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**The Impact of HRM Practices and
Sustainability on Ethical Climate: An
Empirical Study**

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Abstract

La Business Ethics sta diventando sempre più uno strumento fondamentale all'interno del contesto organizzativo, soprattutto dopo gli scandali che hanno caratterizzato l'ambiente delle imprese negli ultimi anni e che hanno portato ad un contesto di profonda crisi economica (da Lehman Brothers nel 2007 allo scandalo Barclays ancora in corso). Se vogliamo analizzare l'impatto delle pratiche di business nell'influenzare la business ethics, la prima cosa da fare è trovare un adeguato quadro teorico in grado di dare un valido strumento per comprendere l'etica all'interno dell'organizzazione.

Partendo da una vasta analisi della letteratura esistente in materia di Business Ethics, Gestione delle Risorse Umane e General Management, abbiamo focalizzato la nostra attenzione sul concetto di Clima Etico Aziendale che la letteratura ha dimostrato essere legato a prestazioni organizzative importanti come ad esempio la job satisfaction, il commitment aziendale, l'employee well-being e la riduzione del turn-over. Il clima etico aziendale è definito come il clima all'interno dell'azienda visto dai dipendenti come una guida chiara per il comportamento più appropriato all'interno dell'organizzazione stessa. Più nello specifico il clima etico può essere di tre tipologie: egoistico, volto a massimizzare l'interesse personale; benevolente, volto a massimizzare l'interesse comune; normato, volto a massimizzare l'aderenza alle norme e principi etici. Partendo da questo concetto siamo stati in grado di portare la nostra attenzione su una mancanza in particolare esistente in letteratura cioè le cause organizzative che possono influenzare in modo significativo, sia positivo che negativo, il clima etico.

Il nostro lavoro di tesi comincia da qui infatti abbiamo individuato una serie di pratiche etiche di HR, divise in cluster, grazie alla teoria AMO (Abilità, Motivazione, Opportunità) ben nota ed utilizzata in campo manageriale, e abbiamo somministrato un questionario a 6 mila dipendenti

europei provenienti da 6 Paesi diversi, cercando di trovare la relazione tra queste pratiche di HR e le tipologie proprie del clima etico (egoistico, benevolente e normato), utilizzando la percezione della sostenibilità all'interno dell'organizzazione nel passato, nel presente e in futuro, come elemento mediatore. I risultati che abbiamo ottenuto mostrano come le pratiche etiche di HR legate alla Abilità hanno una relazione positiva con il clima etico di tipo benevolente e normato sulle quali quindi i professionisti di HR devono e possono lavorare per influenzare e cambiare positivamente la visione etica collettiva in azienda. D'altra parte pratiche etiche di HR relative alla motivazione sono, sorprendentemente, in relazione positiva con il clima etico di tipo egoistico, sintomo di una percezione da parte dei dipendenti delle leve più "hard" di HR legate alle retribuzioni, che li portano ad una visione più individualistica. La sostenibilità invece risulta un mediatore valido solo nella relazione con il clima etico normato.

Per quanto riguarda le implicazioni manageriali derivanti dalla nostra ricerca, possiamo affermare che i professionisti di HR dovrebbero concentrarsi più su pratiche volte alla formazione e creazione di un pensiero etico in generale in azienda piuttosto che focalizzarsi su pratiche volte semplicemente a modificare e correggere in corsa una serie di comportamenti ritenuti non eticamente corretti.

Executive Summary

Introduzione

La situazione macroeconomica che si è venuta a formare a seguito di eventi che coinvolgono scandali etici in organizzazioni come AIG, Lehman Brothers e Barclays continuano ad ottenere una significativa attenzione da parte non solo degli studiosi e ricercatori di management, ma anche da parte del pubblico e dei media. In quasi tutti questi casi, il focus è stato puntato sull'etica organizzativa come fattore all'origine delle attività illegali e immorali, sottolineandone l'importanza per capire come e perché si verificano comportamenti eticamente scorretti. Per questo motivo il nostro lavoro di tesi è partito dallo studio della business ethics e degli elementi che la possono influenzare, con l'obiettivo di validare tramite un modello empirico le relazioni da noi individuate. In particolare, all'interno del mondo manageriale, ci siamo concentrati sul cercare di stabilire se e come la pratiche di risorse umane possono influenzare l'etica all'interno dell'organizzazione e il ruolo della sostenibilità in relazione all'HR alla business ethics.

Il Quadro Teorico

Molte ricerche sulla business ethics hanno sottolineato l'importanza del clima etico aziendale come componente fondamentale del contesto etico di un'organizzazione, in grado di influenzare il processo decisionale etico e il comportamento dei lavoratori (e.g. Vardi, 2001). Per questo abbiamo deciso di utilizzare il clima etico aziendale come strumento d'indagine sull'etica organizzativa. Il clima etico si basa sul ragionamento morale collettivo dei

membri dell'organizzazione (Victor e Cullen 1988) e ha come riferimento teorico il lavoro dello psicologo Kohlberg e dei suoi collaboratori (1976).

Kohlberg, basandosi sulle teorie morali classiche che vengono elencate e riassunte all'inizio del nostro lavoro di tesi, ha evidenziato come il percorso di crescita morale debba determinare il passaggio da uno stadio egoistico a uno basato su concetti più universali quali benevolenza e rispetto di regole e principi universali. Il lavoro svolto da Kohlberg ci aiuta ad allargare il focus dalla dimensione individualistica del singolo dipendente ad uno più ampio che faccia riferimento alla dimensione collettivistica dell'organizzazione.

