

Research Review and Prospect of Flexible Human Resource Management

Jing Wu^{1*}

¹ School of Business Administration, Anhui University of Finance and Economics, Bengbu, China

Email Address

19810601447@163.com (Jing Wu)

*Correspondence: 19810601447@163.com

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Abstract:

Flexible human resource management emphasizes the flexible design of human resource management practices to effectively acquire and deploy the organization's human resources, which is an important means for the organization to obtain competitive advantages in the dynamic environment. Based on this, the article focuses on the application of flexible management theory in human resource management, aiming at optimizing the problem of enterprise human resource management. In essence, flexible management emphasizes humanization. The application of flexible management theory can create an atmosphere of mutual respect and equality on the one hand, and realize the complementary advantages and cooperation between employees on the other hand, and jointly promote the development of enterprises. Based on the analysis of the problems existing in enterprise human resources, this paper proposes the application strategy of flexible management theory, hoping to provide some reference for enterprise human resources management.

Keywords:

Flexible Human Resource Management, Resource Flexibility, Coordination Flexibility

1. Introduction

In today's workplace, the "flexible" management measures adopted by the enterprise human resource management department are usually regarded as one of the best management strategies. For organizations, flexible response and adaptability can enable them to gain competitive advantages in a dynamic and fierce environment [1]. For employees, flexible management can enable enterprises to quickly mobilize employees' knowledge and skill reserves, stimulate creative thinking and innovative spirit, and become their internal driving force [2]. However, only when flexible management measures are implemented and perceived by employees successfully can they significantly affect the psychological and behavioral performance of employees. From the reality level of our country, although the internal communication of this policy, but there is a certain gap with the real demand. Constrained by business performance and production rules, it is difficult to adjust working hours, and remote

working cannot be realized [3]. Some employees doubt that the implementation of flexible working system is only a “shield” for enterprises to increase working hours or an “umbrella” to avoid overtime pay [4]. The implementation of part-time work and shift work is an invisible overtime imposed on employees by enterprises in the name of “flexibility” [5]. Some studies have pointed out that the implementation of flexible management measures will also lead to greater work pressure and intensity of workers, resulting in the loss of individual time and energy, thereby reducing their happiness [6], increasing their workload, and employees are worried about losing their jobs or being isolated by colleagues and criticized by supervisors [7]. In fact, although the implementation of flexible management measures in enterprises still has the problem of separation between reality and ideal, employees still have high expectations for the implementation of flexible work system. According to a 2015 World at Work research report, there are already about 80% of organizations worldwide Offer things like flex time, telecommuting, part-time work And other forms of flexible working.

With the increasingly fierce market competition and the emergence of new technologies, an important means for enterprises to maintain competitiveness is to improve creativity and constantly innovate [8]. Flexible human resource practices provide work resources for employees’ personal development, such as decision-making participation, social support, work autonomy, information and resource sharing, flexible work system, etc. It not only stimulates employees’ internal and external motivation to improve work participation [9], but also expands the space for employees’ self-leadership [10]. At the same time, the implementation of flexible management measures can reduce work-family conflicts [11], improve self-efficacy [12] reduce work pressure, and enhance employees’ work involvement [13], reduce the physical and mental consumption of employees brought by work requirements. Under the background of the new era, flexible management practices such as participatory management and flexible working system provide opportunities for managers to “empower” and are important measures to achieve employee participation.

2. Connotation and Structure of Flexible Human Resource Management

British scholar Atkinson [14] defines “Flexibility” as flexible, first suggested “Human Resource Flexibility Strategy”, created the flexible human resources strategy research. After that, scholars Milliman&Glinow [15] proposed the concept of human resource flexibility, believing that human resource flexibility is the ability of an organization to flexibly use human resource elements to effectively adapt to changes in external environment and diversified internal needs. Blyton [16] first introduced the idea of flexible management into the practice of enterprise management and believed that flexible management should be reflected in various human resource practices such as employment methods and salary formulation. Scholar MacDuffie [17] put forward the importance of employee skills in flexible human resource management. Wright&Snell [18] considered the importance of employee skills and behaviors in the concept of human resource flexibility, and also divided human resource flexibility into three dimensions: employee skill flexibility, employee behavior flexibility and human resource practice flexibility. Way et al(2015) systematically developed a human resource flexibility structure containing four items each of temporary employee skills and behavioral coordination flexibility, employee skills and behavioral resource flexibility, employee skills and behavioral coordination flexibility,

and human resource practice coordination flexibility, as well as a human resource flexibility scale containing five items of human resource practice flexibility. Chinese scholars Xie Lin and Du Gang [19] established four evaluation dimensions of HRM flexibility: functional flexibility, quantitative flexibility, time flexibility and salary flexibility.

