a diverse and socially inclusive workforce is the key for building a high performance culture. Diversity plays a key role in business success, as it allows the organization to draw from the best talent devoid of personal demographics. Being an equal opportunities employer, Tech Mahindra adopts a holistic approach to performance in workplace and fosters a non-discriminatory work environment. Tech Mahindra has several initiatives to engage, encourage and promote women leaders at work place. As the number of women working at Tech Mahindra continues to grow, they have initiated various programs to support their goals and aspirations. The employee count of women in Tech Mahindra (which includes IT associates, BSG & Contactors) for FY 2014-15 was 28 per cent.

Some of the major platforms that connect and initiatives that inspire associates for work life balance are discussed below. Navratna is a platform which helps in sharing one's expertise with associates and teaching them skills. Similarly, they have Samanvay which enables the families to bond with the organization through learning interventions. Tech Mahindra organises "Family Day" in a year where families are invited to offices for fun-filled interactions. Tech Mahindra rejoices in annual associate extravaganza which connects and celebrates associates and their family's talents which they call as Ekatvam. They have "Let's Talk" which is an in-house psychological counselling service that promotes the overall mental and emotional well-being of associates and their families. Other significant means from which it is evident that all employees are involved in various stages of the organisation's function like " All Hands Meets" which is an interaction between senior leaders and associates to communicate priorities, updates & insight into business performance, CXO Blogs are the base where senior leadership use the medium of blogs to share updates, Tech Mate is the online internal

newsletter, FreeVoice portal is a platform for all associates to give feedback, express opinions and bring forward issues and best practices. Based on FreeVoice submissions, sustainable process, policy and technology improvement areas are identified for further evaluation and implementation, Ask the Expert (ATE) Forum is a knowledge-sharing platform where experts from across business units respond to queries posted by associates, JOSH is a team of enthusiastic associates of Tech Mahindra who take up the responsibility of making a difference through various events involving aspects of fun, talent and social welfare. Their various activities are for enhancing employee bonding, showcasing talents of Tech Mighties in various extra-curricular activities like sports, art, music and dance, encouraging the families of Tech Mighties to participate and showcase their talents, supporting various social welfare organizations and causes to spread awareness on social issues and child care facility is available at most campuses (Tech Mahindra Sustainability Report, 2014-15).

Some of the awards and accolades earned by Tech Mahindra are as follows:

Tech Mahindra has won 2014's State & Local Solution Partner of the Year award for its Motor Vehicles Enterprise Solution (MOVES) Platform. Tech Mahindra was ranked at #40 (up from 64 in 2013) in the BT500 India's Most Valuable Companies (run by Business Today) Gramener was the knowledge partner for the 2014 edition (Tech Mahindra Website, 2018).

V.3 Talent Management at Wipro: Wipro Limited (Western India Palm Refined Oils Limited), is an Indian Information Technology Services corporation headquartered in Bengaluru, India. It is a global company provider of comprehensive IT solutions and services, including Systems Integration, Consulting, Information Systems outsourcing, IT-enabled services and R&D services. Wipro entered the technology business in 1981 and has over 140,000 employees and clients across 54 countries. IT revenues were at \$7.1 billion for the year ended 31 March, 2015, with a repeat business ratio of over 95 per cent. Wipro has been ranked 1st in the 2010 Asian

Sustainability Rating (ASR) of Indian companies (Wikipedia data on Wipro, 2018).

As per Wipro, people are their primary asset and strategic lever. Wipro has a high level of commitment to nurturing talent and the integrated talent management approach spans the complete employee life-cycle and all processes and functions like on-boarding, continuous engagement, assessment and capability building, career development and career planning, leadership development, employee well-being and total rewards. Their global workforce is a reflection of their diversity and their key competitive advantage. They consider a robust on-boarding process as a vital step in ensuring smooth assimilation of new employees into the organizational culture and values and to ensure flow of information and support to reduce time to become role-ready. Their campus joiners undergo a 3-month on-boarding process. Lateral hires undergo a 3-month on-boarding process which includes a 2-day classroom induction, business unit-wise inductions, a buddy process and time-boxed learning plans. The welcoming process for campus joiners and lateral hires includes a 'Spirit of Wipro' session to orient all new employees to their values and forms a key component in uniting Wipro-ites across the world. Additionally, new employees in senior bands also undergo customized on-boarding with senior leaders which is aligned to their specific roles. Vital information about the leadership, vision of the unit, business structure and various programs and initiatives are also disseminated through a business unit or project induction.

