Innovation and Trends in Human Resources: Analysis of Improvement Strategies in Graduation Projects From a Master's in HR and Human Talent Management

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the improvement strategies in the area of Human Resources (HR) proposed in 67 graduation projects (Master's Final Project) over the last 3 years from two master's programs of the Faculty of Economics and Business at Andrés Bello University: Master in Human Resources Management and Management Skills and Master in People Management and Talent Management. Using quantitative and qualitative techniques, the study examines trends and the degree of innovation in the projects presented by students. The focus is on the relevance of these strategies in addressing current challenges in the field, including talent retention, diversity and inclusion, and digital transformation. The results point to significant progress in applying modern theories and cutting-edge talent management practices. This analysis provides a valuable perspective on the evolution of HR practices and serves as a resource for academics in improving educational practices and for professionals interested in the ongoing development of the sector.

Keywords: Human resources, Organizational development, Organizational analysis

INTRODUCTION

To understand how individuals are prepared or trained to work in human resources and organizational development, a comprehensive review of relevant studies is essential. Several studies delve into various aspects of human resource management (HRM) practices, training, and development to enhance organizational effectiveness. Farook (Farooq et al., 2016) highlights the significance of the training and development function in HRM, emphasizing its role in improving organizational performance. This underscores the importance of equipping individuals with the necessary skills

and knowledge to excel in HR roles. Similarly, Prieto and Pérez-Santana (Ma Prieto & Pilar Perez-Santana, 2014) shed light on the relationship between human resource practices and innovative work behavior, indicating that certain HR practices positively influence employees' innovative behaviors through conducive work environments.

This suggests that the way individuals are trained and managed in HR impacts their ability to contribute innovatively to organizational development. Additionally, Naqshbandi et al. (2023) explore how specific HR practices, based on the ability, motivation, and opportunity (AMO) model, foster a learning organizational culture. This underscores the role of training and development in shaping organizational culture and knowledge sharing practices, essential for organizational growth and development. Furthermore, the study by Farooq et al. (2016) delves into the relationship between HR practices and organizational innovation, highlighting the mediating role of knowledge management effectiveness. This emphasizes that effective training and development initiatives, as part of HR practices, can significantly influence organizational innovation capabilities, thereby contributing to organizational development.

Additionally, Suifan (2015) emphasizes the positive association between HR practices such as training and organizational commitment, indicating that well-prepared employees are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment to the organization. In the context of organizational development, Sadalia et al. (2022) discuss the impact of strategic intelligence on entrepreneurial behavior and organizational development. They emphasize the importance of aligning organizational strategies with human resource development to foster a strong organizational culture conducive to sustainable performance. Similarly, Naqshbandi & Wilkinson (2022) highlight the role of HR practices, organizational learning culture, and knowledge sharing in enhancing innovation outcomes.

By investing in human resources and promoting a culture of experimentation and knowledge sharing, organizations can drive innovation and ultimately contribute to organizational development. Moreover, the study by Lee & Chui (2019) explores the mediating effect of interactional justice on HR practices and organizational support in a healthcare organization. This underscores the importance of fair HR practices, including training and development, in fostering perceived organizational support and enhancing organizational effectiveness. Additionally, Iqbal et al. (2020) emphasize the role of HR practices in organizational innovation capability through effective knowledge management. This highlights the need for continuous training and development initiatives to enhance organizational innovation and adaptability. In conclusion, the synthesis of these studies underscores the critical role of training and development in preparing individuals to work effectively in human resources and organizational development. By investing in HR practices that promote learning, innovation, and knowledge sharing, organizations can cultivate a skilled workforce that drives organizational success and development.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TYPE OF ORGANIZATONS AND TYPE OR INTERVENTIONS IN HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The relationship between types of organizations and types of interventions in human resources or organizational development is a multifaceted area that draws on various scholarly works. Organizational learning and the concept of a learning organization have been pivotal in shaping human resource development interventions across different organizational settings (Mutamba, 2017). These interventions often aim to enhance individual, group, and organizational learning processes to improve overall performance. Moreover, the integration of technology into workplaces has transformed traditional physical spaces into virtual environments, influencing the types of interventions needed to support employees in adapting to these changes (Mutamba, 2017).

