

The integration of quality management practices into human resources management: A lever for organizational performance in public sector.

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Abstract

This research is based on a review of the international literature examining the impact of integrating quality management practices into human resource management (HRM), on the organizational performance. Four key practices are analyzed: the standardization of HR processes, performance management through key performance indicators (KPIs), the implementation of continuous improvement approaches, and the promotion of an internal quality culture. These practices were selected due to their relevance and the strong evidence supporting their effectiveness in the scientific literature. The objective of this research is to assess the extent to which these practices, inspired by ISO 9001 standards and the ISO 30400 series, contribute to the optimization of HR processes and the enhancement of organizational performance. The literature review reveals a significant positive impact of each of the examined practices on organizational performance, as confirmed by numerous empirical studies.

Keywords

Quality Management System; Human Resource Management; ISO 9001; ISO 30400 series ; Organizational Performance.

Introduction

Over the past several decades, the quality movement, which initially took root in industrial sectors, has undergone significant evolution. It first gained momentum in so-called strategic industries, such as aeronautics, space, and nuclear power, before gradually spreading to the service sector and then to public services. Over time, this approach has shifted from a simple focus on the conformity of the final product to a comprehensive managerial approach that integrates all aspects of organizational management. The literature refers to this transformation as the shift from quality control to quality management.

Total quality management (TQM) has been widely studied as a strategy capable of providing a competitive advantage to companies. One of the main focuses of quality management is system improvement. Attention to processes, products, and information technology represents a form of quality improvement.

However, attention to these aspects may not be a key variable in quality improvement. The human resources (HR) factor takes into account the improvement of organizational quality (Bowen & Lawler, 1992). The human factor has received increasing attention, recognizing that teamwork, cooperation, and motivation cannot be underestimated (Cowling & Newman, 1995). Promoting TQM practices does not necessarily lead to improved performance, but ultimately it is individuals who make quality effective (Prajogo & Cooper, 2010).

Human resource management practices are essential to the implementation of this strategic initiative. In the past, TQM implementation could be led by external consultants who, without involving staff, developed training programs and organizational changes that were nevertheless part of Human Resource Management (HRM). This type of change often posed problems (Hart & Schlesinger, 1991). However, today, the HR department is responsible for ensuring quality throughout the organization. The inability of HRM to communicate TQM messages can lead to ineffective quality initiatives, as it is HRM's responsibility to train and raise awareness among members of the organization (Sarwar et al., 2016; Shahraki et al., 2011).

TQM has a special relationship with HRM in terms of continuous improvement systems. HRM is practiced as a component of quality planning at the company level, and is thus oriented toward the needs of internal customers (Izvercian et al., 2014). TQM requires that job design generate long-term benefits for multiple stakeholders (Simmons et al., 1995). The challenge is therefore

to simultaneously improve the quality of the system and employee performance. TQM-oriented HRM has thus become one of the major innovations of recent decades (Izvercian et al., 2014).

Thus, in this research paper, we focus particularly on quality within the human resources function, a discipline of social science and management science that involves implementing a set of technical and managerial measures to achieve the organization's strategic objectives. This work sheds light on the orientation of a quality management system (QMS) towards the HR function, by examining the transformations that such an approach can generate within HR processes and its potential impacts in terms of organizational performance. More precisely, the objective of our research is to assess the extent to which the standardization of HR processes, performance management through key performance indicators (KPIs), the implementation of continuous improvement initiatives, and the promotion of an internal quality culture—practices inspired by ISO 9001 standards and the ISO 30400 series—contribute to the optimization of HR processes and the enhancement of organizational performance. The four quality management practices selected in this study have been identified in the literature as major levers for improving organizational performance. Their selection is based on the consensus observed among the authors regarding their importance, as well as their recurrence in scientific work and their theoretical relevance to analyze the mechanisms contributing to the improvement of organizational performance.

Our approach is part of the positivist epistemological positioning, characterized by the search for objectivity, the measurement of variables by standardized instruments, and the analysis of causal relationships or correlations between observable phenomena. This perspective allows identifying potential causal patterns, relationships and mechanisms linking the integration of quality management practices in HRM to organizational performance.

Methodologically, this research is grounded in a theoretical framework derived from the international literature on quality management, human resource management (HRM), and organizational performance. Within this framework, the study integrates quality management standards (ISO 9000 series) with human resource management standards (ISO 30400 series) to develop a comprehensive approach to organizational management. This approach seeks to influence both organizational structures and the behaviors of individuals within the organization, thereby promoting alignment and balance (Cappelletti & Khouatra, 2004). The study further draws on established theoretical frameworks to analyze the relationship between HRM and organizational performance, a relationship that has been conceptualized through

various theoretical models. Finally, the positive impact of integrating four quality management practices into HRM on organizational performance is supported by evidence from previous empirical studies. This methodological approach thus enables the examination of the relationship between quality management integrated into HRM and organizational performance from both theoretical and empirical perspectives.

The article is structured in three sections :

- The first section presents a literature review on the key concepts of Human Resource Management (HRM), Quality Management System (QMS), and organizational performance.
- The second section returns to the main theoretical frameworks used to think about the relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) and organizational performance.
- The last section examines the integration of QMS practices into HRM and its relationship with organizational performance, drawing on previous empirical studies.

1. Litterature review

1.1. The public sector and the challenge of modernizing HR services : From personnel administration to strategic human resource management:

Human resources management in the public sector, has long been part of an administrative and bureaucratic logic. It was limited to personnel record keeping, payroll management, application of statutory rules and workforce control. This approach, referred to as 'personnel management', was based on a centralized and hierarchical vision in which the personnel was perceived as a resource to be managed rather than an actor to be developed (Roesch, 1999).

With increasing demands for quality, organizational performance, and institutional attractiveness, this design has gradually been shown to be insufficient. The principles of New Public Management (NPM) have contributed to the adoption of a more strategic approach to management, incorporating tools and practices derived from the private sector (Pollitt, 2001; Bezes, 2005).

The New Public Management (NPM) is an international movement of reforms aimed at increasing the efficiency and transparency of public organizations through methods inspired by

the private sector. However, there is no consensual definition of the concept: far from being a coherent whole, the NPM varies according to the contexts, as Pollitt (2001) has shown. This diversity is in line with the sociocultural approach which highlights the impact of the cultural and institutional factors of the receiving country on the acceptance or rejection of these practices.

Faced with this heterogeneity, the NPM is often presented as an "assemblage" of economic axioms, managerial prescriptions, reform experiences and recommendations from international bodies (Bezes, 2005). It is frequently described as a market-inspired model, where public administration borrows performance, motivation and management techniques from the private sector.