Effective engagement fosters a culture that is participative; this helps bring employees and leaders closer together on an open platform and also reinforces a culture of transparency and ownership. During 2013-14, their engagement programs were more strongly positioned in alignment with their overall people strategic drivers. Their engagement programs are driven on 3 levels - organizational, unit / team and individual. Employees who are cognizant of organization culture, values and changes that impact them are in a better position to provide feedback and participate in the decision making

process at the organizational level. Their awareness and education campaigns include online and email announcements, floor walks and kiosks. The leadership team also engages with employees throughout the year through forums such as company level 'Wipro Meets', business unit level 'All Hands Meet', round-table discussions and function meets. These interactive sessions provide employees an opportunity to understand business highlights, plans, provide feedback and seek answers to queries. These sessions also include a rewards segment where outstanding contribution by employees is recognized.

Informal feedback is collected from employees throughout the year through forums like leadership meets, group discussions and one-on-one meetings. Besides these, Wipro also has a formal feedback mechanism in the form of Employee Perception Survey (EPS), EPS Pulse and Employee Advocacy Group (EAG). At a micro level, different accounts / regions conduct dipstick surveys which measure engagement and gather feedback about the specific micro unit. Focus areas identified through these surveys are rigorously tracked and updates are shared with employees regularly.

Partner Employee Engagement (PEET):

Wipro focus on responsible people practices extends across their people value chain, and covers over 26,000 contractors, primarily located across operations in India. 60 per cent of their contractors are skilled technical employees who are engaged in IT service projects. Many of them are deployed at their client sites, and a customized Partner Employee Engagement team is responsible for talent management, retention and capability building of this workforce. 40 per cent of their contract workforce is deployed across key support functions such as Facilities Management, Security, Transportation, Hospitality and other soft services. Focused engagement initiatives through this program have led to higher engagement and retention levels over the years. Acknowledging that non-compliance to fair labour practices has a serious impact on business continuity and engagement of partner employees, Wipro

conducts annual audits for partner organizations. Where minor non-conformances/delays are observed, partners are provided with a defined period of time to implement corrective actions. Failure to act appropriately leads to the termination of contract. The focus of the PEET program enables career growth, training and competency development in order to enhance retention possibilities (Wipro Sustainability Report 2013-14).

Wipro has received numerous corporate awards that speak for the innovations introduced by them and the various milestones achieved. Wipro won the 'Association for Talent Development' BEST (Building Talent Enterprise-wide Strategically) award for 2016. It has won Innovative Policies and Practices for Persons with Disabilities Award by Zero Project, Vienna. Wipro was named in 2017 as among the World's Most Ethical Companies by the Ethisphere Institute for the 6th successive year. It has won "Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion" award and "Employer with best Employee Health and Wellness Initiative" award at SHRM India HR Awards 2016. Wipro was awarded the runners-up in "Excellence in Talent Sourcing & Staffing" at SHRM India HR Awards 2016. Wipro won the "Platinum Arogya World Healthy Workplace" FY2016 award in the Health & Wellness category. Wipro was awarded the runners-up in "Diversity & Inclusion" in the Corporate HR Best Practices category at NHRD HR showcase 2016 event (Wipro Website, 2018).

Talent Management at Tata Consultancy Services: Tata Consultancy Services Limited (TCS) is a service, consulting and business solutions company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It is a subsidiary of the Tata Group and operates in 46 countries. TCS is one of the largest Indian companies by market capitalization (\$80 billion). TCS is now placed among the 'Big 4' most valuable IT services brands worldwide. TCS alone generates 70 per cent dividend of its parent company Tata Sons. TCS is one of the largest private sector employers in India, and the fourth-largest employer among listed Indian companies (after Indian Railways, Indian Army and India Post). TCS had a total of 3,87,000

employees as of December 2016, of which 31 per cent were women. The number of non-Indian nationals was 21,282 as at March 31, 2013 (7.7 per cent) (Wikipedia data on Tata Consultancy Services, 2018).

