HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT MATURITY MODEL.
TOWARD A NEW MODEL

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Abstract:
    The paper provides an outline of a innovative concept – Human Resources Management Maturity Model (HRM MM), an empiric description of the model and its utility. HRM MM was developed by the author as a tool meant to solve a problem identified in a longitudinal research developed between 2004-2011 in the companies from SE area of Romania (Chasovschi, 2004). This research has showed that Human Resource Management in most companies is facing important weaknesses, in methodology and in instruments applied at all level of HRM functions. The results were both surprising and predictable: the companies are more concerned about doing fast profit, instead of developing the human assets of the companies. HRM MM was designed as a managerial tool that can be used for self-assessment by the companies and helps identifying concrete steps that can lead to a higher performance of employees.
    The "Map of Maturity" is the main part of the "Maturity Model" and it shows by way of a polar diagram, the desired status of HRM System. Thereby, for the HR professionals within companies, is much easier to estimate the steps to be made in order to recuperate some delays and to implement some good practices. Romania should overtake not only the theories of HRM, but also the good practices, and to step forward to the implementation into practice of the recommendations made by HRM specialists from Romania and abroad.

    Keywords: Human Resources Management - Maturity Model - Employee Performance - Map of Maturity

    JEL Classification: J21, J24, J53, O15, M12, M50

1. PAPER MOTIVATION. SHORT BACKGROUND

    The interest for the subject of the present paper has began with a longitudinal research started in 2004, "Health of Human Resource Management within the companies of S-E Romania" (Chasovschi, 2004). The results have showed a high difference between HRM (Human Resoures Management) theories from academic papers/ books and the practice of HRM in most interviewed companies. The results were confirmed by other results of several studies undertaken in Romania by different NGOs or research institutions [1].
    If in theory, Romania joined the western countries in HRM and reached the same level of development (Manolescu, 2003; Lefter, 2007), the practice of HRM is still cached in old organizational frames, in formalism and administrative tasks.
    It is the case not only Romania, but of other post-socialist countries, that had reconstructed the economies in a rush move toward private market. It is true that Romania has lost a lot of time, or like some other authors have mentioned, "HRM has had a late development in Romania" (Prodan and Clipa, 2008).
    In the early 1980, when Europe was deepening into polemics such: Personnel Management vs. HRM, Romania's workforce was lead by rules dictated by socialism system. This fact has directed the evolution of HR function on a different path that started with past-war period and ended in 1990. After 1990, the recovering process was quite slow, searching to adjust the practices to the modern theories from western countries. According to these, Human Resource Management is a combination of managerial decisions and practices that affect and influence directly human resources or people who work for organization (Shaw et all, 1999), a specialized function of management, responsible for the determination and implementation of policies and procedures in order to determine the stages of the recruitment cycle, in a manner that contributes to the well-being and quality of work of employees and organizational efficiency. Human resources management is described also as a managerial perspective, with theoretical and prescriptive dimensions, arguing the need to establish a series of integrated personnel policy in line with the strategy of the Organization, thereby enhancing the quality of the labor process, commitments and performance on the part of employees, organizational efficiency and competitive advantages (Huczynski, Buchanan,

2001). Certo is also stressing out the importance to establish an integrated series of staff policy in line with the strategy of the organization, which ensures the quality of life's work, training and performance on the part of employees and efficiency and competitive advantage (Certo, 2001). Human resources management may be seen as a set of relational info policies with an ideological and philosophical support (Storey, 1995) with four aspects that are needed for its full version: a particular network of "creeds and allegation, decisions of information", "strategic confidence of level management", "the central involvement of level managers, trust in a small set of rules designed to harmonize" and a proper matching of employment relations and relationships between employees.

The purpose of the definitions is to give a brief explanation for what HRM within the modern companies should be, or which functionality should have.

Due its complexity, very often it is difficult to reach the entire range of activities that are addressed. Often the "core" of definition omits a whole variety of areas in which the function is involved. These include communication between employees, collective bargaining, organizational change, health and safety and a variety of reward services or assistance for employees. Extensive efforts were carried out in finding a single definition of human resources management, efforts which have not been successful. We have to admit however that which means a "unique definition" is relatively difficult to achieve, if not even impossible.

In the longitudinal research started in 2004, we have also observed the differences between theory and practice in HRM in Romanian companies. We identified the main reasons for the gap between the theory and the practice of HRM within these. Some of them are:

- HRM managers are not necessary HRM professionals;
- The HR Function is not a priority for the company;
- Less time for planning activities, that are not perceived as important;
- Administrative tasks are preponderant in HRM System;
- HRM is a very centralized function;
- Not all the entrepreneurs are recognizing the HR as strategic resources of the company.

Through direct discussion with HR Managers, we realized that, sometime they don't know what are the basic condition for a proper HRM Function, or "how much is enough" in order to have good results from the employees of the company.

As result, we have designed a tool called "Human Resources Management Maturity Model" – HRM MM that could assist the HRM professionals in analyzing the health of HRM system within their company, and can indicate the corrective actions that should be taken. The model will serve mainly for self-assessment, as an "easy to use tool" for the HRM Professionals.

