

Justifying a Study on Constructing a National Human Resource Development Model as Practiced in Malaysia

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The globe has been confronting a new set of challenges. Such challenges are unique to each country context. The overarching challenge, all above other challenges is, to seek appropriate knowledge as a tool and mean to resolve such challenges. A critical such knowledge to be accumulated in all days is on how to develop people or human resources. However, with the existing knowledge claims in this regard, countries have been unable to resolve such challenges. Human Development, one such knowledge claim, is too broader, and therefore, no guided protocol is suggested in finding solutions. Human Resource Development, as another such knowledge claim is too limited in scope to address broader level challenges. National Human Resource Development (NHRD) has emerged to bridge this gap, emphasising people oriented solutions to resolve country level challenges. The NHRD literature encourages NHRD country case studies, and that, justifications for starting NHRD country case studies is needed. This study justifies such a research on NHRD practices in Malaysia's country context, using content analysis. As a result, this study has shown higher level country challenges, derived a need of people based approach in resolving such challenges, highlighted NHRD as capable as possible in guiding to establish people development knowledge claim, and finally justified an NHRD research to be done within Malaysia's context to see how Malaysia practices NHRD.

Keywords: Malaysia, Human Resource Development, National Human Resource Development, country challenges

Background of the Study

Today, the world has been confronted with alarming challenges. In the annual report of "Millennium Project"—"State of the Future 2009", 15 such challenges for humanity have been identified. They are: sustainable development and climate change; clean water; population and resources; democratization; long term perspectives; global convergence of IT; rich-poor gap; health issues, capacity to decide; peace and conflict; status of women; transnational organized crimes; energy; science and technology; and global ethics (Glenn, Gordon, & Florescu, 2009).

Further, developing countries are confronted with unique sets of challenges resulting from interplay among their divergent socio-cultural, political, and economical contexts as reported by the Human Development Reports (HDR) published from 1990 to 2009. Accordingly, poverty, gender, democracy, human rights, cultural liberty, globalization, water scarcity, climate change, and human mobility have become key

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challenges of Human Development (HD) and development during 1990 to 2009 (UNDP, 2010).

The objectives set in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to be achieved by 2015 have also focused on a set of major eight dimensions of enduring failures of human development in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, empowering women, reduce child mortality rates, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other deceases, ensuring environmental sustainability, and developing a global partnership for development (UNDP, 2003). Further, the country case studies of NHRD provide a unique set of challenges confronted by different country contexts.

The key driver behind resolving such challenges is people development, as per the evidence given herein. In the HDR of 2010, HD has been defined as a process of enlarging people's freedoms to do and being what they value in life and empowering people as active agents in development processes (Alkire, 2010). Simply, HD has been first defined as "a process of enlarging people's choices" (UNDP, 1990, p. 12) that has been the central theme in HD and it is articulated that the "real objective of development has also been to increase people's choices" (UNDP, 1990, p. 13). On the other hand, people have been viewed as both the beneficiaries and the agents of human development, both as individuals and as groups (Alkire, 2010). It has been very clearly shown that the process of HD "...has to be the development of people by the people, for the people" (UNDP, 1991, p. 13). Achieving MDGs requires key capabilities and essential conditions for human development as highlighted in HDR (UNDP, 2008). This indicates that the successful achievements of MDGs depend on people development. In addition, the 15 global challenges "...require a collaborative action among governments, international organizations, corporations, universities, NGOs, and creative individuals" (<http://www.millennium-project.org/millennium/challenges.html>). It means that the 15 global challenges need to be addressed by collaborative HRD initiatives.

However, current fields such as HRD and HD that deal with issues concerning people development have not succeeded in resolving the challenges identified. HRD has been limited in focus only to organizational contexts (McLean, 2004) to resolve problems within the organizations, where as HD seems to be broader in scope and that describes an end state of all efforts as to "expand the choices of people". Therefore, developing people in resolving various challenges recalled above has been another challenge to different societies and nations.

