



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU

Y Drindod Dewi Sant

UNIVERSITY OF WALES

Trinity Saint David

"Strategic People Management: A Comparative Analysis of Walmart and Google in Adapting to Dynamic Work Environments and Technological Advancements"

Name:- Omkar Sudarshan Lagad

Student ID:- 2232639

Course:- Managing People In Organisations

Course Code:- BMMB705

Professor Name:- James Moore

Executive Summary 4

Overview of the Selected Organizations 5

- **1.1 Google: A Brief Overview**
- **1.2 Walmart: In-Depth Focus**

People Management Strategies 6-7

- **2.1 The Role of People Management in Organizational Success**
 - **2.1.1 Google's Approach to People Management**
 - **2.1.2 Walmart's Approach to People Management**

Work and Work Environments 8

- **3.1 Impact of Work Environments on People Management Strategies**
 - **3.1.1 Traditional vs. Hybrid Settings in Google**
 - **3.1.2 Walmart's Predominantly Traditional Work Environment**

Influence of Environmental Changes 9

- **4.1 Adapting to Internal and External Changes**
 - **4.1.1 Google's Adaptability**
 - **4.1.2 Walmart's Response to Change**

Organizational Size, Reach, and Sector Impact 10

- **5.1 Differing Approaches Based on Organizational Characteristics**
 - **5.1.1 Brief Comparative Analysis**
 - **5.1.2 Walmart's Strategy in Detail**

Key People Management Concerns 11-12

- **6.1 Employee Engagement, Performance Management, and Diversity**

- **6.1.1 Insights from Google**
- **6.1.2 Walmart's Practices and Challenges**

Technological Advancements and AI 13

- **7.1 The Role and Impact of Technology in People Management**
 - **7.1.1 Google's Innovation with AI**
 - **7.1.2 Technology in Walmart's People Management Strategy**

Recommendations 14

Conclusion 15

References 16-19

Executive Summary

With technology advancing and workplaces changing worldwide, People Management could not be more crucial in enterprises. It "is aimed at comparing and contrasting the People Management approaches of two extremely different companies: Walmart—the world's largest store, and Google, which is one of the giant companies in the technology industry" (Fleming Clarke, 2019, p. The study examines how conventional vs. hybrid workplaces and company conditions impact how they treat individuals.

According to (McMillon et al., 2016), this study examines how Google and Walmart adapt to internal and external developments, such as AI. The essay also examines how firms treat employees by size, reach, and sector. Diversity, performance management, and employee engagement are prioritised. The article offers unique recommendations to strengthen their People Management strategies and make them more robust to new opportunities and challenges (Verhoef and Broekhuizen, 2021). The following format presents broad opinions, compares the two firms' People Management, and suggests long-term suggestions.

1. Overview of the Selected Organizations

- **1.1 Google: A Brief Overview**

In 1997, Sergey Brin and Larry Page founded Google. It altered online searches by ranking pages with backlinks. It included YouTube to manage and share information as it developed swiftly (Holland, 2010). Google has a creative workplace culture. Gmail was created by employees spending 20% of their time on personal projects. Its youthful co-founders prioritise creativity above profit by providing free lunch and other benefits.

- **1.2 Walmart: In-Depth Focus**

Walmart, the world's largest retailer, prioritises operational efficiency, staff training and development, and employee development to ensure excellent customer service (Soderquist, 2005). Their approach to managing people is based on developing diversity and inclusion across all levels of the company and valuing and respecting everyone. Walmart incorporates digital technologies into their training courses to adapt to technology advancements. Company employs virtual reality to improve staff learning and development. Walmart is a notable people management case study since these activities are part of its bigger mission to increase employee satisfaction and operational efficiency (Fishman, 2007).

2. People Management Strategies

- **2.1 The Role of People Management in Organizational Success**

Smart talent acquisition, rigorous employee development, and performance management produce a dynamic workforce that helps businesses succeed (Dessler, 2020). This indicates a welcoming community that boosts morale and interest. Thus, this improves individual performance and fosters organisational growth and innovation. An organisation may create a healthy working environment that attracts and retains top individuals by investing in their growth and respecting their contributions. This ensures long-term success and a competitive edge (Pink, 2015).

- **2.1.1 Google's Approach to People Management**

According to research (Brock, 2015) we can determine that Google's method to manage its workers is based on innovation, employee well-being, and a culture of inclusion. This approach also helps employees be creative and work together. This is achieved by using data analytics to give each employee a personalised experience and chances to grow.

