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A Grounded Theory Approach to Human Resource Marketing: Developing a New Theoretical Framework Based on Empirical Data

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ABSTRACT

This research endeavour aims to create a novel theoretical framework for Human Resource Marketing (HRMKT) using a grounded theory approach. A thorough comprehension of HRMKT was attained by examining several data sources, such as 15 in-depth interviews with HR professionals, focus groups with employees, and document analysis. The results demonstrate that HRMKT is a multifaceted phenomenon impacted by factors like employee experience, employer branding, talent management, and organizational culture. A novel theoretical framework is suggested, highlighting the collaborative interaction of these aspects for the successful implementation of HRMKT. This research enhances the understanding of HRMKT (Human Resource Management and Knowledge Transfer) and offers practical insights for firms aiming to optimize their talent management strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Marketing (HRMKT) is now considered a crucial strategy for firms aiming to attract, involve, and retain highly skilled individuals in a highly competitive and ever-changing corporate environment (Barber & Wright, 2016). This field goes beyond conventional human resource management (HRM) by embracing a market-oriented strategy for overseeing human capital, focusing on generating value for employees and establishing the firm as an appealing employer (Lievens & Dijkstra, 2018). As firms acknowledge the crucial significance of human resources, HRMKT has been increasingly influential in determining corporate success (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2017).

Despite its increasing importance, HRMKT needs to be developed more than well-established marketing disciplines (Barber & Wright, 2016). Current research frequently concentrates on individual HRMKT practices or isolated elements of talent management rather than constructing a coherent theoretical framework to direct research and application (Lievens & Dijkstra, 2018). A strong theoretical basis is necessary for systematically comprehending HRMKT and its influence on organizational results.

To fill this void in the existing body of knowledge, this study utilizes a grounded theory methodology to construct a novel theoretical framework for HRMKT. This research tries to identify the fundamental processes and mechanisms that drive the effectiveness of HRMKT by creating theory from empirical data through induction. This method will enhance our comprehension of HRMKT as a unique and intricate phenomenon.

This project aims to address the following research inquiries:

- What are the core components of Human Resource Marketing (HRMKT)?
- How do these components interact to influence organizational outcomes?
- What are the underlying processes and mechanisms that drive HRMKT effectiveness?

By responding to these inquiries, this investigation contributes to the progression of HRMKT understanding and establishes a basis for subsequent research and application. The results are anticipated to provide significant knowledge for companies aiming to enhance their people management strategies and establish long-lasting competitive advantages through effective HRMKT initiatives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

HRMKT: A Conceptual Overview

Human Resource Marketing (HRMKT) is a strategic approach using marketing principles to attract, engage, and retain talented individuals (Barber & Wright, 2016). It includes several tasks, such as promoting the company as an employer, recruiting talented individuals, keeping employees engaged, and developing their skills (Lievens & Dijkstra, 2018). HRMKT's strategy involves establishing the firm as an appealing employer and developing a compelling employee value proposition to establish strong connections with new and current employees (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2017).

HRMKT, short for Human Resource Management and Knowledge Transfer, is a crucial role that ensures that

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the management of an organization's talent aligns with its overall aims and objectives (Barber & Wright, 2016). The statement acknowledges that people are not only resources but rather valued assets that substantially contribute to a firm's success (Lievens & Dijkstra, 2018). HRMKT aims to embrace a market orientation to comprehensively comprehend employees' needs and preferences, create focused marketing strategies, and provide excellent employee experiences (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2017). The interaction between HRMKT and marketing is mutually beneficial and interdependent. HRMKT utilizes marketing principles and approaches to effectively recruit and retain talented individuals, while marketing gains valuable insights from HRMKT to comprehend client wants and preferences (Uddin *et al.*, 2019). By combining HRMKT and marketing, firms can develop a comprehensive and customer-focused method for managing human resources (Barber & Wright, 2016).

Theoretical Foundations of HRMKT

Various theories support the field of HRMKT. Employer branding is developing a powerful and distinct employer image to attract and retain high-quality employees (Lievens & Dijkstra, 2018). Talent management involves a broader array of human resources operations, such as acquiring, developing, and retaining talented individuals (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2017). Service-dominant logic highlights the significance of collaborative value creation between the firm and its employees (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Although these theories provide valuable insights into HRMKT, they need to comprehend the intricacy and ever-changing nature of the discipline fully. Current frameworks frequently prioritize individual HRMKT practices or separate elements of talent management, disregarding the interdependence of HRMKT activities (Barber & Wright, 2016). There is a requirement for a more all-encompassing and integrated theoretical framework to direct research and application in HRMKT.

