Metadata of the chapter that will be visualized in SpringerLink

Division	
Organization	Minho's University
Address	Braga, Portugal
Email	

Abstract

The objective of this study is to describe the interactions between individual-level response (employees' trust and adhesion to Human Resource (HR) Management practices) and organizational-level processes (managers' implementation of new practices, for instances technologies). The need to understand employees' perceptions in an interactional perspective, correlating these variables with the perceptions of HR managers constitutes an important field of research, integrating both perspectives in multi-level studies. In this paper we illustrate our initial research in a multi-level research project, presenting the results of a qualitative study of HR managers' perceptions of social processes involved in HR and their employees' acceptance of HR practices. We also analyzed perceptions that might lead to modifications of the HR system. Our results suggest that these perceptions influence the implementation or suspension of HR practices.

Decision Making on Human Resource Management Systems

Ana Teresa Ferreira-Oliveira[1,3(✉)], José Keating[2,3], and Isabel Silva[2,3]

[1] Technology and Management School,
Viana do Castelo Polytechnic Institute, Viana do castelo, Portugal
`ateresaoliveira@estg.ipvc.pt`

[2] Faculty of Economics, Porto University, Porto, Portugal
[3] Minho's University, Braga, Portugal

AQ1

Abstract. The objective of this study is to describe the interactions between individual-level response (employees' trust and adhesion to Human Resource (HR) Management practices) and organizational-level processes (managers' implementation of new practices, for instances technologies). The need to understand employees' perceptions in an interactional perspective, correlating these variables with the perceptions of HR managers constitutes an important field of research, integrating both perspectives in multi-level studies. In this paper we illustrate our initial research in a multi-level research project, presenting the results of a qualitative study of HR managers' perceptions of social processes involved in HR and their employees' acceptance of HR practices. We also analyzed perceptions that might lead to modifications of the HR system. Our results suggest that these perceptions influence the implementation or suspension of HR practices.

Keywords: Human resource management processes · Decision making
Implementation processes · Trust

AQ2

AQ3

1 Introduction

1.1 Social Exchange Theory and Organizational Trust

This work is based on the theoretical model of social exchange theory proposed by Blau [1]. This model assumes that trust emerges with the repeated exchange of benefits between two parties due to attitudes that produce a symmetric feedback. For example, the managers' investment in employee's empowerment, recognition and in their personal abilities might enable the development of positive behaviors towards the leader. This assumption is called "norm of reciprocity". It determines that attitudes and behaviors are mutual, positive or negative, depending on the primary input. In the development of HRM policies for organizations, organizational trust plays an important role. Tzafrir [2] conducted a study with 104 human resource managers in industry, services and trade. His study aimed to "assess the conditions that trigger trust, or whatever it is that makes managers accept the vulnerability present in management actions that are part of HRM"

(p. 1600). Trust was an important variable in the expectation of the managers, reducing the perception of vulnerability and risk [3]. Trust indicates a low level of risk that makes the individual more willing to take the risk and to act [2]. Organizational trust has therefore an impact at the design of the human resource management system (HRMS). This author found significant correlations between organizational trust and high-involvement practices which have been associated with increased performance [4]. Risk perception is an important variable on trust. The literature on this issue is clear and all theoretical models highlight the need for the existence of risk and interdependence for the existence of organizational trust [5, 6]. Trust is not the ignorance of risk but a willingness to take risk [5]. Trust is the willingness to take risk and the trust level is an indication of the amount of risk we are willing to take [5, 7]. Thus, trust is recognized as an important process for the supervisors and employees to reduce the perception of risk involved and to improve this relationship [8]. In this paper we begin to develop a new concept, employees' adhesion to HR practices using also the norm of reciprocity as an important aspect in modifying the HRMS. Employees' adhesion needs more empirical and theoretical developments. Nevertheless, this initial study shows that employees' adhesion to new practices, including those related to new technologies is essential to their development or suspension. We use this new concept, based in the Social Exchange theory, to understand the HRMS as dynamic and interactional.