To bridge this gap, NHRD research agenda emerged to broaden the scope of HRD beyond organizational contexts and as a mechanism of achieving goals of HD and development. McLean presented a cross country definition for HRD in starting the NHRD country case studies. It stated that:

Human resource development is any process or activity that, either initially or over the long term, has the potential to develop...work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity, and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation or, ultimately, the whole of humanity. (McLean, 2004, p. 322)

Thus, NHRD explains national level of HRD phenomenon. McLean (2004), rationalized the need and the importance of NHRD stating that HR: is a prime resource for many countries; is critical in creating national and local stability; needs coordinated mechanism for its development; increases the quality of individual well-being; proactively addresses potential problems of labour scarcity; deals with the ambiguity of global "corpetition" (simultaneous competition + corporation among countries); combats with HIV/AIDS; upgrades technology and to move into a knowledge-induced society; and is able to tackle with external "agents" (globalization and

external institutions such as IMF and World Bank).

NHRD country's case studies provided evidence for its existence in the world. Accordingly, NHRD has contributed to socio-economic development in Singapore (Osman-Gani, 2004), South Africa (Lynham & Cunningham, 2004), St. Lucia (Scotland, 2004), Kenya (Lutta-Mukhebi, 2004), and in the UK (Lee, 2004). Education development and skill training have also been achieved through NHRD in Brazil (Hasler, Thompson, & Schuler, 2006), Pacific-Islands (Bartlett & Rodgers, 2004), and in Kenya (Lutta-Mukhebi, 2004). Countries like South Africa and Kenya have been succeeded in using NHRD in the correction of historical racial imbalances (Lynham & Cunningham, 2004) and elimination of gender disparities (Lutta-Mukhebi, 2004). Brazil is succeed further in creating proper coordination among government, local corporations, foreign subsidiaries, and NGO's (Hasler, Thompson, & Schuler, 2006). Also, the Pacific-Islands are benefiting from NHRD to overcome the problem of brain drain (Bartlett & Rodgers, 2004).

Background of Malaysia's NHRD

Malaysia is one of the most vibrant economies in the South-east Asia region with a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society consisting of a majority of Muslim population. Malaysia's total population, the Bumiputras were 67%, while Chinese and Indians were 24.3% and 7.4% respectively. Others were 1.3% (Malaysia, 2010). It is a country with a land area of 328,550 square kilometres (The World Bank, 2011) and is blessed with an abundance of natural resources such as petroleum, timber, copper, iron ore, natural gas, and bauxite (Index Mundi, 2011).

Currently, Malaysia is experiencing its long journey of realizing the vision 2020 that was laid down in 1991 with the tabling of the Sixth Malaysia Plan. Vision 2020 addressed nine national challenges: establishing a united Malaysian nation made up of one Bangsa Malaysia (Malaysian Race); creating a psychologically liberated, secure, and developed Malaysian society; fostering and developing a mature democratic society; establishing a fully moral and ethical society; establishing a matured liberal and tolerant society; establishing a scientific and progressive society; establishing a fully caring society; ensuring an economically just society, in which there is a fair and equitable distribution of the wealth of the nation; and establishing a prosperous society with an economy that is fully competitive, dynamic, robust, and resilient. In resolving these national challenges, the need and the role of HRD have been clearly highlighted, and the importance of nation's HRD has been properly recognized (Economic Planning Unit, 2011). In detailing about the strategic initiatives to economic development, Mahathir Mohamad, a prominent Prime Minister in Malaysia, has stressed on the importance of HRD:

...I do believe that the narrowing of the ethnic income gap, through the legitimate provision of opportunities, through a closer parity of social services and infrastructure, through the development of the appropriate economic cultures and through full human resource development, is both necessary and desirable...(International Business Publication USA, 2008, p. 232)