NPM is driven by two main dynamics:

1. The reduction of the scope of state action (privatizations, public-private partnerships, autonomous agencies).
2. The introduction of private-sector methods (accountability, results evaluation, obligation to report).

This model counters the rigidity of Weberian bureaucracy by emphasizing more decentralization, flexibility and responsiveness.

In order to reduce costs, and increase performance, productivity, as well as the quality of public services, the new public management provides as a solution to reduce the workforce in terms of human resources with the adoption of a real motivation policy inspired by successful models and techniques used in the private sector such as the individualization of remunerations, and performance bonuses. while ensuring stakeholder participation in the development of decision-making tools.

Consequently, the HR function in public sector has shifted from a traditional bureaucratic logic to strategic human resource management (HRM). HRM can be defined as all management actions directly concerning staff, both in the performance of their duties (prescribed work) and in employment management (career development, remuneration system, etc.), as well as in the mobilization and development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (training, professional support, etc.). Human resources are considered a dynamic element that needs to be developed with a view to flow. HR management therefore takes two forms. Firstly, through the HR

function, which manages individuals at work in a global manner, and secondly, through the actions of local managers, who manage individuals closely in the field.

1.2.The integration of quality management system (QMS) into HRM

The QMS is defined - according to ISO 9000:2015 - as a "set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organization, used to establish policies, objectives and processes in order to achieve these objectives". The characteristic element of the management system is «the system» which translates the transversal dimension of the approach. This system is associated with the notion of 'management', which guides activities within the organization. For this reason, "the elements of the management system include the structure, roles and responsibilities, planning, operation of the organization, policies, practices, rules, beliefs, objectives and processes to achieve these objectives". Management system standards are of two types: A and B. Management system standards of type A are standards providing requirements, while those of type B are standards providing guidelines.

1.2.1. Normalization of HRM

The notion of norm is a broad and polysemous concept, capable of being understood from various angles. In a general perspective, we can retain the definition proposed by J.-P. Denis and his collaborators, according to which the standard constitutes a set of concrete (technical, productive) or abstract (social) criteria allowing an object to be made, or a production, comparable or to define a life attitude compatible with the life of the social group.

The central notion that emerges from this definition is that of compliance with a reference frame, in an aim of comparability. This fundamental characteristic helps to clarify the meaning of the term "standardization". This can be defined as a process aimed at making "a process, an organization (social or productive), conform to the standards set scientifically, philosophically or technically" (Denis, Martinet, and Silem, 2016). However, this general definition needs to be clarified in order to frame the use we make of it as part of this research. Indeed, this work focuses specifically on voluntary standardization within organizations, and more particularly on standards related to human resources management. We will therefore focus on standards in the organizational sense as a reference document.

A. ISO9001 Standard: Quality Management Systems —HRM Requirements

ISO 9001 is a generic management system standard, that is to say it allows a systemic approach of the organization by integrating within the quality management system (QMS) the different activities of the organization, from design to distribution, through the management of human resources. The ISO 9001 standard thus allows better organizational control by streamlining different production processes and seeking continuous improvement of the system with a view to customer satisfaction(1).

The ISO 9001:2015 standard does not contain a section exclusively dedicated to HR, but it incorporates essential requirements concerning personnel management into several clauses. These requirements aim to ensure that human resources are competent, available, well managed and involved in the quality approach of the organization (clause 5,6,7,9,10).

B. ISO 30400 series standards

The ISO 30400 series of international HR management and HRM standards respond to a growing need for organizations seeking to harmonize HRM practices in a context of business development within a globalized environment. The development of the project to create international HRM standards is relatively recent. The first standards were published in 2016 and we are still only at the beginning of the HRM standardization process at international level.

The project to develop international HRM standards was built within the Technical Committee 260 – Human Resources Management (ISO/TC 260) created in February 2011, following initiatives started in 2009 in the United States. The set of HRM standards in the 30400 series are divided into the different themes dealt with by the working groups (WG and TG) of TC 260.

Table 1: ISO standards of the 30400 series published until January 2025:

Number	Title and summary	Date of publication
ISO 30400	Human resources management – Vocabulary	Published in 2023
ISO 30401	Knowledge Management Systems – Requirements	Published in 2018
ISO 30405	Human Resources Management - Recruitment Guidelines	Published in 2023
ISO/TR 30406	Human resources management - Sustainable employability management for organizations	Published in 2017
ISO/TS 30407	Human resources management - Cost-Per-Hire	Published in 2017
ISO 30408	Human resources management - Guidelines on human governance	Published in 2016
ISO 30409	Human resources management - Workforce planning	Published in 2016
ISO/TS 30410	Human resources management - Impact of hire metric	Published in 2018
ISO/TS 30411	Human resources management - Quality of hire metric	Published in 2018
ISO 30414	Human resources management - Guidelines on the internal and external human capital reporting	Published in 2018
ISO 30415	Human resources management - Diversity and inclusion	Published in 2021
ISO/TS 30421	Human resources management - Turnover and retention metrics	Published in 2021
ISO 30422	Human resources management – Learning and development	Published in 2022
ISO/TS 30423	Human resources management - Compliance and ethics metrics cluster	Published in 2021
ISO/TS 30425	Human resources management - Workforce availability metrics cluster	Published in 2021
ISO/TS 30427	Human resources management - Costs metrics cluster	Published in 2021
ISO/TS 30428	Human resources management - Skills and capabilities metrics cluster	Published in 2021
ISO/TS 30430	Human resources management – Recruitment metrics cluster	Published in 2021
ISO/TS 30431	Human resources management - Leadership metrics cluster	Published in 2021

ISO/TS 30432	Human resources management - Workforce productivity metrics cluster	Published in 2021
ISO 30433	Human resources management - Succession planning metrics cluster	Published in 2021
ISO 30434	Human resources management - Workforce allocation	Published in 2023
ISO 30435	Human Resource Management – Workforce Data Quality	Published in 2023
ISO/ TS 30437	Human resources management – Learning and development metrics	Published in 2023
ISO/ TS 30438	Human resources management – Employee engagement metrics	Published in 2024

Source: Adapted from ISO data and the work of Mr. Jonquières.

We note that among these standards, only one is a management system standard: ISO 30401:2018. This standard allows organizations to certify their knowledge management system.

1.2.2. Quality management practices integrated in human resources management

Although TQM practices are numerous, we focus on those that have been most widely addressed in empirical work, recognized for their theoretical recurrence and their close link with organizational performance. Thus, the variables retained are: the standardization of processes, the management by KPI indicators, the implementation of continuous improvement approaches and the dissemination of an internal quality culture.

