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## Article

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# Human Resource Management's Marketing Approach and Its Contribution Towards Employee-Satisfaction

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*In times when organizations in Germany are confronted with a constant change-dynamic regarding their working conditions managers understand that human resources are an important driving factor for the overall company's performance. The attractiveness of an organization towards potential and actual employees is therefore an issue which is of broad interest for general management as it plays an increasing role to reach company's aims. Necessary for creating such an attractiveness as employer are the establishment of substantiated processes of acquiring and retaining employees. The objective of this paper is to assess whether the application of a company's human resource management's marketing approach has an impact on employee satisfaction. Concerning the research methods causal modelling and triangulation of research are used. Quantitative research is applied. Results show that the better a company's human resource management's marketing approach in terms of its quality and performance is, the higher is the employees' perception about their employer's organization as well as the overall employees' satisfaction. Findings also reveal a significant positive relationship between a high quality of human resource management's marketing approach and employee satisfaction. Furthermore, a positive relation between a high performance of human resource management's marketing approach and the classification of a company's brand awareness on the labor market as well as a company's classification into an employer of choice is found. Thus, it can be concluded that human resource management's marketing approach is a viable process in the realm of human resource management to steer a company's success through a focus on employee satisfaction.*

**Keywords:** Human resource management, employee satisfaction, human resource management's marketing approach

**JEL Classification:** M51 - Firm Employment Decisions; Promotions

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## **1. Introduction**

The economic task of human resource management is to ensure the most favorable supply and maintenance of adequately capable and performance-oriented personnel in companies. If this task is completed, the principal relationship of the company towards its organization and its productive forces is fundamentally fulfilled. In this context the relevance of the concept of human resource management as a trigger of positive contributions to the company's success is increasing. The pursuit of effectiveness and efficiency committed to the company's success requires of human resources management an approach which takes into account not only the business conditions but especially the needs of a target group that needs to be acquired and retained by the organization.

The identification and recruiting of this target group orientates itself on the needs of the actual and potential employees of a company and their demands towards an employer. The same applies for retaining employees. By a successful acquiring and retaining of employees human resource management contributes significantly to improving company's performance. Human resource management's marketing (HRMM) approach – as one subsystem of human resource management - is hereby the function organizations need to focus on. It forms the bases for a successful acquiring and retaining of employees by attractively positioning a company on the labor market as well as significantly driving employee satisfaction within a company.

## **2. Theoretical background of the research**

The idea of a HRMM approach that focusses on an increasing employee satisfaction is not completely new. Different authors made an effort to establish and develop different concepts of such HRMM approaches (Bleis, 1992, p. 10f; Dietmann, 1993, p. 108f.; Staffebach, 1995, p. 144; Bartscher & Fritsch, 1992, p. 1747f.; Fröhlich, 2004, p. 17f.). Nevertheless, the environment of organizations is changing fast and the development on the labor market – as one of the driving forces for the establishment of an employee satisfying HRMM approach as a sub-function in the area of human resource management - is very fast, too, especially in times of fast changing economic challenges as they appear today. This gives way to an actual consideration of the topic of HRMM as empirical approaches from ten to twenty years earlier are not adequate anymore.

In addition - caused for example by the demographic change – a situation arises which leads to an augmented competition of organizations on the labor market for employees. Besides, the increasing demand for employees causes a higher risk for job changes of existing employees. Therefore the importance of HRMM approach raises. Existing employees need to be satisfied to ensure that they remain at the company and potential employees need to be attracted to the organizations and invited to apply. Therefore, on the one hand it is crucial for organizations to establish employee satisfying human resource management processes as employee satisfaction is vital for ensuring the long-term efficiency and effectiveness of organizations. On the other hand it is important for companies to position themselves successfully as a more attractive employer than their competitors.

As comparable organizations use – more or less – the same financial and material resources for their business but reach different performance levels in efficiency and effectiveness it becomes clear that the driving factor for these differences is in how company's management understands and implements its role in human resource management. Herein, the managerial influence on employee satisfaction is essential for a constant improvement of an organization's human resource management processes. Thus, the two aspects of employee satisfaction and a company's labor market attractiveness impact positively on a privileged supply of (potential) employees and ensure the business performance of a company (Koppel, 2008, p. 66f.).

