

# THE ORGANIZATION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AT CZECH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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## Abstract

Based on summarizing the results of the authors' preliminary questionnaire survey on the organization of human resource management at Czech primary schools, the goal of the paper is to define particular categories of managers in Czech primary schools and specify their competencies in human resource management. It supports the assumption that management of human resources in primary schools is the responsibility of all managers in the organization, not only the headmaster. The preliminary questionnaire survey verified the theoretical assumptions about the organization of human resource management and examined the views of headmasters of Czech primary schools. The preliminary questionnaire survey was conducted from March to May 2013. The questionnaire was distributed by email to headmasters in 100 selected primary schools in Prague and Central Bohemia. The relevant data were obtained from 50 primary schools. The results are summarized, discussed and applied in three parts, focusing on 1) value of employees and importance of human resource management, 2) system of human resources management, and 3) organization of human resource management. The intention is to use the results and extend the survey to other regions of the Czech Republic.

**Key words:** human resource management, school management, primary schools

**JEL Code:** M12, M50

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## Introduction

The research on the relationship between human resource management and organizational performance has continued worldwide since the early eighties and the fundamental results of this research are summarized both in scientific literature (e.g., Armstrong, 2006; Larsen & Mayrhofer, 2006; Marchington & Wilkinson, 2005) and academic journals (e.g., Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Guest, 2011; Ichniowski et al., 1996).

There is considerable evidence that employees represent a critical source of any organization and many researchers have demonstrated the positive impact of various practices in human resource management on employee and organizational performance (e.g., Gerhart & Milkovich, 1990; Huselid, 1995; Rizov & Croucher, 2009). It is obvious that organizational performance is determined by employee performance and that effective human resource management enables any organization to achieve expected performance by achieving desired employee performance. Employees' abilities (knowledge and skills to perform agreed work), motivation (willingness to perform agreed work) and performance (working results and behavior) enable organizations to produce and distribute demanded products and services, gain and maintain regular and satisfied customers and achieve expected outputs or results. Organizations that want to achieve excellent performance must ensure that individual employees achieve desired performance and contribute to achieving excellent performance of the organization. In other words, organizations must pay particular attention to human resource management (Šikýř, 2011).

The fundamental conclusions about the relationship between human resource management and organizational performance can be also applied to human resource management in primary schools that provide primary education and play an important role in the society. There is no doubt that managers (headmasters, deputy headmasters and others), who want to achieve excellent performance of their schools, must pay special attention to management and leadership of all employees (including teaching and non-teaching staff) because their abilities, motivation and performance determine desired results of schools, especially the quality of education that is important for all stakeholders (employees, students, parents, community, government, etc.). To achieve expected results of primary schools by achieving desired performance of their employees, the managers need an optimal system of human resource management based on proven practices that will enable them to employ and develop enough capable and motivated employees.

The goal of the paper is to define particular categories of managers in Czech primary schools and specify their competencies in human resource management. It supports the assumption that management of human resources in primary schools is the responsibility of all managers in the organization, not only the headmaster. Achieving the goal of the paper is based on the results of the authors' preliminary questionnaire survey on the organization of human resource management at Czech primary schools.

## **1 Methods**

The authors' preliminary questionnaire survey on the organization of human resource management at Czech primary schools verified the theoretical assumptions about the organization of human resource management and examined the views of headmasters of Czech primary schools. The goal was to analyze the typical organization of human resource management at Czech primary schools, define particular categories of managers in Czech primary schools and specify their competencies in human resource management.

The preliminary questionnaire survey was focused on selected primary schools in Prague and Central Bohemia. The intention is to use the results and extend the survey to other regions of the Czech Republic. The authors assume that it will be easier to persuade other respondents to participate in the survey with the partial results. The preliminary questionnaire survey was conducted from March to May 2013. The questionnaire was distributed by email to headmasters in 100 selected primary schools. The email addresses were obtained from public resources. The questionnaire included six multiple choice questions focused on 1) importance of human resource management, 2) significant competencies of headmasters, 3) overall approach to human resource management, 4) perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of schools, 5) results achieved through human resource management, and 6) organization of human resource management. The relevant data were obtained from 50 primary schools. There were 23 (46 %) primary schools from Prague and 27 (54 %) primary schools from Central Bohemia. The respondents were 21 (42 %) men and 29 (58 %) women. The data were processed using Microsoft Excel.