Chang et al [9] put forward the concept of flexible human resource management for the first time, defining it as a set of internally consistent human resource management practices that enable enterprises to widely acquire and develop human resources while effectively deploying these resources, and divided flexible human resource system into two dimensions: resource flexibility and coordination flexibility. Among them, resource flexible human resource management refers to a series of human resources carried out by an organization to cultivate employees with diversified knowledge and skills source management practices, coordination Flexible human resource management refers to the human resource management practices carried out by organizations in order to efficiently deploy employees. Chang et al [9] also proposed that information sharing, job rotation, The use of information technology to manage human resources and extensive job design Including 11 human resource management initiatives to help companies design flexibility Human resource management, and developed the corresponding 11 item scale to measure the degree of flexible human resource management in enterprises. Ye Yijiao et al [10] confirmed that both dimensions of flexible human resource management (resource flexible human resource management and coordination flexible human resource management) are of great significance to organizational technological innovation. Bal&DeLange [20], referring to Hill et al(2008)'s definition of workplace flexibility from the perspective of employees, defined flexible human resource management as the organization providing employees with the opportunity to choose when and how to work, and divided it into flexible human resource management capabilities perceived by employees' usability and flexibility of human resource management use two dimensions.

Flexible human resource management has both commonalities and differences with other human resource management practices. In essence, they are a set of human resource management practices designed to help organizations achieve management goals and achieve sustainable competitive advantage. However, the paths they rely on to achieve their goals are different. From the perspective of conceptual connotation, the core of high performance, high participation and high commitment human resource management is to improve the work efficiency of employees and increase their willingness to work hard to fully mobilize the product of employees very proactive. Flexible human resource management pays more attention to the changes in the internal and external environment of the organization [21]. On the one hand, flexible human resource management emphasizes the rapid allocation of resources to meet the needs of the organization to cope with the volatile changes in the external environment; on the other hand, it emphasizes the universality and portability of employees' skills and knowledge, so as to provide guarantee for the organization to respond to the diversified environmental needs from the source. Stability of the organization's internal and external environmental requirements compared to a stable environment definite, clear, how to achieve people in a competitive environment full of uncertainty the internal and external matching of force resource management practices has become one of the challenges faced by organizations Challenge items.

3. Research Status of Flexible Human Resource Management

3.1. The results of the role at the organizational level

The research shows that flexible human resource management has a positive impact on organizational performance. On the one hand, due to the characteristics of dynamic adaptability, flexible human resource management enables enterprises to quickly respond to the effects of market and technological changes [22]. On the other hand, flexible human resource management can promote and optimize the exploration of enterprise strategic entrepreneurship through extensive resource allocation dynamic and development activities contribute to the improvement of organizational performance [23]. But it is worth noting in the long and short term performance of the organization. In terms of flexible human resource management, the effect of each dimension is poor different. The research results of Yan Dan and Szeto Junquan [22] show that both resource flexibility dimension and coordination flexibility dimension have significant impact on the long-term performance of organizations. However, in terms of short-term performance, the coordination flexibility dimension has a positive effect on short-term performance, while the resource flexibility dimension has no significant effect on short-term performance.

A large number of studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between flexible human resource management and organizational innovation. Based on organizational learning theory, scholars believe that flexible human resource management is conducive to the acquisition and development of knowledge and skills by organizations [9,10] can provide a resource base for organizational innovation. Specifically, Chang et al [9] pointed out that resource-flexible oriented flexible human resource management provides channels for employees to acquire knowledge and creates a good organizational learning atmosphere by developing management strategies such as job rotation and training aimed at developing employees' knowledge and skills. To promote employees to the organization of internal and external knowledge acquisition and absorption; Coordinate flexible oriented flexible human resource management system through performance management, compensation management and participatory. Management strategies such as management can motivate employees to transform and utilize knowledge, which in turn enables organizations to make better use of the identified valuable knowledge and opportunities for innovation. Ye Yijiao (2018) further confirmed this view, arguing that flexible human resource management can promote technological innovation of organizations by promoting the pursuit of new knowledge, namely exploratory learning, and the application and development of existing knowledge, namely exploitative learning. Moreover, Ye Yijiao et al [10] pointed out that according to the dynamic capability theory, flexible human resource management can also promote the realization of organizational technological innovation by improving the dynamic capability of organizations. In other words, flexible human resource management expands the organization's human capital, enables the organization to identify opportunities better and faster, and can transform opportunities into organizational technological innovation through effective coordination of resources.

