

HUMAN RESOURCE MARKETING – HOW TO WIN THE WAR FOR TALENTS

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Abstract: Human resources marketing is a relatively new branch of economic science, routed at marketing and human resources management and organisational governance domains and building upon their concepts. It has a substantial potential – if applied properly by the organisations, to help them attract, motivate, retain and manage their human resources, making sure they are well equipped with the needed skills and qualification, thus obtaining competitive advantage in the war for talents. The paper, on the basis of a dedicated desk-research, examines the evolution of the human resources marketing concept and its theoretical foundations in order to suggest models for successful practical application. It also charts avenues for further theoretical studies.

Key words: human resources marketing, employers branding, attractiveness of professions.

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Introduction

Human resources marketing² (HRM) is a relatively new branch of economic science, being born by a synergy between marketing, human resources (HR) management and organisational governance and building upon their concepts. Recently, scientific literature has devoted a great deal of attention to it and as a result many important findings are made, with

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² ‘Human resources’ is used in the paper as a basic term, because of its generalizing and strategic nature and orientation, while terms such as ‘personnel’, ‘staff’, ‘staff/personnel management’ and ‘personnel marketing’ are of a more operational nature. It shall be pointed as well that the terminological discussion in that regard is focused not mainly on the content of the different terms, but rather on the differences between them and their boundaries.

substantial potential for practical application – e.g., to attract, motivate, retain and manage the HR with the necessary skills and qualification (Petrova, M., Koval, V., Tepavicharova, M., Zerkal, A., Radchenko, A., Bondarchuk, N., 2020); (Stefanov, T., Varbanova, S., Stefanova, M., Ivanov, I., 2023); (Seitzhanov, S., Kurmanov, N., Petrova, M., Aliyev, U., Aidargaliyeva, N., 2020).

Their relevance is underlined especially in times when most of the organisations face increasing difficulties³ to find and retain qualified, loyal, motivated and creative HR – a phenomenon widely known as ‘war for talents’ (Chambers et al, 1998) – at global, European (EC, 2022, Moreno Diaz & Angelova, 2022) and national scale. These developments additionally accelerate and speed up the scientific endeavour to innovate so as to find effective and efficient practical application of theory’s achievements. Hence, the paper aims, on the basis of a dedicated desk-research, to examine the evolution of the human resources marketing concept and its theoretical foundations in order to suggest models for successful practical application. It also charts avenues for further theoretical studies.

In the new millennium, the war for talent is especially severe as many factors drive the intensification of the competition, such as:

- The negative demographic trends, coupled with the clear trend of society’s rapid ageing, that cause significant decrease of HR supply on the labour market;
- Changes in motivation systems of people in active age for employment – and especially the young people. This relates to the way they choose an educational field and/or a profession; the perception of some professions being more or less attractive and principles used by people when deciding on accepting or declining job offers;
- The new characteristics of modern work places, induced by the ongoing technical, technological and societal changes, that affect HR’s requirements, preferences and motivation system;
- The pressure on HR, caused by the twin transition (towards digitalisation and climate neutrality) and by the recent multiple crisis – COVID-19 pandemic (Yotzov, V., et al, 2020), the war in Ukraine, rising prices and growing inflation.

HRM – an important driver of competitiveness

Addressing recent challenges can only be successful if a new modern approach towards shaping and realizing the relationships and interactions of an organisation with its HR is applied. Recent studies⁴ show that there is a growing consensus both in the economic theory and practice that such a new

³ The term ‘organisation’ is used in this paper as a generalizing term for economic and non-economic entities that manage and employ HR.

⁴ Author’s desk research of literature sources and practical cases.

modern approach shall be anchored in the marketing domain. In that sense, the term 'human resource marketing' places the accent on the efforts of applying marketing approach, together with its concepts and instruments, towards HR management (Bröckermann & Pepels, 2002). Against this background, on the basis of a desk-research of scientific sources and practical cases, the nature, content and characteristics of the HRM is explored so as to identify and suggest models for its successful application, and to chart avenues for future research.