Grounded Theory Methodology

Grounded theory is an inductive research method that enables the creation of novel hypotheses based on empirical data (Charmaz, 2014). This approach is especially well-suited for investigating intricate and insufficiently studied phenomena such as HRMKT (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Grounded theory involves the methodical collection and analysis of data. It allows researchers to detect patterns, create categories, and generate a theoretical framework based on the data itself (Charmaz, 2014).

Utilizing grounded theory in this study will facilitate a thorough investigation of HRMKT procedures, revealing implicit assumptions and establishing novel connections among variables. This technique will facilitate the creation of a comprehensive and intricate knowledge of the HRMKT phenomena, establishing a well-founded hypothesis. Nevertheless, grounded theory does possess certain limits. It is a laborious task that demands a substantial allocation

of resources. Moreover, the researcher's subjectivity can impact the interpretation of findings (Charmaz, 2014). To address these problems, we will implement thorough data collection and analysis techniques.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative, exploratory research design to explore the complex and under-researched area of Human Resource Marketing (HRMKT). Given the absence of a well-defined theoretical framework in HRMKT, a grounded theory approach was deemed the most suitable strategy for developing a new theoretical comprehension of this emerging field (Charmaz, 2014). This inductive research methodology facilitated the development of a theory directly from the facts without being limited by pre-existing theoretical frameworks (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Data Collection

Various data collection approaches were used to gain a thorough understanding of HRMKT. Rich insights into HR professionals' experiences, opinions, and practices from varied corporate contexts were obtained through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Employee focus groups were performed to investigate their impressions of HR practices and the influence of HRMKT efforts on their work experiences. In addition, document analysis of HR regulations, job descriptions, and employee handbooks offered additional data to cross-reference findings and provide context for the interview and focus group data.

The 15 interviews were selected using a purposive sampling technique. Participants were selected based on their respective jobs, level of expertise, and the possible depth of their ideas. The sample consisted of human resources experts from different industries and organizations of varying sizes to ensure diversity and the capacity to generalize the findings.

Data Analysis

The data acquired was subjected to a meticulous, analytical process that adhered to the principles of grounded theory. An open coding process was carried out to identify initial codes and categories within the dataset. The axial coding method investigated the connections between categories and established subcategories. The process of selective coding involved the identification of the central category and the development of the theoretical framework.

The process of theoretical sampling was employed repeatedly to enhance and perfect the developing theory. As new understandings surfaced, supplementary data were gathered to delve deeper into and refine the theoretical frameworks. The continual comparative approach was utilized during the analytical process to systematically compare and contrast data, discern patterns, and enhance categories.

Memo writing served to record analytical discoveries,

methodological decisions, and emergent theoretical concepts. Memos functioned as an introspective instrument to document the researcher's reflections and analyses of the data. An iterative approach involving data collection, analysis, and theory building built a grounded theory of HRMKT.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Emergent Themes and Categories

Comprehensive interviews with HR professionals, focus groups involving employees, and document studies yielded valuable data for examining the complexities of Human Resource Marketing (HRMKT). Through thorough data analysis, a number of significant themes and categories were identified.

Core Categories

- a. Employee Experience: Encompassing factors influencing employee satisfaction, engagement, and overall perception of the workplace.
- b. Employer Branding: Conveying the company's image as an employer and its capacity to attract and retain skilled individuals.
- c. Talent Management: Including recruitment, selection, development, and retention strategies.
- d. Organizational Culture: Representing shared values, beliefs, and norms.
- e. HRMKT Implementation: Reflecting the strategies, challenges, and successes of HRMKT initiatives.

Subcategories

Within these core categories, several subcategories emerged, including:

- a. Employee Experience: Work-life balance, job satisfaction, organizational culture, communication, leadership, and employee engagement.
- b. Employer Branding: Employer value proposition (EVP), employee value proposition (EVP), recruitment

marketing, employer reputation, and employer image.

c. Talent Management: Talent acquisition, talent development, performance management, succession planning, and career development.

d. Organizational Culture: Employee empowerment, innovation, collaboration, and ethical climate.

e. HRMKT Implementation: HRMKT strategies, measurement and evaluation, challenges, and best practices.

Theoretical Framework Development

A new theoretical framework for HRMKT is proposed, derived from the emergent themes and categories. This concept suggests that successful Human Resource Management and Knowledge Transfer (HRMKT) relies on a harmonious interaction between employee experience, employer branding, talent management, and organizational culture.

Core Propositions

- i. An employer brand that is strong and resilient is essential for attracting and maintaining individuals with exceptional skills, hence improving the whole employee experience.
- ii. Efficient talent management strategies, encompassing the processes of hiring, nurturing, and retaining employees, play a crucial role in achieving corporate success and ensuring employee contentment.
- iii. A nurturing business culture that promotes employee engagement, well-being, and growth
- iv. influences an affirmative employee experience.
- v. Synchronizing HRMKT plans with the broader company objectives is essential for accomplishing corporate goals and optimizing return on investment.
- vi. Regular monitoring and assessing HRMKT programs are crucial for enhancing and maximizing their effectiveness.

