

Stakeholders' perceptions of the constraints line managers experience in effectively implementing HR practices

The effect of internal and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices on the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices

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Management summary

The presence of HR practices and the effectiveness of HRM implementation are two aspects which are crucial for HRM to be successful. Line managers are responsible for implementing the HR practices on the work floor. Nevertheless, research has indicated that line managers experience several constraints in effectively implementing HR practices. HR practices can be properly designed, but if line managers are unable or not motivated to implement these HR practices successfully on the work floor these HR practices will not be effective.

The aim of this study is to measure to what extent internal and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices correspond with the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. The focus of the study is if employees and line managers will give different attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices for the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. Furthermore, this study aims to examine if the stakeholders gave external or internal attributions of implementation constraint(s) and which constraint(s) are the most influencing factor(s).

In order to determine which internal and external factors play a role for an HRM implementation to be effective, it was beneficial to collect data from multiple stakeholders for a more reliable result based on the fundamental attribution error. The fundamental attribution error expects that line managers will not say that an ineffective implementation is due to internal constraints. Therefore, also employees were asked about line managers' constraints since they experience and interpret HR practices and are therefore a suitable candidate to judge HRM effectiveness. It is an online survey and the study ended up with a sample of 58 employees and 19 line managers.

The results partly agree and partly disagree with the overall findings in the literature. Employees and line managers do make a difference in attribution of internal and external factors concerning the implementation of HR practices for the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. Line managers attribute more external factors and less internal factors than employees to the effectiveness of implementation of HR practices. Furthermore, internal and external factors do interact positively with each other to explain certain subscales of the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices.

However, the results are not entirely reliable due to the small sample. Further research on additional stakeholders should determine whether different stakeholders disagree in constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices for an effective HRM implementation.

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1. Introduction

1.1 HRM implementation

In many studies researchers focus on the relationship between HR (Human Resource) practices and firm performance (Arthur, 1992; Delaney & Huselid, 1996) rather than on the effectiveness of the implementation of HR practices (Huselid, Jackson & Schuler, 1997; Gratton & Truss, 2003). Khilji and Wang (2006) argue that to understand the HR practices and firm performance link, it is not sufficient to have good practices if they are not properly implemented. There has been an increasingly significant difference during the last decade between the HR policy on paper and the daily HR practices (Biemans, 2013). In practice not all HR policies and instruments will be implemented effectively (Biemans, 2013). According to Gratton and Truss (2003) there are two aspects which are important for HRM (Human Resource Management) to be successfully, the presence of HR practices and a successful HRM implementation. The success of HRM implementation has received little attention so far.

HR practices contribute to firm performance if employees are motivated or encouraged to adopt desired behaviours and attitudes that, collectively, help achieve the organization's strategic goal (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). An effective HRM implementation enables that employees contribute to the overall direction of the company and the achievement of the organization's goal. HRM implementation is an important aspect of HRM effectiveness (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). HR practices can be properly designed but if line managers are unable or not motivated to implement these HR practices successful on the work floor these HR practices will not be effective (Bos-Nehles, Riemsdijk, Kok & Looise, 2006). This study will examine how effective line managers' HRM implementation is. Employees will be asked about the effectiveness of line managers' HRM implementation. Line managers' effectiveness of implementation of HR practices is defined as the degree of satisfaction to which HR practices are enacted or put into practice as judged by their employees' experience (Gratton & Truss, 2003). For an HRM implementation to be effective, we have to determine which factors play a role.

1.2 Line managers and their constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices

Line managers play a major role in day-to-day implementation of HRM (Guest & Bos-Nehles, 2013). Line managers have to execute the HR practices on the work floor; they have the responsibility for the HRM implementation (Gratton & Truss, 2003). (First) line managers

can be defined as (the lowest) line managers at the operational level, who manage a team of operational employees on a day-to-day basis and are responsible for performing HRM activities (Bos-Nehles et al, 2006, p. 256).

Often, line managers find it difficult to implement HR practices since they experience several limitations (Renwick, 2002). One can have properly developed HR practices but if line managers fail to implement these HR practices they will not be effective (Bos-Nehles et al, 2006). Line managers are generally either unwilling or unable to effectively implement HR practices (Guest & Bos-Nehles, 2013, p. 96). Bos-Nehles (2010) has described the factors that can be seen as the main constraints line managers can experience in effectively implementing HR practices. She used five constraints in her study that were most mentioned in the devolution literature namely (the lack of) desire, capacity, competences, support and policy and procedures. In this study the focus will also on those five constraints.

According to Bos-Nehles (2010) her research, three of the five factors are significant for HRM implementation effectiveness. The more capacity, competences and support from HR professionals line managers have, the more effectively they implement HR practices (Bos-Nehles, 2010). Also Biemans (2013) focused in her research on the constraints line managers can experience in implementing HR practices. Her research partially confirms Bos-Nehles (2010) conclusions: they are motivated to perform HR tasks, there are sufficient policies, instruments and procedures, but not all managers have the right skills to perform HR tasks well. The following part of the claims is not confirmed; limitations in the support of the HR department and lack of time affects the HR performance of the line manager in the perception of line managers and employees.

Bos-Nehles (2010) who did her research in the production industry in the Netherlands concludes that more research from different organizational and national contexts is needed to determine how robust her findings are about the assumption that line managers are generally either unwilling or unable to implement HRM effectively. As mentioned, Biemans (2013) and Bos-Nehles (2010) contradict each other about this assumption.

1.3 Focus on public service sector

This study builds on the assumption that line managers are generally unwilling or unable to effectively implement HR practices but this study will be researched in a different context than in the research of Bos-Nehles (2010). In this study, research will be done in the public service sector. Research within the public service sector about the relationship between the

HRM and performance is scarce (Bach & Bordogna, 2011; Messersmith, Patel & Lepak, 2011). As Bach and Bordogna (2011) observe, limited attention has been paid to the public service sector in the HRM literature. Organizations realize more and more that the quality of the implementation of HR practices is important for the quality of the production and the quality of the services (Biemans, 2013).

Since 1980 public organizations are increasingly facing pressure to perform. A more business-oriented management approach has come to play a central role within the public service sector (Boyne, Meier, O'Toole and Walker, 2006; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). In addition to values such as legitimacy and quality, values such as effectiveness and efficiency have gained importance. The idea is that, using these values, public organizations can better be judged on their performance. Moreover, because of increased individualization and growing emancipation, citizens expect more from government (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2004; 2012). Citizens expect public services to be of high quality, to be efficient, and to be customized to their needs (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2001). Bos-Nehles (2010) did conduct her research in the production sector. With the given challenges in the public service sector it may be interesting to look into how line managers' experience constraints in effectively implementing HR practices in this said sector.

In the public service sector line managers must create an environment in which employees have the skills and the tools to provide effective service. The recruitment, selection, orientation and training of employees as service providers are essential to the creation of a high-quality service climate. Line managers must coach and train the employees to provide an optimal service to customers (Collins, 2008). In manufacturing company's managers focus more on scheduling the activities needed to transform raw materials into finished goods whereas in the public organization they focus more on scheduling workers so that they are available to handle customer demand (Collins, 2008). A feature of HRM is its assumption that improved performance can be achieved through people in the organization. This seems to be especially true for the public service sector since this is generally considered to be labor-intensive (Boyne, 2003; Poutvaara and Wagener, 2008). Based on this difference, it is expected that line managers are more focused on an effective implementation of HR practices in a public service sector company than in a production sector company.

1.4 Attribution theory

The attribution theory will be used in the present study to gain a better theoretical understanding of HRM implementation effectiveness. The attribution theory is about how people deal with the information they use in making causal inferences (Kelley, 1973).

Attributions are “causal explanations for one’s own behavior, others’ behavior or episodic events” (Nishii, Lepak & Schneider, 2008, p.7). To explain why someone behaves in a specific way depends on whether the “locus of causality is internal or external to the person” (Nishii et al., 2008, p.8). An external attribution declares an event from factors beyond the person and an internal attribution declares an event to factors within the person.

By explaining the behavior of a person, many people tend to attribute the behavior to factors that are within the other person like a certain personality or character traits. This limitation related to the attribution theory is called the fundamental attribution error (Geare, Edgar & Deng, 2006). Another limitation related to the attribution theory is “self-serving bias.” That means that people often have a self-perception that is overly positive and they make a too favorable view of themselves (Kwan, Johan, Kenny, Bond & Robins, 2004).

In the present study there will be researched if stakeholders give different attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices for an effective HRM implementation. The multi-constituency approach of Tsui (1987;1990) suggests that it would be beneficial to collect data from multiple stakeholders surrounding the line manager. A number of authors have called for multiple respondents as a means of increasing the reliability of responses (Gerhart, Wright, McMahan and Snell, 2000). Until today, only a few studies of HR effectiveness have collected information from more than one source. Therefore, in this study both perceptions of employees and line managers will be asked about the constraints line managers can experience in effectively implementing HR practices. Line managers will be asked since they implement the HR practices and employees since they experience and interpret HR practices and are therefore a suitable candidate to judge HRM effectiveness (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004).

Based on the attribution error, it is expected that line managers will not say that an ineffective implementation of HR practices is since they are not appropriate to implement HR practices. Line managers rather will give socially desirable answers and they rather say that an ineffective implementation of HR practices is because of external factors instead of internal factors. For a more objective view about HRM implementation effectiveness, both

stakeholders (line managers themselves and their employees) will be asked about the constraints line managers can experience in effectively implementing HR practices.

1.5 Different stakeholders' perspectives on line managers' effectiveness of implementing HR practices

Bos-Nehles (2010) mentioned that line managers can give biased answers, because line managers might not want to admit their weaknesses in HRM implementation. The consequence could be an ineffective HRM implementation and this might result in a bad performance of the company. In view of the mentioned bias, it will therefore be more objective to ask more stakeholders for having a more objective view of the possible constraints line managers experience in an effective HRM implementation. By either comparing self-perception to the perceptions of others, self-enhancement bias will be controlled in order to achieve an objective measure of the constraints perceived by line managers in effectively implementing HR practices. Line managers are implementers of HR practices and employees are consumers of HR practices, because of this distinction it might be that line managers evaluate the quality of HRM implementation higher than employees do (Geare et al., 2006). The perspectives of the different stakeholders might be helpful for a more objective measure of the constraints line managers can experience in effectively implementing HR practices.

Using the attribution theory, the performance of line managers in implementing HR practices can be viewed in terms of personal (internal) or environmental (external) constraints. Given the fact that people tend to attribute success to themselves, there will be expected that line managers will give different answers than their employees when asked what their constraints are in effectively implementing HR practices. The present study will incorporate responses from line managers and their employees alike to come to measures that could possibly reduce limitations of the attribution theory of the line managers' constraints in effectively implementing HR practices.

2. Relevance

2.1 Theoretical relevance

There are contradicting findings about the constraints line managers experience in effectively implementing HR practices (see Bos-Nehles, 2010, and Biemans, 2013). The present study aims at adding to the understanding of the constraints line managers experience in implementing HR practices by collecting data on the public service sector and adding the perspective of the line managers' employees. The attribution theory might be helpful to gain more insight in the constraints line managers experience in effectively implementing HR practices.

According to Bos-Nehles (2010) more research is needed to determine how robust her findings are about the fact that line managers are often unable or unwilling to effectively implement HR practices. The present study builds on the reliable instrument of Bos-Nehles (2010) for examining the relationship between line managers' constraints and their HRM implementation effectiveness. However, this study will be done in a different context other than in the research of Bos-Nehles (2010) and also an additional group of stakeholders will be asked about the constraints line managers experience in effectively implementing HR practices. This study elaborates on the questionnaire from Bos-Nehles (2010) about the five constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices and the HRM implementation effectiveness.

In the questionnaire for line managers, line managers will be asked about the possible constraints they might perceive in their HR role, since line managers are the ones responsible for implementing HR practices and therefore they evaluate any challenges faced in implementing them. A number of authors have called for responses from multiple stakeholders as a means of increasing the reliability of responses (Gerhart et al., 2000).

Asking more stakeholders to increase the reliability of responses and the discussion that HRM effectiveness should be evaluated by employees because employees experience and interpret HR practices. Also, employees will be asked about the possible constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices line managers might perceive in their HR role. In addition, the employees will also be asked about HRM implementation effectiveness, how satisfied they are about the way their line managers implement HR practices.

The theoretical relevance of this study is further supported by the application of the attribution theory. There is the chance that line managers commit a fatal attribution error when

expressing their experienced constraints in effectively implementing HR practices. Discovering a fatal attribution error in the expressed experience of the line managers may shed light onto differences found between mentioned research papers. The theory offers insights into the different attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices line managers and employees can give for effectively implementing HR practices. The attribution theory can possibly lead to a better insight into what extent the different attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices correspond with the effectiveness of line managers in implementing HR practices. This study also investigates whether the internal and external attributed constraints have an interaction effect on the effectiveness of line managers in implementing HR practices. Hopefully, measurements of these concepts could provide new insights which can make a valuable contribution to existing literature.

