Applications in Human Resource Management: A Study of Authoritative Textbooks

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Abstract

For the purpose of achieving four research objectives: (1) to describe general meaning, types, and utility of applications in Human Resource Management (HRM) useful for teaching and learning purpose; (2) to explore, record, and classify applications in HRM presented in the textbooks on HRM selected for the study; (3) to determine the importance of the classified applications in HRM as per the intensity of usage; and (4) to propose some implications of the findings in the way that will contribute theoretically and practically. The adopted research strategy was the desk research strategy and the study was carried out by using two non-scientific methods, i.e., authority to a greater extent and logical beliefs to a certain extent. By adopting seven conditions 29 authoritative textbooks were utilized and from which a considerable number of applications were explored and recorded. They were logically classified into 15 applications which were arranged in the order of importance in terms of the intensity of usage. Finally, implications were given briefly.

Key Words: Applications, Authoritative Textbooks, Cases, Coronavirus Disease, Critical Incidents, Human Resource Management, Learning, Skill Builders, Teaching

Introduction

Sri Lanka is a country which has a great potential for its economic and social development, though it is still a developing country (Opatha, 2021[1]). A major reason for low productivity in organizations operating in Sri Lanka is bad or poor Management (Akuratiyagamage and Opatha, 2004). Quality of other functional fields of Management depends heavily on quality of HRM being practiced in the organization (Opatha, 2009). Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to the functional field of Management, Business Administration or Organizational Management which is concerned with managing employees in an organization in order to achieve organizational vision, mission, and goals. HRM refers to the policies, practices, and systems that influence employees' behaviour, attitudes, and performance according to Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright (2007). The inclusive definition of HRM developed by Opatha (2021[2], p. 31) is: "*Basically, HRM is the adoption of certain functions and activities for utilizing employees efficiently and effectively in an organization to achieve its goals which include satisfying the key stakeholders to the possible extent and contributing positively to the natural environment. It involves formulation, implementation, and on-going maintenance of strategies, policies, procedures, rules, practices and systems of managing employees strategically, participatorily, and sustainably.*" It has generally been observed that HRM systems and practices being followed by a considerable number of organizations in our country are at inappropriate level or at least not better.

To a great extent, or at least to a considerable extent, right HRM education results in enhancing the practice of HRM and then the practice of Organizational Management. According to empirical studies, there is a considerable number of HRM phenomena in Sri Lanka which need to be improved significantly (Iddagoda and Opatha, 2017; Iddagoda and Opatha, 2020). There is a highly felt need for right graduates in HRM to work as real HRM professionals, consultants, and catalysts (who cause to establish right HRM in industries), and in this regard right HRM education is indispensable (Opatha, 2019[1]). Also, every professional in any field of specialization in Business Management or in other disciplines including Engineering, Health Care and Information Systems needs to be competent in HRM to a significant extent. Hence HRM education which is concerned with gradual process by which a person gains knowledge, skills, and attitudes of managing people at work through learning is profoundly instrumental in developing people who will become HRM specialized professionals as well as those people who will become professionals in various fields in service and other industries.

In 2019[2] Opatha did a comprehensive study to examine the criticality of the case for teaching HRM in management education and that study revealed 13 common reasons emphasizing a very high level of importance of teaching HRM to us. These thirteen common reasons in the order of importance are: (1) Organizational success; (2) Sustainable competitive advantage and organizational improvement; (3) Every manager's vital responsibility and contribution to societal success (two reasons); (4) Enhancing professional life success; (5) Enhancing personal life success; (6) Enhancing quality of organizational life for employees, uniqueness of human resources, and contribution to the natural environment (three reasons); (7) organizational survival, other functional field dependency, and legal compliance (three

reasons); and (8) HRM profession's growth (Opatha, 2019[2]). Certainly, HRM is an essential course for any Business Administration, Management or Management-related Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree as well (Opatha, 2019[2]). Opatha (2021, p. 16) observes: *"Indeed, it is a compulsory course in most of the Degrees of Doctor of Business Administration being offered by recognized universities in Sri Lanka and abroad. It is in fact that there are Bachelor's Degrees, Master's Degrees, and Doctoral Degrees specializing in HRM. Apart from Degrees there are professional programs in HRM. Consequently, at any time of consideration there are a considerable number of students, employees, and professionals studying HRM."*

HRM is a theoretical subject as there are well established theoretical formulations, principles, and theories of managing people at work. Similarly, HRM is indeed a practical subject, hence it has an applied content. For successful teaching and learning HRM any teacher or lecturer does need theory and practice. Quality of teaching and learning the practice of HRM largely depends on the use of applications in HRM. Applications in HRM (or HRM applications) are very useful for the students as well as the teachers because of the basic reason that they give intentionally prepared practically-related exercises with regard to various aspects of HRM. Two functions of applications deriving from Glueck and Stevens (1983) are (1) to provide a series of experiences designed to help the student understand better the management of people at work, and (2) to provide materials to apply the theories and research findings in personnel or HRM. Using case studies and critical incidents in the class, and doing skill builders or exercises in the class to develop skills are two elements of a dimension called "Engaging Students in Applications" of lecturing behaviour, and increased use of engaging students in applications by the lecturer will increase the quality of lecturing behaviour, which significantly and positively impacts on student satisfaction of learning (Opatha, 2020).

There seems to be a performance gap in the HRM teaching context in Sri Lanka according to the author's formal and informal observations of actual teaching performed by some of the relevant lecturers and some grievances expressed by some HRM students to the author. This performance deficiency is not a local one but also a global one. Majority of lecturers seem to have not utilized HRM applications when delivering lectures resulting in impeding the quality and relevance of HRM education. To impart only the theory is not adequate for producing a graduate who will become a successful professional in industry. To impart the practice or influence students to apply the theory into practical situations is needed. Apart from the need of imparting the practice to students when teaching, now we are living under New Normal, and the Coronavirus Disease is attacking all the people in the world including Sri Lanka and indeed this deadly pandemic changed and has been changing the teaching and learning process. Academics have to do more compared with what they did previously, i.e., under the normalcy. They are required to do things in order to increase student engagement in learning. On the other hand, they are required to prepare the question papers or examination question papers in a different approach owing to the reason of conducting examinations through the online mode. It does seem that some academics are not sufficiently competent to prepare an examination question paper that does not have direct theoretical questions, but application-oriented questions. When questions are direct, students will be in a position to answer them by copying from the lecture notes and learning materials. This will indeed be a detrimental

state from the point of ensuring quality of academic assessment in particular and quality of the higher education in general, and the need of differentiating between genuinely high performing students and low performing students. Our experience reveals that most of the students are moderate on academic performance. Some academics seem to have been suffering from an increased degree of stress owing to lack of understanding about applications in HRM and lack of competence of assessing student academic performance through application-oriented examination question papers. From the point of HRM, there is a responsibility on the part of employer (the top management of the academic institute) too to train academics who have relevant weaknesses. Otherwise, it is possible that an academic who is in need of having such a training seriously tends to have a discontent or dissatisfaction arising from a feeling or a belief of injustice with regard to his or her employment. This is called a grievance. Grievances can arise owing to the inability of the employee to do job duties (Opatha, 1994). Hence it is good to do a systematic study to explore the types of applications in HRM available for relevant academics to learn and utilize for their teaching and evaluation purposes.