Diversity within organizations is another critical aspect that influences the types of interventions required in human resources and organizational development. Workforce diversity, including factors such as ethnicity and cultural backgrounds, necessitates specific interventions to promote inclusivity and equality within the workplace (Hussain et al., 2020). Understanding how diversity practices interact with broader human resource systems is essential for developing effective interventions that capitalize on the benefits of a diverse workforce while fostering a supportive and inclusive organizational culture (Hussain et al., 2020).

Strategic human resource management practices play a significant role in shaping employee commitment and organizational success (Pratama et al., 2023). The alignment between organizational strategies, human resource systems, and employee behaviors is crucial for enhancing overall performance and achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Junita, 2016). By implementing strategic human resource management practices that prioritize employee commitment and engagement, organizations can create a positive work environment conducive to growth and success (Pratama et al., 2023).

Human resource planning is another key aspect that influences the relationship between organizational types and interventions in human resources. Effective human resource planning involves anticipating future organizational needs, from recruitment to training and career development, to ensure that the right talent is in place to support organizational goals (Bilagi, 2022). By aligning human resource planning with organizational strategies, companies can proactively address workforce requirements and drive sustainable growth.

The impact of human resources on organizational performance is well-documented in the literature, emphasizing the importance of investing in high-quality human capital to gain a competitive advantage (Adle & Akdemir, 2019). Organizations that prioritize the development of intellectual capital and human resources are more likely to achieve sustained competitive advantage in today's dynamic business environment (Adle & Akdemir, 2019). By recognizing human resources as a strategic intervention for aligning

talent with organizational objectives, companies can enhance their overall performance and market position.

Psychological contracts and human resource practices also play a crucial role in shaping employee relations and organizational outcomes (Scheepers & Shuping, 2011). Investments in human resource practices such as remuneration, training, and development are essential for building positive psychological contracts with employees, leading to increased commitment and performance (Scheepers & Shuping, 2011). By fostering strong relationships through effective human resource practices, organizations can enhance employee engagement and loyalty, contributing to long-term success.

The interplay between organizational culture, human resource development, and lifelong learning is vital for supporting continuous growth and adaptation within organizations (Nguyen et al., 2020). Cultivating a culture that values learning and development, coupled with robust human resource practices, can motivate employees to engage in lifelong learning and skill enhancement, contributing to individual and organizational success (Lay, 2022). Understanding the factors that influence lifelong learning, such as organizational culture and human resource development, is essential for creating a supportive learning environment within organizations.

In summary, the relationship between types of organizations and types of interventions in human resources and organizational development is intricate and multifaceted. By leveraging insights from organizational learning, diversity practices, strategic human resource management, and human resource planning, organizations can design interventions that enhance employee engagement, foster inclusivity, and drive sustainable performance. Investing in human capital, promoting positive psychological contracts, and nurturing a culture of learning and development are key strategies for organizations seeking to optimize their human resources and achieve long-term success.

Methodology

The study, which was exploratory in scope and considered cross-sectional time series (years 2021, 2022, and 2023), took as its unit of analysis the master's degree final projects presented between 2021 and 2023 in the Master's in Human Resources and Management Skills and Master's in People Management and Talent Management programs at the Faculty of Economics and Business of the Universidad Andrés Bello. A total of 67 projects were considered.

From the projects presented by the students, relevant information was extracted for the study's objectives. In particular, the variables considered were organizational diagnosis, methodology of intervention, expected outcome, type of intervention, type of organization, type of problem.

Finally, descriptive analyses were conducted to identify the type of problem according to the type of organization (public or private) and the sector it belonged to (primary, secondary, or tertiary). Additionally, descriptive analysis was used to examine the type of thesis conducted by the students, the type of methodology employed, and the type of intervention proposed, based on the type of problem identified.

