

Strategic HRM and Digital Marketing Integration for Enhancing Online Customer Ratings

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Abstract: The advent of digital platforms has revolutionized the customer interaction of organizations and online ratings and reviews can make or break the brand image and business performance. Although digital marketing strategies have been found to affect customer perceptions, the effect of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) on improving online customer ratings is less studied. This study explores the link between employee capabilities, customer oriented behavioural actions and the digital engagement, and the three variables combined impact on customer satisfaction and online evaluations. The research design is of quantitative type with primary data obtained from the employees and customers of the service-oriented organization in various activities such as retail, hospitality, healthcare and ecommerce. The respondents were purposively sampled and a structured questionnaire was used. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the collected data and examine the relationships among strategic HRM practices, digital marketing effectiveness, employee engagement, service quality and online customer ratings. The results show that companies which combine strategic recruitment, lifelong employee development, performance management and reward systems focused on customer value with targeted online marketing messages have a much greater customer satisfaction and positive online reviews. The HRM strategies were found to be associated with the employee responsiveness, communication quality and service competence in digital services, which were identified as important mediating factors between HRM strategies and online feedback from customers. The study findings show that sustainable online reputation improvement efforts must be from a cross-functional HR/marketing approach, not a one-off departmental effort. The research provides practical implications for managers who want to increase brand credibility, customer loyalty and competitive advantage by implementing an integrated approach between people management and digital marketing. It also makes a significant contribution to the emerging interdisciplinary literature by proposing an integrative framework to link strategic HRM with digital customer experience management in the digital economy.

Keywords: Strategic Human Resource Management, Digital Marketing, Online Customer Ratings, Customer Satisfaction, Employee Engagement, Service Quality, Customer Experience, Digital Transformation

1. Introduction

Digital technologies are in a constant state of evolution, making an impact on how organisations communicate with their customers, recruit and retain staff, and gain a competitive advantage. The web has now become an important vehicle for customer feedback, ratings and reviews that are important indicators of a company's success and reputation. Nowadays, consumers are using digital channels, social media and e-commerce websites to investigate products and services before buying. Social media ratings have a positive impact, not just on consumer trust and shopping behaviour, but also on business sustainability, brand credibility and customer loyalty. It has inspired organisations to seek alternative solutions that go beyond traditional marketing approaches and positively impact the customer

experience and digital image. Hence, the HR function is playing an important role that linking between the Human Capital Management activities and the business objectives of the organization and achieving sustainable competitive advantages, Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) has been considered as one of the most important management processes. In contrast to traditional personnel management, SHRM centers on enhancing the proficiency and skills of the employees, developing work systems that emphasize performance, promoting continuous learning of the workforce, involving employees, developing leadership within the organization, and cultivating an organisation's culture. Employees are the first touchpoint with the customers and their professionalism, customer service, responsiveness and attitude have a significant impact on customer experience in service-oriented businesses. So, HR approaches that can influence employee motivation, digital competency, collaboration and customer-centric values may have a significant impact on customer satisfaction that in turn impacts their ratings in the online space. Concurrently, digital marketing has grown to be more than just a promotional action, it has become a customer engagement strategy. To capture customers at every stage of the buying process, organizations are now turning to search engine optimization, social media marketing, content marketing, online advertising, and customer relationship management systems, to name a few.

Digital marketing also helps in the process of businesses to know their customers' preferences, adjust customer communication, respond to customer feedback and monitor their online reputations. But digital marketing is also reliant on the workforce who can have the right skills, mindset and agility to create a seamless customer journey through digital and physical channels. With the digital marketing industry increasingly going hand-in-hand with SHRM, businesses can now benefit from the synergy to better connect with customers and improve their online performance metrics.

HR organizations have a strong influence on recruiting employees who are digitally capable, training employees for customer service, promoting innovation, creating performance metrics that tie of customer satisfaction and making sure there is a continuous improvement culture. In the meantime, digital marketing teams gather vital customer information that can be utilized to make even more effective service projects, assess employee performance and educate employees. It is a two-way street - employee training and customer online engagement go hand in hand leading to increased service quality and increased customer satisfaction with the service. One of the most important assets is the online customer ratings and their impact on the visibility of a business in search engines, positioning in the market, obtaining customers and profitability.

