

How are companies addressing HR Analytics Skills Gap

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Abstract

This HRM study intends to contribute to the body of knowledge by examining the connection between corporate commitment, employee leadership and the HR skills gap. A study of the literature examines the significance of HR skills and whether it benefits the company's stakeholders. The research that has been conducted about organisational commitment look at the connection between members and organisations. A survey was conducted to gather information with the sample size of 5 HR executives of the e-commerce companies in the UK, to get further in-depth information, along with the 3 HR specialists. The findings of this research as supported by the interviews conducted result that in the present business environment, organisations particularly e-commerce businesses are required to make fundamental use of HR Analytics to bridge the skill gap which exists in the organisation and to meet the industry's requirements. By identification of goals, assessment of current skills, and making timely plans, the existing skills' gaps can be reduced they business organisations.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Contextual Background

Human resources analytics, often known as people analytics, is the process of systematically gathering and analysing information on an organization's employees and their performance to influence significant business decisions. Leaders in HR analytics provide HR managers with the tools they need to get actionable insights from data to make better personnel choices, enhance HR procedures, and boost employee satisfaction (Fachrunnisa and Hussain, 2020). HR analytics is not concerned with acquiring information on workers' performance on the job; rather, it is designed to facilitate management and HR to get an in-depth understanding of each step in the human resource management process by collecting and analysing relevant data. HR administrators use it to identify workers who lack the basic expertise to accomplish their jobs properly or to complete specific projects. Human resources will be able to fill the gaps in talent once they have this data. Human resource managers need to first map and gather all the necessary data before they can begin HR analytics (Wandhe, 2020).

Market differentiation is one of the primary goals of the fast-developing discipline of management analytics (Tomar and Gaur, 2020). A company's bottom line benefits more broadly from the use of management analytics in fields as diverse as marketing, finance, accounting, and supply chain management (Kremer, 2018). Human Resource Management is a component of the management discipline and HR analytics is part of management analytics. The Human Resources Department was slow to adopt management analytics (Wandhe, 2020). Strategic business decisions have been receiving more and more attention from human resource management professionals because of the use of data analytics. The recruitment process has been the primary focus of these data analyses so far. Many e-commerce organisations used digital tools, including software, to cut down on HR administration costs (Fachrunnisa and Hussain, 2020).

The HR department and the company will gain from adopting data analytics to screen applicants and cut down on administrative expenses, but only somewhat. Human resource analytics may be boiled down to any information that pertains to employees (Kremer, 2018). Human resource analytics may be boiled down to any information that pertains to employees. Therefore, HR analytics should be used to improve the firm's performance by revealing how the

HR department can train workers to provide the company with an edge in the market (Prasad et al., 2019). Moreover, HR analytics may be defined as simply the data about people. As a result, HR analytics should be used to uncover ways that the HR department might improve workers' knowledge and abilities to obtain a competitive edge and consequently improve business performance (Restuccia and Taska, 2018).

Human resource management in e-commerce organisations is pushing for data-driven decision-making across all organisational levels. As a result, human resource analytics, which is the examination of human resources data to guide business choices, has emerged (Zeidan and Itani, 2020). It is widely accepted that in the current day, HR analytics is the single most effective instrument for gaining a competitive edge and transforming human resources from a cost centre into a profit centre. The value of HR analytics to modern businesses has been extensively discussed in the published literature (Shet et al., 2021). Research by Karwehl and Kauffeld (2021) indicated that just 10% of businesses were using any kind of HR analytics. Key obstacles to HR analytics were identified and grouped into the categories of data, software, people, and management. Businesses are hesitant to use analytics due to a dearth of in-house talent in the field (Vargas et al., 2018). According to Tursunbayeva et al. (2018), an organisation using HR analytics is involved in the activities of information seeking and information processing to make an informed judgement on the employees working in the organisation.

The skill gap is a prevalent and fundamental issue in various research and publications. However, there is no documentation outlining the precise skill sets necessary for effective HR analytics implementation, the degree to which these skill sets are already available in firms, and the methods that have been tried so far to fill any gaps (Tursunbayeva et al., 2018). This study's findings will attempt to bridge the gap which exists in the current literature on HR analytics and competency development. Additionally, evaluating outcomes of various skill-building tactics employed by different firms might further educate how other organisations can solve this difficulty of the skill gap in HR analytics. Managers of Human Resources will have to develop a company-wide HR analytics plan. That is why the management of organisations is required to carry out extensive research to explore the methods and techniques used by competing businesses.

1.2 Problem Statement

The development of HR analytics and best practices in UK e-commerce organisations have all been covered in the existing research on HR analytics. However, various researchers had provided a broad overview of HR analytics studies in IT sectors, but minimal research has been done on the UK e-commerce sector. Thus, this research desires to provide effective methods of personnel administration and goal attainment in e-commerce organisations in the UK to address skills gaps. Despite the growing body of literature on HR analytics and the abundance of case studies asserting that HR analytics helps companies enhance performance, there is a dearth of studies on the specific ways in which HR analytics affects and influences organisational performance (Valecha, 2022). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to theorise and investigate the processes through which HR analytics affects organisational performance.

1.3 Aims and objective

The study aims to identify the ways in which UK e-commerce firms may fill the gap in HR analytics teams. The objectives of the research are:

1. To identify organisational needs and employees' skills that are affecting the overall company performance and goals in the UK's e-commerce sector.
2. To distinguish the HR-Analytics skills gap and how they are overcome by e-commerce organisational management
3. The extricate skill-building methods that can be successfully implemented to overcome the HR analytic skills gap.

1.4 Research Questions

To attain a crucial and valid conclusion, this study will focus on answering the following research questions.

1. What is the relationship between organisational needs and employees' skills and how this relationship impacts the overall business performance and objectives in the e-commerce sector of the UK?

2. How organisational management can identify the HR- Analytics skills gap and how this gap can be overcome effectively?
3. How does the deployment of the effective implementation concerning the skill-building strategies overcome the identified gap?

1.5 Rationale of the Research

The organisational practices and the operations in the e-commerce sector imply transitioning due to the changing technology which brings advancements along with complexity. With regards to that, this respective research will probe the relationship between the changing organisational needs and the skills of employees working in the e-commerce sector of the UK. There have been numerous research exploring the role of companies in overcoming the skill gap of HR analytics in the context of the UK along with the focus on the IT sector, as well as the different business sectors (Tursunbayeva et al., 2018). However, no research reflects its focus on the e-commerce sector of the UK despite all the technological transitions. Concerning that, this research pertains to be crucial as it upholds its emphasis on exploring the role and processes of companies in overcoming the HR analytics skill gap among the e-commerce companies in the UK.

