# Academy of Human Resources Development

## The Human Odyssey Newsletter

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**Dear Readers ,**

**Greetings from Academy of HRD, Ahmedabad!**

We are delighted to bring forth the latest volume of "The Human Odyssey". As the Organizations across the globe have adjusted well to the new normal and learnt the ways of modern management the learning has been constant for leaders and managers for creating well being practices and empowering teams.

AHRD also continues to be a course of learning for its community. We have a consistent flow of coursework classes which inspires our scholars for world class research. We also continue to provide management development programs for students and executives.

Happy to share that the fellows are contributing and writing their insights as they progress their journey as researchers. Hope overall it will be a delight to go through our initiatives.

Look forward to your suggestions and feedback .

Best wishes

Dr. Shreshtha Dabral

Director, AHRD

# AHRD Welcomes Batch 2024

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**Henkel Polybit Industries Ltd. K.S.A, UAE**

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# AHRD Welcomes Batch 2024

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VP- Technology & Operations

**Office Infosystem LLC FZ, UAE**

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**Arabian Industries SAOC ,Oman**

**New beginnings are exciting chapters waiting to be written. Welcome to this transformative phase of your life!**
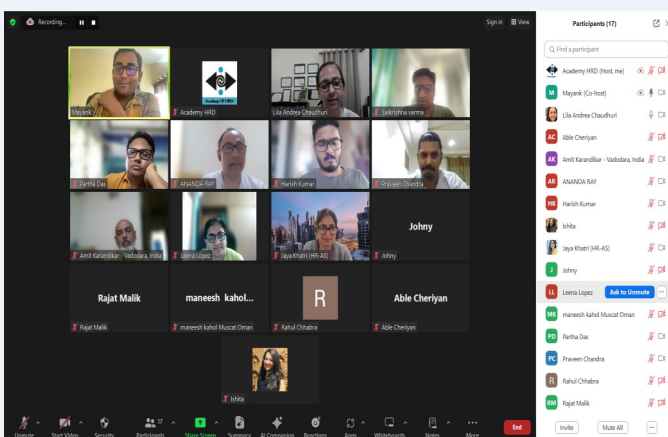
# Virtual Classes

## Structured Equation Modeling (SEM)



The course on **Structured Equation Modeling (SEM)** for the 2022 batch was meticulously facilitated by **Mr. Parth Soni**, a distinguished Ph.D. scholar at the Ravi J. Matthai Centre for Educational Innovation at the IIMA. The course was designed to equip participants with both theoretical knowledge and hands-on experience, enabling them to construct, estimate, and evaluate structural models effectively. His research interests are in applied psychometrics, largescale assessments, item response theory, structural equation modeling, and latent growth modeling.

## Systematic Literature Review (SLR)



**Dr. Mayank Kumar**, professor, MICA, led the **Systematic Literature Review (SLR)** sessions for the 2023 Batch. Sessions on SLR were meticulously designed to equip participants with the methodological rigor and analytical frameworks essential for conducting comprehensive and impactful reviews of existing literature.

## Virtual Class

## Leadership change Management and OD



**Dr. Keith C. D'Souza**, a distinguished Visiting Professor at S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research (Mumbai), XLRI (Delhi), Masters' Union (Delhi), and the Academy of HRD (Ahmedabad), facilitated insightful and engaging sessions on **Leadership, Change Management, and Organizational Development** for the 2023 batch.

Dr. Keith, renowned for his expertise and extensive academic and professional experience, brought a wealth of knowledge to these sessions. His interactive teaching approach, coupled with real-world examples and case studies, enriched the learning experience, leaving a lasting impact on the participants.

The Academy of HRD is privileged to have Dr. Keith's vast expertise, and his contribution continues to inspire and empower the next generation of HR and OD leaders.