"HRM Maturity Model" can lead to a better planning and implementation of specific functions of HRM, and to a higher performance of the employees.

In the present paper we intent only to present a "raw" form of the model and to describe the first steps that were made in order to define the model and its utility.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF A "MATURITY MODEL" IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The documentation made in order to identify „Maturity Models" in other research domains, brought into the light not so many models described under this title.

One is the Capability Maturity Model, named also "Humphrey's CMM" (Humphrey, 2008). It was developed by Watts Humphrey, based on the earlier work of Phil Crosby, in software development field. The **Capability Maturity Model (CMM)** is defined as a *process* capability maturity model, which support the definition and understanding of an organization's *processes*: *"The CMM was originally intended as a tool for objectively assessing the ability of government contractors' processes to perform a contracted software project. Though it comes from the area of*

software development, it can be applied as a generally applicable model to assist in understanding the process capability maturity of organizations in diverse areas (Humphrey, 2008)".

Another Maturity Model was developed in Project Management field, in the frame of an international research model, **Maturity model of a project-oriented organization**. The questionnaire on the maturity model in PM was structured with contribution of Roland Gareis, and is described in Happy Projects (Gareis, 2005).

3. HRM MATURITY MODEL – A POSSIBLE DEFINITION. CONTRIBUTION FOR "HRM MM" AS SPECIFIC METHOD

The goal for a HRM Maturity Model is to help the HRM Professional to identify the gap between a **"standard" HRM System,** given by the **Maturity Map, as a reference standard model,** and the **internal HRM System of the company**.

HRM Maturity Model development started in 2004 and we planned it as an easy-to-use tool based on self-assessment, with some advantages:
- takes a snap shot of the HRM System in the company
- brings additional information to decision makers
- helps the HR Managers to establish priorities in the HRM activities
- improve the performance of HR Function and the performance of the employees
- time saving and easy to use
- money saving
- self help tool.

The proposed definition of **HRM Maturity Model**: *Assessment tool that helps the HR Professional to identify the weaknesses of internal HRM System, by comparing the **maturity map of their company** with **the standard HRM maturity map**.*

For a total comprehension we should define the concept "Maturity Map" as the graph, represented in a polar diagram that shows "the state of the art" of a HRM System that can be defined as "mature". In defining the Maturity Map, we tried to answer to the questions: "Which are the attributes/components of a stabile HRM system that can be described as good and stabile", but also "How much is enough in terms of good practices that can characterize an optimum for HRM practices".

In order to define the **Maturity Map** we have identified some basic assumptions for the following functions of HRM (Table no. 1): General organization of HR Function (G), Strategic Planning of HRM (P), Recruitment (R), Selection (S), Motivation, Compensation and Benefits (M), Development and Training (D), Occupational Health, Safety and Security (H), Local Labor Work (L).

Table no. 1. HRM MM Questionnaire. Extras

G	GENERAL	Strenght	Weakness
G1	The HR Manager is a certified HR professional		
	....		
G25	....		
P	Strategic Planning of HRM		
P1	HR Department is informed about the actual trend on local labor market		
	.....		
P22	.....		
H	Occupational Health, Safety and Security		

The assumptions are describing "desired" situations and are grouped in a HRM Maturity Questionnaire (HRM MQ) that was developed in the first version in 2004 and extended in "Researches about the Human Resources Management at Regional Level" (Chasovschi, 2006).

These will serve for a graphic representation, defined as Human Resources Maturity Map (Figure No. 1).
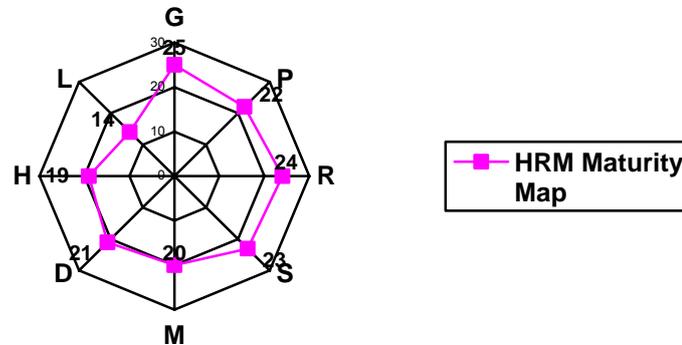

Figure no. 1. Representation of "HRM Maturity Map" as a Polar Diagram

The items analyzed above, as mentioned in the Figure No. 1, are defined as "HRM Maturity Factors" and symbolized through capital letters:

        G – General Organization of HR Function
        P – Strategic Planning of HRM
        R – Recruitment
        S – Selection
        M – Motivation, Compensation and Benefits
        D – Development and Training of HR
        H – Occupational Health, Safety and Security
        L – Local Labor Market.