The critical importance of applying the HRM tools when attracting, motivating, retaining and promoting HR in an organisation is further highlighted by the recently growing dynamism of the labour markets – motivating the necessity of more frequent and flexible upskilling and re-skilling so as to meet the requirements and challenges imposed by the twin transition, the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

When examining the possibilities of how to apply marketing approach successfully in HR management, it shall be noted that the traditional marketing mix (Perreault & McCarthy, 1960; Kotler, 1972), that consists of the '4Ps' – 'product, price, place, promotion', has evolved substantially and has grown up to '7Ps' (Booms & Bitner, 1981⁵). 'People' (personnel and clients), 'process' (of selling a product or deliver a service and customer relations) and 'physical evidence' (of using the product or service, including on-hand experience of customers) are added to the initial concept⁶. These developments call for a harmonious relationship to be established by an organisation with the different social groups - and most importantly - with its own HR. Hence, the characteristics of a marketing model, applied towards HR, can be drawn to cover (Mahmetova, 2009):

- Product creation – e.g., creating a labour team of co-workers;
- Product allocation within the channels of distribution – distribution and re-distribution of HR – e.g., selection, rotation, dismissal of HR;
- Exchange between market participants – exchange of services between the parties in the labour relation – e.g., outsourcing, headhunting, etc.

Marketing approach to HR management

Many scientific studies focus on the development of marketing approach to HR management (e.g., Daniel Bell⁷), incorporating the theory of

⁵ Further, some authors extend the mix to 8Ps, by also adding 'productivity and quality'. Recent studies suggest extension to 10 Ps.

⁶ <https://www.thensmc.com/sites/default/files/CIM%207Ps%20Resource.PDF>.

⁷ Daniel Bell's theory is focused on re-assessment of values and on rearranging of the motivators for choosing a profession. It contains three distinguishable strands or elements: one relating to the post-industrial information workforce, the second one dealing with information flows (particularly scientific knowledge), and the third one concerning computers and the information revolution.

value system changes and elaborating on strategic aspects of HRM (Dei, 2003). On this basis, particular technologies and protocols for applying marketing approach to HR management were developed (Reynolds, 2018).

Furthermore, the scientific community endeavours to develop and precise the theoretical and practical domains of HRM, as well as to define it in a clear way and to distinct it from HR management (Fig. 1.). The analysis of the scientific literature evolution chart shows that irrespective of the broad consensus regarding the benefits of applying marketing approach to the relationships and interactions of the organisations with HR, still a common agreement is lacking concerning the definition, the content, the scope and the characteristics of HRM, of its goals, tasks, functions, techniques, etc. There are diverging views also regarding which starting point should be taken for clarifying the essence of HRM. Over the last decade, the practical models have been running ahead of the development of the scientific theory, calling for more focused theoretical advancement.

Origin – the 60-ties	
The term ‘marketing of personnel’ is used for the first time, drawing a parallel with the product marketing (Schubart, 1962) ⁸ .	‘Marketing of personnel’ as a concept, transposing the product marketing into the HR domain.
‘Marketing of personnel’ is defined as a science, based on conceptual foundations. The marketing instruments’ application is transposed to the management of the personnel (Overbeck, 1968).	
Concept development – the 70-ties	
Accent is placed at adapting ‘marketing of personnel’ to the needs of a particular organisation and at developing it further, including creative market research (Bühner, 1972).	The most important task of HRM is formed – to build in a convincing manner an attractive image of the offered work places, as well as of the organisation as an employer. The goal is that the necessary HR with specific skills that matches the requirements of the work places are found, while making also sure that they possess the necessary qualification, competences, motivation and talent that are needed to safeguard the upward development of organisation.
‘Marketing of personnel’ is defined both as an external communication instrument and as a program, that includes ‘all the measures of an organisation, intended at satisfying the expectations of the current or prospect employees and targeted at achieving effectiveness on the market place’ (Hunziker, 1973).	
‘Marketing of personnel’ as an internal entrepreneurial instrument, allowing precise orientation towards the employees (perceived as clients) and taking into consideration their interests when making managerial decisions, underlying the role of the corporate culture for forming the characteristics of the product ‘work place’, offered to current and potential employees (Eckardstein, 1975; Eckardstein et al., 1975).	
Targeted advertisement for the personnel – aimed primarily at prospect employees outside the organisation (Wunderer, 1975).	
The HR policy of an organisation is oriented towards the needs of the current and future workers, with the aim of retaining and motivating the current and attract the future workers (Eckardstein, 1975).	
The importance of the work place’s attractiveness for retaining the staff and explores rather ‘marketing of the work places’ than the ‘marketing of personnel’ (Ruhleder, 1978).	

