



MODELIZATION OF HRM AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE CAMEROON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

This paper explores the concept of HRM models as well as its perspectives for African in general and Cameroon in particular. Focusing on the case study of the Cameroon Customs administration. Much has been written about these concepts, but there is no integrated conceptual framework available for the Cameroon contextualization of the said concepts, especially in a public fiscal administration. Our goal here is to develop such a framework. We do this in a number of steps, starting with a presentation of the existing approaches, models, theories with respect to HRM. This is followed by a search for the perspectives in the researcher's case study, as a starting point for an integrated model and an in-depth case study regarding the Cameroon Customs department. The research methodology used is based on a qualitative approach in order to address efficiently the research problem. I conclude with the presentation of recommendations and suggestions for further research. Analysis of content indicates that if at first sight, it appears that we cannot really talk about a pure HRM model in Cameroon as the HR practices are simply a copy of the US and European systems through concepts such as performance management in addition to the bibliography and teachings in the HR faculties and schools being those authored and produced by western countries. In reality an African and Cameroonian HR model at close sight exists which is a product of a mixed US and European HR policies with contextual adaptations and influences.

Introduction

At first sight the concepts of human resource planning seem to be closely connected with organizational performance. Most literatures on the above mentioned concepts dealt with issues such as the meaning of labor mobility and its impact; human resource planning concepts; the economics of labor mobility; unemployment and labor mobility or human capital and low cost strategies. Until recently, less attention was given to human resource planning in HRM literature and practice in the Cameroon Customs administration, but the interest now seems to be growing fast with the intervention and pressure of stakeholders such as the World Bank Group and the World Customs Organization.

Although much has been written about labor mobility, JSPM and organizational performance, so far an integrated system bridging the three at once seems not to have been sufficiently explore. In order to find an answer to the research problem which is on the importance and correlation of the variables human resource planning, labor mobility, JSPM and the performance of the Cameroon Customs administration, I will adopt the qualitative data analysis in order to better understand and answer research questions (Martens 2001).

The benefits of this research can be identified at the theoretical, methodological and managerial levels. Theoretically the HRM models and concepts explored led us to the fact that mastery and proper implementations of such models are useful for any organization that looks for performance and effective organizational culture. The limitations of the concepts and theories studied were also brought out in the sense that they did not take into consideration the case of specific contexts and organizations such as African administration and realities, may be due to the fact that they were for the essential carried out in the western environment wherefrom the importance of this study that intends to carry out such a study in that context.

Methodologically the paper tried a qualitative analysis in order to better understand and answer the research problem. It further extended the scope of scientific methods explored in a study as it involved interviews; Performance tests; observations; follow up focus groups and document analysis.



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In managerial terms it puts at the disposal of managers in general and the customs administration of Cameroon in particular, tools to better up their organizational performance and job satisfaction in a context marked by the absence of a real policy of human resource management but a mere personnel administration is approximately applied.

This paper comprises three main parts which are first the conceptual and theoretical frameworks; secondly the methodological approach and thirdly conclusions and contributions of the research.

What are HRM models all about?

HRM Models are defined as the features of HRM. The said models provide analytical framework for studying HRM. They provide characterization of HRM that establishes variables and relationship to be researched and to help discover and understand the world for explaining the nature and significance of key HR practices. There are a good number of models that have been postulated by various scholars to describe the HRM concept.

The Fombrun, Tichy and Devanna Model; The Harvard Model; the Guest Model; The Warwick Model; the Storey's hard and soft model; the European model; the 5 p's model; the Patterson's model of HRM shall constitute the core matter of my analysis in this section.

i) **The Fombrun, Tichy and Devanna model of HRM or matching model**

The Michigan concept of HRM is that developed at the University of Michigan in the early 1980's. The Fombrun et al or Michigan model is also known as the 'matching model' or 'best-fit' approaches to human resource management. The early HRM model developed by Fombrun (1984). It is also referred to as the harder approach to HRM; it emphasizes the interrelatedness and the coherence of human resource management activities.

It is opined here to be similar to the Harvard concept, however; it put more emphasis on strategic measures directed towards the employees and on a high level of thinking about the organizations strategies. Afterward, Clark, (1999) and Fombrun (1984) as cited in Fombrun, et. al. (1999) argues that, the Michigan models concentrates on rewards and it is this reward measures that are used to attain acceptable attitudes in the organisation.

Fombrun wrote that three core elements are necessary for firms to function effectively: Mission, strategy and organization structure. These correspond to a Human resource management or HRM cycle which is made up of Selection i.e. matching people to jobs; Appraisal of performance; Rewards: emphasizing the real importance of pay and other forms of compensation in achieving results and Development of skilled individuals. As the authors state: 'people are recruited and developed to do jobs defined by the organization's formal structure: their performance must be monitored and rewards allocated to maintain productivity'.