There is a theoretical gap in exploring and describing applications in HRM appearing in HRM textbooks in Asian context, perhaps globally. Further to engage in a study of this nature is interesting and scholastically curious.

Objectives
Four specific objectives were established for writing this research paper. The objectives are:

1. To describe general meaning, types, and utility of applications in HRM useful for teaching and learning purpose.
2. To explore, record, and classify applications in HRM presented in the textbooks on HRM selected for the study.
3. To determine the importance of the classified applications in HRM as per the intensity of usage.
4. To propose some implications of the findings in the way that will contribute theoretically and practically.

Method
This research paper is non-traditional and non-scientific. Two non-scientific methods such as authority mainly and logical belief to a certain extent were applied to do the study on which this paper is based. Authority is a non-scientific method for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and this method involves seeking answers from experts on a specific subject (Davis and Cosenza, 1985; Nazario-Romero, 2016). The desk research strategy was used and for the purpose of achieving the first objective, the books which were exclusively written for applications in HRM were used. Indeed, such exclusive literature that was available to the author was very limited. In order to achieve the second objective, a certain number of textbooks were made use of. In selecting textbooks following conditions were applied:

1. Authority: Only authoritative textbooks on HRM showing a lot of theoretical and practical understanding were utilized.
2. Language: Only textbooks which were published in English Language were used.
3. Physical Availability: Only textbooks which were physically available to the author were used.
4. Nature: Books which were perceived as scholar books and books which were perceived as not sufficient standard works for study of HRM lacking to cover essential basics were not considered.
5. Generality: Only generalized ones which focus on General HRM were considered and specialized ones focusing on specialized branches of HRM such as International HRM, Strategic HRM, and Contemporary HRM, and specific functional fields of HRM such as Compensation Management and Human Resource Development were not used.
6. Inclusion: Only textbooks which include applications in HRM were used. In fact, there are certain textbooks physically available to the author which do not include applications.
7. Parsimony: In order to reduce length and rigor of the study, some textbooks physically available to the author having certain common applications were ignored.

All together 29 textbooks were useful for the study and they are given in Exhibit 1. The Exhibit shows the textbooks used for this paper with information that includes author or authors, year of publication of the textbook used, and country of publication. In order to achieve the third objective, a content analysis of the classified applications found in the 29 textbooks was performed by using the intensity of usage. Content analysis is a type of qualitative research and it focuses on an analysis of the content of a written document (Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh, 1996). Mostly logical beliefs were utilized in order to achieve the final objective.

Exhibit 1. Information about the Textbooks used for this Study

No.	Author/s	Year	Country of Publication
1	Glueck	1979	USA
2	Chruden and Sherman	1980	USA
3	Stone and Meltz	1983	Canada
4	Beach	1985	USA
5	Schuler and Youngblood	1986	USA
6	Heneman III, Schwab, Fossum, and Dyer	1989	USA
7	Bernardin and Russell	1993	USA
8	Bratton and Gold	1994	UK
9	Werther and Davis	1996	USA
10	Harris	1997	USA
11	Mondy, Noe, and Premeaux	1999	USA
12	Pattanayak	2003	India
13	Kleiman	2004	USA

14	Fisher, Schoenfeldt, and Shaw	2006	USA
15	Beardwell and Claydon	2007	UK
16	Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright	2007	USA
17	Byars and Rue	2008	USA
18	DeNisi and Griffin	2008	USA
19	Opatha	2009	Sri Lanka
20	Cascio	2010	USA
21	Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, and Cardy	2010	USA
22	Ivancevich	2010	USA
23	Mathis and Jackson	2010	USA
24	Torrington, Hall, Taylor, and Atkinson	2011	UK
25	Schwind, Das, Wagar, Fassina, and Bulmash	2013	Canada
26	Stewart and Brown	2014	USA
27	Bohlander and Snell	2017	USA
28	Aswathappa	2017	India
29	Dessler	2017	USA

Meaning, Types, and Utility of Applications in HRM

Applications in HRM include student-involvement exercises to complement the traditional lecture method, and they tie the theory of HRM with a practical situation, thereby increasing the likelihood of the material being learned and understood (Kelley and Whatley, 1981). Simply applications allow learners to utilize theory into practice, and they offer opportunities for learning experience and they attempt basically to increase analytical and operational problem-solving skills (Opatha, 2003[1]). Nominal definition for an application in HRM is "a teaching and learning method that requires the learner to apply his or her theoretical understanding of HRM to a practical situation that relates to HRM". The basic purpose of an application in HRM is to give an opportunity to the learner to apply theory into practice and an opportunity to the teacher to teach practice supported by theory. In this context theory of HRM includes concepts, principles, policies, procedures, processes, and systems in managing people at work. Practice of HRM includes decisions and actions taken to solve actual or hypothetical problems which exist or are expected to exist in reality of managing people at work. Application in HRM involves a usage of something that is theoretical in a situation that is practical, and applications are the using of concepts, principles, policies, procedures, and theories in particular situations (Opatha, 2003[1]).

Powerful learning takes place when theory is put within the context of the real world (Lussier, 2000). Simply applications in HRM allow learners to utilize HRM theory into HRM practice. Glueck and Stevens (1983) mention seven types of applications in HRM. Refer to Exhibit 2 for the seven types.

