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HR 2.0: linking Web 2.0 and HRM functions

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to identify the possible gaps in use of Web 2.0 tools and human resource (HR) functional performance, and to identify the potential areas of future research for the upcoming researcher and industry practitioners.

Design/methodology/approach – By having a thorough literature review on the said Web 2.0 and HR functions' concepts, the study develops a conceptual model with seven propositions that assist in answering two major research questions, i.e., whether Web 2.0 tools can benefit the four major functions of human resource management (HRM), and to what extent Web 2.0 tools help HR Managers to reap maximum (efficiently and effectively) out of four major functions of HRM. By identifying the possible gaps in use of Web 2.0 tools and HR functional performance, the study identifies potential areas of future research for the upcoming researcher and industry practitioners.

Findings – HR 2.0 regime (right alignment of Web 2.0 tools and HR functions) will allow both the ends (employee and employer) to drive the organization toward sustainable, long-term business success. Excellence in HR functions following the HR 2.0 concept, can lead the organizations get best desired HR and business outcomes across sectors and industries. Though using Web 2.0 tools in HR functions can encounter various challenges as management of bulky information, time wastage, personal conflicts, threats of losing information confidentiality, etc., but these potential threats can be made less risky by transforming organization culture.

Research limitations/implications – As the scope of the study was limited to the use of Web 2.0 tools in HR practices, the study provided a generic view of the use of Web 2.0 tools in HR domain. Thus the findings should be used only in HR domain in a variety of contexts.

Practical implications – The current study adds value to in the exploration of the link between Web 2.0 and HRM in a systematic way because of the fact that Web 2.0 tools as drivers or facilitating tools can play a vital role in execution of HR practices and processes in a secure, effective and efficient manner. The current study also paves the way for the HR practitioners and researcher to extract manifold benefits from the use of Web 2.0 tools in all of its functions with the right understanding. Critical role of HR can be favorably facilitated by Web 2.0 in favor of both, i.e., employees and the employers which could ultimately enable them to create a competitive edge in the market place. The organizations in general (whether private or public, manufacturing or public, small and medium enterprises or MNEs) can extract the real benefits from the right use of Web 2.0 while performing any of their HR function. Enhanced decision making may also be gained using the right mix of Web 2.0 tools and HR practices in any organization. The study also provides a track to the researchers to excavate more associations among the said constructs and to test these relationships in different industries so that maximum HR challenges may be addressed related to the employee and the HR process.

Social implications – Social implications of the current study can be derived as the main focus is HR practices which are executed by the employees, who if are positively addressed, may gain economic and social up gradations. As for the employers use of Web 2.0 tools in their HR functions not only will bring economic prosperity for themselves but for the employees and the society.

Originality/value – Conceptual analysis of links between the use of Web 2.0 tools and HR functions to draw the attention of HR practitioners to benefit both employers and employees. Though the use of Web 2.0 is being popular in various other business areas but not for internal employees regarding HR functions. Paper provides the conceptual link of Web 2.0 applications, i.e., blogs, wikis, folksonomies, RSS, podcasts and online social networks with human resource functions.

Keywords Motivation, Web 2.0, Maintenance, Staffing, Human resource, Training and development

Paper type Conceptual paper



1. Introduction

Human resource management (HRM) these days do not focus simply on individual employees but strives to create networks of employees. Employees in general always push themselves for performance objectives achievement. Most of the employees have a presence and some are on the advance stages of using any of the social media for their personal use. Hale (2010) narrates the internet regime as the driver of replacement of traditional collectivism of employees for collective bargaining and strike actions. In early phase of the last decade of twentieth century, internet grabbed the attention of the corporate world by being a significant part of human interests (Haythornthwaite and Wellman, 2002). Internet as mass media is disseminating information and ideas to the public (Katz and Blumler, 1974). Because of the rapid growth rate of the internet users among masses in developing countries like Pakistan, even small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are using it as a source of both competitive and strategic advantage for their internal and external stakeholders. Use of social media, i.e., Web 2.0 tools, is one of the main affecting factors of attracting the business community toward its usage for business benefits. Barry and Pearson (2015) state that social media users in totality have been estimated at over 1.7 billion worldwide and are expected to enhance to approximately 2.6 billion by the year 2017. According to Granovetter (1983) human relation studies have been derived from influential social network theory considering their Strength of Weak Ties (SWT). Web 2.0 regime includes blogs, wikis, folksonomies, RSS, podcasts and online social networks (Kennedy *et al.*, 2007). According to Wenger *et al.* (2002) corporate world has been prioritizing the objective of cost minimization. They further state that Web 2.0 tools augment the “socio technical phenomena” of exchanging information in any form being cost effective (economies of scale) and efficient and network effects. It has been spotlighted and initiated by O’Reilly in the year 2004 to follow the community driven Web services model, i.e., wikis, blogs and other social networking sites. Facebook, a social networking service introduced in February 2004, by Mark Zuckerberg with some of his colleagues. Initially membership was limited to Harvard student, but soon extended to the other colleges, i.e., Boston Area, the Ivy League and Stanford University. Eventually it was supported and appreciated by the students of other universities and high schools and was finally open to anyone aged 13 and over. With the great increasing strength of 500 million users globally including six million in Pakistan till the year 2012, internet is gaining popularity as an opportunity for the businesses across the globe (Farooq and Jan, 2012). Peters *et al.* (2015) state that global user base per month of Facebook is over 1.39 billion. Twitter is another online social network like Facebook with Micro-blogging service that permits its users to read and send text messages up to 140 characters, called “tweets” launched in March, 2006 by Jack Dorsey. Twitter, being a Micro-blogging network has increased its number of registered members vertically in the graph of social networks up to 200 million with approximate 154 million tweets till the year 2011 (Mučnjak and Pikić, 2011). According to Zhang (2015), Twitter is now being used by one billion registered users and Facebook is closer to this number. Micro-blogs have been researched as a smaller type of blogs combined with features for social networking and enable the employees to develop social network by sharing tweets (short messages) (Haider, 2009). Use of Twitter also vertically gained worldwide popularity, with over 500 million active users as of 2012, generating over 340 million tweets daily and handling over 1.6 billion search queries per day. Web 2.0 enabled the masses/individuals to communicate and collaborate with the facilitation of editing and adding the information (Ankolekar *et al.*, 2007; Pachler and Daly, 2009). It has also

made the life of the business community easier than ever, in terms of resource efficacy and gaining competitive advantage. According to Kalny (2007), Web 2.0 technologies are primarily to be used within the organization. Thus the actual beneficiaries, i.e., employees are required to use these technologies for themselves and for their organization. A.P. McAfee (2006) defines “Techies” as early adopters of Web 1.0 and 2.0 technologies as Web 1.0 technologies used to entail high level of technical expertise whereas Web 2.0 technologies were a paved way for them to easily deal with it. Masses attracted toward Web 2.0 not only due to its user-friendliness features but its feature of “connecting people” with each other effectively and efficiently. Wahi *et al.* (2016) confirm that businesses need to focus upon Web 2.0 which are required to be exploited for business use. Various studies on the use of social networking have been made in the past addressing different aspects of the business processes, outcomes and employees. Coyle and Vaughn (2008) coincide human behavior and social networks because of the connectivity with the people of the same areas of profession and of common interests.