This model of HRM emphasizes on four functions of management and their interrelatedness. The said functions are the followings: Selection, Appraisal, Development and Rewards. This model is considered incomplete as it focuses on only four functions of HRM and ignores all other environmental and contingency factors. But, this model has the advantage to be simple and can serve as a heuristic framework for explaining the nature and significance of HR activities.

The matching model has attracted criticism. At a conceptual level, it is seen to depend on a rational, mechanical form of organizational decision-making in the sense that strategies are often determined and operationalized on a more intuitive, political and subjective level. However the decision-making process is more complex than the model allows. It is also both prescriptive and normative, implying that the fit to business strategy should determine HR strategy.



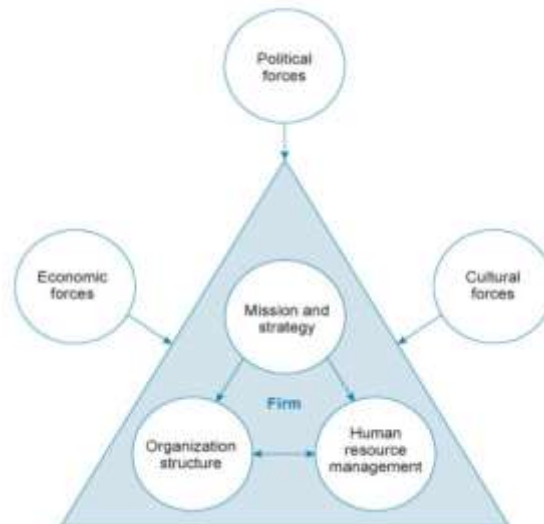
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Randall Schuler and colleagues subsequently presented a more complex version of the matching model that took into account significant wider factors such as technology, organizational structure and size, unionization and industry sector. These accounts were heavily influenced by Michael Porter's writing on business strategy.

Illustration 1: The Fombrun model of HRM



Illustration 2: The Michigan model and the organization's environment



They defined strategy as a process through which the basic mission and objectives of the organization are set, and a process through which the organization uses its resources to achieve its objectives. They also made a distinction between the three levels of managerial work: Strategic levels: policy formulation and overall goal setting; managerial levels: concerned with the availability and allocation of resources to carry out the strategic plan. Operational levels: day-to-day management.

But their most important conclusion was that the HR systems and organizational structures should be managed in a way, which is congruent with organizational strategy. This model, however, ignores the stakeholder interests, situational factors and notion of strategic choice.

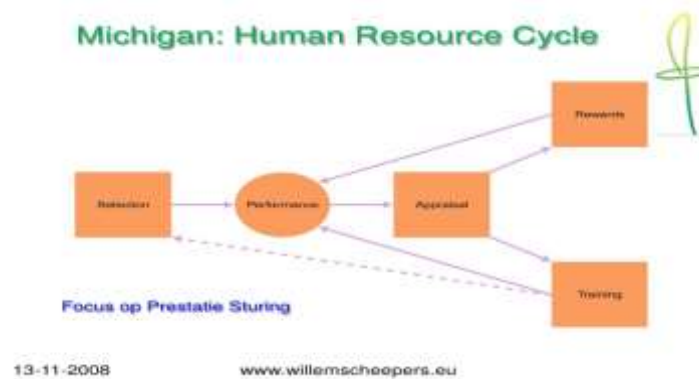
In clear, the Michigan model (Fombrun, Tichy and Devanna, 1984) focuses on hard HRM. It holds that people should be managed like any other resources and so obtained cheaply, used sparingly, developed and exploited fully. The advantage of the model laid on its attachment to market performance and organizational growth. However the disadvantage is the possibility of market failures due to ignorance of environments. More so, HRM planning to ensure the current and future employment requirements of the organisation was minimal as focus was on business not on human resources.



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Besides, with right- based approaches increasingly being used (Bagshaw, 2004) such a model will disintegrate in face of group diversity and intra-group conflict (Chuang et al, 2004) leading to organizational performance failure. Below is an illustration of the human resource cycle.

Illustration 3: The Michigan representation of the human resource cycle.