2   Objectives of the Study

Our aim, in this exploratory study, was to understand the interactional process of decision making in implementing new practices, for instances technologies on the Human Resource Management Systems, from the perspective of managers, throughout the exploration of their expectations. There is a gap in the literature on human resource management implementation processes that doesn't allow us to understand how the systems can produce more effective results [9]. Relevant literature [9] argues the need to study specific indicators, mediators, that intervene in the process of implementation, and through these mediators, results can be more effective. Therefore, the second objective was to understand the importance of trust in the implementation of organizational practices [5]. The third goal was exploring the concept of adhesion of employees' to practices through decisions in critical situations.

3   Methodology

We studied four organizations, one of them from the new technologies sector, specially working on software development systems. We conducted four interviews with top human resources managers, four interviews with middle managers and two interviews with top managers. The middle managers were nominated by the human resource manager, according to their availability. The semi-structured interviews had a script which included the following thematic areas: 1. HRM Practices in the organization (performance appraisal, training, recruitment and selection, career management, retention of employees) 2. HRM Decision Making (decisions about the implementation of

new HR practices or their modification) 3. Adhesion of employees to the HR practices (concept, indicators that enable adhesion: personal and organizational, results) 4. Expectations of HR Management towards the implementation of the new practices 5. HRMS and Organizational Trust. The interviews were transcribed. The data were compiled into themes arising from the script for the interview.

4   Results and Discussion

4.1   Decision Making

AQ4

The decision about the implementation of new practices or their modification is made in three of the organizations we studied, by top management. In organization 1, the HR manager differs from others and has complete autonomy in these cases "What we do is our responsibility". "Decision-making in all these organizations, related to HRMS is influenced by superiors, as reported by all managers, but also by the employees "People demand a lot, and not just superiors. Everyone" (HR Manager 1). The influence of other organizations in the same sector of activity is also considered by all managers as an important element in the implementation or modification of practices. This concern in these organizations be an effort to match their competitors, and not to lose employees to more attractive HRMS (Organizations 1, 2). The decision to implement new HRM also appears associated with the need to link the new practice to previous, namely in organization 2, the performance evaluation with the training system.

4.2   Concept of Adhesion of Employees

In this study we considered important to understand the interactional process that might exist behind the implementation of new practices. Therefore, we tried to describe the concept of employees' adhesion to HRMS and its results in the managers' decision of implementing or suspending new practices. The concept of adhesion in the literature has not an agreed definition, so we decided to ask managers about it, and try to understand what adhesion could mean for their organizations. Employees' adhesion begins to be identified as satisfaction with the organization, an "adhesion to the organization" (HR manager 2), a satisfaction with the organization itself. HR Manager 2 told us that he measured employees' adhesion just like he measured satisfaction, as if they were the same construct: "We have a survey of employees covering a wide range of issues (…) and then we have data that show us their satisfaction." The concept is not clear and needs further empirical exploration; however managers see the employees' adhesion as an important indicator. In this initial data, employees' adhesion was determinant to the development or suspension of the practices. This new data suggests that the HRMS is dynamic and interactional. Managers identified the adhesion of employees to HRM as a voluntary act of acceptance, or cooperation with practices or activities promoted by the Department of Human Resources "The balanced scorecard is voluntary" (HR manager 2). Employees adhesion to new practices, appears to have a strong impact in the HR manager, therefore in the organization, through the change that he implements in the HR practices "later we extended to the whole production" (HR manager 2).