Exhibit 2. Seven Types of Applications

Type	Description
Cases	The cases describe conditions which are sometimes good, sometimes bad, and frequently a mixture of both. They take place in a variety of settings and are of varying lengths.
Incident cases	Short statements of problem situations are presented. They are designed to determine whether the user can ask the right questions from preliminary data to adequately analyze the problem situation.
Role-playing exercises	These applications allow participants to experience a different kind of learning by placing themselves in the focal persons' positions.
Cost-benefit exercises	These applications focus on assessing the value of a personnel/HRM activity
Field-experience exercises	These exercises require the student to do field research to understand a problem or analyze a personnel activity.
Experiences in personnel	These exercises involve the student in solving a personnel problem or responding to a questionnaire on a topical (current or recent) issue.
In-basket exercises	An in-basket is a series of items such as letters and telephone calls. It is designed to simulate the kind of material a manager such as a human resource manager would receive in a workday. The student is required to sort out the items which are the most pressing from those which can wait a bit and will be given a time limit within which he or she must complete the work.

Source: Developed from the material by Glueck and Stevens (1983)

It is interesting to mention here that at least there are seven types of applications in HRM which are useful for the learners of HRM and teachers of HRM. According to French, Dittrich, and Zawacki (1982) there are two major types of applications in HRM and they are cases and the incidents. They (1982, p. ix) write in the preface:

"For the student who is not familiar with incidents and cases in the classroom, the incident is a short, easy-to-read description or a situation that typically frames a single issue or points up one particular problem. Cases, on the other hand, are longer, describe a business or organizational setting in more detail, and provide the student with more complexity as well as a broader understanding of the total problems faced by managers responsible for personnel decisions. Frequently, cases pose multiple problems that require attention and point up the interface among subsets of a more comprehensive personnel system. Because of their complexity and length, cases often require an entire class period, and on occasion more than a single period. They can serve as the basis for more detailed analysis and for the preparation of class reports or examinations."

The above quotation is useful in the way that clearly differentiates between a case and an incident. Accordingly, a case is longer than an incident and it is more complex than an incident.

Also, to analyse a case takes a longer time than an analysis of an incident takes. Further, a case has several or multiple problems to be dealt with but an incident has a single issue or one particular problem. If I use my previous relevant writing done in 2003[1], I presented three major types of applications. i.e., skill builders, critical incidents, and cases. Skills Builder (using the plural word for 'skill') is an alternative term for Skill Builder. Refer to Exhibit 3 for a set of description of the three types of applications.

Exhibit 3. Three Types of Applications

Type	Description
Skill builders	A skill builder is an assignment that aims at allowing the student to develop a certain skill or certain skills rather than knowledge. Skill builders can be used to develop specific thinking skills or specific technical skills in HRM. They can be used on the spot in the class or as homework. A skill builder gives a practical exercise that requires the student to prepare a form, a questionnaire, a resolution, a report, or a program/scheme which can be used in reality.
Critical incidents	A critical incident is a short description of an important event that involves at least a problem which needs to be solved. However, some critical incidents might involve two or three particular problems needing to be solved. The critical incident method links the teaching in the class room with real situations or likely real situations.
Cases	A case is a record of an organizational issue that has been faced or may be faced by the management of an organization. A case sets out problems to be solved by the learner who will be able to apply fundamentals to a practical situation in an organization, develop skills in making correct decisions, and support decisions with appropriate and acceptable analysis and justification.

Source: Based on the material by Opatha (2003[1])

Why are applications in HRM? Basically, there are three objectives of any type of teaching and learning, i.e., (1) Knowledge imparting, (2) Skills development, and (3) Attitudes formation. Applications in HRM become essential for mainly developing HRM skills within the students. The utility or usefulness of applications in HRM is worthy of specifically mentioning here by using some relevant literature. According to Nkomo, Fottler, and McAfee (2000) applications in HRM allow the student to experience a different kind of learning, i.e., learning by doing. They (2000, p. xiii) write: "*They are intended to give you an opportunity to actively experience the reality and complexity of the issues facing practicing managers and human resource executives. While other disciplines like physical sciences allow you to test theories in a laboratory, performing a case analysis allows you to apply human resource management theories to specific organizational problems.*"

Accordingly, applications in HRM allow the student to apply HRM theories to specific organizational problematic situations. Exhibit 4 presents the usefulness of applications in HRM specifically.

Exhibit 4. The Usefulness of Applications in HRM

Number	Specific Purpose
1	To create ability within the learner to apply concepts, principles, policies, procedures, rules, and theories of HRM to a real-life situation in an organization.
2	To assist the learner to develop decision-making skills in relation to HRM.
3	To improve the learner's ability to support HRM decisions made to solve problems with appropriate, adequate, and acceptable justifications.
4	To improve both oral and written capability of communicating ideas, facts etc within the learner.
5	To encourage the learner to recommend steps to evade similar cases and incidents.
6	To allow the learner to gather wide experience within a relatively shorter time without undergoing the real experience with regard to various aspects of HRM.
7	To develop potential within the learner to face practical situations in future which are similar to the situations in the applications in HRM.
8	To develop the learner's interpersonal skills and different perceptual skills through group discussions.

Source: Adapted from Opatha (2000) and Opatha (2003[1])

Exploration, Recording, and Classification of Applications in HRM

It was observed that applications in HRM have been presented by various authors who wrote recognized textbooks of HRM. Having explored the contents of various textbooks of HRM I found certain types of applications in HRM. First, I will introduce the source, and then present the applications. Then I will classify them. I should specifically mention here, in this study, that I have no intention of doing a critical examination of the applications. I give due respect to all the relevant authors, and I use only the descriptive approach, neither critical nor prescriptive approach. Further I use mostly the simple present tense when recording applications.

The first textbook I used for this study is a textbook titled *Foundations of Personnel* written by Glueck (1979), who was a classic authority and a USA Professor in Personnel/HRM. The textbook has 19 chapters and each chapter is held together by a case. It is interesting to note that the case is introduced early in the chapter, added to during the chapter, and concluded at the end of chapter. In addition to the cases given in the chapters, after the last chapter numbered 19 which is about Evaluation of the personnel function and the future of personnel 14 cases are presented. It is possible to classify the cases as *Throughout Chapter Cases* and *End Cases.*

The second textbook used for the study was written by Chruden and Sherman (1980) and its title was *Personnel Management: The Utilization of Human Resources.* This textbook has 21 chapters and at the end of each chapter one problem or two problems are presented in order to give the student an opportunity to apply what is learned. An examination was done with regard to some problems and it resulted in deciding that most of these problems are indeed

cases though they have been named as problems. At the end (after the last chapter numbered 21) there are fourteen cases presented. I classify the problems presented in each chapter as *Chapter End Cases* and the 14 cases presented after the chapters as End Cases.