Abbiamo focalizzato la nostra attenzione sulle ricerche di Victor e Cullen i quali individuano nel loro lavoro due dimensioni di analisi, il "locus of analysis" e l' "ethical criterion" . Dall'intersezione di queste dimensioni essi individuano una serie di tipologie di clima etico; noi abbiamo preso in considerazione il solo clima etico di tipo locale, in quanto è il più utile per capire l'influenza dell'etica nell'organizzazione (Parboteeah, K. P., Lin, Y.-tzu, Chen, I.-heng, Lee, A. Y.-p, & Chung, A. 2010), suddiviso a sua volta nelle tre tipologie base del ethical criterion ovvero egoistico, benevolente e normato; essi hanno utilizzato un questionario, da loro creato (Ethical Climate Questionare, ECQ), grazie al quale è possibile valutare la dimensione etica all'interno di una azienda. Il clima etico ha ricevuto un'attenzione enorme da parte dei ricercatori, che hanno tentato di individuarne le possibili conseguenze. Oltre all'impatto sulla riduzione dei comportamenti eticamente scorretti (Vardi, 2001), Cullen (2003) ha dimostrato, per esempio, come un clima etico benevolente e un clima etico normato abbiano ripercussioni positive sul commitment organizzativo, risultato che poi è stato confermato in uno studio sui dipendenti del settore turistico coreano da Kim e Miller (2008).

Inoltre, Mulki, Jamarillo e Locander (2008) hanno provato come il clima etico sia per i dipendenti una guida chiara per il comportamento più appropriato all'interno dell'organizzazione e un fattore che può portare, nelle

sue varianti, benevolente e normato, alla riduzione del conflitto di ruolo e dello stress sul lavoro, e quindi a un minor turn-over dei dipendenti. Tuttavia: “E’ sorprendente notare che, anche se la ricerca empirica ha affrontato il ruolo di leader e la struttura organizzativa nell’influenzare climi etici, poca ricerca empirica è stata condotta sulle cause di climi etici ”. (Parboteeah et al., 2010).

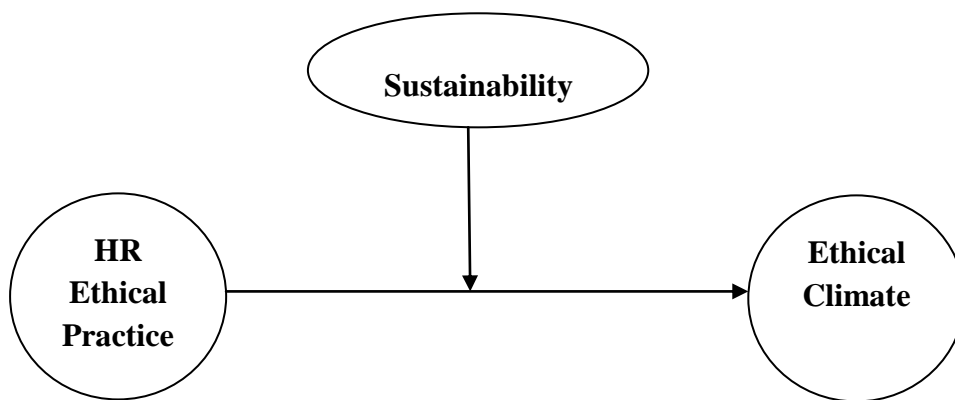
La letteratura suggerisce che le pratiche HR sono in grado di influenzare il clima etico dell'organizzazione: "I professionisti di Risorse Umane devono eseguire decisioni con implicazioni etiche [...], molte aziende danno al dipartimento delle risorse umane un ruolo fondamentale di leadership nello stabilire e mantenere i loro programmi etici"(Carolyn Wiley, 2000).

Abbiamo quindi eseguito un'analisi della letteratura, con l'obiettivo di verificare ciò che è già stato scritto sul rapporto tra l'HR e l'etica a livello organizzativo, focalizzandoci sulle riviste scientifiche internazionali di Business Ethics, Gestione delle Risorse Umane e General Management e prendendo in considerazione libri riguardanti tale tema, concentrandoci su contributi dal 2000 in poi. 94 tra articoli e capitoli di libri hanno soddisfatto i nostri criteri: 48 articoli e 47 capitoli in 6 libri. In una seconda fase abbiamo organizzato e identificato i contributi del data set suddividendo ognuno tra teorici ed empirici, e in seguito in base agli obiettivi didattici e metodi per l'ottenimento dei dati. In seguito abbiamo clusterizzato tutti i contributi in 3 macro aree: contributi base al tema HR e business ethics, etica per l'HR e l'HR per l'etica, concentrando la nostra attenzione sull'ultimo cluster, in quanto ovviamente il più utile per analizzare come l'HR può influenzare l'etica all'interno dell'organizzazione. Abbiamo quindi estrapolato da tale macroarea alcuni articoli e capitoli dei libri, suddividendoli poi in base alle pratiche su cui più si concentravano grazie alla teoria AMO (Appelbaum, E., et al., 2000), che è una teoria formale progettata per lo studio del comportamento che coinvolge le abilità, la motivazione e le opportunità, distinguendo in: pratiche etiche di HR connesse con il tema abilità (ad esempio quelle relative a processi di

