

HRM and Line Managers, the Recipe of Organizational Success.

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Abstract

Finding a roadmap for the relation between Human resources management (HRM) unit and line managers in other units of an organization is a goal that need to be in the center of interest. This will eliminate the overlap between both units roles, which will make any organization more effective and more successful. However, HRM unit becomes crucial in any organization because HRM practices are vital for the success of any organization. Nevertheless, the question remains, can this unit run all human resources in the organization? Do HRM units hear and understand the claim of other units? On the other hand, line managers have crucial role for the success and survival of any organization. Since they have specific roles to conduct in their organization. Then, another question arises, can they do their job alone? Are they delivering their HRM role? Accordingly, an organization must acquire HRM staff, who can hear, understand, and support, and be the guidance idol for every and each line manager. This research is designed as qualitative study. A questionnaire was designed with open question to collect primary data from the community related to hiring practices in the civil sector of Palestine. The tool was conducted through google forms to ensure proper timing of responses and proper collection for data. Moreover, answers were categorized and analyzed, the SPSS program was used to investigate the trends. The population was the supervisory-positions employees who work at Ministry Of Education of Palestine (MoE). 160 employees send recommendations that are related to hiring practices, where all the recommendations hovered around the need to improve hiring practices, the quality of Employment policies, the strength and weakness of recruitment and selection practices.

1. Introduction

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Human resources management (HRM) practice is an essential factor for the success of any modern organization's according to the literature. Where human resources are the most important one for many reasons: firstly because it is controlling and running all other resources. Secondly, it is human resources (HR) who creates intellectual property. In fact, this is what differentiates successful organizations from those that cannot survive. Thirdly, all organizations in all sectors must have good relations with customers, service receivers, partners, stakeholders and/or competitors, in which they are a major factor for the survival of the organization, and indeed, HR who runs these relations. As a bottom line, we cannot restrict all the reasons why HR are the most important resource that organizations have. However, after reviewing schoolers definition of HRM, it can be divided for the sake of better understanding in three points of view: First one: definition from strategic point of view. Armstrong and Taylor (2014) and Bagheri (2016) defined it as philosophy and approach how to manage people because organizational planning and human resources are strategic in nature. Where the second definitions were from the goal of HRM. As (Dessler, 2017; Zehir et al. ,2016; Decenzo, 2010) defined it as all the functions and efforts which ensure effective attracting, hiring, training, motivating, and maintaining of employees to achieve organization goals. While the third category defined it from its organizational effect; Like Itika (2011) and Yaza (2016) defined it as techniques or methods that would improve production, reduce service delivery costs, raise the synergy, and ensure sustained availability of competent staff in the organization; the way to help the organization to be more efficient. But the question remains, can HRM staff run all human resources of an organization? Is it their role to do? Of course not, they must build an agents pool to run all human resources in an organization, those are the line managers.

1.2. HRM Unit Importance

According to Herzallah (2017), human resources management department is the unit that manages the workforce efficiently and effectively to associate the goals of the organization and the objectives of employees through specific functions such as planning workforce and hiring function. Al-Sharbati (2017) added, it is one of the most important departments in business organizations and institutions, in the light of successive scientific and technological developments, it has jobs and activities geared to take care of its human resources. Vardarliera (2016) confirmed, it gains even more importance in times of crises, because it makes up an important dimension of crisis management. Ion Chitescu and Lixandru (2015) mentioned the major role of HR departments by adopting flexible adaptation strategies, based on accessing opportunities and avoiding threats. However, HR structures must consider staff response to consequences caused by these changes, in addition to external positive or negative impact. Al-Sawsaa (2018) considered, the success of any organization depends on the way of human resources quality and management. However, Shakeeb (2010) gave examples of the importance of human resources for the economy and productivity, he mentioned that a big company has teams of expert whom role is only to enhance results, like 650 experts of Nestle Company. He also mentioned the loss of 41 million dollars of the Motorola company in 1968 when 8 experts moved to another company at the exact time of their resignation.