The third textbook utilized for the study was written by Stone and Meltz (1983) and their textbook was titled as *Personnel Management in Canada.* The textbook has 16 chapters and at the end of each chapter there are *Project Ideas* presented. Project ideas stimulate student interest in personnel-related issues in a "real-world" context according to the authors. At the beginning of some chapters there are practical real-life scenarios though some chapters do not have such scenarios at the beginning. These scenarios include real-world experiences of some actual personnel. They are not lengthy. The authors, after presenting the scenario discuss it briefly and link it to the text of the chapter. I classify these scenarios as *Vignettes.*

A textbook titled *Personnel* written by Beach was the fourth textbook utilized for this study and this textbook's publication year is 1985. The textbook has 27 chapters and most of the chapters have cases at the end of the chapter. The author used the term *case problems* for cases. Three chapters have a type of applications for which the author called *exercise*. I classify these exercises as *Skill Builders* or *Skill Building Exercises.* Eight chapters do not have applications.

Schuler and Youngblood wrote a textbook that has the title *Effective Personnel Management* which was published in 1986. This textbook was the fifth textbook used for this study. They wrote 19 chapters which have chapter end cases. According to the authors, two features, i.e., Personnel in the News, and Personnel in Action are presented. The feature of Personnel in the News shows how personnel or HRM functions and activities are actually carried out by actual organizations. It is placed at the start of each chapter. The feature of Personnel in Action illustrates how personnel or HRM activities are actually implemented in organizations and provides information on current laws and court decisions. This feature appears between the start and the end of each chapter. Sources such as Fortune, Personnel Administration, Personnel Journal, Fair Employment Practices, Bulletin to Management, The Wall Street Journal, Business Week, and The New York Times were used to develop these accounts of actual practices. As both features show how HRM functions and activities are actually carried out by some actual organizations, I consider both features as one special type of applications in HRM, not seen in the above textbooks. It is possible to label this special type of applications as *Practical Illustrations*. A practical illustration exemplifies an actual practice of HRM in an actual organization.

The sixth textbook used for this study is a textbook with the title *Personnel/Human Resource Management* published in 1989 and it was written by four authors namely Heneman 111, Schwab, Fossum, and Dyer. The textbook has 20 chapters. It is possible to observe two types of applications in HRM in this textbook and they are illustrations and cases. An illustration shows how a certain aspect of HRM is being carried out in an actual organizational setting. The cases (in fact there are five cases) are presented at the end of a part, not at the end of a chapter. Generally, a part consists of several chapters. The textbook has nine parts and at the

end of five parts cases are presented. Cases are lengthy and I classify them by giving a label *Part End Cases*.

Bernadin and Russell (1993) developed a textbook titled *Human Resource Management: An Experiential Approach* which was the seventh textbook used for the study. This textbook has 16 chapters and three appendixes. As far as applications in HRM are concerned there is something called by the authors as Experiential Exercises. Each chapter has at least two exercises at the end and in fact most of the chapters have three exercises. The exercises were designed to enhance some or all of the critical personal competencies in the context of HRM subject matter and they facilitate greater learning through class interaction and projects according to the authors. My observation of these exercises reveals that they are indeed skill builders, and each exercise includes an individual analysis that has to be done by each student independently, and a group analysis that has to be done by a group of students in the class (about six). Group interaction and consensus building happen with regard to each exercise. I categorize these exercises under the type Skill Builders.

As the eighth book for this study a UK one was utilized. Bratton and Gold (1994) are two UK authors and they developed a textbook with the title *Human Resource Management: Theory and Practice*. The textbook contains 12 chapters and at the end of each chapter a case called Chapter Case is presented. According to the authors chapter case is a pedagogical feature that helps the learning process. Another pedagogical feature in the book is 'HRM in Practice' Boxes. A 'HRM in Practice' Box is indeed a type of applications and it helps illustrate current developments or practices in HRM. I classify these boxes as Practical Illustrations.

Werther and Davis (1996) wrote a classic textbook (their first edition in 1981) titled *Human Resources and Personnel Management* which I examined as the nineth textbook for this study. 19 chapters are in the content of the book and at each chapter's end Chapter Incidents are presented. These incidents are classroom-tested incidents which emphasize the application of chapter concepts to specific questions according to the authors. The chapter incidents are considered as a key pedagogical feature. These are classified as *Critical Incidents*. Another key pedagogical feature of the book is Real-Life Examples and more than 200 examples are in the textbook. The authors mention that these examples demonstrate and reinforce the relevancy of key ideas and practices while increasing reader interest and retention of learning. My careful observation suggests me to classify them as Vignettes.

A textbook that carries *Human Resource Management: A Practical Approach* as the title written by Harris (1997) was the tenth textbook. This textbook is indeed a practice-oriented textbook and hence it is more practical. It has 16 chapters and each chapter has an opening case (that gives a real-life HR situation providing a context for the core concepts discussed in the chapter and raising questions relevant to the chapter's topic), an end-of-chapter experiential exercise (that gives an opportunity to the student/reader to apply the concepts learnt and to develop his or her critical thinking skills), and boxed materials. Opening cases are classified as *Opening Chapter Cases*. Boxed materials are unique features of the textbook and they are of three types, i.e., (1) Intercultural Issues in HRM (these boxes highlight intercultural and diversity

concerns and give international comparisons too); (2) Tales From the Trenches (these boxes present actual stories from the work world of human resources and management in general); and (3) Your Turn (these boxes give the student a change to evaluate how he or she would manage a situation or complete a task) (adapted from Harris, 1997). I classify these boxes under a label named *Special Applications.*

The eleventh textbook is a textbook that has the title *Human Resource Management* which was written by three USA authors, namely Mondy, Noe, and Premeaux (1999). The book's content includes 17 chapters in each of which two HRM Incidents are presented. These two incidents are presented at the end of each chapter. Also, an exercise called "Developing HRM Skills: An Experiential Exercise" is presented at the end of each chapter, and these exercises require the students to participate in the classes and group involvement. A caselet which is a short case study is presented at the beginning of each chapter and it sets the tone for a discussion of the major topics included in the chapter. Another type of applications is a brief exercise that is called by the authors as 'HRM in Action". This exercise requires the student to make decisions with regard to real-world situations that could occur in the business world. These exercises are presented in the body of each chapter.