Human capital is the largest factor in TCS' business and the sustainability of revenue growth that is directly dependent on the organization's ability to attract and retain the right talent in the right number. TCS has a highly educated workforce, whose technical skills are greatly valued globally. TCS recognizes the criticality of human capital to the business and its sustainability, and has in place mature processes devoted to attracting, retaining and developing this human capital, assessed at PCMM Level 5.

The Company does its best to attract high quality talent and has been able to successfully scale up the talent acquisition process. The global workforce plan is structured in alignment with the short, medium and long term business plans. The consolidated requirements are part-fulfilled by re-skilling / up-skilling existing unallocated associates and the balance fulfilled through focused drives by the Talent Acquisition Group. Experienced professionals are recruited through online jobsites, head-hunters, recruitment agencies and through employee reference schemes. Other sources of experienced talent include strategic initiatives like M&A and in-sourcing. The Company's talent acquisition strategy is strongly focused on campus recruitment of engineering graduates and it has invested in building relationships with universities across the world, as well as improving the quality of academic training at engineering colleges.

With custom-tailored training programs and greater gender as well as cross-cultural sensitization, TCS has been able to expand the talent pool from which to recruit, in terms of gender, geography and academic discipline. TCS is an Equal Opportunity Employer and subscribes to the Tata Code of Conduct in embracing diversity in race, nationality, religion, ancestry, marital status, gender, age, ethnic origin, physical ability and sexual orientation. Compensation levels are merit-based, determined by

qualifications, experience levels, special-skills if any and performance. TCS has a well-defined Diversity & Inclusion Policy. The Company participates in the Tata Group's Second Career initiative which offers job opportunities to women returning to the workplace after a break in their careers. TCS also has an initiative called DAWN (Diversity and Women's Network), a support group. DAWN organizes leadership-connects, mentoring, discussion forums, sensitization workshops, wellness sessions and reorientation programs for associates returning to the workplace after long leave. 'Culture Meter' aims to build appreciation in the workforce for different cultures and practices across the globe through mailers, quizzes and other online resources.

The Academic Interface Program (AIP) helps build a strong high-quality, long-term relationship between the Company and academic institutions. Faculty Development Programmes are conducted by senior associates which are special training programs for faculty, to keep them abreast with technology developments and an industry perspective. Student Workshops are conducted where sessions are planned for students on technical, managerial or soft-skills topics to enhance competitiveness and workplace-readiness. TCS provides internship opportunities for students from Indian and overseas institutions. TCS has created a professional networking platform for campus recruits to connect, share, explore and collaborate with their peers and TCS associates prior to joining the Company. Campus Commune aims to engage the campus community and sustain an interest in a career at TCS. The platform provides users with timely information and updates about the Company, Initial Learning Programme (ILP), applicable processes and other pertinent topics of interest. TCS also plays a role in mentoring and guiding students to explore career opportunities within the Company by way of experience sharing, discussions, awareness building on relevant industry trends, engaging through debates, polls and other engagement practices and pertinent topics of interest. CodeVita was launched in 2012 to provide a platform for Coding Enthusiasts in technical colleges to showcase their programming skills. Code Vita has

also been an opportunity for TCS to spot the brightest programming talent in the academia and attract them into TCS. ASPIRE is a mandatory online interactive programme for technical graduates, aims to prepare students who are offered jobs at TCS for the ILP, ensure that they learn the basic concepts of IT, learn about the Company and sharpen their communication skills. The Aspire modules are deployed online in an interactive and gamified manner, reaching more than 20,000 students. The Ignite programme is a pioneering initiative to induct science graduates to TCS. The technology-enabled, project based learning approach at Ignite evolves continuously leading to the development of innovative digital assets.

TCS' Integrated Competency and Management System enables systematic tracking of the training roadmap of the Company's large workforce, while integrating skill assessment and individual development and providing employees an end-to-end view of their learning and competency development needs, as well as their progress against the plan. At the start of the year, every employee in consultation with her/his supervisor, works out a learning and development plan for the year, based on their interests and aspirations as well as the needs of the specific project / Business Unit. Thereafter, the employee goes through various training sessions and workshops as outlined in the plan. These could be through e-learning sessions on in-house Learning Management System, external certifications, classroom sessions conducted by various technical centres of excellence within TCS or Management Development Programmes (MDPs). Each associate is assessed biannually on the progress made against this plan. The newly launched Virtual ILP uses learning technologies to enhance the learning experience of trainees, with sessions delivered digitally and each trainee undergoing a customized learning path based on their baseline assessment. Trainees are also part of the various dedicated ILP and Technology related communities that help them interact with senior leaders, Subject Matter Experts, technologists, scientists and architects. Training programmes at the entry level as well as the continuous learning

