



PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

THE 'H'

IN THE HUMAN  
CAPITAL

OCTOBER 2019

*HR SYMPHONY '19*



**Department of MA-HRM**

**Presents the conference proceedings for**

**HR SYMPHONY'19**

*Delve into the new depths of understanding*

**Venue: Madras Management Association, Anna Salai**

**Date: 04<sup>th</sup> Oct'19**

## **INTRODUCTION**

HR Symphony, the Annual National Conference of the Department of M.A. Human Resource Department was held on Friday, 04<sup>th</sup> October at Madras Management Association, Anna Salai.

As the department went marching on into the 15<sup>th</sup> year, marking the crystal anniversary of its esteemed legacy, the students and faculty celebrated the success of the department, it's excellence in the field of education and the laurels that have poured in over the years. Symphony denotes an ensemble of instruments playing in tandem to create music. While each instrument plays its part, together a greater common purpose is served when they all fall into place. Likewise, HR Symphony as always acted as a medium in synthesizing the right people and the right ideas in tune with the right theme.

In a world that is rapidly beginning to resemble science fiction, how does one preserve humanity? As technology evolves at an exponential pace and redefines the way we work, live and even think, it's high time we explore the myriad of unasked questions we should have been posing quite some time ago. With alarms blasting like fire sirens HR Symphony'19 resonated with a last-minute wake up call to throw focus on the mega-shifts, currently recasting our world. Joining the dots between big data and basic humanity, the conference aimed to discuss the moral framework required to steer the evolution of digital life and to finally articulate the difference between our unique humanity and the rapidly evolving robotic versions. And hence the theme for the year was proclaimed to be **The "H" in "Human Capital"**.

## INAUGURAL SESSION



### Dignitaries on the dais:

**Guest of Honour: Ms. Gowri Kailasam**, President, Rane Madras Limited

**Special Guest: Mr. N. Mahesh**, Associate Vice President HR, Tafe

**Dr. S. Raja Samuel**, Principal, Madras School of Social Work

**Dr. R. Subhashini**, Dean(Self – Financing), Madras School of Social Work

**Dr. Jayanthi Peter**, Head of the Department of Human Resource Management

**Ms. J. Divya**, Student Lead, Corporate Event, HR Symphony'19

The Conference began with warm greetings from the Masters of Ceremony for the first half of the day Ms. Sanjana Nair and Mr. Shane Joseph Renaux of second year MA HRM. This was followed by singing of Tamizh Thai Vazhtu and the College song.

Next, **Ms. Divya. J.**, Student Lead, Corporate Event **welcomed the gathering.**

Following this, **Dr. S. Raja Samuel**, Principal, MSSW delivered the **Presidential Address.**

Dr.Raja Samuel talked about how the topic putting back “H” in the Human Capital is timely. He believes, today we all are contemplating on human being, being human at workplace. Work is seen in two aspects, one is hard work and other as a means of survival. He questioned the possibilities of bringing the joy back in work.

Stressing that conference will give clear idea on how to manage the constraints we face in our workplace today, Dr. Raja Samuel asked everybody to remember that it is easy to work in places than run a business on their own, whether big or small, because of the environment these days. The constraints are strong and the resources are scarce. He said that it is important for human beings to be competitive and collaborative and hoped that they bring in the joy of collaboration into work to give an essence of satisfaction and success. Dr.Raja Samuel ended his speech saying that he is sure, all of us, irrespective of being a weaker or stronger section, have a place in this world.

Next, **Dr. R. Subhashini**, Dean(Self – Financing), MSSW **felicitated the gathering.**

Dr.Subashini appreciated the theme, “H” in the Human Capital. She highlighted the fact that the department of MA HRM always stays relevant and their choice of the topic for the conference proves it right. Humans are one of the marvelous capitals in an organization and that cannot be replaced. Dr.Subashini finally concluded that encouraging and motivating the workforce, enlightens them and the organization, thereby putting the “H” backn the Human Capital. Soon after this, **Dr. Jayanthi Peter**, Head of the Department of M.A. HRM, **addressed the gathering.**

She began her speech highlighting the glorious past of the Department of MA HRM. She talked about how the Department started in the year 2005 and that this year the department is oriously marching into its 15<sup>th</sup> year, celebrating its Crystal Anniversary. Bestowing her pride upon the department she said that it has come a long way since its inception in 2005. It began with 40 students and 2 faculties and now, it is a department with more than 600 plus illustrious alumni, 80 students and 5 faculties. The tall records of the alumni of the department, stands witness to the fact that the endeavors of the department to strive the roots stronger have not been in vain.