selezione e di formazione), pratiche etiche di HR relative al tema Motivazione (ad esempio quelle relative al sistema di compensation), pratiche etiche di HR connesse con il tema opportunità (ad esempio quelle relative ai processi di empowerment). Questa analisi ha evidenziato come i contributi empirici su questo tema siano parziali, focalizzati comunque su singoli paesi e campioni poco rappresentativi, come dimostrano articoli scientifici come ad esempio Ardichvili, A., Jondle, D., & Kowske, B., (2010). Inoltre nessuna ricerca empirica, almeno non sui giornali scientifici da noi analizzati, ha posto in diretta relazione le pratiche HR con il clima etico da un punto di vista empirico. Il nostro scopo è proprio quello di colmare il divario tra concetti teorici sul rapporto tra HR e business ethics e le parziali evidenze empiriche, cercando di verificare se le pratiche HR possano essere considerate una causa del clima etico.

Inoltre la sostenibilità è un concetto sempre più rilevante all'interno della discussione, non solo accademica, sull'universo manageriale. In particolare noi intendiamo con sostenibilità "lo stato dinamico di diventare sostenibile, un processo fondato sugli sforzi coscienti per creare nuove opportunità per l'esistenza in più domini e a più livelli, ora e in futuro" (Docherty et al., 2008). La sostenibilità può essere vista come lo stato dinamico di crescita e rigenerazione delle risorse umane. Uno dei sistemi manageriali sicuramente fondamentale per lo sviluppo della sostenibilità a livello organizzativo è quello dell'HRM, in quanto è la funzione predisposta al design e all'implementazione di pratiche che possono essere direttamente correlabili alla sostenibilità (Vickers, 2005). Tuttavia, "anche se la sostenibilità è diventata rilevante in molti settori della ricerca, ha ricevuto poca attenzione da parte dei ricercatori di HR" (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005). Il nostro primo obiettivo, per quanto riguarda la sostenibilità, sarà quello di verificare se le pratiche da noi individuate come pratiche etiche di HR possano in qualche modo influenzarne la percezione dei lavoratori. Ovviamente il tema della sostenibilità si collega

anche al tema dell'etica: "il concetto di sostenibilità ha una nativa dimensione etica, (...) relativi agli aspetti orientativi del termine - la sua normativa e il significato valutativo" (Becker, 2012). Tuttavia la ricerca non si è ancora sufficientemente focalizzata sull'influenza della sostenibilità rispetto ai temi di business ethics. Per questo noi cercheremo anche di verificare se e come la sostenibilità può influenzare il clima etico.



Il Modello proposto in questa Tesi

Il nostro modello, punta a colmare i lacune empirici fin qui evidenziati (tra pratiche HR e clima etico, tra pratiche HR e sostenibilità e tra sostenibilità e clima etico) e si basa sulle seguenti ipotesi:

- 1a: Le pratiche etiche di HR relative all'Abilità sono negativamente collegate al Clima Etico Locale di tipo egoistico.
- 1b: Le pratiche etiche di HR relative alla Motivazione sono negativamente collegate al Clima Etico Locale di tipo egoistico.
- 1c: Le pratiche etiche di HR relative all'opportunità sono negativamente collegate al Clima Etico Locale di tipo egoistico.

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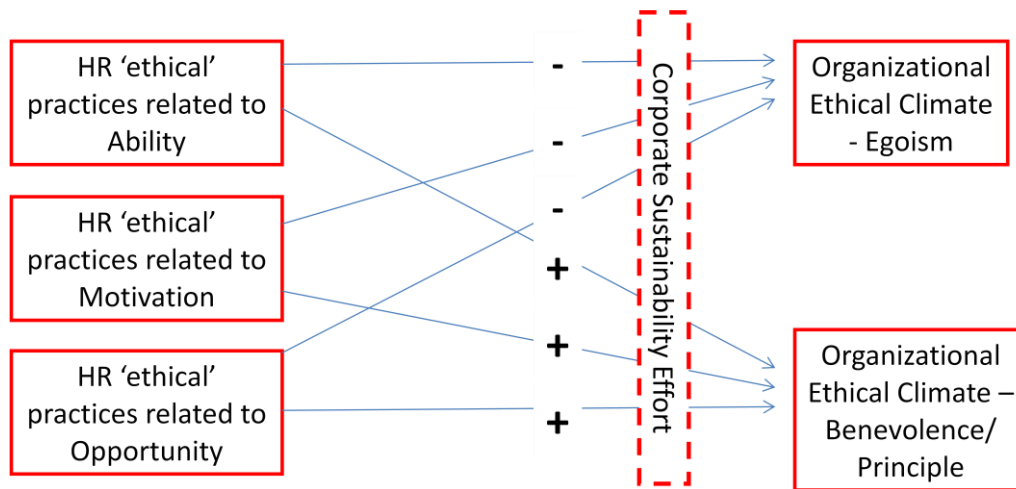
2a: Le pratiche etiche di HR relative all'Abilità sono positivamente collegate al Clima Etico Locale di tipo benevolente/normato.

2b: Le pratiche etiche di HR relative alla Motivazione sono positivamente collegate al Clima Etico Locale di tipo benevolente/normato.

2b: Le pratiche etiche di HR relative all'Opportunità sono positivamente collegate al Clima Etico Locale di tipo benevolente/normato.

3 : La relazione positiva tra pratiche HR etiche (diviso in abilità, motivazione e opportunità come cluster) e tutto il clima etico di tipo locale sono mediati dalla sostenibilità.