### **2.1. Human resource management and the context to a HRMM approach**

The economic task of human resource management is to ensure the most favorable supply and maintenance of adequately capable and performance-oriented personnel in companies (Bisani, 1995, pp. 51-79). If this task is completed, the principal relationship of the company towards its organization and its productive forces is fundamentally fulfilled. In this context the relevance of the concept of human resource management as a trigger of positive contributions to the company's success is increasing (Lado & Wilson, 1994, p. 699f.). The pursuit of effectiveness and efficiency committed to the company's success requires of human resources management an approach which takes into account not only the business conditions but especially the needs of a target group that needs to be acquired and retained by the organization. Marketing research provides - with regard to the exchange of scarce resources like employees on the labor market - fundamental insights and methods. For a conceptualization of human resource management in the context of

scarce resources the ideas of marketing management can therefore be used. Concepts and instruments of marketing support those core concerns of human resource management relating to obtaining and preserving resources in a bottleneck-embossed environment. The scarce resources on the labor market and at the company need to be targeted in a way that satisfies their needs and prolongs their stay in an organization as much as possible.

Human resource management is on the one hand used as a generic wording for every arrangement of personnel management. On the other hand it is seen as denotation of a specific approach within the human resource management which is identified by different characteristics (Boxall, 2008, p. 49). According to a narrow understanding companies try to gain competitive advantage by acquiring engaged and capable employees. For their acquisition a set of cultural, structural and personnel oriented techniques is used (Storey, 1995, p. 6f). For this approach the following three aspects are characteristic: Firstly, the reckoning of employees as important and competitive-relevant resource. Secondly, the integration of all human resource activities into the corporate strategy and thirdly, the integrative coordination of all human resource-related instruments.

The paper looks at a more generic understanding of human resource management. A conceptual clarification of the study object *human resource management* shows that there is broad agreement defining the subject area as all personnel economic actions within companies. More recent views broaden the concept even further. They transfer the concept to all human resource functional areas and aim at a strategic conformity. Oechsler (Oechsler, 2006, p. 353) understands human resource management as the totality of all personnel issues of design, control and development of a visionary and accordingly strategy oriented system.

Based on this, human resource management in the context of this work is defined as a system that copes with all themes related to the staff of an organization. Hence human resource management displays not only a conglomerate of single measures but a long-term strategy and is part of a complex interrelationship (Fröhlich, 2004, p. 24). By defining HRMM approach as a cross-divisional function of human resource management which influences main process functions of human resource management it is made obvious that HRMM approach is a sub-system of human resource management and not an independent discipline itself.

## **2.2. Employee satisfaction in the context of human resource management**

Employees are the linchpin of functions and instruments of human resource management and its marketing approach. One of the key success indicators in this context is the satisfaction of employees (Homburg & Bucerius, 2008, p. 53f.). Spector (Spector, 2003, S. 57f.) states as definition of employee satisfaction with their employer that employee satisfaction is "the extent to which people like their job".

In the realm of human resource management employee satisfaction is related to two objectives. On the one hand employee satisfaction develops towards the work performance and the work content (work satisfaction). On the other hand satisfaction develops towards the employer organization itself. Definitions in literature focus mainly either on one or the other perspective (For an overview of definitions see Bauer et al., 2004, p. 23ff.). Due to the paper's focus on the HRMM approach of an organization and the organization's positioning on the labor market especially satisfaction with the employer organization is regarded.

This satisfaction with the employer organization is - analogous to Griffin (Griffin, 2010, p. 239f.) - the emotion of an employee towards its employer as a whole, not only towards the employee's job position within the company. In this context three major factors need to be considered to speak of employee satisfaction with the whole organization (Mowday, 1982, p. 83f.). Firstly, the employee needs to accept and support the company's overall objectives. Secondly, the employee is willing to excel in his or her daily business performance. And thirdly, the employee feels obliged to stay a member of the organization. These three factors can vary in their occurrence and specificity. However, what all factors have in common is that they bind the employee to an organization and lead to reach the overall company goals. This displays the task management – and especially human resource management – has to fulfill: to establish a mind-set within a company that determines employee satisfaction and the behavior leading to it.

## **3. Methods used in research**

As science-theoretical basis for the empirical investigation the ideas of Carl Popper (Mayer, 2002, p. 15), the *Critical Rationalism*, are used. Causal models act as a rational reconstruction of the actual practice by applying the given theoretical framework (Mayer, 2002, p. 15). If an adequate correlation between the variables exists, the models argue for the plausibility of postulated relations. If it is inadequate, the tenability of such relations is rejected.

Besides the causal modelling also triangulation is used as research strategy. Hereby data sets of different sources are used within the empirical investigation to balance possible bias (Brown J. , 2001, p. 228). On the one hand company data - as one possible data source - are depicted, on the other hand data received from employees are used. Furthermore, different indicators are applied for describing the same construct (Todd, 1979, p. 603). Also here triangulation – within one research method - is applied.

An empirical investigation about HRMM approach and its influences on employee satisfaction needs to meet the requirements of a certain perspective. This perspective needs to express companies' views (self-assessment) as well as employees' view (assessment by others). In addition, it needs to reflect the theoretical framework about HRMM approach in practice.

