
The HRM-KM Nexus: A Conceptual Framework for Valuing Knowledge Workers

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Abstract

This conceptual research analyzes the strategic interrelationship between human resource management practices and knowledge management. Based on an in-depth literature review, it identifies three key bundles of HRM practices — acquisition, retention and development — as essential levers for the creation, transfer and value enhancement of knowledge within organizations. Practices such as recruitment and selection, training, compensation, career management and internal communication are examined in terms of their strategic contribution to knowledge management processes. Far from being limited to an administrative function, these practices shape an organizational environment conducive to knowledge sharing, collaboration and innovation. Central to this analysis is the role of knowledge workers, whose autonomy, creativity and specialized expertise position them as both creators and repositories of organizational knowledge. The article further explores how organizational culture and continuous learning act as moderating conditions that either enable or constrain the effectiveness of HRM-KM alignment. Building on these insights, a conceptual framework is developed, illustrating the systemic and bidirectional nature of interactions and generating empirically testable research propositions. This work contributes to the growing body of literature at the intersection of HRM and KM, offering an integrated and human-centered representation of knowledge governance in organizations, and opening avenues for future empirical research across diverse organizational configurations.

Keywords: Human resource management, Knowledge management, HR practices, Knowledge transfer, Knowledge workers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, human resources management is an essential pillar of organizational performance, but its role extends far beyond the boundaries of traditional practices. This research focuses on the strategic intersection between human capital and intangible assets. Beyond mere administrative management, we treat HRM as the social architecture that either facilitates or inhibits the flow of knowledge. It is deeply intertwined with knowledge management, a discipline which, in an increasingly knowledge-based economy, is a strategic lever for competitiveness and innovation. In this article, we propose to explore the key practices of HRM, while highlighting their subtle articulation with the management and transfer of knowledge within organizations.

Despite conceptual divergences and multiple interpretations of HR practices in the literature, a consensus is emerging that these practices are not limited to operational mechanisms, but embody complex dynamics that simultaneously nurture organizational development and prosperity.

In a world where the competitiveness of organizations increasingly depends on their ability to manage and mobilize their intangible resources (Azzam, 2025), human resource management practices play a fundamental role. These practices, well beyond their operational scope, directly influence knowledge management and transfer, processes that have become strategic in the era of the knowledge economy.

In this article, we will define key HR practices, and then present the link between human resource management practices and knowledge management and transfer. Despite the divergences and differences that exist between authors and different schools of thought on HR practices, they all agree that HR management practices are levers for personal and professional development, as well as for the development of organizational unity.

The objective is to propose a unified conceptual framework explaining how bundles of HR practices (training, appraisal, rewards) act as direct levers on innovation capacity and knowledge transfer. By “practice” we mean the regulated performance of certain activities. They are ways of recognizing, acting and doing. In other words, they actualize passions, interests and beliefs, which give them consistency and meaning (purpose and direction) (Arbouche, 2008). A thorough review of the literature reveals that it is difficult to draw up an exhaustive list of these practices (Ogbonnaya, and Aryee, (2022); Perello-Marín and Ribes-Giner, 2014;). However, it should be noted that a consensus exists on some of these practices, in particular those that we will present in what follows, and which will serve as the basis for our research work.

Drawing on an in-depth literature review, this article aims to demonstrate that HRM practices are not limited to administrative tasks. They are strategic tools for structuring, retaining and

transmitting knowledge within organizations. In this sense, these practices become catalysts for transformation, fostering not only employee fulfillment, but also innovation and organizational competitiveness. They are particularly crucial in the context of knowledge workers, whose role in knowledge management and transfer is central.

The article is structured in three stages: first, a clarification of HR practices in the knowledge economy; second, an analysis of the pivotal role of knowledge workers; and finally, the conceptual modeling of the links between HRM and KM processes. This article is based on an approach that can best be described as theoretical-conceptual, bringing together ideas, creating bridges and strong links between different theoretical frameworks, and laying the foundations for in-depth empirical analysis. The choice of a theoretical-conceptual approach addresses a need for consolidation. Before testing data, it is crucial to build robust logical models to move beyond fragmented empiricism and provide managers with valid frameworks for action.

From this perspective, conceptual papers play an essential role in theoretical development, offering explanatory frameworks and propositions that can be empirically tested in subsequent work. This is emphasized by Gilson and Goldberg (2015) and Meredith (1993), when they warn of the risks of a dysfunctional research mode of constant iteration between explanation and testing, without ever returning to the stage of theoretical analysis, will continue to distance us from our true responsibility to managers, namely the development of valid management theories and theoretical frameworks. And they criticize the over-reliance on theory verification without empirical description, arguing for conceptual research to develop valid theoretical frameworks. Our approach focuses on conceptual modeling, which aims to provide a structural representation of logical interconnections rather than statistical correlations.