La figura sotto riportata ci mostra il modello teorico che abbiamo costruito sulla base dei concetti di Clima Etico, pratiche etiche di HR e sostenibilità, nel quale sono messe in evidenza le ipotesi sulle relazioni tra questi elementi, da noi appena enunciate.



Procedura Campione

Il nostro contributo empirico si basa su un questionario somministrato in sei diversi paesi europei: Italia, Francia, Germania, Spagna, Inghilterra e Polonia. Il questionario è stato inviato a mille lavoratori per nazione, per un

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totale di 6000 rispondenti; ogni campione nazionale è probabilistico, in quanto è stato selezionato in modo da rappresentare l'universo per le variabili di genere, età, titolo di studio, settore di impiego. La componente principale dell'analisi ha subito evidenziato come il campione rispecchi l'universo dei dati in modo molto fedele, dando una sostanziale solidità ai risultati da noi trovati.

Metodo

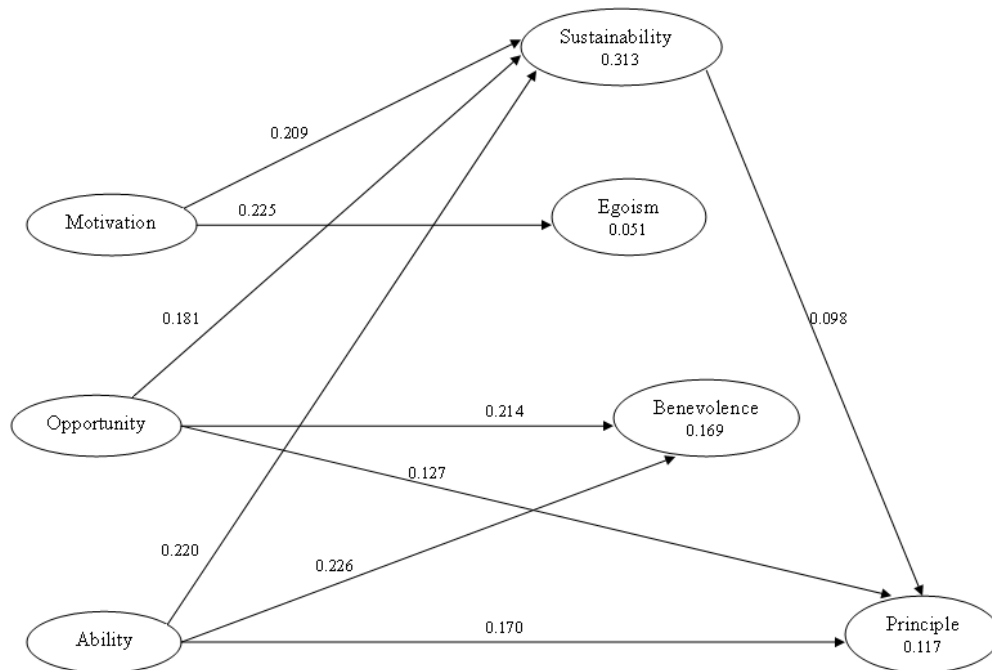
Per quanto riguarda le pratiche etiche di HR, abbiamo cercato, tra quelle suddivise tramite la teoria AMO, di considerare quelle più rilevanti e trasformarle in affermazioni facilmente comprensibili sulla frequenza, tramite opportuna scala Likert. Tali pratiche vengono da noi considerate parte integrante di un programma etico (all'interno dell'azienda) che sia orientato al valore (Weaver e Trevino, 2001) e quindi veramente efficace e che impatti fortemente sul clima etico aziendale. Per quanto riguarda la sostenibilità abbiamo preso come riferimento le domande sullo stato della sostenibilità nel passato, nel presente e nel futuro contenute all'interno del MIT Sloan Management Review Research Report del 2012. Per quanto riguarda il clima etico, infine, abbiamo deciso di prendere in considerazione, tra le affermazioni presenti sull'originale EQC di Victor e Cullen (1988), solo quelle che fanno riferimento al clima etico di tipo locale, in quanto quello da noi ritenuto il più importante per l'analisi del contesto organizzativo, mantenendo comunque le sue varianti egoistico, benevolente e normato.

Analisi dei Dati

Il modello analizzato per elaborare i dati si basa su un PLS path model. Il Partial Least Squares (PLS) è una famiglia di algoritmi con minimi quadrati alternati. Il metodo, sviluppato da Wold (1982), è stato introdotto nel contesto di modelli di regressione lineare multipla; più di recente (Lohmöller, 1989; Wold, 1985) l'algoritmo PLS è stato adottato nei SEM-LV (modelli ad equazioni strutturali con variabili latenti) come un metodo alternativo per le cosiddette procedure di stima della struttura di covarianza (Bollen, 1989).

Risultati

La figura sottostante riporta i risultati che sono stati conseguiti grazie all'analisi dei dati. Sviluppando il modello che è stato ipotizzato inizialmente, tramite una procedura passo passo, eliminando cioè in un primo momento gradualmente i legami meno significativi, e successivamente elaborando il modello stimando i suoi parametri da questo possiamo vedere quali delle nostre ipotesi iniziali sono state verificate e quali no.