programmes that cover technology, domain and project management practices have been enhanced during the year to ensure that TCS develops the right competencies in its workforce that can deliver and meet customers' business needs. This process, in turn, helps individuals drive growth in their careers and realize their potential in different ways. An internally designed development programme for first-time managers, ASCENT, was deployed during the fiscal year using the high-tech virtual classroom interaction. The programme has been initiated to equip First Time Managers to deliver better business results, transformative leadership and trusted partnership for success. This versatile developmental workshop adopts a creative and learner centric methodology to assist managers with critical behavioural skills to play their role effectively. TCS places significant emphasis on training and grooming employees at all levels with a long term perspective that develops the right competencies which help individuals drive growth in their careers and realize their potential in different ways to support their continued employment and post-retirement phase. In addition, HR also organizes multiple programmes on financial management, health and other areas that assist them in managing career endings (Corporate Sustainability Report - Tata Consultancy Services, 2014-15).

Some of the key awards and accolades received by TCS in the FY 2015 with respect to Talent management are:

- Gold Stevie: Best Human Resources Department 2014
- Top Employers Institute: Certified as Top Employer North America 2015
- Top Employers Institute: Ranked # 1 Employer in Europe
- Top Employers Institute: Ranked # 1 Employer in UK
- Golden Peacock National Training Award 2014
- Six awards at Asia's Best Employer Brand Awards 2014, Singapore
- Diversity and Inclusion (DANDI) awards: Top Workforce honour
- World HRD Congress RASBIC awards: Best

Overall Recruiting & Staffing

- Organization & Best Use of Technology for Recruiting

Talent Management at HCL: HCL Technologies Limited is an Indian multinational IT services company, headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India. It is a subsidiary of HCL Enterprise. Originally a research and development division of HCL, it emerged as an independent company in 1991 when HCL ventured into the software services business. HCL Technologies (the abbreviation of Hindustan Computers Limited) offers services including IT consulting, enterprise transformation, remote infrastructure management, engineering and R&D, and business process outsourcing (BPO). HCL also provides services such as DRYiCE, Cybersecurity and Digital & Analytics. The company has offices in 34 countries and it operates across sectors including aerospace and defence, automotive, consumer electronics, energy and utilities, financial services, government, industrial manufacturing, life sciences and healthcare, media and entertainment, mining and natural resources, public services, retail and consumer, semiconductor, server and storage, telecom, and travel, transportation, logistics, and hospitality. As of July 2017, the company, along with its subsidiaries, had consolidated revenue of \$7.2 billion (Wikipedia data on HCL Technologies, 2018).

As per HCL, employees are given the room to think freely, create innovative solutions, and participate and contribute to HCL's revenues. HCL is identified by many stakeholders including academia as a company which has introduced management practices to create a workplace that is truly inclusive, promoting a diversity of culture, people and thought. Employee First approach is all about inverting the traditional organization pyramid, where the management is at the bottom of the pyramid and all actions of the company are focused on enabling employees who deliver value to the customers. HCLites' ideas are valued and they are empowered to take decisions on ideas that can increase stakeholder value and transform HCL's way of working while servicing customers.

Various platforms including the CEO Connect are available for HCLites to share ideas, ask questions and debate on key decisions including policies. They also ensure that there is a consistent focus on employee well-being and experiences. The organization drives several initiatives, platforms and programs that help employees share, interact and exchange ideas and experiences. A unique practice at HCL is their "BlogHer" forum. While many companies invest in diversity training, HCL have this blogging forum on their internal social platform "Meme" where many aspects on gender neutral policies are discussed.

