

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT THROUGH ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES

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Abstract: *The theory of organizational support takes into account employees' subjective perceptions of how much the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. This subjective perception arises as a response to the manner in which the organization attends to employees' social and emotional needs. The practices of human resource management that empower employees and motivated organizational behavior are positively correlated. The study examines how human resource management affects employees' subjective perception of organizational support while also analyzing how employees evaluate the organization's level of support and the environment it cultivates for employees to feel valued and respected. The methodology of this paper is based on the analysis of empirical data gathered using a standardized questionnaire that was administered in a manufacturing company. The most important result of research emphasizes the fact that having a good relationship based on respect and care helps establish motivated behavior of employees.*

Key words: human resources, organizational behavior, motivation, organizational support

1. INTRODUCTION

The process of globalization, technological development, information and communication networks, and the increasing concern for ethical issues create a framework in which human resource management becomes a central function of business (Kalyani and Prakashan Sahoo, 2011). The increased complexity of operations in today's organizations, as well as more dynamic and intricate business practices, affect the way we approach employees. In addition to creating competitiveness for the organization, human resource management also creates favorable conditions for both internal and external stakeholders of the organization (Chernyak-Hai, Bareket-Bojmel and Margalit, 2023). Over time, human resource management has become a leading function that distinguishes people as the most important asset of the organization. As human resource management is one of the functions within an organization, it does not operate in isolation but constantly collaborates with other functions. Since people are the most significant asset of an organization, without whom the business cannot function, we can say that all managers are also human resource managers. The overall success of the organization depends on employee motivation, training and development, organizational commitment, and the alignment of individual goals with organizational goals. Human resource management increasingly manifests itself through perceived organizational support for employees (Côté, Lauzier and Stinglhamber, 2021). According to perceived organizational support theory, employees judge the extent to which their organization is being (un)favorable toward them. These judgments tap on employees' beliefs that the organization values their contributions and cares about them (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986). The behaviorist school of management was developed due to the lack of inclusion of the human factor in the processes of production and organizational management. The principles advocated by the classical school of management were questioned, and the human factor significantly influenced the success or failure of production itself, and that management scientists need to understand the behaviorist school of thought in order to understand organizational behavior (Braunstein, 1972). Research on how employee satisfaction improves organizational processes becomes the focus of further theory development. The contribution of the behaviorist school lies in the fact that even today, the human being is at the center of modern organizations, and this assertion will only become stronger in the culture of organizations over time. Employee motivation, concern for their rights, working conditions, creating a pleasant organizational climate, supporting employees during their work and career development are just some of the items that today's organizations advocate, stemming from this research. Human resource management is a scientific discipline that deals with the study of employees in an organization. As a

scientific discipline, human resource management, or personnel management, was first mentioned in the 1970s and 1980s in the United States in professional literature and then began to be used in everyday communication. In modern organizations, this function is seen as strategic and thus has a significant impact on the business of the enterprise. A strategic approach to human resource management means that the defined mission, vision, and goals are in line with the overall mission, vision, and goals of the organization. Human resource management, as a strategically oriented integral part of strategic global management, has an impact on overall organizational processes by creating the relevant mechanism and climate to cultivate employees' behaviors of sharing knowledge and ideas for achieving significant changes and innovations (Beddow, 2021). The changes taking place in the world have far-reaching consequences for societies and organizations. Influences on change can be divided according to numerous factors, but when considering them in relation to the organization and the implementation of human resource management practices, they can be classified into two categories: (1) internal - everything that happens within the organization, characteristics of the organization, characteristics of employees, characteristics of the jobs performed, and (2) external - changes that the organization usually has no control over, which occur outside its framework, such as government activities, economic environment, cultural environment (Grubić-Nešić Leposava, 2014). As changes occur, organizations transition from traditional, hierarchical, centralized structures to modern organizations characterized by a holistic approach that achieves greater productivity through synergistic effects by working together. Likewise, with changes in organizations, human resource management also changes and gains new frameworks for operation. Traditional personnel management gives way to human resource management (Sparrow, Schuler and Jackson, 1994). When talking about people management as a concept, two terms are distinguished: (1) traditional personnel management and (2) human resource management. In the history of management development, the contribution of Frederick Taylor to the classical school of management is mentioned, and the idea of personnel management emerged precisely during the 1970s. At that time, the function performed basic tasks related to personnel, recruitment, selection, payroll calculation, rule compliance, social care, and regulation of employee departures from the company (retirement, redundancy). All these activities were important for the organization and mostly focused on administration and bureaucracy (Kaur, 2014). Only in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the concept of human resource management was introduced. Personnel management could no longer respond to the changes that were occurring. With the development of technology and the global economy, there was a need for frequent adaptation, i.e., flexibility. Reactive and passive people management was no longer cost-effective. Effective human resource management involves the manager's ability to recognize the differences in individual characteristics that affect behavior, satisfaction, and commitment to work. The behavior of an individual can be influenced by their personality, abilities, and other characteristics. It is crucial to create a culture that promotes respect, creativity, exchange of opinions and ideas, as it will positively impact employee satisfaction, productivity, and the creation of constructive conflicts. A motivated employee, driven to achieve goals, will direct their behavior towards achieving results (Chernyak-Hai, Bareket-Bojmel and Margalit, 2023). In addition to the employee's personality, the manager and the organization play a significant role in providing support to individuals and effectively managing their behaviors through well-defined leadership schemes and the support of organizational structure and culture. The conditions for motivating employees involve the organization providing support for positive motivation by being fair and equitable towards everyone, providing feedback, and allowing employees to rely on it. The organization primarily fulfills this function through the human resources management function.