Drawing reference to the quote by Zig Ziglar “You don’t build a business, you build people and people build your business” Dr.Jayanthi Peter explained the essence of HR Symphony’19, bringing back “H” in the Human Capital. She talked about how we live in an era where in disruptive business technology and society forces are causing unprecedented changes in the workplace. The business world has been caught with the importance of velocity, value and variety of change.

As the work evolved, with the evolution of technology, a question arises that, can just being a human have a competitive advantage or is the “H” factor of the Human Capital irreplaceable? Dr.Jayanthi Peter stressed on the fact that as HR professionals we need to understand that the work is purely human. This includes giving people a sense of focus and a meaning at work, operating ethically, fairly, transparently and bringing peace that fosters personal relationship and humanly connections.

Quoting a Delloitte Report on Human Capital, 2019, of how organizations need to reinvent themselves to be more human by adapting into social enterprise Dr.Jayanthi Peter explained that a social enterprise is an organization whose mission is combining the revenue, growth and profit making with a need to respect and support its environment and stakeholders network.

She explained how with the evolution of changes, workplace has made space for many innovative talent strategies which are already active. She talked about,

- Freelancing – mainstreaming the alternative workforce
- Creation of integrated goals that cuts across discipline, also known as superb jobs.

Dr. Jayanthi Peter also talked about moving beyond employee experience to human experience, that is, business models strive to achieve and understand the human force aspirations and redesign the workplace & organization accordingly with maximum effort to put “H” back into Human Capital.

Finally she ended her speech saying that HR Symphony has been synonymous to the department of M.A. HRM. It is a student forum that works to improve managerial, organizational, analytical, interpersonal, networking and team working skills of students. She expressed her delight at the alumni blooming in the places where they have been planted. She finally said that the journey has been a myriad of experiences to cherish and remember for years to come.



***HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT , DR. JAYANTHI PETER ADDRESSING THE GATHERING***

Next the Guest of Honour, **Ms. Gowri Kailasam**, President, Rane Madras Limited **addressed the gathering.**

Ms. Kailasam began her speech with the words “I take this as an opportunity to address the youngsters about the corporate world”. She guaranteed that there are a lot of opportunities for students. There are a lot of developments

in the corporate world, and young minds are needed to come and make difference. Ms.Kailasam praised the theme for the day saying that it is well thought of and requires deliberation as currently technology is taking over the



***GUEST OF HONOUR, MS. GOWRI KAILASAM , PRESIDENT , RANE MADRAS LIMITED ADDRESSING THE GATHERING***

workplace. Technology and humans are not a contradiction to each other as human mind created the technology to make a difference. It all started with the human mind wanting to make a difference and now, as HR professionals, we need to become teachers.

Ms.Kailasam went on to explain that just as a teacher changes the minds of humans to do good for the society, so does a HR need to do so at the corporate. A HR needs to channelize and change the minds of the employees to do something good to the society and thus connect work with complete purpose, to feel more worthy, achievable, successful and satisfied.

Ms.Kailasam also talked about how robots need human minds to assemble them. They don't have minds of their own. She highlighted how the mind is more powerful than robots and any other technology that is going to come to us. It is important to bring in equitability in all that we do, and that's possible only by human minds. She concluded her speech saying that the difference between one organization and the other is the people and the leader in the organization. Only when there is a higher purpose in life, one will be motivated and every individual, at the end of the day, is a Human Being.



**SPECIAL GUEST FOR THE DAY, MR.N. MAHESH, ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT HR, TAFE ADDRESSING THE GATHERING**

Following this, the Special Guest for the day **Mr. N. Mahesh**, Associate Vice President HR, Tafe **addressed the gathering**. He spoke about how it is important to know when “H” came into Human Capital and acknowledge when “H” came out from human Capital. During industrialization, ‘men’ were considered as a factor of production. Later on the concept evolved into personnel management. He spoke about how with time the factor of human was added, and it became Human Resource Management. When all the other factors such as technology, manufacturing, artificial intelligence and so on started becoming main aspects or concepts, Human Resource Management got separated and that was when we started loosing “H” in the Human Capital. And hence, gradually Human Management was referred as Talent Management. Stressing the need to be a custodian of human dignity and respect Mr.Mahesh said that a HR needs to look into the psychological and the behavioural needs of the employees to make them satisfied and ultimately achieve the organizational goals and only this brings back “H” into the Human Capital.

Next we moved on to the most interesting part of the day, **the panel discussion**, which presented a panel of masterminds who opened new doors of judgment leading to a whole arena of perspectives on the HR domain. With decades of experience in the corporate world, the panelists added flavor to the occasion by sharing snapshots of their journey.