2.2 Practical relevance

This study also has practical relevance for organizations. First of all, the research instrument enables organizations to measure their line managers' constraints in effectively implementing HR practices. It is useful to know for an organization which constraints line managers and employees perceive concerning an ineffective HRM implementation. This will provide organizations with useful insights on what hinders line managers in effectively implementing HR practices and also whether more attention has to be paid on internal or external constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices. According to the outcomes of the study a company can take adequate measures to optimize factors that can be seen as constraints. Organizations will be aware of which constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices line managers perceive and which of them are most hindering.

Furthermore, a practical relevance of this study is provided by understanding how employees judge their line managers. This is important to know for organizations because the higher employees rated their line managers concerning their HR practices, the more satisfied and committed they are to the organization. The higher employees rated their line managers concerning their HR practices, the higher the performance of organizations is (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007). When employees rated their line managers high concerning their HR practices, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) mainly occurs (Organ & Ryan, 1995). OCB represents all the behavior of the employee that falls outside the official job description and what is useful to the organization. OCB can be an important aspect of employee behavior that contributes to the overall effectiveness of the organization (Organ & Ryan, 1995).

Moreover, organizations obtain insight into what extent the constraints that line managers' experience in implementing HR practices correspond with the effectiveness of implementing HR practices. With this information, HR managers can support line managers in their work to reduce these constraints and increase the quality of implementation of HR practices. Overall, the results of this study can be used to improve the effectiveness of implementing HR practices. This can finally result in a better firm performance (Becker & Huselid, 1998).

3. Research goal and research question

The goal of this study is to assess to what extent internal and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices correspond with the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices.

This study examines this by taking into account the perceptions of the line managers as well as the perceptions of the employees. The focus of this study is if employees and line managers will give different attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices for the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. Furthermore, it is important to know if they gave external or internal attributions of constraint(s) concerning the implementation of HR practices and which constraint(s) are the most influencing factor(s). By determining if and which attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices correspond with the effectiveness of HRM implementation, the organization can optimize the process of an effective HRM implementation.

To find out to what extent internal and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices correspond with the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices, the research question is:

Research question: To what extent do internal and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices correspond with the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices?

4. Thesis structure

The next chapter of this study concerns a literature study to find out what is already known about the importance of an effective implementation of HR practices, line managers' constraints in effectively implementing HR practices and different stakeholders' perspective on HRM implementation effectiveness. Hypotheses are formulated to form the foundations for the research question. At the end of the literature study the research model will be present. The third chapter is about the method in which it is about the research population and data collection, the operationalization, reliability assessment of the variables and the preliminary analysis. The fourth chapter is about the analyses and results. The fifth chapter concerns the discussion and explanation of the results in comparison with the literature. It also concerns the practical and theoretical limitations and the suggestions for further research. Furthermore, it concerns the practical and theoretical implications. The last chapter is the conclusion on the results.

5. Literature review

5.1 The importance of an effective implementation of HR practices

A shift of HR responsibilities has taken place from HR managers to line managers (Larsen & Brewster, 2003), which is called devolution. “Performance appraisal, redundancy selection, recruitment, communication and counseling of employees and sickness absence are examples of tasks that are being devolved to line managers (Renwick, 2003, p. 266).” “Reasons why line managers obtain more HR responsibilities are: to reduce costs, to provide a more comprehensive approach to HRM, to place responsibility for HRM with managers most responsible for it, to speed up decision making, and as an alternative to outsourcing the HR function (Renwick, 2003, p. 262).” In the last decade the role of line managers has become more and more important (Larsen & Brewster, 2003). Line managers have been observed to play a more prominent role in HRM due to more HR work being “devolved” to them (Renwick, 2003). They have more responsibility for managing their staff and the extent to which line management autonomy is controlled or restricted by human resource managers will be reduced (Larsen & Brewster, 2003). Line managers are in a crucial position in the HRM performance causal chain (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007); they have the primary responsibility for actually implementing HR practices (Guest & Bos-Nehles, 2012).

The increased involvement of line managers in HRM has both positive and negative sides (Renwick, 2003). “By pushing HR decision making down to line managers, they should be able to make faster decisions that are more tailored to individual circumstances (Perry & Kulik, 2008, p.263).” Perry and Kulik (2008) examined the effect of devolution of HR tasks to line managers in organizations and they found that it has a positive effect on the effectiveness of HRM as perceived by HR professionals. But many researchers expressed their concern about line managers’ HR performance. Furthermore, McGovern, Gratton, Hope-Hailey, Stiles and Truss (1997) predicted that the prospects for devolvement to the line are not promising. “Attempts to devolve HRM to the line in any grand sense can only be regarded as quixotic (McGovern et al., 1997, p. 26).” It is important to identify what kind of effect the devolution of HR tasks to line managers have on the effectiveness of the HRM system.

The HRM system contributes to the organizational performance (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Becker & Huselid, 1998). According to Boselie, Dietz and Boon (2005) empirical evidence confirms a weak relation between HRM and organizational performance. Several researchers are still trying to understand the underlying mechanisms through which this relationship takes

place (Guest, 2011; Wright & Nishii, 2006;2013). The so-called black box between HRM and performance has pointed researchers towards the role of the line manager in mediating the relationship (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007). Wright and Nishii (2006) have drawn attention to the distinction between intended HRM (policies developed by decision makers), actual HRM (implemented HR practices) and perceived HRM (employee perceptions of HR practices). Line managers should implemented the intended HR practices in order that they influence the attitudes and behaviors of employees, which finally results in individual and organizational performance outcomes (Wright & Nishii, 2006;2013). Line managers' discretion in executing HR tasks means that they play an important role in the link between HRM and performance.

Due to the shift of HR responsibilities, line managers can experience constraints, and the implementation of HR tasks by line managers will not always be adequate (Bos-Nehles, Riemsdijk, & Looise, 2011). Not all HR policies and instruments will be effectively implemented by line managers in practice (Biemans, 2013). Earlier studies focused on delineating line management's HR-role (McGovern et al., 1997), but recent studies look at the effectiveness of implementation and factors explaining a successful HRM implementation by the line (Bos-Nehles, 2010). Bos-Nehles (2010) identifies that there are five constraints line managers frequently experience in implementing HR practices. Bos-Nehles (2010) used those five constraints in her study. She studied to what extent first line managers themselves perceive the five constraints that have been indentified so far as hindering and how the HRM implementation success is perceived by employees. Those five constraints will be explained in the next chapter and will also be used for this study.

In case studies it has been underlined that line managers' constraints are expected to reduce HRM implementation effectiveness (Renwick, 2002; Brewster & Larson, 2000). Line managers' effectiveness of implementing HR practices is defined as the degree of satisfaction to which HR practices are enacted or put into practice as judged by their employees' experience (Gratton & Truss, 2003). It is important for a company that the HRM implementation is effective because the HRM system can contribute to the organizational performance (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Becker & Huselid, 1998), for example Bowen and Ostroff (2004) state that HR practices, as a system, can contribute to firm performance. The HR practices contribute to firm performance if employees are motivated or encouraged to adopt desired behaviours and attitudes that, on the whole, help achieve the organization's strategic goals. So effective HRM implementation enables employees to contribute to the overall direction of the company and the achievement of the organization's objectives and

goal. This study contribute to examine the constraints line managers experience and what the effect of the constraints is on the effectiveness of the HRM implementation. Effective implementation is also important for line managers themselves since they are responsible for the operational output and performance of their team (Bos-Nehles et al., 2011).

5.2 Line managers' constraints in effectively implementing HR practices

The effectiveness of HRM depends not only on the presence of good HRM practices but also on the manner and context (Wright & Nishii, 2006). Often line managers spend time on their HR responsibilities even if they don't want to do so. A lot of HR responsibilities are added to the functional responsibilities of the line managers (Larsen & Brewster, 2000).

Bos-Nehles (2010) has been made a research model that focuses on the relationship between the constraints that hinder line managers' HRM implementation. According to Bos-Nehles (2010) there are five constraints that line managers frequently experience. She has been studied to what extent first line managers themselves perceive the five factors. However, in this study both perceptions of line managers and that of employees will be examined. This will be explained in the next chapter. One of the constraints is (the lack of) desire. It has been claimed by Cunningham & Hyman (1999) and Brewster & Larsen (2000) that line managers are not motivated to perform their HR role and do not want to engage in HRM. They lack the willingness to implement HR practices. "This lack of willingness can come forth from a lack of personal or institutionalized incentives (Bos-Nehles, 2010, p. 17)." According to Whittaker and Marchington (2003), people management activities suffer from a lack of attention as short-term operational objectives are given priority. Another constraint that is that of capacity. It is argued that line managers do not have the capacity to spend time on both operational and personnel responsibilities (Bos-Nehles, 2010). Another constraint is support. It is argued that line managers do not always receive support and advice from HR managers to perform their role effectively. Policy and procedures is also a constraint. HR policy is important for line managers whether to know which practices they should use and how they have to execute it at the operational level (Bos-Nehles, 2010). Clear guidelines and communication from the HR department can help to minimize uncertainties amongst line managers about their HR tasks (Den Hartog, Boon, Verburg & Croon, 2013). Furthermore, another constraint is competences. Line managers may have limited management skills and often lack specialist knowledge on HRM (Bos-Nehles, 2010). Line managers often lack the expertise necessary to tackle increasingly complex HR issues. The HR competency of line managers has been assessed to be inadequate by both HR professional and line managers

themselves (Maxwell & Watson, 2006). According to Harris, Doughty and Kirk (2002) an investment in the appropriate training in people management can avoid this problem but not many organizations provide such formal HR training.

These five factors highlight the possible causes of the difficulties line managers experience when implementing HR practices and those five factors will also be used in this study. Bos-Nehles (2010) found that three of these five factors are significant for HRM effectiveness. “The more capacity, competences and support from HR professionals line managers have, the more effectively line managers implement HR practices (Bos-Nehles, 2010, p. 188).” Biemans (2013) analyzed several case studies and based on the case studies she gives an addition on the research of Bos-Nehles (2010) about the five factors model of HRM implementation. The results of her case studies show that two factors, competences of the line manager and support from HRM, play an important role. This seems to be enhanced by the factor lack of time (capacity). The conclusions from the research of Bos-Nehles (2010) are partially confirmed through the perception of the line managers: they are motivated to perform HR tasks, there are sufficient policies, instruments and procedures, but not all managers have the right skills to perform HR tasks well. The following part of the claims is not confirmed; limitations in the support of the HR department and lack of time negatively affects the HR performance of the line manager in the perception of line managers and employees. Based on the different results, more qualitative and quantitative research is needed. In particular more research is needed about constraints and incentives of line manager’s HR performance. Both perceptions of the line managers themselves as those of their employees should thereby be further investigated in this study.

Bos-Nehles (2010) and Biemans (2013) have studied the constraints line managers experience in effectively implementing HR practices. Biemans (2013) states that limitations in the support of the HR department and lack of time negatively affects the HR performance of the line manager in the perception of line managers and employees, whereas Bos-Nehles (2010) suggests that it is not. Based on the inconsistent results of the studies of those two researchers, this study will elaborate on the constraints line managers experience, for obtaining more insight in the constraints and for obtaining more insight about the effect of this on the HRM implementation. This research builds on the relationship between the five implementation constraints line managers experience according to Bos-Nehles (2010). However, not only the perceptions of line managers will be examined such as in the research of Bos-Nehles (2010)

but also the perceptions of employees will be examined. The effectiveness of implementing HR practices will be perceived by employees.

5.3 Different stakeholders' perspective on HRM implementation effectiveness

Although the research of Bos-Nehles (2010) focused on the constraints line managers experience in effectively implementing HR practices, little research considered different stakeholders about those constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices.

A number of authors have called for multiple respondents as a means of increasing the reliability of responses (Gerhart et al., 2000). Until today, only a few studies of HR effectiveness have collected information from more than one source. For example Huselid et al. (1997) collected their information from HR managers but also included a few line managers. In addition, Khilji and Wang (2006) collected their data from an aggregated sample of line managers and staff about the satisfaction with effectiveness. This study will build on the different stakeholders.

It will be beneficial to collect data from multiple stakeholders because customers have different roles in a company, and accordingly they may also have different perspectives on line managers effectiveness of implementing HR practices (Tsui, 1987). Multiple stakeholders include insights from their various perspectives. For example, line managers have to implement the HR practices and employees are on the receiving end of HR practices. A case in point of the different roles people could have in a company is that of Mitsuhashi, Park, Wright and Chua (2000). This study examines the differences in perceptions of the importance and effectiveness of human resources practices in firms operating in the PRC (People's Republic of China). An analysis of questionnaire surveys conducted in 1997 were used for examining both line and HR executives' perceived effectiveness and importance of HR departments. A striking result was seen in the differences between the perceived effectiveness of the entire HR function as rated by the HR and line executives. Both groups had different strategic needs. Both groups view the issue of securing, developing and maintaining human resources as a critical issue for the execution of daily operating and long-term strategic plans. Line executives perceive HR performance effectiveness as significantly lower in these functional areas than HR executives do. As a result, HR departments are not meeting the performance expectations of line executives (Mitsuhashi et al., 2000). Furthermore, line executives have more knowledge of what might be best for the firm. The authors of the article of Wright et al. (2001) find that employees are an important customer

group but line executives serve as HR's most important customer. Because of the different roles customers could have, a stakeholder perspective in judging the effectiveness of HRM implementation will be beneficial.

