

CONCEPTS IN THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

The current status of contemporary society with the changes and profound transformations of the development of information technology requires a perfect adaptation of the managerial act, simultaneously with the acquisition of new models of labour organization and, of course, of human resources and the initiation of practical procedures that as a whole ensure the efficient functioning of the organizational ensemble. Our emphasis on human resource stems from the central place that it occupies in the organizational structure. This aspect has focused the attention of many specialists so that today we can talk about a historical evolution of the concept of human resource management, to the configuration of which generations of researchers have contributed.

Keywords: *human resource management, concept, evolution.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The success of an organization depends largely on the rational and efficient use of human resources, which are unique precisely because of the increased potential for growth and development in terms of the ability to know and overcome their own limits. Human resources are the consequences of the interdependence between the protagonists of the organization, both managers and performers, who have an economic, social or cultural character specific to that community. Therefore, we can highlight that the notion of "human resources" describes an increasingly complex social economic grouping, the individual, as a resource, being the main subject, to the detriment of the material ones, becoming in time an essential, special one "with all sides of his personality, with the challenges and needs that are specific to him and that make him unique, his contribution to achieving the objectives of

the organization to which he belongs being also unique." (Chaşovschi & Bordeianu, 2021)

In the specialized literature we find a series of definitions that highlight the diversity of this category that emblematically illustrate the concept of human resources. Studies conducted by specialists in this field indicate that "human resources are the organization; people represent a common resource and at the same time, a key resource, a vital resource, today and tomorrow, for all organizations, and they ensure their survival, development and competitive success." (Manolescu, 1998) Equally, "human resources have special characteristics that directly determine the degree of efficient use and capitalization of other resources" (Rotaru & Prodan, 1998), but "adequate human resources are the people in an organization who make an important contribution to achieving the objectives of the management system" (Certo, 2001). For some, however, "the term "human resources" represents a disturbingly distant concept for people." (Huczynski & Buchanan, 2001)

The exposure of these definitions shows how necessary human resources are in an organization and that all the characteristics attributed to them fully harmonize with the theory of human resource management.

The evolution of the concept and the managerial exercise in the sphere of human resources has led over time to the creation of distinct models of functions and actions of human resource managers in order to help to know and understand its content.

To write about a field, subject or concept it is necessary to define their terms as objects of reflection of study and research. The birth and progress of the concept of human resource

management represents the answer to the gradual development of the society. The presentation of the theoretical meaning forces us to resort to an etymological analysis of the word "management." Specialists in this field believe that the term derives from the Latin "manus" which translated into Romanian means "hand, manner, style, way of working" (Cracea, 2009). It is later taken up in Italian as "mannegio" (processing by hand), then in French as "manège" and in English as the verb "to manage." Englishmen then derived "manager" and "management," meaning leader and leadership. In the online Romanian dictionary we find the term "management" as:

1. The set of organizational and management activities through which the objectives of a company / enterprise are determined, the resources and work processes necessary for their achievement and their executors, through which the work of employees is integrated and assembled, using several techniques and methods appropriate to achieve the goals of the operation of the company / enterprise.
2. Economic subject aimed at studying the processes and relationships of management (1) within the firm / enterprise, in order to highlight the general rules (principles) governing them and to develop new systems, methods, techniques and ways of management, designed to ensure increased competitiveness (Dexonline, n.d.).

The emergence of human resource management is the product of the contribution over time of different currents of thought of some scientific personalities in the field. Most of the theories that laid the foundations of management developed with the industrial revolution in the latter part of the eighteenth century, when, by expanding factories and increasing the number of employees, they had to find new methods of management in order to make them more efficient. Both working conditions and social patterns or division of labour have undergone major transformations. A new type of employee appears, a boss, who is not the owner as they were used to, a phenomenon that has also attracted concern about current employee problems. (Ivancevich & Konopaske, 2013) For John Storey, Dave Ulrich, and Patrick M. Wright,

the terms used over time for these kinds of concerns, personnel management, personnel administration, employee relations, human capital management, industrial relations, or employment management, mirror in different ways the emergence of human resource management. The phrase "personnel management" was associated with well-being, focused on the individual or small groups of individuals, while expressions such as "industrial relations" and "labour relations" emphasize the collectivist, pluralistic way of the manager-employee relationship, based on partnerships and mutual gain. Therefore, human resource management is "the predominant term to describe theory and practices relating to how people are managed in the workplace" (Storey et al., 2019).