In primo luogo, come previsto, le pratiche etiche di HR legate al tema Abilità e Opportunità sono risultate positivamente correlate al clima etico locale nelle sue varianti benevolente e normato. Ci si aspettava che anche le pratiche etiche di HR legate al tema Motivazione fossero correlate a tali tipologie di clima etico in modo positivo, invece, sorprendentemente, tali pratiche HR sono risultate essere positivamente correlata al clima etico locale nella sua variante egoistico. Inoltre, solo questo tipo di pratica ha una relazione significativa con il clima egoistico, anche se non come ce l’aspettavamo. La nostra ipotesi che la relazione tra pratiche HR etiche (divise nei cluster Abilità, Motivazione e Opportunità) e il clima etico locale fossero mediate dalla sostenibilità non sono state supportate dai nostri risultati, con eccezione fatta per il clima etico locale normato, ma è stato comunque dimostrato l’effetto positivo delle nostre HR pratiche etiche di HR sulla percezione della sostenibilità in azienda. Partendo da questi risultati, siamo ora in grado di svolgere una discussione che tenti di giustificarli.

Discussione e Implicazioni Manageriali

Innanzitutto occorre evidenziare come sia stata confermata anche dalla nostra ricerca l'importanza dell'HR per la business ethics aziendale. Sia le pratiche di HR legate al tema Abilità che quelle legate al tema Opportunità (con però un maggior grado di significatività per quelle di Abilità) sono risultate essere realmente orientate al valore e fortemente impattanti per la presenza di un clima etico locale nelle sue varianti benevolente e normativo, con i vantaggi che questo poi comporta in termini di commitment, job satisfaction, riduzione dello stress sul lavoro, ecc. Le pratiche di Motivazione invece non risultano essere legate a questi tipi di clima etico, contrariamente alle attese, suggerendo che forse quando si parla di ricompense dei manager il focus, indipendentemente dal tipo di pratica, è sempre sul profitto egoistico piuttosto che sul rispetto delle regole e sul reciproco volersi bene. Un'altra possibile spiegazione, almeno per alcune pratiche specifiche come bonus etici, può venire dal mondo della psicologia cognitiva (U. Gneezy and A. Rustichini, 2000) e dalla distinzione tra motivazione intrinseca e estrinseca: se l'attività è intrinsecamente etica per il lavoratore e quindi la motivazione a svolgerla è intrinseca, allora la ricompensa monetaria è una motivazione estrinseca e il risultato può essere una riduzione dell'attività.

Per quanto riguarda le relazioni con il clima etico locale egoistico, innanzitutto va segnalato come l' R^2 collegato a questa sezione del questionario sia di 0,051, quando la letteratura ci dice che solo un valore superiore a 0,1 è rilevante (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). Questo significa che all'interno del questionario questa sezione risulta per i rispondenti essere la meno chiara e la più difficilmente collegabile con le altre. Comunque i risultati evidenziano come le pratiche legate ad Abilità e Opportunità non sembrano collegabili significativamente al clima etico locale egoistico, mentre lo sono, e

positivamente, quelle legate alla Motivazione. Abbiamo dunque riconsiderato il fatto che le pratiche di ricompense dei manager e valutazione delle performance possano far parte di un clima etico orientato al valore. Probabilmente il focus sulla trasparenza e sui bonus etici potrebbe essere un tema non tanto dettato da un orientamento aziendale ad una maggiore moralità, ma piuttosto servire per giustificare comportamenti sulla carta visti come morali e trasparenti ma che in realtà hanno comunque come obiettivo prima di tutto il profitto. È quindi necessario rivalutare le nostre pratiche di Motivazione, non più inserite in un programma orientato al valore, quanto piuttosto in un programma etico orientato alla conformità e quindi le meno utili per migliorare il clima etico aziendale.

Infine, per quanto riguarda la sostenibilità, è necessario fare due considerazioni. La prima è che il set di pratiche di risorse umane da noi definite come pratiche etiche di HR risulta effettivamente impattare, nella sua declinazione con la teoria AMO, sulla percezione della sostenibilità all'interno dell'azienda. La seconda considerazione riguarda invece il fatto che il ruolo della sostenibilità come variabile di mediazione sia confermato solo in relazione al clima etico locale normato. Questo evidenzia come la sostenibilità sia, per i lavoratori, collegabile solo a tematiche di rispetto di regole e procedure, tema proprio del clima etico locale normato

Quindi, ricapitolando, se l'HR vuole sviluppare un clima etico locale che sia di tipo normato o benevolente, con i vantaggi da questo derivanti, deve concentrarsi su pratiche etiche di HR di Abilità (le più impattanti) e di Opportunità. Non è invece chiaro, dati i nostri risultati, come sia possibile per l'HR diminuire la presenza del clima etico locale egoistico. L'HR deve quindi assumere il ruolo di "amministratore etico" (Caldwell, 2011) per guidare all'interno dell'organizzazione la realizzazione di un programma etico che sia veramente orientato al valore, anche se ovviamente non potrà svolgere questo

compito da solo ma avrà bisogno del sostegno di tutte le altre funzioni aziendali e ovviamente del top management.

Limitazioni e Spunti per nuove Ricerche

Una prima limitazione della ricerca attuale è la sua dipendenza da un'indagine auto-riferita da una sorgente e ad un certo punto nel tempo infatti abbiamo utilizzato una sola tipologia di questionario.

Inoltre sono stati spesso segnalati in letteratura le preoccupazioni per la validità della causalità dei collegamenti. Ricerche passate hanno fatto notare sia l'uso eccessivo di sezioni del design di ricerca, la mancanza di design longitudinali, che possono verificare le direzioni di causalità, e il pregiudizio causato dal tempo ritardato.