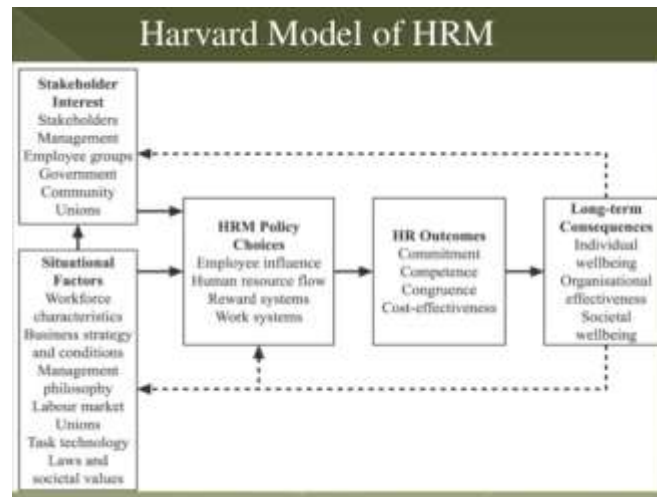
ii) The Harvard model of HRM

The Harvard Model was postulated by Beer M. Beer, Bert Spector, Paul R. Lawrence, D. Q. Mills, and Richard E. Walton in (1984) at Harvard University. The authors of the model also coined it the map of HRM territory. The Harvard model acknowledges the existence of multiple stakeholders within the organization. These multiple stakeholders include shareholders various groups of employees, government and the community at large. The recognition of the legitimacy of these multiple stakeholders renders this model a neo - pluralist model. This model emphasizes more on the human/soft side of HRM. Basically this is because this model emphasizes more on the fact that employees like any other shareholder are equally important in influencing organizational outcomes. In fact the interest of the various groups must be fused and factored in the creation of HRM strategies and ultimately the creation of business strategies. The analytical framework of the 'Harvard model' offered by Beer et al .consists six basic components: Situation factors; Stakeholder interests; HRM policy choices; HR outcomes; Long-term consequences and Feedback loop through which the output flow directly into the organisation and to the stakeholders.

A large part of this section in *Human Resource Management*, 4th edition is devoted to the Harvard 'map' of HRM. The Harvard Business School generated one of the most influential models of HRM. The Harvard interpretation sees employees as resources. However, they are viewed as being fundamentally different from other resources - they cannot be managed in the same way. The stress is on people as *human* resources.

The Harvard approach recognizes an element of mutuality in all businesses, a concept with parallels in Japanese people management. Employees is significant stakeholders in an organization. They have their own needs and concerns along with other groups such as shareholders and customers.

The Harvard Map or model outlines four HR policy areas: Human resource flows (recruitment, selection, placement, promotion, appraisal and assessment, promotion, termination, etc.); Reward systems (pay systems, motivation, etc.); Employee influences (delegated levels of authority, responsibility, power); Work systems (definition/design of work and alignment of people). This in turn lead to the 'four C's' or HR policies that have to be achieved: Commitment; Congruence; Competence and Cost effectiveness. An illustration of the Harvard model is presented below.

Illustration 4: The Harvard Model of HRM**iii) The Guest model of HRM**

The Guest model was propounded by David Guest in 1987. This model is said to be a fusion of aspects that resemble both a hard and a soft approach of HRM. Guest proposes 4 crucial components that underpin organizational effectiveness. These 4 crucial components are: First, Strategic Integration which is the harder side of the Guest Model. This is precisely because human resources are treated in a similar manner like any other resource with the prime goal of achieving business objectives. Second, Flexibility which is basically concerned with the ability of the organization and its people to adapt to the changing business and work environment and to the capacity to manage innovation. It carries both connotations of hard and soft HRM. Third, High Commitment, this is concerned with the need to have both behavioral commitment, which is the ability to go an extra mile, and attitudinal commitment, which is reflected through a strong identification with the organization and finally Quality which is based on the assumption that provision of high quality goods and services results from a quality way of managing people.

Guest acknowledges the difference between the soft and the hard approaches to HRM and incorporates both of them in an ideal model. His Model seeks commitment to organizational goals through strategic management of an organization. Guest's Model focuses on the individual needs rather than the combined workforce which enables organizations to develop power and flexibility.

David Guest's (1989, 1997) model of HRM has 6 dimensions of analysis: HRM strategy; HRM practices; HRM outcomes; Behaviour outcomes; Performance outcomes and Financial outcomes.

iv) The Storey's model of HRM

Storey (1989) has distinguished between hard and soft forms of HRM, typified by the Michigan and Harvard models respectively. 'Hard' HRM focuses on the resource side of human resources. John Storey emerged to be one of the strongest proponents of HRM as a completely different discipline from the preceding disciplines embraced by the TPM approach. He believed that HRM is a holistic approach with a set of interrelated policies with an ideological and philosophical underpinning. Because of these ideological and philosophical aspects, HRM does not only stand distinctively outstanding from TPM but also emerges to be a much more humane approach to employment management.

The model by John Storey is based on four aspects i.e. first, the model is premised on the notion that HRM is based on a set of beliefs and assumptions, which makes it a distinctive approach; second, Strategic Qualities in the sense that HRM is further distinguished by the fact that it is strategic in nature and therefore requires the attention of senior management and top executives; third, Role of Line Managers because line managers have a



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very important role to play in people management. Finally, Key Levers for there is a strong belief that culture management is important than managing Procedures and systems.