## **DIPSTICK PRESENTATION :**

The dipstick presentation started off with a video on the title of the study and the theme of HR Symphony 2019-2020. The dipstick presentation consisted of six members from the team presenting on eight different aspects of the research. The various aspects presented during the events are:

- **Theme Introduction** by Francena
- **Research Introduction** by Sri. S
- **Impact on Human skills** by Raghuram
- **Impact on Socialisation and Behaviour** by Raghuram
- **Impact on Psychological and Physical well-being** by Paulami Sharma
- **Impact on values, ethics and employee integrity** by Paulami Sharma
- **Case studies on best practices to bring back the Human factor** by Abinaya
- **Research findings, recommendations and Conclusion** by Sriikiran

The presentation covered various areas and each area had a detailed delving into the various dimensions of the aspect. Francena started off with discussing the definition of Human Capital and what and all consists of the human capital and also about what are the current practices in HR field which are prevalent in industry.

Excerpts from the Introduction:

“Human capital is an intangible asset that an organisation has in the form of its employees taking into account the value, knowledge, skills and experience of the employees. The human as an embodiment are a very complex set of beings and contain physical, psychological, emotional, professional and personal dimensions are all a part of the human being.

Some of the current practices in HR which incorporate the focus on H are Employee benefits, Employee embeddedness, Employee advocacy, Employee wellness, Employee satisfaction, Employment security, Employee engagement, Employee experience and Human experience.”

Next off, Sri took over the proceedings and brought light on the research methodology and gave insights on what all are the areas that are covered in the research. She also brought forth light on how the human factor is brought lost, when it is lost and importance of it.

Excerpts from Sri's presentation:

“In accordance to the theme of HR Symphony 2019, the research team conducted a dipstick study focussing on how the Human element is being ignored through the waves of technological transformation and how the human touch can be brought back through constant and diligent efforts from both the employees as well as the management.”

Sri also covered upon the scope of the study, objectives of the study, responses included in the study, demographics about the respondents and the interview schedule administered. She also gave a brief over on the four areas included in the study.

After Sri's part, Raghuram took over the presentation and covered the first two areas and the various sub areas covered under it. The areas covered are:

- Human skills and Digital skills: How technology has impacted the human skills of the employees in this digital era, what are the challengers in reskilling and what are the irreplaceable human skills
  - Challengers to reskilling in employees: Resistance to change, Client centric, dynamic change in industry
  - Irreplaceable human skills: Empathy, Creativity, Interpersonal skills, Decision-making
- Socialisation and Behaviour: Technology and its impact on leadership styles, communication patterns, management styles and team cohesion.
  - Leadership styles: Blend of Tech-centred and Humanistic approach: Coach, Delegator, Change agent
  - Communication patterns: Positive impact, negative impact – Lack of work-life balance, lack of human connect
  - Team Cohesion: Misunderstanding, Better efficiency, Lack of human connect
  - Management: Better efficiency, easier delegation of tasks

After Raghu, Paulami covered the next two areas on Physiological and Psychological impact, values and ethics. The areas covered were:

- Physical and Psychological: Technology impact on physical and mental well-being.
  - Psychological well-being: Positive: Sense of belongingness, mentally focussed; Negative: Isolation, Alienation
  - Contributors to stress: Lack of awareness, work-life balance, lack of knowledge, insecurity towards job, resistance to change
  - Strategies to curb stress: Sensitisation, Training, Redefinition of work roles, Change in organizational culture
- Values and Ethics: Impact of technology on the ethics and values of employees, wired organisation's necessity.
  - Wired Organisations: Necessity or Choice with respect to companies opting for it
  - Basis of wired organisations: Lack of trust, Discipline, security, Increase and maintain productivity
  - Invasion of privacy

After Paulami, Kiran presented the major findings of the study. They were as follows:

- Challenges to Upskill/reskill
- Change in leadership, management styles
- Detrimental impact on team bonding
- Invasion of privacy and other impact of wired organisation

The recommendations of the study were as follows:

- Change management
- Human-centric skill development
- Improving and maintaining Human connect
- Proactive measures to curb and prevent stress
- Employee Integrity valued similar to Operational efficiency

After this, Abinaya presented case studies of best practices followed in organizations to value the human factor. Some of the companies included were

- Intuit India: High trust – high performance culture, strong corporate citizenship behavior

- Amazon: Acquiring Whole foods market, change in culture from people centric to process-centric, devaluation of customer integrity
- Taj: “Tajness”, Focus of Human in the employees.