In addition, the awareness of and the emphasis on NHRD within Malaysia have been realized in its practice. It can be proven when reading the strategic approaches of creating an economically just society articulated in vision 2020: "In order to achieve this economically just society, we must escalate dramatically our programmes for national human resource development..." (International Business Publication USA, 2008, p. 232). Continuing to realize the goals of vision 2020, in the FORWARD of the Ninth Malaysia Plan that covered a period from 2006 to 2010, people's capability and the character of country's people have been

considered as the most important factor in becoming a developed nation (Malaysia, 2006). In the same page, however, it has been identified that Malaysia has the urgency to adopt a holistic Human Capital Development encompassing not only knowledge and skills but ethical values, progressive minds, and cultural awareness (Malaysia, 2006).

Even in its latest national policy, the “New Economic Model” (NEM), launched in March 2010 to cover the period until 2020 gives a high priority in nation’s HRD. The National Economic Advisory Council (NEAC) in Malaysia has identified and analyzed most critical factors to sluggish economic growth. They are: absence of private investment difficulties of doing business; low value added industries; stagnating productivity growth; lack of appropriately skilled human capital; insufficient innovation and creativity; and low-skilled jobs (Mehan, 2011). Accordingly, three out of seven critical factors are directly related to the country’s HRD. This is a clear evidence for the critical shortage and the importance of national level HRD to Malaysia. As highlighted in the NEM, the competitive loss of Malaysia in high-skilled versus low-skilled dichotomy is presented in Figure 1. Accordingly, Malaysia is far behind in dealing with a “competitive” workforce in the regional giants.

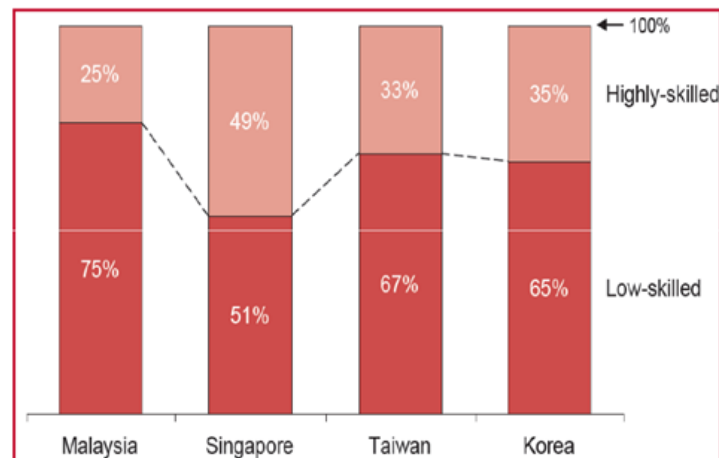


Figure 1. High skilled and low-skilled labour (2007; %). Source: NEAC, 2010, p. 51.

Except for the low-skilled labour problem, in the NEM Malaysia has identified a few other critical limitations of its HRD: (1) the share of labour force with tertiary education needs further improvements; (2) labour productivity of Malaysia in recent years (from 1998-2007) is considerably low and has declined while some other countries like China and India have increased their labour productivity; (3) insufficient efforts to create innovation and creativity; (4) leaving talents instead of attracting and retaining them due to loss of Malaysian talents and steady decline of expatriates; (5) lack in quality of Malaysian students; (6) lower proportion of technical and science streams to Arts stream; (7) and decline in producing vocational and technical graduates leading to the production of the talent that is not in high demand (NEAC, 2010). With these highlighted critical issues it’s clear that Malaysia believes in HRD in reaching its development goals. Minister of Human Resources in Malaysia, proves this stating that: “the government’s primary focus and most important task today is to develop and secure human resources of outstanding knowledge, skills, creativity, innovation, energy, and discipline” (Mehan, 2011).