4.3   Practices of High Involvement and Organizational Trust

All managers described organizational trust as crucial in the organization. They assume that trust influences the dynamics at the organization "I think trust has a lot of influence. They know (…) I'll find a solution. (HR manager 1). In the organization 1, the new technologies organization, the HR manager has a strong power, and trust appears with relevance in the implementation of new measures. In other organizations (1, 3, 4) the influence of organizational trust appears in the managers relationship with their own team, usually by delegating tasks "I delegate everything I could, because of technical trust, I have confidence in their capabilities" (HR manager 4). The results show that there is a relationship between organizational trust and decision making daily. The top and middle management relates to trust with a general importance. The top management associates trust with loyalty in all decisions "Loyalty is very important" (Top head management 2). The middle managers also describe the importance of trust in all the decisions they make "I think the managers rely more on staff. (…) Trust is very important (…) I do not need to be afraid when I delegate (…) When I trust people I do not need to be afraid" (Middle management 4). At the organization 1, the HR manager described that he took more risks and was more vulnerable to implement new HR practices because he trusted in his employees. The modification of the incentive plan, delegating tasks, training, were new activities that this manager identified because of trust, in their employees [5]. Also, organizational trust is acquiring the status of a strategic objective for this technological organization. The findings indicate the importance of trust in reducing the risk perceived by the manager [3]. When the supervisor trusts, the risk is lower, therefore he assumes behaviors towards employee that are commonly associated with increased performance, such as the delegation of tasks [5]. The influence of trust is clear to the managers. One of the respondents addresses the importance of managing trust and not let it interfere negatively in business decisions. For him, trust reduces the perception of risk involved and may increases the risk of making wrong decisions professionally [9]. When the HR manager is the main decision maker in the modification of the HRMS, organizational trust interferes in the process of implementing new practices considered good for the employees [8]. When practices are rigidly formalized by Top Management, trust does not have a direct role. The practices are determined by the top management of these 3 cases, such as strategic objectives (Org 2, 3, 4). The interference of trust, is strongly conditioned by these factors. Take the case of internal promotions "are formalized and can only occur through internal competitions, and training. They will be based on needs identified at the beginning of the year, meeting the technical needs of the population according to mechanisms well established and clear objectives." This manager (2) does not identify trust as an important variable in promoting further training for employees in his organization. All HR managers, top managers and middle managers assume the centrality of organizational trust and its clear role. Our initial assumption that the organizational trust reduces risk and helps managers to introduce new practices [5] was partially confirmed by our data but is totally confirmed in the organization that works directly on the development of information systems.

5   Conclusions

One of the main issues that emerged during the study was the importance given to the HR function by the Top Management at the Organization. In other words, the autonomy and power granted to the HR managers, how the function is perceived by the top management, determines the type of modifications that can be introduced in the HRMS. Therefore, future developments are needed in this area and the influence of indicators, such as the organizational trust, in the modification of the HRMS, could be mediated by the power of the HR function. Also, these indicators need more empirical and theoretical development to understand their importance in employees' adhesion to new practices. Employees adhesion, and the interactional HRMS are important concepts that need further development. This study gave initial input to the next phase of research, as we understood that the interactions between the individual response of employees and organizational processes (implementation of new measures) must be considered. The importance of variables such as organizational trust cannot be viewed isolated, and its influence on changing the HRMS depends on the HR manager power. The results suggest that the modification of the expectations of HR managers due to the different responses of employees' adhesion, influences the implementation or suspension of the new practice, for instances new technologies. The employees' adhesion to new practices or activities undertaken by the HRMS had clear impact on HR managers and organizations.

This is specially observed in the organization that works directly on the development of information systems, from the new technologies sector. It is relevant for the HRM literature to continue to investigate in this sector, analyzing thoroughly with depth, organizational cases on the new technologies sector, through qualitative research. This sector is clearly leading the way in the development of more efficient processes regarding the development of the HRMS, therefore it is crucial to continue to research specific indicators that can improve the efficiency of the systems.

References

1. Blau, P.: Exchange & Power in Social Life, 20th edn. Transaction Publishers, New Jersey (1964)
2. Tzafrir, S.: The relationship between trust, HRM practices and firm performance. Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manag. **16**(9), 1600–1622 (2005)
3. Das, T.K., Teng, B.S.: The risk-based view of trust: a conceptual framework. J. Bus. Psychol. **19**(1), 85–116 (2004)
4. Gould-Williams, J.: The importance of HR practices and workplace trust in achieving superior performance: a study of public-sector organizations. Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manag. **14**(1), 28–54 (2003)

5. Mayer, R.C., Davis, J., Schoorman, F.: An integrative model of organizational trust. Acad. Manag. Rev. **20**(3), 709–734 (1995)

6. Rousseau, D.M., Sitkin, S.B., Burt, R.S., Camerer, C.: Not so different after all: a cross-discipline view of trust. Acad. Manag. Rev. **23**(3), 393–404 (1998)