The next textbook numbered 12 is an Indian textbook written by Pattanayak (2003) and his textbook has the title *Human Resource Management*. There are 26 chapters and except three chapters (1, 3, and 4) all other chapters have an application called HRM Focus. This is an illustration of a practical HRM situation. After the chapters, under Part Seven, 13 cases of Indian organizations are presented.

The textbook numbered 13 for this study is a book written by Kleiman (2004) and its title is *Human Resource Management: A Managerial Tool for Competitive Advantage*. 15 chapters are available in the book and each chapter (except Chapters 1 and 15) contains one or more experiential exercises and one or two cases which relate to the concepts discussed in the chapter. Another type of applications is a Box Feature called by the author as "On the road to Competitive Advantage". Each chapter has at least two boxes which provide examples of how actual companies have used HRM practices for gaining a competitive advantage. I classify these boxed materials as Special Applications.

The textbook written by Fisher, Schoenfeldt, and Shaw (2006) carrying the title *Human Resource Management* was the textbook numbered 14 for the study. The book contains 19 chapters and each chapter opens with an HR Challenge vignette which is a brief scenario that stimulates the student's interest to learn. Also, each chapter has end-of-chapter cases and exercises. In fact, the number of exercises for each chapter is at least two.

A UK textbook written by Beardwell and Claydon (2007) was examined for the study as the fifteenth one. The title of the textbook is *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Approach*. The book is an edited one with 17 chapters contributed by different authors. At the end of each chapter at least one case study is given. In case of some chapters there are two case studies. The book has five parts and each part ends with a case study numbering five case

studies which I label as Part End Cases. The book has another type of applications called Boxes which are presented in most of the chapters. A Box in the book contains a business example by attempting to put theory into practice. I classify these boxes as Practical Illustrations.

The sixteenth textbook is the one written by Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright (2007) and its title is *Human Resource Management.* The textbook contains 16 chapters and at the end of each chapter there are two types of cases, i.e., BusinessWeek Case and Final Case. Also, there are four types of Boxes in each chapter which can be considered as applications in HRM. They are: (1) BEST PRACTICES (these boxes give specific company examples of what is working well in HRM); (2) HR HOW TO (these boxes discuss steps for creating HRM programs and include examples of how companies have tackled challenges); (3) e-HRM (these boxes emphasize the increasing use of technology in HRM today and how it is challenging the things are getting done by using real examples); and (4) DID YOU KNOW? (these boxes provide a snapshot of interesting statistics drawing from company studies related to chapter topics). I classify these boxes as Special Applications.

Byars and Rue (2008)'s textbook titled *Human Resource Management* was the textbook numbered 17. The book has 19 chapters and at the end of each chapter two Incidents are presented while presenting at least one exercise. In each chapter multiple "HRM in Action" boxes are included in order to provide current examples of how actual organizations apply various concepts discussed in the chapter. As Practical Illustrations these boxes are classified.

A textbook with the title *Human Resource Management* written by DeNisi and Griffin (2008) is the next one. This book contains 14 chapters and 2 appendixes. It can be observed that in every chapter four types of applications are presented and they are: (1) Opening Case (this highlights a well-known company or manager, or a recent event, issue, or trend that illustrates a major point or theme in the chapter); (2) Closing Case (this provides questions to guide discussion and application of the chapter's theories); (3) Building HR Management Skills Exercise (this requires the students to apply the information given in the chapter to a specific HRM problem); and (4) HR Internet Exercise (this encourages the students to do website investigation to see how organizations are really approaching issues discussed in the chapter) (adapting from DeNisi and Griffin, 2008). These exercises are classified as Special Applications.

As the textbook numbered 19 the book written by Opatha (2009), the author of this non-conventional research paper was utilized. 21 chapters are in the textbooks and in fact the chapters are comprehensive in order to give concepts, principles, processes, theoretical formulations, and examples. Cases, critical incidents, and skill builders are presented in every chapter. Each chapter (except chapters 12 and 16) includes a case which is a Chapter End Case. Chapter 12 and chapter 16 have 5 cases and 2 cases respectively. Each chapter has at least one critical incident even though some chapters have more than one. Similarly, each chapter includes at least one skill builder though many chapters include more than one.

Cascio (2010) wrote a textbook titled *Managing Human Resources* and this book was the next one examined for the study. 16 chapters are in the book. At the end of each chapter there is

something called by the author as Applying Your Knowledge. An examination of this part reveals that there are two types of applications used, i.e., cases and exercises. Most of the chapters have cases. Chapters numbered 7, 10, 13, and 16 have exercises instead of cases. One special feature I observed in this textbook from the point of applications in HRM is an opening vignette presented in each chapter. According to the author it is a *Split Sequential Vignette* illustrating "HRM in Action". Events in this opening vignette are designed to sensitize the reader to the subject matter of the chapter, and the events lead to a climax, but then the vignette stops like a two-part television drama by asking the reader to predict what will happen next and anticipate alternative courses of action (adapting from Cascio, 2010). This vignette appears again near the end of the chapter. The opening vignette continues and it allows the reader to compare the predictions made by him or her with what actually happened. This is indeed interesting.

The next textbook was written by Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, and Cardy (2010) and it was titled *Managing Human Resources.* The book includes 17 chapters and each chapter has four types of cases at its end. In authors' labels they are (1) Emerging Trends Case (this illustrates an HR-related issue that is likely to require increased attention in the future); (2) Customer-driven HR Case (this illustrates how HRM can add value to an organization by taking a customer-oriented perspective); (3) Ethics Case (this illustrates how HRM can involve tough, real-life choices with regard to the 'right' actions which are to be decided); and (4) Global Case (this focuses on HR practices in different countries). It is possible to classify these cases as *Special Chapter End Cases.*

Ivancevich (2010) is the author of the book titled *Human Resource Management* that contains 17 chapters. At the end of each chapter at least one application case and one exercise are presented.

Mathis and Jackson (2011) in their textbook titled *Human Resource Management* wrote 16 chapters and each chapter presents at its end (1) "HR Experiential Problem Solving" exercise; (2) Case of a real-life HR problem or situation; and (3) two additional "Supplemental Cases" available on the text website briefly describing typical HR problems faced in organizations. At the beginning of each chapter there is a special feature called by authors as "HR Headline" which contains a concise example of a contemporary HRM problem, situation, or practice to illustrate some matters discussed in the chapter. I classify this feature as Practical Illustration. Further there are special features appearing in most of the chapters in terms of boxes which can be considered as Special Applications. They include (1) HR Best Practices (these boxes highlight effective HRM in real-world companies); (2) HR Online (these boxes give examples of e-aspects of HRM); and (3) HR Perspective (these boxes give examples of specific HR issues and ethic concerns).