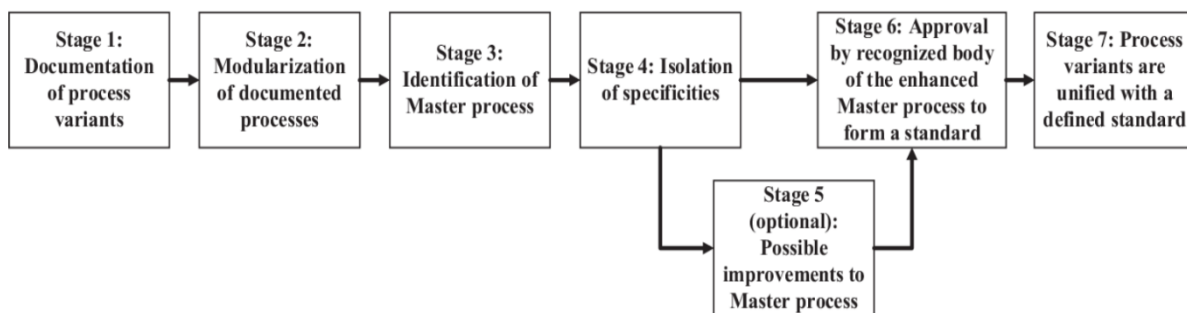
1) The standardization of processes

The standardization of processes is defined according to Muenstermann et al (2010) as being, the definition, documentation and uniform application of organizational activities according to predefined rules, procedures and directives, allowing for a consistent and repeatable execution of the organization's internal processes.

Organizations strive to standardize their business processes to: avoid redundancies (Tregear 2015), reduce costs and improve the quality of products and services (Muenstermann et al. 2010 a), improve process transparency (Kettenbohrer et al. 2013 a), and reduce processing time and redeploy this time for other value-added efforts (Muenstermann et al. 2010 a). The standardization of processes also allows for better coordination of business activities between internal task transfer points and different organisational boundaries (Davenport 2005), and

compliance with rules and regulations (Mahmoodzadeh et al. 2009). Standardized business processes are essential for innovative and in-demand digital transformations such as robotic process automation (RPA) (Desai 2020; Syed et al. 2020) and blockchain-based workflow management (Fridgen et al. 2018).

Figure 1 : Steps of business process standardization (BPS):



Source: Conceptualizing Business Process Standardization: A Review and Synthesis. Goel, Bandara & Gable, 2023.

Business Process Standardization (BPS) has demonstrated its ability to streamline processes (e.g., Romero et al., 2015 a) and positively impact company performance (Muenstermann , 2015; Wüllenweber and Weitzel , 2007).

2) Steering through KPI indicators

According to Setiawan and Purba (2020), KPIs are primarily a management and steering tool for monitoring and controlling organizational activities or processes. They offer the possibility to quickly detect deviations from objectives and apply corrective measures in order to achieve desired performance levels.

The evaluation of performance using KPIs involves comparing the results obtained with those previously set. The success of this approach depends on implementing a coherent and rigorous strategy, aligned with organizational objectives.

A key performance indicator is therefore a set of quantitative and qualitative measures that provide information on the degree to which an organization's strategic objectives are achieved;

The constituent elements of a KPI include according to Setiawan and Purba (2020):

- The strategic objectives,
- The relevant indicators associated with these objectives,
- The reference values (or targets),
- And the corresponding measurement period.

The KPIs thus represent one of the main organizational management tools, aimed at:

- Link the organization's values, vision and mission to its performance strategies and objectives across all of its activities.
- Measure the performance of the organisation and/or its different divisions, in order to identify any significant changes (improvement or deterioration).
- Compare the current performance with past performances, in a logic of continuous improvement.

According to Lebas (1995), a series of indicators, properly selected to reflect the actual performance of the company, must be implemented in order to fully exploit the function of measuring the performance of the company.

These indicators may be quantifiable or non-quantifiable. For example, an indicator such as turnaround time is a quantitative or financial measure, while customer satisfaction is a qualitative or non-financial measure. KPIs thus represent quantitative indices that reflect the key success factors of an organization.

The choice of KPIs must therefore be made according to the organizational context.

Each key performance indicator must be aligned with the company's objectives, quantified and linked to specific responsibilities, in order to serve as a basis for evaluating performance in the different departments. As a result, performance evaluation can be established on an objective and measurable basis. The definition of clear and achievable indicators is thus the key to effective performance management.

In practice, KPIs are often integrated into management models such as the Balanced Scorecard, one of the most commonly used tools. Other approaches are also widely implemented, such as

the Performance Prism, the IPMS (Integrated Performance Measurement System) or the Decision Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory (DEMATEL), which allow to analyze and link different performance indicators.

3) The implementation of continuous improvement approaches

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is implemented as a cyclical process that requires a commitment to implementation, teamwork, time allocation and the celebration of successes and failures. Several continuous improvement models have been used in several areas;

- **The Plan-Perform-Study/Verify-Act (PDCA) cycle:** is a step-by-step process involving project initiation, situation analysis, root cause identification, solution generation and selection, implementation, outcome evaluation, standardization and future planning. The FOCUS-PDCA cycle enriches the PDCA process by adding steps to identify and improve a process (F), build a skilled team (O), clarify the process (C), understand variations (U) and select improvements (S).

- **The FADE cycle:** includes identifying a problem (Focus), understanding it through data analysis (Analyze), developing solutions (Develop) and implementing the plan (Execute). The logical framework involves brainstorming to identify areas for improvement, root cause analysis to build a problem tree, logical reasoning to create an objective tree, formulation of the framework and implementation of improvement projects.

- **The "Breakthrough Series" approach:** requires continuous quality improvement (CQI) teams to meet in quarterly collaborative learning sessions, share their experiences and continue exchanges by phone and cross-site visits in order to strengthen learning and sharing ideas.

Another continuous quality improvement (CQI) model is the Lean approach, which was implemented according to the Kaizen principles, the 5S principles and the Six Sigma model;

- **The 5S (Sort, Store, Clean, Standardize, Sustain):** systematically organize and improve the workplace, with a focus on sorting, tidying, cleaning, standardization, and sustaining improvement.

- **Kaizen principles:** guide ACQ by advocating for continuous improvement, valuing all ideas, solving problems, prioritizing practical and inexpensive improvements, using data to drive change, recognizing process flaws, by reducing variability and waste, considering each

interaction as a customer-supplier relationship, empowering employees, taking all ideas into account and maintaining a rigorous work environment.