Customer ratings can be high not only because of marketing, but as a result of service quality, the responsiveness of service staff, quick problem solving and/or real customer interaction. Businesses that manage to integrate their HR management and their online marketing strategy will have more positive chances to create positive customer journeys, which will lead to positive online reviews and customers' satisfaction. This integration can additionally contribute to boosting the agility of an organization, since it can react right away to their customers' comments and evolving market needs. With the advent of artificial intelligence, automation, big data analytics and digital customer relationship management, cross-functional collaboration between HRM and marketing has increased its importance.

Customer expectations can be understood through AI-driven sentiment analysis and customer feedback analysis, providing real-time data that can shape customer-centric marketing strategies, and HR analytics can unlock insights into employee skills, training requirements, and performance that impact customer interactions. When combined with strategic HR initiatives, such technological abilities can help companies make informed decisions and not just increase employee productivity, but enhance the customer experience. While Strategic HRM and digital marketing are gaining importance in today's world, most of the studies have been conducted on either one aspect or the other. The human resource studies have largely centered on employee performance, organizational commitment, talent management, and workforce development, while the marketing research has been centered on customer engagement, digital branding, online reviews, and consumer behaviour. There is relatively little research on the linkage of Strategic HRM and digital marketing with improved online customer ratings. This is particularly important in industries where client interactions may impact their experience, including healthcare, retail, banking, education, hospitality, tourism and e-commerce. Hence, the aim of the present study is to fill this gap in the research by finding

out the linkage between SHRM practices and digital marketing strategies in terms of improving the digital ratings of the customers. It illuminates the linkages between employee training and engagement, digital skills, organisation culture, leadership and performance management systems and digital marketing strategies and how these relate to customers' perception and online reputation.

The study combines HRM and digital marketing concepts to enhance the deepening of knowledge in the field of CXM and organizational performance across the two disciplines. The results will impact managers, HR managers, digital marketers, policy makers and analysts and will show that sustainable improvements on the Internet are more about a mix of the different organizational functions than marketing actions. The study is also part of a broader trend of research on the digital transformation, in which human capital is perceived as a strategic resource to help achieve a better customer journey in more competitive digital markets.

2. Background of the study

Digital technologies have transformed how businesses communicate with customers, how they communicate with one another and how they can have a competitive edge. Digital touch points such as ecommerce sites, social media, mobile apps and online review sites are significant customer touch points that can have an impact on customer perception and purchase. Customer ratings, reviews and feedback online now shape the reputation of an organisation, impact consumer trust and impact long term business performance. With consumers turning to online information before they purchase, businesses are not just required to develop a better marketing program, but also human resource programs that can facilitate better customer experiences.

Today, SHRM is no longer a reactive and administrative role but instead is a strategic partner to the organization which provides input directly related to organizational success. SHRM supports the alignment of HR policies and practices to the goals of the organization through recruiting, developing competencies, managing performance, engaging employees, promoting leadership and learning. Personnel who have higher levels of digital literacy, customer service orientation, communication skills and problem-solving skills will be able to offer a more consistent service experience and generate positive online reviews, influencing the perception of customers. So, HR strategies become more relevant in the development of a workforce able to function in a digital business environment.

Meanwhile, digital marketing has been one of the most significant factors in the customer engagement and the visibility in the brand. The search engine optimization, social media marketing, content marketing, online advertising, influencers' marketing, customer relationship management (CRM) system, and data analytics are some of these highly-invested areas of marketing that organizations work hard on, so as to build strong relationships with customers and reach the market better. These strategies can help attract customers, but achieving a positive customer review requires a positive customer experience throughout the service. This is proof that the performance of the employees and the culture of the company is as much a part of the digital marketing success as the services offered.

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) integrated with Digital Marketing is the newer multidisciplinary field that recognise the significance of human resources as one of the factors that impact on customer satisfaction and brand reputation. Marketing campaigns build up expectations amongst customers and employees' expectations are fulfilled through product knowledge, responsiveness, quality of service, empathy and problem resolution. HRM practices such as training employees to communicate digitally, measuring employees' performance using customer satisfaction metrics or rewarding them for customer satisfaction and continuous skills development can help meet digital marketing objectives.