1.3. Hiring Practices Concept

Hiring practices are major activities of HRM according to previous researches, such as: (Al-Qaralah, 2018; Bothaljieh and Husaini, 2018; Al-Sharbati, 2017; Verma, 2016; Yaza, 2016; Lebow, 2014). Abdul-Qadir and Jaafar (2020) defined hiring as all practices to fill vacancies. This includes two types of employment: External and internal (Yaza, 2016). Al-Ghazali (2016) defined it as a pool of candidates that is generated to apply for employment to an organization, and the use of specific instruments and criteria to choose persons who are more likely to succeed in the job. Furthermore, Hiring is a very crucial practice for any organization (Dessler, 2017), because it is a critical factor for organizational survival

and success because it depends on the quality of its human resources (Al-Sawsaa, 2018). Lastly, hiring practices consist of two main practices: recruitment and selection (Al-Qaralah, 2018; Dessler, 2017; Al-Ghazali, 2016). Recruitment practices which are the process for which an organization seeks applicants and attracts potential employees (Al-Naqbi, 2011). Where the selection practices are the process of assessing candidates to ensure that the most appropriate ones are hired (Oluoch, 2013). Furthermore, Bureaucratic theory is one of the famous theories that have been applied in the public sector because this theory is incredibly useful for managing large-scale organizations (Egyankosh, 2017) and it suits the public sector because it defines every single unit of effort, which is divided into the completion of duties that are handled to officials (Hollyer, 2011). Where hiring is a main component of bureaucratic theory (Serpa and Ferreira, 2019). Hiring in this theory must be framed by employment policies implementation according to its literature (Collins and Kehoe, 2008; McNeill, 2022; Egyankosh, 2017; Serpa and Ferreira, 2019; Visitchaichan, 2004; Baron et al., 2001). Employment Policies can be defined as all formal policies and procedures that ensure all employees become experts regarding their jobs (Collins and Kehoe, 2008). This add another variable to the hiring practices which is the Employment Policies Implementation in the Bureaucratic Theory.

1.4. Line Manager's

Dessler (2017) defined line managers as managers with line authority on the organization chart, to run departments (like sales or production) that are crucial for the company's survival. He added, They are different from staff managers who run departments that are advisory or supportive (purchasing and human resource management) where staff manager main role is to assists and advises line managers to accomplish their tasks. Yaza (2016) defined their role to plan, organize, monitor, guide, and take decisions to accomplish the mission. Decenzo et al. (2010) defined them by their role, they explain expectations, directions, and priorities, they have to remove obstacles and to reinforce performance, they have also to follow-up and review progress and reinforce improvements.

It's important to differentiate between HRM Unit's Role and Line Managers Role because these roles may affect any organization success and survival. Line managers roles according to (Dessler, 2017; Yaza, 2016, Decenzo et al. 2010) are to run organization departments, to manage, assists and advises their staff, to take decisions to accomplish the mission, to set priorities and clear directions for the staff, to remove obstacles and to reinforce performance, to follow-up and review progress, and to reinforce improvements. Visiting these roles give indicator about the deep work they need to conduct with their employees. Consequently, the hidden HRM management role they need to play with them.

Accordingly, HRM unit role should be improved According to Ulrich (1998). This is noticed now in all organizations according to Decenzo et al. (2010), where more than half of all HR departments offer administrative services to the organization. Zehir et al. (2016) noticed that HRM intends to enable an organization to achieve its goals. Therefore, line managers have crucial role for any organization survival, where HRM unit need to mandate them with HRM practices in certain levels. The scope of HRM unit mandate exceeds the boundary of the organizational structure on the contrary of other units. It should work closely with all other units in the sake of organizational goal achievement. As a conclusion, the recipe of the success is to work closely with the line managers.