Initially, all the master's thesis projects presented between 2021 and 2023 in the Master's in Human Resources Management and Management Skills, and Master's in People Management and Talent Management programs at the Faculty of Economics and Business of Universidad Andrés Bello were compiled. Subsequently, the research team developed a matrix capturing the main information from each of the projects. The projects were considered as the unit of analysis, and the variables extracted correspond to those mentioned before.

RESULTS

Below are presented the general characteristics and sectors of the organizations that were studied by the students in their final thesis projects.

Table 1. Characteristics of the organizations where the theses were conducted, Author's own.

Size	Frequency	Percentage
Big	40	59.7
Medium	11	16.4
Small	8	11.9
Micro	1	1.5
No information	7	10.4
Total	67	100

Table 2. Organization sector, Author's own.

Sector	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	6	9
Secundary	3	4.5
Terciary	58	86.6
Total	67	100

Among the total organizations analyzed, 70.1% were privately owned, 26.9% were public, 1.5% were mixed, and 1.5% lacked ownership information. Regarding the timeline of the projects examined, 9% were developed in 2021, 32.8% in 2022, and 58.2% in 2023. As for the composition of the workgroups, the majority consisted of three members (37.3%) and four members (20.9%), with the remaining groups ranging from solo individuals up to five members. Concerning the gender distribution within these groups, on average, 46.47% of the members were female. Below are three tables regarding Types of Organization, Types of Problems, and Types of Proposed Interventions.

Table 3. Type of problems according to type of organization, Author's own.

Type of organization	Recruitment and Selection		Development and Training		Organizational Climate and Culture		Compensation and Benefits		Performance Evaluation		Others		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Private	6	12	16	32	8	16	5	10	4	8	11	22	50	100
Public	1	5	6	30	5	25	4	20	0	0	4	20	20	100

The table presents the distribution of types of problems detected in organizations, categorized by the type of organization (private and public). It shows that private organizations have a higher percentage of problems in development and training (32%) and other issues (22%), while public organizations report a significant percentage in development and training (30%) and organizational climate and culture (25%).

Table 4. Type of problems according to organization sector, Author's own.

Organization sector	Recruitment and Selection		Development and Training		Organizational Climate and Culture		Compensation and Benefits		Performance Evaluation		Others		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Primary	1	16,67	2	33,33	2	33,33	0	0	0	0	1	16,67	6	100
Secondary	1	33,33	1	33,33	0	0	1	33,33	0	0	0	0	3	100
Terciary	6	9,52	20	31,75	11	17,46	8	12,70	4	6,35	14	22,22	63	100

In the primary sector, development and training, as well as organizational climate and culture, are the most reported issues, each representing 33.33%. In the secondary sector, recruitment and selection, development and training, and compensation and benefits are each reported at 33.33%. In the tertiary sector, development and training issues are the most prevalent at 31.75%, followed by other issues at 22.22%.

Table 5. Type of methodology regarding type of problem detected, Author's own.

Type of methodology	Recruitment and Selection		Development and Training		Organizational Climate and Culture		Compensation and Benefits		Performance Evaluation		Others	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Quantitative	3	25,00%	2	10,53%	3	23,08%	2	22,22%	0	0,00%	2	13,33%
Qualitative	4	33,33%	0	0,00%	7	53,85%	1	11,11%	2	50,00%	5	33,33%
Mixed	5	41,67%	17	89,47%	3	23,08%	6	66,67%	2	50,00%	8	53,33%
Total	12	100%	19	100%	13	100%	9	100%	4	100%	15	100%

For recruitment and selection problems, a mixed methodology is most frequently used, accounting for 41.67% of the cases, followed by qualitative (33.33%) and quantitative (25.00%).

For development and training, the mixed methodology is overwhelmingly dominant, used in 89.47% of the cases, while the quantitative method is used in 10.53% of the cases. Qualitative methodology is not used in this category.

For organizational climate and culture, the qualitative method is most common, representing 53.85% of the cases, followed by both quantitative and mixed methodologies at 23.08% each.

In compensation and benefits, the mixed methodology is again the most common, used in 66.67% of the cases. Quantitative methods are used in 22.22% and qualitative in 11.11%.

For performance evaluation, quantitative methods are not used at all. Both qualitative and mixed methodologies are equally used, each accounting for 50.00% of the cases.