## Charting New Horizons: AHRD Welcomes the Inaugural Ceremony of the New Batch
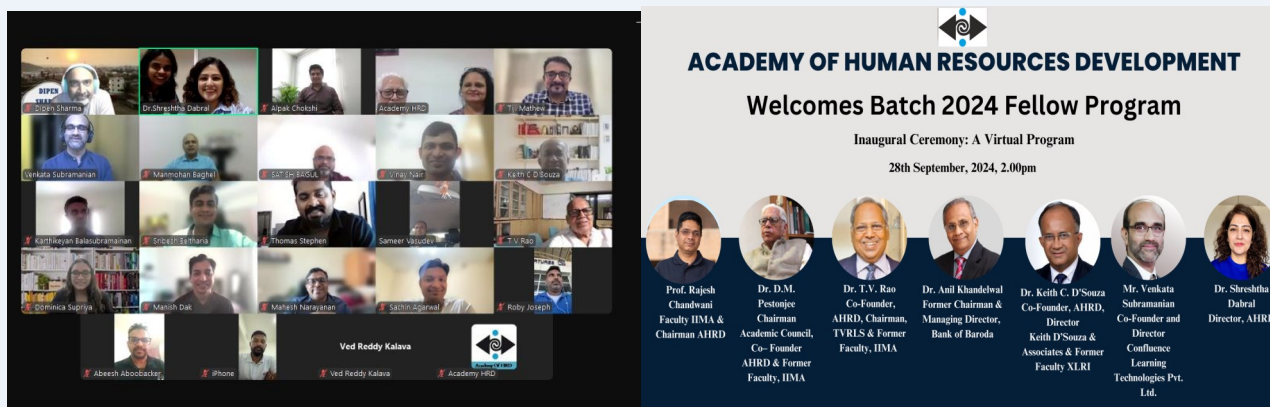


The Inaugural Ceremony of the Fellow Program Batch 2024, held on September 28, 2024, marked the beginning of a transformative journey for a new cohort of passionate professionals. The event commenced with an engaging talk by **Dr. Rajesh Chandwani**, Faculty at IIMA and Chairman of AHRD, laying a solid foundation for the program.

**Dr. Shreshtha Dabral**, PhD, Director of AHRD, extended a warm welcome to the scholars, followed by inspiring addresses from eminent leaders: **Dr. Anil K. Khandelwal**, former Chairman & Managing Director of Bank of Baroda; **Dr. T.V. Rao**, Co-Founder of AHRD, TVRLS, and Chairman & Former Faculty at IIMA; **Dr. Keith C. D'Souza**, Co-Founder of AHRD, Director of Keith D'Souza & Associates, and Former Faculty at XLRI; **Dr. D.M. Pestonjee**, Chairman of the Academic Council, Co-Founder of AHRD, and Former Faculty at IIMA; and Mr. **Venkata Subramanian**, Co-Founder and Director of Confluence Learning Technologies Pvt. Ltd., and a distinguished alumnus.

The community looks forward with great anticipation to witnessing the growth and achievements of this diverse group of 22 seasoned professionals as they pursue excellence throughout their journey in the program.

## How Microlearning Satisfies the Learning Needs of the Gen Z Workforce

**Mr. Karthik Mulakaluri**
**AHRD Fellow**
**Director, Omega**
**Healthcare, Bangalore**

Generation Z is now entering the workforce, and organizations in India are facing unique challenges in engaging and retaining these employees. To succeed, companies must be adaptable, open to new ideas, and willing to evolve their workplace practices to align with the preferences and values of this emerging generation. As the workforce continues to change over time, staying attuned to evolving trends and needs is essential for long-term success.

Generation Z, often referred to as Gen Z, comprises of individuals born between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s. While the exact timeframe varies among sources, it is commonly accepted as from around 1995 to 2010. This generation follows the Millennials (Generation Y) and represents the youngest cohort in the workforce today. A study by the American Psychological Association in 2017 found that 77% of this group are college students who are just beginning to enter the workforce.

Research suggests that many Gen Z individuals, being children of Millennials, share similar qualities such as loyalty, thoughtfulness, responsibility, and determination. However, Gen Z also differs from the Millennial generation, as this group tends to be more entrepreneurial and focused on forging its own identity.

The size of Generation Z is significant, making it one of the largest generational cohorts. In the United States, Generation Z accounts for over 25% of the population, making them a key demographic for employers seeking fresh talent. In India, the share of Millennials and Generation Z is particularly high, accounting for 52% of the population as of 2021, compared to the global average of 47%.