Ancora, possiamo riscontrare che abbiamo utilizzato solamente la metodologia relativo al questionario senza contemplare l'utilizzo in parallelo di altre metodologie di studio.

Abbiamo anche esaminato il sistema delle Risorse Umane come l'unica spiegazione possibile alle performance organizzative della nostra ricerca, anche se in uno dei primi studi nel campo strategico di Gestione delle Risorse Umane, Huselid e Becker (2000) hanno raccomandato i lettori a non considerare il sistema delle Risorse Umane come l'unica spiegazione possibile delle performance organizzative.

La nostra tesi comprende anche una visione rigorosa della causalità lineare, che va dagli input ai risultati attraverso l'uso di mediatori. La tesi della 'causalità inversa' suggerisce invece che i risultati esercitano un ruolo importante per la definizione delle pratiche HR e dei mediatori.

Infine, anche se il modello ipotizzato era coerente con i dati, ci possono essere altre alternative, non testate che rappresentano adeguatamente i dati.

A valle della nostra tesi riportiamo alcuni spunti per future ricerche.

[Digitare il testo]

In primo luogo, il ruolo della variabile paese come moderatore dovrebbe essere ulteriormente analizzato, cercando di trovare le motivazioni che si trovano al di là delle differenze indicate da ciascun paese specifico. In secondo luogo possono essere tenute in considerazione altre variabili come moderatrici sia a livello individuale che di organizzazione. Inoltre altre ricerche potrebbero ampliare il campione di pratiche da noi utilizzato uscendo dagli schemi della teoria AMO. Successive ricerche potrebbero utilizzare modelli basati un approccio statistico diverso, ad esempio il metodo LISREL. Inoltre sarebbe possibile generalizzare ulteriormente la ricerca ampliando i confini oltre la dimensione europea. Infine suggeriamo che ulteriori ricerche potrebbero indicare la rilevanza e l'importanza del ruolo che svolgono la strategia HR piuttosto che la strategia organizzativa all'interno delle singole relazioni della nostra ricerca empirica. Queste considerazioni potrebbero essere implementate con l'inserimento di domande connesse con la specifica strategia HR o organizzativa della singola impresa, oppure domande relative alla supply chain di appartenenza o al settore specifico in cui operano le singole imprese.

1. Ethics in the organization

1.1. Chapter Scope

In this initial chapter, we are going to explain the key relevance of business ethics in the contemporary organizational world, first of all giving an initial introduction to explain our investigation path. Then we are going to present the classical moral theories (that have the individual ethics as reference) and to explain the concept of moral development. This theory linkages the individual ethical choices with the organizational environment in which he lives and it's the first basis if we want to analyze how ethics is related to the organizational business context and its practices.

1.2. Introduction

In the last century, a lot of economic, social, ethical and environmental issues have affected the economic world, but only in recent years business ethics issues have become a topic. The modern period of business criticism began with a rush of scandals that have taken place from 2001 till now day (such as Enron, WorldCom, Tyco, Lehman Brothers, Barclays and so on). It is inevitable that in a pluralistic, special-interest society that the major institutions, such as business, become the subjects of considerable scrutiny and criticism. One way of thinking about the business-society relationship is through the concept of social contract. The social contract between business and society is articulated not only through shared understanding but mostly through laws and regulations. Organizations are bound by law to treat the people they employ fairly and not to discriminate against identified groups. Legislation is a codification of accepted moral principles, and acts to moderate standards within a community – 'the greatest good of the greatest number'.

But, conformity to all legal requirements does not necessarily ensure the best treatment of employees. The law itself may not be fair; it may not cover all eventualities; and it may not always offer a clear guide to action. This is why ethics is always more a primary factor to understand and evaluate an environment. It is a key branch of philosophy that analyze what is right or wrong in people's behavior or conduct.

Ethics and morality are terms that are often used interchangeably in discussions of good and evil. The term 'ethics' is usually applied to persons (ethics comes from the Greek ethos, meaning character) – and 'morality' to acts and behavior (moral comes from the Latin moralis, meaning customs or manners). Both concepts are used interchangeably used to refer to the study of fairness, justice, and moral behavior in business.

Business ethics is the study of practices in the organization and a quest to determine whether these practices are acceptable or not. In particular, business ethics scope is to analyze the organizational environment with an ethical decision making point of view. For this reason, our propose is to found in classical moral theories, that focus themselves on the individual, and in the moral development theory (Kohlberg, 1976), that focus itself on the individuals inside organizational environments, a background for the concept of ethical climate (Victor and Cullen, 1988), an organizational theory that is a key element of our investigation purpose. In doing so, we want to create a path from moral decision (single or isolated moral acts, practices or decision made by a manager) to moral organization (an organization that uses the best practices for achieving a moral management culture).

1.3. Classical moral theories

Philosophy presents us with suggestions about the nature of morality and ethics. It also offers us a set of tools for analyzing and exploring morality.

Some main issues and approaches will now be discussed in this literature, following the flow proposed by Gregory A. Bigley (2007) with the introduction of relativism moral principles: relativism, egoism, consequentialist approaches (e.g. utilitarianism), non-consequentialist approaches (deontological or ‘duty’ ethics), distributive justice, the ethics of human rights, care, virtue ethics.