According to Storey's Definition of HRM human capability and commitment is what differentiates organizations. Moreover, HRM needs to be implemented into the organizational strategy and needs to be integrated into the management functions because these will assist organization to achieve its goals properly. Storey's Definition of HRM identifies the following points of difference between Personnel, IR Practices & HRM Practices:

- Personnel aim at careful delineation of written contracts whereas HRM try to go beyond the contract;
- Personnel prioritizes devising clear rules whereas HRM pursues a can do outlook;
- Personnel guide to management action is based on procedures whereas HRM focuses on business need;
- Corporate plan goes side by side with Personnel whereas HRM is integrated with strategy;
- Pace of decision is a bit slow with Personnel compared to HRM.
- The key concern of Personnel is just labor management while HRM focuses on customer.

v) The Warwick's model of HRM

This model was developed by two researchers, Hendry and Pettigrew of University of Warwick (hence the name Warwick model). Like other HRM models, the Warwick proposition centers around five elements: Outer context (macro environmental forces); Inner context (firm specific or micro environmental forces); Business strategy content; HRM context and HRM content.

The Warwick model takes into consideration the business strategy and HR practices (as in the Guest model), the external and internal context (unlike the Guest model) in which these activities take place, and the process by which such changes take place, including interactions between changes in both context and content.

The strength of the model is that it identifies and classifies important environmental influences on HRM. It maps the connection between the external and environmental factors and explores how HRM adapts to changes in the context. Obviously, those organizations achieving an alignment between the external and internal contexts will achieve performance and growth.

vi) The European model of HRM vs. US model of HRM

The European model of HRM as described by Brewster (1993) presents the following characteristics:

- environment – established legal framework
- objectives – organizational objectives and social concern – people as a key resource;
- focus – cost/benefits analysis, also environment;
- relationship with employees – union and non-union;
- relationship with line managers – specialist/line liaison;
- role of HR specialist – specialist managers – ambiguity, tolerance, flexibility.

The main distinction between this model and what Brewster referred to as 'the prescribed model' was that the latter involves deregulation (no legal framework), no trade unions and a focus on organizational objectives but not on social concern.

As set out by Maybe et al (1998: 107) the characteristics of the European model are:

- dialogue between social partners;
- emphasis on social responsibility;
- multicultural organizations;
- participation in decision-making;
- Continuous learning.

Pieper highlighted that the main difference between American HRM and the European is the influences and controls by the state regulations (Pieper, 1990, cited by Brewster, 2004). The said differences are the following:

- There is less protection for workers in USA as compare to Europe;



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- Workers in USA work more than 40 hours in a week. While in Europe, working hour in a week are restricted to only 35 hours and further control on the overtime works are limited to 130 hours a year (Brewster, 2004);
- In Europe, there are stringent controls by the legislative requirements on the employment policies as compared to USA;
- American is culturally more individualistic and autonomous as compared to the European;
- American are also very achievement-orientated in their works as compared to Europeans;
- The HRM practices in USA will insist performance appraisal being conducted in a fair manner whereby the management will emphasize on the measurable aspects in the target setting and performance reviewing exercise while for in Europe, they are normally less autonomous and lack of entrepreneurialism;
- The European law requires the trade unions to be recognized for collective bargaining purpose, the unions' representatives will play a vital role in the management's decision especially those related to HR practices and policies. Whereby the American model of HRM actually put emphasis on the theory of "management's right to manage" (Brewster, 1995); US Model of HRM Management practices in USA was the product of F.W. Taylor's findings conducted in USA during 1964. US organizations emphasize on knowledge rather than personality;
- The European workforce preferred to have a line manager as the channel of communication between them and their employers instead of direct feedback system unlike in the American system
- American HRM stresses on high degree of formalization in the processes while in Europe, the HRM practices are normally not as formal as compare to the American. There are also fewer organizational charts and lesser formal grading system.

vii) The 5Ps model of HRM

5Ps model of human resource management as developed by Dr. Mildred Golden Pryor, J. Chris White, and Dr. Leslie A. Toombs is a strategic human resource management model based on: Purpose, Principles, Processes, People, and Performance which are the 5Ps. According to this model performance of organization is based on performance of people which are influenced by purposes, principles and processes. Purpose: Purpose refers to the organization's vision, mission and objectives. Principles: Principles are the action guidelines for achieving the purpose. These define how activities are carried out. Processes: Processes are organizational structures, systems and procedure to achieve objectives. People: People are human resources engaged in carrying out various activities in line with principles and processes. Performance: Performance is the outcome measured against standards. Organizations have to align and balance all the 5Ps in order to achieve higher level performances.

viii) The Contextual model of HRM

The contextual model of HRM emphasizes the importance of context in the HRM. The said context refers to environmental factors such as social, institutional and political forces that have been underestimated in other models. The environmental factors differ from country to country and even from province to province within a country. The contextual approach integrates the human resource management with the environment in which it operates. The contextual classification of variables given by Shapiro, et.al (2007) is as follows: 1) Context of Time and space which includes Historical, Geographical, and Personal Space; 2) Social, Technical, Economic and Political context; 3) Cultural context which include Behaviors, Values, beliefs and Assumptions; 4) Psychological context ; 5) Philosophical context; 6. Context of Communication; 7) Sensory context. The proponents of contextual model of HRM believe different proportions of the contextual variables design a specific context model of HRM. A model applicable to one context cannot be applied to another.