Young people have always shaped societal trends and behaviors, and Gen Z is no exception. As the first generation of true digital natives, their influence is spreading rapidly, with a focus on truth and authenticity at the heart of their behavior and consumption patterns. Technology has given them an unprecedented level of connectivity, making generational shifts more significant and accelerating technological trends. For companies, this shift presents both challenges and opportunities, and capturing these opportunities requires openness to change.

By 2030, the internet economy is expected to contribute 62% to India's technology sector, up from 48% in 2022. This growth has a significant impact on nearly every other sector of the economy, offering immense potential for driving economic development. In India, Gen Z accounts for 20% of the global population and 18-20% of the total Indian tech workforce, driven largely by high rates of fresher hiring. Seventy percent of college students in this generation aspire to join tech companies, drawn by the growth prospects in India's IT industry.

## Understanding the Learning Preferences of Gen Z

Understanding Gen Z's lifestyle choices can help companies create a workplace that nurtures their well-being, encourages social connections, and supports their professional growth and development. By aligning workplace practices with Gen Z's preferences, companies can foster a positive and engaged workforce that drives success.

Microlearning is proving to have a significant positive impact on the Gen Z workforce. This generation is transforming how workplaces operate by bringing unique capabilities in adapting to new technologies and environments. Microlearning aligns well with their learning preferences, offering short, visual, mobile-friendly, self-directed, and on-demand learning experiences that reduce learner fatigue. Implementing microlearning strategies can lead to improved engagement, skill development, and job satisfaction among Gen Z workers.

Microlearning is a game-changer for organizations seeking innovative ways to engage employees.

The compactly designed modules deliver focused content in various formats that cater to the needs of Gen Z employees. As most of this generation prefers remote work and learning opportunities, microlearning is an ideal choice, given its accessibility in real-time. Interactive simulations, short-form content, and gamified elements make learning more engaging.

However, mass implementation of microlearning modules may not be effective. Tailoring these approaches to meet individual learning preferences is crucial. Different individuals respond to different learning styles, such as visual content, mobile-friendly activities, audio-based modules, and hands-on demonstrations. Various formats are beneficial for different job roles, helping inspire creativity, adaptability, and retention.

### How Can Microlearning Be Aligned with Gen Z Preferences

To align microlearning with Gen Z's preferences, several strategies can be employed:

**On-demand learning:** Gen Z values instant access to information. Microlearning allows them to access materials as needed, offering flexibility and empowerment.

**Self-directed learning:** Gen Z values autonomy. Microlearning enables them to choose topics, skills, and challenges that drive their growth.

**Visual and interactive content:** Gen Z thrives on interactive models, videos, infographics, and quizzes, which facilitate engagement and information processing.

**Mobile-friendly:** As a fast-paced generation, Gen Z relies heavily on smartphones, making mobile-friendly content essential for learning on the go.

**Gamification:** Incorporating gamified elements like quizzes, badges, and leaderboards appeals to Gen Z's competitive nature and enhances skill development.

**Adaptive learning:** Using AI-powered microlearning platforms, organizations can personalize learning experiences based on individual strengths and areas for development.

**Practical application:** Gen Z is keen on real-world applications of their learning. They engage more with content that relates directly to their current or future work situations, helping them develop a global perspective.

Building a future-ready organization requires adaptability and a commitment to continuous learning and growth. Microlearning is gaining recognition across industries as a valuable addition to corporate training programs. By bridging the gap between traditional learning methods and the expectations of Gen Z, microlearning offers cost-effective and flexible training solutions that support employee development and organizational growth in a rapidly changing global marketplace.

# Empowering employee growth through gamified & personalized learning

**Mr. Manprit Singh Kalsi**
**AHRD Fellow**
**Senior Manager, Et salat**
**UAE**

*"What keeps me excited is the challenges. Every time I complete a task, I want to see what's next. The badges and points make learning feel like winning!"*

In today's fast-paced work environment, companies are always looking for more effective ways to help their employees grow while achieving key business goals. Traditional learning methods, such as standard Learning Management Systems (LMS), often fall short when it comes to keeping employees engaged and motivated. However, by blending gamification, artificial intelligence (AI), and customized learning, companies can create learning experiences that not only develop their people but also drive business success.