Visual Representation

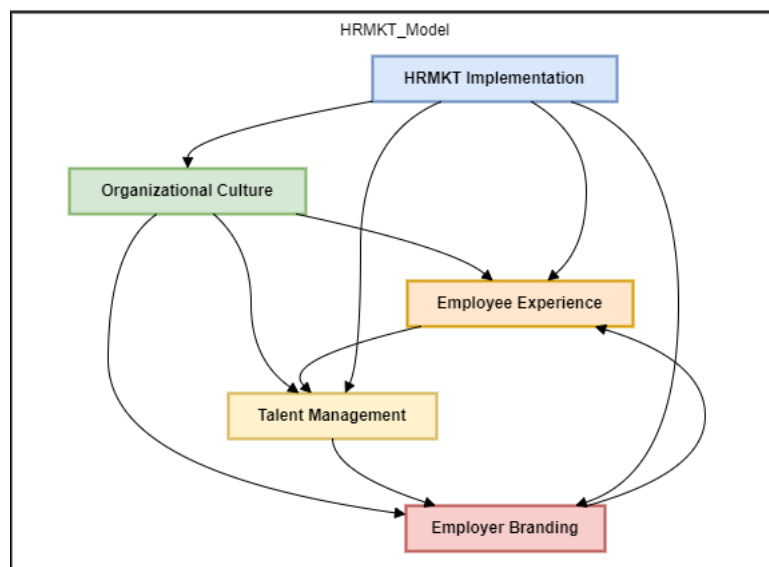


Figure 1: Human Resource Marketing Model: Variables

Source: Author

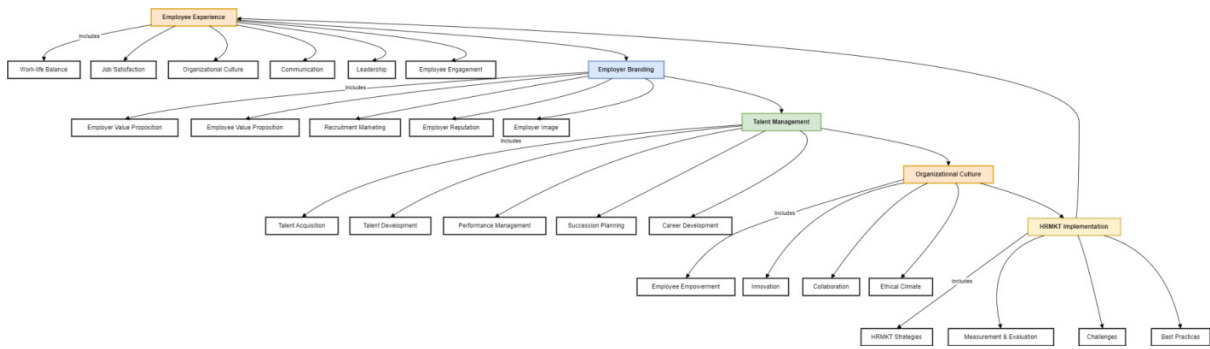


Figure 2: Human Resource Marketing: Relation among factors
Source: Author



Figure 3: Human Resource Marketing (HRMKT) Framework
Source: Author

Theoretical Contributions

The comprehensive theoretical framework provides multiple contributions to HRMKT theory and practice. Firstly, it underscores the significance of the employee experience as a pivotal element of HRMKT, surpassing conventional HR duties. Furthermore, it emphasizes the significance of corporate branding in influencing employee perspectives and drawing in skilled individuals. Furthermore, the framework emphasizes the importance of talent management methods in aligning with HRMKT objectives. Ultimately, it underscores the importance of a robust company culture in promoting employee engagement and achieving overall success in HRMKT. The approach has ramifications for both scholars and practitioners. It establishes a basis for further investigation into the connections among the various elements of the framework with more thoroughness. The framework provides practitioners with a clear, structured plan for creating and executing successful HRMKT strategies.

Proposed HRMKT Model

A proposed model that clearly illustrates the interconnections between main categories and

subcategories, focusing on highlighting the cyclical nature of HRMKT activities.

HRMKT Model Components

Central Core: Organizational Culture

- This core is the basis for all other elements’ construction.

Surrounding Layers

- Employee Experience: Influenced by organizational culture, talent management, and employer branding. It feeds back into organizational culture.
- Employer Branding: Shaped by organizational culture and talent management, influencing employee experience and talent acquisition.
- Talent Management: Interconnected with organizational culture, employer branding, and employee experience, leading to talent development and retention.

