

2. HR Record Keeping A Study of Transition from Manual to Digital Platform

Anusriya Mukherjee

Assistant Professor,
Department of Humanities,
Budge Budge Institute of Technology.

Tanupriya Mukherjee

Student, MBA,
Budge Budge Institute of Technology.

Abstract:

The early 1980s saw the remarkable technological progress, which had a profound effect on workplace cultures around the globe. Similar to other disciplines, human resource management has benefited from technological advancement. After becoming digitalized, practically all ancillary labor in the human resource management industry saw a significant change. Prior to the development of technology, the majority of firms typically kept a handwritten record of all information pertaining to their employees. Yet, over time and with poor use, many of these data were lost. Currently, there are hardly any manual data. This is largely because digital record keeping has become the norm for the great majority of businesses, worldwide. The article that follows makes an attempt to highlight the significant change brought on by the switch from manual to digital platforms.

Keywords:

digital preservation, HR, critical role, optimizations of operations, digital technology, convenience sampling strategy

2.1 Introduction:

The first organised record-keeping procedures were adopted by corporations in the early 20th century in order to manage a database for their personnel. This is when the history of human resource record management began. HR record management has changed significantly since then. Businesses started keeping manual, written records of basic employee information, like attendance and payroll records, in the early 1900s.

Businesses started keeping track of employee data, such as job history, education, and performance throughout their time with the company during the 1920s by creating personnel files. Record-keeping became more uniform across enterprises in the 1930s with the development of standardised forms for employee records.

Businesses started using computers to manage employee records in the 1960s and 1970s, which improved the record-keeping efficiency and accuracy. The development of HR information systems (HRIS) in the 1980s and 1990s, allowed for the consolidation of several HR operations, including payroll, benefits, and performance management, under a single system. With the introduction of cloud-based systems, mobile applications, and sophisticated analytics tools in the 2000s and beyond, digital record-keeping has moved to a higher level of sophistication. The management of HR records is currently evolving, with a focus on data protection, security, and compliance, as well as the use of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence to improve HR procedures. To stay up with the rapid modernization of the workforce, HR must implement new processes and procedures in light of changing time and demographics. The most important shift affecting organisations right now is the digitalization of HR, which has been widely adopted in recent years. In human resources, the switch from paper to digital record keeping entails going paperless, automation, employee self-service apps, social media recruiting, virtual reality training, workplace gaming, people analytics, borderless training, digital platforms that connect disparate groups of people, digital culture, etc. Hence, employing specialised software to convert paper-based personnel files, forms, and other HR documents into electronic format can expedite procedures, boost efficiency, improve accuracy, and improve data security and accessibility.

2.2 Literature Review:

HRM has evolved from a traditional role in organisations to a more prolific, progressive and innovative semblance in executing resolute drives such as proficiency-based recruitment, entrepreneurial compensation, result-oriented performance management, and human resources emancipation. The digitalization of the HR Management function provides an example of a transition towards an enhanced inventive & futuristic approach. As the management of HR functions have undergone a digital metamorphosis, it became extensively capable of surpassing alternative reinforced objectives (Makridakis, 2017). Top-echelon in the field of HRM has pointed out that the advantages of e-HRM is inclusive of two aspects – first is extensive analytics & secondly a comprehensive high-performance level, which contributes to a greater level of efficiencies, particularly during recruitment (Khahro et al., 2021). This can be attributed to replacement of manually prepared curriculum vitae (CV) and AI assisted screening that accomplishes the aforementioned tasks promptly, promise a greater chances of retrieval of previously inaccessible datasets & maintain transparency (Abolhassan, 2017); real-time monitoring of the workforce (Bondarouk, 2017); (Bersin, 2012) & thus influences HR managers prediction processes. In a summary of research exploring the effect of automation of HRM, the precise areas of e-HRM, it has been indicated that digitalization indeed has had the greatest impact on recruitment and selection procedures (Lumi, 2020). HR managers now use social platforms engaging in recruitment as well as teleconferencing, like Facebook, Googlemeet, Skype, WebeX, LinkedIn and others, as digital revolution has increased the effectiveness as well as efficiency of the HRM function. Thus, digitalization has made an impact on employee training & development as well with the aim to confront leaders in business to embrace the evolving cybernated paradigm along with accomplishing the strategies as well as primary goals of HR professionals (Frey & Osborne, 2017). Emphasising that revolution in HRM is facilitating the value-added perception by HR managers, while also ensuring that HRM plays an essentially critical role within enterprises (Kaji et al., 2019).