After the case studies were presented, Kiran gave the acknowledgements for the study and the conclusion for it.



## **PANEL 1**

### **Moderator:**

Mr.G.D.Sharma, Independent Director, Tamilnadu Petroproducts Ltd

### **Panlesits:**

Mr.Sasikumar.T,VP HR and CSR, Ashok Leyland

Mr.Prabhu Nambiappan, Senior VP HR, Ramco Cements Ltd

Mr. George Oomen, Senior Director HR, CTS

Mr. UdayKumar.G, GM and ROM, SAIL

The panel discussion began as Mr. G.D Sharma, Independent Director, Tamilnadu Petrochemicals Ltd, the moderator, welcomed the panelists. He delineated the transformation of humans into digital beings, where we have robots as our assistants. He said that it's impossible to escape technology in this era but what makes us stand out is the human touch which is fundamental to any organization. It cannot be replicated by any technology. Human capital is the only source of competitive advantage in this ever growing world. He listed out the five design principles mentioned in the Deloitte Global Human Capital trend survey, which will be crucial in reinventing the HR focus in the coming days, thus, silhouetting the theme of the conference and setting the stage for the panelists.

Then he invited Mr.Sasikumar.T,VP HR and CSR, Ashok Leyland to share his views on digitalization and its impact on his organization.

Mr.Sasikumar kept the discussion in course and embellished it by adding his personal experience. He emphasized on two major points -collaboration between people -digitalization in HR. He said that Ashok Leyland being one of the oldest organizations in the country posed a challenge in 'change management'. Employees were accustomed to the old way where twenty HR professionals managed two thousand employees, but the break of digitalization in HR happened then. The company used advanced technology in building an app that compressed every information right from the salary to PF of an employee. It made work hassle free and quick but still couldn't address the grievances of the employees. That is where humans have an edge over technology, he reassured that all our roles are safe and no robot could ever replace a human, but it is vital that we bring about change in the way that we work and think. He spoke about a distinct learning methodology practised in his organization called the 5ml learning wherein even the top executives could learn on a regular basis through short video clippings, despite their busy schedule. Finally he concluded by reinforcing the statement that "No robot can ever replace the element of human touch."

The moderator then handed over the mike to Mr.Prabhu Nambiappan, Senior VP HR, Ramco Cements Ltd to share his views on reinventing the human focus in HR.

Mr. Prabhu started off by citing one of the most celebrated books by Yuval Noah Harari, 'Sapiens'. He then boxed humans into four categories, which included those who actively fall in line or actively resist and others who passively fall in line or passively resist. It became effective as he streamlined the whole concept. Those who actively fall in line are the best performers while those who passively do, are the average ones. On the other hand those who actively resist are known to be counterintuitive while those passively resist are considered misfits. He went on to state that people respond differently to different stimuli and left the floor with three profound thoughts to ponder on,

- (i) Are we leading a life of entitlement or not?  
We demand for a dozen of things but do we actually make use of it?
- (ii) The thought of instant gratification  
Our lives today is governed by social media, the number of likes we get determines our mood.
- (iii) Impatience- the main reason why youngsters change their jobs very frequently.

With these thoughts he concluded his speech and passed on the mike to Mr. UdayKumar.G, GM and ROM, SAIL

Mr.Udayakumar being an employee of one of the oldest organizations in the country and a MahaRatna company journeyed back to the 80's where socialism was at its peak. He said that in the era of socialism, profit was not the main concern but human welfare. Socialism gave rise to competition which in turn increased productivity and for increased productivity practices in organisations had to be changed. Thus with the rise in competition, the 'H' in Human factor took the back seat. But in the present age things are changing fast. He made it clear that the 'H' factor is there to bring synergy in an organization, digitalization can never supplement it. In order to bring about harmony in an organization there should be good customer relations. Thus Mr. Udayakumar concluded by reinstating the promise that technology will not take away our jobs.

The final panelist, Mr. George Oomen, Senior Director HR, CTS , then took over, and started off with an online activity. He expounded the three Ws pertaining to work life.