1.6 Structure of Research

The study is split into six chapters in which chapter one focuses on the introduction and background of the study including rationale, objectives, research questions, the scope of the study, and organisation of the research. Chapter two includes the review of related literature and studies and the importance of cultural differences. Chapter three focuses on the methodology that is adopted for the accomplishment of the research which includes the sampling size determination and the techniques that are used for data analysis. While chapter four deals with the detailed analysis of the present research including the summary of results that are obtained after the study. Additionally, chapter five provides a discussion regarding the research of the study. Further, chapter six includes the conclusion of the study having recommendations and limitations of the research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Aspects and Significance of HR Analytics

According to Belizón and Kieran (2022), HR Analytics refers to the process of gathering and organising information on **current employees to boost both the quality** of the organisation's key personnel and its bottom line. However, the HR Analytics talent gap is a need that businesses must meet **to maintain a competitive advantage** in the face of rapidly changing market conditions and organisational structures. According to Kolding et al., (2018) improved productivity may be achieved with the use of HR analytics using more in-depth performance management, succession planning, and career advancement. According to Succi and Canovi (2020), employees and human resources professionals need upskilling because of a **skills gap which exists due to the persistent changes in technology and transitions in the e-commerce business sector practices**. According to Succi and Canovi (2020), it is a necessity for e-commerce **businesses to acknowledge the radical shift to upgrade the personnel skills of the employees to meet the intended targets throughout the rapid transformation of business models**.

In line with **that**, Falletta and Combs (2020) in their research identify that to improve output, the emphasis on streamlining HR procedures and enhancing work-life balance through human resource management in e-commerce companies can be carried **out through the integration of real-time interactive platforms and integrated analytics**. According to Shet et al., (2021), HR Analytics professionals will need to engage in multi-level relationship work. To begin, HR Analytics may forge a connection with the company if it better meets the demands of operational objectives and requirements. Moreover, **HR executives and business partners can foster positive working relationships with HR practitioners by the timely provision of required resources to meet the intended objectives of the business**.

2.2 **Factors Impacting the HR Analytics Skill Gap in Organisations**

According to Fernandez and Gallardo-Gallardo (2020), Human Resource Management training requirements analysis in many e-commerce organisations has been used as part of high-performance work systems to **examine the needs of training**, what training is required, and how many employees are needed to be trained to overcome gaps? Mazurchenko and Maršíková, (2019).

According to Valecha (2022), training need analysis used in e-commerce organisations in the UK assists them to give attention to the need of closing the skills gap in their staff. Employees in these e-commerce organisations are hard to replace hence employers have a vested interest in boosting productivity by closing skill gaps. According to the research conducted by Cayrat and Boxal, (2022), e-commerce organisations in the UK are trying to use redeployment tactics to put underutilised workers from one department to work in another. Such redeployment strategies must be drafted, considering the re-deploy ability of employees, in the context of the investments that will have to be incurred to provide training to make these employees effective in their respective jobs.

It has been shown by Tomar and Gaur (2020) that there is a correlation between how both employees and employers perceive skill shortages. According to Wandhe (2020), employers overestimate or fail to comprehend the competency levels of their workforce and fail to recognise situations when their skill inadequacies have substantial consequences for productivity. Restuccia and Taska (2018) stated that the skill gap exists in reality in an e-commerce organisation but has little bearing on productivity then the firm lacks the necessary communication to allow workers to communicate their training needs to the employer. Thus, it is concluded that to investigate the causes of employees' skill gap, it is important to examine the potential indicators causing the gap.

2.3 Role of Relationship between the Organisational Needs and Employees' Skills in Enhancing the Business Performance of the E-commerce Sector

Tomar and Gaur (2020) argue that organisational working conditions have a profound impact on employees' behaviour and productivity. If the working environment is comfortable and flexible, employees can do up to their maximum productivity. Such working conditions for employees are provided by management to employees including an open learning environment, flexible job hours, and ease of communication to coordinate with peers and seniors which ultimately leads to enhanced organisational performance. Kremer (2018) in the research stated that the workplace setting should encourage individuals to be innovative and to speak out about their experiences and perspectives without fear of retaliation. The technological environment, the human environment, and the organisational environment are the three main parts of a workplace. According to Restuccia

and Taska (2018), the organisational technological environment includes the resources made available to workers with the integration of technology.

In line with this, the study by Restuccia and Taska (2018), discussed various advantages that businesses may reap from e-commerce have been enumerated. The study reflected that with the rise in e-commerce, business organisations now have a new medium through which they can advertise and sell their products, as well as a means by which to get better insights into consumer preference for making relevant modifications in the business' products. Moreover, the study also discusses that organisations may differentiate their offerings and reduce price competition with the aid of e-commerce. Moreover, Vargas et al. (2018) discussed that e-commerce deployment results in increasing the level of productivity inside an organisation to the extent to which a firm is proficient in e-commerce.

2.4 Role of Companies in overcoming the HR Analytics Skill Gap

According to Karwehl and Kauffeld (2021), the HR analytics skill gap may be examined by determining the difference between the skills required to execute HR analytics, and the existing skills of the employees of the business organisation. Thus, the working environment will benefit from the use of a skill gap analytics model that can accurately assess the extent to which the skills gap exists. According to Vargas et al. (2018), once the talent gap has been identified, the next is to investigate potential approaches to training and development that can be implemented by various e-commerce businesses in the UK. Moreover, in e-commerce organisations, HR managers through communication can effectively overcome the skills gap which exists between the employees and teams. According to Tursunbayeva et al. (2018), e-commerce organisations employ different HR analytics methods in which corporations are incentivised to invest in training across the board because of the knowledge edge they have about the employee talents. Similarly, Succi and Canovi (2020) stated that in an e-commerce company skill shortages are easier to identify, diagnose, and address if there are relevant measures implemented in the organisation to facilitate communication between management and employees or their representatives.