NEM comprised of four major pillars for a national transformation: 1 Malaysia, Government Transformation Programme (GTP), Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), and the Tenth Malaysia Plan to achieve major goals of: high income; inclusiveness; and sustainability (NEAC, 2010). Out of the eight

strategic reform initiatives formulated in achieving the set goals, the second strategic reform is related to country's NHRD. It is about, "developing quality workforce and reducing dependency on foreign labour" (NEAC, 2010, p. 16). As a key pillar in the NEM, the "1 Malaysia" concept addresses the first central challenge of vision 2020—establishing a united Malaysian nation made up of one Bangsa Malaysia with sense of common and shared destiny. It aims to create strong and stable society as a precondition.

In its conceptualization, the "1 Malaysia" concept needs people to assimilate three principles of unity (acceptance, nationalistic principle, and social justice), two core values (mutual respect and humility), and eight aspirational values (perseverance, acceptance, education, integrity, meritocracy, humility, loyalty, and culture of excellence). Therefore, "1 Malaysia" concept drives Malaysian societies for a cultural change that recognizes a "people first" orientation while it urges to increase country's current performance through its last part of the slogan—performance now—in realizing vision 2020's aim to be a high income earned country. To instil these new values in all Malaysians and make them prepare for these new challenges, effective HRD efforts at national level are needed. NHRD as positioned by the pioneering authors deals with such issues pertaining to national level HRD to align people towards countries' future strategic requirements aimed at development.

In the FORWARD of the Tenth Malaysia Plan, laid down for the next five years starting from 2011, Malaysia has identified the nation's critical limitation of human capital and talents in the nation (Malaysia, 2010). Malaysia believes that the "foundation of any productive high-income nation lies in a globally competitive, creative, and innovative workforce" (Malaysia, 2010, p. iv). In fulfilling this need, Malaysia has again understood its requirement to implement an integrated approach to address its critical HR limitation in nurturing, attracting, and retaining first-world talent base during the plan period (Malaysia, 2010, p. iv).

On the other hand, Malaysia, in its journey, has achieved a lot with respect to its human development. In 2009, Malaysia's Human Development Index (HDI) was 0.829 (UNDP, 2009) raising its position in 66th place in the world ranking, where as it has been 0.744 in 2010, ranked in the 57th place, and in the 61st place in 2011 reporting an HDI of 0.761, achieving a high HDI. Further, Malaysia has performed outstandingly on all most all the MDG areas (UN Malaysia-country Team, 2009). This report further emphasized the needs to work out proper strategies and policies to achieve equity, sustainable development, eliminate increasing income inequalities, and combat the spread of HIV/AIDS tuberculosis.

In the Malaysian context described above, it is clear that NHRD is needed in the realization of its development goals through the development of people's full potentials. There is evidence that national initiatives for such people development have been taken through its national planning by all government ministries/agencies/institutions in Malaysia. However, one can thus argue that Malaysia has to further strengthen its effort in NHRD in line with the perceived roles in the country's national policies and plans in order to realize its national goals and to resolve its national challenges. Malaysia therefore needs to be encouraged to understand the nature, constructions, conditions (pressures and imperatives), outcomes, enablers, and hindrances of its NHRD initiatives. Recommendation of required modifications to the existing HRD policies and practices can then be plausible in the achievement of the country's national goals.

Theoretical Gap of the Study

The ongoing debate in defining HRD, created the basis to initiate the NHRD research agenda. G. N. McLean and L. McLean (2001) initiated to define HRD in a universal setting. Such initiative could bring the focus of HRD out of the organizational boundaries. Later, this definition was presented by McLean (2004) as a

cross-national definition of HRD with a slight modification to initiate the NHRD research agenda. This involved more than 15 authors in more than 20 countries' case studies to explore NHRD phenomenon (McLean, Lynham, Azevedo, Lawrence, & Nafukho, 2008). NHRD theory is still premature, and requires further research in different country contexts based on its theory development method used so far.