HCL does its best to break the traditional wisdom on engaging and managing talent. HCL knows very well that customers buy value from employees who are delivering services to them, so they have created an uncontested market space by focusing on internal transformation rather than external innovation, through Employees First. They believe that maximum value is created at the employee-customer interface. Therefore, they allow their employees to generate happiness for the customers. They believe in individuals taking charge proactively creating space for growth, expansion and enrichment. They support employees to create a change in the organization, bring about a revolution and create an ecosystem that exudes brilliance and superiority in everything they do. At HCL, they aim to create a passionate, engaged and empowered workforce and have several initiatives towards achieving this goal. Here are some of the initiatives to enrich the employee experience at HCL. Hobby Clubs at HCL are a platform for HCLites to share and collaborate with other like-minded. HCLites share their expertise, seek views, participate in various online/offline contests and win exciting prizes. Over 30,000 HCLites are a part of these online clubs ranging from a club for foodies to a club for bikers, photographers, polyglots and toastmasters. HCL also organize hobby classes to give an opportunity to employees to pursue their interests and passion within the premises of the office. Arlights is the talent fest at HCL which allows employees to showcase their talent. The performances include dancing, singing, fashion show, painting, sketching and theatre. HCL has a

number of quiz lovers and a platform called HCL Inquizitive Minds is provided where they could pursue this interest and test their grey cells. The first ever regional debate contest at HCL was organized in March 2014. They received over 200 nominations across four Indian cities.

Assisting HCLites Anytime (AHA) is a first-of-its-kind initiative that features a range of offerings and services. Employees themselves get to choose the programs/benefits that they wish to be implemented in their regions/ facilities. Since HCL believe in taking 'relationships beyond the contract', they launched the Sunshine Summer Camp for the extended HCL family - the children of their employees based in India. The camp is organized annually during the summer months and is open for children aged 4-11 years and their parents across all regions in India. The activities help the kids develop life-long skills such as confidence, teamwork, leadership, compassion, and build friendships as well. Such family-connect programs have been welcomed by most of the parents. They provide numerous avenues for self-empowerment to their employees as a first step towards creating an engaged workforce. And that is why they have various employee resource groups which are led and driven by employees themselves. These resource groups use a multi-dimensional approach and act as platforms for employees to anchor organizational change and development. They have Chargers, as the name suggests, aiming to engage HCLites and providing them with access to opportunities to live their passion. The intent of this group is to enable individuals to pursue their interests in sports, health and wellness, photography, dance and music, knowledge and problem solving, and specific hobbies with like-minded HCLites.

Women Connect group aims to connect and advance women through development programs, advocate gender-neutral work environment by suggesting appropriate policies and position HCL as an employer of choice by women across the globe. There are over 130 Women Connect office members across the globe who lead "Café coffee" sessions and "Rebalance" events, covering over 1200 employees, to promote a gender sensitive and inclusive work place. This group also coaches

and counsels aspiring young women professionals, and shares experiences on work life priorities. HCL has a group who have come together to help HCL adopt best practices for recruiting, and enabling persons with disabilities. Latino Employee Alliance for Diversity (LEAD) is a network that facilitates the professional development of the Latino/Hispanic employees to ensure community and educational outreach, networking, recruitment, and advancement of the HCL business objectives. As on June 30th 2014, the total number of employees was 99,474 and the total number of women employees stood at 23,874. The total number includes approximately 150 disabled employees.

HCL tries its best to come up with various initiatives to create a work environment where employees feel empowered to deliver their best and where their efforts do not go unrecognized. Towards this, they have several platforms to applaud individuals for the hard work and spirit of excellence. Some of these initiatives like the O Infinity League which is an exclusive league formed for super achievers in HCL who have received the topmost ratings for two or more consecutive years. It is one of the most awaited events in the HCL calendar. These crème-de-la-crème employees are recognized and applauded in the presence of their colleagues and family members. Similarly XtraMiles is a unique appreciation forum created for employees. It was launched to inculcate a culture of expressing gratitude or appreciation for a job well done by an individual. The online XtraMiles portal empowers employees to appreciate and recognize their peers/reportees/colleagues/managers across the organization at the click of a button. Based on a point-reward system, they can earn "miles" of different kinds. On accumulation of a certain number of miles, they attain the membership of the prestigious XtraMiles clubs: Silver Club, Gold Club, Platinum Club and the CEO Club! All club members are felicitated and recognized with customized club kits. There had been a long felt need at HCL to reward employees on an impromptu basis for the special efforts which they have put in while delivering and supporting their respective projects. Hence the HCL SPOT Award