Outer Layer: HRMKT Implementation

- Encompasses strategies, measurement, challenges, and best practices. It influences and is influenced by all inner layers.

Visual Representation

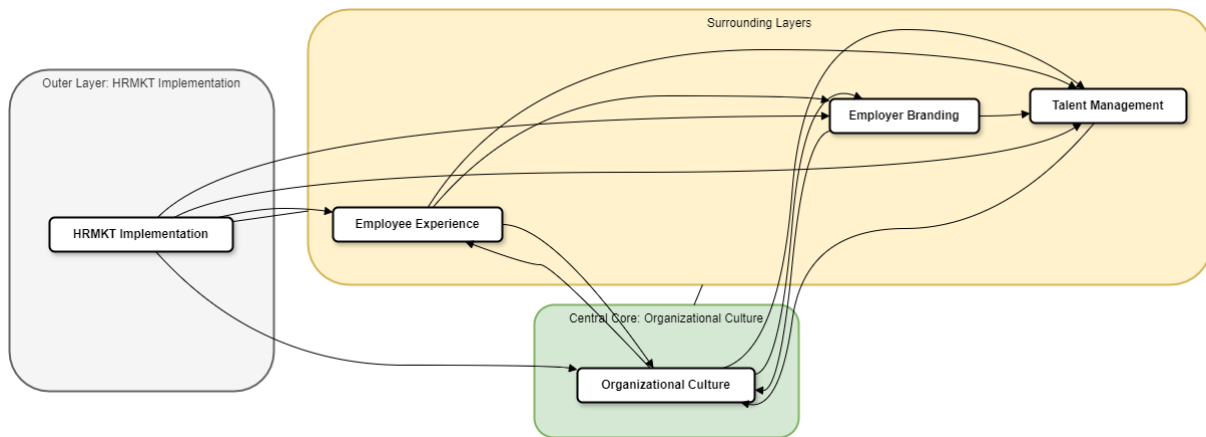


Figure 4: Proposed HRMKT Model

Source: Author

Model Dynamics

- The model emphasizes the dynamic and linked nature of HRMKT components.
- Modifications in one domain influence the others, generating a cascading consequence.
- Efficient human resource management and knowledge transfer necessitate a comprehensive approach that considers all components concurrently.

Key Propositions and Model Expansion

The model is strongly supported by the theoretical foundation provided by fundamental premises. To enhance the model even more, contemplate integrating the following:

- Role of Technology:** Examine how technology, such as HRIS, social media, and AI, might improve HRMKT initiatives.
- External Environment:** Examine the impact of economic, social, and legal issues on HRMKT.
- Measurement and Evaluation:** Create specific metrics to evaluate the efficacy of HRMKT projects.
- Return on Investment (ROI):** Quantify the business impact of HRMKT strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

Each manuscript should include a conclusion section that contain the major outcome of the study, highlighting its importance, limitation, relevance, application and recommendation. Do not use any subheading, citation, references to other part of the manuscript, or point list within the conclusion This research initiative aimed to provide a novel theoretical framework for Human Resource Marketing (HRMKT) using a grounded theory approach. A complete understanding of HRMKT was obtained by analyzing different data sources, such as conducting in-depth interviews with HR professionals, organizing focus groups with employees, and analyzing relevant documents.

The results indicated that HRMKT is an intricate and diverse phenomenon influenced by various interrelated

elements. One key element that arose is the importance of the employee experience. Organizations prioritizing their employees' well-being, satisfaction, and engagement are more likely to succeed in human resource management and marketing. Employer branding is essential for influencing how employees perceive a company and attracting highly skilled individuals. Efficient personnel management strategies are crucial for facilitating company objectives and improving employee contentment. Ultimately, nurturing organizational culture is crucial for cultivating employee engagement and maximizing the effectiveness of HRMKT.

The established theoretical framework suggests that a collaborative interaction between employee experience, employer branding, talent management, and organizational culture is crucial for effectively implementing HRMKT. This approach provides a fresh viewpoint on HRMKT, highlighting the significance of human capital as a strategic resource.

Although this study is a valuable contribution to the field of HRMKT understanding, it is not without its limits. The sample size needed to be more manageable, and the emphasis on specific organizations may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Further investigation could examine the application of HRMKT in various organizational settings and sectors.

To summarize, this study establishes a basis for comprehending HRMKT and its influence on business achievement. The established theoretical framework provides valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners. Organizations can gain a competitive edge by focusing on employee experience, establishing a robust employer brand, allocating resources to talent management, and cultivating a supportive corporate culture, all of which enhance their HRMKT skills.

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