


Chapter 13

The Human Resources Perspective on the Multigenerational Workforce

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ABSTRACT

It is a key issue how different generations coming together for a specific purpose of the business evaluate critical information. In information processing, HRM has critical roles in adapting to the diversity of the multigenerational workforce and fostering creativity. While managing a multigenerational workforce can provide a competitive advantage, ignoring the process can cause sustainability matters for the business. From this point of view, it is useful to consider the multigenerational workforce from different perspectives in terms of HRM. All efforts to understand employees are substantial as they contribute to creating an effective and synergic organization.

INTRODUCTION

Basic demographic factors such as gender and age can lead to differences in social life as well as in organizational life. In today's organizational structures, where the importance of the individual has increased, intense efforts are made to motivate employees in line with individual and organizational goals. As with all organizational concepts, to understand a subject it is necessary to classify it and then identify the characteristics of each group. Only in this way can motivational tools be developed for a particular group. As businesses become increasingly globalized, it has become inevitable for them to understand and manage differences. Every culture, even every subculture, has its characteristics and every age group has its perceptions. Considered in more detail, there may even be differences between an individual born in the winter and an individual born in the summer or born in the Northern Hemisphere and an individual born in the Southern Hemisphere. According to Ince (2022a), as a social being, the individual is affected by the cultural structure of society and other environmental conditions. Since the

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complex mental process of individuals takes into account many variables at the same time, it can produce different results even if the conditions are the same. For this reason, it is seen as quite normal that the technological, economic, and social conditions of the period in which they grew up affect the emotions, thoughts, and behavior tendencies of the individual.

The number and level of influence of internal and external factors affecting the individual can be further increased. However, the real issue is how to use this information in organizational settings that require different individuals to work together for a specific purpose. Multinational organizations that can work in harmony with each other to achieve strategic goals but need to keep creativity alive have to exhibit successful Human Resources Management (HRM) practices in this regard. While diversity in the workplace is a factor that can provide a competitive advantage if managed well, ignoring or not following the process can create problems that cause sustainability problems for the business. Therefore, tasks such as getting to know individuals, and making their presence in the business meaningful with career plans in line with their personal goals have critical importance for the business. Furthermore, the importance of perceptions of the individuals in a workplace should consider with a clear focus on the values, mission, and vision of organizational structure, which is relevant to HRM functions. However, the issue of managing multigenerational employees may require a detailed consideration of HRM functions influenced by organizational culture. This cannot only provide a direct focus on business purpose but can also convince target groups of the business by providing insight into the context that influences corporate decision making. Thus, this chapter of the book discusses generational classifications and presents some organizational applications for understanding different age groups in the workplace.

METHODOLOGY

To understand the state of the future of Human Resource Management, it is necessary to search the variables that affect the nature of individuals in an organization. Environmental factors such as economy, technology, social culture, and other life conditions that affect people are variables that also have the potential to affect the future of the HRM practices, as well as organizational structures. One of the concepts that explain the change of individuals in light of all these factors is generations. Thereby, the idea of this chapter is to provide a basic theoretical framework for generations and their impacts on HRM. According to this idea, it is aimed to provide a practical, and comprehensive guide for practices of future HRM within the scope of the generations. This literature search is based on the general scanning model also known as the qualitative research method by using secondary data to draw attention to new generations in the workplace. Following the theoretical structure, a hypothetical scenario that is based on an HRM case study is discussed within the scope of critical theory.

AGE DIFFERENCES IN THE WORKPLACE

Although the main starting point is age, some differences can be seen in the classification of generations. While some researchers start the age groups from the post-war period, others consider the later period, and also some age differences emerge when classifying the last generations. In this section, the generally accepted five-point classification will be included as the Silent, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Y, and Z. Because this classification appeals to all age groups, considering the important events affecting

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