

From Knowledge Management to Career Management and Related Concepts: Conceptual Model

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Abstract: Knowledge is a crucial factor for organizations' competitiveness in today's labour market and, through knowledge management, Human Resources Management (HRM) can be more useful and effective. For several reasons, Career Management is one of the HRM categories less structured and cared for by organizations. However, having information for the proper management of employees' careers is relevant and considered of high importance, given the impact it has on the development and retention of employees. The employees' development includes increased knowledge, skills and abilities by each individual, which boosts the progression of his career. Managing knowledge from a perspective that accommodates career management seems to be structural for both organizations and their employees. Based on this premise, this article reviews the literature articulating five concepts: two from the knowledge theoretical field, such as Knowledge Management and Organizational Memory, and three from the HRM field, facing the topics of Talent Management, Career Management and People Analytics. The five concepts are explored, as are the relationships between them. The aim of this article translates into the interrelational description of the five concepts, to understand their common aspects and, thus, expand the approaches to Career Management. The concepts were linked in pairs, due to the absence of literature that addresses the five concepts simultaneously. The theoretical analysis allowed the construction of a conceptual model, which enables understanding of the conceptual convergences and divergences in the organizational and personal ecosystem, supported by local and global knowledge. The model presented will be useful to guide organizations in creating broad Knowledge Management systems, focusing on the people, thus enhancing their management and development. At the same time, it will also be useful for all employees since the model presented aims to contribute to the capitalization of their potential and personal achievement capacity within the organization. Future research may empirically validate the pertinence and applicability of this conceptual model.

Keywords: Knowledge Management; Human Resources Management; Career Management; Conceptual model

1. Introduction

Knowledge generated in an organization during its existence is a crucial factor for maintaining competitiveness in the labour market. Thus, organizations should seek strategies that enable effective management of the existing knowledge (Barros, Ramos and Perez, 2015). Therefore, the concepts of Knowledge Management (KM) and Organizational Memory (OM) arise, which are directly connected, since OM constitutes a considerable fraction of the KM (Sudharatna, 2015).

KM interrelates with the Human Resources Management (HRM) activities (Wahjosoedibjo, 2009). In this article, some of these activities will be explored, particularly Talent Management (TM), Career Management (CM) and People Analytics (PA), along with the existing relationships with KM.

The purpose of this article is the interrelational description of these five concepts, identifying their similarities and presenting them in a conceptual model that aims to help organizations develop KM systems focused on Human Resources (HR), benefiting them and their organizations.

2. Knowledge Management

Knowledge can be based on information that is found in data. Knowledge distinguishes from data, since data is characterized as a property of things, while knowledge corresponds to a property of individuals. Knowledge also differentiates from information, since it is impossible to observe directly and its existence is inferred through the individuals' actions (Boisot, 1999).

Knowledge Management (KM) can be described as the objective of management that conceives, designs and manages the idea of knowledge, being used for the long-term benefits of organizations (Darroch and McNaughton, 2002). Consists of a systematic and integrated approach to identifying, managing and sharing all

organizations' assets, including databases, procedures and document policies, together with previously unpronounced experience and expertise that employees hold (Barron, 2000).

KM focuses on achieving a given result rather than worrying about how that result is achieved. It translates into a structure within which organizations perceive all processes as knowledge assets (Paramasivan, 2003). It lists any intentional set of practices and processes created to optimize the use of knowledge, namely to increase the efficiency of production, distribution and use areas of knowledge (Young, 2013).

KM can be perceived as a policy of providing the right knowledge to the right people, in due time, to stimulate in these individuals a culture of knowledge sharing, along with putting that knowledge into practice to try expanding organizational performance (O'Dell and Grayson, 1998; Tayal, Coleman and Li, 2015). KM intends to explore information from organizations to increase productivity, new value, greater competitiveness and incentive to exchange knowledge (Davies, 2000).

There are four fundamental processes in KM, namely knowledge creation/acquisition, knowledge storage/retrieval, knowledge sharing/transfer and knowledge application (Alavi and Leidner, 2001; Kayworth and Leidner, 2003; Zaim, 2006; Fong and Choi, 2009; Turner, Zimmerman and Allen, 2012).