Employees and line managers are the crucial stakeholders to research HRM implementation effectiveness. Line managers will be asked about their effectiveness of implementing HR practices and employees will be asked about how effective their line managers' HRM implementation is. Employees experience and interpret HR practices and are therefore a suitable candidate to judge HRM effectiveness (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Therefore, this study will use both stakeholders' perceptions of line managers and employees.

This research aims to address the neglect of the different perspectives of stakeholders by using attribution theory. Attribution theory can help to provide a better understanding of the behavior of individuals within an organization by distinguishing between external and internal attributions of people to an event. The number of studies using attribution theory in organization studies is still very limited. Attribution theory refers to the perception or inference of cause (Kelley & Michela, 1980) and explains how people deal with the information they use in making causal inferences (Kelley, 1973). It is often used when one wants to give meaning to things, want to have control over his own environment or self-worth. It has become known for its distinction between two types of statements, external and internal attributions (Heider, 1958). An external attribution declares an event from factors beyond a person ("it is because of something or someone else"), meaning that the causes of behavior are attributed to factors over which individuals have no influence, such as the situation or environment in which he or she is located, or actions performed by others. An internal attribution explains the causality of events to factors within the person, ("it is my own fault or performance"), meaning that the causes of behavior can be attributed to the person himself/herself. These could include character traits, personality or simply people's own actions (Heider, 1958). In this study attributions are defined as causal explanations that employees and line managers make regarding the constraints line managers experience in effectively implementing HR practices. This study examines external and internal attributions of line managers and employees about the constraints line managers can experience in effectively implementing HR practices.

The constraining factors line managers perceive for the effective implementation of HR practices can be distinguished based on internal and external attributions of line managers for the causes of effective or ineffective HRM implementation. The internal implementation

attributions are desire and competences. Attributions are “causal explanations for one’s own behavior, others’ behavior or episodic events (Nishii, Lepak & Schneider, 2008, p.7).” To explain why someone behaves in a specific way depends on whether the “locus of causality is internal or external to the person (Nishii et al., 2008, p.8).” Line managers can have a lack of desire or willingness to implement their HR responsibilities (Brewster & Larsen, 2000; Cunningham & Hyman, 1999). According to Huselid (1995), willingness is essential for someone to perform effectively. It is also possible that line managers do not have the required competences to manage people. Desire and competences are two factors that explain the causality of events to factors within the person. People rather attribute success to themselves or to their actions (internal attribution) and failure to environmental or external factors (external attribution) (Geare, Edgar & Deng, 2006). This is called the “fundamental attribution error.” Based on this it is expected that line managers will not say that an ineffective implementation is because they are not appropriate to implement HR practices. They rather say that it is because of external factors instead of internal factors. People who have internal locus of control believe that the outcomes of their actions are the results of their own abilities. The external implementation attributions are capacity, support and policy and procedures. Those external factors declare an event from factors beyond a person. Line managers can experience difficulties because of a lack of support from the HR department or a lack of policy and procedures and capacity on how to execute their HRM responsibilities. People with an external locus of control tend to believe that the things which happen in their lives are out of their control. Such people tend to blame others rather than themselves for their lives’ outcomes. The attributions people make about an effective implementation of HR practices can have an effect on their behavior and attitudes.

In general people have a need to predict and control the environment by understanding the causes of behaviors and events (Heider, 1958). Because people’s interpretations of the causes of behavior and events determine their attitudes and behaviors, it is critical to understand the attributions (Kelley & Michela, 1980). When attributing performance to internal or external factors, errors may be created because not all the necessary information is available. People who have internal locus of control believe that the outcomes of their actions are the result of their own abilities. They believe that their hard work would lead to obtain positive outcomes. According to them, things happen and it depends on them if they want to have control over it or not. People with an external locus of control tend to believe that the things which happen in their lives are out of their control. Their own actions are a result of external factors such as

luck. Those people tend to blame others rather than themselves for their lives' outcomes. There are two types of errors people can make when they attribute: the fundamental attribution error and the self-serving bias. People often have a self-perception that is overly positive and they make a too favorable view of themselves; this theory is called self-serving bias. (Kwan et al., 2004). A comparable limitation related to the attribution theory is that people attribute success to themselves or to their actions and failure to environmental or external factors (Geare et al., 2006). This is called the "fundamental attribution error." The "fundamental attribution error" suggests that actors (here line managers) attribute success to themselves or their actions and attribute failure to environment or external factors. Every day people make attributions but these attributions are not always correct (Heider, 1958). A person has the tendency to overestimate the influence of personal factors and underestimate the influence of situational factors when assessing someone else's behavior. When a person observes behavior, the person is more likely to assume that the behavior of another person is primarily caused by them and not by the situation. Researchers argue that it is human nature to have a self-serving bias. Line managers can act based on their attributions and may act inappropriately if attributions are not valid. When line managers are aware of the fundamental attribution error and self-serving bias they might better understand their own and other's behavior (Heider, 1958).

With the limitations of the attribution theory in mind, it is expected that line managers will explain an ineffective implementation of HR practices to external attributions. Line managers might not want to admit that an ineffective implementation of HR practices is that they might not have enough competences or desire. Line managers rather like to say it is, because I did not obtain enough support, for example. However, they like to admit that HR practices are implemented very effectively because of their strong competences and motivation to perform. The risk is that line managers will give more external implementation constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices as causes of an ineffective HRM implementation instead of admit to internal HR constraints such as a lack of competences or desire.

However, this study primarily investigates whether both internal and external HRM implementation factors have an influence on the effectiveness of line managers' HRM implementation (Figure 1). The factors competences and support seem to play a major role for the effectiveness of implementing HR practices (Biemans, 2013). Mentioning the lack of competences is an internal attribution of constraints and mentioning a lack support is an external attribution of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices. It may be

that both internal and external factors have an influence on HRM implementation effectiveness.

Hypothesis 1: The effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices is attributed to internal (desire and competences) and external attributions (capacity, support, and policy and procedures).

An objective measure of the constraints line managers experience in effectively implementing HR practices can possibly be obtained by also investigating other stakeholders, such as the line managers' employees. Therefore, the employees will be asked about the constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices line managers can experience in implementing HR practices. In other words, the extra group of stakeholders may discover and therefore control for the fundamental attribution error. This study expects that line managers will not give an objective view of themselves, thus we need employees to examine HRM implementation constraints of line managers. The combination of HRM implementation attributions of line managers and employees will lead to more reliable results than focusing on one stakeholder only. This study will especially know if both stakeholders perceive constraints for the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices differently (Figure 1).

Hypothesis 2: In comparison with employees, line managers attribute effective implementation of HR practices more to internal attributions (desire and competences) than to external attributions (capacity, support, and policy and procedures).

Furthermore, according to Biemans (2013) the influence of the two factors competences and support is higher if there is a lack of time and resources. This means that the relationship between competences and support, and the effectiveness of implementing HR practices might be influenced through the variables of a lack of time and of resources. This study examines whether internal and external attributions interact positively with each other in explaining line managers' effectiveness of implementing HR practices (Figure 1). It is important for a company to know if internal and external attributions enhance each other. This might mean that a line manager who is motivated to effectively implement HR practices will perform even better if he is supported by the HR department. But it might also mean that knowledge of HRM implementation policies and procedures will only result in a more effective implementation of HR practices if the line manager also has the required competences to implement HR practices.

Hypothesis 3: Internal (desire and competences) and external (capacity, support, and policy and procedures) attributions interact positively with each other in explaining line managers' effectiveness of implementing HR practices.

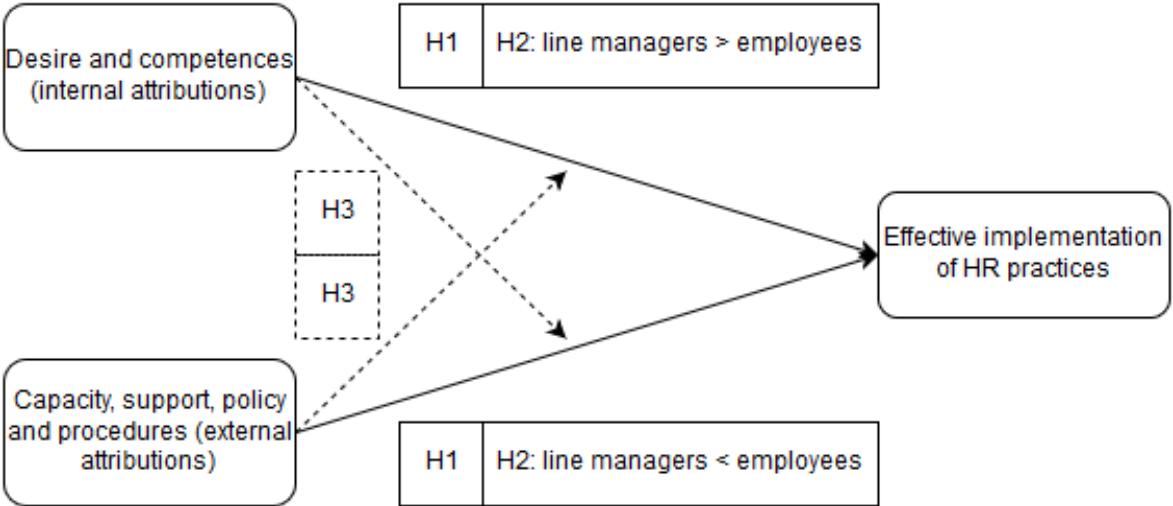


Figure 1. Research Model

6. Method

6.1 Research population and data collection

To answer the research question this study used data from three Dutch municipalities questioning employees about the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices and both line managers and employees about internal and external HRM implementation attributions. This study is an online survey and the questionnaires were adapted to the language of the municipalities. Originally twenty-two municipalities were asked to participate, representing approximately 880 employees and 60 line managers, and three agreed to do so, yielding 58 employees and 19 line managers. This represents a low response rate of 6.59 percent for the employees and 31.67 percent for the line managers. According to Babbie (2003) a response rate of 60 percent or more is considered representative. In other words, this study ended up with a low response rate.

The three municipalities are located in three different provinces of the Netherlands. One of the three municipalities informed their employees via email about the survey while two of the three municipalities informed their employees via intranet site. In total 38 email informed employees responded compared to 17 and 11 intranet informed employees of the two other municipalities. It seems likely that the information scheme resulted in the low response rate. Furthermore, employees found it difficult to answer some questions about the constraints their line managers experience.

The HR managers of three Dutch municipalities were contacted by phone to ask for their participation in the survey. The general information about the survey was sent by email to the HR managers. If the HR managers agreed to participate in the survey, they received another email with the questionnaires for both employees and line managers. The HR managers sent the email with the link to the questionnaires to all employees and line managers and/or made the survey available on the intranet site of the municipality. Hereafter, two reminder e-mails were sent to the HR managers one and three weeks after sending the questionnaires. The HR managers sent a reminder to the employees and line managers about the questionnaire and/or posted a reminder on the intranet site.

Data collection was based on online questionnaires. The questionnaires posed statements to which the employees and line managers were asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with. A cover letter was attached to the questionnaires explaining the objectives of this study and ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. According to Patton (2005)

questionnaires are good tools in gathering information about individuals' behaviour, attitudes and beliefs. The data were collected via the internet available application called Limesurvey. Limesurvey offers researchers to collect data through online surveys on its own secure server. The time to complete the entire survey is approximately 10 minutes. Line managers and employees were given one month to complete the survey.

The descriptive data of the employees and line managers are displayed in Appendix A. A striking finding is that 94.7 percent of the line managers have an education level HBO/WO and 78.9 percent of the line managers are male. Also more than half of the employees have a relative high education level (56.9 percent HBO/WO). Furthermore, 84.2 percent of the line managers are older than 40 years. 84.2 percent of the line managers have more than two years of experience and 73.7 percent of the line managers supervise more than 10 employees. Besides, nearly half of the employees (46.5 percent) work more than 5 years for their current line manager.

6.2 Measurement

The first part of the questionnaire of employees asks about the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices with the aid of an existing questionnaire from Bos-Nehles (2006). Moreover, both questionnaires ask about the role of the line managers in implementing HR practices and the possible challenges they experience in implementing the HR practices. The present study used a questionnaire from Bos-Nehles (2010) based on the role of the line manager in implementing the HR policy and the potential challenges the line managers may experience. Both perceptions of line managers and employees about the possible challenges line managers experience in implementing HR practices will be asked. Bos-Nehles (2006) only asked the line managers themselves about their constraints. However, in this study both employees and line managers were asked about the five constraints the line managers experience in implementing HR practices. Items were deleted for both questionnaires of employees and line managers because several items of the questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2006) ask insights that employees cannot have. Also, new items were added to both questionnaires.

The main structure of the research design is as follows: the independent variables are "internal attributions and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices" and the dependent variable is "the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices."

6.2.1 Dependent variable

The effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices.

The effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices was measured in this study based on perceptions of employees about their satisfaction of the way their line manager performs a couple of tasks. Bos-Nehles (2006) developed a questionnaire to measure how employees judge the effectiveness of implementing HR practices by line managers. This questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2006) was used in this study and consists of 26 items. The following HR practices were discussed: personnel administration, staffing, recruitment and selection, training and development, career management, evaluation and reward and people management. The statements were answered on a scale ranging from 1 (satisfied) to 4 (dissatisfied) and two opt out answers "don't know" and "not applicable." The last two answer options 5 and 6 were replaced by mean scores of the other items of that construct instead of assigning them as missing values.