Nocker and Sena, (2019) suggested that in e-commerce organisations the easiest way to boost productivity is for both employers and employees to acknowledge one other's skill deficits and work in coordination to fill them through employer-sponsored training programmes. It is

unlikely that employers would invest in training employees to close skill gaps and close potential productivity disparities if employees are the only ones who see them. According to Succi and Canovi (2020), in e-commerce **organisations, employers** are the only ones to observe and identify skill lacks and see skill shortages and **employees may be reluctant to take part in any training initiatives irrespective of the increased necessity of such training programs.**

2.5 Impact of Organisational Management in Identifying the HR Analytics Skill Gap

According to Fernandez and Gallardo-Gallardo (2020), one method used in workforce planning is a Gap Analysis which analyses the current skill sets of a company and how they stack up against **what would be required to achieve strategic objectives.** According to Levenson (2018), organisations may utilise it to see where their present staff and skillsets might require improvement. The authors emphasise the significance of HR Analytics deployment because of the profound impact it has on HR's function inside a business. According to Kolding et al., (2018), a case for HR Analytics noted that, first, data-driven decisions have allowed for more rapid growth in many aspects of the company made possible by technological advancements. According to Nocker and Sena, (2019), HR must follow the lead of other departments **like procurement, administration, and marketing which** depend on analytical and qualitative data to make choices. In line with this, the study by Kolding et al. (2018), discussed the influence of human capital on performance is a complicated system that hinders making useful judgments in the present day, it is of the highest significance for companies to make more informed judgments. According to Tursunbayeva et al. (2018), human resources succeed through contributing value to business choices that intervene and produce company success not only by verifying existing knowledge in practice. The implementation of HR **analytics has** far-reaching effects on decision-making, including the substitution of evidence-based decisions for subjective ones, the establishment of a link between management theory and practice, the prioritisation of the returns on HR investments, and the enhancement of HR management's value proposition by way of objectivity rather than experience.

The organisational management plays a crucial role in the skill gap of HR analytics as the management unable to minimise the gap can lead to serious complications for the lost business and missed opportunities. The e-commerce businesses embrace the management with people

analytics for bridging and uncovering the gaps in the company with preparations in better manner in contrast to the competitors for gaining competitive advantage. The strategies of the management in an organisation are not an event of annual planning rather it is the changing priorities constant readjustment (Konovalova et al., 2021). The strategies and technology are changing the way work is conducted in fast manner that the adaptation of the workforce. The competitive pressures in the past few years is main driven through the changing technology pace with altering the mission of HR from risk management as well as processes of people for enabling workforce in the adaptation of disruptive and constant change (Restuccia & Taska, 2018). The organisational management plays an active role in the understanding of skill availability and sources via the tracking of related metrics of recruitment with recruitment targeting in an effective manner with cost savings and long term positive outcomes.

The leaders of e-commerce industry are advocating the employees reskilling and upskilling for various years with some loopholes as well due to lack of clear idea dor the companies management regarding the capabilities of employees and the needed skills for talent gap closing (Vargas et al., 2018). The e-commerce organisations build the gap of talent through people analytics for uncovering the missing and existing skills of the organisation and plan for gap closure. The business automation, digitization, and trends are understoor through workforce and external data impacting the decisions of the business and workforce as well. As per Succi and Canovi (2020), the organisations also develop the predictive models through utilisation of the forward looking analytics for informing the talent availability to business strategists. The talent gap is also anticipated prior to taking place for plans development to close the gap and such information helps in uncovering of informing long term and short term strategies of the business.

2.6 Recommendations for Overcoming the Gaps

In analysing the skill gaps in the organisation the HR (Human Resource) department must identify the skills gaps within their employees which can arise with time. Due to that reason, HR should gather the evidence before getting into any further procedure of analysing because gathering meaningful data regarding the skill gaps can provide an effective path to overcome those elements (Konovalova et al., 2021). Further, in the method of analysing the HR analytical gaps organisation can set their target for identifying the factors that become a reason for gaps in the

organisational development, for that reason they should conduct several surveys within the organisation regarding the performance of the company in the market (Edwards et al., 2022). Through this method the organisation have succeeded in examining their analytical skills and approach towards the development further, it guides the organisation in setting their future goals for avoiding skills gaps.

Building a community of engaged learners represents the most efficient approach for HR professionals to assist employees in keeping up with changing skill requirements. Companies must modernise their concept of employee advancement on multiple critical facets, including skills recognition, motivation of employees, as well as learning solutions, if they want to create networked learners. To remain at the top of the industry, new abilities are continually needed since markets evolve quickly. That adage applies for individuals and corporations in almost all sector of the global economy (Fachrunnisa & Hussain, 2020). To be competitive, people and businesses must evolve, and they must continually evaluate their skill sets. To do this, it is really useful to carry out a skills gap analysis to identify areas for advancement and improvement. Building a strong sourcing strategy can be aided by having a greater understanding of localised employment opportunities. For instance, numerous businesses have discovered that hiring from limited institutions rather than competing in huge metropolitan regions can result in lower costs for crucial talents including data science. Pre-employment evaluations can offer businesses a leg up in identifying strengths and weaknesses of employees to enable the organisation to design specialised induction strategies. The new recruit turnover rate will decrease and self-development as well as engagement will grow with a customised strategy (Marler & Boudreau, 2017).

Moreover, in reducing the skills gaps HR department arranges assessment tests for the new and existing employees which can become beneficial for the organisation for getting knowledge regarding their performance. The implementation of that strategy guides the company in recruiting the right talent in the future in terms of avoiding skill gaps. The analysis of skills gaps within the organisation creates an opportunity for the company to develop their planning for getting effective skills along with improved workforce diversity (Cayrat and Boxall, 2022). After analysing the skill gaps the organisation should arrange several internships and trainee programs to fulfil the gaps with new fresh talent that the company can invest in their employee mentorship program, by these steps they can develop motivation amongst their staff. Therefore, in avoiding the factor of

analytical skill gap organisations should search for motivated employees who can bring positive amendments to the business and can prove to be a long-term asset for the company.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

Training, seminars, and courses are all examples of Learning and Development activities that may be used to develop in-house expertise (Belizón and Kieran, 2022). It is a good option for acquiring soft skills or making little but significant improvements to employees' hard skill sets. Organisations utilise different methods including hiring and recruitment of new workers who possess complementary and required abilities and skill-set. (Tomar and Gaur, 2020). The term outsourcing refers to the practice of contracting out work to a third party (Kremer, 2018). Organisations use this technique when there exists an internal limitation to meet the existing requirements. This is a talent that may be acquired from other firms and organisations by making potential use of such capabilities and expertise. (Wandhe, 2020). Considering that HR analytics calls for a concerted effort between HR and Business Analytics teams, this is a very pertinent area to investigate.