KM needs the help of Organizational Memory (OM) to make the process more integrated and sophisticated (Lestari, Muhdaliha and Putra, 2020). Competent management of the OM will influence the effectiveness of KM in organizations. OM is a significant portion of KM integrating its four processes (Sudharatna, 2015).

There is a direct relationship between KM and OM, since KM provides the dissemination, explicitness and storage of knowledge, while OM dedicates to the creation and maintenance of knowledge (Freire *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, it is pertinent to address the concept of OM.

2.1 Organizational Memory

Knowledge formed in organizations over time is one of the main factors to remain competitive in the labour market and, thus, organizations must be aware and seek strategies that allow preserving the accumulated knowledge. Knowledge preserved in organizations during their "lives" is called Organizational Memory (OM) (Barros, Ramos and Perez, 2015). OM is stored information (Walsh and Ungson, 1991; Guercini, 2012) that comes from organizations' history (Walsh and Ungson, 1991) and the individuals' interaction and history who constitute it (Guercini, 2012). Can be used to aid current decisions, activities and behaviours (Walsh and Ungson, 1991; Stein and Zwass, 1995; Guercini, 2012), resulting in more or less high levels of organizational effectiveness (Stein and Zwass, 1995). OM is perceived as a method of acquisition, retention, recovery and access to experience, skills and know-how for organizational purposes (Walsh and Ungson, 1991; Hatami, Galliers and Huang, 2003). Day (as cited in Li, Zhuang and ZhongYing, 2006) states that OM associates with a repository of collective perceptions in policies, procedures and routines that can be recovered when necessary. OM is a network structure composed of individuals, artefacts, processes and interconnected experiences that establish the contents and knowledge structure, which have been stored over time and are grouped according to organizational needs (Freire *et al.*, 2012). For OM to be useful, organizations must guide their strategies towards establishing a conducive environment to share relevant knowledge, ideas, information and experiences among employees (Barros, Ramos and Perez, 2015).

OM is created and preserved on a technological structure subject to constant update, requesting new requirements and actions favouring a processes' architecture flexible to change. Thus, an organizational culture with rational, interdisciplinary and standardized capacity for action becomes fundamental (Damian and Cabero, 2020).

OM provides support to the individual and organization's development. For the individual, through the combination of knowledge and learning with the organization's experiences and actions over time. For the organization, from the use of accumulated knowledge that helps in the decisions to be made, along with the development of new solutions (Barros, Ramos and Perez, 2015).

3. Talent Management

Talented individuals are people who manage to make a difference, demonstrating their natural potential in the current and future organization's performance. Organizational talent is unique and influenced by several factors

such as industry, organization nature, organization members and group level implication (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2007). Three thought currents related to Talent Management (TM) were identified. The first current consists of labelling regular Human Resources Management (HRM) practices as TM, with a few differences, greater speed or globality in organizations. The second current focuses on the concept of talent pools and considers TM as a process to ensure an adequate flow of employees throughout the organization. The third current centres on talent, without any consideration for specific positions or organizational boundaries (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

TM is the process from which organizations' employers anticipate and meet human capital needs (Cappelli, 2008b). In contrast, the author criticizes that TM should be intended primarily to meet these human capital needs. Therefore, should focus on assisting the organizations' overall goal, generate profit (Cappelli, 2008a).

TM involves all HRM processes, with emphasis on attracting, developing and retaining talent (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; B. Davies and B.J. Davies, 2010).

The importance of TM is due to the employees' involvement, who believe in its relevance to inclusion in organizations (Hughes and Rog, 2008). A well-planned TM strategy can enable the overcoming of organizational obstacles, together with propelling the success (Rowland, 2011).

Thus, designing and offering a convincing value proposition to employees, personalized career plans, competitive compensation and healthy work-life balance are elements of a successful TM (Stahl *et al.*, 2007).

4. Career Management

A career is considered a sequence of positions, jobs, activities (planned or not), attitudes and behaviours, related to work experiences and tasks, that an individual performs throughout his life cycle, involving elements of progression, commitment and personal development (Super and Hall, 1978; Clark, 1992; Hall, 2002).