The operationalization is based on a selection of a list of 25 selected HR activities used by line managers identified by the contact HR manager in the case company (Bos-Nehles, 2006). Employees were asked to rate the effectiveness of line managers on several activities for the HRM practices. Subordinates (employees) are the most important stakeholders of line managers to judge the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. Employees are in the suitable position to judge their line manager since they experience the implementation of HRM practices by line managers on a day-to-day basis. Employees were asked to rate the effectiveness of the HR practices their line managers apply by indicating agreement or disagreement with statements (e.g. "career counseling" and "work meetings with your employees"). An acceptable Cronbach's alpha of .69 was determined.

6.2.2 Independent variables

The internal attributions and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices.

Internal attributions are operationalized as line managers' desire and competences to perform HR practices. There were 17 items for the internal attributions. External attributions are operationalized as line managers' support, capacity and policy & procedures to engage in HRM implementation. There were 19 items for the external attributions. This research builds on the validated existing questionnaire from Bos-Nehles (2006) about the constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices line managers may experience. In this study, a

questionnaire was developed for employees about the constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices line managers may experience. The questions of the questionnaire of line managers were converted so that employees can answer the same questions about the five implementation attributions as their line manager. Several items were deleted and others added to the existing questionnaire from Bos-Nehles (2006). Several items were deleted in both questionnaires since those items ask about insights employees cannot have, therefore new items were added about insights that employees may have (e.g. “I think that this activity is good for me” and “I don’t know, I don’t see what this activity brings me”). The data referring to line managers’ constraints were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“disagree”) to 5 (“agree”).

Two questions were rescaled beforehand due to negative scaling (“I have concrete, planned goals for my HR responsibilities” and “explanation is clear of what has to be done in performing my HR responsibilities”).

Internal attributions

Desire

The concept desire consists of 10 items (e.g. “I think it is interesting to implement HR tasks” and “My line manager thinks it is interesting to implement HR tasks”) based on the validated questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2010). For the concept desire several items were deleted for both questionnaires of this study for employees and line managers. These items were not asked to the employees since they cannot have the necessary insights, and consecutively deleted from the questionnaire for the line managers to guarantee comparability of the questionnaires.

The items that were deleted in the questionnaire about desire of line managers are:

- “I think that this activity is good for me”
- “I don’t know, I don’t see what this activity brings me”
- “I do this activity, but I’m not sure it is a good thing to pursue it”

The items that were deleted in the questionnaire of employees are:

- “My line manager thinks that the activity is good for him/her”
- “My line manager don’t know and don’t see what the activity brings him/her”
- “My line manager does the activity but he or she is not sure if it is a good thing to pursue”

Competences

The concept competences consists of 7 items (e.g. “I can remain calm when I’m confronted with difficulties in implementing my HR responsibilities and tasks, because I can rely on my competences” and “My line manager can remain calm when he/she is confronted with difficulties in implementing HR responsibilities and tasks, because he/she can rely on their competences”) based on the validated questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2010). For the concept competences several items were deleted for both questionnaires of this study for employees and line managers. These items were not asked to the employees since they cannot have the necessary insights, and consecutively deleted from the questionnaire for the line managers to guarantee comparability of the questionnaires.

The items that were deleted for the questionnaire of line managers are:

- “My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for performing my HR responsibilities”
- “I meet the goals that I set for myself in performing my HR responsibilities and tasks”

The items that were deleted for the questionnaire of employees are:

- “The past experiences of my line manager’s job has prepared him well for performing their HR responsibilities”
- “My line manager meet the goals that he/she set for him/herself in performing their HR responsibilities and tasks”

Instead of those items a few new items were added about the same subject. The new items were developed based on the existing topic of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the items were thusly developed that they can also be converted for employees.

New items for the construct competences for the questionnaire of line managers:

- “I’m able to effectively deal with changes in the performance of the HR responsibilities and tasks”
- “I have sufficient knowledge to perform the HR responsibilities and tasks”
- “I’m able to come up with innovative ideas about the execution of HR responsibilities and tasks”
- “I’m able to bring the feedback of the employee on the performance of the HR responsibilities and tasks”

New items for the construct competences for the questionnaire of employees:

- “My line manager is able to effectively deal with changes in the performance of the HR responsibilities and tasks”
- “My line managers has sufficient knowledge to perform the HR responsibilities and tasks”
- “My line manager is able to come up with innovative ideas about the execution of HR responsibilities and tasks”
- “My line manager is able to bring the feedback of the employee on the performance of the HR responsibilities and tasks”

External attributions

Capacity

The concept capacity consists of 5 items (e.g. “I have to implement HR tasks but actually I have no time or energy for it” and “My line manager has to implement HR tasks but he/she actually has no time or energy for it”) based on the validated questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2010). The items assessing capacity were not changed for this study.

Support

The concept support consists of 6 items (e.g. “The HR-consultant is always willing to help me” and “The HR-consultant is always willing to help my line manager”) based on the validated questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2010). For the concept support several items were deleted for both questionnaires of this study for employees and line managers. These items were not asked to the employees since they cannot have the necessary insights, and consecutively deleted from the questionnaire for the line managers to guarantee comparability of the questionnaires.

The items that were deleted in the questionnaire of line managers are:

- “When the HR-department promises to do something in a certain time frame, then it does happen”
- “ The HR-department insists on administering data without mistakes”
- “The employees working in the HR-department inform me about the time specific services need to be ready”

The items that were deleted in the questionnaire of employees are:

- “When the HR-department promises to do something in a certain time frame, then

it does happen”

- The HR-department insists on administering data without mistakes”
- The employees working in the HR-department inform my line manager about the time specific services need to be ready”

Furthermore, the following items were added. The new items were developed based on the existing topic of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the items were thusly developed that the items can also be converted for employees.

Items that were added for the questionnaire of line managers:

- “The HR-department is responsible for the time to obtain the right information that I need for implementing the HR-responsibilities and tasks”
- “Sufficient meetings are scheduled to discuss opportunities where I encounter when I implement the HR-responsibilities and tasks”

Items that were added for the questionnaire of employees:

- “The HR-department is responsible for the time to obtain the right information that my line manager need for implementing the HR-responsibilities and tasks”
- “Sufficient meetings are scheduled to discuss opportunities where my line manager encounters when he/she implement the HR-responsibilities and tasks”

Policy and procedures

The concept policy and procedures consists of 8 items (e.g. “I work with contradictions in HR policy and procedures” and “My line manager works with contradictions in HR policy and procedures”) based on the validated questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2010). For the concept policy and procedures several items were deleted for both questionnaires of this study for employees and line managers. These items were not asked to the employees since they cannot have the necessary insights, and consecutively deleted from the questionnaire for the line managers to guarantee comparability of the questionnaires.

For the questionnaire for this study the following items were deleted in the questionnaire for line managers:

- “I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently in performing HR responsibilities”.
- “The HR instruments I am provided with are clear and understandable”.

- “The HR instruments I am provided with are concrete enough to use them”.
- “I find HR instruments easy to use”.

The following items were deleted in the questionnaire for employees:

- “My line managers works with two or more groups who operate quite differently in performing HR responsibilities”
- “The HR instruments my line manager provided with are clear and understandable”
- “My line manager finds HR instruments easy to use”

6.2.3 Demographic control variables

To reduce the possibility of incorrect results due to correlations between variables some demographic control variables were included in the statistical analysis. The demographic variables that were included in the questionnaire for line managers are gender, age, experience, education and span of control. It is possible that older or more experienced line managers implement HR practices more effectively since they have done it more often than their younger colleagues. Furthermore, line managers with a high education level might be able to apply a wider general knowledge or common sense in using HR practices than less well-educated line managers. Next, the span of control over smaller or larger groups of subordinates is important since simply more time may be necessary to spend on HR issues with a larger group of subordinates (McGovern et al., 1997). The demographic variables that were included in the questionnaire for employees are gender, age, education and the period they have worked under their current line manager.

6.3 Preliminary analysis

6.3.1 Factor analysis

First, two confirmatory factor analyses with principal components and varimax rotation are conducted on all three relevant variables (i.e. the dependent variable (the effectiveness of line managers’ implementation of HR practices) and the two independent variables (internal and external attributions) can be rediscovered. For the dependent variable effectiveness of line managers’ implementation of HR practices it was checked whether the seven components (personnel administration, staffing, recruitment and selection, training and development, career management, evaluation and rewarding and, people management) could be rediscovered (Appendix B). For the independent variable it was checked whether the five components (desire, competences, capacity, support and, policy and procedures) could be rediscovered (Appendix C). Then, two separate factor analyses are conducted for internal

attributions and external attributions to check whether two components could be rediscovered for internal attributions (desire, competences) (Table 1) and three components (capacity, support and, policy and procedures) for external attributions (Table 2).

The Kaiser criterion is used to assess the number of dimensions in the questionnaires. If the number of components determined by the Kaiser criterion differs from the expected number of components then the confirmatory factor analysis is forced to the total of expected components. For the rotated factor loadings a minimum of .40 was handled to determine membership to components.

However, in this study the independent variable is distinguished between internal attributions and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices, therefore confirmatory factor analysis with principal components and varimax rotation is conducted on each independent variable. The factor analysis for the internal attributions found three dimensions where two dimensions were expected (desire and competences) (Table 1). For the external attributions five dimensions were found where three dimensions were expected (support, capacity and, policy and procedures) (Table 2). There is one item that displayed no factor loading for any one dimension above .40 and could therefore not be ascribed to either dimension; "I am doing it for my own good." Another item thought to belong to the component desire displays a higher factor loading onto the component competences (i.e. "I do this activity but I am not sure if it is worth it"). These items were kept in their original components to retain comparability with earlier results (Bos-Nehles, 2010).

For external attributions, two items display overlapping factor loadings with another dimension that they are not thought to belong to. Item 13 and 14 of external attributions load above .40 on capacity and policy and procedures. Item 13 loads higher on capacity while belonging to policy and procedures, whereas item 14 loads higher on policy and procedures than on capacity. Item 13, therefore, could debatably be excluded, since higher loadings are found for another component than the originally ascribed one, while Item 14 would not need to be excluded, since overlapping multiple components is not desirable, but should not cause any errors. However, also these items were kept in their original components to retain comparability with earlier results (Bos-Nehles, 2010), since excluding these items would arguably diminish comparability more than would to include them.

Table 1
Factor analysis for the independent variable (internal attributions, $\alpha=.81$)

		Factors	
		1	2
Desire, $\alpha=.88$			
1.	I think that this activity is interesting	.77	-04
2.	I think this activity is fun	.87	-02
3.	I feel good when doing this activity	.89	-04
4.	I am doing it for my own good ⁺	.26	.33
5.	I believe that this activity is important for me	.60	-04
6.	I do this activity but I am not sure if it is worth it.	.20	.67
7.	It helps the people in my team to grow improve and develop themselves	.83	-04
8.	It helps me to supervise my team.	.85	-07
9.	It helps me to reach my production goals.	.78	-09
10.	It helps me to treat employees in a fair and consistent way.	.78	-05
Competences, $\alpha=.90$			
11.	I can remain calm when facing difficulties in performing my HR responsibilities.	.09	.75
12.	When I am confronted with a problem in performing my HR responsibilities I can usually find several solutions.	-.16	.77
13.	Whatever comes my way in performing my HR responsibilities I can usually handle it.	-.10	.79
14.	I'm able to effectively deal with changes in the performance of the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	-.31	.78
15.	I have sufficient knowledge to perform the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	-.11	.86
16.	I'm able to come up with innovative ideas about the execution of HR responsibilities and tasks. ⁺⁺	-.15	.70
17.	I'm able to bring up the feedback of the employee on the performance of the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	-.04	.70

+Factor loadings <.04

++New items added to the questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2006)

Table 2
Factor analysis for the independent variable (external attributions, $\alpha=.75$)

		Factors		
		1	2	3
Capacity, $\alpha=.78$				
1.	I can't seem to get caught up with performing my HR responsibilities	-.18	.77	-.03
2.	Sometimes I feel as if there are not enough hours in the day.	.08	.80	.05
3.	Many times I have to cancel my commitments to my HR responsibilities.	-.02	.73	-.04
4.	I find myself having to prepare priority lists to get done all the HR responsibilities I have to do. Otherwise, I forget so much to do.	.14	.57	.38
5.	I feel I have to perform HR responsibilities hastily and maybe less carefully in order to get everything done.	.07	.65	.23
Support, $\alpha=.87$				
6.	The HR managers are always willing to help.	.70	-.01	-.00
7.	The HR managers have the necessary knowledge to answer my questions	.85	.11	-.17
8.	The HR department gives me individual attention.	.78	-.12	-.13
9.	The HR department tries to reach the best for me.	.77	-.03	.22
10.	The HR department is responsible for the time to obtain the right information that I need for executing the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	.71	.10	-.16
11.	Sufficient meetings are scheduled to discuss opportunities when I encounter when I execute the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	.78	-.07	-.22
Policy and procedures, $\alpha=.77$				
12.	I work under incompatible HR policies and HR guidelines.	.03	.35	.59
13.	I receive an HR assignment without the manpower to complete it.	-.07	.51	.43
14.	I have to buck a rule or policy in order to carry out my HR responsibilities.	-.07	.42	.53
15.	I perform HR tasks that are accepted by one person but not by others.	.00	-.11	.73
16.	I have concrete, planned goals for my HR responsibilities.	-.33	.18	.52
17.	I lack HR policies and guidelines to help me.	-.03	.14	.78
18.	I have to feel my way in performing HR responsibilities.	-.08	.35	.41
19.	Explanation is clear of what has to be done in performing my HR responsibilities.	-.28	-.08	.63

+Factor loadings <.04

++New items added to the questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2006)

6.3.2 Reliability assessment

To test the internal consistency of the items of the questionnaire, reliability analyses on the sample of the three Dutch municipalities were performed. Reliability assessment addresses the homogeneity of the items in a construct or the extent to which item responses correlate with the total test score (Hinkin, 1995). The most commonly accepted measure is that of internal consistency reliability using Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha gives an indication of the extent to which a number of items in a scale measure the same construct. In general, an alpha of .70 or higher is acceptable (Field, 2009). In Appendix D all the Cronbach's alpha's of the subscales of the independent and dependent variables are shown and the independent variable is compared to the original research of Bos-Nehles (2010). The Cronbach's alpha's of the independent variable display an alpha of .70 or higher, which indicates good internal consistency. For the dependent variable with the seven factors, the construct recruitment and selection and career management have a Cronbach's alpha $<.70$. The Cronbach's alpha's of internal attributions and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices are $>.70$ (Table 3).