The responsibility for it has been passed on to another division inside the company. The ownership of a work may be transferred across business functions in an organisation if the necessary abilities are already being used by another department. Examining whether or if HR analytics has been handed off to other departments within a company, such as a Central Business Analytics group, will be an important area of research (Tomar and Gaur, 2020). To that end, this study will compare the outcomes of various organisational systems. In doing so, it will assist businesses in preparing a conceptual foundation for their journey into HR analytics, where many have encountered difficulty due to a lack of necessary skills.

The Lamp Framework

The Lamp Framework under HR measurement comprises of four key principles includes Logic, Analytics, Measures, and Process. Logic relates to the existing reasons due to which the data is evaluated and what are the anticipated results of such data. The next data A refers to the Analytics which is utilised for extraction of the relevant outcome for reflecting. The third element is Measures which includes the suggest measures associated with reliability, consistency, and

quality. The last element is Process which is related with influencing the decision makers of the organisation (Manjunath et al., 2019).

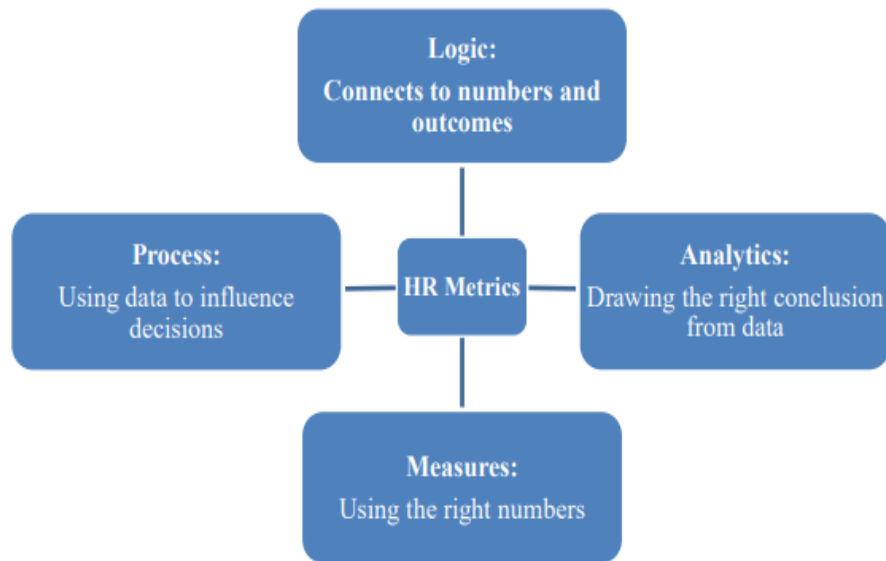


Figure 1 HR LAMP FRAMEWORK – Source (Manjunath et al., 2019)

Chapter 3- Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In the research methodology of the study, detailed measures and approaches are discussed which are used for gathering the data regarding the topic as the reason it provides a proper outline according to the study upon which data can be analysed (Collins, 2021). Research methodology enables the researcher for getting meaningful sources in terms of achieving valuable related material which can be acquired through various methods including primary, secondary and mix data collection depending upon the requirement of the study. While according to the study by Tucker (2021), it is found that research methodology aims to create an in-depth focus of the researcher according to the research approach which can become a source of authentic data collection, for evaluating the existing data and facts. Moreover, the chapter indicates the ethical considerations related to research, the approach of the study, the research methodology for acquiring the data from primary sources, and the researcher used the relevant research method for gaining authentic data related to the agenda.



Fig:1 Research Methodology (Author's own)

3.2. Research Design

According to Gurusinghe et al (2021), the researchers have used several research designs for the accomplishment of their study including the qualitative and quantitative design that develops according to the requirement of the study. Qualitative research focuses on gathering the data in the form of analysis, research and experience it does not deal with the numeric format however, in the quantitative design the data is collected in the form of numbers and statistics that can be measured for getting comparative analysis based on the figures. In the present study of how companies address the HR analytical skills gaps the design which is utilized is the qualitative research design as the study depends on the facts and experiences of professionals in the E-commerce industry of the UK which provides their suggestions and recommendations according to the questions asked in the interviews (Weritz, 2022). The study is formulated with the HR (Human Resource) executives and industry specialists in the E-commerce sector.

3.3 Research Philosophy

In the research philosophy of the present study of analysing the HR skills gaps addressed by the companies, the philosophy of the primary qualitative approach has adopted as the reason the research deals with the analysis of skills gaps which can be accessed through the effective use of conducting semi-structured interviews (Yang et al., 2022). The rationale for selecting that research philosophy in the study is that it can provide relevant data regarding the research because in the primary data analysis information is gathered through effective resources which become a source of getting ground reality to the study. Moreover, the proposed philosophy develops a theoretical and practical framework for the research because analysing the skills gaps demands the thoughts and experiences of the industry professionals in the E-commerce industry within the UK (Smaldone et al., 2022). The philosophy deals with the interpretation of research questions which arise during data collection of the topic because, in the primary qualitative data, surveys become an efficient source of authentic information.

3.4 Research Approach

Research approaches are the strategy used for examining the extent of the study which includes the explanation and explorations regarding the subject that become beneficial for

gathering comprehensive information according to the topic. The research approach enables the researchers to get in-depth knowledge of difficulties and challenges which can be associated with the process of significant research. Sensharma et al., (2022), found that there are two research approaches used including inductive and deductive research approaches, for the present study the approach used is the inductive approach. In qualitative research, the inductive approach is used to produce a systematic method to analyse the qualitative data in which the information is guided by professionals in the E-commerce industry. The inductive approach becomes beneficial in the attainment of ground theory related to the given topic as it required an in-depth analysis of the industry for identifying the skills gaps amongst the HR of different companies.

3.5 Research Method

In the research process, the conduction of an effective research method has a significant impact on the overall study as it becomes a reason for the meaningful gathering of the data which results in the required conclusion for the entire research (Cayrat and Boxall, 2022). The topic of how companies address the HR analytical skills gap required the extensive use of the primary qualitative research method, the rationale for selecting that particular method is to provide support to the researcher in examining the real-time data which is attained through the conduction of semi structured interviews of the experts of E-commerce industry of UK. The inductive research approach guides the researcher regarding the present facts and what kind of implications can be possible to encounter the future research in the field. Further, the research approach enables the researcher to get experienced feedback from the industry professionals that become a source of significant research along with factual evidence and related data (McCartney and Fu, 2022).