2. CONCEPTS OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The main theories or approaches that have marked the evolution of human resource management are of fundamental importance in knowing as complete and thorough as possible the specific processes. In order to emphasize the basic features of human resource management, it is useful to specify both its place and its significance. The specialized literature offers multiple and sometimes contradictory opinions.

In Michael Armstrong's view, human resource management is "a strategic and coherent approach to managing an organization's most valuable assets - the people who work there and who contribute individually and collectively to achieving its goals." John Storey quoted by Armstrong believes that human resource management can be viewed as a "set of interdependent policies with an ideological and philosophical basis." (Armstrong, 2006)

P. Charpaentier, X. Deroy, Odile Uzan are of the opinion that human resource management constitutes "the set of structures and modalities used by enterprises to address and manage human and social problems at the different levels at which they arise." (Charpaentier et al., 2000) According to G.A. Cole, human resource management comprises "a set of specialized

activities aimed at conceiving, implementing and supporting the essential objectives of the organization regarding the use of its employees." (Cole, 2000) In Boxall's opinion, human resource management is: "the management of labour and people, in the sense of desired limits." (Boxall & Purcell, 2007) From another perspective, Grimshaw and Rubery argue that human resource management "addresses how organizations manage their workforce." (Grimshaw & Rubery, 2007)

Summarizing the definitions proposed by different specialists in the field, we can conclude that human resource management represents the totality of structures and methodologies for organizing, approaching and managing strategies, policies and specific activities for conceiving, implementing and supporting objectives in an organization, aiming at human resources.

The general purpose of human resource management is to obtain and capitalize on the knowledge and experience in the field, necessary to achieve a high degree of organizational performance, by applying a methodology or a set of specific tools.

Policies specific to this field are basic rules and attitudes adopted within a company for human resource management. They must be integrated into the management of the enterprise, obtain the support of all staff, act at all levels and ensure a favourable climate for the development of human resources. They also provide for the recognition and motivation of high-performing staff, stimulating the desire for continuous improvement and involving the professionally competent in the decision-making process.

3. MODELS OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The progress made on managerial theory and practice in the sphere of human resources eventually led to the formulation of distinct models of human resource management. They present working manners or thinking concepts that, through understanding and application, help us capitalize more easily on the processes characteristic to the environmental changes or

societal requirements. The most representative models described in the literature are the following:

The Armstrong Model - it is based on the idea that planning and application are the two essential activities in the field of human resources, which must focus on obtaining, retaining, motivating and developing these resources, while being dependent on the environment, strategic objectives and culture of the organization. These three elements, together with personnel activities, define the complete process of personnel management. (Armstrong, 1991)

The Heneman Model - presents us with the main objective of human resource management activity that is based on stimulating the effectiveness and results of available human resources in the structure of any organization using three fundamental components:

- main activities - reflect the policies, programs and methods used;
- achieved results - represent contributions to the achievement of organizational goals;
- external influences - integrate economic conditions, labour market, laws and regulations, trade unions. (Heneman et al., 1989)

The Milkovich-Boudreau model - incorporates the basic features of human resource management by harmonizing content with its diagnostic process, a process that is structured into four main stages:

- assessment of human resources conditions;
- setting human resources objectives;
- choosing and applying human resources activities;
- evaluation of results. (Milkovich & Boudreau, 1985)

The FISHER model - tries to cover the entire issue of human resources and highlights the manner in which their activities or functions influence or support the organizational environment, employees and positions, as well as organizational results and predefined positions. This model gives great interest to more than the resulting yield, which means both a complete and complex knowledge of the objectives of human resource management. (Fisher et al., 1996)

