

Human Resource Management: Vector of Adaptability in the Context of the Textile Industry in Romania

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Abstract

The textile industry from Romania is assimilated to the fashion/clothing industry. The main objective of this paper is to present a comparative analysis regarding the average number of employees from all economic activities from Romania and the average number of employees from manufacture of textile products within the same country. For this research was have used data between 2008 and 2018 from the National Institute of Statistics from Romania. The results show that the trend of the textile industry in terms of employees is somewhat analogous with that from all industries. From 2011 to 2018, the textile industry significantly grew in terms of average number of employees: from 28081 employees to 40276 employees, with a growth rate of approximately 43.43%. However, after our analysis, we can approve that the textile industry has a continuously potential to grow and develop in Romania.

Key words: employees, textile industry, human resource management, comparative analysis

J.E.L. classification: J21, L67, O15

1. Introduction

When practicing human resource management in organizations a premise is developed: the fact that people are the main resource of the organization, on which largely depends the performance of the enterprise (Armstrong, 2009, p. 16).

Regardless of the type of organization considered, the existence of an efficient and effective human resources management transforms the human resources department into a "profit center" that leads the company's management towards at least satisfactory financial results (Popescu, 2009, p. 434). Thus, if the field of activity of an enterprise has a high level demand, and the latter is combined with a favorable human resources management practices, then it appears the possibility of obtaining an increased organizational performance right from the beginning of the business.

These being said, there can be approved that human resources management (HRM) is a direction of management within an organization that uses various strategic and coherent approaches in order to manage the most valuable resources: people. Also, through HRM, it is intended to achieve the expected results, because the organizational objectives set by the company's management are followed.

Confections technology was initially used to make service uniforms, regional outfits or clothes that actually required mass production (Grumbach, 2001, p. 113). If in the 19th century peasants were used to make their clothes to the tailor, and starting with the year 1900, women's mass clothing began to develop massively all over the world.

Regarding the textile area, clothing and footwear sector it seems to be a key element of European Union, its contribution to the number of employees and to the added value for the economy of the European space being consistent enough (European Economic and Social Committee, 2011).

2. Theoretical background

In any enterprise, human resource management is on the border between hard and soft. On the one hand, according to the meaning of hard type (technician or material-utilitarian), employees are simple resources that have to be purchased, trained and used in order to achieve the organization's objectives. In the hard vision, human resources are seen as any other economic factor. On the other hand, the soft version of human resources management (humanistic or morally ideational) takes into account communication, the leadership skills of people and their motivations (Neșțian *et al.*, 2020).

In the soft vision, employees are valuable assets and the employer is focused on: their capacity for loyalty, their professional skills, their ability to adapt, etc.

The HRM manager, regardless of the object of activity of an organization, has as main task, the implementation of a human resources strategy that has to be in accordance with the objectives established by the top management of the company. Thus, by establishing a human resources strategy, the following factors come up and influence any of the actions performed (Prodan, 2010, p. 7):

- The organizational structure;
- The culture of the organization;
- Technology;
- Any changes in the labor market.

Given these 4 main factors, it can be concluded that the functions and practices of HRM may vary greatly from one enterprise to another. The functions of HRM can be grouped according to the criterion of the variation of activities in four main categories, as it follows (Armstrong, 2009, p. 46):

- The function of human resources as an internal agency. In this view, any activity of the human resources department is perceived as a cost which is sustained by the other activities from the company.
- The function of human resources as an internal consulting unit. This approach directly concerns the decision-makers in the companies, who can ask for the internal services provided by the human resources department and, if they are dissatisfied of the results, can redirect the organization to other external sources specialised in HRM.
- The function of human resources as a company within the same company. In this case, there is a company specialized in HRM within the organization, whose services can be used by both, employees within the company and other external clients.
- The function of human resources as an external consulting unit. This case can be observed in the case of outsourcing of the HRM function. The outsourced service is provided by several specialized companies, depending on the choices of each department of the enterprise.

In the past, the concept of fashion was a privilege of the royal courts (for example, Maria Antoinette, Queen of France in the time of Louis XVI, was taught by her mother, Empress of the Roman Empire, Maria Theresa, about the personalized couture that was required) (Grumbach, 2001, p. 16). Currently, we are dealing with a real ocean of fashion, called fashion industry.