A textbook on HRM with the title *Human Resource Management* was written by Torrington, Hall, Taylor, and Atkinson (2011) who are British academics. The book includes 30 chapters and each of which presents a special feature called by the authors as Window On Practice that provides a topical illustration of HRM in practice. I classify this application as Practical

illustration. The book has 8 parts and at the end of each part a case study problem is presented.

Schwind, Das, Wagar, Fassina, and Bulmash (2013), who are Canadian authors, present 14 chapters in their book titled *Canadian Human Resource Management*. Each chapter presents two cases and at least an incident. Some chapters present more than one incident. According to the authors, the incident is a short case that usually does not require the student to do an extensive analytical work but a case is more compressive and tests the student's thorough understanding of concepts and their impact on an organization. Many chapters include exercises also. According to the authors, exercises are usually conducted under the supervision of an instructor, however they can be used as a group exercise outside the classroom.

Two US authors namely Stewart and Brown (2014) wrote a special textbook carrying the title as *Human Resource Management: Linking Strategy to Practice* and it has 14 chapters and each of which has three major types of applications in HRM at its end. They include: (1) Example Case (this application illustrates how a specific company implements the HRM theory discussed in the chapter); (2) Discussion Case (this application provides background information about a fictional company and requires the student to respond to the questions asked at the end); (3) Experiential Exercise (this application requires the student to complete an activity by using online information about the topic discussed in the chapter); and (4) Interactive Experiential Exercise (this application provides a link to the companion website and requires the students to engage in a role-play). Further the textbook includes three features in each chapter which can be classified as Special Applications. In the authors' words they are (1) A Manager's Perspective (this gives a real-life scenario that describes a decision faced by an individual, manager, or a human resource professional); (2) Building Strength Through HR (this illustrates how a specific company has used the concepts discussed in the chapter to increase success); and (3) Technology in HR (this describes how technology affects HRM in an organizational setting).

Bohlander and Snell (2017) in their textbook titled *Principles of Human Resource Management* wrote 16 chapters. After the chapters two types of cases are presented. Type one is called by the authors as Brief Cases and the other type is called as *Integrative Cases*. For each chapter except two chapters there are two brief cases presented. Three brief cases are given for chapter 7 and chapter 15. 11 integrative cases are presented. An integrative case requires the student to apply material given in more than one text chapter while a brief case requires the student to apply mainly material given only in one text chapter. Brief cases are classified by me as Chapter End Cases. An integrative case is considered as a separate sub type of cases as it is different from a Part End Case in the sense that it can relate to several chapters or many chapters in the textbook, not necessarily to the chapters of a particular part of the textbook.

An Indian author namely Aswathappa (2017) wrote a textbook titled *Human Resource Management: Text and Cases*. 26 chapters are in the book. According to the author there are three types of cases presented in each chapter in order to understand the real world HRM

issues. They are Opening Vignette, *Continuing Case*, and Closing Case. My observation of them suggests me to classify opening vignettes as Practical Illustrations, and closing cases as Chapter End Cases for the purpose of the study. The continuing case appears in most of the chapters by adding material relating to the subject matters of each chapter. This continuing case can be considered as a separate sub type of cases.

Dessler (2017) in his fifteenth edition of the textbook titled *Human Resource Management* included 18 chapters. In each of the chapters of this textbook applications in HRM such as Application Case, Continuing Case, and Experiential Exercise are presented. As Special Applications, the book has (1) Trends Shaping HR (this gives recent trends in HRM practice); (2) HR As A Profit Centre (this shows how HRM can work in order to reduce costs or boost revenues); and (3) The Strategic Context (this shows how managing people strategically is done in a practical setting).

Refer to Exhibit 5. It presents found applications from the textbooks utilized for the study and my classification of them.

Exhibit 5. Found Applications and Their Classification

No.	Author/s	Applications	Classification
1	Glueck	Cases	Throughout Chapter Cases and End Cases
2	Chruden and Sherman	Problems and Cases	Chapter End Cases and End Cases
3	Stone and Meltz	Project Ideas and Practical Real-Life Scenarios	Project Ideas and Vignettes
4	Beach	Case Problems and Exercises	Chapter End Cases and Skill Builders
5	Schuler and Youngblood	Cases, Personnel in News, and Personnel in Action	Chapter End Cases and Practical Illustrations
6	Heneman III, Schwab, Fossum, and Dyer	Illustrations and Cases	Part End Cases and Practical Illustrations
7	Bernardin and Russell	Experiential Exercises	Skill Builders or Skill Building Exercises
8	Bratton and Gold	'HRM in Practice' Boxes and Chapter Cases	Practical Illustrations and Chapter End Cases
9	Werther and Davis	Chapter Incidents and Real-Life Examples	Chapter End Incidents (or Critical Incidents) and Vignettes
10	Harris	Opening Chapter Cases, End-of-Chapter Experiential Exercises, and Boxed Materials (Intercultural Issues in HRM, Tales From the Trenches, and Your Turn)	Opening Chapter Cases, Skill Builders, and Special Applications