1.5. HRM Unit's Support to Line Managers

The question arise, what is the role of support that HRM unit should provide to line managers who lead other units? How can they support them to accomplish their mission? Dessler (2017) answered, they should train line manager to put in place policies and practices that produce employees competencies and skills that organization needs to achieve its strategic goals. According to the literature, HRM must do the following of the hiring practices: (Dessler, 2017; Armstrong and Taylor, 2014; Stiles et al., 2006; Ulrich, 1998): to help to select line managers who can align results with strategy implementation, to help line managers and train them to get the right staff.

2. Methodology

2.1. Study's Approach and Design

The unit of analyses are the individuals who works as heads of middle management unit and high management unit of MoE. The study is a qualitative study depending on open answers categorization and analyses. The qualitative approach is used for this study because of its nature and aim. It tries to investigate the facts on ground depending on the respondents answers. It started with reviewing literature that is related to study's variables. Then to develop the instrument for the study. Then information and data were collected, where it was collected through google form because of the Palestinian situation and closers. Afterward, analysis was conducted of the gathered data and information to give interpretation about the factual practice of hiring.

2.2. Targeted Population

The Palestinian Ministry of Education (MoE) is the largest ministry in the Civil Services Sector CSS. The employees are more than forty-seven thousand employees which rate around 57% of the Palestinian civil sector (PMoE, 2019), which make it a representative organization for the civil sector because of the size. In addition, MoE hired more than three thousand long-term employees and a greater number of short-term employees in the years 2019-2020, which makes it most of the civil sector hiring (General personnel council, 2021). Another reason to target MoE is the big portion of MoE budget that is spent on projects (Almost 40% of the total budget) annually, where more than 1.4 billion dollars have been allocated for its projects since 2012, and more than 200 million dollars were allocated to projects in the last two years according to the head of projects unit at MoE. Lastly, education portion consists more than 22% of the national budget annually (PMoF, 2019). Furthermore, Ministry of Education (MoE) staff form a portion of 57% of CSS.

The study targeted line managers at MoE, they are personnel who are mandated to be part of hiring processes at MoE. They are only the one who occupy managerial levels at the ministry. They were

requested to answer voluntarily an open question about their recommendations and opinion about hiring practices at MoE. 160 of them participated and answered the question. The question was sent to 341 supervisors. It is about respondent recommendations about suggested improvement that can be adopted for hiring practices. It was open-ended questions that may provide important input for improvement plans.

2.3. Data Collection, Procedures and Analyses

Data was collected through Google forms platform. The questionnaire was sent to 341 respondents to be answered voluntarily. In addition, the questionnaire was sent in the last week of October 2022, and data was gathered till the end of November 2022. The results were extracted using The SPSS program Version 25. The analysis included descriptive Analysis of the answers, frequencies, and percentages to identify their responses according to their point of view.

3. Finding and recommendations

3.1. Finding

One hundred and sixty employees sent their recommendations about areas of improvement for hiring practices. 25.0% Of them send recommendations about Hiring practices as a whole. While selection practices was tackled by 54.4% of the respondents. 18.1% of them send suggestions about employment policies and only 2.5% send suggestions about recruitment. Transparency of hiring, competencies-based for selection, and selection tools improvement are the most mentioned areas by the respondents to be improved. Where salaries and incentives as a tool for recruitment was the least mentioned to be improved.

Moreover, employment policies implementation was mentioned to be improved by them. Twenty-eight recommendations were received and twenty-four of them were about planning for hiring practices as a critical area that needs to be improved. However, a few respondents talked about recruitment and

were about the importance of enhancing internal recruitment to improve hiring practices. On the other hand, eighty-four recommendations were received about selection practices. Twenty-nine recommendations were about improving selecting tools. Another area of focus of the recommendations was about competencies bases and experiences bases for selection, fifty- three recommendations received in this regard. Table 3.1 shows recommendations related to hiring practices.

Table 3-1: Respondents Recommendations about Hiring Practices.