With regard to the research objective a quantitative empirical research is conducted. Hereby the questioning was chosen as one possible research method (Schnell et al., 1999, p. 319) as a most broad comparability as well as a most possible structuring of the data sets can be reached (Mayring, 2003, p. 89). The questioning was documented via two different structured questionnaires. On the one hand companies have been questioned (self-assessment), on the other hand employees out of these organizations have been interviewed (assessment by others).

The development of both questionnaires has been closely linked to the conceptual part of the paper. Due to that integrative procedure a systematic linkage of the theoretical, conceptual basic principles with the empirical research is reached. The questionnaire for companies (self-assessment) consists of a brief introduction including the reason for the survey, target group, confirmation of anonymity, estimated handling time, contact details of participant and contact details of the author. The second part of the questionnaire consists of questions concerning the evaluation of the quality of a company's HRMM approach and questions concerning the evaluation of employee satisfaction. The whole questionnaire is standardized, no comments can be given.

The self-assessment questionnaire is filled in by companies – represented by human resource professionals. Human resource professionals have the insight and information concerning data of a company that illuminate the quality of its HRMM approach as well as employee satisfaction.

Human resource professionals in the context of the paper are defined as professionals working in human resource departments of organizations. Hereby no differentiation is made concerning their educational background or their individual tasks within the human resource department. The availability of these professionals is essential for an effective data collection. Therefore only those companies have been involved in the empirical research and analysed in-depth that were able to provide enough valid data. Valid data in this context mean enough contact persons to address as well as the utilization of their answers.

The second questionnaire (assessment by employees) substantiates the scientific aim with another set of quantitative data and is based on the same criteria concerning the linkage with the theoretical framework as mentioned above. It starts with a brief introduction including the same items as the organizations' questionnaire, followed by questions concerning the performance of HRMM approach and the employees' satisfaction with the employers' organizations.

To ensure a precise measurement of the hypothesis – both questionnaires considered details of a two-year period (2012 and 2013). All actions that have been taken into consideration outside that time period are not evaluated.

### **3.1. Research design of the empirical study**

Following the definition of the research methodology and its science-theoretical basis is the definition of the whole research design. Hereby it is important to define which companies and employees participate in the empirical investigation and why they have been chosen. In addition, the conducting of the whole research process needs to be described to provide transparency into the executed process.

Before the description of the research's realization can be conducted it is - in a first step - crucial to describe the participants to establish a solid basis for the empirical investigation. The paper's object is the HRMM approach at companies. Hereby, a European or even worldwide investigation is economically not justifiable. As human resource management is – for the time being – nationally oriented a limitation to the area of Germany is conducted.

The necessity and priority of HRMM approach is increasing in times with restricted available labor demand. In this situation, companies make growing endeavours to acquire and retain employees. However, some organizations are more advanced in realizing these issues and put more focus on their HRMM approach than others (Steinle & Thies, 2008, p. 52). These organizations have understood that HRMM is one approach to face the problems of coping with limited labor demand and increasing labor supply. One possibility to

overcome this problem is the participation in career fairs (Nieschlag, & Hörschgen, 2002, p. 229). Therefore all companies participating in career fairs in Germany form the population for the empirical investigation. This population consists of 2328 companies.

A census is – due to economic reasons like time and costs – not applicable. Therefore a limitation of the investigation to some population's units takes place - a random sample is drawn. Out of a relevant database, which includes 56 different career fairs in Germany, four fairs have been randomly filtered. Hence, the sample size - as defined by the number of companies attending the four career fairs - is 482. At every fair companies were randomly selected to participate in the survey, so that in total 233 companies were asked to participate (master sample). However, 137 companies were not willing to respond at all and 68 companies stopped answering in the middle of the survey's process. Only 28 companies were finally willing to answer the whole questionnaire which leads to a response rate of 12.02 %. The low response rate is acknowledged and it is emphasized that the overall conclusions cannot be generalized due to the specifics of the research's target group. However, it is pointed out that the response rate for surveys that are conducted in Germany normally ranges between 10 – 20 % (Theurl & Saxe, 2009, p. 7). Even if the achieved response rate is at the lower edge of this range it represents reality concerning response rates in Germany. As the surveyed data is in most cases company confidential the companies' data sets have been made anonymous.

As already mentioned an assessment by others (employee survey) is conducted to provide a second data set on the research subject. Also here the random sampling is used. Randomly selected 336 employees of the 28 questioned companies have been asked to participate in the empirical investigation. The number of employees completing the whole questionnaire is 259, accounting for a response rate of 77.08%. Concerning this questionnaire also here the data sets are anonymous.

Different authors (Friedrichs, 1990, p. 245; Mayer, 2002, p. 97) point out the necessity that a chosen research method needs to be subjected to a pre-test, even if the author is personally present to clear ambiguities and to interact with the interview partners (Zikmund, 2003, p. 201). Against the background of the pre-test's importance both questionnaires have undergone a pre-test phase.