The contextual approach is broader, integrating the human resource management system in the environment in which it is developed. According to Martin-Alcázar: 'Context both conditions and is conditioned by the HRM strategy.'

A broader set of stakeholders is involved in the formulation and implementation of human resource strategies that is referred to by Schuler and Jackson as a 'multiple stakeholder framework'. These stakeholders may be external as well as internal and both influence and are influenced by strategic decisions.



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ix) **The Best practice model of HRM**

Johnson (2000) details, “the best practice or the high performance work practices are described as HR methods and systems that have universal, additive, and positive effects on organizational performance”. This definition relates to the fact that the best practices that the organisation employs, each will add to the previous, thus compounding the resulting performance of the organization. The ‘best practice’ school of HRM is based on universalism. The assumption here is that a set of practices aimed at high commitment or high performance will benefit all organizations regardless of context.

The elements of best practices identified by Pfeffer (1998) are now widely recognized, if not universally accepted: Employment Security/ Job Security; Sophisticated Selection /Selective Hiring; Team-working and Decentralization; High wages linked to organizational performance; Extensive Training; Narrow Status Differentials and Communication and Employee Involvement.

x) **The contingency model**

A contingency theory is an organizational theory that claims that there is no best way to organize a corporation, to lead a company, or to make decisions. Instead, the optimal course of action is contingent (dependent) upon the internal and external situation.

Contingency approach refers to a method of decision-making often applied in devising appropriate human resource (HR) strategies and termed the “best fit” approach in contrast to “best practice” approaches. It is based on the premise that picking the most effective HR policies and practices depends on matching them appropriately to the organization's environment.

The contingent factors influencing HR strategy might include type of business strategy pursued, organization size, type of technology, geographic location and labor market, management skills and preferences, industry sector and economic conditions.

One formulation of contingency theory to prescribe HR practices for different organizations is the business strategy model based on Michael Porter's threefold categorization of business strategies as focused on the pursuit of low costs, product innovation, or quality. Another variant is the business life-cycle model, which specifies different HR techniques according to organization age from start-up to decline.

Contingency models can be static and offer no help to dynamic organizations undergoing frequent change and neglect to recognize that organizations often need to satisfy multiple conflicting goals. They can be either too simplistic and fail to include every contingency or too complex for managers to apply in practice.

xi) **The Patterson model of HRM**

According to the Patterson's model of HRM, HRM practices can improve company performance by increasing employee skills and abilities; promoting positive attitudes and increasing motivation; providing employees with expanded responsibilities so that they can make full use of their skills and abilities. The above factors provide a basis for determining ‘good’ or ‘high performance’ HRM practices

Why comparative HRM?

Comparative HRM is defined as a systematic method of investigation that seeks to explain the patterns and variations encountered in cross-national HRM rather than simply describe HRM institutions and practices in different societies.

According to comparative HRM literature, different national business systems arise from differences in specific historical, cultural and institutional heritage in certain countries. The said Comparative differences occur due to decisive historical.

Hofstede's (1980) adopted the 'culturalist' perspective where he argued that national business styles emerge due to ingrained cultural attitudes and mental schemas. He described culture under five dimensions which are power



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distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation. Other researchers claim that HR management practices differ between nations due to the presence of specifically national institutions such as education, banking services or state/legal support.

The main reasons why it is necessary to study comparative HRM are:

- The realization that the efficient management of human resources is a key success factor for international organizations in different countries;
- The composition of international organizations' workforce is becoming more diverse than ever not just in terms of their employees but management as well;
- More and more companies are dependent on managers from different cultures and nationalities operating in different countries.
- The free movement of labor within and between continents and countries;
- HR manager for an international organisation need to have clear understanding about culture for the host nation and knowledge about different culture practice in different nation to run the organization efficiently and to avoid any misunderstandings among the employees;
- Comparative research is prone to look into the wider societal issues and problems in its description and explanation of organizational and working life phenomena;
- Comparative HRM as a field of study focuses on the national institutional differences in human resource practices, strategies and systems;
- The contextual model of HRM emphasizes the importance of context in the HRM.

How does culture impact HRM?

Culture is often defined as the social behavior and norms found in human societies or the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society. It refers to the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time (Cambridge Dictionary). The word "culture" derives from a French term, which in turn derives from the Latin "colere," which means to tend to the earth and grow, or cultivation and nurture.

The Center for Advance Research on Language Acquisition goes a step further, defining culture as shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs and understanding that are learned by socialization. Thus, it can be seen as the growth of a group identity fostered by social patterns unique to the group. "Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things,"(Cristina De Rossi)¹. It implies therefore that culture is not constant but a changing factor.