The terms “social capital” and “network capital” involve people to people relationship to synergize employees’ efforts and to have trusted information communicated to each individual (Ferreira and Du Plessis, 2009). According to Alberghini *et al.* (2014), social media networks are the reason of mapping and representing the relationships among individuals and the groups in an organization. Human resource (HR) processes are being consistently changing with the rapidly changing business practices because of the paradigm shift in the information and communication technology (ICT) regime with the emergence of new technologies across various industries in today’s volatile business environment. History of the users, expectations, perceived organizational and /or management support and the trust for Web 2.0 regime have been identified which are generically demanded by the employees in any organization whether they are users of Web 2.0 technologies or not (Paroutis and Al Saleh, 2009). Bryan *et al.* (2007) correspond by highlighting the need of greater interactions among employees as virtual teams that people gauge organizations on ROI and organizations’ focus on measurement of employee satisfaction and employee productivity. Employees, if are provided a logical and visionary view of Web 2.0 by their employers, can be at least a few step ahead toward their own professional growth and for the growth of their organization.

Web 2.0 technologies are creating marginal benefits for almost all the major HR practices as Riemsdijk *et al.* (2005) quoted HR planning (HRP), recruitment and selection (R&S), training and development (T&D), performance management (PM), employee reward management, employee career development (ECD) and employee relationship management (ERM). According to Kavanagh and Thite (2009), the prime reason of using technology in HR functions is its features (i.e. cheaper and more powerful). They further state that these features help organizations improve their efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery, cost reduction and value-added services. Corporate wikis, blogs and other Web 2.0 applications help managers interact with their employees, empower them in taking work-related decisions which ultimately result in better performance and greater level of satisfaction among the employees. The more employees would be satisfied, the more they will be engaged and will own their organization instead of thinking to find new opportunities in outside market.

A.P. McAfee (2006) narrates necessary “SLATES” components of Enterprise 2.0 applications (i.e. search, links, authoring, tags, extensions and signals) because of which, enterprises especially the big ones started reaping benefits from the social media and Web applications. Furthermore McAfee (2009) critically put emphasis on the

use of Web 2.0 strategies and SLATES criteria in the business/projects because of their multiple business benefits. Because of the paradigm shift in web applications from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, their use, to perform HR functions, has also shifted from smaller components to the groups of components.

Shang *et al.* (2011) state that the application of Web 2.0 is in its early stage and its knowledge-creating processes need dynamic and contextual management for the right use of knowledge, for exploitation minimization and for the decrease in the undesirable impact of that knowledge. Moreover Sigala and Chalkiti (2014) also emphasized toward the use of Web 2.0 for knowledge management purposes mainly for internal use in any organization. According to Hao and Lee (2015), Magnuson (2013) concluded that Web 2.0 applications increase learning process through the affordances of sharing, organization and categorization of information, promotion, creativity and enjoyment, enhancement of rich discussion and facilitation of technology-related knowledge enhancement. Ozkan and Abidin (2010) provide multiple examples of Web 2.0 in connection with HR practices quoting social network sites, i.e., LinkedIn, Facebook and MySpace, etc., which are used for attraction or recruitment of employees, variable cost reduction and virtual network management.

In today's volatile environment, transformation has become necessity for both individuals and the organizations. Transformation is considered as radical change with is more likely to happen internally in any organization (Appelbaum and Wohl, 2000; Stockport, 2000). Because of the increased globalization issue, organizations are required to re-think about being competitive which is possible only through their people (Appelbaum and Wohl, 2000; Knapp, 2004; Stockport, 2000). Such global pressure has forced the organizations to reconsider their HR functions to meet their future objectives (Appelbaum and Wohl, 2000; Yeung and Brockbank, 1994). Web 2.0 tools help organizations to reconsider their HR functions and enable them to motivate their people to cope-up with the business challenges. HR experts always put endeavors to develop positive attitudes in their employees to perform their routine job duties (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005). Positive attitude can be created by involving the employees into the decision-making process. Web 2.0 tools successfully create motivation among the employee, e.g., by facilitating the managers to involve their employees into the decision-making process and bridging the communication gaps vertically and horizontally using Web 2.0 tools. Studies ensured that the HR practices can successfully be managed by the Web 2.0 tools. Using Web 2.0 tools the exchange of information between employee and the employer will be instant, and the HR activities can easily be handled by HR professionals (Ashbaugh and Miranda, 2002). HR managers need to stay connected with the line managers (Mohrman and Lawler, 1997) and with their employees to better integrate the overall management practices which is quite probable in an efficient and cost effective manner using Web 2.0 tools.

The study aimed to riposte two below stated research questions by digging out a literature review of the past studies which provided the answers of the two main research questions posed in the current study. Relevant studies were classified and extracted from various research databases. The current study was not restricted to any particular time frame due to the fact that it considered all the studies (cited) potentially relevant. To enrich the literature base, the study also looked for the literature references found in the keyword search, for other relevant studies to be incorporated. The current study provides the concept of ultimate use of Web 2.0 applications/social media in major HR functions which has been named as HR 2.0. Paper provides reviews about literature on Web 2.0 tools, i.e., social media, wikis, blogs and HR major four functions

to derive propositions for identification of potential areas for future studies. The review made in this study has been organized along the following research questions:

RQ1. Whether Web 2.0 tools can benefit the four major functions of HRM?

1.1. What is the difference between the roles of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 tools whether partially or fully in HRM functions?

1.2. What possible benefits could be drawn from SLATE features of Web 2.0 tools in performing functions of HRM?

RQ2. To what extent Web 2.0 tools help HR Managers to reap maximum (efficiently & effectively) out of HRM major four functions?