In line with these propositions, our approach allows us to structure the subtle but essential links between human resource management, knowledge workers and knowledge management. Far from confining itself to a mere academic review, it aims to weave a structured reflection and illuminate the nuances revealing how HRM go beyond their traditional role to become catalysts and vectors of knowledge enhancement, innovation and a pillar of organizational competitiveness.

This work is part of a progressive approach that lays the foundations of a conceptual model that can subsequently serve as the basis for more in-depth empirical research. This approach marks a willingness to dig beyond the obvious, revealing the depth of the interconnections between human dynamics and knowledge management in an environment where the intangible is becoming a key resource.

2. Insights into HRM practices: A preliminary examination of knowledge management

2.1 Human resources acquisition practices

These acquisition practices derive mainly from the process of forward-looking human resources management, the aim of which is to determine the workforce and skill requirements needed to achieve the organization's objectives and put its business strategy into practice. This includes recruitment, selection, induction, integration and socialization (Fabi and Garand 1994). HR is constantly evolving (departures, hiring, changes in qualifications, promotions). HR managers need to be able to anticipate these changes, or risk running into difficulties linked, for example, to staff shortages or overstaffing. The role of GPEC is to anticipate these changes in line with the company's projects. This method involves taking stock of available human resources, comparing them with development forecasts, and then making any necessary adjustments. In practice, it is a cross-functional, horizontal approach which concerns the majority of HR practices (recruitment, mobility, training, career management) and aims to describe and prepare the company's various possible futures with a view to preparing human resources management decisions. On the other hand, the development and implementation of this system underpins transparency and fairness in HR management and work organization. It contributes to the description and clarification of main activities, the purpose of the job and the definition of work situations.

2.2.1. Recruiting the right profiles

The recruitment process consists of identifying the organization's human resources needs, and selecting, attracting and choosing the right people to meet those needs. In other words, this process refers to all the means by which companies attract and retain highly qualified and competent individuals. At the same time, Whitehill (2022) defines recruitment as the search for and procurement of the right number and quality of potential candidates to meet an organization's employment needs. He identified three sources of recruitment, namely high turnover and attrition, the creation of new positions, and an increase in the company's business volume.

From a managerial point of view, the recruitment process comprises four stages: identifying the positions to be filled, determining the job profile (requirements and qualifications), choosing recruitment sources and methods, and finally building up a pool of candidates. All in all, recruitment is just one of the processes by which a company acquires the human capital it needs. The decision to recruit must put the right person in the right job. The recruitment process must provide the company with competent, qualified staff capable of meeting the company's quality and productivity requirements.

In this sense, Mahapatra and Sahu (2017) presented the objectives of a recruitment process:

- Attract people with multi-dimensional skills and experience that suit the organization's current and future strategies;
- Inject new blood at all levels of the organization;
- Develop an employer brand and boost the company's attractiveness in order to attract the right people;
- Find or recruit people whose skills and knowledge match the company's values;
- Offer employees the possibility of promotion, mobility and career management.

2.2.2. Selection, induction and socialization

Recruitment and selection offer organization key opportunities to modify the structure of the human resources at its disposal. Recruitment focuses on the identification and selection of individuals from a pool of candidates external to the organization, while selection focuses on internal candidates (Searle, 2003).

Human resources selection, induction and integration aim to match jobs and employees in a way that satisfies the mutual short- and long-term interests of the organization and its employees. Selection involves gathering and evaluating information on each candidate for a given position, in order to find the right profile. There are many instruments for gathering information: application forms, reference checks, interviews, tests, interviews, simulations The choice of these tools depends on their effectiveness. The choice of these tools depends on their validity for the position to be filled, and the information the organization needs.

The induction and integration phase consists of introducing the new recruit to the organization, his or her tasks, the workspace, managers and colleagues. This is followed by the integration or socialization process, the aim of which is to provide the new recruit with the necessary information on policies, culture, values, standards, as well as rights and obligations. Some organizations use mentoring for this purpose, choosing a sponsor to guide new employees. The aim of these actions is to avoid rejection of the new recruit and to integrate him or her as effectively as possible.

2.2 Human resources retention and loyalty practices

The two main practices that constitute essential management levers for organizations wishing to retain and preserve their employees are: compensation and performance appraisal, in addition to recent practices relating to à la carte HR services, recognition at work, organization of the workplace and working hours, and actions to help employees find a balance between their professional and personal lives, in order to motivate and retain the best employees and create a healthy environment for their dedication.

2.2.1. Compensation

According to Citeau (2002), remuneration is the monetary consideration for work or a service rendered. Recruitment policy aims to attract, retain and motivate the company's employees, while reflecting the company's strategy. Today, such a policy can only be conceived as a holistic one, integrating all elements, whether pecuniary or not, immediate or deferred. A global compensation policy therefore goes far beyond the management of base salary alone.