11	Mondy, Noe, and Premeaux	HRM Incidents, Exercises called "Developing HRM Skills: An Experiential Exercise", Caselets (Short Case Studies), and Brief Exercises called 'HRM in Action"	Critical Incidents, Opening Chapter Cases, and Skill Builders
12	Pattanayak	HR Focuses and Cases	Practical Illustrations and End Cases
13	Kleiman	Experiential Exercises, Cases, and Box Feature called "On the Road to Competitive Advantage"	Skill Builders, Chapter End Cases, and Special Applications
14	Fisher, Schoenfeldt, and Shaw	HR Challenge Vignettes, End-of-Chapter Cases and Exercises.	Vignettes, Chapter End Cases, and Skill Builders
15	Beardwell and Claydon	Boxes and Case Studies	Practical Illustrations, Chapter End Cases, and Part End Cases
16	Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright	BusinessWeek Case, Final Case, and four types of Boxes: (1) BEST PRACTICES, (2) HR HOW TO, (3) e-HRM, and (4) DID YOU KNOW?	Chapter End Cases and Special Applications
17	Byars and Rue	Incidents and Multiple "HRM in Action" Boxes	Critical Incidents and Practical Illustrations
18	DeNisi and Griffin	(1) Opening Cases; (2) Closing Cases; (3) Building HR Management Skills Exercises; and (4) HR Internet Exercises	Opening Chapter Cases, Chapter End Cases, and Special Applications
19	Opatha	Cases, Critical Incidents, and Skill Builders	Chapter End Cases, Critical Incidents, and Skill Builders
20	Cascio	Cases, Exercises, and Split Sequential Vignettes	Chapter End Cases, Skill Builders, and Split Sequential Vignettes
21	Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, and Cardy	(1) Emerging Trends Cases; (2) Customer-driven HR Cases (3) Ethics Cases; and (4) Global Cases	Special Chapter End Cases
22	Ivancevich	Cases and Exercises	Chapter End Cases and Skill Builders
23	Mathis and Jackson	(1) "HR Experiential Problem Solving" exercises; (2) Cases of real-life HR problems or situations; (3) Web Based additional "Supplemental Cases"; (4) "HR Headline"; (5) HR Best Practices; (6) HR Online; and (7) HR Perspective	Skill Builders, Chapter End Cases, Practical Illustrations, and Special Applications
24	Torrington, Hall, Taylor, and Atkinson	Window On Practice Illustrations, and Part End Cases	Practical Illustrations and Part End Cases
25	Schwind, Das, Wagar, Fassina, and Bulmash	Cases, Incidents, and Exercises	Chapter End Cases, Critical Incidents, and Skill Builders

26	Stewart and Brown	(1) Example Cases; (2) Discussion Cases; (3) Experiential Exercises; (4) Interactive Experiential Exercises; (5) Manager's Perspective; (6) Building Strength Through HR; and (7) Technology in HR	Chapter End Cases, Skill Builders, and Special Applications
27	Bohlander and Snell	Brief Cases and Integrative Cases.	Chapter End Cases, and Integrative Cases
28	Aswathappa	Opening Vignettes, Continuing Cases, and Closing Cases.	Practical Illustrations, Continuing Cases, and Chapter End Cases
29	Dessler	(1) Application Cases; (2) Continuing Cases; (3) Experiential Exercises; (4) Trends Shaping HR; (5) HR As A Profit Centre; and (6) The Strategic Context	Chapter End Cases, Continuing Cases, and Special Applications

A careful examination of the applications in HRM which were explored and recorded above reveals that there are different types of applications. A quality textbook presents applications, at least one type. Of course, it seems that some authors formulated special applications in order to differentiate their textbooks from other ones. However, these special applications have improved the opportunity for the learners to learn the practice of HRM to a significant extent. All the types of applications indeed contribute to the learner to learn the practice of HRM to a greater extent without his or her actual involvement in practice. In other words, vicariously it is possible for the learner to develop skills in HRM.

Content Analysis of the Found Classified Applications

The above section gives applications in HRM presented in 29 textbooks. As a result of my classification fifteen applications can be found and they are listed below.

1. Throughout Chapter Cases (TCC)
2. End Cases (EC)
3. Chapter End Cases (CEC)
4. Project Ideas (PI)
5. Vignettes (V)
6. Skill Builders or Skill Building Exercises (SB)
7. Practical Illustrations (PIL)
8. Part End Cases (PEC)
9. Critical Incidents (CI)
10. Opening Chapter Cases (OCC)
11. Special Applications (SA)
12. Split Sequential Vignettes (SSV)
13. Special Chapter End Cases (SCEC)
14. Integrative Cases (IC)
15. Continuing Cases (CC)

Now an attempt is made to find out the intensity of usage of the applications in HRM which were explored, recorded, and classified. There is a need of giving a working definition to the term 'Intensity of Usage' in this context. A working definition is a nominal definition assigned by the researcher to a term for the purpose of achieving his or her research objectives (Babbie, 1986; Opatha, 2003[2]). The working definition assigned to the intensity of usage is the number of counts for each application presented in the textbooks examined for this study. The number of counts of presenting of the above listed fifteen applications in the twenty-nine textbooks was done and the results of the content analysis are shown in Table 1. For analysis purpose in the Table, the acronyms given for the applications were used (as shown in the above list within the brackets).

Table 1. Content Analysis of Applications in HRM Presented in the Twenty-Nine Textbooks

Author/s	Applications														
	TCC	EC	CEC	PI	V	SB	PIL	PEC	CI	OCC	SA	SSV	SCEC	IC	CC
1. Glueck	×	×													
2. Chruden and Sherman		×	×												
3. Stone and Meltz				×	×										
4. Beach			×			×									
5. Schuler and Youngblood			×				×								
6. Heneman III, Schwab, Fossum, and Dyer							×	×							
7. Bernarding and Russell						×									
8. Bratton and Gold			×				×								
9. Werther and Davis					×					×					
10. Harris						×				×	×				
11. Mondy, Noe, and Premeaux						×			×	×					
12. Pattanayak		×					×								
13. Kleiman			×			×					×				
14. Fisher, Schoenfeldt, and Shaw			×		×	×									
15. Beardwell and Claydon			×				×	×							

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright			×								×				
17. Byars and Rue							×		×						
18. DeNisi and Griffin			×							×	×				
19. Opatha			×			×			×						
20. Cascio			×			×						×			
21. Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, and Cardy													×		
22. Ivancevich			×			×									
23. Mathis and Jackson			×			×	×				×				
24. Torrington, Hall, Taylor, and Atkinson							×	×							
25. Schwind, Das, Wagar, Fassina, and Bulmash			×			×				×					
26. Stewart and Brown			×			×					×				
27. Bohlander and Snell			×											×	
28. Aswathappa			×				×								×
29. Dessler			×								×				×
Total	01	03	18	01	03	12	09	03	05	03	07	01	01	01	02

According to the results of content analysis of the usage of the applications in HRM presented in the textbooks which are 29 in number, out of 15 applications the item that has the highest intensity of usage (number of counts in presenting or appearing) is the item numbered 3, i.e., Chapter End Cases. The next highest item is the item numbered 6, i.e., Skill Builders. The item that has the third highest usage is the item numbered 7, i.e., Practical Illustrations. The 11th item got the fourth place. It is Special Applications. The item numbered 9 was ranked as the fifth one in the order of usage and it is Critical Incidents. For the sixth place there are four items numbered 2, 5, 8, and 10 i.e., End Cases, Vignettes, Part End Cases, and Opening Chapter Cases. The seventh one or place in terms of the intensity of usage is the item numbered 15, i.e., Continuing Cases. The last place, i.e., the eighth place (lowest level of usage) goes to the rest of the items numbering 5. The applications in HRM can be arranged in terms of

importance based on the intensity of usage in the textbooks and the arrangement is given in Table 2 (in the descending order):