Table 3.
Cronbach's alpha of constructs for the independent variable (internal attributions and external attributions)

	Research at hand		Original research (Bos-Nehles, 2010)	
	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
Internal attributions	.81	17	-	20
Desire	.88	10	.78	13
Competences	.90	7	.76	7
External attributions	.75	19	-	24
Capacity	.78	5	.84	5
Support	.87	6	.87	7
Policy and procedures	.77	8	.81	12

7. Results

7.1 Line managers' constraints in effectively implementing HR practices

Line managers experience several constraints in effectively implementing HR practices. The means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations of line managers' constraints in effectively implementing HR practices are shown in Table 4. In this table bivariate correlations between all variables are shown, including the dependent variable. The first table shows the means, standards deviations and bivariate correlations for the employees (Table 4) and the second for the line managers (Table 5).

The effectiveness of implementing the HR practices (the dependent variable) was only measured via the employees. For answering the hypotheses the total means per municipality of the effectiveness of implementing the HR practices indicated by the employees were predicated to the respective line managers.

Bivariate correlations between the independent variables of employees and line managers are found (Tables 4 and 5), this implies that some constraints are dependent on each other. In the table of the employees (Table 4), competences correlate negatively with desire, and capacity correlates negatively with desire. It is possible that if a line manager is not interested in HR, he/she also will not develop his/her skills further and he/she will invest little to no time in HR. Capacity correlates positively with competences. That might mean that if a line manager invests time in HR, he/she will also develop his/her skills. Furthermore, policy and procedures correlates negatively with desire and correlates positively with competences and capacity. In the table of the line managers (Table 5) support correlates negatively with desire. When HR managers do not support the line managers, line managers might lose interest in HR. It is also possible that when a line manager is not motivated, he/she will not looking for support.

Furthermore, a few constraints are also dependent on the subscales of the effectiveness of implementing the HR practices for the employees (Table 4). Desire correlates positively with recruitment and selection and people management. Desire correlates negatively with training and development. Competences correlates positively with staffing and, training and development but competences correlates negatively with career management and people management. Support correlates negatively with staffing and correlates positively with career management and people management.

7.1.1 Employees attributions

The means show that employees seem to be not clear on what internal and external constraints line managers experience when implementing HR practices (Range = [1; 5]; $M_{\text{internal}} = 2.94$, $SD_{\text{internal}} = 0.48$ and $M_{\text{external}} = 2.96$, $SD_{\text{external}} = 0.40$) (Table 4). According to the employees line managers seem not to experience different hindering from internal constraints or external constraints in implementing the HR practices. Employees seem to attribute *a lack of support* as the most hindering compared to other constraints (Range = [1; 5]; $M_{\text{support}} = 2.59$, $SD_{\text{support}} = 0.67$) (Table 4).

7.1.2 Line managers attributions

Line managers themselves seem to perceive internal constraints as most hindering in implementing HR practices (Range = [1; 5]; $M_{\text{internal}} = 1.73$, $SD_{\text{internal}} = 0.38$) (Table 5). This is a striking result since it was expected that line managers would indicate external attributions of constraints to be more hindering in implementing HR practices. The means show that line managers themselves seem to perceive competences as most hindering in implementing HR practices (Range = [1; 5]; $M_{\text{competences}} = 1.64$, $SD_{\text{competences}} = 0.69$) (Table 5). Line managers seem to attribute *a lack of competences* as most hindering compared to other constraints.

7.1.3 Line managers' effectiveness of implementing HR practices

Subordinates seem to perceive line managers' HRM implementation effectiveness as reasonably high (Range = [1; 4]; $M_{\text{HRMimplementationeffectiveness}} = 2.53$, $SD_{\text{HRMimplementationeffectiveness}} = 0.24$) (Table 4). Three of the seven dimensions of HRM implementation effectiveness have a mean higher than the total mean of 2.53. This may seem to indicate that the line managers are effective in implementing HR practices. The subordinates seem to appear to be most satisfied with how their line managers perform recruitment and selection and personnel administration (Range = [1; 4]; $M_{\text{recruitmentandselection}} = 2.91$, $SD_{\text{recruitmentandselection}} = 0.47$ and $M_{\text{personneladministration}} = 3.07$, $SD_{\text{personneladministration}} = 0.67$) and least satisfied with career management ($M_{\text{careermanagement}} = 2.07$, $SD_{\text{careermanagement}} = 0.53$) (Table 4).

Table 4.
Means, standard deviations and correlations between the independent and dependent variable (employees)

	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.
1. <u>HRM implementation effectiveness</u>	2.53	0.24														
2. Staffing	2.51	0.56	.46**													
3. Recruitment and selection	2.91	0.47	-.05	-.43**												
4. Training and development	2.56	0.68	.55**	.60**	-.41**											
5. Career management	2.07	0.53	.40**	-.20	.02	-.20										
6. Evaluation and rewarding	2.40	0.65	.53**	.30*	-.33*	.29*	.17									
7. People management	2.16	0.57	.42**	-.31*	.24	-.16	.66**	-.01								
8. Personnel administration	3.07	0.67	.44**	.14	.05	.17	-.14	-.06	-.05							
9. <u>Internal attributions</u>	2.94	0.48	.17	.22	.10	.30*	-.22	-.05	-.11	.19						
10. Desire	2.86	0.62	.16	-.14	.33*	-.27*	.20	-.11	.33*	.24	.06					
11. Competences	3.04	1.32	.04	.27*	-.12	.41**	-.31*	.03	-.29*	.01	.80**	-.56**				
12. <u>External attributions</u>	2.96	0.40	-.02	-.06	.05	-.01	.02	-.10	.10	-.02	.26*	-.25	.37**			
13. Capacity	3.17	0.74	-.03	.10	-.18	.11	-.09	.02	-.13	.00	.27*	-.37**	.45**	.71**		
14. Support	2.59	0.67	-.13	-.38**	.29*	-.24	.09	-.18	.31*	-.13	-.05	.18	-.15	.42**	-.15	
15. Policy and procedures	3.17	0.61	.14	.19	-.04	.12	.02	-.01	-.03	.10	.27*	-.30*	.41**	.69**	.47**	-.18

* p < .05; ** p < .01

Table 5.
Means, standard deviations and correlations between the independent and dependent variable (line managers)

	M	SD	1	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. <u>HRM implementation effectiveness</u> ⁺	2.15	0.96							
2. Personnel administration ⁺	2.72	1.21							
3. Staffing ⁺	2.13	0.95							
4. Recruitment and selection ⁺	2.45	1.09							
5. Training and development ⁺	2.17	1.00							
6. Career management ⁺	1.76	0.80							
7. Evaluation and rewarding ⁺	2.03	0.91							
8. People management ⁺	1.81	0.84							
9. <u>Internal attributions</u>	1.73	0.38	.07						
10. Desire	1.81	0.43	.08	.61**					
11. Competences	1.64	0.69	.03	.77**	-.04				
12. <u>External attributions</u>	3.25	0.51	.14	-.42	-.39	-.21			
13. Capacity	3.53	0.88	.09	-.28	-.28	-.12	.82**		
14. Support	2.72	0.91	.10	-.40	-.58**	-.03	.60**	.27	
15. Policy and procedures	3.56	0.72	.07	-.06	.23	-.26	.42	.29	-.35

* p < .05; ** p < .01

⁺ Correlations were omitted due to assigned value for HRM implementation effectiveness

7.2 Internal and external attributions explain the effectiveness of implementing HR practices

To answer hypothesis 1 several multiple regression analyses were performed. The dependent variable was the effectiveness of implementing HR practices (and in subsequent analyses the subscales thereof) and the independent variables were comprised of the five constraints (both internal and external attributions) and four demographics. The regression analysis displayed explanatory value for training and development, career management, evaluation and rewarding, and people management (Table 6). All four measure for the effectiveness of HR practices could be positively explained by competences, career management, and people management additionally could be positively explained by motivation.

Table 6
Regression to explain effective implementation main scale and sub scales by independents and demographics

	Effective implementation of HR practices			Personnel administration			Staffing			Recruitment and selection		
	B	SEB	P	B	SEB	P	B	SEB	P	B	SEB	P
Motivation	0.02	0.04	.66	0.36	0.20	.07	0.07	0.14	.65	0.26	0.13	.05
Competences	0.00	0.02	1.00	0.08	0.10	.41	0.08	0.07	.26	0.06	0.06	.39
Capacity	-0.02	0.04	.56	-0.04	0.16	.78	-0.06	0.11	.63	-0.09	0.10	.39
Support	0.00	0.04	.93	-0.12	0.18	.52	-0.32	0.13	.02	0.24	0.11	.05
Policy and procedures	0.06	0.05	.23	0.10	0.19	.62	0.05	0.14	.73	0.13	0.12	.29
Gender	0.04	0.06	.51	-0.18	0.22	.42	0.31	0.16	.06	-0.20	0.14	.16
Age	0.00	0.00	.74	0.00	0.01	.76	-0.01	0.01	.40	0.01	0.01	.46
Education	-0.05	0.03	.10	-0.10	0.10	.33	-0.09	0.07	.23	0.05	0.06	.44
Location	-0.05	0.03	.18	-0.09	0.13	.49	0.05	0.09	.59	-0.08	0.08	.32
	F	df	P	F	df	P	F	df	P	F	df	P
	1.02	9;56	.44	1.07	9;49	.41	1.60	9;49	.15	1.85	9;49	.09
	Training and development			Career management			Evaluation and rewarding			People management		
	B	SEB	P	B	SEB	P	B	SEB	P	B	SEB	P
Motivation	-0.06	0.18	.74	0.71	0.16	.00	-0.06	0.18	.74	0.71	0.16	.00
Competences	0.26*	0.09	.01	0.24	0.08	.00	0.26	0.09	.01	0.24	0.08	.00
Capacity	-0.12	0.14	.40	-0.02	0.14	.90	-0.12	0.14	.40	-0.02	0.14	.90
Support	-0.28	0.16	.09	0.05	0.15	.74	-0.28	0.16	.09	0.05	0.15	.74
Policy and procedures	-0.12	0.18	.51	-0.12	0.18	.51	-0.12	0.18	.51	-0.12	0.18	.51
Gender	0.19	0.20	.35	-0.20	0.22	.37	0.19	0.20	.35	-0.20	0.22	.37
Age	-0.02	0.01	.09	0.00	0.01	.68	-0.02	0.01	.09	0.00	0.01	.68
Education	-0.10	0.09	.30	-0.11	0.11	.30	-0.10	0.09	.30	-0.11	0.11	.30
Location	-0.16	0.11	.18	0.00	0.12	.99	-0.16	0.11	.18	0.00	0.12	.99
	F	df	P	F	df	P	F	df	P	F	df	P
	2.30*	9;49	.03	6.34	9;65	.00	2.30	9;49	.03	6.34	9;65	.00

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Hypothesis 1 stated: The effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices is attributed to internal (desire and competences) and external attributions (capacity, support, and policy and procedures).

Based on the findings hypothesis 1 is partially rejected and partially supported. The availability of both internal and external factors for line managers on their HR role and how to execute HR practices are not salient for their HRM implementation effectiveness according to themselves and their subordinates. Only the internal factors (motivation and competences) are of influence on subscales of effectiveness of implementing HR practices.