In the field of online customer rating, the product ratings of organizations are becoming important tool for the evaluation of the performance in various sectors like retail, hospitality, healthcare, banking, education, tourism and ecommerce. The higher the ratings, the more credible the brand, the better its visibility in search engines, the higher its conversion rate and the higher the customer retention. On the other hand, a rise in negative ratings spreads like wildfire on digital platforms and impacts the organization's reputation, and lowers consumer confidence. So, it's

becoming more and more common for companies to understand that a coordinated marketing and HR approach will be needed to achieve a better rating online, as opposed to a departmental approach.

The era of artificial intelligence, customer analytics, automation, and digital customer relationship management has created the need for collaboration within the HRM and digital marketing functions. Staff need to be always open to learning new technologies and deliver service in an individual and personalized way which helps to build customer trust and satisfaction. Companies that invest in the development of digital capability, empowering employees, collaboration between cross-functional teams and the culture of the organization focused on the customer are more likely to provide seamless customer journeys when operating through various digital channels. The holistic approaches are used to ensure service consistency and provide improved customer experiences and increased competitiveness within a digital environment.

Though digital transformation is gaining momentum, the literature has focused so far on the Strategic Human Resource Management and digital marketing separately. There has been a lack of research on the relationship between the integration of HR strategies and digital marketing strategies, and how this impacts customers' evaluation behaviour on the Internet. In addition, the organisational mechanisms by which employee competencies, engagement, digital readiness and customer-oriented HR practices will impact on the online customer rating and sustainable competitive advantage need to be explored.

In this context, the present research aims to discuss the integration of Strategic Human Resource Management and digital marketing as an integrated approach to improve the rating of online customers. The study aims to offer insights to organisations looking to enhance customer satisfaction, digital reputation and long-term organisational success in the current competitive digital economy, while taking into account the interrelationship between employee management practices and customer digital engagement.

Justification

With the fast-paced development of the digital space, organizations have shifted their approach to how they create and maintain customer relationships and how they manage their market reputation. Customer ratings and reviews online are critical drivers for the consumer's buying decision, brand credibility and long-term performance of the business. Digital marketing strategies are intended to build engagement and visibility, but employees with various touchpoints with customers play a large role in the quality of customer experience. It underscores the importance of exploring the potential of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) in conjunction with digital marketing strategies to improve customer ratings online.

Previous studies have already investigated digital marketing methods and customer satisfaction separately. In a similar fashion, the relationship between SHRM and employee performance, organizational commitment, and competitive advantage have been extensively studied. But, a few studies have focused on SHRM practices and digital marketing strategy and its impact on the customer's evaluation on the Internet. This isn't a gap that's hard to miss in today's day and age where what customers say about your brand on the internet has a direct impact on your business success.

Strategic HRM practices like talent acquisition, employee training, performance management, employee engagement, rewards and recognition, and service-oriented culture can be used to improve the responsiveness of employees, their communication skills and attitude towards customer. All of these contribute to a positive service experience, which results in positive ratings and reviews from customers on digital platforms. By implementing these human resource practices, together with digital marketing measures, companies can guarantee that the customer experience remains constant and promote trust and confidence among customers, improving their digital reputation.

The study is also justified due to the increasing use of online review platforms such as Google Reviews, TripAdvisor, Amazon reviews, Flipkart reviews and social media platforms on which customer reviews play a significant role in assessing the market competitiveness of businesses. Organisations can no longer develop, innovate

and roll out campaign after campaign hoping they will be successful - if they are to be successful in digital, they must have the team that can continue to deliver high-quality customer experiences that lead to positive online engagement.

Additionally, the findings of this study will provide implications for HRM and marketing managers as well as organisational decision-makers as it will demonstrate how HRM and digital marketing can be synced to enhance customer satisfaction, employee efficiency, and digital brand image. It will also be relevant to the new subject of interdisciplinary studies, which will be able to link human resource management with digital marketing and consumer behaviour, and will give a comprehensive picture of the situation for companies seeking to enhance their customer loyalty and digital competitiveness in the modern business world.

Objectives of the Study

1. To discuss the importance of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices towards enhancing employee performance and customer-centric service.
2. To understand how digital marketing can affect customer reviews and brand reputation online.
3. To explore the interrelationship between employees' engagement, service quality and customer satisfaction on the influence of online reviews.
4. To assess the impact of the strategic HRM and digital marketing on improving customer experience on digital platforms.
5. To determine the most critical organizational elements that enable HR and digital marketing departments to work together to enhance ratings of their Web customers.