For other types of problems, the mixed methodology is used most frequently at 53.33%, followed by qualitative at 33.33% and quantitative at 13.33%.

Overall, the mixed methodology appears to be the most used across different types of problems, particularly for development and training, compensation and benefits, and other types of problems.

Table 6. Type of intervention according to the type of problem detected, author's own.

	Recruitment and Selection		Development and Training		Organizational Climate and Culture		Compensation and Benefits		Performance Evaluation		Others	
Type of intervention	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Organizational Development	1	7,69%	6	18,75%	8	47,06%	1	9,09%	2	33,33%	4	19,05%
Strategy	2	15,38%	3	9,38%	1	5,88%	1	9,09%	1	16,67%	4	19,05%
Talent Management	4	30,77%	5	15,63%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%	1	4,76%
Human Resources (process of)	6	46,15%	18	56,25%	8	47,06%	9	81,82%	3	50,00%	12	57,14%
Total	13	100%	32	100%	17	100%	11	100%	6	100%	21	100%

For Recruitment and Selection issues, interventions are mostly through Human Resources (HR) processes (46.15%), followed by Talent Management (30.77%), Strategy (15.38%), and Organizational Development (7.69%). In Development and Training, HR processes are again the main method (56.25%), with Organizational Development (18.75%) and Talent Management (15.63%) also playing roles, and Strategy being less common (9.38%).

Organizational Climate and Culture problems are equally addressed by HR processes and Organizational Development (47.06% each), with Strategy interventions being minimal (5.88%). Compensation and Benefits issues are largely managed by HR processes (81.82%), with both Organizational Development and Strategy at 9.09%. Performance Evaluation is primarily tackled through HR processes (50.00%), followed by Organizational Development (33.33%) and Strategy (16.67%). For other types of problems, HR processes are the most common intervention (57.14%), with

Organizational Development and Strategy each at 19.05%, and Talent Management being the least used (4.76%).

Overall, HR processes are the dominant intervention across all problem types, with Organizational Development and Strategy also being significant, though to a lesser extent. Overall, HR processes are the most frequently used intervention across all problem types, with Organizational Development and Strategy also playing significant roles.

DISCUSSION

The study analyzes improvement strategies in Human Resources (HR) from 67 graduation projects at Universidad Andrés Bello. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, it examines trends and innovation in student projects, focusing on strategies addressing current HR challenges.

A significant finding is the progress in applying modern theories and advanced talent manager, compensation, and other issues. This trend towards integrating qualitative and quantitative methods allows for a comprehensive understanding and effective application of improvement strategies.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals significant advancements in modern HR theories and practices, especially in talent management. These are crucial for tackling issues such as talent ment practices, crucial for talent retention, diversity, inclusion, and digital transformation. These insights benefit academics and professionals aiming to improve HR practices.

Projects reveal prevalent issues in development and training in both private and public organizations. Private organizations report more problems in development and training (32%) and other issues (22%), while public organizations face significant challenges in development and training (30%) and organizational climate and culture (25%). This highlights the need for targeted interventions to enhance organizational effectiveness.

The mixed methodological approach was most used, especially for development and training retention, diversity, inclusion, and digital transformation. The analyzed projects emphasize these areas, indicating a shift towards innovative and effective HR strategies.

Private organizations face more issues in development and training, while public organizations report challenges in development, training, and organizational climate and culture. This underscores the need for targeted interventions to improve performance and satisfaction.

The study highlights a preference for mixed methodological approaches, combining qualitative and quantitative methods for a comprehensive understanding of HR issues. This is particularly effective for addressing development and training, compensation, and other problems.

The findings have practical implications for both academia and industry. Academics can use these insights to enhance HR educational programs, ensuring future professionals are equipped for evolving demands. HR

practitioners can apply these strategies to foster innovation and development, leading to better practices and outcomes.

In summary, the study provides an overview of current HR trends and strategies, emphasizing innovation and targeted interventions. Focusing on key areas and adopting mixed methods can enhance HR practices for long-term success. These insights are valuable for researchers and professionals in the field.

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