## What makes Gamification so powerful?

At its core, gamification involves taking game-like features—such as points, badges, leaderboards, and challenges—and applying them to non-game settings, like workplace learning.

## Why does Gamification work so well?

It's about tapping into human psychology. When people are challenged and rewarded for their efforts, their brains release dopamine, the "feel-good" chemical, which makes them want to continue engaging. Studies, like those by Hamari et al. (2014), show that adding game elements to learning environments boosts engagement and motivation. This creates a fun, rewarding atmosphere where employees actively want to learn, rather than feeling forced to.

## Key Components of a Gamified Learning Platform

**Points and Levels:** These provide instant rewards and progression, keeping learners motivated by marking their achievements.

**Badges and Achievements:** Acknowledge milestones with visible rewards, encouraging learners to take pride in their progress.

**Leaderboards:** Create a competitive edge by ranking users, fostering healthy competition and motivating top performers.

**Quests and Challenges:** Break down learning into tasks or challenges to encourage active participation and completion.

**Real-Time Feedback:** Instant feedback helps learners track their performance, correct mistakes, and stay engaged.

**Personalization:** Tailor content and pace to individual learners needs, ensuring a relevant and engaging experience.

**Collaboration and Social Interaction:** Encourage group activities and peer-to-peer learning to enhance social engagement.

**Rewards and Incentives:** Align rewards with business objectives, offering both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to keep learning.

These components form the backbone of a gamified learning platform, driving engagement, motivation, and effective learning.

## The future Employees: Gen Z and Gen Alpha

As Gen Z and Gen Alpha enter the workforce, companies will need to rethink the approach to learning. These digital natives have grown up with interactive environments, personalized content, and social gaming, making them accustomed to customizing their experiences and learning through engaging, gamified platforms.

For these generations, collaboration, instant feedback, and personalized learning paths aren't just perks—they're expectations. Learning platforms that allow for group challenges, leaderboards, and shared achievements will be key to keeping them motivated. Companies that embrace these features will not only attract top talent but also foster deeper engagement and growth in the next generation of employees.

**Benefits of Gamification:**

**Real-Time Feedback:** Gamification pro-vides instant feedback on progress, helping employees stay motivated and correct their course when needed.

**Increased Engagement:** Gamified learning transforms tedious tasks into fun, engaging experiences, making employees look forward to learning.

**Actionable Insights:** Gamified platforms allow businesses to track key behaviors, monitor progress, and reward employees for important achievements.



## The Role of AI: Making Learning Personal

AI takes gamified learning a step further by customizing the learning experience to each individual. AI can analyze how an employee is progressing and suggest personalized learning paths. For example, if an employee is struggling with a particular module, AI can slow down the pace and offer additional resources. On the flip side, if someone is breezing through, AI can adjust the difficulty to keep them challenged (Woolf et al., 2013).

**How AI Enhances Learning:**

**Tailored Learning Paths:** AI personalizes the learning journey, ensuring that each employee moves at a pace that's right for them. No more cookie-cutter learning plans—AI makes sure every experience is unique and relevant (Huang, Huang, & Tschopp, 2010).

**Predicting Challenges:** With predictive analytics, AI can identify when someone might be losing interest or struggling with a concept. This allows companies to step in before employees fall too far behind (Baker & Siemens, 2014).

**Data-Driven Improvements:** AI doesn't just help employees; it also helps businesses by providing insights into what's working and what's not. Employers can use this data to fine-tune learning programs, making them even more effective (Slater & Boyle, 2019).

**How Gamification Drives Business Success**

While gamification is great for employee engagement, it also has a direct impact on business performance. Employees who are more engaged and learning effectively are more productive. In fact, a study by Robson et al. (2015) shows that gamification can improve employee performance by up to 25%.