2.1. Web 2.0 tools can be used by HR managers to perform HR staffing function.

2.2. Web 2.0 tools can be used by HR managers to perform training and development.

2.3. Web 2.0 tools can be used by HR managers to perform employee motivation.

2.4. Web 2.0 tools can be used by HR managers to perform maintenance.

2.5. Web 2.0 tools help organizations to transform its culture.

2. Conceptual model and construct

2.1 Conceptual model

Figure 1 represents the key constructs, from left to right, are the component of functions, i.e., recruitment, training, appraisal and employee communication using Web 1.0 tools to a complete functions, i.e., HR staffing, training and development, motivation and maintenance using Web 2.0 tools. The dotted outer line expresses the roles of both the

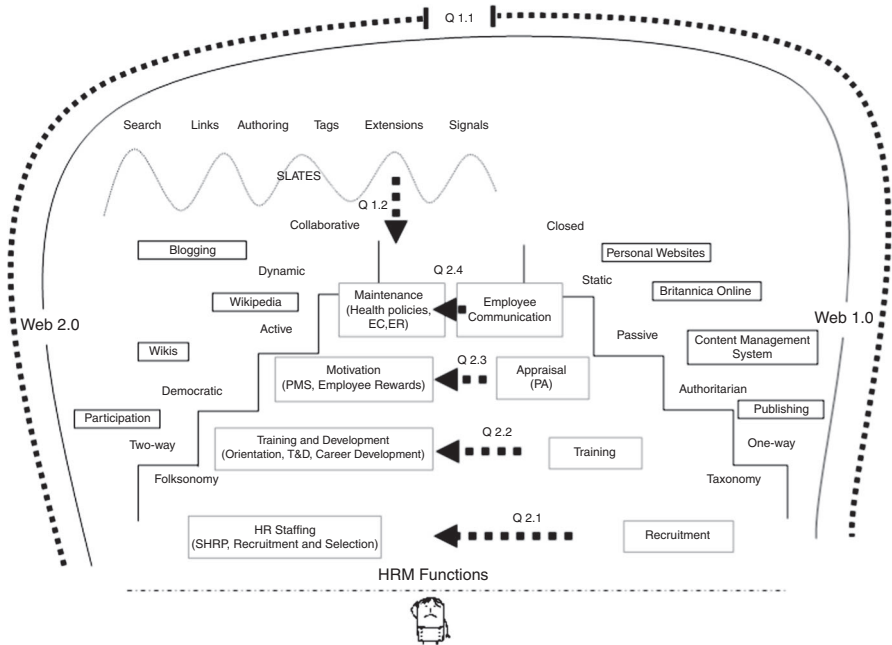


Figure 1.
Conceptual model
of HR 2.0

Note: Dotted arrow lines indicate the developed propositions

platforms/tools Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 which are or could be used for the facilitation and could benefit managers and industry practitioners in performing HR functions to their full. A vertical dotted arrow, directed downward provides a view of what possible benefits could be drawn from SLATE features of Web 2.0 tools in performing functions of HRM.

Organizations can verily incorporate Web 2.0 tools into their HR functions to improve their delivery of HR initiatives, employee interaction with management and employees' engagement (Gareth Bell, 2012). According to Martin *et al.* (2009), Web 2.0 is meant as a tool to encourage greater collaboration among employees and other organizational stakeholders. They also affirmed that the characteristics of Web 2.0 tools include participation and collaboration, openness, user control, decentralization, democratization, standardized communication and modularity following a bottom-up approach. The link between HR functions and Web 2.0 tools has been confirmed in the context of collaboration of opportunities, knowledge sharing, feedback mechanism and HR practices (Broughton *et al.*, 2009; Creese, 2007; Fuchs-Kittowski *et al.*, 2009; Martin *et al.*, 2009; Sena, 2009; Stobbe, 2010; Wilensky and Redmiles, 2008). Web 2.0 tools possess boundless potential for the business world as a method of communication, collaboration and collection (Creese, 2007). Creese further quotes that due to the changing demographics, there is a need of Web 2.0 tools for employee productivity. Web 2.0 or social media technologies are being used by the business entities to rationalize and transform HR practices from old conventional methods to the modern ones, for both internal and external operations, service quality improvements (Ssonko, 2010). Current study developed the conceptual framework based upon use of Web 2.0 tools in connection with their HR practices and the theoretical links between Web 2.0 tools and HR functions provided in the past literature.

3. Propositions

3.1 There is difference between the roles of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 tools whether partially or fully in HRM functions?

Web 1.0 evolved as the information publishing tool over the internet (Srinivasan, 2009) but the problem occurred to the business community was lack of trust because of being open and insecure. Business entities started approaching toward it when the new regime, i.e., Web 2.0 was evolved by O'Reilly in the year 2004 for the very first time because of its concurrent acceptance by the public and the feature of not entailing any technical expertise. ICTs (i.e. Enterprise 2.0 which include blogging and social networking sites, file sharing sites and wikis, etc.) do not entail technical knowledge and allow the information recipients to be active (Kolbitsch and Maurer, 2006). These social networking websites replaced the traditional relationship ties of the individuals whether or not employees, with the networked Web 2.0 models, where no hierarchy is followed and knowledge is shared willfully. In the last decade, revolutionary Enterprise 2.0 applications attracted the business community (Srinivasan, 2009) after its acceptance by armatures (Keen, 2007). Employee engagement has been associated with blogs as a medium of creating full duplex communication between the employees and their bosses which facilitate both the ends to create networking with each other (Leidner *et al.*, 2010). Weber (2008) argue that Web 2.0 plays a vital role in managing knowledge not only at individual level but also at organizational level. Social networks are used by the companies for the strategic decisions. These technologies are as important for knowledge management and for enhancing knowledge form individual workers' to organizational level to be aligned with organizational philosophy. Bughin and Manyika (2007) state that McKinsey

conducted a survey on the usage and the compatibility of Web 2.0 technology in business. The survey included 24,847 executives of worldwide corporations which concluded that, most corporations are investing in Web 2.0 technologies to sustain their market position, to hold the competitive advantage and to meet the customers demand worldwide.

Role of Web 2.0 is critical because of its openness for both, the organizations and the employees. Use of Web 2.0 tools can make employees more engaged but on the other hand for many organizations and HR professionals, it is quite difficult to manage it. Due to the incorporation of Web 2.0 tools into business areas, roles and interaction processes for individuals and organizations at large are being changed (Schneckenberg, 2009b). Organizations can involve their employees by motivating them to participate in collaborative work using Enterprise 2.0 tools. A collaborative work culture has to be adopted by the organization(s) as it is the pre-requisite for being benefited from Enterprise 2.0 tools. Argyris (2001), spotlights work motivation and employee performance describing internal commitment as a process of employee empowerment by giving him chance to participate in decision making and external commitment as adaptive behavior and performance goals. Enterprise 2.0 tools can help companies in transformation process for changing organization structure from centralized to decentralized in order to compete in today's dynamic changing business environment (Schneckenberg, 2009a). Web 2.0 tools help in training and it should be extended to all the employees across the whole organization to not only those who physically are in contact but also to those who are not. Karjaluo *et al.* (2015) state that social media should be encouraged for its use in employees' training instead of restricting it.