On the axis/radius is measured the intensity of each factor. For each good practices assumption, related to one function/factor is awarded one point. Like this, the number of points that are awarded for a "mature" HRM function, are 25 points for G - General organization of HR Function, 22 for P - Strategic Planning of HRM, 23 points for R- Recruitment, 24 points for S - Selection, 20 points for M – Motivation, 21 points for D - Development and Training, 19 points for H - Occupational Health, Safety and Security and 14 for L - Local Labor Work.

The items proposed for HRM functions were only 5 initially: General Items, Strategic Planning, Recruitment and Selection, Motivation, Development and Training (Chasovschi, 2004). We tried to extend them, after the functional areas in HR, described by HRCI/Human Resource Certification Institute (Mondy, 2005), an affiliate of the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM), that has granted certification to more than 60.000 HR Professionals, since its founding in 1976.

Diagnose through the HRM MM tool should follow the next steps:

Step 1. Evaluation of HRM System of company. The evaluation is done with the help of HRM Maturity Questionnaire, by filling in the answers to the questionnaire assumptions.

Step 2. HRM Company Map is the graphic representation of the score obtained for the questionnaire assumptions (on each axis of the polar diagram is represented the score for each factor: G, P, R, S a.o.)

Step 3. Comparison of HRM Maturity Map with HRM Company Map. By matching the results with the standard values of the factors, the gaps and differences will be identified by overlay the two graphs. For further interpretation should be used both tools: the Maturity Map and the

Questionnaire. The Maturity Map should deliver information about "where" and "how deep" the gap is. In order to go for further details and identify the weaknesses of the HR System you can return to the questionnaire.

Step 4. Formulate strategies for improvement of HRM function.

The HRM Maturity Model should conduct the HR Officers back to the planning and to HR Strategy improvement.

The questionnaire can be a self assessment tool, or can be applied by an external consultant.

Each assumption is equally weighted, and has the value "1". As a result, if, for example, for a company X, through HRM MM Questionnaire, was identified for P (Strategic Planning of HRM) only 12 validated assumptions, from a total of 22, as are defined in the standard HRM Maturity Model (See Figure No.2), on the radius of HRM Company Map, "P" will have the value 12. The company "X", in order to have a "mature strategic planning of HRM" should reduce the difference by corrective actions that will address the 10 assumptions that were not fulfilled.
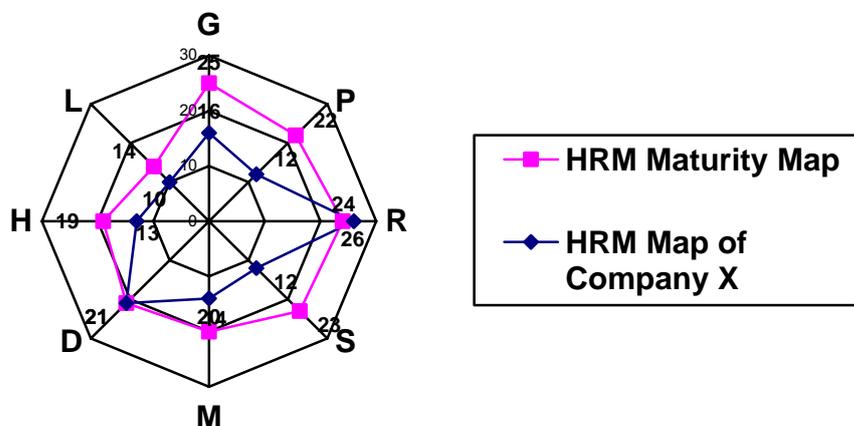

Figure no. 2. The Maturity Map of HRM and the HRM Map of Company X

Other possibility that will be studied through further research is to give different weight to the questions, or different weight to the HRM Maturity Factors. For example, this system is applied for the certification of HR Professionals by HRCI (Human Resource Certification Institute) (Mondy, 2005). The questions for the certification represent the functional area of HR and the percentage indicates the extent to which each area is emphasized at exam level.

Table no. 2

	PHR
Strategic Management	12%
Workforce Planning and Employment	26%
Human Resources Development	15
Compensation and Benefits	20%
Employee and Labor Relations	21%
Occupational Health, Safety and Security	6%

Source: Mondy, R.W, Noe, R.M – Human Resources Management, 9th Edition,
Pearson Education Int., 2005, pg. 46

4. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed HRM Maturity Model, it is still far from a stabile system. In developing the present HRM MM, we have stick to the T. Elliot recommended research steps (Elliot, 2001), and

we have checked the followings: formulation of general research plan (goal, objectives, target group, theoretic concepts and framework), initial documentation, generation of a tool and additional materials, validation of content.

As further methodological steps described by Elliot, we will revise the model according with the new studies and researches undertaken in 2011 and start the pilot testing of 2nd alternative of the model, (improved according to results of 1st testing phase), next revising of the model and the 3rd pilot testing phase.

Regarding the content related to HRM best practices, future developments will be done, related to further development of important assessing assumptions, definition of „mature" stage of the HRM Maturity Map, possibility to particularize the HRM Maturity Model for different types of companies, and after their life-stage, and the involvement of two assessment perspective: of HRM representatives and of employees.

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