**Business Benefits:**

**Track Key Business Metrics:** A gamified LMS can track the metrics that matter most to your business, such as how many employees completed a specific training or how much time they spend learning. This allows companies to tie learning directly to business goals (Sailer et al., 2017).

**Boost in Productivity:** When learning becomes enjoyable and employees are recognized for their achievements, they are more likely to invest time and effort into their own development. This, in turn, leads to higher productivity (Huang & Soman, 2013).

**Healthy Competition:** Leaderboards and challenges create a sense of friendly competition among employees. This can be particularly effective where a little competition can push people to work harder

## How to Build a Gamified Learning Platform: Setting Up a Rule Engine

To make gamification work, companies need a rule engine—a system that defines which behaviors get rewarded, how points are earned, and how success is measured. A rule engine ensures that the gamified elements are aligned with both employee goals and company objectives.

### Steps to Implement a Rule Engine:

Define Important Behaviors: Start by identifying the key behaviors that drive business success. Whether it's completing training or mastering a new skill, you need to define what matters most (Kapp, 2012).

**Establish Reward Rules:** Decide how and when points, badges, or other rewards will be given. For instance, you might award points for completing a training module (Landers et al., 2019).

**Automate Feedback:** Set up real-time notifications that keep employees informed about their progress, completed tasks, and earned rewards. Instant feedback keeps the momentum going (Zainuddin et al., 2020).

**Incorporate Leaderboards:** Adding leaderboards based on key behaviors creates friendly competition and motivates employees to keep improving (Sailer et al., 2017).

## Conclusion: Gamification is the Future of Learning

By combining gamification, and AI businesses can create dynamic, engaging learning environments that drive employee growth and business success. Employees will be more engaged, motivated, and productive when they can learn at their own pace, receive real-time feedback, and work toward meaningful rewards.

With a gamified learning platform, you're not just investing in your employees—you're also ensuring that they are continuously developing the skills that will drive your business forward. As studies show, when employees feel empowered and excited about learning, everyone wins.

# The Psychology of Workplace Motivation: How to Drive Engagement and Productivity

**Mr. Manprit Singh Kalsi**
**AHRD Fellow**
**Senior Manager, Et salat**
**UAE**

*Why do some employees go above and beyond, while others do the bare minimum?*

Is it financial rewards, recognition, or finding fulfillment in their work? Understanding the psychological drivers behind excellence can help organizations boost motivation and performance.

Positive psychology offers insights into workplace motivation, showing that long-term satisfaction often comes from purpose, autonomy, and connection—not just financial perks. As companies adapt to remote work and compete for talent, harnessing these psychological factors is essential for building a motivated, high-performing workforce.

## The Science Behind Motivation

Two of the most influential frameworks for understanding employee motivation are **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs** and **Self-Determination Theory (SDT).** Maslow's model suggests that basic needs like job security must be met before employees can pursue higher-level needs like belonging and self-actualization, where they find fulfillment and perform their best. (Maslow, 1943)

On the other hand, **Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**, developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), emphasizes three core psychological needs: **autonomy**, **competence**, and **relatedness**. Employees who feel they have control over their work, are able to develop mastery, and have meaningful relationships at work are more likely to be intrinsically motivated. Intrinsic motivation, as opposed to extrinsic motivation (which is driven by external rewards like money), leads to sustained engagement and higher job satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

**Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation**

**Intrinsic motivation** comes from within—employees do their work because they find it inherently rewarding. For instance, an employee may feel intrinsically motivated when they solve a complex problem or contribute to a meaningful project. Intrinsic motivation is linked to creativity, persistence, and higher quality of work.

**Extrinsic motivation**, however, is driven by external factors such as bonuses, promotions, or praise. While these rewards can certainly encourage performance, they are often short-lived. Research by Kohn (1993) found that over-reliance on extrinsic rewards can actually diminish intrinsic motivation over time, as people begin to focus more on the reward than the work itself.

