Deploying HR-bot in e-HRM for elevated employee experience: Case study in Manipal hospitals

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Deploying HR-Bot in e-HRM for Elevated Employee Experience: Case Study in Manipal Hospitals

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Abstract: Automating processes with artificial intelligence (AI), chatbots, and other technological innovations have created new opportunities. We examined the deployment of an HR (Human Resource) Bot in the modern HR context, along with its immediate causes and implications. Case-based analysis of Manipal hospitals is the research philosophy employed in the study. The current exploratory study relies on secondary data. The study's findings demonstrate the enhancement of employee experience by using AI-based HR bots. Future researchers may include quantitative testing of the proposed design of a pleasant employee experience.

Keywords: HR-Bot, case study, Manipal Hospitals, Chatbot

1. INTRODUCTION

The "Fourth Industrial Revolution," sometimes referred to as "Business 4.0," ushers in several extraordinarily potent and highly innovative technologies, many of which have the potential to transform the ways of doing work. The development of new technologies, from robotic process automation (RPA) and chatbots to more complex ones like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, provides businesses with new opportunities. In many cases, this is done by simply streamlining procedures and tasks humans previously did manually [1].

Support functions are under increasing pressure to provide value, manage complexity, and cut costs as advanced industrial enterprises expand. Many firms have already used traditional strategies like outsourcing, offshore, and centralization to their total capacity. Today's executives rely on automation and digital solutions to boost efficiency and cut expenses in finance, human resources, and information technology (IT) [2].

As expectations change, HR must undergo its tech-enabled transformation. There are countless options. By assisting with transactional tasks like time tracking, payroll, and record keeping, bots can serve as the HR department's "third arm." Algorithm-based technologies have a vast range of applications in processes like talent sourcing. In the meantime, benefits administration and record-keeping tasks that HR service centers formerly handled are starting to be managed by conversational AI platforms like chatbots and cognitive agents. Such systems work with human workers and offer round-the-clock coverage of IT [2].

Thanks to today's more innovative, quicker, and less expensive technology, support services are about to transform, and they will do so without the protracted suffering typically associated with more established tech programmes like enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems. Past research from other sectors suggests that organizations can make long-term savings of more than 30% in IT while saving 5–10% on costs in as little as 18–24 months [2].

1.1 THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The rationale behind conducting a study on the role of HR chatbots in an organization lies in the growing shift towards artificial intelligence and chatbots across the globe. The justification for choosing India for the study is that the Indian economy, with its sound fundamentals, is ready to dominate on the global map in the 21st century. As per World Economic Outlook Database, April 2022, India's economy is the third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP) and the fifth-largest by nominal GDP. India ranks...
128th by nominal GDP and 142nd by nominal GDP in per capita income, respectively, as per International Monetary Fund records [3].

The rationale behind choosing the healthcare sector was that this sector had grown to be one of the biggest in India in terms of income and employment. According to Niti Aayog, hospitals comprise over 80% of India's healthcare market. The hospital sector had a 2016–17 market value of $61.79 billion and appears to increase at a CAGR of 16 and 17 percent to reach $132 billion by 2023 [4].

There has yet to be any research on the organisational aspects that can help or hurt the creation and use of chatbots for customer care. Additionally, more information is needed about how the use of chatbots affects organisations. In a recent assessment of the literature, Syvanen and Valentini [5] found a need for more studies on organisational Meso-level or societal macro-level chatbots. They concluded that contemporary research focused on a micro-level understanding of chatbots. By examining some of the upcoming uncertainties surrounding the introduction of chatbots for HR services, this study set intended to address the existing gap in knowledge.

1.2 RELEVANCE OF CONTEXT

Although we conducted the study on HR-bot, similar studies can be conducted on bots used in other business functions. Artificial intelligence (AI) technology is a mega-trend in 2018 and appears to be a crucial component of every major corporation in the future [6]. Artificial intelligence (AI) technology can carry out tasks that typically need human intelligence. Studying the enhancing role of HR-chatbot can lead organizations to organizational growth and productivity. As stated, most research into chatbots focuses on various chatbot adoption measurements, but no researcher has made a deep pragmatic study on a sample organization. Studying AI-based chatbots is significant as employees' roles have changed with the advent of chatbots and other AI-based gadgets [7].