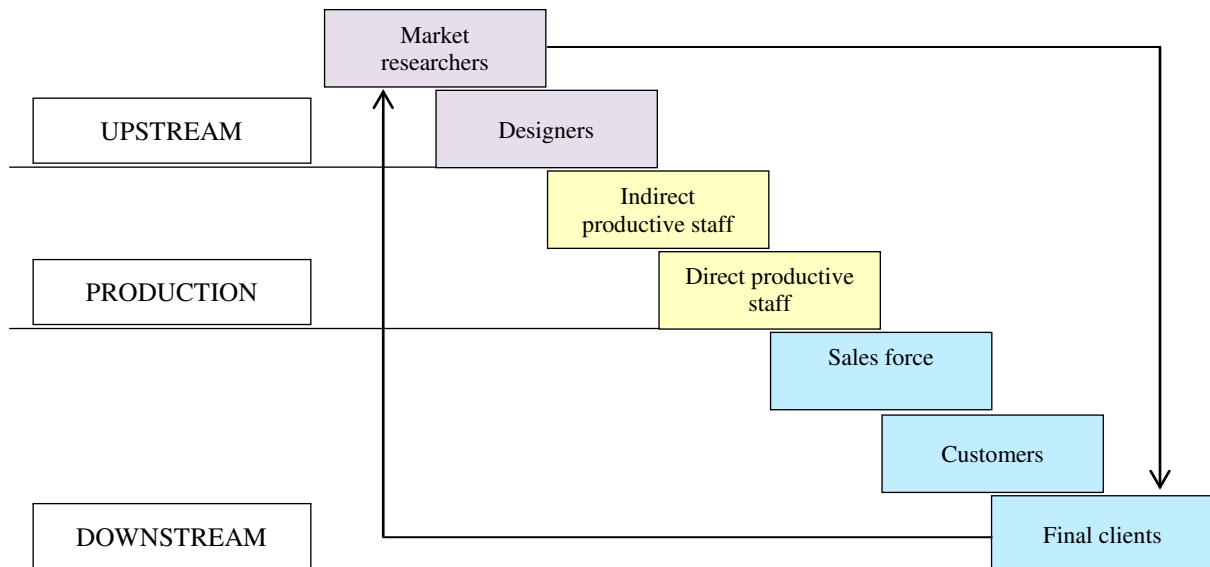
However, the fashion industry can be defined from several perspectives: if the promoters of the fashion industry (mannequins, models) can evaluate this industry as one that pays them for their work and designers can transpose their ideas accordingly to the trends within industry, various chain stores managers (assimilated to the fashion industry) work in this field for one main purpose: a substantial profit.

The fashion industry is an environment that permanently surrounds us and influences: clothing, style, even the behavior of people. The main actors for this industry are: market researchers, designers, direct labor (seamstresses, staff from the creative departments, etc.), indirect productive

staff (sales force, mannequins/models, human resources managers, general managers, etc.), customers and final consumers.

A representative diagram from upstream to downstream shows the main people involved in this chain. HRM department must take into account all these categories of human resources when working in an enterprise. Details are presented in figure no. 1.

Figure no. 1 The general circuit of human resource



Source: Authors' contribution

An organization in this industry may have or not a category of human resources (for example, most luxury brands can afford to own exclusive models-the case of GUESS, Impero Couture, etc., while other brands may call to outsourced services from modeling agencies to promote their products).

The human resources from the entire chain of fashion (which assimilates the textiles field), as shown in the previous figure, are:

- Industry researchers. Their role is to prospect the market and to predict future fashion trends.
- Designers. Their role is to translate trends into their own, original creations (from clothing and footwear to jewelry and perfumes).
- Managers and other indirectly productive staff. Their purpose is to manage domestic production as well as possible, in accordance with market requirements and the ideas of designers and researchers' forecasts.
- Direct productive staff. This category of employees work directly in production (such as dressmakers), and they must have appropriate skills to the area in which the company is in the fashion field (haute couture, prêt à porter, major chains, moderate chains, etc.).
- Other indirect productive staff. It refers to the sales force and product promoters (models, mannequins, etc.).
- Customers and final clients. The customer can be a distributor, and the final client is the person who actually uses the company's products/services.

Personnel in the human resources department must ensure that the company in this field does not have deficiencies in terms of quality/quantity of human resources upstream and downstream and closely monitor their necessary skills that must be in accordance with top management requirements. Ultimately, human resources people need to find a solution that balances the categories of human resources needed to be employed in this field.

The role of a designer can vary depending on the specifics of the company/brand for which he works. A luxury brand (such as Hermès, Louis Vuitton) has in the central plan the designer, who has total freedom in originality and creativity, while the other brands located in retail, can have in general: a director of design that coordinates the activity of the procurement manager and the merchandising activities (Diamond, 2006, p. 39).