A balanced approach that incorporates both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators tends to yield the best results. While extrinsic rewards can boost short-term performance, fostering intrinsic motivation through meaningful work and personal development opportunities can drive long-term engagement and success (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

**Key Psychological Drivers of Workplace Motivation**

**Autonomy:** Employees who feel they have control over their work and decision-making tend to be more motivated and productive. A study by Deci and Ryan (2000) found that autonomy-supportive environments lead to higher job satisfaction and performance. Giving employees flexibility in how they complete tasks or the freedom to choose their projects can significantly boost their motivation.

**Competence:** People are motivated by the desire to master their skills and grow professionally. Providing regular feedback, development opportunities, and challenging tasks helps employees feel competent in their roles, which enhances their intrinsic motivation.

**Purpose:** Employees are more engaged when they understand how their work contributes to a larger mission. Research shows that individuals who view their jobs as meaningful are not only more satisfied but also more committed to their work.

**Relatedness:** Building strong interpersonal connections at work fosters motivation. When employees feel a sense of belonging and connection to their colleagues and organization, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated. Research found that the need to belong is a fundamental driver of human behavior, making it crucial for workplaces to nurture this sense of community.

**The following models and frameworks provide additional insights into understanding workplace motivation.**

**Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory:**

 Herzberg's **Motivator-Hygiene Theory** identifies two sets of factors that impact motivation: hygiene factors (e.g., salary, job security) and motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition). While hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction, they don't necessarily lead to motivation. It's the intrinsic motivators, like recognition and meaningful work, that drive true engagement (Herzberg, 1959).

**Goal-Setting Theory by Locke and Latham:** Locke and Latham's **Goal-Setting Theory** emphasizes the power of clear, specific, and challenging goals in driving performance. Goals help employees focus their efforts and persist in the face of obstacles, while regular feedback keeps them motivated along the way (Locke & Latham, 2002).

**Expectancy Theory by Vroom:** Vroom's **Expectancy Theory** suggests that motivation depends on an employee's belief that effort will lead to performance, and that performance will lead to a valued reward. The clearer the link between effort, performance, and reward, the more motivated employees will be (Vroom, 1964).

**Job Characteristics Model by Hackman and Oldham:** Hackman and Oldham's **Job Characteristics Model** focuses on five key job features—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—that influence motivation. Jobs that incorporate these elements tend to offer employees more meaningful work experiences and, as a result, lead to higher engagement and motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

**So how can an organization boost motivation and empower employees to exceed expectations?**

Organizations can increase motivation and drive employees to achieve more by implementing a range of effective strategies designed to align employee goals

with organizational objectives. A motivated workforce is crucial for maintaining high-quality service, which directly contributes to the success of the organization.

**Here are some strategies to boost employee motivation:**

### 1. Provide Meaningful Work

When employees see how their efforts align with the company's mission, they feel more invested in their roles. Emphasizing the broader impact of their work—whether on the team, the company, or even society—instills a sense of purpose and drives motivation.

### 2. Offer Opportunities for Professional Growth

Employees are more motivated when they feel their careers are progressing. Providing training programs, mentorship, and new challenges keeps employees engaged and eager to advance within the organization.

### 3. Recognize and Reward Achievements

While intrinsic motivation is essential, recognizing hard work and accomplishments plays a significant role in maintaining engagement. A simple "thank you" or public praise can be highly effective. If feasible, consider offering raises or promotions to further reward contributions.

### 4. Cultivate a Positive Work Culture

A supportive, inclusive work environment where employees feel valued encourages motivation. Promoting teamwork, recognizing achievements, and maintaining a healthy work-life balance can boost engagement and performance across the board.

### 5. Value Employee Contributions

Acknowledging employees' hard work doesn't always require financial investment. Sometimes, a well-timed "thank you," public praise, or initiatives that allow employees to take on more prominent roles can make a significant impact. When budgets allow, offering promotions or salary increases also reinforces this recognition.

## 6. Set Clear Objectives and Expectations

Employees are more motivated when they have a clear understanding of what's expected of them. By defining specific, achievable goals, you give them a sense of direction, allowing them to work with purpose and focus. Make sure to communicate these goals effectively and equip your team with the tools they need to succeed.