The prime stimuli that led the new research agenda to emerge, has been the more emphasis on context specific HRD policies and practices rejecting an ethnocentric approach to HRD. The current NHRD literature provides definitions of NHRD (McLean, 2004; Yang, D. Zang, & M. Zang, 2004; Bartlett & Rodgers, 2004; Lynham & Cunningham, 2004; Scotland, 2004; Cooper, 2004; Cox, Arkoubi, & Estrada, 2006; Hasler, Thompson, & Schuler, 2006; Cunningham, Lynham, & Weatherly, 2006); pressures and imperatives to NHRD, alternative NHRD models, importance and challenges of NHRD, attributes of excellent NHRD and its desirable outcomes (Cho & McLean, 2004; Lynham & Cunningham, 2006), theories behind NHRD (Paprock, 2006), country experiences in implementing NHRD (2004 and 2006 NHRD country's case studies), and some debates over the new emergence of NHRD (Wang, 2008; Wang, Korte, & Sun, 2008; Wang & Swanson, 2008a; McLean et al., 2008).

However, in this study, it is believed that whether NHRD is a policy study or a deferent paradigm of HRD, there is evidence (see Appendix 2.1, 2.2, & 2.3 in Pages 287, 293, and 297) for practicing HRD as a national agenda in different country contexts and that it should be studied for new knowledge developments. Besides, in a study carried out after analysing Malaysia's all four national policies and the 10 national plans that covered a period from 1960 to 2015, Devadas, Silong, Ismail, and Crauss (2011) showed that Malaysia has been practicing NHRD using different terminologies from "population, labor force, and man power development" to "human resource development" to "human capital development". This further confirms the validity of this study to systematically investigate the nature of Malaysia's NHRD grounding not only on national plan data but also triangulating them with the interview data and the literature at the later part of the study. It is further argued as stated in Chapter Two that studying about HRD as national policy agenda should recognise the limits imposed by the dominant domain of HRD and be based on the criteria of modern HRD.

Except to the above work, in the Malaysian contexts, NHRD research has not been done with sufficient focus. Some other literature on Human Capital Development (HCD) in Malaysia can be seen (Devadas & Silong, 2010; Silong, Ismail, See, Hassan, Aziz, & Devadas, 2011). Very recently, in the book of *Human Resource Development in Malaysia* (Ismail & Osman-Gani, 2011a), HRD in Malaysia has been placed in its national policy context highlighting the interrelatedness of national policy and HRD practice. Further, in this book, Malaysia's HRD has been discussed in sector-vice such as HRD in public sector, private sector, manufacturing sector, and service sector. Simultaneously, the authors of the book have accepted that "...National Human Resource Development (NHRD) also contributes to the success of organizational HRD" (Ismail & Osman-Gani, 2011b, p. 12), and that "...organizational HRD initiatives should be integrated with the national level HRD initiatives..." (Ismail & Osman-Ganib, 2011b, p. 12). Notably, HCD has been named as an example of national level HRD initiative that happens in many national contexts (Ismail & Osman-Gani, 2011b). However, they have not described NHRD practices within Malaysia in a way to give a holistic understanding of it. Instead, the book is dedicated to generally discussing Malaysia's sector-vice HRD.

Further, some HRD research in the national contexts has focused on various HRD issues. The HRD plans, policies, roles, strategies, and responsibilities have been discussed based on a documentary review by Abdulla, Rose, and Kumar (2007). Globalization and HRD in the public sector have been studied by Yusoff (2003).

HRD in the manufacturing sector also has been investigated by Abdulla (2009); and Abdulla, Rose, and Kumar (2007). Fleming and Søbørg (2010) have examined the institutional support provided by the Malaysian government in skills and human resources development for knowledge intensive production.