The influential model of Enterprise 2.0 holds attention of the employers for both formal and informal communication, collaboration and social networking (Frاند and Hixon, 1999). Social networking is considered as a driver of informal learning as informal learning contribute around 80 percent of employee's total learning (Breslin, 2008). Gu *et al.* (2014) also put emphasis upon the use of Web 2.0 technology for informal learning that ultimately reshape learner's behavior. Hinchcliffe and Kim (2012) state that the use of social media in business has gained strategic importance and social networking technology adoption helps employees to support each other as a community. According to El Ouiridi *et al.* (2015), Leino *et al.* (2012) stated that the social media tools facilitate workplace learning by creating interaction, peer support and immediate feedback. Kavanagh and Thite (2009) also affirm that a strong virtual learning environment plays a pivotal role in the learning of its internal stakeholders. Its design is required to be employee centric so that they may get maximum out of it. As mere technology, i.e., Web 2.0 adoption without its real understanding to use doesn't create any difference (Harris and Rea, 2009; Rollett *et al.*, 2007). According to DiMicco *et al.* (2008), beehive, i.e., an internal social networking site used by IBM, disseminate employees data in a free and trusted manner even the employees know that the data is shared within in the company or among internal stakeholders and is being monitored somewhere. They even share their personal information with the company's employees they don't know but this communication which generally includes their areas of interest, their job issues, their personal problems and professional issues on their jobs, not only help them take benefits for themselves by having opportunities to learn (DiMicco *et al.*, 2008) but for the overall benefits of their organization. Schütt (2007) reports employee use of IBM's internal or public blogs which are run by around 15 percent of its own employees and used by its half of the employees with

approximately 1,43,000 entries and around 8,800 wikis regularly. Though the use of wikis and blogs can be useful for organization's HR functions by and large but the issue encountered so far by the businesses is enabling their employees to use them positively. Reidy (2008) surveyed around 2,081 managers across various organizations of the world which concurred with the outcome that the 25 percent actually use it to communicate with their colleagues, business partners and customers. Reidy (2008) also narrates that around 58 percent of respondents are not aware of their use for their professional growth and the growth of their organization. Knowledge sharing with colleagues, motivates employees (Kirchner *et al.*, 2009) as Web 2.0 tools are more information centric rather social (DiMicco *et al.*, 2008). Reciprocity on the social website is considered as the true driver of the knowledge culture (Ito *et al.*, 2008) as traditional HR methods are being replaced with the social networking tools, i.e., wikis and internal blogs which facilitate in employee coordination and collaboration. Parry (2012) declares the self-serving nature of Web 2.0 applications facilitate managers and employees both, direct support in performing their HR services. A well planned social networking tool within an organization can be used for the monitoring objective fulfillment without giving the feel of threat to the employees.

Employee centric Web 2.0 technologies include wikis and blogs (corporate Wikis and internal blogs) which not only facilitate employees to publish their skills and knowledge to find better opportunities to learn, career growth tracks but a close bonding structure among networked employees, tie them to stay with the organization for a longer period of time. Fraser and Dutta (2010) narrate that with the attainment of right Web 2.0 tools and creating the right environment can lead the organization to the achievement of both, its operational and strategic objectives. Old HRM processes and methods are now required to be updated by optimistically adopting Web 2.0 tools open communication (Bennett *et al.*, 2010) to maximize the business benefits in this highly competitive world. According to Blanchard (2011), communication mechanism using social media provides marginal support to empower human networks.

3.2 Potential benefits could be drawn from SLATES features of Web 2.0 tools in performing functions of HRM?

According to Kavanagh and Thite (2009), all the HR functions are being computerized for reaping maximum out of them. HR information systems benefit the organizations in effective information management regarding HR functions. Using HR information systems, Web 2.0 strategies and SLATES criteria are considered as the important sources of drawing multiple business benefits (McAfee, 2009). According to (Forrester*, 2005), searching require contents on the intranet by the employees and is comparatively easy from internet. The feature of linking best pages for the audience provides guideline for individuals to make them updated in their knowledge enhancement. This attribute of Web 2.0 platforms can be a good source for the employees to make them updated by creating links with the most desired pages on the web for the benefits of both, i.e., employees and the organizations. Links can create a seamless form of informal training to the employees without making them considering it as an extra burden upon them. Linked pages with the relevant information pages can benefit the employees, if they get updated information associated with their job tasks and their skills. Desire to author is an intrinsic feature of the most of the employees. Authoring model of Web 2.0 tools like blogs and wikis can provide the employees a feel of being participative in corporate decision making. Employee engagement hikes when

they are facilitated in providing feedback and share their knowledge and experiences into a common pool. With the help of authoring on internal blogs and corporate wikis if provided by the organization, employees whether in individual capacity or in a group, find opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences that can be a source of encouragement and a feel of being competitive.

According to Staff (2008), facts suggest that with every passing day employees are becoming less engaged and are having a feel of being neglected in decisions. Knowledge-sharing among the organization's internal stakeholders benefits the employees in terms of finding continuous career development opportunities within the organization, continuous learning for knowledge and skills up-gradation. Employers can reap widespread benefits from providing authoring facilities to its employees being cost effective and responsive especially in terms of training and development and feedback. Performance management process can also be facilitated by having a close eye on the employee involvement in the job and performing 360 degree survey using blogs and wikis. Categorized contents if provided by the employer not only save time and efforts of its employees but enhance their level of engagement. The concept of folksonomies reflects the structure and relationship of the information which is evolved from tagging. Forrester* (2005) highlights the requirements of users from their organization's intranet of categorized contents provision which is through letting them attach tags, i.e., a simple description. Employees can have a track of visited both intranet and internet pages through tags. Employers can also have a view of most visiting tags by the employees to plan rightly for both the employees and the employers. Employees if are provided the facility of recommending or not recommending sites, employers can measure their pattern of rating for different sites/pages they visit and match their preferences through extensions' provision and make their preferred sites available for them. Lastly letting the employee know about the new information which could benefit them in their job or task performance can be a massive method of keeping them updated and reducing their response time against the odds they could face. This two way benefiting measure can best facilitate through signaling the employees on company intranet and its website.

3.3 Web 2.0 tools can be used by HR managers to perform HR staffing function

Staff (2008) provides a working definition of Web 2.0 as a "people centric web" which helps individuals in conversation, creation of interpersonal networking, personalization which is practiced by sophisticated HR and managers. In today's highly competitive and globalized environment, use of Web 2.0 tools can benefit the staffing function both in terms of cost and time.