1.3.1. Relativism

According to the relativistic ethics, right and wrong are decided by the ethics of the most influential group, that leads the others behaviors. One important question is, naturally, “what is the relevant group?” Clearly, the choice a researcher makes on this point will affect outcomes because the ethical norms within a work team may be different from those sanctioned by local management, by executive policy, by the stockholders, or by local, state, or federal law. Moreover, ethical views of these different hierarchies may receive different weighting relative to the importance and success chances of any given behavior one might consider (M. R. Buckley 2001).

This theory is of primary concern because of globalization and the question of which values should prevail: those of the organization or those of the environment in which it operates. Most philosophers reject the theory of ethical relativism for a variety of reasons (Velasquez at all 1997, 1998).

One argument against ethical relativism observes that just because two people have different ethical beliefs does not, in and of itself, mean that they are both right and that there is no way to judge between them.

A second argument against ethical relativism is that there are some moral standards that a society must adopt if the society is to survive; for example, it would be difficult for a society to survive without at least some prohibitions on the murder of members of the society. Finally a third argument is that what appear to be cultural differences in moral standards may only be surface

differences that obscure underlying commonalities (P. L. Schumann 2001). The conventional approach to business ethics was introduced as an initial way in which managers might think about ethical judgments. One major problem with this is that it is not clear which standards or norms should be used, and thus the conventional approach is susceptible to ethical relativism.

1.3.2. Egoism

Ethical egoism is a minimalist ethical position based on the Hobbesian assumption that 'the only valid standard of conduct is the obligation to promote one's own well-being above anyone else's, (Beauchamp and Bowie, 1983: 18), an injunction to act on the basis of maximizing self-interest. This is not to imply that ethical egoists do not consider the interests of others when it suits them and may well do so in order to fend off unpleasant consequences.

This is not far from the position of Friedman (1962) who claims that business works solely for the benefit of shareholders (D. Winstanley, J. Woodall 1998).

1.3.3. Utilitarianism

According to the John Stuart Mill's utilitarian ethics one must try to provide the major good for the majority, without any distinction between single individuals and try to maximize the general benefit (M. R. Buckley 2001). Utilitarianism is commonly misunderstood as being nothing more than a minimalist or managerialist argument in support of the "business case". It is true that utilitarianism has been used to support the classical view or shareholder model by evoking the argument, known as the "invisible hand" doctrine, that, if left to its own devices, a market driven economy will produce greatest good for the greatest number (Evan and Freeman, 1988). Utilitarianism

cannot, however, be used to justify the business acting in self-interest to maximize its own utility, that is, to support the “business case”. (Greenwood, 2002)

There are several important things to note about this principle. First, this principle focuses exclusively on judging the ethics of the action in terms of the results produced by the action (in terms of means vs. ends, it focuses exclusively on the ends, not the means). Second, the benefits and costs produced by the action are not examined from the perspective of the decision-maker; on the contrary, all benefits and costs that accrue to anyone who is affected by the action are counted (social benefits and costs, not private benefits and costs). Third, benefits and costs include any kind of good or harm, including things that may be difficult to value in precise noncontroversial ways (for example, the value of a human life). Fourth, the benefits and costs to be counted include both those that accrue in the present time as well as those that accrue in the future; future benefits and costs are discounted to present value. Fifth, it is not sufficient that the action does more good than harm; rather the action must do the most good and the least harm to be considered ethical.

A possible criticism of utilitarianism is that it assumes that the end justifies the means. Velasquez (1998, pp. 80±81) illustrates this criticism of utilitarianism with the following hypothetical example. Suppose a person's uncle has an incurable and painful disease. The uncle, who owns and manages a chemical plant, will die as a result of the disease within a year. Although the uncle is miserable, he does not wish to terminate his own life. Because of the uncle's misery, he deliberately makes life miserable for his workers and he refuses to install needed safety equipment, although he knows that this will mean the certain death of some employees. The nephew is the uncle's only living relative and so will inherit the uncle's business when the uncle dies. The nephew knows about the uncle's treatment of employees, and plans to install the needed safety equipment as soon as he takes over the business. In the

example, is it ethical for the nephew to murder the uncle? The murder of the uncle might be argued to be ethical according to utilitarianism because the murder eliminates the misery of the uncle, saves the lives of employees, and adds to the happiness of the nephew. However, if there is another alternative that produces even larger benefits and smaller costs than the murder of the uncle, then the murder of the uncle would be unethical according to utilitarianism.

For example, the nephew could seek better medical care for his uncle in order to reduce the uncle's misery, and try to convince the uncle to install the needed safety equipment. Alternatively, the nephew might blow the whistle on the safety problems to government regulators who then would require the uncle to install the safety equipment. The conclusion in the example that murder might be ethical under certain circumstances bothers the critics of utilitarianism because they feel murder violates important human rights (Velasquez, 1998).

On the other hand, supporters of utilitarianism might argue that killing a person is indeed ethical if it produces the most good and the least harm for everyone who is affected by the killing. Another challenge under the utilitarian principle is to measure all the possible benefits and costs of an action. In some cases, the measurement problem might be addressed by using principles of market capitalism. In particular, the father of modern economics, Adam Smith, argued that the invisible hand of capitalism, with its reliance on the principles of private property and voluntary exchange, results automatically in the maximization of net social benefits. This argument can be illustrated with a human resource management example by Schumann, 2001. From the employees' side of the analysis, if people have voluntarily chosen to work for a company, then these employees must believe that this is the choice that makes them the best off. If there were alternative jobs that made them better off than their current jobs, then they would switch employers. Similarly, if they believed that they would be better off staying home and not working for pay in

the labor market, then they would quit their current jobs. So, the employees must believe that their current jobs maximize their welfare.