Traditionally, employee remuneration is made up of several elements: the wages, salaries or allowances received each month, individual or collective fixed or variable bonuses, salary supplements (profit-sharing, incentive schemes), fringe benefits and benefits in kind. These different remuneration techniques are used to motivate and retain employees.

Soulié (1997) spoke of cafeteria compensation systems, which let employees choose their own personalized compensation package to suit their own needs. In effect, companies offer a mixed remuneration package that integrates fixed and variable components. Different profit-sharing formulas and various remuneration complements such as benefits in kind, pension and provident supplements (Soulié, 1997). With this in mind, Jahman (2012) proposes four components of remuneration: direct pay, social or indirect pay, extra pay and working conditions.

In practice, remuneration policy involves two important phases: firstly, salary determination, which consists of three stages: job evaluation or job weighing, salary structure development, individual salary determination and individual merit pay. Secondly, compensation management: the aim is to draw up a fair and equitable compensation policy, which ensures employee satisfaction and motivation, the imperatives of management from an accounting, societal and human point of view, and the communication of information relating to fixed and variable compensation components.

2.2.2. Career management

From this point of view, career management refers to the HR issue of matching skills needs with the resources available to the company. Career means the evolution of the individual within the organization. Career planning consists of a series of activities designed and implemented to plan, organize, implement and control the workforce (Guérin and Wils, 1992). It involves aligning employees' long-term career goals with organizational objectives through continuous training.

2.2.3. Tailored HR Services

A la carte HRM is a new HRM practice within the framework of human resources marketing (Amari and Mokhefi, 2021). They define à la carte HR services as a set of services designed to

meet employees' personal wishes (meal tickets, inter-company childcare, vouchers, summer holidays) and corporate performance objectives (reducing absenteeism and turnover, improving availability). Today, other personalized services are being added as part of Human Resources Management à la Carte, which consists of getting closer to each employee's individual project by offering him or her a certain number of options (Cerdin and Peretti, 2005). This is a set of management practices enabling the company to get closer to each employee's personal project and needs, by offering them a range of job choices. In our case, this mainly concerns the organization of working time and space.

To sum up, retaining and developing employee loyalty is a lever for company performance, attractiveness and internal promotion; it means finding ways to keep them motivated for as long as possible. Employee retention practices correspond to a variety of offers relating to working conditions, remuneration systems, working hours and work organization.

2.3 Human resources development practices

2.3.1. Training and the acquisition of new skills

Citeau (2002) defines training as the set of educational devices offered to employees to enable them to adapt to structural changes and modifications in work organization implied by technological and economic developments, and to foster their professional development. Kaddouri (2011), in turn, sees training as one aspect of the socialization of employees, and more precisely as a process geared towards their gradual integration into the relations of the salaried workforce. In his view, the transitive form of the term expresses an educational intention on the part of certain actors towards other actors, either individually or collectively. The pronominal form refers to a subject who decides to train for himself, to ensure his own development.

The professional development of personnel is essential for everyone within a company, in a human capital logic; every organization possesses a heritage of talent, knowledge and experience which are its source of differentiation.

Increasing this wealth and ensuring its continuity are the results of investment not only in training, but also in the systematic transmission of know-how and acquired experience; this is the role of training policies. Investing in training is important in today's war for talent, as employees tend to stay as long as possible with the company that provides them with the best training. This type of training enables them to anticipate and adapt to medium- and long-term changes in their professions, particularly for production staff. It enables them to keep pace with technological developments and adapt to them. For employees in support functions (accounting, administration, human resources), it enables them to keep pace with both technological and administrative developments, and thus improve their professional skills and efficiency.

However, the success of a training program depends on it being adapted to the specific activity of the employee in question.

Training enables companies to view the organization of work from a new perspective, one that calls for far-reaching transformations: knowledge management, cooperation, autonomous teams, multi-skilling, teamwork, a qualifying organization, a learning organization, and so on.

2.3.2. Internal communication

Internal communication is the process of transmitting information and knowledge. It encompasses a range of communication actions within an organization, aimed at its employees, to keep them informed about corporate life and make them aware of current issues. The term “internal” allows us to exclude from our definition commercial or institutional communication, aimed at the company's environment. Broadly speaking, we consider internal communication to be all the transmission and exchange of general and operational information that takes place within the company. General information concerns the company's operating context, production system and internal organization, as well as motivational information. Operational information, on the other hand, is concerned with work-related issues and supports the execution of tasks. Internal communication plays a social and informative role, and is a tool for social cohesion, making it possible to:

- Establish a culture of knowledge transfer;
- Inform company employees;
- Facilitate staff buy-in to company policy;
- Establish social dialogue and limit conflicts;
- Enable better coordination of everyone's actions;
- Enable employees to express their views directly and collectively on wages, working hours and work organization.