- (i) Work- He stressed on how the nature and dimension of work has changed over the years and the need to redesign jobs. He highlighted the change in trend, where part time work has started gaining much attention, he mentioned how Part time workers were in par with the full time workers in the state of California. According to him jobs which involve empathy, questioning will co-exist with the rising digital organizations.
- (ii) Workforce: One of the main concerns of an organization should be to engage its employees on a personal level. In the current scenario employees seek for instant gratification and hence instant feedback is very essential. The success of an organization lies in bringing together diverse groups and keeping them motivated.
- (iii) Workplace: The efficacy of the workplace lies in reducing the effect of the transition from a 'Sunday evening to a Monday morning'



### **.PANEL 1 : REINVENTING WITH A HUMAN FOCUS**

#### **Moderator:**

Mr.G.D.Sharma, Independent Director, Tamilnadu Petroproducts Ltd

#### **Panelsits:**

Mr.Sasikumar.T,VP HR and CSR, Ashok Leyland

Mr.Prabhu Nambiappan, Senior VP HR, Ramco Cements Ltd

Mr. George Oomen, Senior Director HR, CTS

Mr. UdayKumar.G, GM and ROM, SAIL

Finally, the moderator pointed out the key points from the discussion and moved to the question -answer session.

## Panel 1 Question and Answers

Q1.

What are the platforms created in your respective organizations to reinvent the HR focus?

Answer by Mr. Sasikumar- Virtual collaboration went down well with the employees, apart from that every team met with their team managers for at least half an hour a week to talk about progress and not grievances. This practice has been very effective in Ashok Leyland.

Answer by Mr. George Oommen- Being one of the top IT giants Cognizants employs many collaborative tools to bring its employees together and moreover the practice of bringing together like-minded people with similar skill sets has churned out great results.

Q2.) In today's context what are certain key practices that an HR should implement?

Answer by Mr Udayakumar- Open Communication should be the priority. There should be a proper e-mail system and the line managers should be willing to address their employees at any time despite their busy schedule. This practice of open communication is carried out in SAIL, wherein weekly, monthly and quarterly meetings are organized between the managers and the employees.

Q3.) In a world where the employee is put on an electronic leash, how do you give him/her the elbowroom to do what he/she wants?

Answer by Mr.Prabhu Nambiappan- Garnering relationships that exist beyond the technical boundaries is the key. It is important to give the employees the 'family feeling', so that they will have a sense of belongingness even at work which will in turn foster healthy employee relations and will help each employee to contribute better.

Q4 With organizations working to reinvent themselves with a human focus, at ground level what would be some of the ways through which organizations can create or restore the human connection to the employees? In reality how much effort will it require to redesign such jobs?

Answer by Mr. Sasikumar- In Ashok Leyland it has been done by adding more content to the already existing jobs and by also making the employees mobile, wherein they will practice functions of other departments as well.

Answer by Mr. Prabhu Nambiappan- Whenever a person leaves a job, it is redefined so that it will have enough components a new person can make use of.

Answer by Mr. George Oommen- In a way organization structure itself facilitates redesigning of jobs. It is important for every organization to make its employees aware of their skills and then give them a platform to up skill themselves else move to a new position where in a different set of skills are required.



### **PANEL 1 : QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION**

Post lunch the second panel discussion was held.

### **PANEL – 2**

**Moderator :** Gurubharan S, Asst GM HR, TCS

### **Panelists:**

Prof. V.D Swaminathan, Retired Professor- Dept of Psychology, University of Madras

Mr.Hariram.VM, Head - Organisational Capabiliy, TVS and TASPL

Dr.Sumathi Narayanan, President, Creative Communications and Management Centre

Mr.Balaji Renganathan, Head HR, TTK Healthcare Ltd

Mr. Gurubaran, the moderator greeted the gathering and said that he wasn't a student from MSSW, but his association with the college has been throughout his entire 14 years at TCS. He said that of 350 HRs at TCS in Chennai 25% are from MSSW. He added that they thus played a major role in shaping the HR strategic thoughts of TCS and thus if it is good the credit goes to the institution of if it isn't great also it is on the institution. He introduced the panelists for the day which included Dr.Sumathi Narayanan, President, Creative Communications

and Management Centre; Prof. V.D Swaminathan, Retired Professor- Dept of Psychology, University of Madras; Mr.Hariram.VM, Head - Organisational Capabiliy, TVS and TASPL and Mr.Balaji Renganathan, Head HR, TTK Healthcare Ltd. After having introducing the panelists they were welcomed with a flower bouquet and the panel discussion began on 'Putting he H back into human resources. He said that the panelists are from two different backgrounds and that we would get to know and understand from both perspectives.

Dr. Sumathi began by saying that even the panel has 25% MSSW since one panelists is an alumni of the college. She said that the minute we start looking at human beings as resources they no longer exist as humans they just are resources. The HR industry looks at people as a resource to be used effectively, in this process things got professional and quantity was put for measuring human capabilities. Lots of models came and she as a person from background of human development was watching all this.