Career Management (CM) consists of the dynamic process in which individuals gather information about their tastes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses and the labour market, develop achievable objectives, develop and implement strategies to meet the objectives and seek to obtain feedback, to enhance decision-making (Greenhaus and Callanan, 1994). Additionally, this process should include a monitoring stage for the previously defined career objectives and strategies (Greenhaus, Callanan and Godshalk, 2000).

Recently, CM was defined as the process that helps understand the organization's employees' career opportunities, along with outlining a professional path within the organization (Kasemsap, 2017).

CM is vital for an organization to achieve strategic objectives and for employees to link to a sense of purpose and motivation. If these needs are not met, consequences will occur, such as turnover, decreased individual and organizational performances and a decline in the employees' skills (Clark, 1992).

Employees, managers and organizations have separate roles that they must play in a CM system. Employees are responsible for self-evaluating, creating plans in the organizational reality context and conducting development activities. Managers should support employees in understanding organizational needs and requirements. Organizations are responsible for providing resources and structures needed to help the process (Gutteridge, Shore and Leibowitz, 1993).

5. People Analytics

The current society, more digitized, has an interest in the vast amount of data and analytical techniques (Raguseo, 2018). Understanding and developing organizations' HR is an essential part of this trend (Sullivan, 2013; M. Edwards and K. Edwards, 2016). Extensive use of data, statistical and quantitative analysis, explanatory and predictive models and fact-based management to drive actions and decisions is called Data Analytics (Davenport and Harris, 2007). Since data is ubiquitous in organizations, it can help employees make agile and accurate decisions, and the science behind Data Analytics about people is called People Analytics (PA) (Bishnoi and Poonam, 2020).

PA concerns the method of analysis that can facilitate executive managers' decision-making about employees (Cornerstone, 2018). It has a varied choice of data collection types associated with people and productivity's financial ratios, individuals' values measurement, employees involvement degree, HR processes effectiveness and efficiency measurement, competencies measurement, among others (Mayo, 2006).

A typical PA model has five steps to help construct a people analytical approach for any organization (Tursunbayeva, Lauro and Pagliari, 2018). The first step is tracking data, which includes extracting data from numeric, textual, audio, video or image resources. Data is transformed into useful information, which will be loaded and merged with other sources. Later, data is stored in a database. This step includes supervising live data in the contemporary environment. The second step is analysing, which includes using Business Intelligence (BI) tools such as Power BI and data mining to analyse substantial amounts of data. The third step is modelling, which involves formulating a model that can make predictions and optimization through advanced analytical tools. The fourth step is equivalent to deciding on existing or recently developed models to assist in decision-making about repetitive processes. The fifth stage is the action, which is decision guided, according to the specific organization (Tursunbayeva, Lauro and Pagliari, 2018).

Stipulating the relationship between what people do and organizational outcomes and, subsequently, designing strategies based on this information is the primary purpose of PA (Tursunbayeva, Lauro and Pagliari, 2018).

6. Theoretical model (relations between concepts)

6.1 Relation between Knowledge Management and Talent Management

Competency Management, TM, Human Resources Development, KM and other Human Resources Management (HRM) activities are interrelated concepts (Wahjosoedibjo, 2009).

TM's principle can favour and improve KM in organizations (Whelan and Carcary, 2011). Knowledge is understood as a considerable organizational asset and has been perceived as a source of competitive tools (Kiessling and Harvey, 2006). Most competitive advantages have a tacit nature, implied in people's actions and experiences, which makes it difficult to imitate or even formalize and share in organizations. Consequently, to whom the TM process is entrusted, it is necessary to recruit individuals with tacit knowledge and experience, invest in their training and development and retain them in the organization (Mcdonnell, Gunnigle and Lavelle, 2010).

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (as cited in Poorhosseinzadeh and Subramaniam, 2013) found that organizations are strengthening their focus on TM to create, disseminate and retain knowledge. Therefore, organizations will have a better understanding of the interaction between TM and KM, which will lead to a more effective TM (Whelan and Carcary, 2011).

6.2 Relation between Knowledge Management and Career Management

CM is the personal and organizational responsibility for the professional evolution of employees, by increasing their knowledge bases and providing them with a progression in the organizations' hierarchy. The nature's change of work, directed to knowledge, resulted in a transition in careers' design and management, together with new approaches' evolution of CM at the individual and organizational level (Baruch, 2006).