3.6 Data Collection Method

The data collection method has a vital impact on the research as it provides basic support to the study as it becomes essential for the accomplishment of effective research however, inappropriate data collection leads to an inaccurate conclusion. For that purpose, the method which is used for collecting the related data is a primary qualitative method in which semi-structured interviews have been conducted with the HR executive of the E-commerce industry of the UK along with the professionals of the related industry (Tomar and Gaur, 2020). The rationale for selecting the primary qualitative method is to get authentic real-time data of the field that guides

the researcher regarding the present conditions and provides experience relating to the topic. Moreover, the result obtained through the primary data collection is authentic and gives appropriate reasoning according to the topic which makes the research strong for the researcher to accomplish of the study (Wandhe, 2020).

3.7 Research Instrument

For the present research, the instrument which is used for effective research is arranging the interviews of professionals in the E-commerce industry including the HR executives of various companies related to the field in the UK (Qamar and Samad, 2021). For getting the impactful result from the semi-structured interviews, five HR executives of the industry along with three industrial specialists of various companies have interviewed related to the same industry which mainly operates in the UK. The rationale for selecting this research instrument is that, it provides industrial experience to the researcher and through the interviews, they get exposure that how skills gaps can be identified in the professional environment (Singh and Muduli, 2021). The questions which are asked to the participants in the interviews include the relationship between the employee's skills and the needs of the organisation and how it can impact the performance of the company in the E-commerce industry. In addition, how management can identify the HR analytical skills gaps and how such gaps can be reduced?

3.8 Data Analysis

After gathering the data through the primary qualitative method, data analysis is the vital stage for getting an accurate interpretation of the data by using an effective analysis technique. In the present research, the data was collected from the primary qualitative method in which semi-structured interviews have been conducted through which participants shared their views and experiences regarding the related industry (Collins, 2021). Due to that reason, the qualitative data gathered from the interviews can be analysed through the thematic analysis in the research. The reason for selecting this analysis is that it provides a significant data collection method which can be sorted into several themes according to the given objective.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

In conducting research, a researcher should have to follow the ethical considerations throughout their research work as it includes the data of various experts and professionals of the industry (Gurusinghe et al., 2021). For that purpose, the researcher should make sure that the information of participants should be confidential because it includes their personal information and ideas regarding the study. The collected data will be stored in the form of hard copy and soft copy as well for future reference for this research study. Further, the effective compliance with ethical considerations of the research methodology ensures the confidentiality and validity of the research.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the current study is to identify the strategies that can be effective in filling the gap in any e-commerce business. The objectives of the study are to explore employees' skills that impact the overall performance of the company and the strategies to overcome the skills gap in the workforce. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with HR executives of the e-commerce industry of the UK. The collected data in form of interview transcripts is analysed with the use of thematic analysis. After familiarization with collected data, the researcher coded it and then developed analytical themes. The interview transcripts and references from scholarly articles are used to discuss analysed data.

4.1 Employees skills for e-commerce

4.1.1 Digital marketing

The research participants agreed to the fact that skill gap analysis is crucial for progressing and learning organizations. According to HR experts match the desired knowledge and experience with existing skillset of candidate (Mason, et al., (2016), so that only competitive workforce can be recruited. One of the participants agreed that,

"... skills gap analysis is a systematically performed process that facilitates HR management to understanding which skills and knowledge are currently missing in the workforce..."

As the sample population for the current study is related to e-commerce, therefore, research participants have elaborated on the skills that are fundamental for any e-commerce employee. Patacsil & Tablatin, (2017) discusses that any e-commerce business largely relies on an electronic network, internet and information technology. In the current digital age, business activities from

researching the required products to placing orders and financial transactions are placed digitally. Therefore, the workforce related to e-commerce businesses needs to be equipped with information technology skills despite other soft and department-related knowledge. Interviewee four shared the idea that,

“... despite depending on only traditional marketing resources, e-commerce companies seek to exploit the opportunity to attract the consumer via the digital market. Therefore, any marketing expert should be able to employ both conventional and digital marketing strategies...”

Kaur & Kumar, (2013) discusses that with the technological revolution, companies have adopted a hybrid business model to expand their consumer network. With knowledge of IT skills, the concept of e-commerce is incomplete. Communication with virtual consumers is challenging for e-commerce companies, as the consumers spend only a few seconds on the product portfolio or advertising content of an e-commerce company. Social media knowledge, website marketing, search engine optimization, content marketing and pay-per-click advertising knowledge were considered mandatory for the marketing team of an e-commerce company. The potential of marketing cannot be achieved until the employees cannot implement strategies to make an impact on target consumers. Bala & Verma, (2018) discusses that it is imperative to engage potential consumers in the digital landscape to build positive brand image and gain a competitive advantage as a thought leader. The goal of any online business is to increase website traffic which is possible with SEO proficiency. The interviewees discuss that from practical and technical perspective, the significance of keywords is manifold. Concerning digital marketing a research participant shared that,

“... it is easier to connect customers with the brands, when employees can successfully use online channels to engage customers and make them purchase online products of the brand...”

4.2 E-commerce transactions

The research participants highlighted the role of e-commerce transactions in buying or selling of things. In e-commerce electronic networks are used by consumers, therefore, funds are also transmitted through electronic funds transfer. Interviewees highlighted the knowledge of electronic fund transfer mandatory for accounting staff members despite, proficiency in accounting practices. According to an interviewee,

“... being a part of e-commerce, not only the consumers but company employees must know how to use a website of the bank to transfer funds to another bank account...”

Consumers can use smart devices, like tablets or smartphones to place an order. Therefore, e-commerce staff has to be vigilant in performing online order management, payments and feedback services. Within the business context of e-commerce, keeping online books and profit-loss sheets have become definable and identifiable characteristics for the e-commerce workforce. The offer and acceptance of orders are paced generally on networks, therefore, incompetency in skills of e-commerce can lead to dissatisfaction among consumers.