⁸ Quoted in Reich, 1995 and Schamberger, 2006.

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<i>Deepening the concept and widening liaisons with the internal factors of the organisation – the 80s</i>	
The possibility to use marketing methods when working with HR is assumed - defined as 'construction of thought and action, oriented towards the desires and needs of the current and potential employees, based on their needs' (Schneider, 1985).	Ongoing scientific debate as to precise the concept. Introduces and endorses the understanding for the necessity to position the workplaces as attractive. Introduces the division of internal and external 'marketing of personnel'.
'Marketing of personnel' is viewed as just a new name given to classical instruments for working with personnel (Staffelbach, 1986).	
'Marketing of personnel' is examined from the viewpoint of the influence of work place's attractiveness on the internal and external labour markets, where the organisations need to position themselves in an active, systematic and positive manner, so that the search, selection and retention of the necessary HR can be successfully performed (Strutz, 1989).	
HRM is linked with studied or assumed value orientations of a given target group in an attempt to 'sell' the organisation to it, by picturing it in the most attractive way (von Rosenstiel et al., 1989).	
<i>Widening of the concept – the 90s</i>	
Operational and strategic approach, taken regarding 'marketing of personnel' is widened towards a concept of thought and action, that spreads across the entire HR area, stemming from the common goals of marketing and the specific goals of an organisation, covering both the internal and external activities (Schwab, 1991; Reich, 1995).	Widening the understanding of HRM as an activity with a very detailed content, scope, goals, and functions. HRM - both in a narrow and in a broad sense, is defined at the same time as a set of principles and as a managerial activity, oriented towards long-term provision of HR for the organisation.
Replacement of purely administrative activities regarding the staff with activities, oriented towards considering the staff interests and requirements. HRM focuses on the conscious and objective assessment of all the activities of an organisation from the viewpoint of their influence on its position on the internal and the external HR markets (Stutz, 1992, Scholz, 1993, Schwan & Seipel, 1994).	
HRM is viewed: 1) in a narrow sense – as sufficiently differentiated specific function of the personnel management services, aimed primarily at providing information about the labour market with the view of effectively satisfying the organisation's need from personnel; 2) in a broad sense – as philosophy and strategy for managing the staff-related functions (Kibanov, 1997; Zubkov & Zhuravliov, 1997).	
<i>New holistic approach towards HR marketing - first decade of the 21st century</i>	
HRM is understood as a tool for matching vacancies with the best candidates (Lewandowski & Liebig, 2004).	Dichotomy concept of the market – as a labour market and as an active market of work places, viewed as a specific good, offered for sale both to the unemployed people at the labour market and to organisation's own staff, who also have the role of client.
The organisation shall aim at 'selling' its free work places to its current and to the potential workers (Dincher, 2007; Beck, 2008).	
Clear and definite marketing perception regarding HR – as a: 1) Good, characterised by the consumer value of the workers (employees); 2) Buyer (client), who buys a particular work place in exchange to their labour (Durakova & Kibanov, 2008).	
The application of marketing in the area of HR improves the performance of areas such as: planning, searching, selection, evaluation, motivation, training, remuneration and release of HR and help developing specific staff and corporate culture (Duran & Chlebikova, 2016).	