## 7. Foster Teamwork

Encouraging collaboration within teams creates a sense of unity and drives greater results than working individually. Feeling a part of the team boosts motivation, helping employees aim for bigger achievements. Team-building activities, whether in or outside the workplace, are a great way to promote bonding, boost morale, and enhance motivation.

## 8. Prioritize Work-Life Balance

Employees perform better when they feel supported in balancing their work and personal lives. Offering flexible hours, remote work options, or wellness pro-

grams can reduce burnout, improve job satisfaction, and increase overall motivation.

Motivation in the workplace is about more than just rewards—it's about understanding the deeper psychological drivers that inspire employees to perform at their best. By incorporating key frameworks such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Self-Determination Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Goal-Setting Theory, organizations can create an environment where employees feel motivated, valued, and empowered to succeed. The result is a more engaged, productive workforce that drives business success.

# Trade Unions: Awake, Define, Revive and Rise!

**Ms. Shachi Thakur**
**AHRD Fellow**
**Chief Manager (HRD)**
**PNB**

*They say '' Lal Salam''; we hear a ritual*

*They call it a '' Sanghthan''; we see staggered groups*

*They call it unified purpose; we see motives only.*

*They boast their achievements; we fail to find any*

*They try to influence; we see bagging for attention*

Are our trade unions seeing their fading glory and losing relevance in the rapidly changing world of work? Are they behind the times in understanding the evolving workplace dynamics? Are they inadequately equipped to confront the new uncertainties of the modern labor market? Are they struggling to address the challenges faced by workers in the 21st century? Are they unable to develop the necessary capabilities to resolve the specific issues of the younger workforce?

We grew up with a great reverence for our trade union leaders, viewing them as heroic figures in the movies we watched. These depictions not only showcased the struggles of the working class, but also spearheaded movements against oppressive and exploitative employers. Our leaders have played a pivotal role in shaping the course of history, advocating tirelessly for the rights and dignity of the working class.

However today, the glory of our unions, once emerged as national actors in the 20th century, is fading day by day and they are somewhere stuck to find true purpose in the changing organizational contexts. A once-dominant force, unions are now grappling with a profound sense of purpose, their relevance seemingly diminished in the face of rapid technological advancements, globalization, and shifting societal expectations. As organizations shift from conservative to open cultures, HR divisions evolve, and new labor codes take effect, Unions are struggling to find their place.

Factors like contract labor, increased productivity at non-union workplaces and a more business – friendly legal environment further complicate their efforts. These changes across the globe have put trade unions into a crisis with plummeting numbers and thus making trade union decline a worldwide phenomenon.

As per the 2017 report, of the ministry of statistics and programme implementation, Government of India, the number of registered trade unions in India declined from 41545 in 2000 to 11556 in 2017.

A major decline happened during the period 2000 to 2013 when membership of the unions fell drastically, a noticeable 40% reduction from 5.42 million to 3.23 million.

The ILO's data reveals a concerning global trend: a steady decline in trade union membership. This downturn is fueled by several interconnected factors. The shift from manufacturing to service sectors, the outsourcing of unionized jobs, the rise of the informal economy, the changing nature of employment relationships, and the impact of automation have all contributed to this decline.

Richard Hyman, a renowned scholar in industrial relations, asserts in his seminal work "How can trade unions act strategically" that trade unions are experiencing a global crisis. Membership numbers are dwindling, public perception is waning, and their ability to achieve core objectives is diminishing.

Trade union density, while commonly used as a proxy for trade union strength, has limitations in terms of specificity and comparability. (Anne Metton MA 2021). Despite the prevailing narrative of a global decline, Indian trade unions have exhibited a degree of resilience and revival, challenging the assumptions based solely on density metrics (Vidu Badigannvan, John Kelly, Manik Kumar, 2021)

**Lost purpose? Leadership failure? Driven by Emotions? Bounded by Traditions? Fragmented? No entry in emerging industries?**

**What to blame?**

In the nascent stages of industrialization, employers wielded considerable authority over their workforce, often implementing arbitrary policies.