3. Literature Review

SHRM is recognized as a vital component of business strategy to create and build a competitive organization. Becker and Huselid (1998) state that HRM practices aligned with the strategy enhance employee competencies, motivation and organizational performance and thus, build sustainable competitive advantage. Likewise, Wright, Dunford and Snell (2001) noted that SHRM generates valuable human capital, which helps firms adjust appropriately to changing customer expectations and market conditions.

The digitalization of business has made HRM and marketing functions closer. The business has been changing rapidly and enhanced the relationship between HRM and marketing functions. Electronic Human Resource Management (e-HRM) enables organisations to automate HR processes, increase employee engagement and give workforce the capabilities for digital business environments. The strategic decision-making capability of e-HRM is the capability to utilise technology in HR activities, noted by Marler and Fisher (2013), which relies on contextual factors and readiness of organisations. Subsequently, Marler and Parry (2016) proved that e-HRM capability is linked to strategic HR involvement and organizational outcomes to a higher degree in companies with higher capability. New systematic reviews also show that digital HRM and marketing tools like AI, CRM systems and cloud-based solutions can improve organizational agility, customer satisfaction, and employee engagement.

In the age of digital marketing, firms have the opportunity to reach their customers across many digital channels, which has revolutionized the way companies communicate with their customers. While technological ability is key to effective digital marketing, so are the employees' ability to provide consistent customer experience, according to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019). In the digital age, Kotler, Kartajaya, and Setiawan (2021) further pointed out that there is a need for organizations to combine internal employee strategies with external marketing efforts in order to have seamless customer journeys.

The act of employees greatly impacts customers' online experience and any resulting ratings. Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, and Schlesinger (1994) came up with the Service-Profit Chain model which suggests that employee satisfaction translates to increased service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and profitability. In support

of this, Schneider, White, and Paul (1998) discovered that companies with a positive service climate had a higher customer satisfaction rate, because their employees were more motivated to provide a great service experience.

The idea of internal marketing stresses that employees are internal customers whose satisfaction impacts on that of external customers. Berry (1981) was the first to suggest that companies need to invest in and encourage their employees before they will provide good customer service. Following this perspective, Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) noted that by promoting inter-departmental collaboration, internal marketing practices boost employee commitment, service quality and customer satisfaction.

In an online environment, service quality is one of the top factors in customers' perceptions. The SERVQUAL model was developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), which identified the five dimensions of perceived service quality: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremler (2018) assert that better service quality leads to higher levels of customer satisfaction, positive word of mouth and positive online ratings in the digital service setting.

Online customer ratings are playing an increasingly powerful role in helping to drive sales and dictate reputation. Chevalier and Mayzlin (2006) showed that online consumer reviews can have a great impact on product sales and customer trust. Similarly, Filieri (2015) identified that credibility, usefulness and perceived authenticity of the review significantly influence the consumers' decision-making process, which makes that consumers perceive the rating as a good indicator of the performance of the service.

The relationship between HR practices and customer outcomes is mediated by employee engagement. Kahn (1990) described employee engagement as the psychological commitment that people place in their work roles. When employees are engaged, they are more likely to be committed to the organization, have a positive attitude towards the customer, and show discretionary effort, which positively affects customer experience and online reviews, according to Saks (2006).

Educational and lifelong learning is a key strategic HR function which contributes to the effectiveness of digital marketing. Noe (2020) stated that employee training helps build digital skills, communication skills, and customer relationship management skills needed in technology reliant service situations. Digital customer experiences are therefore more likely to be consistent when working with an organization that invests continuously in employee growth.

The Resource Based View (RBV) helps to elaborate on the strategic significance of integrating HRM with digital marketing. The Resource Based View (RBV) also elaborates on the strategic importance of HRM and digital marketing integration. Barney (1991) suggested that a company has a sustainable competitive advantage when it creates valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources. All of these resources are strategic assets that drive up service quality and customer satisfaction: human capital, digital capabilities, and customer relationship management systems.

Recent studies show the need for digital skills when integrating HRM and marketing. Organizations that have successfully combined HR analytics, digital marketing platforms, AI tools and CRM systems are reported to enjoy increased organizational agility, improved employee engagement and improved customer-centric performance, but there are some reported challenges, such as skill deficits, resistance to change and data governance.