- **Lean Six Sigma:** a continuous quality improvement (CQI) model, applies the DMAIC methodology, which consists of defining (D) and measuring the problem (M), analyzing the root causes (A), improving by finding solutions (I) and controlling by evaluating the stability of the process (C).

- **The 5 C cyclical model: (consultation, collection, consideration, collaboration and celebration),** the first CQI framework for voluntary dental services in Indigenous communities, ensures quality care tailored to the needs of the community. One study used meetings including activities such as reviewing objectives, assigning roles, discussing the agenda, completing tasks, retaining key results, planning the next steps and evaluating the effectiveness of the meeting.

Continuous quality improvement initiatives can have a significant impact on quality in a wide range of areas, with an emphasis on improving structure, processes and outcomes.

4) The dissemination of an internal quality culture

The concepts of cultivation are also essential to quality improvement methods. From core clinical audit to collaborative continuous improvement initiatives, business process re-engineering and Lean Six Sigma, the need for cultural reorientation is an integral part of the change challenge within each organization.

Quality culture is defined, according to Kumar et al (2019), as the set of values, behaviors and practices shared within an organization that promote continuous improvement, product/service quality, and employee engagement in achieving quality. The authors rely on the model proposed by Srinivasan & Kurey (2014), which breaks down quality culture into four key dimensions:

- Leadership Emphasis: Management's focus on the importance of quality.
- Credibility Message: Credibility of quality-related messages within the organization.
- Peer Involvement: Peer involvement in quality initiatives.
- Employee Ownership: Employees take over quality-related responsibilities.

Russell and Davies (2018), categorized three levels of organizational culture in the health sector (increasingly opaque) and where quality culture is an essential component;

- Level 1: The visible manifestations of healthcare culture;
- Level 2: Shared modes of thought;
- Level 3: The deeper shared presuppositions.

Organizational culture therefore encompasses the way things are organized and done, as well as how they are presented and justified – in other words, the stories and speeches explaining what is being done and why, and the presuppositions that underlie them. All of these elements can reflect a shared and commonly accepted vision of hospital life, which is manifested in care practices, safety and risk management.

1.3.Organizational performance

Performance is a lexical blend, a complex concept, difficult to define precisely because of the diversity and multiplicity of definitions, approaches, and perspectives that exist with regard to it. Several researchers have studied the notion of performance in order to explore it in its complex and dynamic context. The performance has evolved in time and space, bringing to light several visions, positions and problematics related to each author and researcher, thus moving from a unidimensional and objective notion to a multidimensional and subjective one.

Many researchers have been interested in this concept due to its wide mobilization in the managerial literature. Performance is generally associated with the idea of success and the results of an action. For Bourguignon (1997), the definitions proposed by the authors converge around three main meanings: performance is a success, it is the product of an action, and it is also the action itself as a process. Thus, the evolution of this concept highlights the diversity of researchers' approaches and interpretations.

1.3.1. Measurement of organizational performance: convergence between subjective evaluations and objective data:

The literature generally distinguishes three main approaches to measuring organizational performance.

The first is based on the adoption of a single measure, chosen on the basis of belief in its ability to reflect the overall performance of the organization (Hawawini et al., 2003; Hillman & Keim,

2001; Roberts & Dowling, 2002; Spanos, Zaralis & Lioukas, 2004). Although this approach may be justified by a theoretical framework or empirical evidence, it is most often based on postulates that are not explicitly verified.

The second approach involves mobilizing several distinct measures in order to compare analyses according to different dependent variables, while maintaining the same independent variables (Baum & Wally, 2003; Kundu & Hsu, 2003; Miller, 2004; Peng, 2004). This method aims to strengthen the robustness of the results by diversifying the performance indicators used.

The third approach is characterized by the aggregation of several dependent variables, based on the hypothesis of a convergent validity, that is to say on the observed correlation between these measures (Cho & Pucik, 2005; Goerzen & Beamish, 2003). It is particularly used with subjective performance indicators, seeking to ensure psychometric validity of the measured traits (Varadarajan & Ramanujam, 1990). However, some studies also incorporate aggregate operational and financial measures (Rowe & Morrow, 1999).

The relevance of each of these approaches largely depends on the ability of the selected indicators to meet theoretical, statistical and psychometric requirements. Thus, it is necessary to distinguish between, on the one hand, objective measures of performance — such as accounting, financial or organizational survival indicators—and, on the other hand, subjective or quasi-subjective measures, based on self-evaluations resulting from surveys or on Likert-type scales. These target financial dimensions, market-related performance and shareholder satisfaction, which are major indicators of organizational performance.

A. Objective measures of organizational performance

▪ Accounting measures:

Accounting measures are the most commonly used indicators for assessing organizational performance, due to their accessibility and demonstrated link with economic returns (Danielson & Press, 2003; Jacobson, 1987). However, their reliability is limited by the influence of accounting choices, human errors and possible manipulations, as well as by the fact that accounting standards do not always accurately reflect the reality of performance. Their retrospective nature represents another major limitation, since they essentially measure past performance (Keats, 1988), and are less relevant in unstable environments. Research conducted in emerging countries, such as Malaysia (Jusoh & Parnell, 2008) and Vietnam (Luu, Kim, Cao & Park, 2008), has highlighted the risk of bias in favor of more qualitative indicators, such as

employee and customer satisfaction. Finally, the market share, although associated with market measures, is also based on accounting data and is the subject of debates as to its status, being considered either an antecedent or an indicator of financial performance.

▪ **Financial and market measures :**

Financial and market measures, including shareholder return, are widely used to assess organizational performance because of their prospective orientation (Fisher & McGowan, 1983) and their ability to integrate intangible assets (Lev, 2001). They are particularly relevant in resource- and knowledge-based approaches. However, their validity is limited by institutional contexts where the company is not reduced to shareholder logic alone, as well as by the biases highlighted by behavioral finance, which show that markets do not always reflect a rational evaluation of future flows (Kahneman & Riepe, 1998; Malkiel, 2003). Moreover, the dependence of these measures on the reliability of financial information and their inability to distinguish the performance of different units or product lines reduce their relevance for detailed analyses, despite their usefulness for the overall assessment of the company. (Bulow, Geanakoplos & Klemperer, 1985; Devinney & Stewart, 1988).

▪ **Mixed measures and survival:**

Mixed measures combining accounting and financial market data offer an advantage by integrating risk, often ignored by purely accounting indicators. Of these, the most well-known hybrid measure is Tobin's q — the ratio between the market value of assets and their replacement cost—(Tobin, 1969). Despite a strong empirical correlation with accounting values, its use introduces certain distortions related to accounting methods and the lack of full consideration of intangible assets (Varaiya, Kerin & Weeks, 1987; Perfect & Wiles, 1994).