4.3 Diverse employee skills for e-commerce

With the use of an omnichannel retail management system, the staff members can access orders, financials, customer relationships and inventory. However, it is possible only when workers can use various software effectively. Research participants agree that the whole process of e-commerce is dependent on digital knowledge from placing the order, and forwarding it to databases to the merchant system. One of the participants stated that,

“... I had to learn how to use video conferencing technology so that I could communicate with virtual team members, ... I also learnt to share screen method so that I could view product launches and monthly reports with the team members...”

According to Tsai, et al., (2015) big data analytics cause multiple transformative benefits to e-commerce companies including dynamic pricing, improved interaction, and real-time customer experience. The research participants agreed with the fact that big data analytics skills are imperative for every e-commerce business. Russom, (2011) agrees that big data analytics allow higher conversion rates and strategic decision-making. The researcher identified the prevalent idea in interview transcripts that a high-performing online business is not possible until the management does not get insight into consumer changing behaviour so that organizational capabilities are invested accordingly. One of the interviewees stated,

“... workers need to upgrade their skill set concerning big data analytics to strategic decision-making. When the employees are able to use a group of tools to interpret information confident plannings can be made..”

The concept of e-commerce is incomplete without integrating the knowledge of artificial intelligence. states that better return on investment, accuracy and lower costs in e-commerce are not possible without artificial intelligence. Interviewees agree that for successful e-tail, despite upgrading the skill set of the existing workforce, the recruitment of software engineers facilitates accessing and managing e-commerce. The significance of graphic designing has increased considerably with online businesses. Despite interactive content, captivating images display a positive image of a brand. Hence, various kinds of digital skills like web designing, digital marketing and better computer literacy are mandatory for the success of any online business. The executives of e-commerce companies alluded to the fact that computer literacy (knowledge about software, hardware, and networks) enables the team members to run and navigate various programs and applications successfully.

4.4 Skill-building Methods

Training and Development of current workforce

Learning and development are fundamental in human resource management. According to Renninger, et al., (2014) with the use of a systematic process the skills of employees, their knowledge and competency can be increased considerably. The research participants pointed to the fact that after the acquisition of skills and knowledge, it can be broadened with practices in professional life. One of the participants agreed that,

“... with the use of learning and development the behaviour of workers can be improved, enabling them to perform their duties more effectively...”

Several useful models can be used for the learning and development of employees but the framework given by Van Gelder , the pedagogical analysis, is widely used within organizations (Blackman, et al., 2016). The interviewees agreed that before the development of the workforce, the executives need to set objectives to achieve set goals. Most of them stated that teaching method, material and subject matter are developed accordingly (Renninger, et al., 2014). With the technological revolution, it is the need of the hour that the skillset of the workforce is rearranged and redesigned. One of the participants suggested using 70/20/10 model for the development of the workforce in the following words,

“... the model given by McCall, Lombardo & Eichinger is helpful in developing skills related to e-commerce. The 70% learning via practical training facilitates the workforce in gain learning new skills..”

According to Harrison, (2005) lectures, seminars, discussion groups and debates in interactive settings can be beneficial for training the workforce. Most of the interviewees were of the view that theoretical knowledge is essential but most e-commerce skills require experiential activities. Some executives suggested “simulation/game” as an engaging strategy for learning new skills and knowledge. One of the interviewees stated that,

“... for me, Bloom’s taxonomy is successful in evaluating the extent of learning in the employees...”

4.5 Replacement of jobs

After the changes in business operations, some jobs are replaced with others for increased productivity concerning the core responsibilities and tasks. In the case of job redesign, the assigned responsibilities are in agreement with the expectations and requirements of changing business world. Interviewee five agreed that,

“... in the upcoming years, the technical knowledge along with soft skills of effective communication, critical thinking and problem solving will be more required as compared to degrees and diplomas...”

However, when there is the change in organizational change which is necessary for the competitiveness of a firm, there is the likelihood of resistance due to several factors like fear of failure or feelings of uncertainty. According to Tims & Bakker, (2010) education, communication, participation and involvement are effective methods to combat challenges as the result of redesigning the roles and responsibilities of workers. Lack of understanding, exposure and practice of new skills can hinder the development of e-commerce-related skills. Interviewee one agreed that,

“... with the increased awareness and understanding, it is easier to reduce strong resistance with less cost and time. Both explicit and implicit correction of workers can bring forth positive organizational outcomes...”

The skills of the workforce should be in agreement with the mission and vision of the company. The volatility, uncertainty and complexity of the working world require the combination of hard skills, soft skills and information skills. E-commerce is largely about automation and digitization of organizations. The jobs in the 30s or 40s are extinct now. Not only in sales jobs, but in construction, food preparation, cleaning and other personal services the requirements of consumers have changed substantially. Therefore, for keeping pace with other companies, proficiency in manual skills is not sufficient. The algorithm and digitization have turned the workforce into more independent entities. The training to use digital channels and programs like social media, programming, appropriate use of computers and MS office is essential for workers.

4.6 Conclusion

As the researcher was interested in exploring the relationship between organizational needs and employee's skills, the research findings suggest that in the fast-pacing world, it is not possible to progress without equipping the workforce with new skills and redesigning their roles and responsibilities. The research findings have elaborated various strategies used by research participants to improve the skill set of workers. The last research question was designed to investigate the key skills that are required for positive business performance. The researcher has identified digital marketing, electronic transaction and data analytics as necessary skills for the workforce in the e-commerce business.

The current study has been successful in answering most of the questions posed in the introduction section. Furthermore, the interviewees highlighted the aspect of resistance to change which was not found in the literature review. Change management by leadership can facilitate effective training and development of the workforce to meet the challenges of online business.

Discussion

There should be equal consideration of the company's offer to its employees throughout the planning phase of a future-of-work programme. To recruit external talent to fill specialised areas for which there are inadequate internal applicants, businesses must build clear and compelling value propositions for workers (Diez et al., 2019). By building and implementing the infrastructure and capabilities required for reskilling at scale, businesses may alter the skill profiles of their whole enterprises. All workers may need generalised upskilling in areas like the

commercial value and use of digital and analytics, but others may require far more in-depth and role-specific reskilling (Konovalova et al., 2021).