- **2.1.2 Walmart's Approach to People Management**

Walmart incorporates People Management into their strategy to provide excellent jobs and promotion possibilities. We believe that investing in people generates a sustainable business model that develops the firm and helps the society (Roberts and Berg, 2012). Walmart's People Management plan: competitive compensation, benefits, and employee development. The organisation continues to strengthen pay systems to ensure that employees are rewarded sufficiently for their contributions to its success.

Walmart prioritises learning and growth. Their immersive training uses cutting-edge technology like virtual reality to prepare employees for careers and business success (Walmart, 2018). In order to encourage every employee to flourish, the company's benefit programmes, which

comprise key perks and certain extra items, are developed for a large, diverse workforce. Walmart encourages diversity and inclusion along with skill development and career advancement. Diversity and inclusion are valued at all levels in the firm's workforce, which represents its communities. This requires increasing representation and making all employees feel valued, respected, and heard. Walmart's People Management approach promotes fair compensation, career advancement, skill development, and diversity and inclusion. These qualities produce a healthy, engaging workplace that promotes professional growth (Soderquist, 2005a).

3. Work and Work Environments

- **3.1 Impact of Work Environments on People Management Strategies**

Thus, the setting of the work has much influence on determining the way people in management are run and the way they work out in the interaction of the firms and the administration in relation to the employees. For example, the work environment of Google, which is both adaptable and innovative, paves the way for such HR strategies and practices that encourage independence, teamwork, and technologies (Hoffman et al., 2020). Walmart, on the other hand, has mostly traditional stores, so they need to focus on business speed, rigorous training, and organised performance management systems to make sure that all of their stores provide the same high-quality customer service (Zeynep Ton, 2014).

- **3.1.1 Traditional vs. Hybrid Settings in Google**

Google values collaboration and new ideas in the organization's standard settings. Their hybrid model, which was introduced after the pandemic, appreciates flexibility in combining work done from home and in the office to keep high output and good health for employees (Pfeffer, 2018).

- **3.1.2 Walmart's Predominantly Traditional Work Environment**

This approach to people management at Walmart is structured through efficient operations that are important to deal with the large store network under a predominantly conventional work set up. Walmart doesn't let its employees work from home like Google does; instead, a lot of its employees have to be in shops all the time (Fishman, 2007b). Because of this need, the company's people management focuses on thorough training, clear sharing of job roles, and strong support systems to make sure that customers always get good service. Walmart also spends money on technology like virtual reality to train employees, make stores run more smoothly, and make shopping and interacting with customers safer. This method not only helps keep service standards high, but it also helps employees grow in a fixed work setting (Whalin, 2009).

4. Influence of Environmental Changes

- **4.1 Adapting to Internal and External Changes**

Managing well means being able to adapt to changes in the internal and external world. Companies need to adapt their plans with time to changing new technologies, changes in economy, and social trends (Cameron and Quinn, 2011). For instance, a large number of modern businesses had to shift to remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. It means that tools like communication, performance management, and staff support need to be reviewed. Good adaptation helps maintain a high mood and productivity even when changes occur (Kotter, 2012).

- **4.1.1 Google's Adaptability**

Quick adoption of remote work technologies and open policies by Google is illustrative action responding to the change in technology and standards of employees by its flexible People Management (Duhigg, 2017).

- **4.1.2 Walmart's Response to Change**

For instance, the strategy responses to the market's trends, changes in the economy, and innovations of technology by Walmart clearly indicate how the company is managing changes within its environment. The big store has put a lot of money into e-commerce sites and going digital. Their big investments on e-commerce sites are meant to compete fairly with online stores like Amazon, in line with the changing customer preferences (Roberts and Berg, 2012b). During the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, Walmart quickly built up its online shopping and sidewalk pickup services. That showed how nimble it is in a quickly changing retail environment. Walmart has also put in a lot of work into its sustainability projects and programmes to bring down the impact they have on the environment. Among those are the efforts directed to waste minimization, as well as green energy projects that go hand in hand with an ever-increasing awareness of the environment globally (Ignatius, 2017).

5. Organizational Size, Reach, and Sector Impact

However, the size, the scope, and the industry are going to dictate the People Management strategies of an organization. The need is for strong and standardized procedures, e.g., for larger and more global businesses such as Walmart, while in smaller relative terms, they will definitely be more flexible and often be more personalized types (Pfeffer, 1994).