<p>HRM performs three roles at the same time as a: 1) Dictum (i.e., main principle, rule) - aims at producing effects on the strategy, planning, and supply of HR for the organisation in a long run; 2) Method - aims at providing information that shall guide the work with HR – e.g., by conducting respective studies; 3) Instrument aims at focusing on engaging into employment certain target groups (market segments), for the of which it shall, by positioning for their perception the organisation as an attractive, employer, that offers attractive work places using differentiated communications (Buhner, 2000)</p>	<p>Complex approach towards HRM, extended and developed in a holistic aspect towards the marketing with its 4 elements – integrated, partnership, social and internal marketing.</p>
<p>Focus on the factors, which allow the organisation to utilise HR in an optimal manner, while achieving its goals (Novatorov, 2001).</p>	<p>HRM - a 'philosophy for maintaining partner relationships and interactions between organisations & HR on the labour markets and the work places, as to simultaneously satisfy the needs of both parties by using specific marketing technologies&instruments'.</p> <p>The employer's branding is the function of a comprehensive, long-term (positioning) strategy, thus being itself a holistic approach for increasing the attractiveness of a given company as an employer.</p>
<p>Type of a managerial activity, aimed at long-term provision of HR for the organisations, and at identifying the sources and ways for satisfying the organisations' needs of HR (Kriuchenko, 2008).</p>	
<p>HR management philosophy, unified managerial process, which gathers various functions in an organisation and orients them towards the external market (Kiryanko, 2013).</p>	
<p>Specific approach towards HR, based on market relationship - the staff is a special type of client of the organisation (Patlasov, 2013).</p>	
<p>'HRM' is defined as: 1) a part of the functions related to the staff management; 2) an independent functional area, responsible for securing HR for the organisation (Chashtin, 2013).</p>	
<p>'The employers' branding is an identity based, internal and external development and positioning of a company as a trustworthy and attractive employer' (DEBA, 2006).</p>	
<p>Widens the understanding about the strategic nature of HRM towards a comprehensive strategy, that embraces all business areas – employers' branding (Knoppik, 2008).</p>	
<p>Employers' branding as an international concept focused on the demand for skills and competence, and is a basis for differentiation vis-à-vis the rivals. To be successful, it shall incorporate factors such as psychological motives, organisational culture, values, etc., as to attract and retain employees in the organisation (Gaddam, 2008).</p>	
<p>Combining HR (in-ward oriented, focused on onboarding HR and training) with marketing/communication (outward oriented, focused on the organisational mission, purpose and strategy) as to enhance the collaborative work culture (Arya et al., 2021).</p>	
<p>Internet – based practical oriented content – blogs, online guides and tools - latest trends</p>	
<p>HRM is a new concept, positioning the company as the 'best place to work', resulting in a strong brand. It may be used to recruit new HR, increase employee loyalty, retain top talent, and create the necessary mental image of the organisation in the minds of HR and job seekers (https://www.lpcentre.com/).</p>	<p>HRM is a company's focused effort to attract qualified talent to their organization. They can do this through creating a positive employer brand, talent pools, job listings, and career pages. HRM is</p>
<p>HRM is an umbrella term for all activities an organization undergoes to attract, motivate, and retain the best talents. These activities include employer branding on social media, marketing the training programs, recruitment marketing, and a lot more (https://www.zavvy.io/blog).</p>	

<p>HRM, also referred to as employer branding or recruitment marketing, is a key component of any company's success - it entails developing your brand image in order to entice and hold onto the cream of the crop. In recent years, HRM has become increasingly important for businesses seeking to stand out in a competitive hiring landscape (https://hrmhandbook.com/core/hr-marketing/).</p>	<p>when a company actively promotes a position in an attempt to attract skilled candidates. This involves creating job posts and resources for prospective employees.</p>
<p>HRM shall be used to attract the right candidates for employment and to ensure that an organisation stands out from the competition as a highly desirable employer – especially in times when the market power is shifting from employer - to candidate-driven market. HRM is a company's focused effort to attract the types of people they want to have working in their business, including: creating a career page; posting job listings; recruitment marketing; creating a talent pool; ensuring positive candidate experience; creating a positive employer brand. (https://peertopeermarketing.co/hr-marketing/)</p>	

Source: Author's desk research

Figure 1. Chart of HRM concept evolution

The review of the literature also highlights that the similarities and differences between product and HR marketing derive primarily from the specificities of the markets, on which the process of exchange between market participants are preformed, as well as from the specific characteristics of the objects of exchange. Therefore, specific manifestations and activities related to product marketing mix (market research, customers, demand, market conditions, product, price, variety, product image, brand popularity, aftersales services, etc.) strictly match to those related to HRM (market research of the work places; supply; demand; introduction; HR; training; upskilling; work regarding professions, work places and tasks; needs matching; management; presentation of key figures; operational research; discussions and interactions; organisation and way of realisation, etc.).