Other hybrid indicators have been developed to improve the prediction of performance and risk, such as Altman's Z-score (Altman, 1968), which combines accounting and market ratios to assess the probability of bankruptcy, or the EVA (Economic Value Added) (Stern Stewart, 1995), based on the net return relative to the cost of equity. While some studies have shown a higher predictive power than traditional measures (Milunovich & Tsuei, 1996; Lehn & Makhija, 1997), other results remain mixed (Biddle, Bowen & Wallace, 1997; Chen & Dodd, 2001).

Survival is also used as a performance indicator, particularly in the sociology of organizations and entrepreneurship (Hannan & Freeman, 1977). It reflects organizational adaptation and selection and can be measured by the persistence of a company over time. Although easy to

collect, this categorical variable has limitations: it does not distinguish types of exit (bankruptcy vs acquisition) and offers limited variance to discriminate short-term performance (Powell & Poulsen, 1987; Hannan & Freeman, 1977). Thus, survival provides a partial signal of performance, useful especially for longitudinal and macro-organizational analyses.

B. Subjective measures of organizational performance :

Subjective measures of organizational performance are based on the assessments of key informants who are believed to know the company well. They allow to apprehend performance according to broader and contextual dimensions, often overlooked by purely financial indicators. These measures fall into two categories: those which are entirely subjective and those which are described as quasi-objective, which reproduce objective indicators.

Subjective measures have long been viewed with scepticism due to the risk of cognitive bias (Gilovich, Griffin & Kahneman, 2002; Kahneman & Tversky, 2000), but they have nevertheless gained legitimacy as the notion of performance has expanded to include social dimensions, environmental and innovation. The Balanced Scorecard approach (Kaplan & Norton, 1996) illustrates this evolution, combining financial perspectives, customer, internal processes and learning/innovation.

Two fields have particularly favored this use of subjective indicators: the company's social performance (CSP) and organizational reputation. PESCO, now integrated into strategic and financial analyses, tends to be institutionalized in regulatory requirements, notably through the United Nations Global Compact (2007). A meta-analysis of 52 studies showed a positive mean ($r = 0.36$) correlation between CSP and financial performance (Orlitzky, Schmidt & Rynes, 2003), although other work (Margolis, Elfenbein & Walsh, 2007) highlights the moderate and bidirectional nature of this relationship.

The KLD index (Kinder, Lydenberg & Domini) is the benchmark for assessing CSP, measuring companies' "strengths" and "concerns" according to various criteria (environment, diversity, labour relations, human rights, governance, etc.). Empirical analyses show that this index explains a significant part of the variance in financial indicators such as ROA and EPS (Van der Laan et al., 2008).

Similarly, the Fortune Reputation Index survey evaluates companies according to eight dimensions (financial strength, innovation, management quality, social responsibility, etc.). These measures have a high reliability ($\alpha = 0.97$) (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990) and are correlated

with past performance, although their link to future performance is weaker (McGuire et al., 1990). Finally, Roberts and Dowling (2002) highlighted the existence of a residual reputation capable of predicting future performance, regardless of past financial performance.

Thus, despite their methodological limitations, subjective measures today constitute an indispensable complement to objective approaches, by integrating social, environmental and symbolic dimensions essential for the global evaluation of organizational performance.

Fully subjective measures rely on respondents' self-assessment of organizational performance, without a fixed reference to an objective indicator. This approach offers great flexibility, as it allows questions to be adapted to the specific dimensions of the performance. However, it has limitations related to cognitive and psychological biases, such as self-enhancement, causal ambiguity, or the halo effect, which can alter the reliability of the results. Methodological strategies, such as the selection of well-informed respondents and the temporal proximity of the measure to the assessed event, allow for an improvement in its validity. Despite their weaknesses, the subjective measures show a moderate to strong correlation (0.4 to 0.8) with the objective measures, thus attesting to a reasonable convergent validity (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 1987; Wall et al., 2004).

C. Performance management:

Advocating a global approach to performance, many actors propose to managers an interpretation grid of the company including indicators that complement and enlighten each other and are linked to multiple objectives (R. S. Kaplan and D. P. Norton, 1992). Financial criteria alone are no longer sufficient for managers, and in practice non-financial indicators complement the former; they are the driving force behind future success, they provide pilots with an indispensable global vision of performance in several areas simultaneously (M. Morin, M. Guindon and E. Boulianne, 1996).

▪ Kaplan and Norton (2003) model: 'balanced scorecard':

Kaplan and Norton (2003) have developed through their "balanced scorecard" or Balanced Scorecard (TBP) model a global and multicriteria approach to performance. It is a strategic management tool that allows to address the gaps in accounting standards and management tools that poorly take into account the non-financial and intangible assets of the organization. Within the balanced scorecard, the human factor is not treated as a load (as it appears in accounting) but as a source of value (Fourmy, 2011). The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) offers a multi-criteria

approach to performance indicators that are both financial and non-financial (qualitative and quantitative), which promotes a balance in managing the organization's performance. The model contributes to a global approach to performance.

▪ **Becker, Huselid & D.Ulrich model : HR Scorecard (2005) :**

The HR Scorecard (HRSC) is a variation of the BSC at the level of the HR function. The HRSC is a model proposed by D. Ulrich in order to identify the performance generated by the missions and orientations of the HR function (Dave Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005). According to the authors, HR can and should be quantified and aligned with business objectives to demonstrate their strategic value. Traditionally, human resources has been perceived as a qualitative field, difficult to measure and quantify. However, the authors argue that HR can be assessed objectively, just like other business functions, such as marketing or finance.

To achieve this, Becker, Huselid and Ulrich (2007) propose the use of an 'HR dashboard', a tool that allows HR practitioners to track and measure the impact of their initiatives on the strategic objectives of the organization. This dashboard includes HR-specific key performance indicators (KPIs), such as staff turnover rate, cost per hire, and employee satisfaction rate. By aligning these indicators with the company's objectives, HR can convincingly demonstrate their contribution to the overall success of the organization.

One of the strengths of 'The HR Scorecard' is its ability to demystify the HR performance measurement process and provide practical guidance for its implementation. The authors offer detailed case studies and concrete examples to illustrate how companies have successfully used the HR dashboard to improve their operational efficiency and financial performance.