- **5.1.1 Brief Comparative Analysis**

Considering organization size, it has an impact on the way people are managed. For example, large organizations such as Walmart standardize methods at all levels, while for the small ones, they standardize methods, being flexible and personal in approaches (Boxall and Purcell, 2022).

- **5.1.2 Walmart's Strategy in Detail**

Walmart's strategy, which is affected by its huge size and ability to reach people all over the world, focuses on standardising its People Management practices so that all of its foreign sites are the same (Albrecht et al., 2015). This includes organised training programmes, clear job paths, and consistent rules that keep the organization's culture strong all over the world. Walmart takes advantage of its size to set up HR solutions that are both cost-effective and successful, and that fit its business goals and market presence (Simon, 2023).

6. Key People Management Concerns

- **6.1 Employee Engagement, Performance Management, and Diversity**

Concerns pertaining to key people management, such as employee engagement, performance management, and diversity, are essential to the success of an organisation (Pink, 2009). Effective engagement tactics boost both motivation and productivity, while thorough performance management ensures that the aims of employees are in line with the objectives of the organisation. In addition, making diversity a priority helps to cultivate an inclusive culture, which in turn contributes to increased innovation and decision-making. For the purpose of constructing a workforce that is both robust and dynamic, these areas are essential (Forner and Jones, 2020).

- **6.1.1 Insights from Google**

Google is amazing at promoting diversity and staff participation, focusing on a culture open to new ideas and a strong team that helps each other. Their performance management builds upon numbers and ensures everybody is just adding on to what they have already (Books, 2017).

- **6.1.2 Walmart's Practices and Challenges**

The necessity of managing a large and diversified staff across hundreds of sites throughout the world is the driving reason behind the People Management strategies that Walmart employs here. The organisation places a significant amount of importance on standardised training programmes, performance management systems, and employee engagement activities in order to guarantee effective and consistent service and to maximise operational efficiency (Ferguson, 2018). The primary focus of Walmart's effort in keeping their employee turnover rates low and maintaining a motivated staff, two major problems form—trying to keep the levels of employee engagement and employee satisfaction high. Walmart, therefore, found itself having to respond with a variety of employee welfare programs and career development opportunities in order to enhance morale and retention rates from its workforce (Bergdahl, 2010).

In addition, through the recruitment set programs, diversity training programs, and partnerships with organizations that focus on the worker diversity agenda (Walmart, 2023), it would promote a culture that is inclusive.

7. Technological Advancements and AI

● 7.1 The Role and Impact of Technology in People Management

People management has influenced organisational procedures in human resource, such as recruitment, performance reviews, and more, since they are guided by technologies fused with artificial intelligence (Eubanks, 2022). 1. Simplified decision-making, supported by data, increased the accuracy of recruiting in the form of algorithmic applicant screening, and drove employee engagement through personalized training programs. Technology nurtures the aspect of real-time feedback and performance tracking in order to take place with a more dynamic and responsive working environment (Li, 2023).

● 7.1.1 Google's Innovation with AI

The Google human resource department could involve artificial intelligence more pervasively. AI-powered software and predictive analytics can be very useful for the recruitment process and make way for sustained work empowerment for people. This innovation brings a more individualized experience to employees' work. The innovation also increases the effectiveness of the operations (Power, 2023).

● 7.1.2 Technology in Walmart's People Management Strategy

It is a strategy by which technology is used in the management of its people. This includes the use of technology in dealing with employees who, ideally, in any given organization, will make their work easy when embraced across the world and make them even happier. The retail giant uses data analytics to help in staff planning and further ensures that it draws the very best out of people who work at all its sites, to maintain a level of customer service at all times (McGregor, 2021). Also, Walmart is starting employee training with virtual reality (VR). It will provide a lifelike, immersive training space in which employees are instructed on various instances of customer service and how to be a manager. This technology-driven method sharpens training effectiveness and speeds readiness for tough jobs (Coulter, 2014).

Recommendations

Advice on how to make Walmart's people management strategy stronger

Better uses of AI and machine learning: Walmart should let AI and machine learning invade much farther through the people who handle positions. AI-driven advanced data could enable better hiring, more customized training, and more accurate prediction of worker needs.

This is going to not only make things run much more smoothly but will also help you better predict and act upon the changes that might be taking place in the marketplace and how your employees are acting. Offering more remote work options: Some of the processes of Walmart would require its personnel's presence in the store or their facility most of the times, but there would be some types of positions in administration and management that could be offered with more flexible models or a combination of both.