Markets for human resources and workplaces

To ensure its good positioning, an organisation is supposed to conduct a good research of the product markets by making a full use of the marketing mix instruments, and it shall be well acquainted with all the market actors and the interactions amongst them. The product markets are characterised by a relatively simple composition in terms of market actors, who perform product and services transactions at different levels. This setting, where particular goods and services with pre-defined purpose and characteristics are traded on specifically defined market segments, substantially facilitates the realization of specific marketing impacts and the achievement of the pre-

planned results. However, this is not the case when it comes to the markets, on which HR marketing is applied – namely the two different markets – respectively HR market and the workplace market. On these markets, together with the direct actors involved in selling and buying, other market actors with various additional functions and tasks are also interacting - e.g., institutions and agencies, intermediaries, VET providers, assessments centres, etc.

The two markets are interconnected to each other, as they function in synchrony in time and space, and also absorb the influences caused by the product markets. These two markets are not limited within the boundaries of an organisation, but are rather infiltrated in its overall framework. Because the process of buying and selling of work force happens both inside and outside the organisation (when there are job vacancies and career opportunities within an organisation, they are accessible at the same time for people that have already been employed inside the organisation and for those who are still seeking for employment outside - on the HR market). Hence, an important characteristic of HRM turns to be the fact that the main market actors (the organisations and HR) participate directly in the transaction on both markets at the same time: 1) the organisations act as buyers on the HR market and as sellers on the workplace market; 2) the HR act as sellers on the HR market and as buyers on the workplace markets.

As a result, the degree of coordination, balance and interdependence between the two markets, as well as the simultaneous participation of the individuals on them, also produce some direct effects on certain professions, ranking them according to their perceived attractiveness by HR. This very fact imposes over the organisations the requirement to generate and implement a system of various marketing measures and influences – aimed at particular target segments, simultaneously on both markets, in order to position and maintain their brand and be attractive and competitive, in order to move the offered workplaces/professional occupations higher in the perceived ranking of attractiveness. At the same time, the organisations want to be in a position to attract the most qualified and skilled individuals – both from within and outside, who are willing to commit their talent into the common fund of HR.

Many other market actors play active role on both markets - e.g., institutions, regulators, intermediaries, etc. Amongst them, education providers and institutions deserve a special attention as they are entitled with the very important function of forming the characteristics and ensuring the constant upward development of the workforce. This involves equipping HR

with the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, qualification, etc., to ensure their closest match to the needs of the employers and the specific jobs, but also to help HR navigate successfully through these requirements so as to be able to anticipate the future changes and to be prepared to adapt to them.

Strategic and tactic dimensions of HRM

The organisation must be pro-actively participating, including using support from the respective sector and/or employers' associations, in the process of forming HR – by applying adequate and appropriate organisational and marketing measures.

Forming HR is a complex and time-consuming process with a strategic orientation. Therefore, it requires the application of marketing measures of a strategic nature in principle, yet some of them may also be of a tactic nature when it comes to short-term influences and adjustments.

The strategic marketing measures shall reflect the general trends of the technical, technological, social and economic development of the society and the organisations' planned innovations that are expected to produce respective changes of the professions and jobs. Impacts are realised either directly by the organisations, or indirectly – by the respective sector and employers' associations. The latter play an important role in the consultation process for setting the institutional network, high schools and universities curricula and programmes, nomenclature of protected disciplines and professions, state educational standards and rules for obtaining professional qualification, etc. In this process, educational stakeholders such as lecturers and trainers shall be involved as well and various promotion measures shall be implemented in high schools and universities.

The tactic dimensions of HRM are related to the necessity of performing routine, short-term and mid-term actions to attract and employ new staff on the labour market – e.g., freshly graduated students from high schools (and especially professional high schools) and universities, as well as to planning and implementing rotation of the current staff (career development and job shifting), so that all the vacancies are filled. In such cases, the need of specific and effective marketing measures, targeted at particular market segments is explicitly underlined, including the need of promoting the organisational brand and advertising the attractiveness of the job vacancies/professional occupations announced. Effective and appropriate measures of such kind could include elaboration and implementation of programmes for scholarships, active participation in students' and labour' bourses, direct involvement in educational and training courses in universities and high

schools (especially when it comes to professional high schools), presentation of practical cases, constant up-skilling and attestation of current employees (including the support of HR evaluation centres).