Regarding these two categories of clothing designers, the main attributions of the human resources staff that will facilitate their activities are analyzed in table no. 1.

As it is illustrated in table no. 1, human resource management facilitates creation by enabling the environment in which designers can work in a timely manner, with competent and well-trained people. The staff in the human resources department must act as a vector that perfectly aligns the tasks of each employee to the main pawn of the creation related to the company/brand.

Table no. 1 Designers' characteristics and HRM responsibilities

The type of designer	Characteristics	HRM attributions
Luxury brand designer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The designer is the one who coordinates ideas and creativity; • The designer is a public figure, he can become an idol; • The designer takes care of all the upstream and downstream part of the company. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating the environment (from the point of view of human resources collaboration) in which the designer can carry out his activity; • Recruitment, selection and training of staff required for PR; • Recruitment and selection of staff with whom the designer is compatible; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional training of new employees; • Vocational training of former employees according to the market trends.
Design director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company has a creative department with several designers, coordinated by a design director; • Designers/design directors are not public figures; • The tasks from the company are divided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and selection of staff with whom the design director is compatible; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional training of new employees; • Vocational training of former employees in case of retooling.

Source: (adapted after Diamond, 2006, 39)

Considering the importance of the field of textiles at national level for the fashion industry, the attributions of the human resources management for the main categories of employees in this area are illustrated in table no. 2.

Table no. 2 Clothing staff and HRM responsibilities

Employees	Characteristics	HRM attributions
Directors (general, production, commercial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling the related activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of recruitment/professional training activities, etc. depending on the requirements of the top management level.
Confectioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine work; • Fluctuation of staff; • Mostly payment by agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of human resources policies for employees retention (bonuses for exceptional achievements, creation of favorable working conditions, etc.); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of new staff; • Design and implementation of a salary scale in accordance with the requirements of employees and the financial possibilities of the company.
Sales force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small number of sales agents compared to direct productive staff; • Local and international activity (export); • Their activity is influenced by external factors, such as: national policy (taxation, subsidies, etc.), purchasing power, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivating human resources to obtain the expected results (emphasis on percentage of sales, premiums for exceeding targets, etc.); • Design and implementation of a salary scale in accordance with the requirements of employees and the financial possibilities of the company; • Providing training/development programs in the field of sales.

Source: (adapted after Lăzărescu, 2020)

The human resources department must comply with the requirements of the employees, but as far as the management of the company allows this (most often the reasons that slow down the desired actions are the financial restrictions). For the Romanian textile sector, human resources people must find solutions for the employee retention and especially for improving their motivation.

3. Research methodology

For this research there were used the Tempo databases of the National Institute of Statistics from Romania (INSSE) with data between 2008-2018, regarding the average number of employees from the activities of the national economy (sections and divisions) according to CAEN Rev. 2. Data was selected for the 8 regions of Romania: North-West, Center, North-East, South-East, South (Muntenia), București-Ilfov, South-West (Oltenia) and West.

The purpose of this paper is to present a comparative analysis regarding the average number of employees from all the economic activities from Romania and the average number of employees from the manufacture of textile products from Romania. The data processing was performed with the Excel program from Microsoft Office, and the analysis was made only at a descriptive level.

4. Findings

Table no. 3 shows the average of total employees in Romania from all activities, in the main 8 regions of the country. Data was analyzed for the period 2008-2018.

Table no. 3 The average of total number of employees for all activities in Romania by regions according to CAEN Rev. 2