Chatbot use will increase from 15% in 2018 to 70% of all customer contacts globally in 2022, according to Gartner [8]. We are unaware of any research on the organisational aspects that can assist or interfere with creating and using chatbots for HR purposes.

The case rationale for focusing on the study was to find solutions implemented by a sample company that always focused on fulfilling customer needs through high-quality experiences. To the researchers' best knowledge, there needs to be a thorough analysis of challenges and factors influencing the usage of chatbots in the HRM field; organizations adopted innovative strategies. For the sample organization, employee satisfaction is as important as customer experience.

1.3 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The research objective of the study is to explore how e-HRM based on HR-Bots can enhance employee experience in the changed business scenario.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

The idea of customer experience gave rise to the concept of employee experience. Maylett and Wride [9] contend that "to develop a sustained, world-class customer experience, a firm must first create a sustainable, world-class Employee Experience." Morgan [10] makes it quite evident in his book that a thorough organisational redesign is necessary to focus on the employee experience. According to his suggestion, the first stage is to care about the requirements of the employees sincerely [10]. The term "employee experience" describes how an employee feels about his encounters with the company he works for as a whole [11].

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A Chatbot (CB), developed on AI-based technology, allows users to converse intelligently with it [13]. As was previously said, CB is not a new technology; the creation of one of the first CB ELIZAs took place in the early 1960s [14]. When ELIZA tried to impersonate a therapist, she used pattern
matching and a template-based response system [15]. But the emergence of CB has accelerated recently, and popular chatbots include Apple's Siri and Amazon's Alexa [16]. Computer programmes may converse with users in natural language through chatbot technology [17]. Chatbot refers to automated advice givers that may "postulate and scrutinise solutions while engaging [their human user] in the decision-making phase" [18, p.26].

2. RESEARCH METHODS

Researchers consider the integrative literature review method since earlier researchers have widely used it to summarise research works related to a concept [19] and produce novel information about evolving topics [20, p. 356].

2.1 CASE STUDY METHOD

Research questions, theoretical claims, analytical units, logic connecting the facts to these claims, and standards for judging these claims are the five main parts of a case study [21]. We developed the case study after gathering data from the literature. We have selected Manipal Hospitals as the unit of analysis in this case study.

2.2 CONTEXT OF STUDY

We looked at leading businesses pioneering digital transformation when choosing the sample corporations. Multi-specialty hospitals in India are part of the Manipal Hospitals franchise. The Kasturba Medical College, established by T. M. A. Pai in 1953, is the institution's foundation.

As per Manipal Hospitals-Overview [22], Manipal Hospital is one of India's top multi-specialty hospitals serving domestic and foreign patients. A pioneer in education and healthcare, Manipal Hospitals Ltd is a member of the Manipal Education and Medical Group (MEMG). Manipal Hospitals are India's second-largest hospital chain, comprising 27 facilities across 15 cities. They have a variety of organizations that ensure proper operation, efficient management, and general patient happiness to run such a vast network of hospitals. The Manipal Group has expanded into the hospital, healthcare, and educational sectors under Pai's direction. Manipal Hospitals, established in 1991, is one of India's top healthcare organizations, operating a network of over 15 hospitals and six medical schools.