3.2. Employee level outcomes

At the level of research on individual employees, the results are controversial, both positive and negative. The research of Zheng Yaqin et al (2014) shows that compared with other human resource management practices, flexible human resource

management is more able to provide human resource measures that match the needs of employees and promote the satisfaction of employees' psychological contracts. Based on the work adaptation theory, Bal and De Lange [20] believe that flexible human resource management can improve the "flexibility" of employees in the time, ability and attention allocated to work, and enable employees to have work autonomy and sense of control. While promoting the compatibility of individual life and work requirements, it can also promote the improvement of work engagement. Specifically, flexible human resources management enables employees to flexibly apply the resources provided by the organization work to help employees better cope with stress and meet job demands, from it is beneficial for employees to show higher work engagement and higher work engagement means more focus on work tasks, which helps facilitate improvement of employee performance [20].

Working time flexibility allows employees to flexibly adjust working hours to cope with private events, and workplace flexibility allows employees to flexibly choose working places to deal with family problems, both of which reduce the occurrence of work-family conflicts [24]. At the same time, the satisfaction of out-of-work needs and the reduction of work-family conflict can make employees more willing to engage in organizational citizenship behavior and lower turnover tendency [25]. However, Kelliher and Lee [26] showed that compared with employees with flexible working hours, employees who work full-time in the workplace have more opportunities to participate in training and perform various tasks, which leads to higher skills, personal development and work quality.

In terms of the impact on employees' physical and mental status, Hoeven and van Zoonen(2015) found that the implementation of flexible management measures has a two-sided impact on employees' happiness. On the one hand, it can enhance work-life balance, enhance employee autonomy and improve communication efficiency to achieve a positive impact on employee happiness; on the other hand, this kind of institutional arrangement will cause disruption of time and space, which may also have a negative impact on employees' happiness.

3.3. The importance of flexible management in the application of enterprise human resource management

Help to stimulate the creativity of employees. The ability and quality of employees will be directly related to the future development of the enterprise, the enterprise should ensure the reasonable allocation and utilization of personnel through human resource management, so that people can give full play to their talents and perform their duties. In order to give full play to the potential of employees and stimulate the enthusiasm of employees, enterprises should integrate flexible management concepts. It is beneficial to adapt to the complex external environment [27]. At present, the external environment facing enterprises is becoming more and more complex. If enterprises want to improve their adaptability and make reasonable decisions, they must take into account the influence of many factors, so as to better adapt to the outside world Environment, ensure the right decision. In the application of flexible management mode, enterprises should clarify the responsibilities of employees, conduct targeted training and assessment of employees, and formulate perfect incentive measures, so that employees are enthusiastic about work, improve their own value, and then form a healthy competitive atmosphere, so that every employee is more focused on their own work and self-improvement good work, the enterprise will therefore be full of infinite development vitality.

It is beneficial to meet the needs of flexible production. At present, people's living habits and ways have changed significantly, at the same time, there are more stringent requirements for aesthetics, and the level of demand is getting higher and higher [28]. When conducting production and operation, it is necessary to take into account the individual consumption needs of consumers.

With the help of coordinated flexible human resource management, it can provide sufficient guarantee for the smooth development of technological innovation activities of enterprises, which is reflected in the following aspects. First of all, with the advantage of effective human resource allocation, employees can carry out relevant activities according to their own abilities, expertise and actual innovation needs in carrying out technological innovation activities. To a certain extent, it can improve the efficiency of employees' knowledge utilization. So as to enhance the innovation ability and practical ability of technical personnel, theory into practice. Secondly, abundant human resources can provide employees with a platform for interpersonal communication and information exchange, creating more opportunities for them. From its positive role, it not only enables employees and new colleagues to enhance their understanding and understanding of each other in the process of communication and contact [29]. At the same time, in the activity of exploring the content of technological innovation, it creates opportunities for them to expand their innovative thinking. Finally, in the technical personnel deployment activities, we can organize activities in a way to promote the hidden communication of employees. From the perspective of flexible human resource management and enterprise technological innovation, they also show a positive correlation, which is embodied in the following three aspects. Firstly, from the perspective of dynamic capability theory. In carrying out technological innovation activities, we need to fully consider the positive role of the coordinated development of basic resources and conventional capabilities in this process.