Indeed, many companies consider that providing their employees with ever more information is the guarantee of quality internal communication. However, internal communication aims to provide the means to promote greater integration within the organization, through dialogue, exchange of information and experience, and participation at all levels (Scroferneker, 2004). Internally, the communication policy must accompany the knowledge management project in order to inform and explain the benefits of this approach, and provide the necessary tools for effective knowledge transfer. In this dynamic, ever-changing environment, the use of technology has become indispensable for organizations. These tools facilitate the exchange of information between organizations and their various stakeholders, and stimulate

communication flows between the organization's various collaborators (El Adraoui and El Idrissi (2020)).

2.3.3. *Developing and enhancing skills and knowledge*

Valuing and recognizing acquired experience enables employees to have their professional or personal experience recognized, making it easier for them to resume training and improve their orientation or access to new jobs. Employability and skills management policies are implemented with the aim of enhancing employee performance.

Companies are, however, dependent on employment structures that exert their own influence on the situation of their employees, and their day-to-day practices in terms of recruitment, promotion, remuneration and training affect the situation of the male and female staff they employ (Laufer, 1993). The practices described above have been chosen because they are among the most important and most frequently cited in recent human resources management research. The “human resources” function is often presented as a simple juxtaposition of classic missions (recruitment, compensation, appraisal, training), to be fulfilled with tools and methods. Today, however, HRM is enjoying a new lease of life, driven by a number of trends and practices that place people and the knowledge they possess at the heart of all decision-making. Having explored the main HR practices, we will now examine how these practices influence knowledge management and its transfer.

3. **The link between Human Resources Management and Knowledge Management**

The complex relationship between human resources management and knowledge management lies at the heart of organizational effectiveness. A nuanced perspective on knowledge management is revealed, reinventing traditional approaches by considering employees and knowledge workers as important stakeholders (Cheng et al., 2024). In this sense, this paragraph explores the central role of knowledge workers as key players in the knowledge transfer dynamic, highlighting possible links between knowledge management and transfer, and human resources management.

3.1 **Knowledge workers: Key players in knowledge management and transfer**

We live in the knowledge age, and many employees are now considered knowledge workers (Alvesson, 2004), who rely heavily on their knowledge and expertise to succeed in the organization. The emergence of Knowledge Work has greatly transformed the way we think about work. Henceforth, work no longer consists in mass-producing tangible products, but in focusing on the company's intangible assets, notably its human and intellectual capital. The nature of knowledge-based work is extremely different from what has traditionally been associated with the machine age, the machine man and mass production on the assembly line.

The shift from traditional to knowledge-based work has led managers to modify strategies, models, individual roles, human resources practices, strategies and tools related to knowledge and its transfer (Moorhead and Griffin, 1999). Knowledge-based work is therefore an activity that relies on cognitive skills, the result of which is immaterial, and whose added value is based on knowledge processing, creativity and, consequently, knowledge creation and transfer.

Knowledge workers are people who primarily perform knowledge work, particularly in knowledge-intensive companies that are able to find ways of attracting and retaining expert labor.

A company's most valuable assets in the 20th century were its tangible means of production. By contrast, the most valuable asset of a 21st-century organization is its knowledge workers and their knowledge-based work (Drucker, 1998). The need for workers capable of planning, organizing, directing and controlling work has given rise to a new managerial approach and a critical mass of knowledge workers (Davenport, 2005). Knowledge workers are professionals with in-depth knowledge of a given field. Their main activity is to create, manage, transfer and apply knowledge. Knowledge workers are indispensable to organizations. They tend to be the most appropriate people to decide, plan, organize and coordinate core business activities Herstad (2026). Unlike other conventional types of worker, knowledge workers possess the organization's main means of production, namely knowledge.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of the Industrial vs. Knowledge-Based Work Paradigms

Dimensions	Industrial Paradigm (Machine Age)	Knowledge-Based Paradigm (Knowledge Work)
Primary Resource	Tangible assets and physical means of production.	Intellectual capital and intangible assets.
Nature of Activity	Standardized mass-production and routine repetition.	Heuristic problem-solving, creativity, and innovation.
Ownership of Production	Concentrated within the organization (Machinery/Land).	Embodied within the worker (Human Capital/Expertise).
Performance Indicators	Quantitative throughput and physical labor ("Hard Work").	Qualitative impact, relevance, and "Working Smart."
Leadership Philosophy	Command, control, and top-down direction.	Facilitation, support, and professional autonomy.
Organizational Goal	Operational efficiency and economies of scale.	Agility, knowledge creation, and resilience.

(Source: Authors)

3.1.1 Knowledge workers and knowledge managers: a new approach to KM

These knowledge workers have been defined by Drucker (1993) as people with a high level of specialized knowledge and skills, combined with the ability to use information technology and the ability to apply these skills to identify and solve problems. More concretely, knowledge workers enter the job market with skills and knowledge that they have generally acquired as part of their initial training. With experience, they acquire deeper expertise and practice-based knowledge, and apply their knowledge in different contexts to solve a variety of problems. The concept of the knowledge worker is based on the idea that knowledge is a resource that belongs to knowledge workers as a form of intangible capital. As for the difference between a knowledge worker and a knowledge manager, the former is an owner, manager and user of his or her own knowledge, while the latter is a coordinator or promoter who accompanies the creation of knowledge.