was launched. The aim of this initiative is to reward employees 'on the spot' for contributions that are regarded as noteworthy by their managers. HCL have a number of channels that can be used by employees to share their feedback on practices, provide solutions, ask for solutions to issues that prevent them from being productive on the job, report grievances and any workplace harassment. Any employee can meet the respective manager or HR, share the concerns and get actions initiated. Employees can submit policy and support programs related queries and concerns to enabling functions for immediate actions through Smart Services Desk (SSD). HCL have listen hour where employees can meet enabling functions once a quarter and share suggestions / questions. They have initiated "Ask a leader" in which every employee can write to their business leaders and get their concerns addressed. Similarly they have "Ask HR" which is a forum available in MEME for employees to ask any HR related queries. SECURE is a platform where employees and contractual staff can report workplace harassment-related grievances and receive confidential support. Employees and any stakeholder can register ethics-related complaints and initiate appropriate actions called Whistleblower (Rebalance for 2014 and beyond- HCL Technologies).

Some of the key awards and recognition earned by HCL are as follows:

For the eleventh consecutive time, HCL was named a 'Top Employer in the United Kingdom' in recognition of its best-in-class employee engagement and people practices. Additionally, HCL won the ATD '2016 Excellence in Practice' award in the category of career development, for its flagship social career navigation platform "Career Connect". "Power of One" program engages HCL Employees in community development and nation building through various activities: teaching, rehabilitation, counselling, mentoring, training and sensitization programs. 'My School' is a unique program by HCL Foundation to enable every HCL employee to embark on a powerful personal journey of giving back. HCL Foundation currently covers over 50,000 students from 100 schools under 'My

School' program. 'My Scholar' is a holistic Career Development Project fully funded by One Rupee that is donated each day by close to 35,000 employees, to fulfil the aspirations of talented and meritorious students from weaker economic backgrounds.

HCL was recognized for its innovative HR practices and policies. At the HR Innovation Awards 2016, organized by The Guild &

Hindustan Times Mint and presented by Talent Vouch, HCL was awarded for 'GetAJob social media campaign' in the category of 'Most Innovative Use of HR Social Media'. Further, HCL was awarded the Silver Award for Innovation at the Workforce 26 Annual 2016 Optimas Awards for harnessing mobile technology to empower employees (HCL Technologies Website, 2018).

Conclusions, Findings and Suggestions

Table showing a bird's eye view of the HR strategies practised in some of the major IT companies in India

IT Companies Strategies	Infosys	Tech-Mahindra	Wipro	Tata Consultancy Services	HCL
Critical focus area, awards and recognitions	Interactive programme which connect employees with seniors, rapid problem solving culture through technology, Initiative to eradicate "Bench", continuous feedback system with respect to performance management system., expert track to identify domain and technology experts within the organisation, digital platform to mobilize internal opportunities	Awards like Praise on time, Bravo by supervisor for successful completion of a one-time task, pat on back, Associate of the month, grand salute, best team award, long service award, platform which helps one's expertise with associates and teaching those skills, All hands meet	Induction programme for new joiners called on-boarding, continuous engagement driven on 3 levels - organisational, unit/team, individual, employees are part of decision making process, Wipro meets, All hands meet, round table discussions, function meets. Formal feedback mechanisms in form of Employee Perception survey, EPS pulse, Employee advocacy group. Entry level training programmes, Upgrade Skills and Competencies through Accelerated Learning (UPSCALE), Awards like Winner's Circle - top-down - peer-to-peer, points based recognition, Customized business unit rewards and recognition	Equal opportunity employer, compensation levels are merit based, Second career initiative which offer job opportunities to women returning to the workplace after a break in their careers, Culture meter aims to build appreciation in workforce for different cultures and practices, Academic interface programmes, Faculty development programmes, students workshop. Awards like Star of the month, quarter award, on the spot, star team, fast track promotions, membership to professional bodies, etc.	CEO Connect, Employee first approach, BlogHer (Internal social platform), employees are given room to think freely, create innovative solutions and participate and contribute to HCL's revenue, Meme (aspects on gender-neutral policies are discussed), Awards like O Infinity (Super achievers), Xtramiles (Job well done by an individual), SPOT R&R(For special efforts while delivering & supporting projects)
Work life balance	Health assessment and lifestyle enrichment programmes, counsellor support to employees, corporate intranet, TV channel, radio channel, annual employee satisfaction survey. Leaves like paid maternity leave, sabbatical, paternity, adoption, flexi-hours, work from home and part-time	Enables families to bond with the organisation, Psychological counselling service, Ekatvam celebrates associates and their family's talent, Extracurricular activities like sports, music, art, dance, etc. Leaves like Parental, paid. Travel and relocation benefits, Health care options, insurance	Leave - maternity, paternity, annual, sick, adoption, without pay, 2-year Sabbatical, Half-day half-pay, Work from home, PF, Gratuity, Retirement planning tools, Wipro Advantage - Special Price for lifestyle, health financial products	Athletic and sporting events at the national, regional and local level, forum for employees and their families to participate in and develop sense of camaraderie is TCS Maitree, National Stress Awareness Day.	Hobby clubs, Arlights (Talent fest), HCL Inquizitive minds for quiz lovers, employees connect (summer camps for employees' children, debate competitions, AHA (Assisting HCLites Anytime), Employee resource groups (Health & wellness, sports, photography), Women Connect