Thus, a critical gap can be seen in HRD literature in Malaysia's context and within international HRD literature about the NHRD in Malaysia, although much evidence of the policy initiatives and the practices of Malaysia's NHRD can be seen. Hence, this study is important since the knowledge on NHRD within Malaysia is skeletal. It should be recalled here that the term NHRD has been used within Malaysia's context and HCD in Malaysia has been contemporarily discussed and identified as a national level response to NHRD (Ismail & Osman-Gani, 2011b; Devadas, Silong, Ismail, & Krauss, 2011). However, few questions are still left unanswered: Is the current HCD is equal to Malaysia's NHRD responses or one among others? What are the other areas of Malaysia's national level HRD except HCD? What alternative terms are used for national HRD aside from HCD? Is the scope of Malaysia's national HRD and HCD constant or changing? If it changes how has it been? Has Malaysia's NHRD taken an economic perspective only with HCD? To answer these questions, a holistic understanding of what it is and why it emerges has to be obtained. So that, the questions of how it should be or ought to be in effectively responding to country's national goals can then be resolved.

Statement of Problem

The world today seeks appropriate knowledge as a tool and means to overcome and neutralize the challenges previously stated. Critical knowledge in this regard deals with how to develop people or human resource at individual, group, organizational, community, national, regional, and global levels. HRD is a field of study that provides such knowledge. Yet, it has been shown that HRD, although is capable of resolving the problems within organizational levels, is unable to address the issues beyond the organizational contexts. McLean (2004, p. 269) pointed out that HRD has been traditionally defined "in the context of individuals, the work team, the organization, or the work processes". The outcomes of HRD range between learning and performance within organizational contexts. In bridging this literature gap, NHRD research agenda emerged, aiming at the outcomes that range from economic to humanitarian beyond organizational levels (Paprock, 2006). Based on this distinction, between HRD and NHRD, a series of country-case studies has been done to explore the experiences of different countries with NHRD. However, the still premature NHRD theory encourages new research on NHRD within different country contexts.

Within the selected study context of Malaysia, the need, the importance, and the role of country's national HRD have been widely recognized in the face of its national challenges. Besides, it is evident that NHRD is practiced as a national policy agenda in its national planning and implementation as highlighted in the background of the study. Nevertheless, the limitations of its national level HRD have also been highlighted in its national policy context. However, the literature on Malaysia's NHRD is skeletal within or outside Malaysia. With this identified gap, the research problem set in this study is that "there is no single construct on NHRD within Malaysia to enable the practitioners and scholars to understand the nature of Malaysia's HRD as a national policy agenda".

Therefore, to address the identified problem, the purpose of this grounded case study was to describe and articulate the nature of NHRD within Malaysia enabling a development of a conceptual model for the practitioners and scholars to have an understanding of Malaysia's NHRD which will eventually facilitate to improve the country's HRD practices. The research question of this study, therefore, was set as "which

conceptual model will facilitate, as common knowledge, to describe and understand the nature of NHRD within Malaysia?"

Thus, this research studies the NHRD phenomenon within Malaysia. Case study method using Straussian grounded theory canons and procedures is employed as its research strategy and methodology. Straussian grounded theory presented a paradigm model in studying a nature of phenomenon in question by identifying its macro or structural level conditions, causal level conditions, actions, and interactional strategies, and consequence or outcomes of actions and interactional strategies. This paradigm model guided to establish a priori construct to identify the nature of NHRD in Malaysia as depicted in Figure 2 below.