There has been identified several types of cultures. The term "Western culture" has come to define the culture of European countries as well as those that have been heavily influenced by European immigration, such as the United States, according to Khan University. Eastern culture generally refers to the societal norms of countries in Far East Asia (including China, Japan, Vietnam, North Korea and South Korea) and the Indian subcontinent. Latin culture refers to the societal norms of the Spanish-speaking nations. The Middle East is the birthplace of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and as such is characterized by various sub middle east cultural backgrounds.

As far as African culture is concerned, it must be underlined that currently, Africa is divided into two cultural groups: North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. This is because Northwest Africa has strong ties to Middle East, while Sub-Saharan Africa shares historical, physical and social characteristics that are very different from North Africa, according to the University of Colorado. The harsh environment has been a large factor in the development of Sub-Saharan Africa culture, as there are a number of languages, cuisines, art and musical styles that have sprung up among the far-flung populations.

According to the Business Dictionary, organizational culture encompasses values and behaviors that "contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization". organizational culture represents the collective values, beliefs and principles of organizational members and is a product of factors such as history, product, market, technology, strategy, type of employees, management style, and national culture; culture



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includes the organization's vision, values, norms, systems, symbols, language, assumptions, environment, location, beliefs and habits (Needle, 2004).

1. An anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London, The word "culture" shares its etymology with a number of other words related to actively fostering growth," De Rossi said.

Hofstede demonstrated that there are national and regional cultural groupings that affect the behavior of organizations and identified four dimensions of culture in his study of national cultures. They are: Power distance (Mauk Mulder, 1977) in the sense that different societies find different solutions regarding social inequality; Uncertainty avoidance which is the way of coping with uncertainty about the future ; Individualism vs. collectivism i.e. disharmony of interests on personal and collective goals (Parsons and Shils, 1951); Masculinity vs. femininity which reflects whether a certain society is predominantly male or female in terms of cultural values, gender roles and power relations. Long- Versus Short-Term Orientation (Hofstede, Geert H. 2001) which he describes as "The long-term orientation dimension can be interpreted as dealing with society's search for virtue.

A model based on the belief that cultures can be distinguished by values that are reinforced within organizations was developed (O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). Daniel Denison's model (1990) asserts that organizational culture can be described by four general dimensions i.e. Mission, Adaptability, Involvement and Consistency. Deal and Kennedy created a model of culture that is based on 4 different types of organizations (Work-hard, play-hard culture; Tough-guy macho culture; Process culture; Bet-the-company culture). According to Schein (1992), culture is the most difficult organizational attribute to change. Gerry Johnson (1988) described a cultural web, identifying a number of elements that can be used to describe or influence organizational culture (The paradigm Control system; Organizational structures; Power structures; Symbols; Rituals and routines; Stories and myths). Stanley G. Harris (1994) argues that five categories of in-organization schemata are necessary for organizational culture (Self-in-organization schemata; Person-in-organization schemata; Organization schemata; Object/concept-in-organization; schemata Event-in-organization schemata). Charles Handy (1976) popularized Roger Harrison (1972) with linking organizational structure to organizational culture.

Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn (1999) conducted research on organizational effectiveness and success. Based on the Competing Values Framework, they developed the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument that distinguishes four culture types i.e. Clan culture; Adhocracy ; Market culture; Hierarchy culture. Robert A. Cooke defines culture as the behaviors that members believe are required to fit in and meet expectations within their organization. Adam Grant, author of the book *Give and Take*, distinguishes organizational cultures into *giver*, *taker* and *matcher* cultures according to their norms of reciprocity. Stephen McGuire (2003) defined and validated a model of organizational culture that predicts revenue from new sources. Eric Flamholtz (2001; 2011) has identified and validated a model of organizational culture components that drive financial results (Flamholtz and Randle, 2011). The model consists of five identified dimensions of corporate culture: 1) treatment of customers, 2) treatment of people, 3) performance standards and accountability, 4) innovation and change, and 5) process orientation.

Literature reveals that organizational culture has deep impact on the variety of organizations process, employees and its performance. This also describes the different dimensions of the culture. Research shows that if employee are committed and having the same norms and value as per organizations have, can increase the performance toward achieving the overall organization goals.

Organizational culture provides a framework with respect to the behavior of employees in their workplace. Depending on the type of culture that is created in an organization, it can have a positive or negative effect on employee performance. Organizational culture to a large extent determines the performance of the employees. Therefore, it is in the interest of organizations to eliminate negative factors that slow down employee performance in order to foster a positive workplace environment or a positive organizational culture. Thus it appears that culture impacts HRM in the sense that employers generally implement human resources policies to give an organization structure, to provide employees with discernible guidelines, and to support the



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company's employment actions. Moreover, although the underlying reasons for HR policies are similar, HR policies are not a one-size-fits-all proposition. A number of factors are pertinent in developing HR policies. The size of the employee base, the corporate structure, the workplace climate, and even the location and industry all comprise organizational culture, and ultimately influence HRM.