The theory of organizational support examines the development, nature, and outcomes of the subjective perception of organizational support. According to this theory, employees develop this subjective perception in response to the relationship between their social and emotional needs and the organization's willingness to acknowledge these needs and reward the employee's efforts. Empowerment is recognized as a key component of organizational support, and research shows a positive correlation between high autonomy and increased organizational support (Eisenberger, Rhoades and Cameron, 1999). When an organization believes in its employees' ability to make appropriate and wise decisions, perform their jobs effectively, and help the organization achieve its goals, employees will reciprocate by performing their tasks in a better manner. The existence of directly impacts higher commitment, improved performance, desirable employee behavior, reduced avoidance behaviors, and unnecessary efforts (Baran, Shanock and Miller, 2012). According to research conducted by Eisenberger (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986) organizational behaviors and treatment towards employees influence employee performance. A meta-analysis by Riggle confirmed a strong and positive relationship between

organizational support and commitment and job satisfaction, along with a strong negative relationship between organizational support and intention to quit (Riggle, Edmondson and Hansen, 2009). Studies have also shown that affective commitment is positively correlated and predictive with exhibited organizational citizenship behaviors (Liu, 2009). Engagement of employees in the workplace is referred to by various synonyms in the literature, such as job commitment, organizational dedication, or organizational commitment. Several definitions of organizational commitment can be found in the literature, although scholars studying organizational commitment have not come to an agreement as to the nature of organizational commitment, and how it develops (Mercurio, 2015). In 1971, Sheldon defined organizational commitment as "a positive evaluation of the organization and a willingness to work towards its goals" (Sheldon, 1971). In 1974, Porter defined commitment as "a strong acceptance and belief in organizational goals and a willingness to exert significant effort for the organization, as well as a desire to maintain membership in it (Porter *et al.*, 1974). Mowday, Porter & Steers in 1979 wrote that behavioral commitment "relates to the process by which individuals become locked into certain organizations"(Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1979). Meyer and Herscovitch in 2001 theorized that affective commitment is developed primarily by an individual's involvement and identification with the organization, they asserted that individuals become intrinsically motivated or involved in a course of action that develops from an identification, association, and attachment with the larger organization's values and objectives (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). Subjective experience of organizational support refers to employees' perception of the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Research on organizational support begins by recognizing that managers who are committed to their employees directly influence employees' commitment to them and the organization. If an organization cares about the well-being of its employees, they will experience affective commitment, a desire for involvement in achieving organizational goals, and the expectation that greater performance and engagement will lead to rewards. This mutual give-and-take relationship respects the unique individuality of each employee, celebrates small successes, and prioritizes mutual respect and care.