In the context of the knowledge economy and the learning organization, improving the productivity of knowledge workers is based on six key points (Drucker 1993, 1998; Farooq (2024); Shujahat and al., 2017;) knowledge workers are able to:

- Concentrate solely on knowledge-related tasks;
- Enjoy professional autonomy ;
- Being treated as an "asset" rather than a "cost" ;
- Constantly innovate and solve problems creatively;
- Continuous learning;
- Focus on the quality and quantity of results.

Based on the work of (Drucker 1993, 1998), we can see that making productive knowledge work will be the great management task of this century, just as making manual labor productive was the great management task of the last century. This means that the quantity of knowledge must be replaced by quality, and that a new metric must be devised to assess the productivity of knowledge workers. The new management slogan of the century should be working smart instead of working hard.

Table 2 : Mapping HRM Strategic Levers to Knowledge-Based Work Productivity

Productivity Pillar	Theoretical Conceptualization	Strategic HRM Levers & Interventions
Professional Autonomy	The degree of discretion and self-direction required to navigate complex, non-linear cognitive tasks.	Trust-based Management: Implementation of "À la carte" HR services, hybrid work frameworks, and decentralized decision-making structures.
Continuous Innovation	The systematic transition from standardized task repetition to creative problem-solving and value creation.	Incentive Alignment: Knowledge-sharing bonuses, non-monetary recognition programs, and peer-to-peer appreciation systems.
Continuous Learning	The conceptualization of knowledge as a dynamic, perishable asset requiring constant renewal.	Intellectual Capital Investment: Strategic GPEC (Strategic Workforce Planning), mentorship for tacit knowledge transfer, and dedicated "R&D time" for employees.
Asset-Based Valuation	The shift from viewing labor as a variable cost to treating human expertise as a core strategic investment.	Retention & Talent Architecture: Customized career pathing, high-commitment work practices (HCWP), and robust organizational socialization (onboarding).
Quality of Output	The prioritization of relevance, impact, and intellectual rigor over raw quantitative volume or "hours worked."	Impact-Oriented Performance Appraisal: 360-degree feedback mechanisms focusing on contributions to the collective organizational memory and innovation.
Cognitive Focus (Deep Work)	The necessity of shielding knowledge workers from administrative "noise" to preserve cognitive bandwidth.	Structural Optimization: Job redesign, administrative offloading, and the deployment of internal communication tools to streamline information flows.

(Source: Authors)

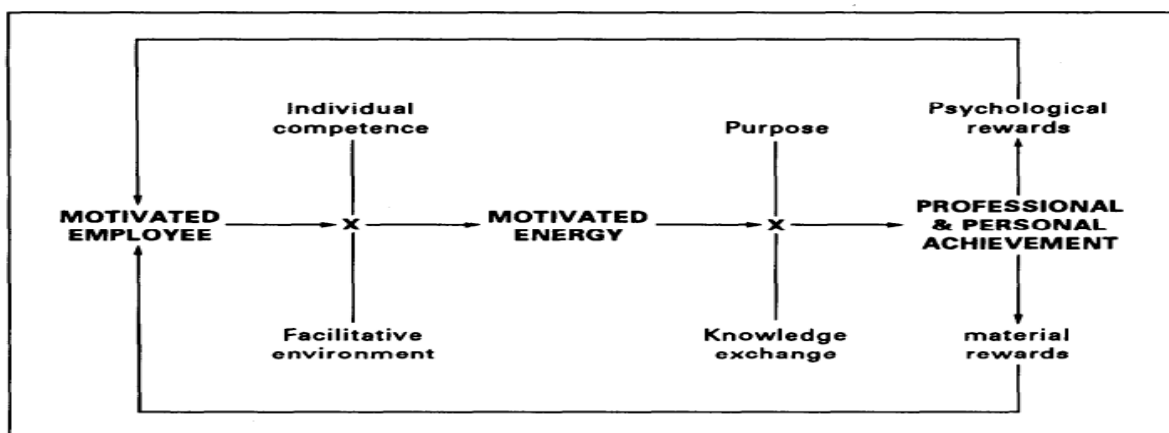
3.2 Linking HRM and KM for knowledge workers

3.2.1 Valuing knowledge workers

In the same vein, knowledge management and human resources management are in a position to adapt HR practices to the specificities of knowledge workers, and to create new motivation

and reward systems to encourage and challenge them in their intellectual capacities. Knowledge workers should be treated as an asset rather than a cost, valuable assets who like to have complete autonomy in the work they do. Given the nature of their work, which is often characterized by creativity and problem-solving, it's worth pointing out that the notion of autonomy is fundamental to the implementation of knowledge management within the organization, insofar as the ability to create ideas and innovate is closely linked to autonomy. Motivating knowledge workers mainly involves creating a stimulating environment, career development plans, motivation and appropriate reward and recognition systems such as knowledge-sharing bonuses (Skyrme, 1998).