2.3 BACKGROUND

According to Dilip Jose, CEO of Manipal Hospitals, 1.4 billion people are living in India [22]. "One of the fastest-growing populations exists in our senior population, and over the past 30 or 40 years, non-communicable illness events have increased significantly. Accessibility and affordability have improved at the same time. A rising number of foreign visitors also come to the nation primarily because India offers a cheaper alternative. In light of this, if you examine these factors more closely, they are all quite long-lasting. The agreements are for the following twenty to thirty years, so the outbreak should allow us to accomplish our strategic objective of growing”.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 CHALLENGES FACED BY MANIPAL HOSPITALS

Manipal Hospitals were facing the following numerous challenges in the FY 2020-21-

3.1.1 TEDIOUS EMPLOYEE INTERACTIONS

The high-frequency employee interactions bogged down HR personnel in Manipal Hospitals.
3.1.2  RAPID GROWTH OF MANIPAL HOSPITALS

Manipal Hospitals Bangalore, old airport road was established in 1991; Manipal Northside Hospital Bangalore, Malleshwaram in 1993; Manipal Hospitals Goa in 1994; Manipal Hospitals Mangalore in 1997; Manipal Hospitals, Vijaywada in 2006; Manipal Hospitals Salem in 2007, Dr. Malathi Manipal Hospital Bangalore Jayanagar in 2008, Manipal Hospital Jaipur in 2014, Manipal Hospital Whitefield in 2016, and super specialty tertiary care in Dwarka Delhi in 2018. Manipal Hospitals joined Columbia Asia, an international healthcare group, in 2021 [22].

Manipal’s competitors have yet to adopt the aggressive strategy of snatching up the competition that it has. As per Jose, CEO of Manipal Hospitals, interview [25], “I believe that we expanded the fastest over the past year. It is better to close geographic gaps now rather than later, and we think it is optional if finance and financing are not major concerns. We don’t have to relax and say, I’ve already made two or three acquisitions; let me wait another two years before we look at anything else, even today.”

In the summer of 2020, Ranjan Pai, chairman of Manipal Education and Medical Group (MEMG), was fighting two battles. On the one hand, he was trying to limit the effects of a national lockdown on his hospital chain, Manipal Hospitals. Conversely, Ranjan Pai, the 48-year-old billionaire entrepreneur, was trying to salvage a big-ticket acquisition to kickstart his long-held dream of a pan-India hospital chain [25].

“Manipal [Hospitals] has demonstrated a track record of good governance, strong management, growth, and value creation. We are pleased to invest in Manipal when the group expands significantly from a regionally important healthcare company to a pan-India chain,” says Sujoy Bose [25], Managing Director and CEO of the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF).

3.2  SOLUTIONS RELATED TO CHALLENGES

Employee experience is one strategy that finds utility to fulfill the role of a strategic partner and handle internal and external concerns [9, 10, and 11]. Because it seeks to give employees the best experience possible while they are at work, employee experience, in its intended comprehensive form, may bring practical solutions to a range of business problems. So, it might be an excellent new strategic approach to managing people [24]. Since the pandemic, digitization has accelerated significantly. Across industries, numerous large and small businesses have automated their HR procedures. Manipal Hospitals have also started moving towards this goal. This hospital and healthcare chain introduced an Artificial Intelligence (AI) based chatbot called the MiPAL Intelligent Bot on 24 Dec 2021.

The company’s goal to take a forward-thinking tack to provide a better work experience led to MiPAL. The chatbot will assist Manipal Hospitals’ 12,000 on-roll staff in finding solutions to all their HR-related issues, problems, or questions, including those regarding pay, leaves, and medi-claim [23].

Partha Das, Chief People Officer, Manipal Hospitals, discloses numerous chatbot characteristics and operational details in a conversation with HR Katha. For all employee questions relating to HR, MiPal is the go-to resource. It will now save a lot of time for employees because they don’t need to email HR or call them with specific questions, says Das [23].

4. RESULTS

Common acclamation and recognition boost employee morale and drive. Even though Manipal Hospitals have started using MiPal recently, Manipal Hospitals’ staff members have shown good reactions to it. The workers’ initial response has been reasonably positive. 52% of the staff has already downloaded the programme, and many have expressed interest, claims Das [23].

5. DISCUSSION

HR-bots came out with the following inherent advantages in meeting the challenges of the organizations-
5.1 EASE OF ACCESS

The chatbot includes an application the staff can download on their desktops and smartphones. Employees can use this app to ask the HR team any inquiry, and the bot will respond immediately. The application also has internal capabilities to address any additional inquiries workers may have regarding HR guidelines [23].