Field of recommendation	# recommendations	%	Area of improvement		%
1. Hiring practices improvement	40	25.0%	Transparency	24	14.8%
			Improve hiring processes	12	7.4%
			Hiring monitoring	6	3.7%
1.1 Employment policies	29	18.1%	Planning for hiring	23	14.2%
			centralization	4	2.5%
			salaries and incentives	2	1.2%
1.2 Recruitment practices	4	2.5%	eternal recruitment	4	2.5%
1.3 Selection principles	87	54.4%	experience base	22	13.6%
			competencies base	24	14.8%
			selection tools	29	17.9%
			hiring time and experimental period	9	5.6%
			Others	3	1.9%
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MoE can give more attention to for hiring practices efficiency according to the answers and results as shown in table 3.1. For the Hiring practices as a whole, transparency, hiring processes, and hiring processes monitoring need more attention and improvement. It is clear that all three of them are interrelated and are all about the final result of transparency.

For employment policies implementation, Planning for hiring was the most mentioned area to be improved according to the respondents. It is very important one to be taken because hiring policies frame all the processes and the procedures. While for the selection practices, the respondents focused on

experience base and competencies base for selection processes. In addition, many of them concentrate on improving selection tools and some of them recommend reducing of hiring time and experimental period for new employees.

3.2. Discussion and Recommendations

The results gave feedback about hiring practices at MoE. Transparency of the hiring activities and hiring decision was one of the most mentioned areas to be improved about hiring practices. Therefore, MoE should improve Hiring transparency. MoE to improve framework that can enhance all transparency that is related to hiring practices.

A fast track of promotion for the excellent employee can help an organization to enhance its performance. However, according to MoE literature for hiring, all candidates and employees are bound by experience and age requirement for high-level promotions, where capacities is not will-framed as a requirement in the job descriptions. In addition, the university degree is another preventing factor that some excellent employees cannot overcome this requirement to occupy high-level positions. Therefore, MoE can improve job descriptions manuals for high-level positions to allow excellent to occupy high-level positions by depending on competencies and skills. To develop job descriptions manuals that are related to competencies and not bound to experience, age, or university degree. Even though hiring goal is to have the best employees in high-level positions, and success is more related to employee competencies. MoE can develop such a track for excellent employees through improvement of job descriptions. On the other hand, developing a matrix of competencies can improve the effectiveness of recruitment and selection practices. Competencies are the key word for success and developing a competencies matrix for recruitment and selection is vital for it. Using experience as a base for recruitment and selection is a good principle if it does not affect getting the most competent candidates.

Having diverse sources for recruitment is a sign of an effective hiring system. Varying recruitment sources will create a more suitable pole of candidate to select from according to the literature. The only

way for recruitment externally is through General Personnel Council portal which is reducing the external recruitment source to only one source. MoE should improve hiring system capacities to use more external sources to allocate candidate. Moreover, using internal sourcing for hiring for high-level positions is very important for employees' satisfaction and for effectiveness of hiring system according to literature. Therefore, MoE should depend more on internal sourcing like promotions. In addition, MoE can use internal source for getting new employees, especially from short-term contracted staff. Doing so will enable MoE to allocate the most competent staff and hire them from this cluster.

Hiring practices consume time and money as shown as mentioned. However, quick hiring practices can provide the required employees at the right time. In addition, costly hiring practices are signs of ineffective hiring practices according to bureaucratic theory. Therefore, MoE should improve the capacities of its hiring system to have a faster selection process, and a less costly one. Selection processes consume a long time at MoE as respondents' answers shows. Communication needs to be launched with all parties to make it faster. Time-consuming selection processes influence many areas, one of those areas is the cost of the selection processes.

On the other hand, formal examinations and/or interviews are good selection tools if they were designed on scientific bases. Results showed the need for more improved selection tools. MoE can review selection results to ensure selection tools quality. In addition, MoE can develop more selection tools to have more efficient selection decisions.

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