Figure 1: Motivation and performance model for knowledge workers.



(Source: Tampoe, M. (1993))

The figure below highlights how a supportive environment, combined with individual skills and knowledge exchange, nurtures motivated energy in knowledge workers. This dynamic, amplified by both material and psychological rewards, paves the way for both personal and professional achievements. In turn, these achievements solidify knowledge management and transfer mechanisms, creating a virtuous circle at the heart of the organization and contributing to sustainable organizational performance. In addition, knowledge transfer strengthens corporate resilience by fostering a culture of collaboration, continuous improvement and adaptability to changing market challenges (El Adraoui 2025; Heikkilä and Vilko. (2025); El Adraoui and al., 2024).

After studying over 100 organizations and 600 knowledge workers, Davenport (2005) came to the conclusion that the old adage of hiring smart, high-performing employees and marginalizing the rest is not the best way to leverage these collaborators. The study shows that knowledge workers represent 25% to 50% of the workforce in advanced economies. Their expertise and experience fuel the success of countless organizations worldwide, and their value is reflected

in their motivation and appreciation. Knowledge workers need innovative HR practices that take into account the particularities of this class of employee. These employees want intelligent solutions and are constantly seeking recognition from their peers and superiors.

3.2.2. An inclusive view of employees: towards a balanced HR perspective

However, this perspective of knowledge workers as special and distinct has been widely debated by several authors, who in this case consider that all workers should be considered knowledge workers (Allee 1997; Hunter and al., 2012; Serenko (2023)). The general criticism made by these authors of the “specificity” argument is that this approach overlooks the fact that the work of all employees is important for organizational performance. Distinguishing between knowledge workers and other workers will only persecute employees and engender a feeling of inferiority, create disparities within the company and weaken the level of loyalty and commitment to their organization, impacting on their productivity and predisposition to share knowledge. If knowledge is all that knowledge workers possess. It will become a power and a guarantee of their work. So sharing their knowledge in a social context where competition between people is very strong, may threaten their existence, which would explain the reluctance of knowledge workers to share their expertise, for which they have spent a lot of effort and time.

We therefore postulate that knowledge workers are collaborators-actors within the organization who possess a significant capacity for innovation, a critical vision, and an important ability to proliferate knowledge, transfer it and make it benefit the entire organization. What's special about this type of worker is that their added value to the company increasingly comes from their own contribution to the company's intellectual capital and collective memory.

3.3 The Heuristic Value of HR Practices for Enhanced Understanding of KM

Human resource management practices and knowledge management are imperatively interconnected. Human resource management acquires a primordial role in potentiating and facilitating knowledge management (Figueiredo and al., 2016). Indeed, if human resource management is about managing people effectively, and if the most valuable resource of those people is knowledge, then KM and HRM are closely interconnected (Svetlik and Costea, 2007). HRM, at its strategic and functional levels, is intimately linked to the organization's strategic orientations and its approach to knowledge management. Although the role of human resources in knowledge management is undeniable. On the other hand, one of the most frequently asked questions regarding the role of human resources in knowledge management is how human resource management and its practices can contribute to improving knowledge management. Indeed, interest in the relationship between KM and HRM has grown in recent years as KM and HRM have become more sophisticated and complex.

Employees are the most important organizational asset, especially when it comes to implementing effective knowledge management processes. Companies use HR practices to provide employees with the skills, resources, knowledge and conditions they need to effectively manage and leverage knowledge. In this respect, we argue that HRM and its practices are key elements enabling a company to increase its capacity to deploy knowledge management activities.

In organizations, HR practices play a crucial role in managing and implementing knowledge within the organization in order to maintain success. Thus, the implementation of good HR practices would be able to improve employee performance by generating and transferring knowledge (Nawab and al., 2015). Several authors have focused on the link between KM and HRM ((Svetlik and Costea, (2007); Edvardsson (2008); Pillania, (2009); Nilsson and Ellström, (2012); Santoro and Usai, (2018)). It is logical, practical and common sense to assume that human resource management is not knowledge management (Pillania, 2009). Indeed, KM and HRM have several points in common insofar as they share common practices, objectives and strategies. Except that KM is more versatile than HRM, as it includes the management of intellectual property rights in addition to the transfer of individual and organizational know-how (Svetlik and Costea, 2007). Organizations using effective human resource management practices achieve high performance by creating human resource practices supported by knowledge management and organizational learning capacity. More concretely, strengthening HRM activities, such as recruitment and selection, training, performance management and reward systems, is essential to properly manage knowledge (Santoro and Usai, 2018). It significantly and positively impacts performance related to knowledge management and learning outcomes (Arunprasad, 2016).