## **2 Results and discussion**

The results of the authors' preliminary questionnaire survey on the organization of human resource management at Czech primary schools are summarized, discussed and applied in three parts, focusing on 1) value of employees and importance of human resource management, 2) system of human resources management, and 3) organization of human resource management.

### **2.1 Value of employees and importance of human resource management**

Employees are usually valued as the most important source of an organization. Each organization also needs other resources (material, finance, or information), but capable and motivated employees are indispensable to achieve excellent performance. Employees'

abilities and motivation impact on employee performance, i.e. employees' results that impact on organizational performance, i.e. an organization's results, including operating results (productivity, quality, efficiency, etc.), market results (sales, market share, customer satisfaction, etc.) and financial results (costs, revenues, profits, etc.).

An organization that wants to achieve excellent performance must ensure that employees achieve desired performance and use efficiently and effectively their abilities and motivation to achieve the success of the organization. In other words, the organization must pay particular attention to human resource management (management and leadership of employees) that refers to practices that influence employees' abilities, motivation and performance, including such practices as employee selection, appraisal, compensation or training. Human resource management enables any organization to achieve expected performance by achieving desired employee performance. Successful human resource management differentiates successful organizations from unsuccessful organizations.

According to the authors' research results, all respondents agreed that employees (including teaching and non-teaching staff) are the most valuable source of any school and that human resource management plays an important role in school management. According to the respondents, the efficient use of employees' abilities and motivation to achieve expected organization's results requires an effective system of human resource management in the organization.

## **2.2 System of human resource management**

It is obvious that applied practices in human resource management affect the ability of any organization to achieve expected organization's results through achieving desired employees' results. Any organization seeking to achieve excellent performance should therefore apply an effective system of human resource management based on proven practices that enable managers to employ and develop enough capable and motivated employees and achieve expected organizational performance by achieving desired employee performance.

Application of an effective system of human resource management in an organization should be based on a conceptual approach, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, a definition of strategic objectives, policies and practices of human resource management, a plan for the implementation of human resource management policies and practices, or an evaluation of the system of human resource management.

According to the authors' research results, 72 % of respondents strongly agreed, 26 % respondents agreed and 2 % respondents disagreed that they regularly analyze the strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of their schools, 54 % of respondents strongly agreed and 46 % respondents agreed that they define strategic objectives, policies and practices of human resource management, 44 % of respondents strongly agreed, 52 % respondents agreed and 4 % respondents disagreed that they plan the implementation of human resource management policies and practices, and 42 % of respondents strongly agreed and 58 % respondents agreed that they evaluate the system of human resource management in their schools.

The conceptual approach to human resource management helps an organization to achieve desired results of human resource management in the organization. According to the authors' research results (tab. 1), respondents strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that the applied system of human resource management help them to achieve defined results of human resource management in the school, including necessary number and structure of employees, required knowledge and skills of employees, expected satisfaction and motivation of employees, desired results and behavior of employees, friendly working relationship, sufficient number of students, or overall satisfaction of parents and other stakeholders.

**Tab. 1: Achieved results of human resource management**

	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
Necessary number and structure of employees	44 %	48 %	4 %	4 %
Required knowledge and skills of employees	20 %	78 %	0 %	4 %
Expected satisfaction and motivation of employees	36 %	60 %	0 %	4 %
Desired results and behavior of employees	26 %	70 %	0 %	4 %
Friendly working relationship	40 %	48 %	12 %	0 %
Sufficient number of students	24 %	56 %	10 %	0 %
Overall satisfaction of parents and other stakeholders	40 %	60 %	0 %	0 %

Source: Authors

The respondents were also asked about perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the internal and external conditions of their schools that also influence the system of human resource management. According to the respondents: the significant strengths include the stable teaching staff or the willingness of the teaching staff to work

beyond the obligations; the significant weaknesses include the low qualification of the teaching staff or the unwillingness of the teaching staff to further education; the significant opportunities include the effective collaboration with the founder or the opportunity to obtain grants; the significant threats include the constantly changing legislation or the decrease in the number of students. Many of these strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats can be affected by the effective human resource management.

### **2.3 Organization of human resource management**

The modern concept of human resource management implies that management and leadership of employees to achieve expected results is a fundamental responsibility of all managers in the organization. Anyone who influences and directs others in the organization must solve many complex and various personnel problems within his or her day-to-day work. It applies to all managers in the organization who are competent and responsible for achieving expected organization's results through achieving desired employees' results.