2. Human resource management and organizational performance – theoretical foundations

2.1.The universalist, configurational and contingency perspective:

▪ **The universalist approach**

The universalist approach is based on the idea that there are so-called 'best practices' in human resources management, whose application systematically leads to an improvement in organizational performance, regardless of the context in which they are implemented. (Pfeffer, 1994; B. Becker & Huselid, 1998; Gagnon & Arcand, 2011). The basic postulate of this approach excludes the company's strategy from the basic model. The mere implementation of

these best practices should provide a benefit to the company. The universalist approach to human resources management identifies best practices in human resources management. It is based on three major principles (Allani, Arcand, and Bayad, 2003); According to this approach, some HRM practices are better than others and they can be implemented in any organization (Delery and Doty, 1996). Not all HRM practices can be considered strategic; those that are do provide a benefit and financial performance to the company (Allani, et al, 2003). The addition of different practices used simultaneously increases the company's efficiency. The final effect will be the summation of the individual effects of the different practices used. Moreover, the effect of these practices would be independent of other practices; the practices do not interfere with each other. Although increasingly criticized (Arcand, 2000), it lays an interesting foundation for the GSRH.

- **The contingency approach**

Conversely, the contingent approach argues that the effectiveness of HR practices depends on their alignment with the specific strategy of the organization. In this context, the HR policy must be designed in line with the strategic orientations of the company in order to contribute effectively to the achievement of its objectives (Arcand et al., 2004). Thus, according to Adraoui (2015), the HR function positively impacts performance only if its practices are developed in line with the overall strategy of the organization.

The universalist approach and the contingent approach each have limits that need to be overcome in order to arrive at a more integrated model, reconciling the advantages of both.

The universalist approach tends to refocus the HR function on itself (internal dimension), while opening it up to 'best practices' from the external environment. On the other hand, the contingent approach orients the HR function towards the strategy of the organization (external dimension), while anchoring it in its internal specificities.

- **The configurational approach**

The configurational approach is distinguished from the previous two approaches by its ability to complementary articulate the internal and external dimensions. It is based on two fundamental assumptions;

- The first postulates that human resources management has a significant impact on organizational performance only if it is based on a coherent system of practices (Adraoui, 2015).

This implies an internal alignment, where the HR function ensures the coherence and complementarity of its practices (cluster practices), thus strengthening its relevance and effectiveness (B. Becker & Huselid, 1998; Delery & Doty, 1996).

-The second hypothesis emphasizes that this coherent set of practices only fully achieves its effectiveness if it is aligned with the overall strategy of the organization, which constitutes external linkage.

By combining these two dimensions; internal consistency of practices and external strategic alignment, the configurational approach makes it possible to design integrated human resources management systems that bring performance and added value for the organization (McMahan, Virick, and Wright, 1999, p 104).

By articulating the internal consistency of HR practices with their external strategic alignment, the configurational approach provides a structuring framework for designing integrated human resources management systems that generate value and performance for the organization. It thus constitutes a reference model that has inspired the development of modern management systems, such as HR dashboards. The work of Becker, Gerhart (1996) as well as that of Becker, Huselid and Ulrich (2001) underline moreover the decisive contribution of this approach in the optimization of the HR function.

In this perspective, the use of specific performance indicators, particularly HR KPIs, is fully part of a strategic management logic. It aims to objectify and strengthen the contribution of the HR function to the overall performance of the organization, in line with its strategic directions.

2.2.Models by Patrick M. Wright and Gary C. McMahan (1999):

Patrick M. Wright and Gary C. McMahan highlight the importance of theory to allow a better understanding, anticipation and optimization of HR practices from a strategic perspective and propose a conceptual framework for linking HR practices, corporate strategy and organizational results, by mobilizing several theoretical perspectives from management sciences, economics, sociology of organizations, and systems theory.

According to Mc.Mahan and M.Wright, HRMS is conceived as a pattern of activities and planned deployment of HR with the aim of enabling the organization to achieve its objectives (5). It differs from classic HRM by two fundamental axes; the vertical axis, which refers to the

integration of HR practices into the strategic process of the organization, and the horizontal axis, which reflects the internal consistency between different HR practices.

Wright and McMahan proposed a conceptual framework linking human resource management practices, company strategy, and organizational performance. Among the six theoretical perspectives they identify, divided between strategic and non-strategic theories, four strategic approaches structure GSRH.

- **Resource-Based View – RBV**

This perspective holds that a sustainable competitive advantage relies on an organization's internal resources. Human resources become strategic when they are value-creating, rare, difficult to imitate, and non-substitutable. In this regard, human capital, which carries specific and socially complex skills, is a central lever for competitiveness. The RBV thus encourages organizations to invest in the development and enhancement of distinctive skills as a major source of sustainable performance.

- **The behavioral perspective**

This approach emphasizes the mediating role of employee behaviors between organizational strategy and performance. Inspired by contingency theory, it postulates that HR practices must be designed to foster the attitudes and behaviours necessary for the effective implementation of the chosen strategy. Each strategic direction therefore requires a coherent set of HR policies that promote the expected behaviours.

- **The cybernetic models**

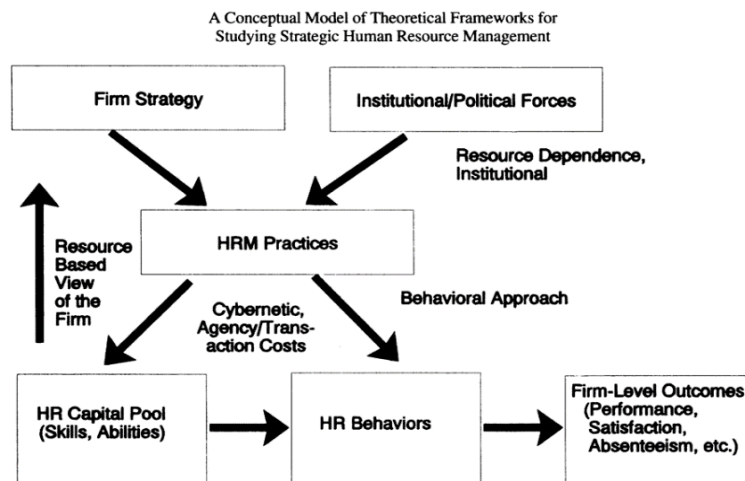
Cybernetic models apprehend the organization as an open system in permanent interaction with its environment. They rely on mechanisms for control, feedback and continuous adjustment of HR practices based on results and contextual developments. Three levels of control are distinguished: inputs (recruitment, training), behaviours (evaluation, rewards) and results (strategic performance). This perspective highlights the need for a global and dynamic alignment of HR functions with the organization's strategy.

- **Agency theory and transaction cost theory**

These two approaches view the employment relationship as a set of contracts designed to minimize costs and mitigate opportunistic behaviors. The theory of transaction costs highlights

the ex ante and ex post costs associated with exchanges and guides governance choices between market and hierarchical structures. The agency theory, on the other hand, is interested in information asymmetry and the divergence of interests between the principal and the agent. In HRM, it results in the implementation of control and incentive mechanisms (evaluation, variable remuneration, incentive contracts) intended to align individual objectives with those of the organization.