3.3.1 Strategic HRP and Web 2.0. Human resource planning (HRP), for most of the businesses, is not positively catered for as it should be because of the true understanding of its critical nature of being strategic (Vareta, 2010). HRP is a process of planning about the desired future HR needs (supply and demand) and the decision of recruiting right employees with the right skills at the right time. Having the right use of Web 2.0 technologies HR can go through its workforce planning process efficiently and effectively by producing parallel analytical reports about the existing employees during the course of performance measurement. The most critical process of succession planning can be supported using Web 2.0 platforms by classifying critical positions in the company using data which is formed and communicated on daily basis.

3.3.2 Recruitment and selection. Recruitment, a serious concern of HRM for every organization which contributes critically toward organizations success (Girard and

Fallery, 2009) because of its process of finding the required job candidate (Singh and Finn, 2003) with the right skills and experience that should best fit the organization's culture and should provide competitive advantage to the business in today's competitive business arena. When technology/internet is used as a driver or facilitator in recruitment process, the term e-recruitment is employed (Girard and Fallery, 2009; Heery and Noon, 2001). Web 2.0 as a tool of utilizing individual's collective strengths (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) helps both employer and the candidate to collaborate and share information with each other (Dasgupta and Dasgupta, 2009). Gueutal *et al.* (2009) narrate employees who upload their personal and professional information and show their behavior or attitude on blogs or other social sites are assessed in different ways by potential employers to great extent. They can also be assessed rightly from their social circle on these social networking sites. Web 2.0 applications can play a very useful role for the employers to assess and recruit the required candidate which could best fit their organizations.

After completing the job analysis, employers define hiring needs (Holm, 2009) for the purpose of preparation for e-recruitment to satisfy their future needs. Advertising on Web 2.0 applications in a planned manner and hitting the target using online communities can attract a large pool of qualified applicants. Filtering the employees, their short listing using applicant's available information and quicker background check (Clark and Roberts, 2010) can be made by following a pre-defined process by the organization. Detailed online interviews and tests can be taken to examine the applicants' suitability for the jobs and employers can finally decide about the selection decision while negotiating the contract with the chosen candidate(s) (Holm, 2009; Maier *et al.*, 2009). Web 2.0 tools benefit the organizations by reducing recruitment time (Jansen *et al.*, 2009), saving recruitment cost (Jansen *et al.*, 2009; Pfielfelmann *et al.*, 2010; Puck and Paul, 2008) and by presenting them as equal employment opportunities provider (Singh and Finn, 2003).

Past studies on the use of Web 2.0/social websites, blogs and wikis in association with area of HRM, have been made but in bits and pieces and on its selected functions. The slogan today of staffing has widened its scope as "hire and wire" which inculcated the employee integrated with each other across all the components of value chain (VC). Social websites as LinkedIn and Facebook allow both employers and employees to find each other and achieve knowledge objectives for themselves and their organization. Breure and van Meel (2003) quote social media and internet as an important platform for scholars and potential employees to hunt jobs and find organizational and job-related material. Studies (Efimova, 2009; Martin *et al.*, 2009) treat the social media as an opportunity where they can share employment-related knowledge and enthusiasm for leaning and for career growth. Taking social media as an advanced and dynamic medium of communication for the employee and employers, both get updated experiential and innovative information (Haythornthwaite and Wellman, 2002). Employees are very keen to develop professional relationship for efficient and productive working in the form of virtual teams (Brown *et al.*, 2007). The importance of employment relationship in any business environment has also been critically emphasized by Kavanagh and Thite (2009). Employees not only share their knowledge but also support each other in solving their day-to-day job-related problems. Distance/online learning programs by the organizations, whether formal or informal (i.e. peer led) are the good examples of benefits of the social media or Web 2.0 technologies (Homitz and Berge, 2008). Such type of relationship development skills keep the employees part

of the social networks (websites and blogs) which enable them to perform their virtual role without being in stress and in social isolation (Nelson *et al.*, 2006). The blogs facilitate the employees to express their feelings about the work done on their jobs freely without feeling threatened.

A survey conducted in 2007 comes up with the results that 44 percent of the total employers included social networking sites, i.e., Facebook to screen job candidates. Gras (2009) also explored that almost half of those managers negated online hiring. Some most common issues are still required to be addressed taking Web 2.0 as a tool for recruitment. These issues could be the incomplete information from both the parties, lacking information richness, misunderstanding by any of the parties (Jansen *et al.*, 2009), cheating by the applicants (Cronin *et al.*, 2006) and data privacy issue, etc. Keeping these unaddressed issues so far ahead, literature highlights Facebook as a difficult platform for the recruiters to search the right candidates but a great opportunity.

3.4 Web 2.0 tools can be used by HR managers to perform training and development

3.4.1 Orientation. Most critical first 90 days (McKersie, 2003) for the newly hired employees require a thorough understanding of duties to be performed (Ragsdale and Mueller, 2005). Formal orientation is considered though necessary but an informal orientation also enables a newly entered employees learn about the organization more quickly and cost effectively. With the help of an effective orientation program, HR managers can shape the attitude of a newly entered employee. If HR managers use Web 2.0 tools for enrichment of orientation program in addition to the formal orientation, they can get manifold orientation benefits beyond what were stated by Ragsdale and Mueller (2005) in an efficient and effective manner.

3.4.2 Training and development. Social media has taken a vital space in the area of employee training. Companies have started using Web 2.0 tools to train their employees for the purpose of their maximum engagement and professional development. Virtual/online trainings are threads of Web 2.0 technologies. Corporate wikis are emerging as training tools for big companies across various industries, i.e., telecommunication, pharmaceutical and other high-tech organizations with innovative methods adoption to get maximum employee training benefits. Zareie and Navimipour (2016) determined that 24/7 access to training materials is required to be focussed by the businesses in the context of e-learning satisfaction and commitment which ultimately lead them toward continuous learning and empowerment. The most obvious use of social media particularly wikis and blogs, is training as wikis behave like a natural born trainers for individuals.

3.4.3 Career development. Career communities define social structures and provide massive career support (Parker *et al.*, 2004). Self-organizing nature of these communities contribute toward intelligent careers driver in today's information age. Butler (2001) defines the significance of Web 2.0 communities for their career-related services to the individuals because innovative online services need maximum participation (Von Hippel, 2007). Social networks and communities have been researched in relation with various business uses (Castells, 2000, 2007; Riemsdijk *et al.*, 2005). Shared identity, interests and commonalities are considered as the prime feature of social media or networked communities (Castells, 2004; Plickert *et al.*, 2007). Web 2.0 tools help employers in making their employees analyze their career preferences. Employees can track their career goals in the long run by having provision of career paths, gaining information about changing their job roles, being empowered to track

certain paths and development of smart networking abilities having Web 2.0 technologies with the right direction by their employers. Web 2.0 platforms enable employees to have an opportunity to have a self-directed career planning and development paths. Organizations finding this gap, should push job opportunities for the ones who which to excel in their jobs from within the organization instead of letting them find it from outside. It is confirmed that employees do find career growth opportunities within the organization first and if missing find other outside sources.