The network of public and private employment services and labour bourses also have a certain role to play in the discussed aspects of HRM – and especially at regional level. This role can be effectively performed in close cooperation with the social partners, represented by their national, sector or regional structures. Public employment services regulate the labour market being in charge to register, from one side, the job seekers (mainly unemployed and job-shifting seekers) and from another – the vacant jobs offered by the organisations. The network is also supported by private employment agencies and HR recruiting companies.

Relevant marketing measures on the labour market

The development and implementation of the relevant set of marketing measures on the labour markets by the organisations, done with the facilitation of the network of public and private employment services, is very important. Because those measures, if devised and implemented in a right manner, enhance and support the prompt adaptation of the newly recruited staff to the requirements of the workplaces, and their smooth integration into the team.

In order to guarantee the success of this process, it is necessary to describe the requirements of the job vacancies in a detailed and clear manner, presenting comprehensively all the specific organizational, managerial and psychological aspects as well as the applied technologies used and the working conditions offered. The job descriptions, though, are often not sufficient from a marketing point of view, as they lack important information regarding the characteristics of an organisation – and such omissions can be detrimental. Since, quite often, the brand of the organisation is the element that impresses clients (job seekers) the most. Therefore, an organisation's brand shall be carefully built in order to provide a competitive advantage when positioning the workplaces offered as the most attractive and building an attractive image for the profession sought.

The organisations are supported by the relevant state bodies when they define the relevant professions – as usually, each state has a national classifier of professions. Although these definitions are not always accurate and are often lagging behind dynamic changes on the labour market, they remain the main source for shaping a very important characteristic of HRM – segmenting the labour market on the basis of professional occupation.

A profession, however, forms only one, very important characteristic of HR, though. As, at the same time, individuals can differ from each other, following the differences in other characteristics and their combinations – e.g., age, education, experience, qualification, etc. Differences also occur within the framework of a given professional occupation and even of a particular workplace, and between the same positions in different sectors⁹. Such differences shall serve as the basis for fine-tuning and précising HRM measures – aiming at applying the various tools of the marketing mix so that the right measures are shaped in order to allow to attract the most knowledgeable, qualified, skilful, creative, efficient future employees so that they become part of the team. It is also necessary to create the right conditions for upward career pathways of the already employed workers. Such an endeavour imposes the need of an effective combination and synergy between HR marketing and management tools. The ultimate goal is to predict, understand and meet the vast variety of material and non-material needs and expectations that workers have.

Those needs and expectations shall be identified by conducting targeted market research. On the basis of the results achieved, the possibilities of the organisation to meet them and the proper ways of doing this by exploiting the possibilities given by HR management (fig. 2) shall be revealed and analysed.

The degree of coordination, the balance and the interdependence between the two markets – of HR and of workplaces, as well as the simultaneous participation of the individuals on them, produce a direct effect on certain professions, positioning some of them as more attractive and others – as less. A specific issue to be further explored here is the theoretical foundations of the perceived attractiveness of professions (Petranov et al., 2017). A system of endogenous and exogenous factors works together to create a multi-factor theory explaining what affects the attractiveness of a profession by building upon HR management, career development and motivation theories (content- and process-based theories and motivation models) in order to explain how a profession is chosen. Depending on the specific characteristic and relationships of a particular workplace, the combination of endogenous and exogenous factors will be blended in different proportions. These proportions that can be defined precisely by an empirical study give an important recipe to help shaping strategies for increasing the attractiveness of certain professions.

⁹ For example, the economic activities in Bulgaria are classified by the National Statistical Institute (NSI, 2008) in 96 groups, which are further internally divided in sub-groups – including the sub- groups based on the 1st and 2nd sign after the decimal point of the classification codes.