Employees perceived as valuable are, consequently, developed more proactively by organizations (Hirsh, 2006). This process often includes a more active organizational role in planning and facilitating career changes for individuals. In contrast, knowledge workers have the primary responsibility to develop their own careers (Baruch, 2006). Organizations encourage employees to develop careers through personal choices, providing them with flexibility and opportunities to improve individual learning skills, to conceive and share knowledge in organizations (Gope, Elia and Passiante, 2018).

Besides the diversity of CM strategies, a variety of career paths may emerge at the individual level, while KM becomes progressively more relevant for HRM and, more specifically, CM (Iles, Yolles and Altman, 2001).

6.3 Relation between Knowledge Management and People Analytics

PA is associated with HR practices, since it allows to evaluate the relationship between these practices and organizational outcomes, concerning attrition rates, turnover rates, customer satisfaction rates and profit

(Lawler, Levenson and Boudreau, 2004; Boudreau and Ramstad, 2006). HRM activities are linked to KM (Wahjosoedibjo, 2009). Consequently, the relation between KM and PA becomes evident.

Although KM practices generate knowledge effectively with the help of analysis techniques (Shabbir and Gardezi, 2020), there is a shortage of literature regarding the connection between the concepts of PA and KM.

6.4 Relation between Career Management and Talent Management

CM is one of the biggest challenges HRM can currently face, due to the changes taking place in the world at economic and technological levels. These changes have provided increasing complexity in modern careers and TM is closely related to CM (Milhazes, Ribeiro and Gomes, 2021).

The development and management of the progression of employees with potential, through various functions, govern the concept of TM. It is the organization's responsibility, on a global scale, to attract, select, develop and retain key talents, so that they are aligned with the organizational strategy priorities (Ribeiro and Gomes, 2017). This TM is criticized, since it becomes impossible for some organizations to take advantage of their assets without knowing the employees, along with their characteristics and specificities. Thus, TM is directly linked to all HRM practices, including CM (Collings, Scullion and Vaiman, 2011, 2015; Sanchez and Levine, 2012; Ribeiro and Gomes, 2016, 2017).

6.5 Relation between Career Management and People Analytics

Organizations that apply analytics in career building begin by using HR data to trace trajectories that individuals have followed in the past. Since conventional careers, based on the hierarchical organization chart, have faded, organizations begin to analyse the numerous ways in which individuals evolved, to highlight the paths options available to employees. This career mapping, in the most elementary way, uses historical data to display what previous employees of a certain function have done, enabling individuals who are currently in this role to visualize the set of plausible options for the next steps, regarding career changes. In other cases, organizations identify the positions that sustained a particular function, to reveal the diversity of paths that employees can follow, to reach the position they aspire to. Regardless, analytics is being used to discover options, in favour of individuals' advancement and growth, which are not detected by formal organization charts, but instead by the employees' and managers' decentralized decisions, building careers within the organization (Bidwell and Stefano, 2019).

6.6 Relation between Talent Management and People Analytics

With the exponential development of technology and the existence of an enormous amount of data about people, the use of analytical tools in HR functions has become a reality, to improve the performance of these functions, namely to boost their role in organizations through PA (Canais, 2016).

PA uses data to provide introspections to organizations' management in decision-making about acquisition, placement, promotion, compensation and retention of talent (Walford-Wright and Scott-Jackson, 2018). PA is emerging as a tool of TM, to offer organizations' managers a way to manage talent. The use of analytics modernizes TM's traditional decision-making, which is based on experience and intuition. Today's digital leaders understand technology differently, i.e. they see it as something that enables them to see through the problem, directly to the solutions, and that data can help them to be more effective (McQuivey, 2013).

6.7 Conceptual model

A conceptual model (Figure 1) was constructed based on numerous keywords selected from the concepts explored previously.