Figure 2: conceptual model by McMahan and M.Wright from strategic theories:



Source: Mc.Mahan and M.Wright.

2.3.Models by Bayad (2004):

Bayad (2004), in turn, identified four strategic human resources management models related to organizational performance, namely the HR accounting model, the HR strategic planning model, the HR competitiveness model, and the HR competency model.

- **Human resources accounting:**

The model of human resources accounting was mainly developed during the sixties and seventies by Hermanson (1963), Brummet, Flamholz, and Pile (1968), as well as Flamholz (1971, 1972, 1973). This model is the first to advocate the valorization of HR as a resource allowing the success of the company. Rooted in the schools of human relations and human capital, it is not surprising, according to Bayad (2004), that this model argues that the achievement of organizational goals is only a result of HR valorization.

Although criticized, the HR accounting model has allowed a refocus on the individual-organization interface as a value creator. It has also guided human resources strategies

(Bayad,2004). However, Capron (1995) informs us of the major limitations of this model by indicating that the valuation methods used were designed to apply to financial capital and not human capital. indicating that the valuation methods used were designed to apply to financial capital and not human capital.

- **Strategic human resources planning:**

According to Bayad (2004), the strategic human resources planning model, which originated at Harvard, is the most prolific in terms of research and application, which earned it the title of classic GSRH model. Formed in two stages, first in the sixties to seventies when research efforts focused on human resources planning, strategic human resources planning was actually created at the turn of the nineties-twenty influenced by the Harvard School and the Michigan School (Baron 2004; Bayad 2004). Human resources planning, also known as HR planning, was much more of a supply and demand management system for work. This vision was much more reactive than strategic in terms of forecasting and placed HR as a support function for the other functions of the organization. Moreover, Bayad (2004), in his review of the different models of HRMS, notes several limits to this model.

Following criticism of the human resources strategic planning model, the human resources strategic planning approach took shape in the early eighties through the work of Beer, Spector, Lawrence, Mills and Walton (1984) of the Harvard and Devanna School, Formbrun and Tichy (1984) of the Michigan School (Bayad 2004). This renewed model postulates that companies, to be successful, must use their HR in their strategic planning. According to this model, the integration of human resources must be done by adjusting the HR strategy to the company's external development strategy and at the internal strategy level, adjusting the needs and staff availability necessary to achieve these strategies. This integration of HR with internal and external strategies traces the lines of what should be an HR strategy aligned with the development of the company as well as a coherence of HRM activities between them.

- **The model of human resources competitiveness :**

The human resources competitiveness model is based on three complementary approaches: strategic interdependence, organizational change and collective bargaining. According to Bayad (2004), this perspective is based on four major principles: the strategy does not constitute a predefined framework to which the HRM must simply adapt; transformations of the organizational structure and culture can precede strategic formulation; HRM must be proactive

and contribute to the development strategy; finally, HRMS is part of a context of limited rationality marked by power relationships and conflicts of interest.

The strategic interdependence approach emphasizes that strategic choices emerge from the interaction between business opportunities and human resources capabilities, not from normative or fixed planning. Strategies must therefore remain adaptive and take into account the skills, behaviours and experiences of human capital.

The approach to organizational change emphasizes flexibility as a condition for success in the face of environmental changes. A truly strategic HRM cannot be limited to the application of predetermined models; it depends on the degree of appropriation of the HR strategy by all the actors and functions of the organization.

Finally, the collective bargaining approach emphasizes the consideration of internal and external stakeholders in the decision-making process. HRM becomes strategic when it is based on dialogue and consensus with the different actors influencing or being influenced by the company, in a logic of satisfactory solutions rather than absolute optimization.

▪ **Human resources competence:**

The last of the Bayad models is the model of human resources competence. This model, widely used in research, defines the competitive advantage based on the concept of the organization's resource. According to Akremi and Sâad (2004), this theory places the human factor as a source of sustainable competitive advantage for the company. Moreover, according to Bernard (2009), this model allows the development of the concept of GSRH, which has allowed the emergence of universalist, configurational and contingency approaches.

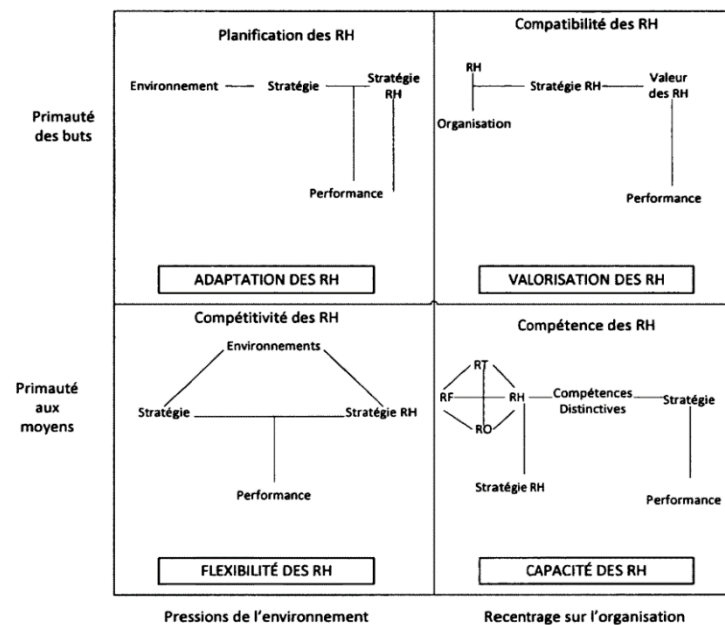
The premise underlying this theory argues that the performance of the organization involves the creation of a sustainable competitive advantage. One that is based on highly qualified and involved human capital resources through a set of human resources practices and the formulation and implementation of a forward-looking and dynamic HR strategy (Bernard, 2009). Human resources as a competitive advantage are an element that is difficult to transfer because it is rooted in the organization and consists of collective knowledge unique to the organization (Akremi, 2004). The knowledge and skills intrinsic to the organization evolve slowly. However, their lifespan is longer than that of any product (Rumelt, 1994). Through these characteristics, we can understand why human resources, unlike other resources, can easily become creators of value that are difficult to imitate and substitute (Bayad 2004).