Dr.Sumathi said that if you do not allow someone to be themselves in the workplace they would they will not feel connected with the organisation or the work they do. You need to speak about passion and it doesn't come from outside. When she does workshops on work life balance, which she refers to as an ugly word, she says you must balance the work in life and thus she calls it LBW which is life balanced with work. Because of the imbalance what happens in life is that many people are not happy and the human factor is gone. If you ask someone how is their work going on they say it is too taxing. Children do not get to see their parents, parents don't get to spend time with their children, many children grow up with parents present for a very short time and what has happened in the last two decades is that because of the extra hours people have to put up in the workplace if someone leaves at the official closing working hours they do not return to the same office the next day.

These days there is a lot of disrespect for the personal space and life of every employee has happened. So then came policies where mothers can bring young babies, if it is a large organization there is a creche to take care. Dr.Sumathi said that although it is a very small thing, if only everybody follows what is followed all over the world which is things like a closing time for work, not using phones, responding to messages or mails after office hours. That is the kind of work culture that is there in some parts of the US, Europe and the UK. She questioned how is that they are following it and they are doing exceptionally well. In India how do you work better?

Dr.Sumathi continued her talk saying that it is assumed that the longer one works he/she is supposed to be more productive but this not true. People may not work long but they can create the impression that they are working very hard. So what is happening? Young couples do no get to spend time together so family procreation is difficult, it is difficult to find life partners first of all because we do not have time to socialise more in person. The messages are becoming more romantic but when people see each other face to face they do not know what to talk because they are used to texting and they sit next to each other and text because they do not know how to articulate. So what happens is that young children do not spend time with their parents while they grow up. She said she advices young mothers that their child will grow with or without them, but later when they grow up they would question where they were all this while. She believes that family is the biggest employer of all organisations because if there is no family nobody would go to work. Everybody goes to work to earn money that is undeniable. If all about the work is good but if they pay is not good they wouldn't mind if they do not have a family, they spend as much as they want, go around the world and come back. The need for work commitment comes but when a family life is there what are we earning for. It is time that we wake up and do not accept terms that are not human friendly. When Dr.Sumathi was working in a company in 1997 she asked them if they could leave at 7 at least and they said what are you asking? Is it a joke? She said that you are asking me to do a program on balancing then there is a need for me time, they need to have some personal life. They said we will think about it but it did not happen.

She feels that if the timings are decent they will have some time for themselves. Otherwise it is always work, people bring back work to their homes with their laptops and their personal life is gone. We are not aware of this because the human touch is going. Dr.Sumathi said that you can't have it all if you want to progress in life, you have to give up something to get something. By doing that we have somehow lost the human touch. If two people are put together in a room they need for communication is very strong they prefer the company of the phone and not of the human being sitting next to us.

Dr.Sumathi also said that these days she experiments when she travels she tries to strike a conversation with the person next to her who will most likely have their earphones on, they think that she has intruded into their personal space and they give a look. So she said we have all lost the art of communicating in person, everything is mechanised in order to make time but to do what is the question, because anybody you ask they say that there is not time. Even a child says so, so what is the time there for. Make use of time to be in touch. She said she was reminded of what someone said that the diaper and whatsapp is the same because both need to be checked often to see if there is something there. So the need to connect is there but the way to connect has changed so much and the more important thing is that if we do not interact with human beings we cannot generate positive hormones in our body. All the digital world will give the dopamine you need but it becomes an addiction. Then we end up with deaddiction counsellors. If you want to be healthy and happy learn to smile at other humans before sending a message. It is good to use technology but it should not substitute a human being. Dr.Sumathi also said that technology is useful but do not allow technology to use you. To bring the human back to ourselves we need to see what are we doing, how much time we spend on ourselves and then we can find a lot of changes in the quality of life that all of us are now missing knowingly and unknowingly. We do not sleep on time or eat on time and we become sick, organisations have tie ups with health centres. 30 year olds have health check ups, what is the need for health check ups at that age? She spoke about having neck aches and back aches because of the style of working and how does the company compensate for all this is by paying for physiotherapy. We need to think what should be done to bring back importance on ourselves first. Take care of ourselves, spend time with other people or colleagues and then we can see the human back into human resources.

