

HR Research: Everything you need to know

Author: Benjamin Sombi . November 2020

HR department needs to carry on researches to stay up to date with trends and information that is happening in the industry and within the organisation. In this article we will talk about everything that HR professionals need to know about research.

Research is defined as the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it leads to new and creative outcomes.

This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) as comprising of creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.

Characteristics of researches

A systematic approach must be followed for accurate data. Rules and procedures are an integral part of the process that set the objective. Researchers need to practice ethics and a code of conduct while making observations or drawing conclusions.

1. Research is based on logical reasoning and involves both inductive and deductive methods.
2. The data or knowledge that is derived is in real time from actual observations in natural settings.
3. There is an in-depth analysis of all data collected so that there are no anomalies associated with it.
4. Research creates a path for generating new questions. Existing data helps create more opportunities for research.
5. Research is analytical in nature. It makes use of all the available data so that there is no ambiguity in inference.
6. Accuracy is one of the most important aspects of research. The information that is obtained should be accurate and true to its nature. For example, laboratories provide a controlled environment to collect data. Accuracy is measured in the instruments used, the calibrations of instruments or tools, and the final result of the experiment.

Objectives of Human Resource Research

HR research is most effective developing HR practices and is supportive to the HR activities. The following are the objectives or HR research:

1. It seeks to evaluate the present position in the concerned area of research.

2. It facilitates prediction of future events and behavioural patterns.
3. Evaluation of current programmes, practices and policies is possible through HR research.
4. It prepares objective base for revision of current organisational programmes, practices and policies.
5. It paves ways and means for building up of capabilities and attitudes of employees regularly.
6. It facilitates evaluation of proposed HR policies and programmes.
7. It facilitates change, enables management to replace old techniques with the new ones.

What are the most Research Methods used in HR

1. Historical Studies:

Past records serve the purpose here. All reputed organisations maintain records of their employees relating to several aspects creating problems such as accidents, salary and wage structure, employee turnover, absenteeism, performance, leaves etc. Researchers investigate the past records and seek information by conducting interviews of present and past employees. This method facilitates systematic investigation over a pretty long span of time.

1. Survey:

Survey research is relatively inexpensive and enables collecting large sampling of opinions relating to compensation, collective bargaining, jobs, quality of working life and so on. It involves preparing a series of questions on the area of research. An adequate sample of individuals is chosen who fill in the information in the questionnaire then it is analysed and

computed to draw conclusions. This method suffers from the limitation of misinterpretation of questions. But survey uses large samples, some may misinterpret questions, majority will not. Survey method is used in a variety of situations where people and organisations are involved. This method is time consuming.

1. Case Studies:

Through case study method the systematic and in-depth investigation of the significant relationship under given circumstances is possible. The careful analysis of case studies may lead to broad application in the area of HR management and Human Relations.

1. Statistical Studies:

Statistics is widely used in research. Under this method collection, classification, analysis and interpretation of data are undertaken. The various statistical methods such as mean, mode, median, dispersion, correlation and regression, trends, probability, chi square, index numbers are used to draw statistical inferences. With the advent of computers the statistical methods are increasingly used in modern times.

1. Mathematical Models:

Mathematical models are used to explain the specific relationships between variables. Computers have made the use of mathematical models widespread in management research. Mathematics helps in examining the complex relationship between variables and enabling decision making simple and effective.

1. Simulation Models:

Simulation models are based on theories. This methods is used in procurement and training of personnel's, collective bargaining and to study the problems relating to production and inventory control.

1. Field or Action Research:

In this method behaviour of the members of the organisation is studied. This is a useful method to study group behaviour in the organisation.

What process do you follow when conducting Research in HR

Organisation comprise of human beings working there. At the workplace they have several grievances or problems which lead to process of HR research to find out solutions for their prevention.

HR research passes through several steps listed below:

1. Formulation of problem
2. Formulation of Hypothesis
3. Setting of Objectives
4. Design of enquiry
5. Methodology of research
6. Collection of data
7. Analysis and interpretation of data
8. Preparation of report

The need for HR research arises because of the following Reasons

1. Every branch of knowledge is growing at a faster rate leading to changes in perception, attitude of the people. This emphasizes the need for HR research to find out solutions to the new problems of HR. However this also builds up existing HRM knowledge.
2. Through HR research new methods of evaluation of HR policies, programmes and practices is possible.
3. Current policies and practices of HR can be evaluated and implemented in the light of new methods provided through HR research.
4. HR problems crops up because of employees dissatisfaction on various issues leading to

industrial disputes. Through HR research the problems can be predicted and solutions can be provided to prevent them.

Benjamin Sombi is a Data Scientist, Entrepreneur, & Business Analytics Manager at Industrial Psychology Consultants (Pvt) Ltd a management and human resources consulting firm.

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