It should be pointed out at the outset that human resources management makes an instrumental contribution to improving the flow of knowledge and the management of knowledge management processes. In the same vein, human resources management influences knowledge management insofar as it supports its implementation and promotion through a panoply of actions:

- Create a culture of openness that values knowledge sharing;
- Foster a climate of commitment, trust and social peace that encourages knowledge transfer;
- Assess and explore employees' tacit knowledge during recruitment and selection;
- Design ergonomic workspaces conducive to encounters and knowledge exchange;
- Offer resources to facilitate knowledge creation and transfer;
- Implement effective communication to raise awareness of the importance of knowledge management;

- Develop motivation and reward practices to encourage knowledge sharing;
- Create performance management processes focused on knowledge development and transfer;
- Encourage senior management leadership in knowledge management;
- Promote organizational and individual learning to generate and disseminate knowledge;
- Organize events such as workshops, conferences and seminars for the interpersonal sharing of knowledge;
- Implement systems to capture and encode knowledge, using technology;
- Sensitize senior managers to the importance of knowledge management and their role in supporting knowledge management initiatives.

Today, skilled human resources are considered a vital asset for any organization, as maintaining competitive advantage depends primarily on the knowledge and skills of its knowledge workers. As employees are the main source of knowledge, HRM must establish effective practices to acquire, maintain, develop and evaluate valuable human capital, support knowledge management and establish the right organizational culture and structure for knowledge management.

With this in mind, Gope and al (2018) and El Bedawy (2018) specified that HRM practices stimulate individual learning, motivate employees to improve knowledge acquisition and sharing. Employees are the vectors of knowledge creation, transfer and implementation. In this sense Nilsson and Ellström (2012) have pointed out that organizational success is increasingly associated with identifying, recruiting, managing and retaining high-performing, talented people to meet the organization's current and future demands. Consequently, the main objective of the HR function is to develop, select and hire people, train and develop staff, assess their performance, reward them and create a learning culture to support and achieve the knowledge management strategy (Edvardsson, 2008).