Following the pretest phase is the empirical research itself. For the data gathering career fairs have been personally attended between January and March 2014. The companies' questionnaires were distributed to the master sample of 233 companies. The organizations' representatives (human resource professionals) were personally invited to participate in the survey. In a second step, 336 employees out of these organizations were invited to participate in the survey. Also here the employees' questionnaire was personally distributed to the participants at the career fairs from January to March 2014.

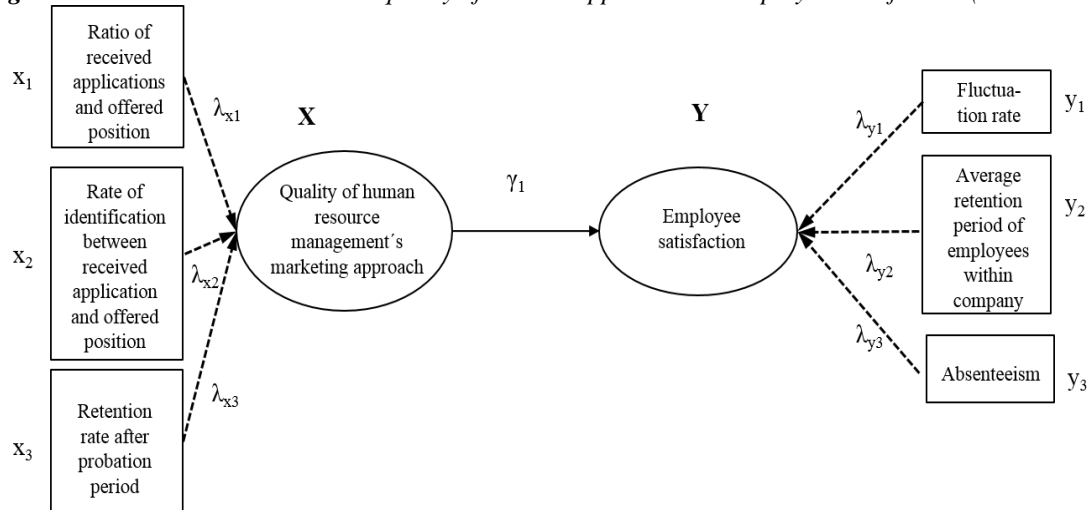
Limitation of this procedure is that only employees are interviewed who have been personally present at the career fairs. The method of how these employees have been chosen by their organizations to participate in the fairs is not evaluated. Therefore, this pre-selection can lead to results' bias. However, this possible pre-selection of probands is not of crucial importance for the aspired research aim which is to consider typical situations within organizations. The probands still fulfill the required relevance and applicability for the empirical investigation as their answers reflect typical situations within organizations.

The results of the surveys are evaluated by a statistical computer program (SPSS).

### **3.2. Modeling the relationship between HRMM approach and employee satisfaction**

The purpose of the paper's theoretical framework is to provide a basis for probation in research and therefore for transformation into reality. The developed idea of the relationship between HRMM approach and employee satisfaction is such a basis which needs to be tested empirically. To circumstantiate this idea, the causal modelling is used and two causal models have been chosen to enable a bilateral evaluation of the impact of HRMM approach on employee satisfaction. The first model (see figure 1.) depicts the companies' view on the influence of HRMM approach on employee satisfaction. The second model (see figure 2.) substantiates this perspective with the employees' perception.