▪ **Summary model by Bayad :**

In his review of the main strategic human resources management models, Bayad (2004) proposes a four-quadrant summary model that allows for a clear understanding of the direction of each model (Figure 2). Putting in opposition on one axis the primacy of goals versus the primacy of means and on the other axis the pressure of the environment versus the refocusing on organization, this model highlights that:

- The integration of HR value is primarily dictated by the primacy of goals and the need to refocus on the organization (HR accounting model);
- Adaptive HR integration emphasizes the primacy of purpose over environmental pressures (HR strategic planning model,);
- Flexible HR integration prioritizes means to address environmental pressures (HR competitiveness model);
- HR capacity integration develops the need for a refocusing on the organization to fully prioritize means (HR competency model.) (Bayad 2004).

Figure 3: Strategic human resources management models related to organizational performance:



Source : Bayad (2004).

3. The integration of QMS practices into HRM & organizational performance : Previous empirical studies

3.1. Standardization of HR processes and organizational performance:

Previous work by Muenstermann (2015) and Wüllenweber and Weitzel (2007), have demonstrated that the standardization of business processes contributes to the streamlining of organizational activities and the improvement of overall performance. More specifically, in their study entitled " The Impact of Process Standardization on Business Process Outsourcing Success " 2010, the authors showed that the standardization of the recruitment process significantly reduces hiring times. (up to 23 days of reduction) and associated costs (up to 30% savings), while improving data quality and process transparency.

In the specific field of human resources management, Hauff, Alewell and Hansen (2017) in their study titled "HRM System Strength and HRM Target Achievement: Towards a Broader Understanding of HRM Processes", highlighted that a strong HR system, characterized by clear, consistent and reliable processes, significantly improves the HR performance perceived by managers, measured through the achievement of organizational objectives. These results highlight the structuring role of the formalization and harmonization of HR practices in optimizing the functioning of organizations.

3.2. The management of HRM by KPIs and organizational performance:

In their study " Usage des indicateurs de capital humain et pilotage de la performance" , Gates and Langevin (2010), demonstrated the strategic importance of human capital indicators (HCIs). According to their study, the more HCIs are integrated into the HR management system, the more capable the organization is of achieving its strategic objectives. HCI are not simply measurement tools, but strategic levers for guiding managerial action and optimizing talent management. The study indicates that when HR KPIs are aligned with the overall strategy, they become instruments for strategic performance management. The involvement of HR managers in defining strategy improves the implementation of indicators: the more actively they participate, the more effectively they are able to apply HRIs, reflecting a greater awareness of the strategic role of the HR function. The authors also highlight the clear desire of HR directors to develop KPI-based management systems aligned with organizational strategy in order to optimize overall performance.

The study by Chasmawala and Jhadav (2025) highlights the strategic importance of key human resources performance indicators (HR KPIs) in the industrial manufacturing sector. The authors show that these indicators, whether quantitative (turnover rate, absenteeism) or qualitative (employee satisfaction, individual initiatives, participation in training), are essential levers for improving employee performance and, therefore, the overall success of the organization. The results indicate that systematic monitoring of HR KPIs allows companies to better identify professional development needs, increase staff retention and strengthen engagement at work, thus contributing to the productivity and competitiveness of the organization.

3.3.The application of continuous improvement procedures and organizational performance:

Yi Jiang and Metta Sirisuk's work "The Effectiveness of Lean Management Practices on Organizational Performance: A Meta-Analysis of Empirical Studies", showed that lean management practices have a significant positive effect on operational performance ($r = 0.376$) and a positive relationship with non-operational performance ($r = 0.297$), with the correlation between operational and non-operational performance also being positive ($r = 0.280$).

Thus, the findings of Mohammed A. Khan et al. (2018), in their study "Application of Continuous Improvement Techniques to Improve Organization Performance: A Case Study" demonstrated that the implementation of continuous improvement techniques has a tangible positive impact on organizational performance, resulting in reduced lead times, increased margins and sales, improved planning, and employee satisfaction.

3.4.Dissemination of an internal quality culture and organizational performance:

Yu Han et al. (2019) "The Impact of Culture of Quality (COQ) on Organizational Performance". which demonstrated that quality culture positively influences employee performance across several dimensions, namely:

- Leadership emphasis on quality issues ($\beta = 0.272$, $p < 0.01$);
- Peer involvement in quality initiatives ($\beta = 0.230$, $p < 0.01$);
- Employees' sense of responsibility for quality ($\beta = 0.347$, $p < 0.01$);
- The credibility of quality-related messages, whose effect remains positive but statistically insignificant ($\beta = 0.119$, $p > 0.05$).

This research also highlights that individual employee performance has a direct and positive effect on overall organizational performance.

Genny Navarro and Gloria Naranjo (2025) in “Quality Culture, Quality Management, and Organizational Performance: A Structural Model for the Manufacturing Sector”, demonstrated that quality culture has a direct effect on organizational performance, an effect that is reinforced by quality management as a mediating variable. Their study highlights the decisive role of leadership, employee participation, and customer focus in the implementation of effective quality systems. Practices such as strategic planning and performance monitoring contribute to the simultaneous improvement of both financial and non-financial aspects of performance.

Finally, Faris Alghamdi's study (2018) “Total Quality Management and Organizational Performance: A Possible Role of Organizational Culture”, showed that implementing total quality management (TQM) practices, particularly customer focus, management commitment, and human resource development, significantly improves organizational performance as perceived by managers. This study also highlights the moderating role of organizational culture: in organizations characterized by a structured, hierarchical, or rational culture, the impact of TQM on performance is reinforced, particularly in the public sector.

Conclusion

Our research focused on the impact of quality management practices integrated into human resource management on organizational performance. More specifically, we sought to determine if the standardization of HR processes, the management of HRM using HR KPIs, the application of continuous improvement approaches and methods, and the dissemination of an internal quality culture can impact the organizational performance in public sector.

The choice of our subject was determined by the publication of a new series of international standards specific to human resources management: ISO 30400. These standards aim to standardize HRM practices and focus in particular on knowledge management (ISO 30401:2018), sustainable employability (ISO/TR 30406:2017), human governance (ISO 30408:2016) or workforce planning (ISO 30409:2016). Moreover, we have noted that the scientific literature remains limited regarding the articulation of the standards of the ISO 9000 series (quality management) with those of the ISO 30400 series (HR management). However, in the context of an environment subject to multiple normative requirements, achieving the articulation of standards between them is a major challenge for organizations (Savall and Zardet, 2005).

The general result of our research is as follows, the four variables studied: Standardization of HR processes, Management by KPIs, Continuous improvement and Quality culture all exert a positive impact on perceived organizational performance within the organization. The empirical studies consulted testify to a unanimous observation that these dimensions are essential levers for improving the overall performance of the organization.

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