7. Schoorman, F.D., Mayer, R.C., Davis, J.H.: An integrative model of organizational trust: past, present, and future. Acad. Manag. Rev. **32**(2), 344–354 (2007)

8. Whitener, E.M.: Do "high commitment" human resource practices affect employee commitment? A cross-level analysis using hierarchical linear modeling. J. Manag. **27**(5), 515–535 (2001)

9. Bowen, D., Ostroff, C.: Understanding HRM-firm performance linkages: the role of the 'strength' of the HRM system. Acad. Manag. Rev. **29**(2), 203–221 (2004)

10. Zahra, A., Yavuz, R., Ucbasaran, D.: How much do you trust me? The dark side of relational trust in new business creation in established companies. Entrepreneurship Theor. Pract. **30**(4), 541–559 (2006)

AQ5

Author Query Form

Book ID :	**464040_1_En**	
Chapter No.:	**99**	

Please ensure you fill out your response to the queries raised below and return this form along with your corrections

Dear Author

During the process of typesetting your chapter, the following queries have arisen. Please check your typeset proof carefully against the queries listed below and mark the necessary changes either directly on the proof/online grid or in the 'Author's response' area provided below

Query Refs.	Details Required	Author's Response
AQ1	This is to inform you that corresponding author has been identified as per the information available in the Copyright form.	
AQ2	Please check and confirm if the authors and their respective affiliations have been correctly identified. Amend if necessary.	
AQ3	Per Springer style, both city and country names must be present in affiliations. Accordingly, we have inserted the city and country names 'Viana do castelo', 'Porto', 'Braga' and 'Portugal' in affiliations '1', '2' and '3'. Please check and confirm if the inserted city and country names are correct. If not, please provide us with the correct city and country namesss.	
AQ4	The 'opening quotes' does not have a corresponding 'closing quotes' in the sentence "Decision-making in all these organizations…" and also in 'I think trust has a lot of inffiuence…'. Please insert the quotes in the appropriate position.	
AQ5	Reference [10] is given in the list but not cited in the text. Please cite this in text or delete this from the list.	

MARKED PROOF

Please correct and return this set

Please use the proof correction marks shown below for all alterations and corrections. If you wish to return your proof by fax you should ensure that all amendments are written clearly in dark ink and are made well within the page margins.

Instruction to printer	Textual mark	Marginal mark
Leave unchanged	··· under matter to remain	Ⓙ
Insert in text the matter indicated in the margin	⅄	New matter followed by ⅄ or ⅄⊘
Delete	/ through single character, rule or underline or ⊢——⊣ through all characters to be deleted	⎙ or ⎙⊘
Substitute character or substitute part of one or more word(s)	/ through letter or ⊢——⊣ through characters	new character / or new characters /
Change to italics	— under matter to be changed	⌣
Change to capitals	≡ under matter to be changed	≡
Change to small capitals	= under matter to be changed	=
Change to bold type	∿ under matter to be changed	∿
Change to bold italic	≈ under matter to be changed	≈
Change to lower case	Encircle matter to be changed	≢
Change italic to upright type	(As above)	⌐
Change bold to non-bold type	(As above)	⇞
Insert 'superior' character	/ through character or ⅄ where required	Ɣ or ⅄ under character e.g. Ɣ² or ⅄²
Insert 'inferior' character	(As above)	⅄ over character e.g. ⅄₂
Insert full stop	(As above)	⊙
Insert comma	(As above)	,
Insert single quotation marks	(As above)	Ɣ or ⅄ and/or Ɣ or ⅄
Insert double quotation marks	(As above)	Ɣ or ⅄ and/or Ɣ or ⅄
Insert hyphen	(As above)	⊢-⊣
Start new paragraph	⌐	⌐
No new paragraph	⌒	⌒
Transpose	⊔⊓	⊔⊓
Close up	linking ⌒ characters	⌒
Insert or substitute space between characters or words	/ through character or ⅄ where required	Ɏ
Reduce space between characters or words	| between characters or words affected	⋂