**Figure 1.** Causal model between the quality of HRMM approach and employee-satisfaction (Model no. 1)

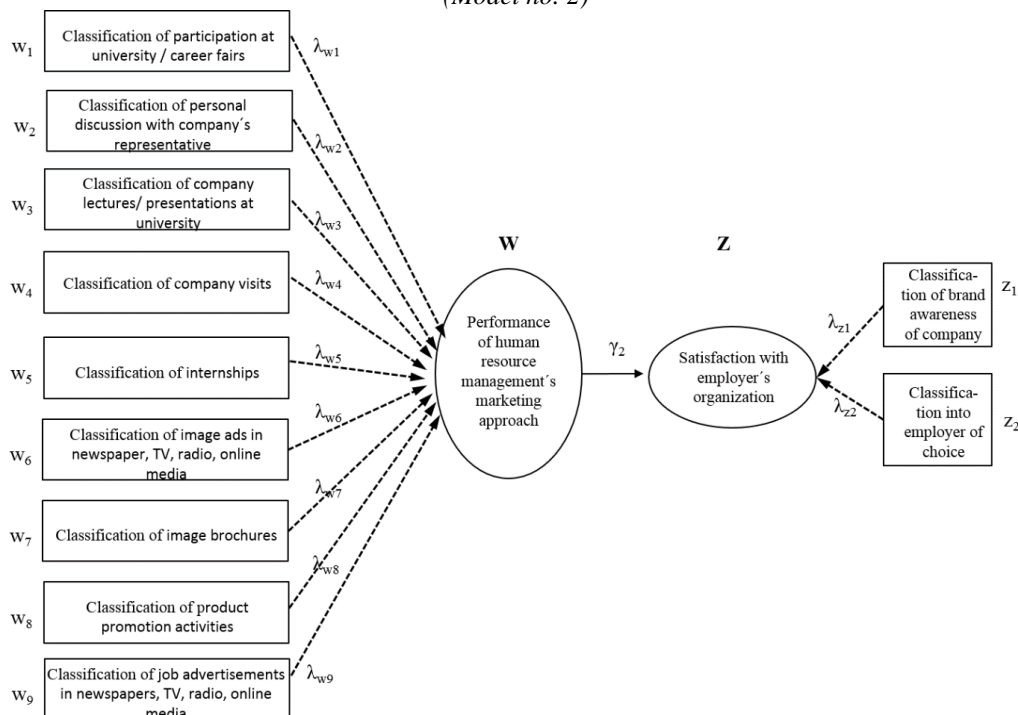


Source: Author's creation

The first model (see figure 1.) depicts a relationship between the independent structural variable *Quality of HRMM approach* (X) and the dependent structural variable *Employee satisfaction* (Y) - displayed via the arrow  $\gamma_1$ . The independent structural variable *Quality of HRMM approach* (X) is described by the indicators *Ratio of received applications and offered positions* ( $x_1$ ), *Rate of identification between received application and offered position* ( $x_2$ ) and *Retention rate after probation period* ( $x_3$ ). The arrows  $\lambda_{x1}$ ,  $\lambda_{x2}$ ,  $\lambda_{x3}$  display hereby the descriptions of the single indicators ( $x_1$ ,  $x_2$ ,  $x_3$ ) for the structural variable *Quality of HRMM approach* (X). The dependent structural variable *Employee satisfaction* (Y) is described by the indicators *Fluctuation rate* ( $y_1$ ), *Average retention period of employees within company* ( $y_2$ ) and *Absenteeism* ( $y_3$ ) - displayed via the arrows  $\lambda_{y1}$ ,  $\lambda_{y2}$ ,  $\lambda_{y3}$ .

In the second model (see figure 2.), the relationship between the independent structural variable *Performance of HRMM approach* (W) and the dependent structural variable *Satisfaction with employer organization* (Z) - displayed via the arrow  $\gamma_2$  - is depicted.

**Figure 2.** Causal model between the performance of HRMM approach and satisfaction with employer organization (Model no. 2)



Source: Author's creation

As displayed in figure 2. the independent structural variable *Performance of HRMM approach* (W) is described by the nine indicators *Classification of participation at university / career fairs* ( $w_1$ ), *Classification of personal discussion with company's representatives* ( $w_2$ ), *Classification of company lectures / presentations at university* ( $w_3$ ), *Classification of company visits* ( $w_4$ ), *Classification of internships* ( $w_5$ ), *Classification of image advertisements in newspapers, TV, radio, online media* ( $w_6$ ), *Classification of image brochures* ( $w_7$ ), *Classification of product promotion activities* ( $w_8$ ) and *Classification of job advertisements in newspapers, TV, radio, online media* ( $w_9$ ). The arrows  $\lambda_{w1}$ ,  $\lambda_{w2}$ ,  $\lambda_{w3}$ ,  $\lambda_{w4}$ ,  $\lambda_{w5}$ ,  $\lambda_{w6}$ ,  $\lambda_{w7}$ ,  $\lambda_{w8}$  and  $\lambda_{w9}$  display hereby the descriptions of the single indicators ( $w_1$ ,  $w_2$ ,  $w_3$ ,  $w_4$ ,  $w_5$ ,  $w_6$ ,  $w_7$ ,  $w_8$ ,  $w_9$ ) for the structural variable *Performance of HRMM approach* (W). The dependent structural variable *Satisfaction with employer organization* (Z) is described by the indicators *Classification of brand awareness of company* ( $z_1$ ) and *Classification into employer of choice* ( $z_2$ ) - displayed via the arrows  $\lambda_{z1}$  and  $\lambda_{z2}$ .

Besides the structural variables and their indicators also a grouping variable exists which is not displayed in the two models. This grouping variable is called *Different employee groups* and might disclose differentiations in the empirical investigation. It represents different shareholders within an organization.

#### 4. Main results' interpretation

In a first step, all indicators have been tested via the Shapiro-Wilk-Test. Hereby it is documented whether the indicators are normally distributed or not in order to decide for the usage of further statistical tests. The Shapiro-Wilk-Test test was run for all indicators. The result of the Shapiro-Wilk-Test shows that no normal distribution exists concerning all indicators. Therefore, all following statistical tests are run for non-normal distribution.