Can we talk about an African model of hrm?

Even though the African culture has greatly been influenced by other continents due to phenomena such as colonization and globalization. It must clearly be stated that the culture of Africa is varied and manifold, consisting of different countries with various tribes with their own unique characteristics. In Cameroon, the public administration has been the product of the influence of both the French and the British dominion. This can be observed through the language, the dressing, the eating habits, the training programmes and even the HRM systems.

If at first sight, it appears as if we cannot really talk about a pure HRM model in Cameroon as the HR practices are simply a copy of the US and European systems through concepts such as performance management moreover the bibliography and teachings in the HR faculties and schools being those authored and produced by western countries. In reality an African and Cameroonian HR model at close sight exists which is a mixed US and European HR policies with contextual adaptations and influences for the following reasons according to the author:

- Notwithstanding the legal framework that predicts large protection for workers in Cameroon as in Europe; in reality there is less protection for workers as this is not always enforced by the state. We often talk about protection of workers during seminars and events but on the field there is no concrete measures taken;
- The laws and regulations of the country states that workers like in Europe should work for 35 hours but in reality they work more than 40 hours like in USA with no control on the overtime works ;
- In Cameroon, we cannot really refer to stringent controls by the legislative requirements on the employment policies as compared to Europe, we tend to espouse at that level the American system;
- American is culturally more individualistic and autonomous as compared to the European, in Cameroon the two realities are present depending on the type of managers since the country possesses several tribes some being individualistic and others collectivist or autonomous depending on the case;
- In Cameroon, depending on the organization, they are some that are very achievement-orientated in their works like the American but in general it is not the case such as with the Europeans;
- In Cameroon, The HRM practices will insist performance appraisal being conducted in a fair manner whereby the management will emphasize on the measurable aspects in the target setting and performance reviewing exercise like in USA for organizations led by tribes or clan that have an individualistic or "take" culture. While for some who are from the south part of the country , they are often characterized by less autonomy and lack of entrepreneurialism;
- The European law requires the trade unions to be recognized for collective bargaining purpose, the unions' representatives will play a vital role in the management's decision especially those related to HR practices and policies. Whereby the American model of HRM actually put emphasis on the theory of "management's right to manage" (Brewster, 1995). In Cameroon even though trade unions exist and are recognized they are most often controlled and influenced by the managers. It is a political game of interests and hypocrisy leading to lack of performance and underdevelopment;
- The European workforce preferred to have a line manager as the channel of communication between them and their employers instead of direct feedback system unlike in the American system. The Cameroonian system combined the two depending on the political interests of managers;
- American HRM stresses on high degree of formalization in the processes while in Europe, the HRM practices are normally not as formal as compare to the American. There are also fewer organizational charts and lesser formal grading system. In the Cameroon public administration, even though there exists many organizational charts, they are seldom implemented. They remain most often at the theoretical dimension.



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The author believes that the above mentioned specificity even though marked with negativity can constitute a model or system on its own on the ground that they provide analytical framework for studying HRM in the Cameroonian context and provide characterization, realities and specificities on their own of our HRM policies and practices. In other words there could exist a Cameroonian model that is a product of a mixture of the US, European model and Cameroonian cultures considering the multiculturalism of the country and the harsh economic, social and political environment characterizing it.

What are the perspectives for the Cameroon customs administration?

The objective of our study was to interpret and describe the significance of HRM models in their variety and importance in order to bring out its perspectives for the Cameroon Customs administration. Comparing with the above mentioned literature review and theoretical frameworks, it appears that the multiple HRM models studied aim at identifying human resource planning process, identifying organizational *goals* and matching them with the competencies employees need to achieve those *goals*. Human resource models and planning serve as a guidance or link between *human resource management* and the overall strategic plan of an organization in general. This is in line with authors cited above and the theories presented and relating to HRM modeling in the sense that effective strategic modeling of HRM according to theoretical background and field realities or context will avoid subjectivity and therefore underperformance and as such guarantee organizational performance. Moreover HRM Models define the features of HRM. The said models provide analytical framework for studying HRM. They provide characterization of HRM that establishes variables and relationship to be researched and to help discover and understand the world for explaining the nature and significance of key HR practices which definitely necessary for the Cameroon customs department considering the shortage of skills and policies in the HR domains.

This means that there could be put in place a Cameroonian model which could be the product of a mixture of the US, European model and Cameroonian cultures and realities considering the multiculturalism of the country and the harsh economic, social and political environment characterizing it. In that vein the customs department could put in place an HRM model convenient for its HR policies.

However the literature review and theories above stated show limits in the sense that it is limited to American and European models. Very few are said about progress and evolutions made in HR modeling in other areas in the world. The said literature did not also provide tools to resolve issues relating to the implementation or conception of a model in an African public administration. Still the questions concerning the contextualization and the implementation of the general interest and performance are insufficiently provided by the surveyed literature and theoretical frameworks as far as HR models are concerned.

