

BEHAVIOR OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES FUNCTION IN THE ORGANIZATIONS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Annotation

The present scientific approach addresses the issue of the behavior of the human resources function in the organizations of the Republic of Moldova. Last researches have demonstrated the direct link between human resources management and organizational performance. At the same time, HR provides a wide range of services to its clients or stakeholders, and at the same time conducts a large number of activities targeting employees of the organization. Starting from the increasing role that human resources have on organizational performance, we considered it important to evaluate the human resources function in local organizations both in quantitative and qualitative terms. In this context, a survey was carried out involving 115 organizations from the Republic of Moldova with more than 75 employees. The obtained results have proved that the organizations in the Republic of Moldova are still far from achieving a good management of human resources, due largely to the shortage of specialists in the field, but also to the superior management attitude towards this subdivision.

Keywords: human resources, human resources function, human resources management, human resources managers, human resources specialists.

JEL Classification: J44; M12; M53; M54.

1. Introduction

At present, there are some problems in the Republic of Moldova related to the implementation and development of the performance management of human resources. The erroneous perception of society over the years, as well as the subjective attitude of superior management towards this field, has led to the management of human resources in indigenous organizations being treated in a simplistic manner, as a secondary element, away from the current requirements imposed by competitive economy. Probably, this interpretation, far from what was required, has also generated an appropriate attitude towards the curriculum of economic training.

In a number of organizations in the Republic of Moldova, the human resources function, responsible for the development and implementation of effective staffing strategies and policies, performs only some operational activities related to human resources management. In many cases, employees of the human resources function don't correspond to the studies necessary to occupy any job in this organizational subdivision. The lack of specialists in the field has meant that people with different professional backgrounds are employed in the human resources subdivision of the local organizations. Most of the time, the situation has led to worsening human resources problems, while generating a host of other issues within these organizations.

2. The theoretical framework of the function of human resources

Within organizations, human resources function has a determining role in efficient management and staff development. By the end of the nineteenth decade of the 20th century, the environment in which organizations were active was predictable or stable. In this case, staffing was particularly concerned with overseeing human resources activities. Its role consists in the current management of the personnel within the organizations, which is still preserved in many local organizations [3; p. 36].

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At present, the evolution of the external environment is less predictable and changes occur with greater rapidity in economic, social, geopolitical, etc. In order to remain in this tumultuous environment, organizations need to find solutions to the changes that take place in society in order to adapt constantly to new situations. Under these circumstances, several authors believe that human resources are the key factor that can ensure the success or failure of changes made by the organization [1; 2; 10; 12; 13].

Researches in the field over the last few years have demonstrated the direct link between human resources management and organizational performance. These studies have concluded that the human resources function should accelerate changes in the organization and move from management-centered conception to value-centered approach. From this perspective, the human resources function has to be raised to a higher rank, becoming a key function in the organization, with a strategic impact on its development. As a result, there is an expansion of the activities to be performed by the human resources function and an increase in the number of clients who will benefit from the services of the subdivision.

Viewed from an expanded perspective, the RU function offers a wide range of services to its clients or stakeholders, and at the same time conducts a large number of human resources activities. As the clients or stakeholders of the human resources function can be considered: current employees of the organization, managers of functional subdivisions, line managers, trade unions, potential employees, etc.

Regardless of how the human resources function within the organization is dealt with, its fundamental role is to enable senior management to achieve its goals by delivering concrete initiatives and providing guidance and support services for all issues facing employees of the organization. Also, the human resources function should make a decisive contribution to creating the right environment for employees to make the most of their potential, both for their benefit and for the organization. At the same time, the American researcher in the field, D. Ulrich, is of the opinion that the function of human resources shouldn't be defined by what he does, but by the results he produces [13; p. 31]. In other words, American researcher K. Sisson mentions that the human resources function is not a homogeneous occupation, but one that involves a wide variety of roles and activities that differ from one organization to another and at a level in another within the same organization [1; p. 199].

3. Applied methodology

In order to assess the human resources function, a survey was carried out involving 115 organizations from the Republic of Moldova with more than 75 employees. Of the 115 organizations that participated in the survey, 113 provided information related to the assessment of the human resources function, the reasoning of choosing organizations with more than 75 employees started from the idea that within them can be created the function of human resources work, department or department) responsible for managing employees within organizations.