Secondly, the causal-models' constructs are assessed through correlation analysis (Spearman's Rho) to determine the strength and direction of relationship between the exogenous and endogenous variables. Hereby - as is suggested by Bauer (Bauer F., 1984, p. 167) - all correlations  $r > 0.5$  are considered to be strongly related / strongly significant. Correlations between  $r = 0.3$  and  $r = 0.5$  are considered to be related / significant. All correlations  $r < 0.3$  are considered to be not related / not significant.

Finally, an analysis of differences due to the grouping variable *Different employee groups* (Kruskal-Wallis Test) is conducted. In line with empirical convention an alpha level of 0.05 and confidence interval of 95.0 % are set to determine the significance of the statistical tests.

Of utmost interest is an investigation of correlations between the different variables' indicators to examine to which extend the postulated relations can be accepted. Correlation coefficients were calculated using the non-parametric test Spearman's Rho.

The results of correlation analyses indicate statistically significant relations between the postulated relationships.

An overview of the results of companies' assessment of Spearman's correlations' calculation is given in the following table 1. The algebraic sign of the correlation coefficient indicates the direction of association while the absolute value reveals its strength (Brosius, 2008, p. 527).

**Table 1.** Relationship between the quality of HRMM approach and employee satisfaction (Spearman's Rho) – derived from companies' assessment for the years 2012 and 2013

| Indicators in 2012 / 2013   | Fluctuation rate ( $y_1$ ) |             | Retention period ( $y_2$ ) |             | Absenteeism ( $y_3$ ) |             |
|---|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|
|   | 2012                       | 2013        | 2012                       | 2013        | 2012                  | 2013        |
| <i>Ratio of received applications to offered positions</i> ( $x_1$ )                      | $r = -0.97$                | $r = -0.96$ | $r = +0.96$                | $r = +0.89$ | $r = -0.47$           | $r = -0.58$ |
| <i>Rate of identification between received application and offered position</i> ( $x_2$ ) | $r = -0.45$                | $r = -0.50$ | $r = +0.48$                | $r = +0.50$ | $r = -0.95$           | $r = -0.84$ |
| <i>Retention rate after probation period</i> ( $x_3$ )                                    | $r = -0.78$                | $r = -0.83$ | $r = +0.76$                | $r = +0.70$ | $r = -0.32$           | $r = -0.46$ |

Note: All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: Author's creation using research results

The highest relation ( $r = -0.97$  in 2012 and  $r = -0.96$  in 2013) exists between the *Ratio of received applications to offered positions* ( $x_1$ ) and the *Fluctuation rate* ( $y_1$ ) within a company. In addition, the *Retention*



period ( $y_2$ ) of employees within an enterprise is also strongly related to the ratio of received applications to offered positions ( $r = +0.96$  in 2012 and  $r = +0.89$  in 2013). The more applications a company receives per offered position, the lower the fluctuation rate is and the higher the employee's retention period is within this organization. In addition a negative correlation – even if it is not as strong as the ones mentioned before - also exists between the ratio and absenteeism ( $r = -0.47$  in 2012 and  $r = -0.58$  in 2013). This means that the higher the ratio between received applications and offered position is, the lower is the number of absenteeism days within an organization. The lowest relation is between *Retention rate after probation period* ( $x_3$ ) and *Absenteeism days* ( $y_3$ ) within a company ( $r = -0.32$  in 2012 and  $r = -0.46$  in 2013). Even if this correlation is the lowest of the measured indicators it can be postulated that the higher the retention rate, the lower is the absenteeism within a company. The indicator *Rate of identification between received application and offered position* ( $x_2$ ) has the subsequent lowest impact on the indicators describing the satisfaction of employees. For the relation between the rate of identification and the fluctuation rate the correlation coefficient is  $r = -0.45$  in 2012 and  $r = -0.50$  in 2013. For the relation with the retention period of existing employees within a company the coefficient is  $r = +0.48$  in 2012 and  $r = +0.50$  in 2013. The relation of the identification rate with the absenteeism is strongly negative ( $r = -0.95$  in 2012 and  $r = -0.84$  in 2013), indicating that a high rate of identification between application and offered position leads to lower absenteeism of employees. Concerning the retention rate of employees after their probation period and the fluctuation rate strong correlations exist ( $r = -0.78$  in 2012 and  $r = -0.83$  in 2013). The average retention period within a company increases with an increasing retention rate after the employees' probation period (correlation of  $r = +0.76$  in 2012 and  $r = +0.70$  in 2013).