Table 2. Arrangement of 15 Applications in HRM in the Order of Usage

No.	Application	Order
3	Chapter End Cases	1
6	Skill Builders	2
7	Practical Illustrations	3
11	Special Applications	4
9	Critical Incidents	5
2	End Cases	6
5	Vignettes	6
8	Part End Cases	6
10	Opening Chapter Cases	6
15	Continuing Cases	7
1	Throughout Chapter Cases	8
4	Project Ideas	8
12	Split Sequential Vignette	8
13	Special Chapter End Cases	8
14	Integrative Cases	8

Discussion and Conclusion

This non-traditional but innovative research paper was written in order to achieve four research objectives. The first objective was: "To describe general meaning, types, and utility of applications in HRM useful for teaching and learning purpose". An application in HRM is a student-engagement activity tying the theory of HRM with a practical situation. The nominal definition developed in this paper for application in HRM is "a teaching and learning method that requires the learner to apply his or her theoretical understanding of HRM to a practical situation that relates to HRM". To give an opportunity to the learner to apply theory into practice and an opportunity to the teacher to teach practice supported by theory is the basic purpose of an application in HRM. There are various types of applications in HRM found in the limited literature exclusively for applications in HRM, and they include Cases, Critical incidents, Skill builders, Role-playing exercises, Cost-benefit exercises, Field-experience exercises, Experiences in personnel, and In-basket exercises. Applications in HRM have a variety of specific utility. They become essential for mainly developing HRM skills within the students. They indeed allow the student to experience a different kind of learning, i.e., learning by doing. They give the student an opportunity to actively experience the reality and complexity of the issues faced by practicing managers and human resource professionals.

The second research objective of this paper was: "To explore, record, and classify applications in HRM presented in the textbooks on HRM selected for the study. The investigation of the applications presented in the textbooks numbered 29 finds out that a considerable number of applications in HRM are available. My classification results in finding fifteen applications

and they include Throughout Chapter Cases, End Cases, Chapter End Cases, Project Ideas, Vignettes, Skill Builders or Skill Building Exercises, Practical Illustrations, Part End Cases, Critical Incidents, Opening Chapter Cases, Special Applications, Split Sequential Vignettes, Special Chapter End Cases, Integrative Cases, and Continuing Cases.

The third research objective of the paper was: "To determine the importance of the classified applications in HRM as per the intensity of usage". Out of the 15 applications the type of applications in HRM with the highest intensity of usage is Chapter End Cases. The next highest type is Skill Builders. The type of applications in HRM with the third highest usage is Practical Illustrations. The type with the fourth place is Special Applications. These are boxed materials uniquely developed by the respective authors. The type ranked as the fifth one in the order of usage is Critical Incidents. The other types of applications arranged in terms of importance based on the intensity of usage (in the descending order) are End Cases, Vignettes, Part End Cases, and Opening Chapter Cases as the sixth place; Continuing Cases as the seventh place; and Throughout Chapter Cases, Project Ideas, Split Sequential Vignettes, Special Chapter End Cases, and Integrative Cases as the eighth place.

The fourth research objective was: "To propose some implications of the findings in the way that will contribute theoretically and practically." The classified fifteen types of applications in HRM becomes a general toolkit for the academic who is required to develop skills in HRM within the students. The fifteen types of applications can be used as a general set of tools used for teaching by requiring the students to apply their theoretical understanding of HRM to practical situations that relate to HRM. There may be some lecturers who do not know that different specific types of cases are available for teaching purpose. As far as cases are considered eight types exist and they include (1) Chapter End Cases, (2) End Cases, (3) Part End Cases, (4) Opening Chapter Cases, (5) Continuing Cases, (6) Throughout Chapter Cases, (7) Special Chapter End Cases, and (8) Integrative Cases. There may be lecturers who are not familiar with some of the fifteen applications. It is suggested that such lecturers should study relevant textbooks and attempt to learn them through self-studies or assistance from senior academics who are adept at cases.

Not only the fifteen applications in HRM can be utilized as a general toolkit for teaching but also for evaluating the students' academic performance at examinations. Indeed, an application in HRM is a teaching method, a learning method, and an evaluation method as well. The relevant academics will be in a position to utilize some of the applications when preparing question papers that lead to maintain the quality of the evaluation of on-line examinations which have to be conducted during this Coronavirus Disease. First, the academics must possess a right attitude about applications in HRM and in this regard a good understanding of the utility of applications in HRM needs to be acquired. Then they must learn them and get experienced in utilizing them for teaching and evaluating. In this regard use of textbooks is a must and it should be mentioned here that use of one textbook is not sufficient if an academic wants to be really adept at using applications. Certainly, an academic should be adept at adopting and adapting applications in HRM from the appropriate textbooks. At

least chapter end cases, critical incidents, and skill builders as activities for teaching and learning (Opatha, 2019[3]) are suggested to be utilized.

Definitely locally and in Asia and perhaps globally being the first research paper of its kind, I expect that the paper is of some theoretical value as well as some practical value. Theoretically the paper fills a gap in exploring and describing applications in HRM appearing in the authoritative textbooks of HRM. The paper provides a synthesis of types of applications in HRM in a single paper. Of course, future research studies are needed to find systematically and scientifically answers for at least some questions which are:

1. How to develop and write an application which is relevant, adequate, and useful?
2. What are the useful steps or procedures for learning through cases?
3. Are there more appropriate applications at Bachelor's level? Then what are they?
4. Are there more appropriate applications at a Master's level? Then what are they?
5. What are the perceptions of students about use of applications and different applications?
6. What are the perceptions of academics in respect of applications in HRM as a teaching method?
7. What are the perceptions of academics in respect of applications in HRM as an assessment method?
8. Are there significant differences between a teaching class with the usage of applications and a teaching class without the usage of applications with regard to students' learning, students' satisfaction, and students' effectiveness?
9. What are special barriers which hinder the sufficient usage of applications in HRM in Sri Lanka or a developing context?
10. What are the strategies which could be taken in order to improve the usage of applications at the individual level, the group level, and the organizational level?

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