Tools and measures for meeting the needs	Workers' needs																		
	Wages, bonuses, awards	Certainty	Rules and compliance	Conflict resolution, control	Requirements	Leadership	Information	Delegation	Responsibility assignment	Authority (power)	Personal assignments	Support and advice	Personal contacts	Attention devoted	Appraisals and awards	Tolerance	Forming loyalty	Motivation	Emotional binding
Wage	X																		
Social security	X	X	X																
Compensations	X	X	X																
Prof. activity			X	X				X							X				
Prof. unity			X				X			X				X	X				
Career development	X				X					X		X							
Up- and re-skilling					X	X		X		X									
Competences and tasks			X			X		X											
Access to information	X		X			X		X				X			X		X	X	X
Independence			X		X	X		X										X	
Responsibility			X		X	X		X										X	
Discipline and subordination				X						X	X						X		X
Support					X							X			X				X
Contacts							X						X	X					X
Friendship and team work													X			X	X	X	X
Belonging				X								X	X	X			X		X
Individuality			X		X		X			X			X	X			X		X
Criticism and appraisal	X						X						X		X				X
Dangers	X		X						X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	
Cooperation						X	X					X	X			X	X		
Self-development			X		X								X				X		X
Stimuli	X		X		X		X					X	X		X			X	

Source: Author's adaptation based on Schwan, 1995

Figure 2. Needs of the workers, and tools and measures for satisfying them

Effective HR marketing – ensuring a perfect match between the characteristics and the special requirements of a given workplace and the skills of the worker that shall occupy it

The results of the market studies, coupled with the relevant marketing tools, create pre-conditions for more effective HR management that will increase labour productivity and efficiency and improve the end results. They once more underline the direct link between HR marketing and management.

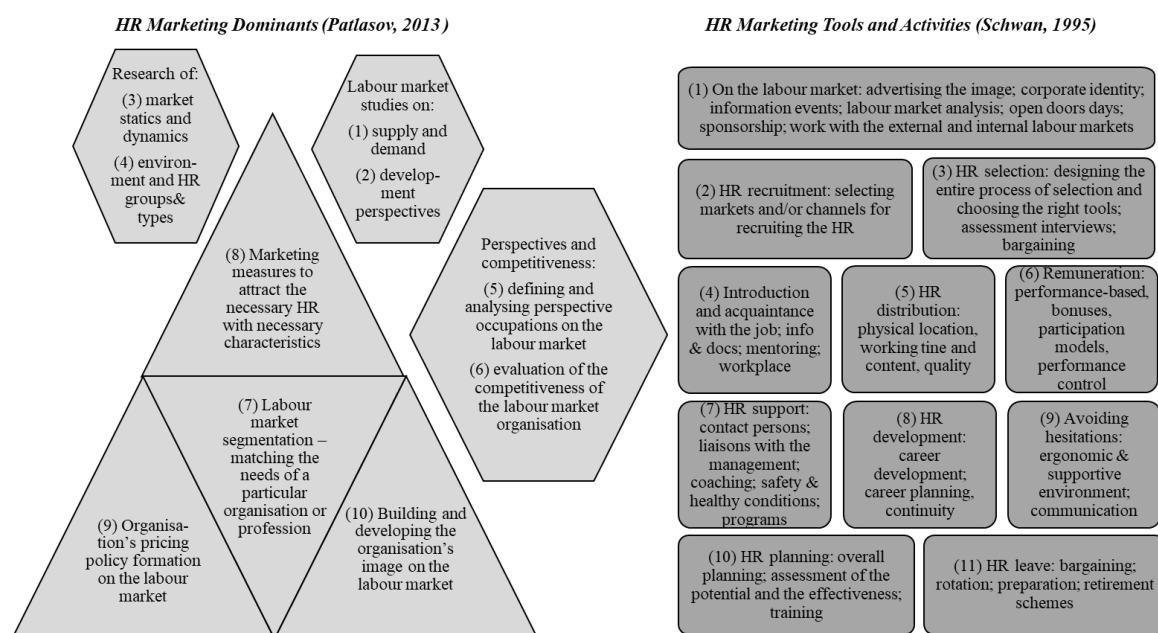
Current and future workers of an organisation lend their services to the organisation via performing their job at particular workplaces, which they have 'bought' or will 'buy' against their readiness to repay for them by performing their professional tasks and functions in adequate and effective manner. In order for this process to be successful, it is necessary to establish a perfect match between the particular characteristics and the special requirements of a given workplace and the skills of the worker that shall occupy it. There are two scenarios for how to achieve such a perfect match, and both of them suppose performing respective marketing actions.