The results show that companies certify themselves a profound understanding about the influence of their HRMM approach's quality on employee satisfaction. However, a second investigation is conducted to verify whether the companies adequately judge their HRMM approach's performance. Therefore, in the following, the postulated relations are also investigated by an assessment by others.

By looking at the results of Spearman's rank correlation coefficient the relations can also be approved via this second empirical research as employee satisfaction and HRMM approach was found to be related.

However, the correlation coefficients (see table 2.) display that an in-depth investigation of the single indicators' results must be conducted. It is obvious that employees more critically judge the issue of HRMM approach compared to their employers.

**Table 2.** Relationship between the performance of HRMM approach and employee satisfaction (Spearman's Rho) – derived from employees' assessment for the years 2012 and 2013

| Indicators in 2012 / 2013  | Classification of the company's brand awareness on the labor market ( $z_1$ ) |                   | Classification of the company into an employer of choice on the labor market ( $z_2$ ) |                  |
|--|---|-------------------|--|------------------|
|  | 2012  | 2013              | 2012   | 2013             |
| <i>Classification of a company's participation at university and / or career fairs (<math>w_1</math>)</i>                | $r = +0.70^{**}$  | $r = +0.77^{**}$  | $r = +0.57^{**}$   | $r = +0.68^{**}$ |
| <i>Classification of a personal discussion with a company's representative (<math>w_2</math>)</i>                        | $r = +0.46^{**}$  | $r = +0.56^{**}$  | $r = +0.39^{**}$   | $r = +0.51^{**}$ |
| <i>Classification of company lectures and / or presentations at university (<math>w_3</math>)</i>                        | $r = +0.46^{**}$  | $r = +0.57^{**}$  | $r = +0.49^{**}$   | $r = +0.60^{**}$ |
| <i>Classification of possible company visits (<math>w_4</math>)</i>  | $r = +0.35^{**}$  | $r = +0.48^{**}$  | $r = +0.36^{**}$   | $r = +0.49^{**}$ |
| <i>Classification of internship offers within a company (<math>w_5</math>)</i>   | $r = +0.42^{**}$  | $r = +0.54^{**}$  | $r = +0.43^{**}$   | $r = +0.54^{**}$ |
| <i>Classification of company's image advertisements in newspaper, TV, radio and / or online media (<math>w_6</math>)</i> | $r = +0.35^{**}$  | $r = +0.345^{**}$ | $r = +0.29^{**}$   | $r = +0.39^{**}$ |
| <i>Classification of company's image brochures (<math>w_7</math>)</i>  | $r = +0.07$   | $r = +0.21^{**}$  | $r = +0.22^{**}$   | $r = +0.35^{**}$ |
| <i>Classification of company's product promotion activities (<math>w_8</math>)</i>                                       | $r = -0.08$   | $r = +0.03$       | $r = +0.08$  | $r = +0.16^*$    |

|   |                           |                           |                           |                           |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b><i>Classification of company's job advertisements in newspapers, TV, radio and / or online media (w<sub>9</sub>)</i></b> | <b><i>r = +0.43**</i></b> | <b><i>r = +0.56**</i></b> | <b><i>r = +0.43**</i></b> | <b><i>r = +0.55**</i></b> |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|

Note: \*\* Correlations are significant at the 0.01 level.

\* Correlations are significant at the 0.05 level.

Source: Author's creation using research results

The correlations' results show that hardly any relation exists between the indicators *Classification of brand awareness of company (z<sub>1</sub>)* and *Classification into employer of choice (z<sub>2</sub>)* and the indicators *Image advertisements in newspaper, radio, TV and / or online media (w<sub>6</sub>)* and *Image brochures (w<sub>7</sub>)*. The indicator *Product promotion activities (w<sub>8</sub>)* is not at all significantly related to the indicator *Classification of brand awareness of company (z<sub>1</sub>)* (correlation coefficient of  $r = -0.08$  in 2012 and  $r = +0.03$  in 2013) and therefore does not support that the higher the classification of a company's *Product promotion activities* is, the higher is the *Classification of this company's brand awareness*. In the year 2012 the algebraic sign for this relation was even negative. In the year 2013 the sign turned into positive. However, as the relation needs to be dismissed, this change in the algebraic sign does only play a minor role. Besides, also the relation that the higher the classification of a company's *Product promotion activities* is, the higher is the *Classification of the company into an employer of choice (z<sub>2</sub>)* needs to be neglected. The correlation coefficient of  $r = +0.08$  in the year 2012 and  $r = +0.16$  in the year 2013 does not provide support for this relation. The indicator *Image brochures (w<sub>7</sub>)* is not related to *Classification of brand awareness of company (z<sub>1</sub>)* (correlation coefficient  $r = +0.07$  in 2012 and  $r = 0.21$  in 2013) and only slightly related to the indicator *Classification into employer of choice (z<sub>2</sub>)* (correlation coefficient  $r = +0.22$  in 2012 and  $r = +0.35$  in 2013). Likewise, the indicator *Image advertisements in newspaper, TV, radios and / or online media (w<sub>6</sub>)* is only slightly related to *Classification of brand awareness of company (z<sub>1</sub>)* (correlation coefficient  $r = +0.35$  in 2012 and  $r = +0.45$  in 2013) and *Classification into employer of choice (z<sub>2</sub>)* (correlation coefficient  $r = +0.29$  in 2012 and  $r = +0.39$  in 2013). All other indicators show a significant relation between 0.35 (correlation coefficient for *Company visits (w<sub>4</sub>)* with *Classification of brand awareness of company (z<sub>1</sub>)* in the year 2012) and 0.70 (correlation coefficient for *Participation at university / career fairs (w<sub>1</sub>)* with *Classification of brand awareness of company (z<sub>1</sub>)* in the year 2012).