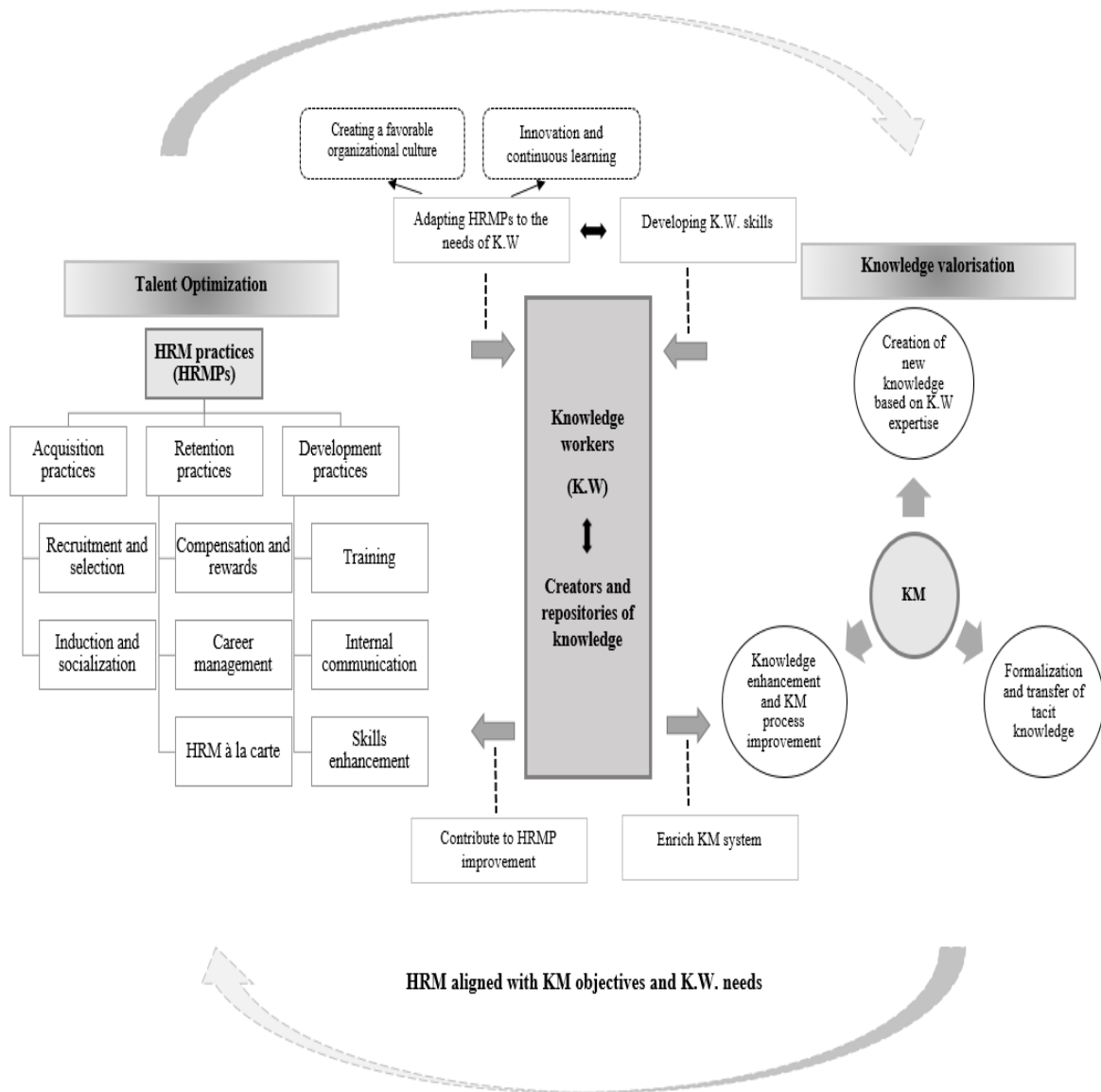
4. Summary

This article explores how HR practices go beyond their traditional role to become essential drivers of knowledge management and transfer. Much more than a simple tool for acquiring, developing or retaining knowledge, HRM has become a strategic instrument, shaping a fertile ground where knowledge circulates freely and takes root in the organizational culture.

By delving into the inner workings of the various practices mentioned above, we have uncovered a subtle yet powerful mechanism that transforms HR practices into a vector of innovation and competitive advantage. In today's knowledge-based economy, where knowledge is becoming the most precious resource, knowledge workers play a catalytic role in this alchemy, enabling organizations to move forward with agility in an uncertain and

constantly changing world. This work concludes with the presentation of a conceptual model that illustrates these interactions, and reflects the symbiosis between the two fields, highlighting the key HR levers and their role in creating a resilient and dynamic organizational ecosystem.

Figure 2: Conceptual framework developed.



(Source: Authors)

Figure 2 synthesizes the core argument of this article: HR practices and knowledge management are not parallel functions, but deeply interconnected strategic systems. Positioned at the heart of the model, knowledge workers embody this intersection — simultaneously shaped by HR practices and driving knowledge creation, transfer and valorisation. This central positioning reflects our theoretical stance that human capital is the primary engine of organizational knowledge dynamics. The model further highlights a co-evolutionary logic: as HR practices develop knowledge workers' capabilities, these workers in turn enrich and transform both HR

systems and KM processes through continuous feedback loops. This framework thus constitutes an original contribution to the HRM-KM literature, moving beyond fragmented analyses to propose an integrated, systemic and human-centered representation of knowledge governance in organizations.

This framework generates four empirically testable propositions:

- **P1:** Bundles of HRM practices aligned with knowledge workers' needs positively influence tacit knowledge creation and transfer.
- **P2:** Knowledge worker autonomy, fostered by HR development practices, moderates the HRM-KM relationship.
- **P3:** Organizational culture mediates the impact of HR retention practices on knowledge-sharing behavior.
- **P4:** Bidirectional HRM-KM alignment enhances organizational learning capacity and sustained competitive advantage.

These propositions invite future empirical investigations across knowledge-intensive industries, cross-cultural settings, and digitally transformed organizational environments.

5. Conclusion

By way of conclusion, HR practices are emerging as a strategic vector for transformation and success, essential for guiding organizations towards excellence and innovation. In this sense, the study of practices for acquiring, retaining and developing human resources has shown that they transcend mere gadgets and administrative tools, proving to be structuring devices and mechanisms capable of generating and transforming organizational knowledge.

In line with these ideas, the relationship between HRM and knowledge management is one of complementarity, with each field nourishing and complementing the other. Whether in recruitment, training or compensation, HR practices foster an environment conducive to the transfer and valorization of knowledge. What's more, when these practices are supported by sound technologies and an organizational culture that encourages knowledge transfer and innovation, they contribute to building a sustainable competitive advantage.

However, these approaches need to be adapted to the organizational and cultural contexts of each organization. The real challenge for managers today is to mobilize knowledge workers as key players in this transformation. Knowledge workers play a central role as both repositories and creators of knowledge, but their commitment depends on practices that value their autonomy, creativity and strategic contribution.

In short, this article opens up interesting perspectives for research and practice. Insofar as it emphasizes the synergies between human resources management and its practices and knowledge management, while highlighting their transformative potential. To go further, it is necessary to study the interactions between these two fields in greater depth, notably by exploring the impact of new technologies and innovative organizational models, and by studying each practice in isolation. It is now up to researchers and practitioners to pursue this reflection, in order to bring out solutions adapted to the complex challenges of the knowledge economy.

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