First, all the specific and specialised requirements of a given workplace shall be defined and presented in a clear and comprehensive manner once the workplace is offered on the market – irrespective of outside or inside an organisation. This is an absolute prerequisite to enable the buyers to make their informed choice. In the case of offers made inside an organisation, this prerequisite is accomplished by elaborating and approving the respective job description that stipulates the obligations of a worker in order to perform a certain job in a comprehensive manner. However, very often, these job descriptions are not precise, exact, or exhaustive enough thus failing to serve effectively their intended purpose. In order to prevent such a situation, it is necessary to include descriptions that are comprehensive and understandable and concern not only worker's obligations, but also the working equipment and characteristics, and conditions of the workplace. Promoting these elements and communicating effectively on the workplace market as well as using the appropriate marketing instruments is of utmost importance.

Second, the qualifications and skills of a person that occupies a given workplace shall be assessed, and on this basis the person shall be offered on-the spot in-company training in order to eliminate any detected deficits and to equip the new worker with the missing specific and specialised skills. The key for success is how precisely the assessment will be done in order to reveal the deficits and to guide the choice and application of the relevant marketing instruments for their elimination. To facilitate this process, if

necessary, services of staff assessment centres may be used so that individual training programs can be elaborated on this base, tailored specifically to increase the qualifications of the worker in question and align them with the requirements of a particular workplace.

The effective interaction between HR marketing and management is a pre-condition for development and implementation of innovation at the workplace – by selecting one of the above scenarios to follow and the particular elements to feed into the chosen one. The innovations in question are a good managerial practice aimed at improving the quality of the working environment and the motivation of the workers by employing new elements within the HR management or labour processes in an organisation. They are also intended to stimulate the cooperation and exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas amongst workers. A key success factor in this process is the engagement and the authorisation of the workers within the decision-making process in order to offer them more independence and flexibility to perform their duties. This is also supposed to improve their motivation as well as the working environment and to unleash the innovation potential of organisations.



Source: Author's adaptation, based on Schwan, 1995 and Patlasov, 2013

Fig. 3. HR marketing dominants, tools and activities

Based on the above, HRM can be defined in a more detailed manner, with particular instruments and actions (fig.3). The knowledge and

understanding of the marketing dominants when related to the needs and specific characteristics of the labour markets, both in terms of demand and supply for workforce and workplace, is important to guide the right choice of HRM tools and activities so as to secure the best possible result.

Conclusions and avenues for further research

In the midst of the war for talents, HRM is an important tool for the organisations to gain important advantages, helping them to win not only particular battles, but also to be sustainable and more competitive as a whole. In order to do so, it is important to develop and enrich HRM theory – both in theoretical terms and in practical application.

The avenues for further theoretical studies shall help the better understanding of the functions and opportunities offered by the concepts of internal and external HRM, as well as their interactions and liaisons with the other elements of the external and internal environment. Employing the possibilities offered by the relationship marketing application is another perspective, alongside more consistent work on defining the functions, goals, tasks and core competences of HRM.

In terms of enhancing the effective and smooth practical application of the theoretical concepts and models of HRM, it will be useful to make some further research so as to collect primary data that can be analysed to allow revealing and shaping certain methods and models for practical application. Specific themes can be related to blending the endogenous and extraneous factors in proportions that will position a profession to have relatively high attractiveness, employing the elements of the conventional and extended marketing mix for producing intended impacts on the labour market and to influence internal and external relationship of an organisation with its current and future HR. Whatever direction the future research may take, there is no doubt that the key for success is to apply a complex and holistic approach – with all its elements – integration, partnership, social and internal focus towards HRM. This is the only beneficial formula for making coordinated, informed and future-proofed decisions when managing both a given organisation and its HR in order to derive and maintain competitive advantages.

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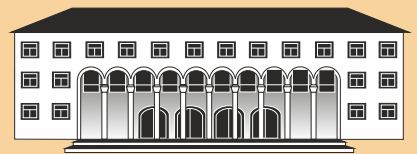
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