This could also allow Walmart to reach a more diverse group of applicants and maybe make more people from those jobs happy working for the company, hence keeping more of them employed. People Management with Focus on Sustainability: The company needs to think about how it needs to be in a position to integrate sustainability better into its People Management plans. Promoting a culture that values sustainable practices is one way to do this. This can be done through training programmes and projects that get workers involved with the company's sustainability goals. These actions not only follow global trends, but they also make the company look like a more responsible place to work.

Employee Wellness Programs: Since well-being and health, including mental health, enhance productivity, through excellent wellness programs, a firm can ensure overall well-being for each employee. Walmart should do much more by putting in place comprehensive health programs that help in mental health, bonuses for fitness, and developing programs that take care of the needs of a broad employee base on work-life balance.

Conclusion

This study looks at how Walmart and Google, two very well-known companies around the world, manage their employees. It shows how the type of organisation, its size, and its industry affect how these companies handle their employees. Walmart's strategy is based on its huge size and focus on standardisation and efficiency. Leading technology such as that of the company leverages employee skill development training through virtual reality.

The company that really stands out in the type of industry and approach used in conducting its business is Google. Its technology leverages management in promoting creative and flexible cultures. This is particularly evident in the manner in which it has embraced both hybrid models of work and AI in the functionalization of its HR processes. This is because the two firms are high in terms of showing commitment to diversity and the participation of employees.

They can accept that welcoming and strong staff keep them at the cutting edge of the market, adapting to its changing dynamics fast. More importantly, this research has not only looked at their different tactics but also suggested ways in which they can improve their People Management, including using more technology, being more environmentally friendly, and having more wellness programs for everyone. Beyond that point, Walmart and Google are going to become a more intense signal of how companies win with flexible and intelligent investments in people.

They are likely to set an example for businesses who would like to do well in a business world, moving towards greater complexity and being more technology-driven, in continuing upward improvements for their People Management.

References

- Albrecht, S.L., Bakker, A.B., Gruman, J.A., Macey, W.H. and Saks, A.M. (2015). Employee engagement, Human Resource Management Practices and Competitive Advantage. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 2(1), pp.7–35.
- Bergdahl, M. (2010). *HR Magazine - How the HR Division at Wal-Mart Drives the company's Success through People*. [online] HR Magazine. Available at: <https://www.hrmagazine.co.uk/content/features/how-the-hr-division-at-wal-mart-drives-the-companys-success-through-people/>.
- Bock, L. (2015). *Work Rules!: Insights from Inside Google That Will Transform How You Live and Lead*. [online] Google Books. Grand Central Publishing. Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Work_Rules/mkmICgAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%22Work+Rules [Accessed 24 Mar. 2024].
- Books, W. (2017). *Summary and Analysis of Smarter Faster Better: the Secrets of Being Productive in Life and Business*. Open Road Media.
- Boxall, P. and Purcell, J. (2022). *Strategy and Human Resource Management*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Cameron, K. and Quinn, R. (2011). *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework*. 3rd ed. San Francisco, Ca: Jossey-Bass.
- Coulter, K. (2014). *Revolutionizing Retail workers, Political action, and Social Change*. Basingstoke,: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Dessler, G. (2020). *Human Resource Management*. 16th ed. Harlow, England Pearson.
- Duhigg, C. (2017). *Smarter faster better : the transformative power of real productivity*. New York: Random House.
- Eubanks, B. (2022). *ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR HR : Use Ai to Support and Develop a Successful workforce*.S.L.: Kogan Page.

Ferguson, E. (2018). *Walmart's Generic Competitive Strategy and Intensive Growth Strategies*. [online] Panmore Institute. Available at: <https://panmore.com/walmart-generic-competitive-strategy-intensive-growth-strategies>.

Fishman, C. (2007a). *The Wal-Mart Effect: How an Out-of-town Superstore Became a Superpower*. [online] Google Books. Penguin Books Limited. Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/The_Wal_Mart_Effect/oVfwgL8jKFMC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%22The+Wal-Mart+Effect%22+by+Charles+Fishman&printsec=frontcover [Accessed 23 Mar. 2024].

Fishman, C. (2007b). *The Wal-Mart Effect: How the World's Most Powerful Company Really Works--and How It's Transforming the American Economy*. First ed. Penguin Books.

Fleming, M. and Clarke, W. (2019). *The Future of Work: How New Technologies Are Transforming Tasks* We thank Harry Holzer, Daniel Rock, and Bledi Taska for helpful comments. [online] Available at: <https://mitibmwatsonailab.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Future-of-Work-How-New-Technologies-Are-Transforming-Tasks2.pdf>.