7.3 Differences between line managers and employees how constraints concerning effective implementation of HR practices are viewed

In order to investigate whether there is a difference in how line managers and employees attribute the constraints of line managers' effectiveness in implementing HR practices, independent samples t-tests for each independent variable as dependent on job position are performed. There is statistically significant difference in how important line managers and employees view motivation. Line managers evaluate the importance of motivation lower with a mean of 1.81 (SD = 0.43) than employees with a mean of 2.86 (SD = 0.62). There is statistically significant difference in how important line managers and employees view competences. Line managers evaluate the importance of competences lower with a mean of 1.64 (SD = 0.69) than employees with a mean of 3.04 (SD = 1.32). There is statistically significant difference in how important line managers and employees view policy and procedures. Line managers evaluate the importance of policy and procedures higher with a mean of 3.56 (SD = 0.72) than employees with a mean of 3.17 (SD = 0.61) (Table 7).

Table 7.
Independent samples t-tests between line managers and employees on constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices

	Motivation			Competences			Capacity			Support			Policy & procedures		
	t	df	p	t	df	p	t	df	p	t	df	p	t	df	p
Job function	6.80	75	.00	5.97	60.40	.00	-1.74	75	.09	-0.68	75	.50	-2.34	75	.02

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Hypothesis 2 stated: In comparison with employees, line managers attribute effective implementation of HR practices more to internal attributions (desire and competences) than to external attributions (capacity, support, and policy and procedures).

Three independent samples t-tests show statistically significant results, but point in the opposite direction of the hypothesis, namely regarding internal attributions (i.e. motivation and competences) were scored lower by line managers than employees and external attributions (i.e. policy and procedures) were scored higher by line managers than employees. The hypothesis can therefore be rejected.

7.4 Internal and external attributions interact with each other in explaining line managers' effectiveness of implementing HR practices

To answer whether there is an interaction between internal and external constraints several multiple regression analyses are conducted. The multiple regression analyses were comprised of the internal and external attributions, the interaction term of both and the demographics as independent and the measure for effectiveness of HR practices as dependent variable (Table

8). To determine the interaction term Z-scores were calculated from internal and external attributions, the Z-scores were then multiplied to arrive at the interaction term. The regression analyses show statistically significant explanatory value for training and development, career management, evaluation and rewarding, people management. For all measures of effectiveness of HR practices internal attributions displays a statistically significant positive main effect. For training and development, and evaluation and rewarding, external attributions displays a statistically significant negative main effect. For training and development, and evaluation and rewarding, the demographic age displays a statistically significant negative main effect. For training and development, and evaluation and rewarding, the interaction term between internal and external attributions displays a statistically significant positive interaction effect.

Hypothesis 3 stated: Internal (desire and competences) and external (capacity, support, and policy and procedures) attributions interact positively with each other in explaining line managers' effectiveness of implementing HR practices.

The regression analyses found statistically significant positive interaction effects between internal and external attributions only for the sub scale training and development, and evaluation and rewarding. The hypothesis can partially be confirmed, partially rejected.

Table 8.**Regression analyses to explain effective implementation main scale and sub scales by internal and external attributions (z-scores) and their interaction terms and demographics**

	Effective implementation of HR practices			Personnel administration			Staffing			Recruitment and selection		
	B	SE _B	P	B	SE _B	P	B	SE _B	P	B	SE _B	P
	F	Df	P	F	Df	P	F	Df	P	F	Df	P
Internal attributions	0.00	0.03	.89	0.19	0.16	.24	0.18	0.11	.10	0.09	0.11	.40
External attributions	0.01	0.03	.75	-0.04	0.16	.80	-0.26	0.11	.03	0.09	0.11	.40
IAT of IA*EA	0.01	0.03	.82	-0.05	0.18	.77	0.33	0.13	.01	-0.15	0.13	.24
Gender	0.04	0.06	.55	-0.20	0.22	.37	0.14	0.15	.36	-0.10	0.15	.51
Age	0.00	0.00	.62	0.00	0.01	.93	-0.01	0.01	.13	0.01	0.01	.23
Education	-0.05	0.03	.08	-0.13	0.10	.21	-0.10	0.07	.17	0.04	0.07	.54
Location	-0.05	0.03	.13	-0.13	0.12	.28	0.09	0.09	.29	-0.14	0.08	.11
	1.11	7;65	.37	1.04	7;49	.42	2.04	7;49	.07	.97	7;49	.47
	Training and development			Career management			Evaluation and rewarding			People management		
	B	SE _B	P	B	SE _B	P	B	SE _B	P	B	SE _B	P
	F	Df	P	F	Df	P	F	Df	P	F	Df	P
Internal attributions	0.39	0.15	.01	0.45	0.13	.00	0.39	0.15	.01	0.45	0.13	.00
External attributions	-0.31	0.15	.04	-0.13	0.10	.22	-0.31	0.15	.04	-0.13	0.10	.22
IAT of IA*EA	0.38	0.17	.03	0.11	0.10	.27	0.38	0.17	.03	0.11	0.10	.27
Gender	0.05	0.20	.81	-0.22	0.23	.34	0.05	0.20	.81	-0.22	0.23	.34
Age	-0.03	0.01	.02	-0.01	0.01	.60	-0.03	0.01	.02	-0.01	0.01	.60
Education	-0.07	0.09	.44	-0.15	0.11	.16	-0.07	0.09	.44	-0.15	0.11	.16
Location	-0.05	0.11	.65	-0.02	0.12	.90	-0.05	0.11	.65	-0.02	0.12	.90
	2.31	7;49	.04	6.79	7;65	.00	2.31	7;49	.04	6.79	7;65	.00

* p < .05, ** p < .01

7.5 Summary of hypotheses

Internal factors (competences and motivation) are of influence on the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. However, employees and line managers do make a difference in attribution of internal and external factors concerning the implementation of HR practices for the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. Line managers attribute more external factors and less internal factors than employees to the effectiveness of implementation of HR practices. Furthermore, internal and external factors do interact positively with each other to explain certain subscales of the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices (Table 9).

Table 9.
Rejected and accepted hypotheses

Hypotheses	Decision
Hypothesis 1: The effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices is attributed to internal (desire and competences) and external attributions (capacity, support, and policy and procedures).	Partially supported, partially rejected
<i>Hypothesis 2:</i> In comparison with employees, line managers attribute effective implementation of HR practices more to internal attributions (desire and competences) than to external attributions (capacity, support, and policy and procedures).	Rejected
<i>Hypothesis 3:</i> Internal (desire and competences) and external (capacity, support, and policy and procedures) attributions interact positively with each other in explaining line managers' effectiveness of implementing HR practices.	Partially supported, partially rejected

8. Discussion

8.1 Line managers' attributions

The results of this study are very different from the overall findings in the literature. It was expected that line managers gave more internal factors for an effective HRM implementation. It seems that line managers actually attribute more external than internal factors to the effective implementing of HR practices. The line managers attribute the good implementation of HR practices to external factors and not internal ones. In other words, line managers do not seem to display a fatal attribution error. The fundamental attribution error describes the situation where people attribute success to themselves or to their actions (internal attribution) and failure to environmental or external factors (external attribution) (Geare, Edgar & Deng, 2006). The anonymity of the questionnaire may have supported honest answers since compliance biases diminish with higher anonymity (Lajunen & Summala, 2003). With unbiased answers a seeming fatal attribution error due to actual social desirability is less likely and was not observed in the present study. It seems that line managers can attribute the effective implementation of HR practices to external factors and do not have the need to give socially desirable answers. Alternatively, the higher education of the line managers may enable them to critically evaluate one's own contribution and the dependency of the individual on the group to succeed in such endeavors as implementing HR practices.

8.2 Employees' attributions

In contrast, employees attribute more internal than external factors to the effective implementing of HR practices. According to their employees, for line managers internal factors are more important than external factors in implementing HR practices effectively. The employees seem to differ in which factors they deem important for their line managers to implement HR practices effectively. In line with the attribution theory it was expected that employees would attribute more external factors to well implemented HR practices. It may be that the employees did not have insights into how external factors can constrain the leeway of line managers in implementing HR practices.

8.3 Comparison to recent research

The present study poses certain contradictions with earlier work of Bos-Nehles (2010) and Biemans (2013). The results of the case studies of Biemans (2013) show that two factors, competences of the line manager and support from HRM, play an important role in HRM implementation. This seems to be enhanced by the factor lack of time (capacity). These

findings could only partially be replicated by the present study. Only competences of line managers were identified as effective for some subscales for HRM implementation. Bos-Nehles (2010) found that line managers are motivated to perform HR tasks, there are sufficient policies, instruments and procedures, but not all managers have the right skills to perform HR tasks well. In other words, competences were the matching finding between the present study, Biemans (2013), and Bos-Nehles (2010).

8.4 The effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices

Employees perceive line managers' HRM implementation effectiveness as reasonably high, they are satisfied with the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. Employees evaluate their line managers' performance on recruitment selection and personnel administration tasks to be fulfilled better than other tasks and evaluate career management tasks the lowest. In earlier research several researchers expressed their concern about line managers' effectiveness in implementing HR practices. It has been claimed by Cunningham & Hyman (1999) and Brewster & Larsen (2000) that line managers are not motivated to perform their HR role and do not want to engage in HRM. They lack the willingness to implement HR practices which suggests that employees would evaluate the fulfillment of according tasks negatively. However, this study indicates that employees evaluate their line managers' performance positively.

8.5 Limitations

8.5.1 Research limitations

Focusing solely on line managers and employees as stakeholders to identify limitations might be a limitation of the present study. Employees seem an adequate stakeholder group since they experience and interpret the implementation of HR practices by their line managers on a daily basis. However, one could have decided to ask also HR professionals for example for their opinion about the constraints line managers' experience, in order to get more different attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices that line managers experience. Multiple stakeholders increase the reliability of responses (Gerhart et al., 2000).

8.5.2 Practical limitations

Data was collected in three municipalities and the response rate was very low. A higher response rate would have been preferable. This study ended up with a sample of 58 employees and 19 line managers. The number of respondents is so small that random outliers, positive or negative, could strongly determine the results of the evaluation in question.

Also, the respondents found it difficult to answer the questions about the constraints line managers' experience. Especially the employees found it difficult to answer the questions about the external constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices their line managers' experience. Therefore, a lot of employees didn't fill in the questionnaire. The results concerning the external constraints measured through employees may be limited.

Furthermore, due to the busy schedules of the HR managers it was hard to get in touch with them. Finally, it was quite a long questionnaire for employees and it was also difficult for the employees to answer the questions about their line manager. The length and difficulty of the questionnaire may have led to an increase in drop-out rate.

8.5.3 Theoretical limitations

In the present study only employees were asked about the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices, not the line managers themselves. Bos-Nehles (2006) developed a questionnaire to measure how employees judge the effectiveness of implementing HR practices by line managers. In the present study not only line managers' themselves were asked about the constraints they experience in implementing HR practices, but also the employees were asked about the constraints line managers experience in implementing HR practices. A value is assigned to line managers for the HR effectiveness derived from the employees' answers. This reduces the accuracy of the analyses since the outcome variables are very much intertwined.

Further, the employees probably do not have the necessary insights to answer questions regarding effective implementation of HR practices, for instance the archiving, managing and analysis of data. Therefore, a more objective measure should be developed, possibly with another stakeholder that can offer objective insights.

8.6 Implications

8.6.1 Practical implications

The results of the present study indicate that line managers do not fall victim to fatal attribution error and that employees evaluate internal factors more importantly than external factors. Line managers regard external factors as important for the effectiveness of HR practices, which indicates that to improve HR practices external factors, such as capacity, support, and policy and procedure have to be improved too. According to employees, internal factors, such as the motivation and competences of the line managers are important for the effectiveness of HR practices. Therefore, both internal and external factors seem important for

different stakeholders and dependent on which measure of HR effectiveness is target of improvement different internal or external factors have to be improved.

8.6.2 Theoretical implications

Recent research has not focused much on attribution theory in the context of working environment (cf. Snead Jr., Magal, Christensen & Ndede-Amadi, 2015; Wang, Hall and Rahimi, 2015; Böhm & Pfister, 2015). The study at hand did apply attribution theory to the context of working environment and found that with anonymity, the fatal attribution error did not occur. This finding is supported by other research suggesting that the fatal attribution error seems reducible by providing anonymity of response (Lajunen & Summala, 2003). The study at hand enhances the understanding of attribution theory including a related variable (i.e. anonymity).

8.7 Suggestions for further research

It seems advisable to develop a more reliable research instrument for measuring stakeholders' opinions about the constraints line managers experience in implementing HR practices. The present study was hindered by employees having difficulties answering the questions about the external constraints their line managers' experience. Further research should improve the questionnaire so that stakeholders can answer it more easily.

Furthermore, the results of the present study shows that line managers admitted that external factors are of influence for the effectiveness of implementing HR practices. This results in limited attribution error since line managers do admit to external factors instead of saying that internal factors are of influence for an effective HRM implementation. This honesty with oneself may be a predictor for self-insight of a line manager. This could mean that a limited attribution error indicates a better line manager because the line manager might have a better self-insight. When line managers have a better self-insight, they might also know what they need to work on for a more effective HRM implementation. Further research hereafter in HRM is required.

9. Conclusion

The present study aimed at finding out to what extent internal and external attributions of constraints concerning the implementation of HR practices correspond with the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. Employees and line managers do make a difference in attribution of internal and external factors concerning the implementation of HR practices for the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices. Line managers attribute more external factors and less internal factors than employees to the effectiveness of implementation of HR practices. Furthermore, internal and external factors do interact positively with each other to explain certain subscales of the effectiveness of line managers' implementation of HR practices.