3.5 *Web 2.0 tools can be used by HR managers to perform employee motivation*

3.5.1 *Performance management.* Social media not only enables the employers to assess their employees using different employee assessment methods and techniques but also facilitates the employees to rate and assess their peers. Information collected from any of the social networks whether within or outside the organization can be used as a measure of performance (Gueutal *et al.*, 2009). Use of internal blogs, wikis or any other social media, can contribute in employee satisfaction positively because of being a process of ongoing evaluation, development and feedback. Formal and informal continuous assessment by the managers is quite possible with the right use of Web 2.0 applications especially wikis and blogs because of the review process of having a critical feedback about employees by applying 360 degree appraisal method. Web 2.0 platforms can play a vital role in bringing employer and employees closer to each other developing an environment of trust. Web 2.0 applications provide them an appropriate platform which should deliver productive business outcomes from mutual data-driven conversations in rapidly responsive manner with the feature of reciprocity. Using these platforms can enable employer/managers avoid roadblocks and delays by providing continuous feedback based on employee progress to goals. Facilitating employees in their job engagement and goals clarity can be one of the core performance objective of Enterprise 2.0 tools. Effective and planned use of Enterprise 2.0 tools within any organization keeping in view the performance measurement and enhancement, can create understandable line of sight and feedback attainment from a relevant audience across the whole organization. Managers with the help of these tools can review employee performance by creating a network of reviewers, routine performance feedback, ongoing facilitation to the employees and overall performance monitoring (MacLeod, 2008). Onuch (2015) concludes by accepting the importance of social mobilization for employee motivation purpose in relation with the role of social networks that internet and social media news sites play an vital role to defuse the information and are critically influential in motivating people.

Performance goals can be achieved by communicating them transparently and effectively to the employees with goal-process alignment of performance management. Employee retentions can be prolonged using Web 2.0 tools as performance management driver not only for hiring but for the purpose of whole PM process arena to get maximum out of this for both employee and the organization. A fact based feedback can contribute more toward employee satisfaction and may lead them to polish themselves for produce desired performance outcomes. Performance review process can positively provide critical feedback on the employee's work performance with factual data and help employees to improve the skill areas where they deficiently perform. Blogs (both micro and macro), corporate wikis and other social websites play a vital role in employee communication (Bell *et al.*, 2008) which ultimately creates impact on employee performance in either way.

3.5.2 Employee rewards. Frederick *et al.* (1959) set off the first initiative of rewards bifurcation, i.e., recognition as intrinsic and salary, security, etc., as extrinsic ones. Employee behavior is considered as modifiable (Zhou *et al.*, 2009) which could be changed through different motivational tools and techniques whether intrinsic or extrinsic. Vroom (1964) referring the cognitive theory, actions get stronger when there is gap between one's actions and rewards on the change of expectations. It is all about perception about pay system of being fair. Rewards system as a backbone, shapes the mindset and behavior by putting focus upon performance (Reilly, 2003). According to Buch and Tolentino (2006), six sigma approaches highlight four categories of rewards which include social rewards and organizational rewards in addition to the commonly known intrinsic and extrinsic ones. Larson (2003) testifies direct rewards as a "small token of appreciation" which could be the main reward in case of Web 2.0 tools as the appreciation is passed on concurrent bases. He also affirms that indirect rewards includes better future prospects which can be expanded and successfully achieved using Web 2.0 tools by having expanded avenues of opportunities for the employees. Social rewards, according to Alderfer (1969), can dominantly be affected by Web 2.0 tools because of their focus upon team based activities. Organizational rewards can be made more effective through Web 2.0 tools, i.e., wikis and blogs, etc., because of their use in training and development, effective and efficient communication network establishment within and outside the organization among not only the employees but all the stakeholders of the organization.

3.6 Web 2.0 tools can be used by HR Managers to perform maintenance

3.6.1 Safety and health policies. According to Gross and Friedman (2004), rewards also include health, work-life and other benefits. Employee priorities in general include workplace practices, safety, health and wellness; work-life balance, etc. In order to improve their employees' satisfaction level, companies improve health and safety standards and incorporate health and safety policies into their corporate strategies. Healthy workplace requires the attention of management on worksite safety and injury prevention of their employees and helping them avoiding smoking, unhealthy eating habits and unhealthy physical activities. The common pool of Web 2.0 tools can help them sharing such information and experiences to change the overall behavior of the employees. Using such common pool of information sharing, i.e., Web 2.0 tools can possibly help managers to promote health and safety standards which could lead employees toward the well-being of their physical, mental and social states for themselves and for their associates. Sound health and safety policy development along with employee involvement not only intrinsically and socially motivate employees but if applied using Web 2.0 tools, can help organizations in reducing health-care costs which may be enhanced in the form of absenteeism, use of drugs and immoral moves.

3.6.2 Employee communication. The communication on work blogs enables employees to speak freely (Schoneboom, 2008) and provides work-related feedback to the employers which can be addressed in a positive manner by immediately responding to them. Communication among employees using wikis and blogs has become fast and easy with maximum participation and rights. In any organization, internal social networks including corporate wikis and internal blogs can contribute quite productively for the purpose of collaboration and communication. Bughin and Manyika (2007) confirm that the Web 2.0 tools particularly wikis, blogs and real simple syndication (RSS) feeds enhance collaboration and knowledge exchange among employees in any organization.

Though many big organizations are taking benefits from these applications but there is yet to be gained from Web 2.0 technologies for the business world. Web 2.0 tools facilitated organizations by vertical decrease in information and communication costs in a networked economy (Malone, 2004), which can be applied in a “networked employee structure” generalized as “flat structure.” Birkinshaw and Pass (2008) analyze the recent surveys by describing that unlike previous generations, younger generations are different in communication and expectations from their jobs. Thus the use of Web 2.0 tools in work settings for communication can benefit the entire pool of stakeholders manifold.

3.6.3 Employee relations. Bughin and Manyika (2007) explore that Web 2.0 tools like Wikis, Blogs, and RSS feeds not only help managers enhance communication with external stakeholders but also benefit them by encouraging collaboration and knowledge exchange among their employees. These tools empower employees enhance individual and group interaction, which enhances their ownership by having a feel of empowered (Schneckenberg, 2009a).