The Ivancevich-Glueck model - tries, through a complex and coherent approach to human resources management activities and results, to emphasize some influences of the organizational structure, both internal and external, which alter the good understanding between the content of specific activities and human characteristics, suggesting the diversification of activities circumscribed to the field in question, as a solution to include as many sides as possible regarding the work with the human resource. (Manolescu, 2003)

From the studies conducted by specialists, theoreticians or practitioners of human resource management, we can see that each organization develops its own culture characteristic of the area in which it operates, assimilating the philosophy and beliefs of its members.

In Romania, human resource management stands out mainly after 1989. Access to international literature or the opportunity to prospect, in recent years, online databases with outstanding scientific publications have led to an update of the concepts and models used in this field. At the level of organizations in Romania, there are strategies regarding human resource management, but in some cases they have remained only at the stage of intentions or statements. There is a lack of communication between senior management and employees, still marked by formal hierarchical authority, the latter not being made aware of the content of human resource strategies. Personnel activities are sometimes controversial or even loathed, representing sources of discontent. Organizations want fast, immediate results. (Petrescu, 2014)

In France, according to the legal and cultural framework according to which organizations are managed, we can determine a series of socio-organizational properties of human resource management, as following:

- reduced mobility of staff;
- procedures and structures with high formalism;
- the great importance of hierarchy;
- the existence of numerous regulations in labour law;
- often conflicting social relations.

In the US, human resource management is inspired by the pragmatic side of life. Private

property and entrepreneurship are the main benchmarks that influence the way the American citizen acts and thinks. The specific characteristics of the management practiced from the smallest to the largest organizations are:

- profit maximization;
- increase productivity;
- individualized management;
- mainly action-oriented;
- priority for individual self-realization;
- democratic management;
- optimism;
- analytical approach.

If a new market is developed or diversified, the tendency is to replace human resources rather than training to accommodate new requirements.

In Japan, the organizational climate is based on cultural symbols and traditional conceptions. The evolution of human resource management used by the Japanese supports the idea that the whole is more than the sum of its parts, that is, translated into simple language:

- contribute to the welfare of the society;
- achieve harmony and cooperation within the company;
- to continuously improve their activities;
- show courtesy and humility by staff;
- to achieve a national service through the industrial activity carried out;
- to show honesty in actions and behaviour;
- to strive for better and better results;
- corrections and assimilation of new elements;
- to express gratitude whenever appropriate.

A simple analysis of the objectives exposes the importance of the organizational culture in Japanese management. Thus, immediately after the first major objective, through which the company aims to contribute to the welfare of the society (an altruistic component of the Japanese managerial culture), it is placed to achieve harmony and cooperation within the company. This second objective is closely related to the forms of manifestation of organizational culture. (Caluschi et al., 2003)

In Italy, a study carried out by the Italian association for personnel management, companies under 100 employees have neither a human resource department nor a personnel policy officer. The use of human resource

management techniques is poorly propagated, adapting to local specificities, the decisions being made by the owners.

In Germany, the specialized education system is closely linked to organizations and characterized by rationality, competence and coordination skills, constituting a well-trained workforce in all economic sectors. (Edit, 2010)

4. CONCLUSIONS

The presented models allow a deeper understanding of the concept of human resource management, representing a crucial aspect in economic and social development, as well as an essential factor for increasing the competitiveness of an organization. In a knowledge-based society, human resource management demonstrates performance capacity, contributing to harmonizing the interests of employees and society, as well as aligning present generations with future ones. Therefore, human resource management plays a central role in the creation and development of organizations, which depends on the level of training and use of human resources, their creative and innovative role in conducting an economic activity. This work can be useful to those who want to supplement their knowledge in the field of human resource management. Learning the concepts of human resource management will allow us to capitalize in the future on professional opportunities as managers or specialists in human resources, with specific competencies, such as strategic, economic, cultural and organizational effectiveness.

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