However, the results are not entirely reliable due to the small sample. Further research on more stakeholders could determine whether different stakeholders disagree in internal or external attribution concerning the implementation of HR practices for an effective HRM implementation.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Table 10.
Gender distribution of line managers and employees

Gender	Line Managers		Employees	
	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency
Male	78.9	15	37.9	22
Female	21.1	4	62.1	36

Table 11.
Age distribution of line managers and employees

Age	Line Managers		Employees	
	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency
20-30	0	0	8.6	5
30-40	15.8	3	29.3	17
40-50	26.3	5	27.6	16
50-60	52.6	10	31.0	18
60 and older	5.3	1	3.5	2

Table 12.
Education level distribution of line managers and employees

Education	Line Managers		Employees	
	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency
No Education	0.0	0	0.0	0
VMBO/MAVO/LBO	0.0	0	6.9	4
MBO	5.3	1	24.1	14
HAVO/VWO	0.0	0	12.1	7
HBO/WO	94.7	18	56.9	33

Table 13.
Experience as a line manager

Years	Line managers	
	Percentage	Frequency
0-1 year	5.3	1
1-2 years	10.5	2
2-5 years	47.4	9
5-10 years	36.8	7
Longer than 10 years	0.0	0

Table 14.
Line managers' span of control

Span of control	Line managers	
	Percentage	Frequency
Less than 10 employees	26.3	5
10-30 employees	36.8	7
30-50 employees	26.3	5
50 or more employees	10.5	2

Table 15.
How long do you work for your current manager?

Years	Employees	
	Percentage	Frequency
0-1 year	19.0	11
1-2 years	13.8	8
2-5 years	20.7	12
5-10 years	32.8	19
Longer than 10 years	13.7	8

Appendix B

Table 16.
Factor analysis for the dependent variable

		Factors						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Personnel administration (Cronbach's alpha=.80)								
1.	Hours registration	-.07	-.08	.74	-.05	.01	.23	.05
2.	Absenteïsme	-.03	.08	.79	-.06	-.18	-.04	-.18
3.	Archiving	.03	.07	.75	.11	.17	.21	-.02
4.	Translation of organizational policy to your team.	-.19	.31	.57	-.17	.13	-.03	.25
5.	Safety	-.06	.08	.70	-.18	.04	-.12	.31
6.	Managing and analyzing the data (from the personnel administration/personnel information system for operational purposes.	.16	-.05	.75	.09	.06	-.07	-.32
7.	Quality of work (job content, working condition, labor relations, workplace ergonomics, environmental climate)	-.09	.14	.21	-.01	-.19	.79	-.12
Staffing (Cronbach's alpha=.81)								
1.	Introduction of new employees.	-.04	.66	.01	.14	.21	.46	.10
2.	Function classification.	-.20	.43	-.12	.24	.03	.52	.44
3.	Personnel changes (placement, transfer, dismissal, promotion).	-.19	.67	.04	.31	-.19	.08	.22
4.	Operational personnel planning (matching staff availability and staffing in relation to operational planning)	-.25	.76	.08	-.13	-.29	.18	-.01
Recruitment and selection (Cronbach's alpha=.68)								
1.	Attracting potential employees.	.14	-.51	.03	-.27	.55	.11	.04
2.	Selection (selection of letters, attending job interviews, tests or assessment centers, selection of new employees).	.06	-.19	.11	-.09	.78	-.16	-.06
Training and development (Cronbach's alpha=.76)								
1.	Evaluating existing training and education and provision of training needs.	-.06	.75	.07	.05	-.29	-.10	-.14
2.	Educate and instruct your employees (including	-.01	.81	.10	.13	.08	.09	-.14

course, function and task oriented training).

Career development (Cronbach's alpha=.69)								
1.	Career counseling	.63	.05	-.06	.43	-.09	-.22	.20
2.	Work meetings with your employees	.67	-.36	-.00	.01	-.01	.20	.10
3.	Assessment/progress meetings	.43	-.19	-.02	-.05	-.08	-.07	.74
4.	Career development and policy	.53	-.03	-.07	.16	-.31	-.10	.21
Reward (Cronbach's alpha=.83)								
1.	Determining salaries	.13	.15	-.10	.75	-.37	.18	-.06
2.	Increase or decrease in salaries	-.04	-.03	-.13	.91	-.01	.06	-.12
3.	Discussing salaries	.02	.34	.10	.78	.03	-.10	.15
Supervision of employees (Cronbach's alpha=.82)								
1.	Resolving conflicts between members of your team.	.76	.06	-.06	.10	.33	-.24	-.03
2.	Advise your employees	.78	-.12	-.07	-.09	-.07	-.11	-.04
3.	Maintaining harmonious group relationships within your team.	.76	-.02	.04	-.11	.14	.10	-.21
4.	Kind support (personal conversations, individual oriented employee accompaniment)	.79	-.18	.05	-.01	.09	-.00	.22

Appendix C

Table 17.
Factor analysis for the independent variables

		Factors				
		1	2	3	4	5
Desire (Cronbach's alpha=.88)						
1.	I think that this activity is interesting.	.75	-.07	-.16	-.25	-.10
2.	I think this activity is fun.	.86	-.05	-.05	-.11	-.11
3.	I feel good when doing this activity.	.87	-.06	-.04	-.15	-.20
4.	I am doing it for my own good ⁺	.23	.26	-.31	.29	-.30
5.	I believe that this activity is important for me.	.57	-.07	-.22	-.21	-.01
6.	I do this activity but I am not sure if it is worth it.	.20	.62	-.37	.15	-.09
7.	It helps the people in my team to grow improve and develop themselves.	.83	-.02	.10	-.02	-.07
8.	It helps me to supervise my team.	.85	-.04	.04	.02	.00
9.	It helps me to reach my production goals.	.77	-.04	.12	-.06	-.00
10.	It helps me to treat employees in a fair and consistent way.	.77	-.01	.17	-.06	-.12
Competences (Cronbach's alpha=.90)						
1.	I can remain calm when facing difficulties in performing my HR responsibilities.	.10	.75	.04	.02	.01
2.	When I am confronted with a problem in performing my HR responsibilities I can usually find several solutions.	-.13	.80	.02	-.06	.25
3.	Whatever comes my way in performing my HR responsibilities I can usually handle it.	-.11	.77	-.15	.01	-.08
4.	I'm able to effectively deal with changes in the performance of the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	-.31	.77	-.08	.07	.05
5.	I have sufficient knowledge to perform the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	-.09	.86	.03	.05	.12
6.	I'm able to come up with innovative ideas about the execution of HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	-.09	.70	.07	.13	.17
7.	I'm able to bring up the feedback of the employee on the performance of the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	-.05	.65	-.24	-.05	-.13
Capacity (Cronbach's alpha=.78)						
1.	I can't seem to get caught up with performing my HR responsibilities.	-.26	.18	-.15	.70	-.06
2.	Sometimes I feel as if there are not enough hours in the day.	-.16	-.09	.07	.79	.07

3.	Many times I have to cancel my commitments to my HR responsibilities.	-.04	.12	-.00	.74	-.02
4.	I find myself having to prepare priority lists to get done all the HR responsibilities I have to do. Otherwise, I forget so much to do.	-.27	.07	.17	.48	.34
5.	I feel I have to perform HR responsibilities hastily and maybe less carefully in order to get everything done.	-.46	.35	.13	.47	.16
<hr/>						
Support (Cronbach's alpha=.86)						
<hr/>						
1	The HR managers are always willing to help.	-.09	-.14	.68	-.05	.00
2	The HR managers have the necessary knowledge to answer my questions.	.02	-.02	.85	.12	-.18
3	The HR department gives me individual attention.	.17	.06	.78	-.09	-.11
4	The HR department tries to reach the best for me.	-.11	-.17	.74	-.04	.19
5	The HR department is responsible for the time to obtain the right information that I need for executing the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	.02	-.03	.71	.09	-.16
6	Sufficient meetings are scheduled to discuss opportunities when I encounter when I execute the HR responsibilities and tasks ⁺⁺	.09	-.04	.77	-.05	-.22
<hr/>						
Policy and procedures (Cronbach's alpha=.77)						
<hr/>						
1.	I work under incompatible HR policies and HR guidelines.	-.11	.13	.03	.38	.57
2.	I receive an HR assignment without the manpower to complete it.	-.16	-.22	-.12	.57	.40
3.	I have to buck a rule or policy in order to carry out my HR responsibilities.	-.06	-.07	-.11	.48	.55
4.	I perform HR tasks that are accepted by one person but not by others.	-.07	-.14	-.09	-.03	.67
5.	I have concrete, planned goals for my HR responsibilities	.25	-.33	.24	-.07	.50
6.	I lack HR policies and guidelines to help me.	-.09	.08	-.05	.12	.78
7.	I have to feel my way in perform HR responsibilities ⁺	-.44	.18	-.04	.21	.31
8.	Explanation is clear of what has to be done in performing my HR responsibilities	-.03	.30	-.22	-.14	.63
<hr/>						

+Factor loadings <.04

++New items added to the questionnaire of Bos-Nehles (2006)

Appendix D

Table 18.
Cronbach's alpha of constructs for the dependent variable

	Dependent variable	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
1.	Personnel administration	.80	7
2.	Staffing	.81	4
3.	Recruitment and selection	.68	2
4.	Training and development	.76	2
5.	Career management	.69	4
6.	Evaluation and rewarding	.83	3
7.	People management	.82	4

Table 19.
Cronbach's alpha of constructs and subscales for the independent variable

	Research at hand		Original research	
			(Bos-Nehles, 2010)	
	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
Desire	.88	10	.78	13
Intrinsic motivation	.92	3	.84	3
Identified regulation	n.a.	2	.73	3
Amotivation	n.a.	1	.80	3
Value added	.92	4	.93	4
Competences	.90	7	.76	5
Occupational self-efficacy	n.a.	7	.85	5
Capacity	.78	5	.84	5
Role overload	n.a.	5	.88	5
Support	.87	6	.87	7
HR support behavior	n.a.	6	.89	4
Policy and procedures	.77	8	.81	12
Role conflict	.77	4	.86	5
Role ambiguity	n.a.	4	.84	4

Appendix E

Questionnaire for line managers

Vragenlijst over de HR-rol van leidinggevenden

Het onderzoek

Deze vragenlijst gaat over de rol van leidinggevenden bij het uitvoeren van het HR-beleid en de mogelijke uitdagingen die zij daarbij ervaren. Door het aantrekken, ontwikkelen, beoordelen en begeleiden van medewerkers hebben leidinggevenden namelijk ook een HR-rol. In dit onderzoek wordt er gevraagd naar uw eigen opvattingen en naar uw eigen ervaring als leidinggevende met HR-taken en verantwoordelijkheden.

Hierbij zal worden gevraagd naar de tijd die u aan HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken besteedt, uw motivatie om de HR-activiteiten uit te voeren, uw eigen competenties voor HR, de ondersteuning van de HR-afdeling (HR-consultants) en de richtlijnen en procedures voor het uitvoeren van uw HR-taken.

Het invullen van deze vragenlijst zal maximaal 10 minuten in beslag nemen. De vragenlijst zal tot 1 januari online staan.

Vertrouwelijkheid en anonimiteit

Iedereen die deze vragenlijst ontvangt moet zich vrij kunnen voelen om de vragenlijst in te vullen. Daarbij zijn vertrouwelijkheid en anonimiteit van het grootste belang. Ik wil benadrukken dat er vertrouwelijk met de data wordt omgegaan. De gegevens gebruik ik alleen voor mijn onderzoek. De vragenlijst zal dus niet voor andere doeleinden worden gebruikt. De gegevens die ik terugkoppel aan de gemeente zijn volledig anoniem. Ik zal de onderzoeksresultaten uiteraard ook aan u terugkoppelen.

Ik stel het zeer op prijs dat u mee werkt aan deze vragenlijst!

Vragen?

Indien u vragen heeft over dit onderzoek dan kunt u contact opnemen met I. Dewulf

E-mailadres: i.dewulf@student.utwente.nl

Algemene gegevens

1. Wat is uw geslacht?

Vrouw

Man

2. Wat is uw leeftijd?

Vul uw antwoord hier in:

3. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

Geen/lager- of basisonderwijs

VMBO/MAVO/LBO

MBO

HAVO/VWO

HBO/WO

4. In welke vestiging bent u werkzaam?

Vul uw antwoord hier in:

5. Op welke afdeling bent u werkzaam?

Vul uw antwoord hier in:

6. Hoelang bent u werkzaam als leidinggevende op deze afdeling?

0 tot 1 jaar

1-2 jaar

2-5 jaar

5-10 jaar

Langer dan 10 jaar

7. Hoeveel werknemers heeft u onder uw leiding?

minder dan 10 werknemers

tussen de 10 en 30 werknemers

tussen de 30 en 50 werknemers

meer dan 50 werknemers

Motivatie HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren

Ik zal u vragen stellen over uw leidinggevende functie met een focus op de motivatie van HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken die u voor uw team moet uitvoeren. Leidinggeven betekent niet alleen het leiden, aansturen, motiveren en coachen van uw team. Leidinggevend zijn zijn ook verantwoordelijk voor bepaalde HR-activiteiten.