From the perspective of human resource management. It can not only effectively take advantage of the positive role of flexible human resource management, but also bring into play the transformational leadership mode to enhance the technological innovation ability of enterprises. Secondly, in the process of continuous development of an enterprise, it should be considered from the perspective of the development trend of the entire industry and related planning in combination with various contents. Have a clear and clear understanding of their own development status, timely introduction of resources with certain competitive advantages, so as to promote the effective improvement of technological innovation and development of enterprises. Finally, the current value system should be questioned. In different stages of development, the specific content of technological innovation will also appear certain differences. Therefore, it is necessary to jointly promote the external resources and internal resources of the organization and coordinate the development. On the whole, the effective use of flexible human resource management in the enterprise's technological innovation activities can not only effectively improve the economic development benefits of enterprises to a certain extent, improve their innovation ability. At the same time, for employees, it also cultivates and exercises their innovative ability. In the future work, we can better contribute to the development of the company's technological innovation

3.4. The application measures of flexible management in enterprise human resource management

Establish a flexible organizational structure and implement the people-oriented concept. In human resource management, in addition to the need to pay attention to the protection of talents, it is also necessary to attach great importance to the development of talents, further enhance the cohesion of employees and promote the growth of employees. At this stage, enterprises are organized structure is generally pyramid-style, due to more levels of organizational management, resulting in slower information transmission speed. In this regard, enterprises can use flexible management to adjust the organizational structure of enterprises to a network flat organizational structure, so as to improve the efficiency of enterprise transmission at all levels and enhance the effective interaction and communication between various departments. Take advantage of this the organizational structure can inject vitality into the development of enterprises.

Develop flexible management system and form flexible enterprise culture. Standardized and reasonable management system is the guarantee for the efficient application of flexible management theory in human resource management. With institutional support, it can promote the implementation of various work. At the same time, business leaders need to develop a flexible flow management mechanism and ensure the effective use of human resources according to the development situation and future development direction of the enterprise. Moreover, enterprises should also implement the two-way flow mechanism of employees, so as to ensure that human resource management is in dynamic change. The use of flexible management theory can improve employees to a certain extent not due diligence and other problems, to achieve the scientific and rational allocation of human resources. Optimizing the internal incentive mechanism of enterprises can create space and opportunities for employees to develop freely and further improve their work efficiency. In addition, enterprise human resource managers need to fully consider the actual situation of employees, and formulate scientific and reasonable development plans to promote employees to better meet the needs of enterprise development.

Design flexible work system and optimize talent hiring system. From the perspective of enterprise development, the establishment of internal system can effectively improve the efficiency of enterprise human resource management. The working hours of some enterprises are relatively fixed or even in a rigid state, which causes some employees to be dissatisfied with their work and the enterprise to a certain extent, so it is very necessary to design a flexible work system. Its value is reflected in two levels. Designing a flexible work system can ensure the effective implementation of flexible management and enhance employees' sense of belonging in the enterprise. In addition, enterprises need to further optimize the talent recruitment system and system to inject vitality into the development of enterprises.

The individual is an important part of the organization, and its motivation, attitude, behavior, and performance all play an important role in the growth and success of the organization. However, the existing studies on the effect of flexible human resource management mainly focus on the performance results, and pay little attention to the attitude and behavior of employees and the impact on employees themselves. Therefore, it is a future research direction to investigate the effect of flexible human resource management on employees. The study of employees' work attitude and behavior is inseparable from the discussion of their work motivation. Work motivation determines the direction, intensity and duration of employees' work attitudes and behaviors [30], but there is no interpretation of the direction of employees' work motivation on the existing theoretical basis. Therefore, it is

necessary to introduce self-determination theory and discuss flexible people from the perspective of employee motivation the impact of force resource management on employee level.

4. Conclusions

The organization's human resource management activities operate and develop under the influence of the organization's internal and external environment. From the perspective of external factors, although the external environment plays a less direct role than the internal environment, it will eventually affect the design of the organization's human resource management. When the environment faced by an organization is more complex and turbulent, the more flexible human resource management is needed to flexibly and efficiently mobilize the human resource elements of the organization, so as to help the organization seize the opportunities in the environment and deal with potential threats. Based on this, combined with the background of technological and organizational change in China today, we should pay special attention to the influence of external environmental factors such as technological change, competitor behavior and consumer demand on flexible human resource management in the future.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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