3.7 Web 2.0 tools help organizations to transform its culture

Organizational shift from old traditional processes of managing people for business use is due to the rapid advancement and incorporation of technology into the business world. Web 2.0 tools fill the highly competitive advantages and have started creating its affect onto business processes in a volatile manner. Legacy processes, methods and functions of doing business are being replaced by the new ones due to, in general business technologies and especially the Web 2.0 applications. Social websites are considered as the prime reason for businesses to shift from the old culture to the required one to fulfill business needs (Fraser and Dutta, 2010). Hofstede (1984) describes that the studies regarding culture include collective behavior. He further states that cooperation across cultures is always needed and multiple major and minor problems can be solved by close cooperation of individuals having different backgrounds. In order to solve multiple problems whether minor or major, Web 2.0 tools may become quite helpful in the creation of cooperation among individuals in any organization. Argyris (2001) highlights that majority of companies are facing the problem from their employees to involve them in decision-making process. Web 2.0 tools help such organizations to empower their employees by having their voice in company affairs and transform their culture as required.

Though the use of Web 2.0 tools can modernize the HR regime but carry multiple issues and risks associated with them. These issue may include employee privacy, discrimination as the information is open, recruitment biases (Caers and Castelyns, 2010), employee firing due to being open and critical (Valentine *et al.*, 2010) and cyber bullying, etc. Such issues are associated with the use of Web 2.0 tools for which a comprehensive policy should wisely be developed by the employers without having a threatening impression upon the employees. Varied culture may place barriers in use of Web 2.0 tools and must be tackled via outreach, training and promotion of these tools (Werner, 2008). Werner also proposed encouragement for participation, initiation of cultural shift from “need to know” to “responsibility to provide,” community management using monitoring and auditing blogs, etc., setting standards for acceptable contents, encouragement of wikis instead of e-mail, demonstration provision and parallel trainings provision. Almeida (2012) also pointed out some risks regarding use of Web 2.0 tools, i.e., productivity loses in case of mismanagement, data leakage

threats, and security risks because of being open to the public. Threat of surveillance in connection with the use of Web 2.0 tools (privacy breach) (Fuchs, 2011) can also be prevailed among employees which can positively be tackled by differentiating between positive and negative aspects of it.

Web 2.0 tools have triggered a revolutionary change in the business world in the last decade because of its ability to change human relationships, especially in business contexts by facilitating them in building and optimizing personal and organizational power/resources (Tormo-Carbó *et al.*, 2014). Around 1,700 executives, from various industries performing varied operational role have been surveyed with the collective response of gaining excellence in employee practices in both internal and external operations of their companies (Bughin *et al.*, 2009). Various studies like “The Walt Disney Company” (Creese, 2007), ensured the use of Web 2.0 tools in the organizations for their internal and external stakeholders gaining excellence in their practices. Davison *et al.* (2014) states by quoting Bughin *et al.* (2009) that use of Web 2.0 by the Chinese employees was 54 percent internal and 41 percent external. Product and service quality can be enhanced used Web 2.0 tools by acquiring good skill set (staffing), their efficient and cost effective training and development, their motivation and their maintenance (Guo *et al.*, 2014). According to Bughin and Chui (2010), responses derived from 3,249 executives from various regions, industries and functional areas show that two-third of them are using Web 2.0 tools in their organizations. Moreover use of Web 2.0 tools in various functional areas is continuously growing as the growth rate of using social networking has been reported as 40 percent and the growth rate of using blogs was 38 percent, etc. Bughin and Chui (2010) further narrate that the overall response of the executives provides a view that integration between Web 2.0 tools with day-to-day activities is rising which result in higher collaboration among employees by breaking down the organizational barriers. Use of Web 2.0 has been worked upon in various sectors as in education (Alexander, 2006; Crook, 2008; Redecker *et al.*, 2009), manufacturing (Masson *et al.*, 2007), library services (Casey and Savastinuk, 2006; Maness, 2006), tourism (Sigala, 2007), etc., especially in the areas of purchasing (Emaus *et al.*, 2010) and marketing (Constantinides and Fountain, 2008; Sigala, 2009) with the objectives of bridging the communication gaps among the stakeholders, collaboration and knowledge management. A literature gap was also found in the literature regarding the use of Web 2.0 tools in relation with human resource practices which was addressed in the current study.

4. Theoretical foundation

According to Yang (2008), Web 2.0 is in its infancy stage and being explored so far. Multiple micro and macro theories have been quoted in the literature for the use of Web 2.0 tools and HR functions. Various studies used grounded theory in Web 2.0 domain, proposed by Glaser (1992) for the purpose of theory formulation which was considered as appropriate due to the theoretical sensitivity (Glaser, 1978) for important data recognition and conceptually dense theory. The use of Web 2.0 tools primarily has benefited the organizations in the context of knowledge management for which dynamic theory of knowledge management was suggested using Virtual Human Resource Development (VHRD) model for the purpose of generating organizational knowledge creation process (Nonaka and Konno, 2005). The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) was also used in application of Web 2.0 tools in SMEs networks (Peris *et al.*, 2013). Using HR context, Girard and Fallery (2009)

linked Web 1.0 with resource-based view focussing upon organizational unique set of resources and associated Web 2.0 with social network theory (also called network theory) which puts emphasis on “the strength of ties,” “the network structure” and “the nature of contact attributes.” According to Granovetter (1983), human relation studies have been derived from influential social network theory considering their SWT. Studies, i.e., (London, 2012; London and Hall, 2011) linked Web 2.0 with learning theory keeping in view the individuals’ and teams’ readiness to perform and knowledge management. Social Presence Theory, proposed by Short, Williams and Christie (1976), highlights varied roles of each collaborative technology regarding psychological impression of the physical presence of users, i.e., better social presence perception leads to the better image of technology usefulness (Cyr *et al.*, 2007). James Baxter (2014) put forth the “Socio-technical systems theory” (STS) for connection between the technical and social dynamics of wiki adoption in an organization which resulted with the view that there is a positive link between the use of organizational environment and acceptance for Wiki among employees. Moreover this relationship leads toward improvement in more effective and efficient business processes. According to Iglesias-Pradas *et al.* (2014), the significance of socially derived characteristics is enhancing intensively because of varied individual perception due to their skills, knowledge, experience or personality (Downs and Mohr, 1976). These perceptions heavily depend upon the fact that how employees use the tool (Carlson and Zmud, 1999) with a set of expectation and rewards. Analyzing from HR perspective some other theories have been highlighted as Vroom (1964) referred the cognitive theory as actions get stronger when there is gap between one’s actions and rewards on the change of expectations. As system theory provides basis for the open and dynamic organizations’ system (Senge, 1990) and learning theories describe the treatment with the information for learning purpose. System Theory (Forrester, 1968; Senge, 1990) elaborates the organizations as open systems which always remain in the process of change (Ackoff, 1981; Kontoghiorghes *et al.*, 2005). Psychological learning theory supports the concept of learning levels in the organization (Argyris and Schon, 1978, 1996; Swierinaga and Wierdsama, 1992). System theory context states organizations as open systems which keep changing (Kontoghiorghes *et al.*, 2005; Senge, 1990). Rational choice theory (RCT) addresses the employee-organization relationships (Barker and Camarata, 1998). RCT resides upon the assumption of trade-off between the parties on the bases of “what individuals expect in return for their efforts or choices.” Thus no single theory can cover the whole regime of association between Web 2.0 tools and HR practices/functions as multidimensional constructs and varying contexts can be derived from the proposed conceptual models and the proposed model can be tested in parts and in various industries using qualitative and quantitative methods. Thus working with a single theory will not suffice the connections of Web 2.0 tools with HR practices.