Next, Mr.Hariram took over with diverse ideas. He said that one critical aspect that has changed over the years is that we have graduated from the Personnel Department to the Human Relations department to the Human Resources Department with the desire to get into the boardrooms. So that is the first step he says where we started losing the human touch. We have created a process, procedure and system that systematically demotivates people and pushes them to the point they feel they are worthless. Compliance is another careless word that is being used. When budgets came in we stopped using the word people but rather began saying FTE's that is full time equivalents to accomplish a task. When he sits through discussions on organisation structures, names are no longer used rather they refer to them as consultants. We started commodicising the people who work for us, we started calling non billable resources as overheads. This systematic way of disrespecting human value and giving importance to business and money is where the shift happened and we eventually lost the human value.

Dr.Swaminadhan began by thanking the organisers. He began with two questions, why should we put the human back into human resources? He says it is because we are marching towards prosperity and that is what everybody wants but prosperity alone will not suffice. He said that the newspaper these days has more negative news than positive ones and mostly it is suicides and sexual assaults. All of us need to experience peace from within and that means we are drifting away from the human touch. We need to be healthy, happy and more importantly harmonious. These three H factors matter a lot. But how are we going to do this? At microlevel behavioural

scientist shall do the ground work, at meso level familial and institutional factors shall come into play and the macro level factors would be bringing positive changes in policies and practices and the fourth is the mega level because tech advancement is such that we can even work from home and fifth is spirituality which is a meta level factor. When spirituality is strong humanity will automatically blossom without any hurdle. He says the mobile makes him feel immobile. Super human functions can be activated if a person is more spiritual. Many problems arise because of cell phones and it is a potential cause for accidents. As a person grows older the spirituality increases. We have evolved from the sixth to the seventh sense and it is time we develop the eighth sense which is the spirituality quotient.

Mr.Balaji Renganadhan began by congratulating the team. He said that homo sapiens have competitiveness and thus destroyed and survived after 5 other species of humans. We have the ability of creating something dangerous than us and get on top of that. Machines took over us during industrialisation. But we gained control but again came up with automation and the machines are supposedly learning now. We need to first address the heart to address the H in the human capital. He speaks about few Hs one which is hike which talks about the salary but how do you advance the organisation and how to do things. There is also a sense of holism and a sense of higher purpose is another. Higher order thinking skills also need to be given importance.

Next, Dr.Sumathi quoted Bhutan's happiness index to answer what or how should we handle ourselves being HR professionals. Thus we need to introspect what do we do with our time and what we want to do with our life. Each individual has to seek those opportunities that they need to align with the organisation as well.

Dr.Swaminadhan was asked how can we re-energize ourselves. He answered that by being in touch with reality and humanity and if there is a gap between the two, build that gap and that will enable one to maintain a good state of well being.

Dr.Sumathi added that we must empathise but not get into that emotion. She asked us to be with the person and not become that person. We need not solve their problems we need to help them solve their problems by coming up with their own solutions. One needs to detach the thought that it is a job and he/she is not the job.

Dr.Swaminadhan included that we need to move from empathy to sympathy and move on to apathy and never to antipathy. It is better to go for telepathy.

Mr.Gurubaran moved on to asking the HR professionals how can we bridge this gap talking about the happiness index of employees. Mr.Balaji said that organisations place priority on investments and not on profits when it comes to new organisations whereas traditional organisations like his do not do so. Funding happiness is a challenge. He says he tries to take all that he has learnt from what the institution has taught him. There is always a dilemma in finding the fine balance between human and self determination, making this working, being pragmatic etc.

Mr.Hariram said we can look at simpler aspects like just a small smile could work. Simple things like talking, food, coffee, ac levels etc were some of the first concerns that cropped up in crowd sourcing.

Dr.Sumathi said that money and happiness never go together, money cannot buy happiness. The fundamental things are what we need which can be the most simple of things. Companies cannot promise happiness to employees by way of funding.



## PANEL 2: PUTTING THE HUMAN BACK INTO HUMAN RESOURCE

**Moderator :** Gurubharan S, Asst GM HR, TCS

**Panelists:**

Prof. V.D Swaminathan, Retired Professor- Dept of Psychology, University of Madras

Mr.Hariram.VM, Head - Organisational Capabiliy, TVS and TASPL

Dr.Sumathi Narayanan, President, Creative Communications and Management Centre

Mr.Balaji Renganathan, Head HR, TTK Healthcare Ltd

The question “Can the employee be the boss of the HR person rather than business being the boss?” was put forth by Mr.Gurubran. Dr.Sumathi replied saying that then it would become human services and not human resources. With so much advancements she says can we also not try to bring back the human touch back and is it so difficult to do so.

To this Mr. Gurubaran replied saying that there is a democracy of ideas coming into play.