Furthermore, HRMM approach needs to meet the requirements of the respective target group to be successful. Indicators can vary in their results due to this target-groups' differentiation. In the conducted research the target-groups were depicted by four different employee groups. Looking at an optionally target-group specific approach of HRMM approach the research shows that the indicators' results make a differentiation necessary in some cases. The Kruskal-Wallis Test was applied to contrast these perceived differences due to the grouping variable *Different employee groups*. In a first step, the research results of the companies' assessment are tested via the Kruskal-Wallis Test. Identified differences due to different investigated employee groups are depicted. Secondly, the test is ran for the employee's assessment to illustrate whether differences due to different employee groups arise in this investigation as well.

In the conducted Kruskal-Wallis Test of the companies' assessment all indicators' significance levels are  $p = 0.000$ . The confidence interval in the conducted Kruskal-Wallis Test is set at 95.00%;  $p < 0.05$ : statistically significant difference between the mean ratio of employee groups. As they are smaller than the predefined accepted significance level of  $p = 0.050$ , the Kruskal-Wallis Test argues for differences due to different employee groups. By additionally investigating the means of the indicators, these differences can be depicted.

To supply the research with another set of data, the Kruskal-Wallis Test is also conducted on the results of the employees' investigation. Possible differences due to the grouping variable *Different employee groups* are displayed and further investigated. The empirical research depicts differences due to the grouping variable in some indicators' results of the assessment by others. The significance level of the indicators *Classification of a company's participation at university and / or career fairs (w<sub>1</sub>)* ( $p = 0.021$ ), *Classification of a personnel discussion with a company's representative (w<sub>2</sub>)* ( $p = 0.021$ ), *Classification of a company's image brochure (w<sub>7</sub>)* ( $p = 0.000$ ) and *Classification of job advertisements in newspapers, TV, radio and / or online media (w<sub>9</sub>)* ( $p = 0.001$ ) as well as of *Classification of brand awareness of a company (z<sub>1</sub>)* ( $p = 0.049$ ) and *Classification of a company into an employer of choice (z<sub>2</sub>)* ( $p = 0.000$ ) are smaller than the predefined accepted significance level of  $p = 0.050$  and therefore reflect significant differences due to the investigated employee groups.

## 5. Conclusions

The availability of labor forces is one of the basic premises for a company's economic success. In order to cope with this requirement in the future, the acquisition and retention of employees is of crucial importance. In the context of the paper human resource management and its marketing approach is displayed concerning its correlation with employee satisfaction. The following conclusions are the outcome of the work and starting points for further research.

- Overall, the postulated relations are proven for the time being. Organizations give themselves a positive testimonial concerning the quality of their HRMM approach. Employees judge this more critically. However, overall they state their employers a HRMM approach which satisfies their needs as well as demands and therefore contributes to their satisfaction.
- The quality of a company's HRMM approach is significantly contributing to the overall employee satisfaction. Furthermore, employees' perception of their employer's organization is significantly influenced by the performance of the HRMM approach of the employer's company.
- Differentiations concerning an organization's HRMM approach arise due to addressing different employee groups. Empirical evidence – derived from the Kruskal-Wallis Tests - shows that measures of HRMM approach need to be adapted to the target-groups' differing demands on the labor market.
- Spearmans' Rho displayed that different instruments of a company concerning its HRMM approach have a different impact on employee satisfaction. However, there is still room for further investigation. The reasons why three instruments are not regarded as essential for a labor market-oriented and employee satisfying approach should be deeper investigated. This could help to develop a prioritization in the ranking of the different instruments to enhance the companies' performance concerning their HRMM approach.
- The work only conducted quantitative investigations. Further research should be applied considering qualitative measures. Qualitative analysis can try to substantiate the already gained deeper insight as the paper provides first explanations for employees' satisfying structures of human resource management and its results concerning personnel.

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