Lumi's 2020 summary of research, investigating the effects of digitalization, confirmed the impact of automation of HRM. His reference about definitive functionalities of HR management indicated that personnel file maintenance & recruitment has been extensively revolutionised by digitalization (Lumi, 2020).

Not only has digitalization shaken previous plans for setup and growth, but it has also propelled the objectives of preparatory work and execution. The goal of training is to challenge industry leaders to adjust to the transforming quantitatives. Some authors argue that user engagement during formulation and maintenance in e-HRM is critical to outcomes & accomplishments (Kossek, Gash, Nichol & Young, 1994), in contrary to others who opined that there isn't enough evidence to prove the same with certainty.

2.4 Objective of the Study:

The objective of the study was to find out the advantages of digital record keeping by the HR Department and for that reason we conducted interview sessions from 30 HR Managers of different sectors. The core concept of the study was to understand how digital evaluation radically changed the record keeping of Human Resource Department and consequently find out the immediate consequence of the digitalization of work process (Fabbri & Scapolan, 2018). The concept of Digital transformation can not only be viewed as a way for empowerment of employee but also the optimization of operations, digital transformation may also complicate the way in which employees are managed (van den Berg et al., 2020).

2.4 Research Methodology:

We made an effort to conduct interviews with HR managers from a variety of areas in order to perform my study. I contacted them via email, extended a WhatsApp invitation, scheduled a meeting, and even performed telephone interviews. Many HR managers declined to cooperate, but we still got assistance from 30 managers in all, on whom my paper is based on. The list below serves as an example of my process for choosing HR Managers:

Gender:

Male	09
Female	21

Age:

Age Group	No of HR personals selected for Interview
21-30	12
31-40	15
41-50	3

Educational Qualification:

Post Graduate	26
Graduate	04

Experience:

Industry:

Experience	No. of HR personals selected for Interview	Manufacturing	Service
0-4 years	3	5	25
5-9 years	8		
10-14 years	14		
15-19 years	5		

We used a convenience sampling strategy for our research and created a statement-based questionnaire and asked HR staff to complete it at their convenience. The sampling was collected only from Kolkata. The claims are listed below:

- Employee Record keeping digitally is easier and time saving
- Digital CV does help to screen potential candidates for interview
- User-friendly HR Software
- It is cost saving to the company to go digital for employee record
- Efficient use of manpower resources using digital technology
- Need of training the digital record maintenance
- Transparent view of individual employee profile
- Easy update of any upgradation of employees
- Use of cloud technology to prevent loss of data
- 10. Overall quite satisfied by using digital platform

2.5 Findings and Discussion:

Area of Observation – Kolkata, West Bengal

Sr. No.	Statement	Fully Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Fully Agree
1	<i>Employee Record keeping digitally is easier and time saving</i>			3	5	22
2	<i>Digital CV does help to screen potential candidates for interview</i>				5	25
3	<i>User-friendly HR Software</i>		2		8	20
4	<i>It is cost saving to the company to go digital for employee record</i>		5	4	11	10
5	<i>Efficient use of manpower resources using digital technology</i>				4	26
6	<i>Need of training the digital record maintenance</i>				7	23
7	<i>Transparent view of individual employee profile</i>			7	5	18

HR Record Keeping a Study of Transition from Manual to Digital Platform

Sr. No.	Statement	Fully Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Fully Agree
8	<i>Easy update of any upgradation of employees</i>				5	25
9	<i>Use of cloud technology to prevent loss of data</i>				2	28
10	<i>Overall, quite satisfied by using digital platform</i>			3	10	17

While 22 applicants of 30 participants—fully agree that maintaining digital records is very efficient and time-saving, 5 candidates—out of 30—agree but with some restrictions. We found it fascinating that 3 participants are neutral about the digital process. When questioned, they responded that some businesses have both manual and digital records, thus the issue of efficiency and time savings does not apply to them.