Although there is no regulation regarding the constitution of the human resources function in the organizations of the Republic of Moldova, the superior management of the organization decides on the necessity of its creation, depending on the policy promoted in this field. Similarly, there is no regulation regarding the ratio between the number of employees in the organization and the number of specialists in the human resources function. However, in the research I have tried to find out the weighted average of human resources specialists and the ratio of the number of human resources and employee specialists (Table 1, Figure 2).

Table 1. Weighted average of human resources specialists in the organizations participating in the survey

N. o.	Categories of organizations by number of employees	Number of organizations included in the research	Average number of employees	The weighted average of human resources specialists
1.	76-100 employees	11	91	1.18
2.	101-150 employees	19	124	1.21
3.	151-200 employees	26	177	1.65
4.	201-300 employees	15	257	1.47
5.	301-400 employees	11	340	1.64
6.	401-500 employees	7	438	4.14
7.	501-700 employees	5	633	4.00
8.	701-1000 employees	6	860	5.67
9.	1001-1500 employees	5	1134	2.60
10.	1501-2000 employees	5	1591	6.40
11.	2001-2500 employees	2	2204	7.50
12.	Over 2500 employees	1	4000	75
13.	TOTAL	113		

Source: Developed by the author on the basis of the research carried out.

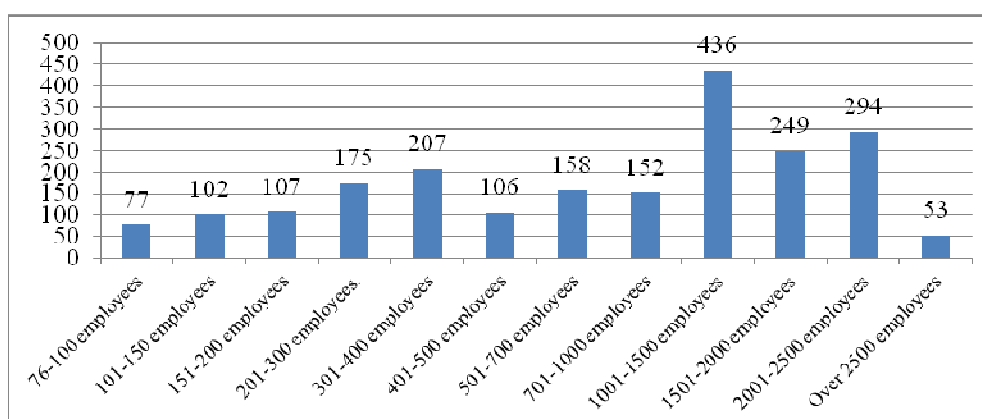


Figure 2. The ratio of the number of human resources and employee specialists

Source: Developed by the author on the basis of the research carried out.

The information presented in Table 1 and Figure 2 shows that the higher the organization, the higher is the ratio between the number of employees and that of human resources specialists, with the exception of the company with more than 2500 employees. Thus, we can see that a human resources specialist serves an average of 77 employees for organizations with 76-100 employees. The higher the number of employees in the organization, the more the human resources specialist needs to serve more employees. The weighted average of human resources specialists in organizations with 76-100 employees is 1.18, which means that out of 11 organizations in this survey, in 9 organizations there is one employee as human resources specialist, and in 2 organizations - 2 employees in that subdivision. For example, out of the two surveyed organizations with a number of 2001-2500 employees, the weighted average is 7.5, which, in the author's opinion, is very low, with an average of almost 300 employees a human resources specialist. The problem is much more difficult if we analyze separately, because in an organization in this category there are 13

human resources specialists, while in another, only 2 people. That's why arises the question: "To what extent can two human resources specialists manage and solve the problems of more than 2,000 employees?"

So, the results from the research show that, for the most part of the organizations, the number of human resources specialists is insufficient to deal with personnel problems.

By making a comparison regarding the behavior of the human resources function in the Moldovan and European Union organizations we find quite obvious differences. This may be due to the fact that in some European countries some of the tasks and responsibilities of the human resources subdivision have been decentralized as far as possible, while in other countries these tasks and responsibilities are centralized within the human resources department (Table 2).