Hieronder vindt u uitspraken over uw eigen motivatie om HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren. Kunt u voor de volgende stellingen aangeven in hoeverre u het ermee eens bent (van 1 t/m 5) ?

Waarom houdt u zich bezig met het uitvoeren van HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken?

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel van mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Ik vind dat het uitvoeren van deze activiteiten interessant is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Ik vind het leuk deze activiteiten te verrichten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Ik voel me prettig bij het uitvoeren van deze activiteiten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Ik doe dit voor mijn eigen bestwil.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Ik geloof dat het verrichten van deze activiteiten belangrijk voor me is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Ik voer deze activiteiten uit maar ik ben er niet van overtuigd dat ze de moeite waard zijn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Het helpt de mensen in mijn team te groeien, zichzelf te verbeteren en te ontwikkelen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Deze activiteiten helpen me mijn team aan te sturen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Het helpt me bij het bereiken van mijn doelen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Het helpt me mijn medewerkers op een eerlijk en consistente manier te behandelen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Competenties van de leidinggevende voor het uitvoeren van HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken

Hieronder vindt u uitspraken over uw eigen HR-kennis en vaardigheden om uw HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren. Kunt u voor de volgende stellingen aangeven in hoeverre u het ermee eens bent (van 1 t/m 5)?

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Ik kan kalm blijven wanneer ik geconfronteerd word met moeilijkheden in het uitoefenen van mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken, omdat ik kan terugvallen op mijn vaardigheden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Wanneer ik geconfronteerd word met een probleem bij het uitoefenen van mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken, dan vind ik meestal verschillende oplossingen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Wat er ook gebeurt in het uitvoeren van mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken, ik kan het gewoonlijk wel aan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Ik ben in staat om effectief om te gaan met veranderingen in het uitvoeren van de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Ik heb voldoende kennis om de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Ik ben in staat om te komen met vernieuwende ideeën omtrent het uitvoeren van de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Ik ben in staat om feedback van de werknemer mee te nemen in het uitvoeren van de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Tijdbesteding aan HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken

Kunt u aangeven in hoeverre u het met de volgende stellingen eens bent (van 1 t/m 5) ?

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Ik moet HR-activiteiten uitvoeren waar ik eigenlijk geen tijd of energie voor heb.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Mijn werkdag heeft onvoldoende uren om al de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren die men van mij verwacht.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Vaak moet ik mijn verplichtingen voor mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken afzeggen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Het is nodig dat ik een prioriteitenlijstje maak om alle activiteiten die tot mijn leidinggevende taak behoren, te kunnen uitvoeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken gehaast en wellicht minder zorgvuldig uitvoer om alles af te kunnen krijgen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ondersteuning bij het uitvoeren van uw HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken

De volgende stellingen gaan over de ondersteuning die u van de HR-afdeling en speciaal van de HR-consultants krijgt. Kunt u voor de volgende stellingen aangeven in hoeverre u het ermee eens bent (van 1 t/m 5)? Wat is uw mening over de ondersteuning die u van de HR-afdeling krijgt?

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. De HR-consultant is altijd bereid mij te helpen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. De HR-managers beschikken over de kennis die nodig is om mijn vragen te beantwoorden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. De HR-consultant geeft mij individuele aandacht.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. De HR-afdeling heeft het beste met mij voor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. De HR-afdeling zorgt voor het op tijd doorgeven van de juiste informatie die ik nodig heb om de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Er worden voldoende vergaderingen gepland om moeilijkheden te bespreken waar ik tegenaan loop bij het uitvoeren van de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Beleid en procedures voor het uitvoeren van uw HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken

Hieronder vindt u een aantal uitspraken over het HR-beleid en de procedures die u ter beschikking staan bij het uitvoeren van uw HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken. Kunt u voor de volgende stellingen aangeven in hoeverre u het ermee eens bent (van 1 t/m 5)? Ik ervaar de volgende conflicten bij het uitvoeren van mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken:

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Ik werk met tegenstrijdig HR-beleid en –richtlijnen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Ik krijg HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken toegewezen zonder de bijbehorende menskracht om het uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Ik moet regels en gedragslijnen negeren om bepaalde HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Ik werk met twee of meer groepen die ieder op geheel verschillende wijze opereren, bij het uitoefenen van mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Ik heb duidelijke, geplande doelstellingen voor mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Ik mis richtlijnen en gedragsregels om me te helpen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Ik moet gevoel krijgen voor het uitvoeren van mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. De uitleg van wat er moet gebeuren bij het uitvoeren van mijn HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken is duidelijk.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Hartelijk bedankt voor uw deelname!

Appendix F

Questionnaire for employees

Vragenlijst over de HR-rol van uw leidinggevende

Het onderzoek

Welkom bij de vragenlijst over de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken van uw leidinggevende. Graag wil ik van u weten hoe tevreden u bent over de manier waarop uw leidinggevende zijn HR-taken uitvoert, hierbij kunt u bijvoorbeeld denken aan het aantrekken, ontwikkelen, beoordelen en begeleiden van zijn medewerkers.

Verder zal er worden gevraagd naar de mogelijke uitdagingen die uw leidinggevende ervaart bij het uitvoeren van zijn HR-taken. Wat zijn volgens u belemmeringen die uw leidinggevende ervaart? Werknemers staan dicht bij de leidinggevend en zijn volgens mij daarom de juiste beoordelaars. Er zal worden gevraagd naar de tijd die *uw leidinggevende* aan HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken besteedt, de motivatie van *uw leidinggevende* om zijn HR-activiteiten uit te voeren, zijn eigen competenties voor HR, de ondersteuning van de HR-afdeling (HR-consultants) en de richtlijnen en procedures voor het uitvoeren van zijn HR-taken.

Het zal soms lastig zijn om sommige vragen te beantwoorden over uw leidinggevende. Indien u bij zo'n vraag komt, probeert u zich dan zo goed mogelijk in te leven in de rol van uw leidinggevende.

Het invullen van deze vragenlijst zal max. 10 minuten in beslag nemen. De vragenlijst zal tot 1 januari online staan.

Vertrouwelijkheid en anonimiteit

Iedereen die deze vragenlijst ontvangt moet zich vrij kunnen voelen om de vragenlijst in te vullen. Daarbij zijn vertrouwelijkheid en anonimiteit van het grootste belang. Ik wil benadrukken dat er vertrouwelijk met de data wordt omgegaan. De gegevens gebruik ik alleen voor mijn onderzoek. De vragenlijst zal dus niet voor andere doeleinden worden gebruikt. De gegevens die ik terugkoppel aan de gemeente zijn anoniem. Ik zal de onderzoeksresultaten uiteraard ook aan u terugkoppelen.

Ik stel het zeer op prijs dat u mee werkt aan deze vragenlijst!

Vragen?

Heeft u vragen over dit onderzoek dan kunt u contact opnemen met I. Dewulf.

E-mailadres: i.dewulf@student.utwente.nl

Algemene gegevens

1. Wat is uw geslacht?

Vrouw

Man

2. Wat is uw leeftijd?

Vul uw antwoord hier in:

3. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

Geen/lager- of basisonderwijs

VMBO/MAVO/LBO

MBO

HAVO/VWO

HBO/WO

4. In welke vestiging bent u werkzaam?

Vul uw antwoord hier in:

5. Op welke afdeling bent u werkzaam?

Vul de naam van uw afdeling in:

6. Hoelang bent u werkzaam onder de leiding van uw huidige leidinggevende?

0 tot 1 jaar

1-2 jaar

2-5 jaar

5-10 jaar

langer dan 10 jaar

Motivatie van uw leidinggevende, HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren

Hieronder vindt u uitspraken over de motivatie van uw leidinggevende om HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren. Kunt u voor de volgende stellingen aangeven in hoeverre u het ermee eens bent (van 1 t/m 5)? Waarom houdt uw leidinggevende zich bezig met het uitvoeren van HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken?

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Mijn leidinggevende vindt het uitvoeren van deze activiteiten interessant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Mijn leidinggevende vindt het leuk deze activiteiten te verrichten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Mijn leidinggevende voelt zich prettig bij het uitvoeren van deze activiteiten.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Mijn leidinggevende doet dit voor zijn eigen bestwil.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Mijn leidinggevende gelooft dat het verrichten van deze activiteiten belangrijk voor hem/haar is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Mijn leidinggevende voert deze activiteiten uit maar hij/zij is er niet van overtuigd dat ze de moeite waard zijn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Het helpt de mensen in zijn/haar team te groeien, zichzelf te verbeteren en te ontwikkelen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Deze activiteiten helpen zijn/haar team aan te sturen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Het helpt hem/haar bij het bereiken van zijn/haar doelen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Het helpt zijn/haar medewerkers op een eerlijke en consistente manier te behandelen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Competenties van uw leidinggevende voor het uitvoeren van HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.

Hieronder vindt u uitspraken over de HR-kennis en vaardigheden van uw leidinggevende om de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren. Kunt u voor de volgende stellingen aangeven in hoeverre u het ermee eens bent (van 1 t/m 5) ?

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Mijn leidinggevende kan kalm blijven wanneer hij/zij geconfronteerd wordt met moeilijkheden in het uitvoeren van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheid en taken, omdat hij/zij kan terugvallen op zijn vaardigheden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Wanneer hij/zij geconfronteerd wordt met een probleem bij het uitvoeren van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheid en taken dan vindt hij/zij meestal verschillende oplossingen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Wat er ook gebeurt in het uitvoeren van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken, hij/zij kan het gewoonlijk wel aan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Mijn leidinggevende is in staat om effectief om te gaan met veranderingen in het uitvoeren van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Mijn leidinggevende heeft voldoende kennis om de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Mijn leidinggevende is in staat om te komen met vernieuwende ideeën omtrent het uitvoeren van de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Mijn leidinggevende is in staat om feedback van de werknemer mee te nemen in het uitvoeren van zijn of haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Tijdbesteding van uw leidinggevende aan HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken

Kunt u aangeven in hoeverre u het met de volgende stelling eens bent (van 1 t/m 5)?

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Mijn leidinggevende moet HR-activiteiten uitvoeren waar hij/zij volgens mij eigenlijk geen tijd of energie voor heeft.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Zijn/haar werkdag heeft volgens mij onvoldoende uren om al de HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren die van hem/haar worden verwacht.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Volgens mij moet hij/zij vaak zijn verplichtingen voor zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken afzeggen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Het is nodig dat hij/zij een prioriteitenlijstje maakt om alle activiteiten die tot zijn/haar leidinggevende taak behoren, te kunnen uitvoeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Ik heb het gevoel dat hij/zij HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken gehaast en wellicht minder zorgvuldig uitvoert om alles af te kunnen krijgen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ondersteuning bij het uitvoeren van HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken van uw leidinggevende

De volgende stellingen gaan over de ondersteuning die uw leidinggevende van de HR-afdeling en speciaal van de HR-consultants krijgt. Kunt u voor de volgende stellingen aangeven in hoeverre u het ermee eens bent (van 1 t/m 5)? Wat is uw mening over de ondersteuning die uw leidinggevende van de HR-afdeling krijgt?

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. De HR-consultants zijn altijd bereid mijn leidinggevende te helpen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. De HR-managers beschikken over de kennis die nodig is om de vragen van mijn leidinggevende te beantwoorden.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. De HR-consultant geeft mijn leidinggevende individuele aandacht.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. De HR-afdeling heeft het beste met mijn leidinggevende voor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. De HR-afdeling zorgt voor het op tijd doorgeven van de juiste informatie die mijn leidinggevende nodig heeft om zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Er worden voldoende vergaderingen gepland om moeilijkheden te bespreken waar mijn leidinggevende tegenaan loopt bij het uitvoeren van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Beleid en procedures voor het uitvoeren van HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken van uw leidinggevende

Hieronder vindt u een aantal uitspraken over het HR-beleid en de procedures die uw leidinggevende ter beschikking staat bij het uitvoeren van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken. Kunt u voor de volgende stellingen aangeven in hoeverre u het ermee eens bent (van 1 t/m 5)? Mijn leidinggevende ervaart de volgende conflicten bij het uitvoeren van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken:

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel: mee oneens = 1 en mee eens = 5.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Mijn leidinggevende werkt met tegenstrijdig HR-beleid en –richtlijnen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Mijn leidinggevende krijgt HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken toegewezen zonder de bijbehorende menskracht om het uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Mijn leidinggevende moet regels en gedragslijnen negeren om bepaalde HR-verantwoordelijkheid en taken uit te voeren.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Mijn leidinggevende voert HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken uit die acceptabel zijn voor de ene persoon maar niet worden geaccepteerd door anderen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Voor mijn leidinggevende zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken geldt:

Kies het toepasselijk antwoord voor elk onderdeel:

	1	2	3	4	5
5. Mijn leidinggevende heeft duidelijke, geplande doelstellingen voor zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Mijn leidinggevende mist volgens mij richtlijnen en gedragsregels om hem/haar te helpen.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Mijn leidinggevende moet gevoel krijgen voor het uitvoeren van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. De uitleg van wat er moet gebeuren bij het uitoefenen van zijn/haar HR-verantwoordelijkheden en taken is naar mijn mening duidelijk voor hem/haar.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Hartelijk bedankt voor uw deelname!