The notion that digital resumes make it simple to examine potential interview candidates was acknowledged by all 30 participants. All the human resources executives at the businesses we spoke with used various web resources to find and store candidate resumes. The great majority of these HR managers check and save CVs on the LinkedIn network for further use.

We've received some conflicting responses from the participants when we've questioned them about how user-friendly the HR software is. While 28 participants gave favourable assessments for the usage of HR software, 2 interviewees disagreed with the use of such software.

They contended that only those who are knowledgeable about computers can utilise the software effectively and with ease. Those who are accustomed to tracking HR records manually, most frequently find it challenging to switch to paperless documentations.

When asked about the cost savings a firm would experience from using digital software, we discovered conflicting responses. Five participants criticised the use of software and digital modes because, instead of reducing costs, they were steadily driving up the cost to the organisation.

While 11 individuals agreed that digitising HR records had helped the organisation decrease costs, only 4 employees expressed neutrality. It has been generally accepted that the digitalization of HR record maintenance has been crucial to the effective use of human resources when using digital technology, the need for training in digital record maintenance, the ease with which employees can be updated for any advancements, and the use of cloud technology to prevent data loss.

Of the 30 people interviewed, 7 employees expressed no opinion, while 23 others agreed that the digital preservation of employee records did indeed provide a transparent view of each employee's profile. Overall, we discovered that the majority of HR professionals have a high level of satisfaction with maintaining digital records.

2.6 Conclusion:

In conclusion, the discipline of human resource management has benefited greatly from digitalization. It is now simpler to manage employee records, automate HR procedures, and give employees access to their private HR data thanks to technology. Digital record keeping has decreased the danger of errors and inefficiencies associated with manual record keeping while increasing the accuracy and security of employee data. Moreover, by giving HR professionals better access to employee data and enabling data-driven decision-making, digitization has enabled them to play a more strategic role in their organisations. HR practitioners can now discover trends and patterns in employee data using advanced analytics technologies, which can assist guide talent management and workforce planning strategies. It is crucial to remember that digitalization also brings with it a unique set of difficulties, including issues with data security and privacy, the requirement for ongoing training and development of HR professionals, and the possibility that technology will eventually take the place of human interaction in some HR functions. Organizations must be aware of these difficulties and make sure that their digital HR strategies are built to meet the needs of both their employees and the entire company. In general, the digitization of human resource management is a potent trend that can assist firms in enhancing their HR services' accuracy, efficiency, and strategic impact.

In terms of human resource management, digital record keeping has many benefits over manual record keeping. HR workers may increase productivity, accuracy, accessibility, security, and cost-effectiveness by utilising technology, which will ultimately contribute to corporate success.

2.7 Challenges:

From our study, we have found that a minority of participants does not agree that the function of human resource management will change due to digitalization while others contend that the tasks and role won't change while the methods will (the role of the HR Manager won't change, but there will be more ways to complete the same task). The way human resource functions are carried out will change as a result of automation (automating labour-intensive manual processes). To fully adopt from manual to digital record keeping will be challenge faced by a majority of companies in future.

2.8 Limitations and Future Scope:

We are aware that the results of this study have some limitations. First off, as this research was based on a case study of a few selected organisation within one state (Kolkata) only, so we accept that it is impossible to generalise the findings. Also, only a small number of samples (30) could be collected on which our findings are based. Yet, by demonstrating the effects of digitization on HR managers, this study advances understanding. The following have been the limitation of our study:

- A. *Sample size* – We faced a major setback in the form of number of responses we received from the HR personnel. We aimed for at least 50 responses but in the end could only collect 30 responses. This has been a major limitation of our study.

- B. *Geographical area* – Also, we selected Kolkata to be our area of study, thus reducing the scope of a much-varied response.

A qualitative study in this area has a lot of potential in the future. To get a more realistic image, testable hypothesis conversion could be applied. Although this study provides insightful information on HR managers' perspectives on the problems posed by digitalization, we think it would be fascinating to speak with HR specialists from other states that operate in other circumstances. In conclusion, evaluating results from research like this carried out in a wide range of organisational scenarios could to show an enhanced & poised perspective of HR management in this era of digitalization.

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