Table 2. Average number of HR specialists recruiting 1000 employees in organizations in the main countries of the European Union

Country	The average number of human resource specialists per 1000 employees
<i>Italy</i>	18,2
<i>Great Britain</i>	13,9
<i>France</i>	13,8
<i>Spain</i>	14,9
<i>Germany</i>	14,5
<i>Netherlands</i>	18,5
<i>Sweden</i>	15,6
Denmark	10,7

Source: Adapted after: [80; p. 38].

As a result of the investigations, we find that the organizations in Denmark have the lowest number of personnel specialists per 1000 employees. This is due to the fact that the Danish organizations have the highest degree of delegation of tasks and responsibilities for employees to managers of subdivisions within organizations. At the same time, Italy and the Netherlands are countries with the lowest degree of decentralization of tasks and responsibilities in the field of human resources management. Therefore, the ratio between the total number of employees and that of specialists in the human resources subdivision is the highest in these countries. This demonstrates that the human resources subdivision of the Italian and Dutch organizations assumes mainly the responsibility for the good performance of the employees' activity and performs most of the tasks and attributions related to this field of activity, regardless of the hierarchical position occupied and the level of their qualification.

The lack of knowledge and professional skills in the field of human resources management among specialists working in staff subdivisions makes them operate according to outdated standards that don't meet the requirements of the competitive economy. Also, in several organizations, human resources subdivisions have not been restructured and adjusted to new requirements. This is also evidenced by the results of the survey, which confirms that out of the 126 survey organizations with more than 75 employees, 27.4% mentioned that personnel issues are concerned not only with the human resources subdivision, but also other organizational subdivisions (Figure 3).

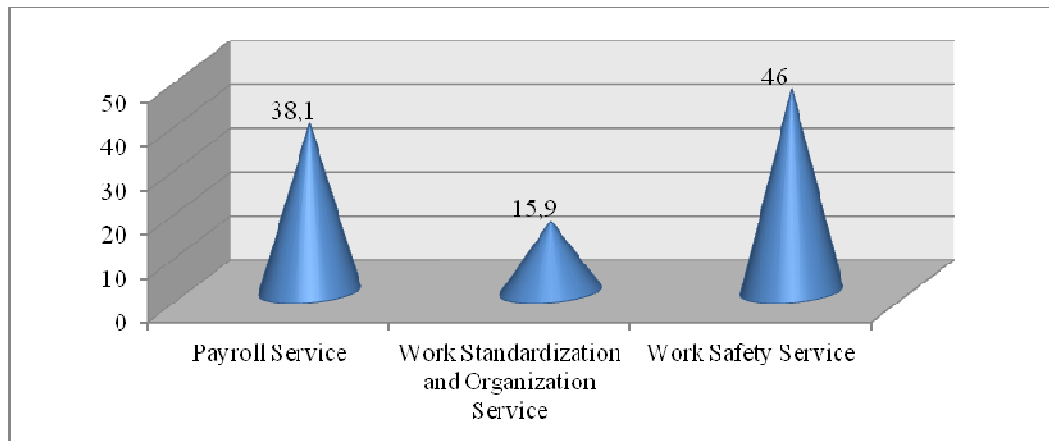


Fig. 3. Other subdivisions concerned with personnel issues in organizations participating in the survey

Source: Developed by the author on the basis of research.

Figure 3 shows that of the 27.4% of the respondent organizations who claimed that other subdivisions concern staffing issues, 38.1% mentioned that in their organizational chart there is the Payroll Service, 15.9% - Service of normalization and organization of work, and 46.0% - Labor Protection Service. Therefore, the dispersion of subdivisions concerned with employees' problems leads to a reduction in the efficiency of these activities and, last but not least, the reduction of organizational performance. In our opinion, finding these structures within a strengthened human resources subdivision will lead to more efficient human resources management activities.

Conclusions:

The erroneous perception of the human resources function has made it marginalized within the local organizations, being considered as an ancillary one, which carries out operational activities. This has prompted the higher management of the local organizations to pay less attention to the given field, which has led to a series of problems related to their staff, which they manage to deal with difficulty. In some organizations, the human resources function is performing its activities beyond outdated standards that don't meet the requirements of the competitive economy. In other organizations, the human resources function hasn't undergone a restructuring process in order to develop, modernize and streamline human resources management activities.

The number of people employed in the human resources subdivision is insufficient to cope with the volume of activities to be deployed. Although there is no regulation in this respect, the ratio between the number of human resources specialists and the total number of employees is significantly lower than the one existing in the countries of the European Union.

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