5. Conclusion and practical implications

This particular study was conducted to understand the possible benefits of Web 2.0 tools for employers and employees by associating them with HR functions in any organization. In order to bridge the gap between the use of Web 2.0 tools and HR functions it is scrutinized that implementing Web 2.0 tools to innovatively use HR functions, support the HR department reduce traditional operational workloads and could enable the HR departments gain maximum advantages with low cost and minimum time. Web 2.0 regime can be used not only as operational tool but as a set of strategic tools which may be used to optimize efficiency, effectiveness, trust, loyalty,

commitment toward job, work engagement, etc., of the employees which is in the best interest of the employees and employers both. Blanchard (2011) suggests that a basic operational framework should include all the elements in the right manner and at the right time. He further states that the use of social media for brand building is a new phenomenon and the resource allocation for social media (i.e. talent, time or money, etc.) in any business is considered as an investment. HR centric approach of using social media may help employers to achieve staffing, training and development motivation and maintenance objectives. HR centric approach of using social media requires a multidimensional view of each sub-component of the main HRM functions by academicians and industry HR practitioners to get maximum out of this alignment and integration of Web 2.0 platforms and organizational HR practices. Human capital management can be successfully achieved by the right understanding and use of Web 2.0 technologies. Organizations need to further investigate other HRM/HCM functions which could positively and productively be benefited from the use of Web 2.0 tools.

The roles of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 tools in HRM functions have been different as the expectations of HR personals were highly demanding especially with regard to the treatment with information security and privacy. This chaos led toward enhanced concerns regarding the use of Web 2.0 in HR practices in any organization. With the initiation of Web 2.0 influential model, the said concerns were positively addressed and are still being effectively accounted for in order to confirm the first proposition of the study. The study also confirmed the second proposition that potential benefits could be drawn from SLATES features of Web 2.0 tools while performing staffing, training and development, employee motivation and maintenance. Literature confirms that searching, links, authoring tagging, extensions and signaling could marginally affect the HR functions. SLATE features help employers to reap maximum by executing their HR strategies and by gaining employee trust and interest in an efficient and more cost effective manner. People centric web, i.e., Web 2.0 can positively be used for staffing functions' execution as literature (cited above) reveals the many obvious and potential associations between Web 2.0 tools and the staffing functions. Training and development has also been dug out in relation with the use of Web 2.0 and was found strongly connected with it. Manifold benefits of T&D practices may be attained with the understandable use of Web 2.0 in any organization. The study also reasonably highlighted the concentrated use of Web 2.0 tools in maintenance practices, i.e., safety and health policies, employee communication and employee relations and its cultural transformation. Proposition regarding use of Web 2.0 tools for employee motivation practice was also confirmed from the literature. Employers may reap multiplied benefits with the right understanding and use of Web 2.0 tools in their performance management and rewards management practices. The effects of HRM functions across the whole VC of any organization can be multiplied if use of Web 2.0 technologies is linked with them with clarity and understandability. The term HR 2.0 is proposed in the study which reflects the true link and interdependencies of the Web 2.0 platforms and HR functions. HR 2.0 regime (right alignment of Web 2.0 tools and HR functions) will allow both the ends (employee and employer) to drive the organization toward sustainable, long-term business success. Excellence in HR functions following the HR 2.0 concept, can lead the organizations get best desired HR and business outcomes across sectors and industries. Current study contained appropriate analytical information of two potentially associated slices (i.e. Web 2.0 tools and HR practices) which were though addressed in bits and pieces by the past researchers but had never been addressed earlier as a unified whole. The conceptual model was built on the basis

of the connections among the concepts drawn from the literature quoted above. The study also included the use of Web 2.0 in different industrial practices in order to support the connection between Web 2.0 tools and HR practices. The study endeavored to incorporate a most suitable literature regarding Web 2.0 tools and HR practices by analyzing them in a systematic manner. Though the study covered most relevant literature that could provide a link between the two said regimes in general but there is still room for the researchers to dig out more, taking pieces of the proposed model or expend it further as multidimensional constructs. Varying contexts can be derived from the proposed conceptual model and can be tested as a whole or in parts in various industries using qualitative and quantitative methods.

Use of Web 2.0 can help individuals, organizations and the society at large by changing their mindset toward what they do and toward others. McAfee (2009) confirms that competitive organizations are increasingly adopting the Web 2.0 tools (emergent social software platforms) that have potential to improve the working conditions of the individuals. In addition to the role of Web 2.0 tools in the HR functions' execution, various societal benefits can be reaped like some studies (Crook, 2008; Evans, 2006; Freedman, 2006; Schuck and Aubusson, 2009; Sprague and Pixley, 2008; Turvey, 2006) highlight the role of Web 2.0 tools in formal learning process. The current study adds value to in the exploration of the link between Web 2.0 and HRM in a systematic way because of the fact that Web 2.0 tools as drivers or facilitating tools can play a vital role in execution of HR practices and processes in a secure, effective and efficient manner. The current study also paves the way for the HR practitioners and researcher to extract manifold benefits from the use of Web 2.0 tools in all of its functions with the right understanding. Critical role of HR can be favorably facilitated by Web 2.0 in favor of both, i.e., employees and the employers which could ultimately enable them to create a competitive edge in the market place. The organizations in general (whether private or public, manufacturing or public, SMEs or MNEs) can extract the real benefits from the right use of Web 2.0 while performing any of their HR function. Enhanced decision making may also be gained using the right mix of Web 2.0 tools and HR practices in any organization. Though using Web 2.0 tools in HR functions can encounter various challenges as management of bulky information, time wastage, personal conflicts, threats of losing information confidentiality, etc., but these potential threats can be made less risky by transforming organization culture. The study also provides a track to the researchers to excavate more associations among the said constructs and to test these relationships in different industries so that maximum HR challenges may be addressed related to the employee and the HR process. Undoubtedly most of the Web 2.0-related challenges discussed in the literature should also be catered for in future studies. Further studies should also be made on each HR function separately incorporating Web 2.0 use into these so that macro HR challenges may be addressed across various industries round the globe.

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