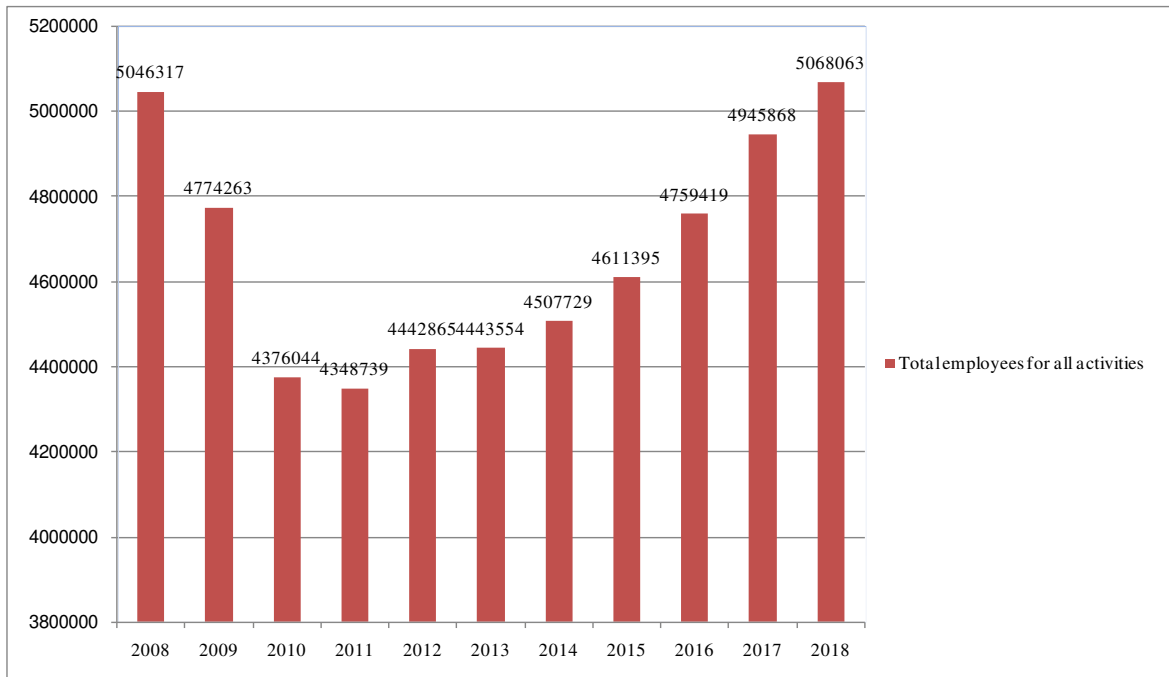
Region	North-West	Center	North-East	South-East	South	București-Ilfov	South-West	West	Total
2008	646075	632847	592399	590799	600776	1025786	423895	533740	5046317
2009	614616	586433	556601	557300	575161	992590	401130	490432	4774263
2010	573728	544191	499314	503193	518977	918069	363808	454764	4376044
2011	569195	546445	492185	488966	514078	911534	361744	464592	4348739
2012	582932	567851	505799	498940	523551	918900	369294	475598	4442865
2013	591258	573807	497928	498958	528069	915542	361793	476199	4443554
2014	614810	579874	499798	503319	531232	932699	359789	486208	4507729
2015	628425	590125	513631	509582	540867	966068	364313	498384	4611395
2016	649572	611269	532486	512799	547849	1024401	370663	510380	4759419
2017	681859	637749	554237	533782	573033	1056169	383102	525937	4945868
2018	691451	653485	569739	541662	588074	1099405	397360	526887	5068063

Source: (processed after Tempo ONLINE, 2020)

The number of employees in Romania remains somewhat stable if we refer to the years 2008 and 2018: in 2008 were employed, on average, 5046317 people, and in 2018, 5068063. The lowest number of employees was registered in 2010, when, on average, there were 4376044 people in the field of work, and the largest number of employees in the analyzed period was registered in 2018, when 5068063 people were employed.

For a better understanding of the information, data is graphically presented in figure no. 2.

Figure no. 2 The average of total number of employees for all activities in Romania according to CAEN Rev. 2



Source: (processed after Tempo ONLINE, 2020)

The total number of employees decreased, on average, from 2008 to 2011 by approximately 13.82%. Probably the economic crisis from this period was a factor that contributed to this decline. Starting with 2012, and until 2018, the average number of employees has continuously increased. More precisely, from 2011 to 2018, the number of employees increased by approximately 16.54%.

Table no. 4 shows the average of total employees in Romania from the manufacture of textiles industry, in the main 8 regions of the country. Data was analyzed for the same period: 2008-2018.

Table no. 4 The average of total number of employees for manufacture of textiles in Romania by regions according to CAEN Rev. 2