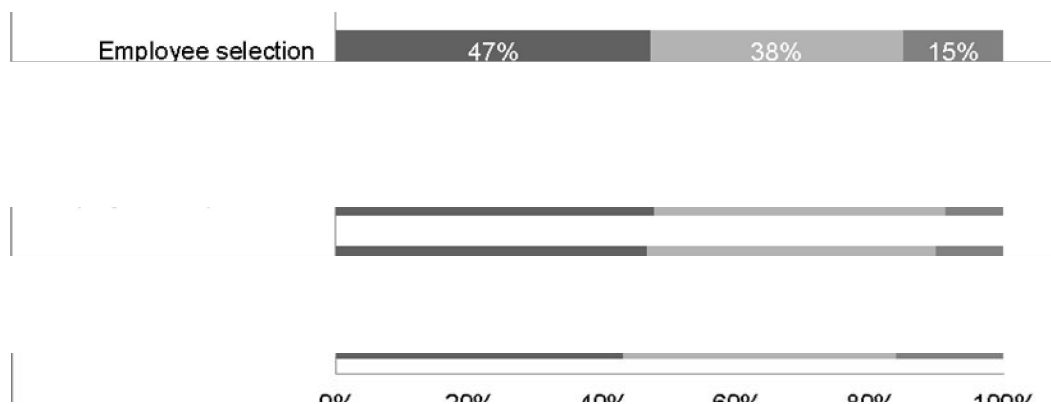
In primary schools, there are mainly headmasters who are competent and responsible for managing and leading of other employees (including teaching and non-teaching staff) to achieve expected results of primary schools, especially expected quality of primary education. In this context, the respondents were asked about the significance of given competencies for a headmaster. According to the respondents the significant competencies include managerial competencies (the ability to manage others), personal competencies (the ability to manage yourself), or professional competencies (the ability to manage the school). It is obvious that the main responsibility for human resource management in primary schools belongs to headmasters, but the authors' research results support the assumption that management of human resources in primary schools is the responsibility of all managers in the organization, not only the headmaster.

According to the authors' research results (fig. 1), the responsibility for human resource management in primary schools belongs to headmaster, as well as to other managers, including deputy headmasters, head teachers, heads of school clubs and school canteens, educational consultants, school psychologists, treasurers, or school caretakers. All these managers are involved in human resource management and participate in various human resource management activities related to human resource planning, employee selection, employee appraisal, employee compensation, employee training, or employee care.

The essence of the positive relationship between human resources management and organizational performance is the optimal system of human resource management that enables

to achieve expected organizational performance by achieving desired employee performance. The relationship between various practices in human resource management and results of an organization is mediated by results of employees. In human resource management, there are useful practices that positively influence employee and organizational performance, but their application requires fit to political, economic, legal, technical, cultural, social, and other conditions that determine the positive effect of applied practices in human resource management on achieved employee and organizational performance.

**Fig. 1: Organization of human resource management**



Source: Authors

Among proven practices in human resources management that demonstrably enable to influence employee abilities, motivation and performance belong practices in employee selection (selecting employees paying attention to their personal characteristics), performance management (achieving expected performance of the school by achieving desired performance of employees), employee compensation (applying fair monetary and non-monetary compensation system to employ capable and motivated employees) or employee training (apply systematic training to teach employees to perform their jobs and prepare them for changes of their job). These practices help managers to deal with the performance challenges, but do not solve partial problems related to employee and organizational performance. They help managers to change the style of management and leadership of employees.

## Conclusion

The results of the authors' preliminary questionnaire survey on the organization of human resource management at selected Czech primary schools in Prague and Central Bohemia support the assumption that the responsibility for human resource management in primary schools belongs not only to headmasters, but also to other managers in primary schools, including deputy headmasters, head teachers, heads of school clubs, heads of school canteens, educational consultants, school psychologists, treasurers, or school caretakers. Anyone who influences and directs others in primary schools should be involved in human resource management and participate in various human resource management activities related to employee selection, appraisal, compensation or training. These activities enable managers to employ and develop enough capable and motivated employees and achieve expected results of primary schools, especially expected quality of primary education, through achieving desired results of employees. The significant competencies of headmasters and other managers in human resource management, as well as in school management, include managerial competencies (the ability to manage others), personal competencies (the ability to manage yourself), or professional competencies (the ability to manage the school). These competencies help managers to deal with the performance challenges and optimize the style of management and leadership of employees. The intention of authors is to use the results of the preliminary questionnaire survey and extend the survey to other regions of the Czech Republic.

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