2. METHODS

The subject of the research is how human resource management in an organization affects the subjective experience of organizational support. The research problem relates to organizational support, specifically the subjective experience of organizational support by employees about the organization they work for, as well as the question of whether the organization creates adequate conditions in which they will feel valued and respected. The research hypotheses are H1: The organization implements human resource management through employee support. H2: Human resource management is based on care for employees. H3: Employees believe that the organization they work for is sufficiently focused on the well-being of its employees. The research on how employees perceive and whether they receive organizational support was measured using the Perceived Organizational Support (POS) test developed by Eisenberger R, Huntington R, Hutchison S, and Sowa D. (1986). The test encompasses the employees' perception of the extent to which the organization is willing to reward greater effort made by employees because it values their contribution and cares about their well-being. The test consists of seventeen items, of which eight measure the employees' perception of the extent to which the organization values their contribution, while the remaining nine relate to measures the organization could take to influence employees' well-being. The method used is the Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1-strongly disagree, 5-strongly agree). The research was conducted in a company that produces raw and refined oils, biodiesel, and protein meal. The company processes sunflower and soy and has become the largest factory in Southeast Europe for the production of biodiesel, extraction and peeling-pressing sector, and the energy-boiler sector. A total of 31 people were examined, with 80.65% male and 19.35% female. The higher percentage of males can be explained by the sectors in which the research was conducted, given that physical jobs are mostly performed by men. The average age of the participants is 41 years old, with the youngest being 23 and the oldest being 61. It was noticed that the highest percentage of participants is between 30 and 40 years old, followed by those between 40 and 55 years old, while a small number of participants are younger than 20 to 30 years old. The average work experience of the participants is 17 years. In the given organization, employees mostly have work experience of over 5 years, while only younger employees have work experience of 1 to 5 years. Out of the total number of participants, 67.74% have secondary education, 19.35% have completed university education, followed by vocational schools and primary education with the lowest percentage. None of the participants have completed specialist,

doctoral, or master's studies. Technical professions are more dominant with 80.65% compared to social professions, which have a percentage of 19.35%. When it comes to positions in the organization, less than 50% of the participants have managerial positions, and those who do mostly hold lower and middle-level management positions, while 67.74% of the participants are not managers. As for career advancement in the organization, 58% of the participants remained in the same position throughout their career in the organization, while 42% were promoted, and none of them were demoted in their career path.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the statement "The organization values my contribution to its well-being," an identical number of respondents, 35.5%, are unsure or mostly agree with the statement that the organization values their contribution to well-being, the distribution of responses is equally divided for the other options, 9.7% of respondents fully agree with the statement, but an equal percentage strongly disagrees or disagrees with the statement. 29% of respondents completely agree that the organization would not hire someone else for a lower salary instead of them, while the same number of respondents believes that the organization would replace them with someone who has a lower salary. Considering that the research was conducted in the logistics sector and two sectors involving more manual labor, we can interpret the results from the perspective of employees performing manual jobs and understand that they are more concerned about their position being replaced by someone who will do their job for a lower salary. The data of 58.1% indicates that more than half of the employees are unsure if the organization values the effort they put in. The organization does not provide adequate feedback to employees regarding their value and recognition as essential contributors to overall operations and good results. A higher percentage of employees, 41.9%, are unsure if the organization rigorously evaluates their goals and values, followed by a percentage of 25.81% of respondents who disagree that the organization is strict in evaluations, very small percentages of affirmative responses were obtained. The largest percentage of employees, 58%, disagree that the organization ignores their complaints if they exist, indicating that the organization is there for them if they raise specific concerns. Since the highest percentage of employees, 35.5%, is unsure if the organization neglects their interests when making decisions, we can conclude that the organization, although caring about employees as shown by the percentages of 22.6% and 19.4% of employees who disagree, does not clearly communicate this to everyone. A higher percentage of employees agree that the organization, or human resource management, is willing to help if employees come to them with a problem. This percentage, in total (mostly agree and fully agree), amounts to 58.1%, which is more than half of the employees. An identical percentage of respondents, 35.5%, are unsure if the organization genuinely cares about their well-being, and mostly agree that the organization carries out its tasks with their well-being in mind. The high percentage of uncertainty among respondents can be explained by the lack of clear support and feedback from management. 48.4% of employees agree that the organization is willing to help them achieve maximum results and perform their job to the best of their abilities. A smaller percentage, 19.4%, of respondents believe that the organization is not willing to provide support in carrying out their tasks. Half of the employees, 51.7%, feel that the organization recognizes a job well done, while 19.3% of respondents think otherwise, the remaining respondents, a larger percentage of 19%, are unsure of the answer. Overall, more than half of the respondents, 58.1%, believe that the organization would assist employees if they request it, while a much smaller percentage disagrees with this statement. Connecting to the previous statement regarding the organization helping an employee when they have a problem, we can conclude that the organization will provide support to those employees who express their need for assistance or raise a problem. Job satisfaction is the most important category of employee motivation and behavior. Related to that, in organization we can conclude that nearly half of the respondents, 45.2%, believe that the organization cares about their satisfaction. However, a significant number of respondents, 32.3%, were unsure about their organization's concern for their job satisfaction. It is important to note that 22.6% of respondents believe that the organization does not care about their well-being. One of the responses where a majority of respondents disagree with the statement that the organization exploits them for its own needs amounts to 45.2%. Meanwhile, 12.9% of respondents feel that the organization does exploit them, which may be the case in sectors dominated by physical labor and manual tasks. Considering the total number of affirmative responses, the percentage of 38.8% indicates that employees do not feel that the organization genuinely cares about their needs. 22.6% of respondents were unsure about the organization's care for them. Nearly half of the respondents are unsure if the organization values their