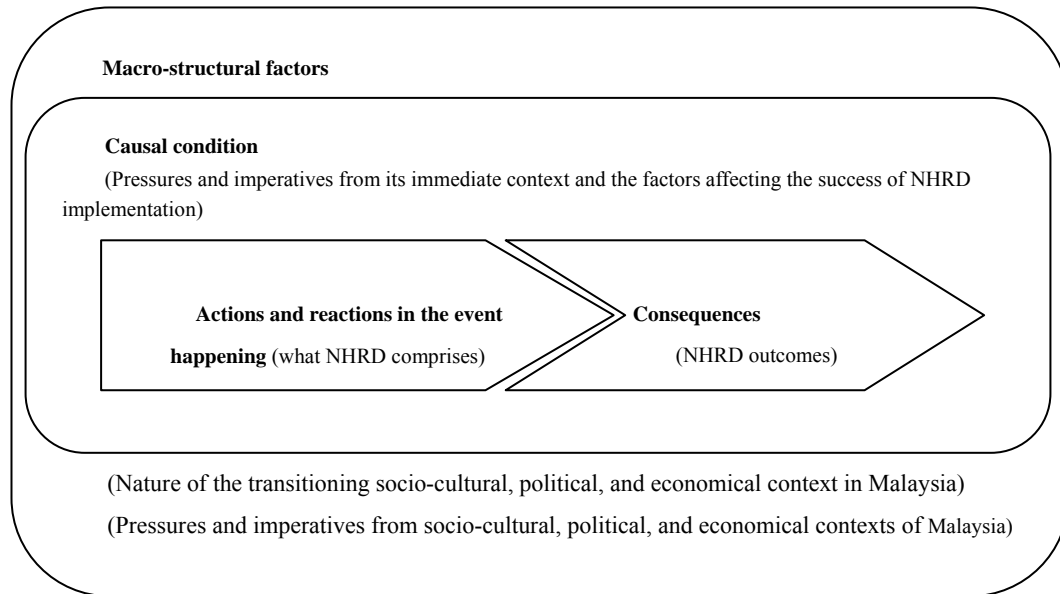


Figure 2. The study construct based on paradigm model.

Thus, this study used three sub research questions pertaining to each component of the study construct as mentioned below:

What comprises NHRD within Malaysia?

The answer for this question was targeted to identify NHRD programs and initiatives as actions and interactional strategies, NHRD outcomes, and the characteristics of NHRD in Malaysia.

Why is NHRD needed in Malaysia?

This question was dedicated to identifying the macro and causal level conditions that have been the pressures and imperatives to NHRD in Malaysia. In other words, the answer for this question describes the causes that pull or push or create the needs for NHRD in Malaysia after a systematic investigation into it.

What are the forces (facilitators and hindrances), and challenges of NHRD implementation within Malaysia?

The answer for this question was related to identify the positive and negative forces of NHRD implementation from a top level strategic planning point of view. Based on the answers generated for all three questions the main research question was resolved by developing a conceptual model for NHRD within Malaysia to enable a better understanding of Malaysia's NHRD among the practitioners and the scholars locally and internationally.

Significance of the Study

The research expectations are organized to show its contribution to knowledge base, implications to policy, and relevance to the practice. As the NHRD research is still developing, this study attempts to add to the body of knowledge of HRD by constructing a comprehensive conceptual model that is necessary to understand the nature and the composition of NHRD in Malaysia. Then this construct of Malaysia's NHRD can be compared and contrasted with the existing NHRD models shown in the literature to confirm them or to develop a unique model for Malaysia's NHRD. Further, this study eventually leads to a series of further studies not only to replicate, verify, and expand the findings of this study but also to give a fresh emphasis on the areas suggested by this study to facilitate NHRD practice in Malaysia.

At the policy level, the key finding of this study that is the new understanding about the nature of NHRD within Malaysia helps to make relevant remedial actions to design a new set of NHRD policies and practices or change or modify the existing NHRD policies and practices or to continue the existing NHRD policies and practices in a better way, in the realization of development goals of Malaysia.

Identifying Malaysia's NHRD model, the factors affecting it, and the context in which NHRD is operating is helpful to the practitioners in the decisions with regard to: the required skills and competencies needed to the NHRD practitioners, and the training and development programs to enhance them for effective planning and implementation of NHRD; appropriate course of actions to be made in facing the NHRD challenges; and the NHRD areas to be made more effective.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

This study focuses only on the national level initiatives of NHRD, as shown in Figure 3, made by the federal government to achieve the national goals and objectives of the country. Thus, the data sources are the national policies and plans, and the key people involved in the development and implementation of such national policies and plans in the EPU and in the relevant ministries in the federal government. The NHRD implementation below the federal government's ministry level is not targeted by this study.