5.2 EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

Organizations must provide the proper solution to satisfy the worker. Chatbots, on the other hand, can only provide employees with the practical solutions they need with AI. A chatbot has the potential to raise employee satisfaction when appropriately implemented significantly. Chatbots can help businesses reduce staff churn and enhance the working environment leading to employee satisfaction [23].

5.3 WIDESPREAD DEPLOYMENT

Integration of chatbot automation devices into the Manipal Hospitals' already-deployed HRMS platform began in mid-2021, and it took some time. On December 24, 2021, Manipal Hospital successfully launched MiPal. The network of hospitals had to adapt the technology following labour requirements before introducing the AI chatbot. Adapting various algorithms to produce relevant results for different demands was necessary since some questions or queries required a specific type of response [23].

5.4 COST SAVING

Organizations could believe investing in this technology for a business will be expensive. Deploying chatbots could require a certain amount of investment spending. In contrast to hiring people and having them communicate with clients, this cost is lower [23].

5.5 EASE IN CONDUCTING SURVEYS

HR will utilize MiPal to perform employee engagement and satisfaction surveys and respond to the employees' typical questions and concerns. MiPAL will conduct employee engagement and satisfaction surveys and respond to staff questions from the hospital chain. Since the organization will gather the information immediately via an internal system, this will aid the business in gathering and producing facts and insights. According to Das, this will prevent HR from spending money on external suppliers to conduct surveys [23]. Therefore, chatbots find utility in Quick Data Collection and Analysis.

5.6 ASSISTANCE IN MAKING STRATEGIC DECISIONS

Das, Chief People Officer, Manipal Hospitals, mentions, 'In addition to the surveys, significant real-time insights and data obtained during interaction with the bot will assist us in building and filtering HR strategies [23]. People want instant gratification, which a chatbot can provide for your frequently asked questions.' As stated earlier by Das, Manipal Hospitals’ HR team invested a significant amount of time responding to employee questions, which was more of a transactional role for the team. The HR staff will get more time to focus on the strategic planning related to HR functions and substantially contribute to the business's expansion after implementing MiPal. According to Das [23], strategic decision-making in the organization will now benefit more from HR.

In addition to the 12,000-regular staff, Manipal Hospitals also employs roughly 6000 doctors on a contractual basis. Das informs HR Katha [23] that the Manipal Hospital will introduce an AI-based chatbot to its doctors during the project's second phase. According to Das, doctors will still find a use for the AI chatbot even if they mostly use it for meeting their functional requirements instead of HR-linked inquiries [23].
6. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Organizational characteristics that affect the use of chatbots also affect innovation more broadly. The findings thus far are consistent with the general hypothesis developed on applying technological advancements in the chatbot industry.

7. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Despite a few shortcomings, the current study produced insightful ideas that have ramifications for academics and practitioners. In particular, the section on effective practical implementation intends to assist practitioners in their quest to improve the employee experience inside their organisation and help them realize the potential already there.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE OF RESEARCH

The case study's reliance on internet sources imposes general restrictions on the case study's progress. Future researchers may expand the data collection process to include interviews with all organization stakeholders to improve the quality of the data analysis outcomes. The other limitation of the paper lies with the case study taken up for a single business organization, Manipal Hospitals. Multiple business organizations may be taken as part of the future scope of research. The study takes business strategy as a driver, which is a severe limitation of the paper.

9. CONCLUSION

By incorporating cutting-edge technology into general and administrative support operations, industrial organisations are discovering new ways to generate value. The outcomes can be fantastic for companies that can adjust to the disruptions created by outdated technologies (Eldich et al., 2018).

As robotic process automation (RPA) technology develops, Bots and algorithms will perform more and more of the labour currently done by humans [2]. Our experience demonstrates that businesses that address general and administrative (G&A) activities systematically. The resources made available by this transformation finds applicability in carrying out more practical tasks like scenario planning and business counseling, which will result in significant efficiency improvements [2]. Together, humans and robots could emerge as the new workplace superheroes.

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