There is a growing gap of HR analytics skills threatening the economic prosperity of the nation in the long term. The workers do not possess enough as well as skilled candidates for the fulfilment of the high skills ever increasing job numbers. The workforce with high quality is significant in the business success determination and the challenges regarding the best people hiring possess a direct impact on the competitiveness of organisations in future as well as today (Moldovan, 2019). Most of the e-commerce organisations in the UK are at the heart of a skill-shaping initiative to manage the distribution of reskilling programmes, assign workers to learning journeys, and distribute newly trained workers to the areas of the company that have the most demand for them (Opatha, 2020). In addition to monitoring the program's efficacy and implementing agile methods for testing and refining instructional materials and assessment tools, the hub will be in charge of fostering the development of a reskilling infrastructure within an organisation so that it can meet the changing demands of the company (Boakye and Lamptey, 2020). When a company knows what kinds of abilities it will need to fill future positions, it can compare those needs to the talents now present in its workforce, figure out how people will be reassigned over time, and fill any gaps that arise (Moldovan, 2019). Companies should evaluate the fundamental elements that might make or fail a reskilling programme during the planning process. The HR and training resources already in place, as well as the openness of the workforce to change, are two such factors (Konovalova et al., 2021).

Employers require an international, highly competent workers to bridge the skills gap. It is necessary to hire from non-traditional talent pools, train employees, engage with academic institutions to increase employability of graduates, and compete worldwide for the best people. Employers help in solving the current talent shortages by utilising atypical and more diversified candidate pool. Today's modern organisations can find great skills from seniors. Over years in the workforce, mature individuals have developed their expertise and talents (Santandreu Calonge & Aman Shah, 2016). In the course of their careers, as well as during times of underemployment or unemployment, many people have continued their education and added to their areas of expertise. For the majority of firms in e-commerce sector, retaining skilled older employees and hiring new ones is fundamentally smart business. Businesses who are successful in hiring applicants with

disabilities report more revenue, greater net profit, lower attrition, reduced hiring expenses, enhanced productivity, and better customer engagement. Employers must make sure that including disabled candidates in their entire hiring strategy is a competitive advantage for the company. Employers can start to believe about forming alliances with regional educational institutions as well as other organisations including technical schools or credential programmes. These collaborations offer the advantage of giving employers access to a pool of applicants who are developing the skills they require (Michaelis & Markham, 2017). Employers can gain by utilising tax credits as well as other rewards for hiring members of particular groups, including veterans and people with disabilities.

The leading e-commerce retailers around the world are making investment in analytics and data for strengthening the competitive position in the competitive marketing for the preparation of the company regarding future growth. The main function is the investment in the area of people management as the players require highest return on this area. The best practice companies begin with the comprehensive people diagnostic performance (Ebner et al., 2020). It is crucial for e-commerce retailers to examine the store roles and identify the driving values of the organisation. The e-commerce retailers also need to find the gap between the needed capabilities for success and existing capabilities in terms of capacity or skills. The leading players focus on addressing the issue of skills gap through informed decision making regarding closure of gap with the application of state of the art in the HR analytics. Jabir et al. (2019) identified three key areas for the application of HR analytics involving borrow, buy, and build. The build area focuses on the areas for the value maximisation from the existing employees. The buy area is the best option for getting the needed talent with the refinement of analytics strategy of recruitment. The borrow area is the one on which the organisation need to depend on temporary workers or contractors for excellence driven business.

It is critical to make investment in new capabilities building with the evolution of roles particularly in the future growth driven areas including technological and interpersonal skills. The future story is not merely a focal point of the shopper experience enhanced with technology rather the data gathering hub and the decision making driven through data (Hancock et al., 2020). The applications of technology by the skilled workforce can be smart tags of prices to targeted promotions in the store with display on the smart carts of shopping or pushed to the registered

shoppers of mobile phones. However, the challenge is the skill labour as the prerequisite for the value generation maximisation through innovation. The HR gap analysis in this regard is crucial as the breakdown of the current skills and workforce in contrast to the needed workforce for reaching the key goals of the business. The HR gap analysis helps in the identification of the skill deficiencies and upcoming personnel in the company with the skills gap analysis in HR analytics. The HR analytics skills gap supports the growth plan of the organisation with the needs or project hiring in the workforce of the future regarding experience and skills understanding in the existing workforce and the strategies development to overcome the gap (Angrave et al., 2016).

The HR analytics gap analysis helps the organisation for staying competitive in the workforce changes in terms of downsizing as well as growth. Rather than reactively firing or hiring, the organisations plan for the future with taking actions carefully at the right targeted time. The operations conducted as a result are easy for responsibly growing with making sure that the needed positions are filled and the workforce meets the evolving needs of the e-commerce organisations. The HR analytics gap analysis is useful for e-commerce organisations struggling in meeting goals prior to the implementation of change. Vidgen et al. (2017) identified four key steps including goals defining, key skills identification, current skills assessment, and the plan creation. The defining of goals can be on a small scale or organisational level with clear objectives or combination of goals. The identification of key skills involves soft skills and hard skills for workforce building fitting the culture and talent needs. The appropriate way is to mine current descriptions of job with the values of the organisation for the positions of hiring. The current skills assessment starts with the key skills new list in comparison to the each skill expertise and the needed expertise level. The large e-commerce organisations lean on the assessments of managers, reviews of performance and surveys of employees for information gathering (Hancock et al., 2020). The plan creation comprise the needed key skills and the current skills inventory for the HR analytics gap analysis. This further focuses on the best solutions identification for gap fulfilment and actions on the plans.

Organisations in the e-commerce space put a premium on encouraging analytical thinking and evidence-based decision-making, especially in the realm of human resources. Since prior research has only shown a positive business result without specifying which outcomes are influenced directly and indirectly (Moldovan, 2019). Organisation-wide analytic maturity is

required for analytics to contribute meaningfully to human resources management, so that HRM may realise its full potential and reap all the benefits of analytics (Boakye and Lamptey, 2020). Moreover, it was argued that a political aspect is also important for the success of HR Analytics. Resistance to change by managerial decision makers has a significant impact on the abandonment of the results derived by such analysts (Jabir et al., 2019). HR professionals need the cooperation and cooperation of managers from other functions to gain access to the cross-functional data necessary to perform analysis. Businesses have a responsibility to provide their employees with the chance to learn and grow professionally. New hires need to be able to pick up and use new technologies inside the company to better communicate with existing and potential clients (Fenlon and Fitzgerald, 2019).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

In the dissertation, the role of the conclusion has a significant impact because it provides the overall view of the research and becomes easy for the reader to interpret the main concern regarding the study. The conclusion consists of analyses of the entire study regarding the topic. Moreover, the conclusion is an essential part of the study as it provides an entire point of view of research and becomes an effective method to analyse the core agenda of the topic. The conclusion of the present research deals with the summary of findings, limitations to the study along with managerial implications and recommendations.