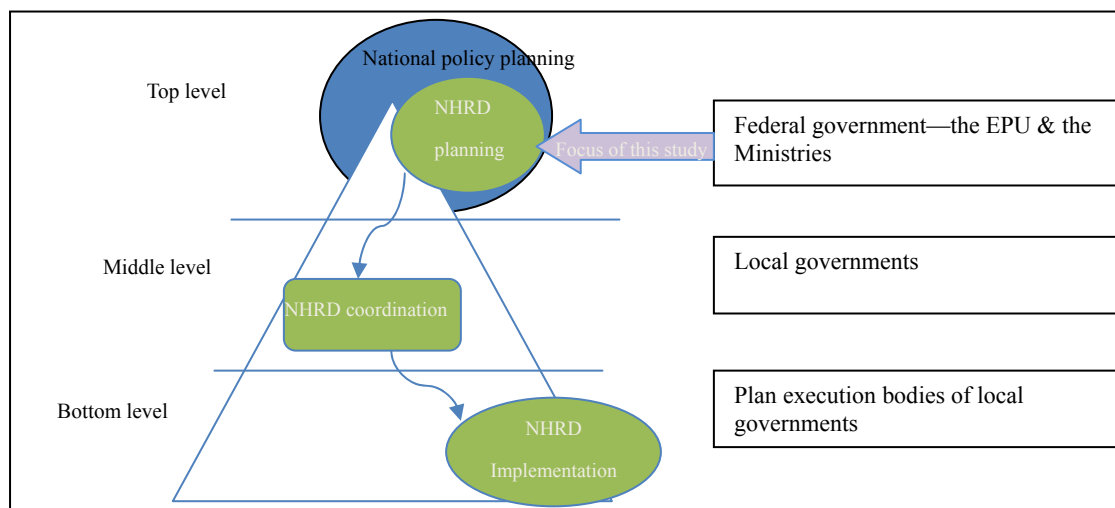


Figure 3. NHRD Planning and Implementation Hierarchy

The national level HRD initiatives planned and initiated by non-governmental (private sector and NGOs) sectors are not considered by this study. This study further does not study the separate HRD practices of each

ministry/agency/institution adopted for their internal workforce. The reason is that such practices do not belong to national HRD, but to organisational HRD. Since the study is descriptive in nature, the study does not explain, in detail, why and how the nature of NHRD in Malaysia has been changed which can be the focus of an explanatory study.

The key people involved in NHRD planning such as prime minister, and other all levels' ministers are not targeted for the interviews unless it is proven possible to access to them due to the time constraints, and the difficulty in getting access to such key personnel. The substantive theory or the model or the conceptualization derived as the outcome of this study can only be generalized to country contexts that are more similar to the contexts of Malaysia. Further, the study does not measure the extent of unachieved NHRD outcomes since ignorance of such gaps does not hide the findings of the study. This study does not conclude with a natural saturation. Instead, it saturates under the research constraints imposed by available time and resources for a PhD study, and by the scope of the study.

Assumptions

It is assumed that the NHRD initiatives taken by the government have been codified in the national plans due to the reason that it pertains to the country's national planning that cannot be in the minds of few people since it needs to be put into action through various people involved. The other aspects of NHRD that are not codified in national plans can also be observable since they represent macroscopic initiatives taken so as to impact the nation.

Conclusion

This study justified a need of studying national HRD as practice in Malaysia in resolving the country's higher level challenges. Delineating the limitations of both Human Development and Human Recourse Development while positioning National HRD as appropriate knowledge claim in aiding the resolution of country's national challenges, this study concludes that: countries face unique challenges that are stimulated at higher levels; such challenges need to be resolved through proper human resource developments; human resource development needs higher level perspectives and that national HRD is plausible to address such challenges; and Malaysia is a worthwhile case to be studied to see Malaysia's national HRD practice in bridging National HRD literature gaps. Thus, this study contributed to NHRD research agenda by preparing a background and a problem statement to stimulate national HRD country case study in Malaysia.

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