Forner , V.W. and Jones, M. (2020). Motivating workers: How Leaders Apply self-determination Theory in Organizations. *Emerald Insights*, 18(2753-8567).

Hoffman, B.J., Shoss, M.K. and Wegman, L.A. (2020). *The Cambridge Handbook of the Changing Nature of Work*. United Kingdom ; New York, Ny: Cambridge University Press.

Holland , C. (2010). *The Google Settlement: a Brief Overview*. [online] Uwtsd.ac.uk. Available at: <https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/core/journals/legal-information-management/article/google-settlement-a-brief-overview/F5EA385DB2E21C8A377D2A701F691319> [Accessed 23 Mar. 2024].

Ignatius, A. (2017). *An inside Look at the Ups and Downs of Walmart's Journey*. [online] Harvard Business Review. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2017/03/we-need-people-to-lean-into-the-future>.

Kotter, J.P. (2012). *Leading Change*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press.

Li, O. (2023). *Re-creating the World - on Necessary Features for the Creation of AGI*. [online] ScienceDirect . Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2664329423000067>.

McGregor, J. (2021). *Dead Weeks, 'Resenteeism' and How Walmart's HR Chief Is Putting AI to Work*. [online] Forbes. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jenamcgregor/2023/07/07/dead-weeks-resenteeism-and-how-walmarts-hr-chief-is-putting-ai-to-work/?sh=3ff1f0853f45> [Accessed 15 Apr. 2024].

McMillon, D., President, CEO and Walmart (2016). *How Walmart is Transforming to Better Serve Customers*. [online] corporate.walmart.com. Available at: <https://corporate.walmart.com/news/2016/10/06/how-walmart-is-transforming-to-better-serve-customers#:~:text=Our%20goal%20is%20to%20earn> [Accessed 23 Mar. 2024].

Pfeffer, J. (1994). *Competitive Advantage through People : Unleashing the Power of the Work Force*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press.

Pfeffer, J. (2018). *Dying for a Paycheck : How Modern Management Harms Employee Health and Company Performance and What We Can Do about It*. New York, Ny: Harperbusiness, An Imprint Of Harpercollins Publishers.

Pink, D. (2009). *Drive: the Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us*. Riverhead Books.

Pink, D. (2015). *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*. [online] Available at: <https://meridiancoaching.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Drive-by-Daniel-Pink.pdf>.

Power, R. (2023). *Where AI Can and Can't Help in Talent Management*. [online] Forbes. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rhettpower/2023/08/13/where-ai-can-and-cant-help-in-talent-management/?sh=20fa63e9160f> [Accessed 15 Apr. 2024].

Roberts , B. and Berg, N. (2012a). Walmart: key insights and practical lessons from the world's largest retailer. *Choice Reviews Online*, 50(01), pp.50-038650-0386. doi:<https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.50-0386>.

Roberts, B. and Berg, N. (2012b). *Walmart*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Simon, H.A. (2023). Bounded Rationality and Organizational Learning. *Organization Science*, 2(1), pp.125–134.

Soderquist, D. (2005a). *The Wal-Mart Way*. Thomas Nelson Inc.

Soderquist, D. (2005b). *The Wal-Mart Way: The Inside Story of the Success of the World's Largest Company*. [online] *Google Books*. Thomas Nelson Inc. Available at: https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/_/mIxxwVLXdyjQC?hl=en&gbpv=1 [Accessed 23 Mar. 2024].

Verhoef, P.C. and Broekhuizen, T. (2021). Digital transformation: a Multidisciplinary Reflection and Research Agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, [online] 122(122), pp.889–901. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.09.022>.

Walmart (2018). *Your Story is Our Story Culture Diversity & Inclusion 2018 Report*. [online] Available at: <https://corporate.walmart.com/content/dam/corporate/documents/purpose/culture-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-report/walmart-cdi-report-vfweb.pdf>.

Walmart (2023). *Belonging, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*. [online] Belonging, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. Available at: <https://corporate.walmart.com/purpose/belonging-diversity-equity-inclusion>.

Whalin, G. (2009). *Retail Superstars : inside the 25 Best Independent Stores in America*. New York: Portfolio.

Zeynep Ton (2014). *The Good Jobs Strategy How the Smartest Companies Invest in Employees to Lower Costs and Boost Profits*. Boston [U.A.] New Harvest.