5.1.2. Summary of Findings

In the chapter conclusion, a summary of findings makes the researcher and reader enable to understand the basic learning outcomes according to the study because in this section researcher can provide their positive experience regarding the research. The present research on how companies are addressing the HR analytics skills gap deals with the various findings that become beneficial for the researcher in examining their skills according to the field of HR analytics within the E-commerce industry of the UK. From the discussion carried out in this research study, it has been concluded that HR Analytics is characterised as an emerging business discipline which makes the HR capable for taking relevant strategic decisions and for integration of timely information to

make key future decisions. HR Analytics facilitates the organisations in ensuring that human capital based decision making is carried out in a reliable manner in HR which further ensures the effectiveness of performance measurement system. It has been further concluded that in the E-commerce industry of the UK the role of HR analysis has a vital impact in getting the knowledge of skill gaps in the organisation because in the business environment the element of lacking skilful employers can bring negative impact on the organisational performance. Due to that the researcher has found that to overcome the factor of skill gaps within the E-commerce industry HR conduct interviews to recruit new talent that can add value to their organisation in a positive manner and become a source of avoiding the skill gaps in the sector.

Further, in the study student have found the significance of workforce diversity within the working environment of the E-commerce business as the reason in the professional environment it becomes essential for the employees to enhance their skills in which they can deliver their maximum output for the organisation. The reason, HR can create a positive competitive environment within the professional setting is because the effective implementation of a gentle atmosphere can result in the desired accomplishment of organisational goals along with a positive human environment. Another finding that becomes impactful for avoiding the skills gaps in HR analytics is that employee can enhance their productivity through effective communication amongst themselves because through meaningful communication, skill gaps can be overcome through a proper channel. In the findings of the research, it is observed that organisational needs and employee skills have a direct relation to the performance of the business in the E-commerce industry as the reason for getting effective outcomes Companies should know the needs of their employees regarding their growth within the organisation that develop positive relations between industry and its employees.

The section of findings identifies the influence of significant relations amongst the employees as it creates a positive environment within the organisation, it becomes an essential tool in terms of achieving desired output for the business. In the E-commerce sector of the UK, the factor of employee engagement has a vital impact on the overall performance of the business because in the industry the rate of competition has become high due to the involvement of various business sectors in this field. Due to that reason, it is observed that HR analytics has paid significant attention to retaining their valuable employees to get a competitive advantage in the

market as the reason employee turnover can cause a severe effect on organisational performance. Moreover, the study identifies the role of organisational management in identifying the HR analytical skill gaps for that purpose, the management finds the solution of conducting assessments for their employee which provide the basic knowledge regarding the worker's performance.

In the findings of the study, the researcher has found the factor of effective implementation of skill-building strategies to overcome the identified gaps for that reason, the organisation have used several measures of fact-finding strategy to identify the elements of the affected performance of the employees. Through the strategy of fact-finding, it is observed that organisations can build a relationship of trust with their valuable employees which can become a source of identification of the skill gaps within the HR analytics of the company.

5.1.3 Research Limitations

The present study has its limitations which occurred during the research in the process the student limited their approach to the E-commerce industry of the UK which create significant limitations to the study. Further, for the accomplishment of methodology researchers have focused on the experts of the industry and HR specialists which become beneficial for the study to get authentic data regarding the field (Strohmeier et al., 2022). For that purpose, the researcher has to perform primary qualitative research which deals with the conduction of interviews with the experts of the industry and professionals of the industry that limits the boundaries of research for the student.

In addition, qualitative data analysis has bound the researcher to getting thematic analysis rather than getting any quantitative data which can be analysed through Excel software to identify the statistical information regarding the research (Margherita, 2022). Due to the primary qualitative research method, this research is limited for not utilising the inductive approach which guides in getting related data according to the requirement because the information gathered through the primary sources requires the inductive approach for examining the supported data. Therefore, research limitations have an essential part in the research process for getting significant boundaries in terms of attaining related information.

5.1.4 Managerial Implications and Recommendations

In the section of managerial implications and recommendations of the chapter overall research have analysed and according to that recommendations are suggested for getting the improved outcome of the study. The present topic of HR analytical gaps the owners of the E-commerce industry in the UK should conduct organisational surveys regarding the performance of their business it can guide the identification of skill gaps (Karmańska, 2020). After highlighting the issues organisation should conduct interaction sessions between the employees and management through this method they can develop positive relations with their workers which leads the organisation towards a competitive advantage.

Further, the managers of the organisation should review the performance of their employees through the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) method which guides the management to evaluate their best workers (Fachrunnisa and Hussain, 2020). In addition, for getting skills development in the existing employee of the organisation management should conduct several paid training programs for their senior workers through this process company can overcome the skill gaps amongst the employees that become a reason for significant performance in the E-commerce industry (Reddy and Reddy, 2022). Therefore, the management of the organisation should focus on the skills development of their employees which creates a major impact for overcoming the analytical skill gaps.

CIPD Reflection

CIPD Reflective Statement

This research work completed by me under the effective guidance of my supervisor and support of my colleagues have made me able to learn new concepts and elements related to HR and HR Analytics which is the context of this research work. In this research to analyse the qualitative data through use of relevant themes drawn on participant's information (gathered), I learnt about the role which HR Analytics perform in overcoming the existing gap between the existing skills and requirements. I have already applied some of the research-related information I learned in my organisation (I am not directly employed by the research organisation). It has been effective so far in forming my positive working relationship with colleagues to gather fundamental insights on HRM particularly HR Analytics. The entire research work made me learn that Human Resource Management is one of the key departments which operates in any business organisation and the decisions taken by HR directly impact the organisational efficiency in short and long-term. As the business organisation grows, it requires effective implementation of timely decisions by HR to ensure the organisation's operations are carried out as required. This research project based on HR Analytics was a challenging yet amazing experience for me. From searching for the relevant studies, articles, and websites to documentation (written work) of this research project, every aspect was entirely knowledgeable and effective for me. I managed to complete my research project by utilisation of different skills including proper planning, time management, and effective communication with my supervisor and my fellows for getting their guidance and feedback at each step.

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