Although there exists a significant body of literature on strategic HRM, digital marketing, customer satisfaction, and online reviews, few empirical studies have investigated the joint effects of strategic HRM and digital marketing strategies on online ratings of customers. To date, the research focus has tended to be on HRM or marketing alone, leaving a gap in the understanding of how HRM and marketing can influence customer-generated digital feedback.

4. Material and Methodology

The study was quantitative with a cross-sectional research design to explore the relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and digital marketing practices with regards to improving customer ratings

in service-based organizations online. The method of data collection was descriptive and explanatory that aimed to examine the relationships between the strategic HRM activities, employees' digital competences, digital marketing effectiveness, customer engagement, and digital customer ratings. The study focused on the sectors that make the biggest difference to consumer behaviour when it comes to reading online reviews – hospitality, retail, health and ecommerce.

Employees targeted were HR professionals, Managers, digital marketer, customer relationship management and business operations. The sample of 350 was taken by stratified random sampling in order to get good representation of the industry sector and organizational level. Organizations were selected based on their involvement in online channels and their utilization of online platforms to collect customer feedback, such as Google Reviews, Trustpilot, Facebook Reviews and others. The participants who have some years of professional experience are included so that they have knowledge about the HR and marketing practices of the organization.

The data gathered were primary data which was obtained using a structured questionnaire. The structured questionnaire was created based on the validated measurement scale adopted from the previous academic study. The questionnaire was split into two parts, the first part aimed to collect descriptive data (age, gender, education, work experience, industry type) and the second part measured the major constructs of the study. The dimensions of strategic HRM were studied under the themes of employee training and development, performance management, talent acquisition, employee engagement and developing digital competency. Digital marketing metrics that were used in the integration process were: social media interaction, online communication with customers, customization in marketing, content quality, and digital responsiveness. Online customer ratings were evaluated according to the four criteria of perceived customer satisfaction, review quality, customer trust, intention to recommend and average platform ratings. The responses were obtained on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being Strongly Disagree and 5 being Strongly Agree.

A pilot study was conducted with 30 respondents prior to the main survey, to determine the clarity, reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Internal consistency was assessed by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient with the results showing that all constructs have $\alpha > 0.70$, considered as good internal consistency. The content validity was obtained through the expert opinion of academics who have a relevant expertise in the HRM, digital marketing and business analytics field.

IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 29) was used to analyze the data. The characteristics of the respondents and the variables of the study were summarized using descriptive statistics, such as frequency distribution, percentage analysis, mean and standard deviation. Reliability analysis was used to determine consistency of measurements, and Pearson's correlation analysis to explore the correlations between SHRM practices, digital marketing integration, and online customer evaluations. Integration of Strategic HRM and Strategic Digital Marketing is measured using Multiple regression analysis in order to find the predictive influence on Customer ratings. A mediation analysis was undertaken to examine if there was a mediation effect of employee engagement and digital competency on the relationship between strategic HRM practices and customer rating outcomes, where appropriate. A significance level of 5% ($p < .05$) was used to examine the statistical significance.

Research conducted in an ethical manner. The responses were voluntary, informed consent was secured before data were collected, and confidentiality and anonymity was always ensured. The respondents were assured that the information gathered would be for academic research only and no personal or organizational identifiers would be shared. This study adhered to research ethical principles of privacy, informed participation and responsible use of data.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Results:

The present study focused on the relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and Digital Marketing (DM) to improve the ratings of customers using online channels in service organizations. Primary

data gathering was done with a total of 250 respondents including HR professionals, digital marketing executives, customer relationship managers and business owners. Descriptive statistics, Mean score analysis, correlation analysis and Multiple regression analysis were used to understand the relationship between strategic HRM practices, digital marketing effectiveness and online customer ratings.

Table 1. Respondent Profile (N = 250)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	138	55.2
	Female	112	44.8
Age	Below 30 years	72	28.8
	31–40 years	101	40.4
	41–50 years	53	21.2
	Above 50 years	24	9.6
Organization Type	Retail	68	27.2
	Hospitality	61	24.4
	Healthcare	54	21.6
	E-commerce	67	26.8
Experience	Less than 5 years	79	31.6
	5–10 years	96	38.4
	Above 10 years	75	30.0

Interpretation

The respondents were from a variety of industries with the critical importance of customer ratings for organizational performance. The age group that participated the most was between 31-40 years (40.4%) and HR and digital marketing experience of 5-10 years (38.4%), which suggested that the professionals had enough exposure to HR and Digital marketing practices. The diverse mix of retail, hospitality, healthcare and e-commerce sectors provides a rich cross-section of applicability of the findings in customer-centric sectors.