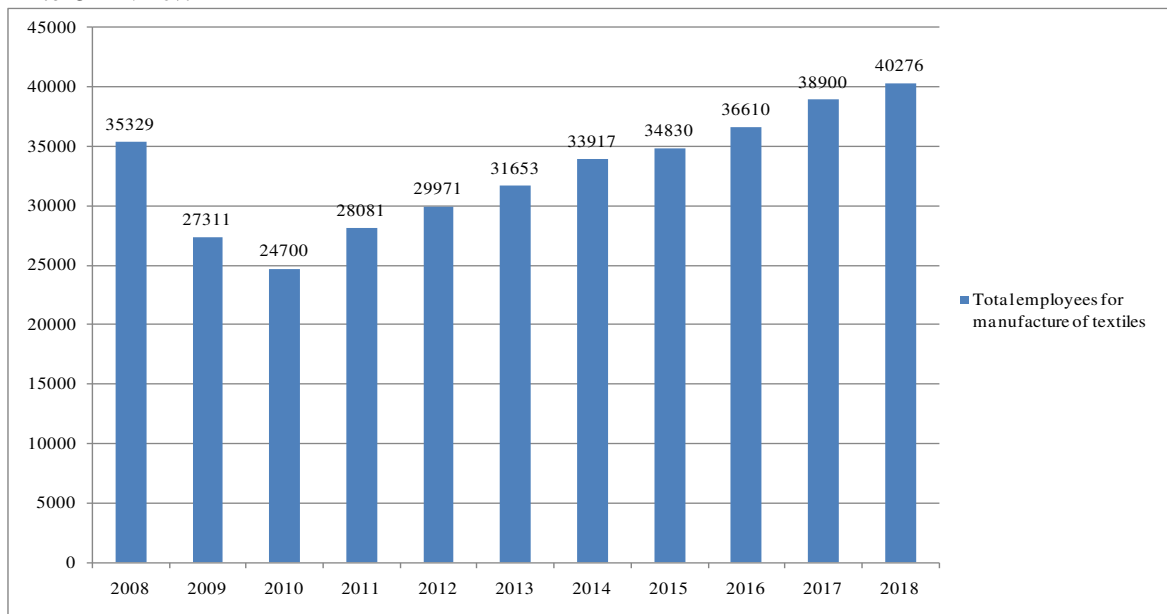
Region	North-West	Center	North-East	South-East	South	București-Ilfov	South-West	West	Total
2008	5678	6127	6928	1692	4414	2843	1746	5901	35329
2009	4052	5188	5667	1505	3921	1926	993	4059	27311
2010	3117	4705	5030	1375	4126	1748	909	3690	24700
2011	3344	5319	5294	1780	4837	1586	936	4985	28081
2012	3405	5651	5289	1594	4923	2182	1224	5703	29971
2013	3562	5598	5707	1823	5589	1647	1136	6591	31653
2014	3523	5355	6363	2230	6288	2152	1116	6890	33917
2015	3913	6016	6444	2071	6425	1779	1284	6898	34830
2016	4433	6942	6199	1961	6742	2271	1202	6860	36610
2017	4559	7455	6684	1938	7060	2583	1421	7200	38900
2018	4823	8192	6684	2203	7218	2478	1663	7015	40276

Source: (processed after Tempo ONLINE, 2020)

The number of employees in Romania significantly increased from the year 2008 to the year 2018: in 2008 were employed, on average, 35329 people, and in 2018, 40276 (the growth rate is 14%). The lowest number of employees was registered, again, in 2010, when, on average, there were 24700 people in the field of work, and the largest number of employees in the analyzed period was registered one more time in 2018, when 40276 people were employed.

In order to better understand the information, data is graphically presented in figure no. 3.

Figure no. 3 The average of total number of employees for manufacture of textiles in Romania according to CAEN Rev. 2



Source: (processed after Tempo ONLINE, 2020)

The total number of employees decreased, on average, from 2008 to 2010 by approximately 30.09% (much more compared to the decreasing rate of the number of employees from total industries of 13.82% for the period 2008-2011). Again, probably the economic crisis from this period was a factor that contributed to this decline. Starting with 2011, and until 2018, the average number of employees has continuously increased. More precisely, from 2011 to 2018, the number of employees increased by approximately 43.43%.

5. Conclusions

Human resource management facilitates creation and design by enabling the environment in which designers and workers from the textile industry can work in a timely manner, with competent and well-trained people. The staff in the human resources department must act as a vector that perfectly aligns the tasks of each employee to the main pawn of the creation related to a company/brand. Also, the HRM activities are related to organizational rewards, very important for the employees and the budget of the company as well (Armstrong *et al*, 2011; Balme, 2009), and thus, in this area, the staff of HR department have to establish a balance.

From 2011 to 2018, the textile industry significantly grew in terms of average number of employees: from 28081 employees to 40276 employees, with a growth rate of approximately 43.43%. The factors that led to this situation could be: the increasing demand of export, the increasing of the number of corporations with this object of activity in Romania, a higher demand inside the country, etc. Finally, after our analysis, the textile industry has continuously a potential to grow and develop. The trend of the textile industry in terms of employees is somewhat analogous to that of the average number of employees from all industries, with the observation that, after the economic crisis that started in 2008, the increase in the number of employees in the textiles began in 2011, earlier than the general trend which has begun to increase starting with the year 2012. This indicates that the textile industry has recovered faster from the economic crisis.

6. Acknowledgment

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