It is evident from the study that, effective and efficient Talent Management practice ensures that the talent strategy is clearly aligned with the

corporate strategy. It carefully considers the need in involving the right stakeholders in the talent management strategy which helps in creating

highly-skilled internal Talent Pools who are critical elements for a successful talent management program and helps generate "talent pools". A consistent and talented pool also helps a lot in succession planning. Employees get self motivated, determined and inspired when they know that talent plays a vital role in their pay and rewards as per their performance. Top performers are recognised, existing talent is used well and new recruits are done selectively to tap the best talent. Employers come to know about their best performers. A good Talent Management practice in the organisation directly attracts the best talent in the industry and this creates a brand image of the organisation. One thing that does warrant agreement is that talent management is not just about upward career moves. Horizontal career moves that broaden an individual's experience are also an integral part of many processes. For many, detailing a talent management strategy has seen a deliberate increase in the 'sharing' of talent within an organisation. From the employer's point of view it enables them to gain competitive advantage through hiring and retaining the best and most contributing employees. In a nutshell, it helps in strengthening the lifeline of an organization which is none other than its talent pool.

Having a strong talent management culture favourably impacts how employees rate their pride in their organizations and willingness to recommend them as places to work. Additionally, if employees have favourable views of their organizations' talent management practices, they are more likely to have confidence in the future of the organization. Employees who believe in their companies' talent management efforts also have more favourable opinions of their management, the research found. These employees believe their managers effectively manage the workload and that senior management demonstrates employees are important to the success of the company. They also are more likely to feel a sense of job security, be satisfied with on-the-job training, feel that performance is evaluated fairly and experience greater feelings of personal accomplishment.

Improved line-of-sight over people and

performance will enable one organisation to monitor engagement and performance levels, helping them address poor performance and reduce turnover. Supporting talent and performance management technology will also allow for efficient identification and utilisation of talent, making succession planning simple and accurate.

Limitations of the Study: The study is based on secondary data. Therefore, it just provides an overview of the practices adopted by the IT companies. However, these practices may differ in real life.

Conclusions:

Though some of the major IT companies' secondary data were accessible, the overall findings pertaining to talent management practices and human capital management is quite positive. The attraction, growth and retention of talent are a key success factor for modern service based knowledge organisations. To be known as an employer of choice is considered a key organisational goal with direct benefits. An organization's talent management strategy and investments must align with broader business goals and realities. A deep understanding of business issues must include how workforce can best be managed. Despite today's global financial circumstances, the capacity of organizations to attract, develop, motivate and retain talent will remain a critical strategic issue for the 21st century's knowledge economies. It will impact the ability of organizations to survive the crises and prepare them for eventual recovery.

Companies must create the culture and programs that will best engage and motivate talent in organization. It is recommended that organisations should move away from the competitive, winner/ loser mentality towards a more cooperative, generative approach of creativity 'talent solutions'. HR managers must have the ability to rapidly train and retrain employees according to business needs and create opportunities for new talent. There are several benefits of a strategic talent management process. It gives organizations a committed workforce, trained employees, lower attrition rate; it helps in improving HR policies of the company and prepares the organization to adapt to changes.

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