Modeling of HRM should go beyond analytical framework; relationship with variables or HR policies, featuring, mere characterization or simple analysis on the contingencies or contextual influences. There are also sociological, administrative specificities, tools for implementation and possible obstacles for applying the said HRM models in specific contexts such as Africa and Asia that need to be revisited and questioned. In fact the “Cameroon public administration” is far different from the “western organization” that have been the case study in the present empirical and theoretical literature and which have not been sufficiently addressed.

Henceforth it appears glaringly clear that HRM models should be thoroughly analyzed at the strategic, tactic and operational levels, the tools for their implementation well defined in order to put in place organizational performance in African institutions such as the Cameroon Customs Administration considering its own social realities, objectives and historical background. This will also permit to have clear guidance in the carrying out of the missions of the said administration in general and its HRM department in particular.

Conclusions

This study aimed at analyzing the different models of HRM in order to answer the question whether an African model of HRM existed that could best fit African organizations considering the underperformance of the said organizations that apply either European or sometimes the American system, focusing on the case of the Cameroon Customs administration. The main problematic was on the importance and the mechanisms for the



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implementation of an efficient HRM model or system. The methodology used for that purpose was a qualitative analysis in order to better understand and answer research questions (Martens 2001).

The analysis show that In reality an African and Cameroonian HR model at close sight could exist which is a product of a mixed US and European HR policies with contextual adaptations and influences.

The benefits of this research can be identified at the theoretical, methodological and managerial levels.

Theoretically the HRM models and concepts explored led us to the fact that mastery and proper implementations of such models are useful for any organization that looks for performance and effective organizational culture. The limitations of the concepts and theories studied were also brought out in the sense that they did not take into consideration the case of specific contexts and organizations such as African administration and realities, may be due to the fact that they were for the essential carried out in the western environment wherefrom the importance of this study that intends to carry out such a study in that context.

Methodologically the paper tried a qualitative analysis in order to better understand and answer the research problem. It further extended the scope of scientific methods explored in a study as it involved interviews; Performance tests; observations; follow up focus groups and document analysis.

In managerial terms it puts at the disposal of managers in general and the customs administration of Cameroon in particular, tools to better up their organizational performance and job satisfaction in a context marked by the absence of a real policy of human resource management but a mere personnel administration is approximately applied.

This study goes alongside with the article of the same author entitled: "A comparative study in between a professional football team and the Cameroon customs administration" which revealed that the Cameroon Customs Revenue will pass from \$827.9 million a year to \$ 4232, 7 million which represents almost half of the Cameroon State budget if only real HRM policies were implemented.

Although this research was carefully prepared, I am still aware of its limitations and shortcomings i.e. First of all, the difficult access to information, the population of the experimental group does not systematically represent the majority of workers and finally since the assessment of the pretest and post test was conducted by the author himself, it is possible to find in this study a certain degree of subjectivity.

In terms of research perspectives it is believed that the present research was not sufficiently explored and as such there is need to extend it to other Cameroonian administration which for the majority faces the same realities. It should be furthered in the context of the customs department by defining the model that is effectively fit for the Cameroon Customs administration in line with its strategy and goals. Furthermore an adaptation of models to our contextual realities should be made in order to conceive a specific model "best fit" for the Cameroon Customs administration.

Recommendations for the Cameroon customs administration

From the above mentioned, the following recommendations are formulated towards the Cameroon Customs managers.

- A guide for labor law compliance should be conceived for all categories of personnel according to established regulations and followed up by the HR department;
- Workers should work for 45 hours a week and time scheduled according to field realities and formalized accordingly;
- Our system should be based on an individualistic model like in USA with competitive schemes and appropriate reward to stir individual performance that will ultimately lead to collective performance. In that vein performance contracts should be extended to every agents and duly followed up and enforced accordingly;



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- Cameroon Customs administration should be essentially achievement-orientated in their works and the implementation and enforcement duly followed up and sanctioned;
- the management should emphasize on the measurable aspects in the target setting and performance reviewing ;
- Trade unionism should be recognized and encouraged for collective bargaining purpose, the unions' representatives will play a vital role in the management's decision especially those related to HR practices and policies.;
- The management of workforce should combine line management and direct feedback as channels of communication ;
- HRM practices should stress on high degree of formalization and implementation of such formalities in the processes ;
- Workforce planning; JSPM; labor mobility; competency profiling; job description and job classification should be the main tools for any recruitment and selection in the Cameroon Customs department;
- Compensation and benefits should be done in equitable, fair, transparent and objective criteria for all agents;
- Training development should be the product of a training and development plan based on workforce planning; JSPM; labor mobility; competency profiling; job description and job classification;
- Remuneration practices; career advancement practices; work-life balance practices; work environment management practices should essentially be done on objective and transparent ground

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