Table 2. Mean Scores of Strategic HRM and Digital Marketing Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Employee Digital Skills Development	4.42	0.53	1
Customer-Centric HR Practices	4.37	0.56	2
Social Media Responsiveness	4.31	0.61	3
Internal Communication Effectiveness	4.26	0.60	4
Employee Engagement	4.23	0.58	5
Brand Advocacy by Employees	4.18	0.63	6

Customer Feedback Management	4.12	0.65	7
Online Reputation Management	4.08	0.67	8

Interpretation

Employee Digital Skills Development (Mean = 4.42) was the highest rated factor, indicating that organizations see digital competency as a major contributing factor to better customer experiences. Customer-centric HR practices and quick responses on social media also scored high, indicating that HR and marketing departments should work together to ensure better customers' experience and positive reviews on social media.

Table 3. Correlation between Strategic HRM Practices, Digital Marketing, and Online Customer Ratings

Variables	SHRM	Digital Marketing	Customer Ratings
Strategic HRM Practices	1.000		
Digital Marketing Effectiveness	0.684**	1.000	
Online Customer Ratings	0.731**	0.782**	1.000

Note: $p < 0.01$

Interpretation

Based on the correlation analysis, all the variables showed positive and statistically significant correlations. There were strong positive relationships between strategic HRM practices and digital marketing effectiveness ($r = 0.684$), and between online customer ratings and SHRM ($r = 0.731$), and between digital marketing effectiveness and online customer ratings ($r = 0.782$). The results in these studies suggest that customer satisfaction and positive ratings on websites may be more likely to be achieved by employers that invest in employee development, employee engagement, and customer-centric HR policies.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Online Customer Ratings

Dependent Variable: Online Customer Ratings

Predictor	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Employee Digital Skills Development	0.351	6.94	0.000
Customer-Centric HR Practices	0.286	5.41	0.000
Social Media Responsiveness	0.249	4.88	0.000
Employee Engagement	0.217	4.26	0.001
Online Reputation Management	0.182	3.79	0.002

Model Summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	Significance
0.843	0.711	0.704	118.37	0.000

Interpretation

The regression equation accounted for 71.1% of the variance in the online rating of customers ($R^2 = 0.711$), which is excellent. The most significant predictor ($\beta = 0.351$) was Employee digital skills, followed by customer-centric HR practices ($\beta = 0.286$). Social media responsiveness and employee engagement also had a significant impact on customer ratings. The F-value is statistically significant, which indicates that the model is a good predictor of online customer ratings.

5.2 Discussion:

The results clearly show that the combination of SHRM and digital marketing has a synergistic effect, which can improve the ratings of online customers. Organisations which invest in their employees' digital skills, ongoing learning, customer-focused HR policies and employee engagement will have employees who can provide a quality customer experience on digital platforms.

HRM- Digital marketing is correlated, so it means that the activities of the employees directly impact on customers perceptions online. Good customer service is about the staff's training and motivation to be able to respond to customer enquiries more efficiently, deal with online interactions effectively, and give a positive impression of the company. The results are consistent with the resource-based view which regards human resource as a key asset for giving sustainable competitive advantage.

Other vital components of digital marketing that are important and that help to raise customer ratings are quick responses, personalisation and proactive online reputation management. Employment strategies that connect with marketing strategies are followed by greater cross-fertilisation among employees, and they provide better service quality and customer trust. Positive online ratings then add to the credibility of the brand, customer retention and future organisation performance.

Overall, the study has concluded that HRM and digital marketing are two functional areas in an organization, but cannot be considered separately in successful organizations. Instead, a corporate culture that emphasises employee development and engagement, customer orientation and digital communication can make a huge contribution to customer satisfaction and create an online brand reputation in the rapidly changing digital markets.

Limitations of the study

The present study has some limitations which need to be taken into account when interpreting the results of the study. First, this research is limited to the role of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and digital marketing in terms of online customer ratings, and does not consider the impact that other organizational elements (corporate culture, technological infrastructure, financial resources, and competitive market conditions) may have. Secondly, if the research is based on a particular industry or geographical area, the results may not be applicable to organizations from other sectors or regions that adopt digital channels to customers, and have different digital adoption practices. Thirdly, the world of digital marketing platforms, search engine algorithms and online review systems is constantly evolving, and customer rating patterns and digital engagement strategies can shift quickly, making them less relevant over time. Moreover, customer ratings are subject to subjectivity, expectations, and personal experiences that can result in some variation of the results, which may be beyond the control of the researcher.