However, as time progressed, our government, businesses, institutions, and organizations have evolved, a paradigm shift occurred, recognizing the imperative of fair treatment, improved working conditions, and eliminating arbitrary policies. These entities have recognized the immense potential of human resources to drive competitive advantage and ensure organizational success. With this progress, the traditional hierarchical structure has begun to erode, fostering a more collaborative and equitable workplace. Employees are increasingly empowered to voice their concerns and ideas, bridging the gap between them and their employers. This shift towards employee-centric practices is not only enhancing employee satisfaction but also driving organizational innovation and productivity. The evolution of HRD has ushered in a new era of employee empowerment, challenging traditional hierarchical structures, and diminishing the prominence of trade unions. Employees are increasingly empowered to advocate for themselves, raising their concerns and negotiating for better working conditions independently. This shift reflects a broader trend towards employee-centric workplaces, where individuals are recognized as valuable contributors and active participants in shaping organizational culture and direction. While trade unions continue to exist, their traditional functions are being redefined in response to the changing dynamics of the modern workplace and they are **losing the purpose for which they were originally founded.**

**The leadership within trade unions** currently facing the dilemma of maintaining a balanced perspective between employee interests and business needs. A myopic focus on gaining advantages for employees at any cost is proving to be detrimental to both the organization and its workforce. By neglecting the broader business context, trade union leaders may inadvertently undermine the long-term sustainability of the organization and ultimately harm the interests of the employees they represent. Though, a trade union leader's ability to witness management decisions has immense potential to contribute to strengthening management's ability to make right decisions but for this, the leader's perspective should be clear and objective. Often, the leader's own biases, preconceived notions, or limited understanding of the company's operations prevent them from fully appreciating the complexities of management's decision-making process.

The top-down approach remains deeply entrenched within many trade union organizations, hindering their ability to innovate and adapt to changing circumstances. Despite frequent protests and emotional displays, these organizations often find themselves **trapped in a cycle of tradition**, unable to break free from outdated practices. Their rhetoric, while passionate, often lacks the substance and strategic vision necessary to drive meaningful change. As a result, their efforts may be limited to symbolic gestures, leaving little lasting impact, and perpetuating the status quo. They are **exemplary in the display of their emotions**, but it is not in consonance with their ability to give meaning to the same. Their voice is loud but lacks impact.

**The multiplicity of trade unions**, a testament to the diverse tapestry of labor interests, has inadvertently become a double-edged sword. While intended to empower workers and safeguard their rights, this proliferation has often led to a labyrinth of internal rivalries, jurisdictional disputes, and a dilution of collective bargaining power. The fragmentation of the workforce has not only hindered negotiations with employers but has also increased administrative costs and reduced operational efficiency. As a result, the very institutions designed to protect workers have inadvertently become entangled in a web of complexities that undermine their effectiveness and diminish their ability to advocate for the betterment of the working class.

**There is no room for trade unionism in new emerging industries**, particularly the IT sector, due to high attrition rates and flexibility within organizations. Employees believe that unions hinder organizational innovation and do not want a collective voice. The difficulty of entering emerging industries and surviving in existing ones has placed trade unionism in a precarious situation. They are surviving in the existing industry primarily due to statutory obligations.

### Awake, Define, Revive and Rise!

If there is any doubt about the existence of trade unions, we should remember that workplace imperfections inevitably lead to the formation of unions.

Gregor Murray's groundbreaking research on union renewal (2017) offers a comprehensive vision for the future of labor organizations. By advocating for the re-engineering of union structures, the adoption of innovative organizing techniques, and the creation of collective action laboratories, Murray challenges unions to adapt to the evolving labor landscape. His emphasis on bridging the gap between internal and external labor markets underscores the critical importance of strategic thinking in ensuring unions remain relevant and effective advocates for workers in the 21st century.

**The time for trade unions to slumber is over.** It is time for them to **awake** to the challenges and opportunities of the modern workplace, **define** their role as champions of workers' rights, **revive** their connection with the workforce and **rise** to the occasion of addressing inequality and job insecurity. To remain relevant and effective in the 21st century, they must awaken from their traditional mindset of **survival and security** and embrace a new perspective focused on **growth and innovation**.

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