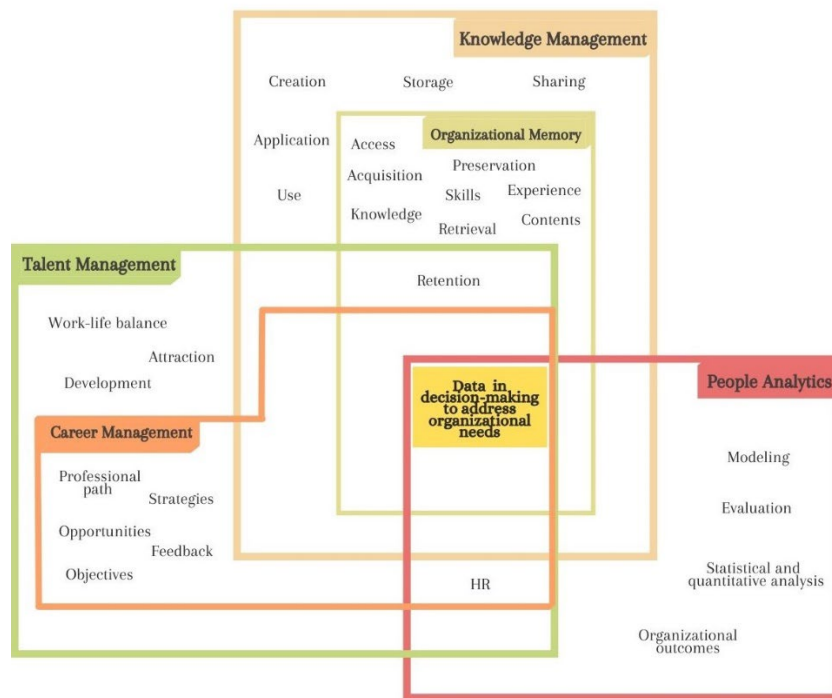


Figure 1: Conceptual model

The common ground for all these concepts is the use of data to facilitate decision-making according to the organization's needs. Through knowledge, individuals or statistical and quantitative analysis, these five concepts intend to assist the organization's management to make consistently more effective decisions, always aiming to address organizational needs and purposes.

Since Organizational Memory (OM) consists in a substantial portion of Knowledge Management (KM) (Sudharatna, 2015), the shared terms of these concepts appear in the OM section, them being "Knowledge" and "Retrieval". Both concepts seek to preserve the existing organizational knowledge, considering that knowledge was become a major asset in creating competitive advantages.

The term "Retention" arises from the relationship between OM and Talent Management (TM), seeing that both look to retain assets in the organizations. The one difference is that OM focus mainly on knowledge (Walsh and Ungson, 1991; Hatami, Galliers and Huang, 2003), while TM concentrates on individuals (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; B. Davies and B.J. Davies, 2010).

TM, Career Management (CM) and People Analytics (PA) share the term "HR", given that these concepts are embedded in Human Resources Management (HRM), which spotlights the individuals of an organization, providing them with the tools and conditions to develop their skills and contribute to the organization's success.

7. Conclusions

In the concepts addressed during this article, it is possible to identify the premise that translates into the need to attract, manage, develop and retain individuals (and their knowledge) who have organization value (Lewis and Heckman, 2006; B. Davies and B.J. Davies, 2010), to achieve the strategic results, facilitate decision-making and, consequently, generate profit, long-term benefits and increase the competitiveness of organizations, in order to thrive in the labour market.

Career Management (CM), Talent Management (TM) and People Analytics (PA) are encompassed in the Human Resources Management (HRM) area and, according to Wahjosoedibjo (2009), KM is directly related to HRM. KM can specifically favour and improve TM (Whelan and Carcary, 2011). There is also an evident relation between

KM and OM (Freire *et al.*, 2012). Thus, a connection between all these concepts exists, which allows ensuring new opportunities and challenges for organizations that invest in these processes to help achieve organizational and personal objectives, contributing to organizational development.

One final highlight about these concepts consists of a common goal, which is to stimulate a sense of belonging in the individuals and promote a sharing culture in organizations (O'Dell and Grayson, 1998; Tayal, Coleman and Li, 2015). This requires having a purpose, motivation, increased and improved skills, efficiency and effectiveness in organizational processes and, also, recognition and development of valuable employees' potential to organizations.

The conceptual model was designed to demonstrate the relationships between the five concepts and, consequently, the knowledge and HR fields, making it easier for organizations and their employees to recognize advantages and opportunities in developing KM systems that are people-centred, specifically exploring approaches to Career Management and aiming to create new competitive advantages in a labour market that already considers knowledge as an indispensable asset.

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