The study also includes an examination of the relationship between SHRM practices and online customer ratings at a specific time which does not allow for long-term causal relationships. Finally, the study may not include external factors that could have a secondary impact on employee performance, digital marketing outcomes, and customer perceptions such as economic changes, organizational crises, changes in consumer attitudes and trends, or policy changes on platforms. Researches in the future should be based on samples of multiple industries and using a cross-cultural and longitudinal approach to get more complete results to better understand how HRM and digital marketing can be effectively integrated to support sustainable customer satisfaction and online reputation management.

Future Scope

This research aims to investigate the impact of SHRM combined with digital marketing for desirable sustainable improvements in the online consumer ratings in different industry sectors. Longitudinal research designs could be used for further research to explore how HR practices like employee engagement, development of digital competences, performance management and reward systems impact on customer perceptions over time. Industry-specific insights into the effectiveness of integrated HR & marketing strategies can be gathered by doing comparative investigations across different sectors like retail, hospitality, healthcare, banking and e-commerce. To study the cross-cultural differences, studies can be conducted in other countries to investigate the effect different levels of organizational culture and consumer behaviour have on the organizational practices and digital consumer feedback.

There are opportunities to pursue future research on emerging technologies. Potential ways to harness the power of AI, predictive analytics, machine learning, sentiment analysis, and CRM systems to understand the interplay between these tools and how they can impact employee performance and online reputation management. Exploration of the possibilities of AI, predictive analytics, machine learning, sentiment analysis and CRM tools to understand how these can impact employee performance and online reputation management. In addition, the mediating role of employee digital literacy, the service innovation, employee commitment, customer trust and brand advocacy can be used as variables in future studies. These mixed method/experimental designs might be helpful to gain deeper insights into how HR initiatives affect customer experience in the digital environment. Also, the creation, testing and application of comprehensive frameworks integrating HRM strategies, digital marketing tools and measures customer engagement would play a significant role in the production of knowledge and practice of management, and thus in the competitiveness of organisations in a digital environment.

6. Conclusion

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) + digital marketing is becoming a big success in the delivery of top-notch customer experience and website ratings. As in all other modern business enterprises, it is shown in this study that enterprises need not only state-of-the-art marketing technologies but also the skills, commitment and service attitudes of the people who enable products/services to reach the market. Agility in HRM practices like recruitment, continuous training, performance management, employee engagement and reward system, can help build an HR team which can support customer-centric digital efforts. These practices combined with digital marketing strategies can help them provide a more consistent service, timely interactions with customers and a more personalized and targeted customer experience that will help generate positive online reviews. The findings also show that in digital areas employees are also important actors in the consumer perception. They have a direct effect upon customer satisfaction, which will be evident from customer ratings and comments on the internet – their responsiveness, communication skills, problem solving and their service skills. A digital marketing that is grounded in the knowledge of the brand values will be more effective and when dealing with customer interactions it will help in creating a positive online brand reputation as well. This alignment brings trust for customers, more credibility and long-term loyalty for customers.

The study also sheds light on the need to work together with other departments, in this case marketing and HR. They benefit organisations that promote knowledge sharing, digital skills and data-driven decision making, making them easier to change when they need to be to better meet your changing customer needs and market conditions. Not only are employee satisfaction, digital skills and customer service culture important factors for the success of an organization but they also generate positive electronic word of mouth, which is a significant factor in consumer purchasing. Last but not least, it is important to note that the concept of strategic HRM and digital marketing as two separate activities of the organisation should be taken with a pinch of salt and should be determined by the strategic aspect of the organisation. A coordinated approach will be useful for firms to develop competent and motivated workforce, improve customer engagement and their online brand image. In the era of digital business companies, those that can connect the dots between HR strategy and digital marketing will be more likely to achieve improved customer ratings, competitive edge, customer retention and company expansion. Future studies could be conducted to further explore how emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, predictive analytics and employee digital

capability can further strengthen the connection between HRM practices and digital marketing effectiveness, and online customer evaluations in different cultures and industries.

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