opinion, with a percentage of 41.9%, indicating a lack of employee involvement in decision-making processes crucial for overall operations or individual aspects of their tasks. 41.9% of respondents do not believe that the organization takes pride in its achievements, while 32.3% of respondents were unsure about this statement, which likely speaks to an organizational culture that does not celebrate the "small victories" of its employees. Regarding the statement about job interest, the responses were predominantly evenly divided. 29% of respondents believe that the organization makes an effort to create interesting tasks, 25.8% of respondents were unsure, while a slightly larger percentage, 45.2% of respondents, disagree with this statement. As mentioned before, two out of the three sectors surveyed mainly involve manual, repetitive, and straightforward tasks, which can explain this result.

H1: The organization implements human resource management through employee support.

In many questions, the response "unsure" holds the highest percentage. However, looking at the overall results, we can observe that the organization provides support when employees face problems, the human resource management does not ignore complaints and it helps employees perform their job in the best possible way. Human resource management based on employee support is present in the organization, but there is room for improvement. As a suggestion for improvement, there should be a greater focus on employees performing manual tasks, considering their long tenure and loyalty to the organization. By implementing strategies to motivate these workers, they will be more satisfied and productive, leading to better overall results for the organization. The hypothesis is confirmed.

H2: Human resource management is based on caring for employees.

By examining the overall responses of employees and statements such as "The organization shows very little concern for me" and "The organization takes pride in my achievements," we conclude that half of the respondents disagree with these statements. The hypothesis is not confirmed.

H3: Employees believe that the organization they work for is adequately focused on employee well-being. A higher percentage, of respondents agree that the organization is focused on their well-being. They do not believe that they are being exploited or that their needs and interests are ignored when decisions are made. The hypothesis is confirmed.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this paper is to better understand the functioning and management of an organization, specifically the human resource management segment within a manufacturing organization. The essential outcome is the presence of a quality mutual relationship based on respect and care, fostering positive organizational relationships. Personal characteristics of individuals are of great importance in understanding employee behavior, as they are responsible for generating new creative ideas and solutions. However, while it is important to nurture personality differences, it is equally crucial to create an organizational culture that fosters shared values with its employees, expressing selfless concern for their well-being and welfare. Motivated employee behavior can be seen solely through well-defined organizational structures that respect these principles. It is observed that different individuals are driven by different motivators, which can be material or non-material, and it is expected that the human resource management function determines "what motivates whom". In the conducted research within the company, three different sectors were examined: logistics, extraction sector, and energy sector. More than 50% of the respondents were not in managerial positions, and those who were mostly held lower and middle-level supervisory roles. Additionally, for a significant number of statements, ten out of seventeen, the highest percentage of responses belonged to "unsure." This phenomenon can be explained by employees' fear of providing honest answers, the lack of feedback on job performance, and an inadequate support system that would help employees gain better insight into the organization's care.

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