The second panel was followed by the Q and A session

Ranganagaki of 2<sup>nd</sup> MA HRM posed the first question stating a research on twitter on the Happiness Index at companies and that Microsoft, Google and Amazon topped the list. So her question was as to why other companies do not make it to the list or for that matter even give their response.

To this Mr.Gurubaran replied that he has a very healthy skepticism that surveys are like the Oscars they have a limited audience, limited films among whom the award goes around but doesn't consider movies of other countries, languages or regions that are far more deserving. Same way there are so many companies that are doing extremely well but the fact that they do not win the award doesn't mean they aren't good enough. Saying so, he directed the question to the panel for them to respond.

Dr.Sumathi said that employees are so used to complaining that when they are asked what makes them happy in the organization they are clueless, some people are afraid to speak up but ensuring that the fundamental needs of individuals is not tapered with then they are happy to work by making it a part of the HR policies that we should give importance to individuals, not in all areas but make sure that they have their space but also have their responsibilities as well. The H could not just mean human but it could also mean putting back the happiness at work.

To this Mr.Gurubaran said that happiness is sometimes over-rated because happiness cannot be the outcome but it is good work and happiness should be the by product of the way we deliver. Dr.Sumathi responded saying happiness is needed everyday but it is only helping us to get better results to be more productive and creative. Creativity comes only when people are in their peace of mind. Happiness should be a process and should be present every day.

Sri of 2<sup>nd</sup> MA HRM asked the question "All along we've been talking about organizations keeping employees happy but what if the employee itself as an individual is not happy and does not bring his whole self to the organization?"

Mr.Balaji responded saying that it is about the kind of work employees or individuals do, if the work is not connected to their competence they will not have interest and thus will not be happy to come to work. Since our organisations are inspired by the military setups. If we bargain the human is lost. The role of the manager is so important. He said it can be done by two things to generate happiness, one is by giving them a hike and the other is by having a conversation.

The next question was put forth by krithika of 1<sup>st</sup> MA HRM. She asked "If we have a culture like the timings are too flexible then what about the productivity of the individual employee, what will they contribute to the growth of the organization?"

Mr.Hariram replied in a technical manner to this question. He said when he builds an organization design it is built for a delivery. So it is designed in such a way that it is not necessary that everyone should give their 100%. So basically we move away from people to FTEs and the job is broken into deliverables and the organisation design is built from those deliverables to the network. So it is the question of how much the person delivers when they are given a particular time period to achieve a target and it is not their working hours as such that should be considered.

Mr.Gurubaran added that time beyond point is out of productivity. Mr.Balaji on a lighter note said that if an organisation is filled with working mothers that organisation will be very efficient because they are very clear and they know how to manage both worlds efficiently. It is also necessary to push people to leave when the day is over and this would make them more efficient.

Vignesh of 1<sup>st</sup> MA HRM posed a question to Mr.Gurubaran stating should we support business or look for the well-being of associates. To this Mr.Gurubaran replied stating that we think one should happen at the cost of the other. There are some people who just know people well while other just know the business well and it is not easy for both to succeed in an organisation. So as an HR one must understand business, understand people and implement changes. So knowing business and taking care of people is very co-related. So the problem happens when they are not able to manage one. Being human also starts with being humble and having humility. He congratulated the department for putting together a panel discussion with a diverse range of speakers.



**PANEL 2 : QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION**

## **HR SYMPHONY – VALEDICTORY**

The Valedictory Address was given by **Ms. Rajini Sriraman**, Corporate HR Head, Malladi Drugs &Pharamceutical Ltd.

The day-long event came to a befitting end with the very engaging and energetic presence of Ms. Rajini Sriraman. Ms. Sriraman is a senior psychologist and a human resources leader with over 20 years of versatile organizational expertise. She started off by Congratulating the Quiz Master Mr. Arjun Krishnan, II MA.HRM on having wonderfully organized a very interesting Quiz program.

She went on to talk about how in this day and age, when technology has made the world smaller, people have actually become more distant. She reminded the students on the importance of personal touch or the ‘human’ touch in this world driven by numbers and technology and that even a smile goes a long way. Being human starts at home, small things like taking time to interact with one’s family is what extends to the workplace. Helping employees achieve their career aspirations and empowering them is an important part of an HR professional’s job and the ‘human’ touch is the need of the hour. Ms. Sriraman encouraged the students to become HR Professional who make a difference.



**VALEDICTORY ADDRESS BY MS.RAJINI SRIRAMAN, CORPORATE HR HEAD, MALLADI DRUGS AND PHARMACEUTICAL LTD**

Finally, **Mr.Vasanth**. second year MA HRM delivered the **vote of thanks** and the day came to an end.