From the employer's side of the analysis, if the employer has voluntarily chosen to hire these people, then the employer must believe that these employees are the best ones available. If there were alternative employees who could better serve the employer, then the employer would replace the current employees. So, the employer must believe that the current employees maximize its welfare. Therefore, as long as the employment relationship is voluntary, then it must be true that both the employees and the employer believe that no alternative employment option would improve their positions. Thus, since the existing employment relationship has resulted in a condition in which neither the employer nor the employees can improve their situation, it must achieve the utilitarian goal of maximizing benefits and minimizing costs.

To continue the example, suppose the employer is considering hiding from employees the dangerous nature of some chemicals that are used in production. If this fact is hidden from employees, then they have not made an employment decision that is fully informed by all of the relevant facts. Since the employees do not know the true benefits and costs of their employment, there may in fact be an alternative employment option for them that improves their welfare. Since hiding relevant facts from employees may lead them to accept employment when there are better jobs available, the result does not maximize benefits and minimize costs. Therefore, it is unethical on utilitarian grounds for an employer to hide relevant facts concerning employment, such as the dangerous nature of chemicals, from the employees involved. Note that this conclusion can be reached without explicitly measuring the relevant social benefits and social costs. Thus, the utilitarian goal of maximizing net social benefits is automatically achieved by market capitalism provided that both the employer and the employee have complete information about all relevant aspects of the employment relationship. However, even if both the employer

and employee have perfect information, their voluntary employment agreement may still not achieve the utilitarian goal of maximizing net social benefits if there are other people who are affected by the employment relationship.

1.3.4. Deontological Ethics

Deontology, in its many versions, primarily remains an ethics of duties. Deontology derives from the greek words deon(duty) e logos(speech), and this approach connects ethics with what is ideally fair (Diana Winstanley, Jean Woodall 1998). Kantian deontology, in particular, on the respective duties we have both toward ourselves and others when our actions are consonant to a principle of obligation to do the morally right, irrespective of the possible consequences. Accordingly, an action's moral value originates in the maxim with which it complies, not in the success to accomplish a desired outcome or end. Such moral principles should apply categorically: moral agents are urged to engage in duties identified through a process of rational exploration of distinct formulations of the categorical imperative. Universal principles emerge in an ideal community of participants, in which the humanity of each person has to be treated as an end, not merely as a means to attain desirable ends. Most importantly, the Kantian emphasis on the moral autonomy of the individual prevents moral agents from exercising any form of coercion within organizational settings.

This is of primary interest to any work climate, given that “business practices under a Kantian regime have only one ultimate reason for being: to develop the human, rational and moral capacities of people in and outside the organization” (Jones et al., 2005, p. 45). Kantian deontology would effectively constrain negative political behavior in many aspects. Bowie (2000) argues that a Kantian regime encourages individual autonomy, ensures meaningful work, and fosters leadership styles that facilitate workers' participation and enhance

perceived fairness in the workplace. Kant's Categorical Imperative, relying on moral reasoning, would imply that universally shared good intentions are epitomized in moral rules, as well as in the ability to conform to these rules as moral duties. We could also draw an analogy in the case of negative political behavior: employing the categorical imperative, if every employee resorted to blaming or attacking others, then the concept of team work would ultimately be bereft of any meaning. Blaming as a generalized practice would potentially undermine the very idea of organization, and no one should engage in practices which, if adopted by all, could also turn against him/her.

A second implication of Kantian deontology for delineating ethically questionable political tactics and strategies consists in the fact that we ought to act in conformity to the "Golden Rule," i.e., to respect others' humanity by treating them just as we would wish to be treated. Respectful treatment of employees becomes an integral part of an organizational culture that embodies excellence, openness, joint decision making, trust, mutuality, and recognition, so inimical to the covert processes of standard organizational politics. Human interactions in an organization are then framed by a fundamental commitment to dignity and respect that precludes treatment of others as mere instruments of one's personal ambitions.

A third implication is that, by focusing on proper moral intentions, Kantian deontology appears to diminish the erosive effects of self-serving behavior: a manager, for instance, who deliberately follows the categorical imperative, should refrain from practices that violate others' autonomy and independence; e.g., not allowing himself/herself to intimidate or coerce his/her subordinates. Bowie and Werhane (2005, pp. 40–60) provide a set of goals for ethical human resource management, among which are empowerment and employees' voice in decision making, as well as the means to implement them (team work, reducing informational asymmetry, commitment to compress existing wage gap, etc.). Other deontological approaches to business and management are

also of interest. For instance, rights-based theories place an emphasis on primary obligations to uphold and respect others' rights, as well as on the moral judgments involved in a particular decision-making process. In organizational environments, reciprocities require that any decision should afford due respect to others and to their rights, as if all participants' interests were invested with intrinsic value. Conceivably, in stakeholder theory, an organization has specific obligations to its members, due to the dual quality of the latter as human beings and as stakeholders of the organization in issue in respect of which employees have role and moral obligations to the company that employs them, as well as to other stakeholders (Greenwood and De Cleri, 2007).

1.3.5. Distributive Justice

This moral principle examines whether or not the results produced by the action in question create a fair distribution of benefits and costs, good and harm (Velasquez, 1998). In particular, the distributive justice moral principle may be summarized as follows: The morally correct action is the one that produces a fair distribution of benefits and costs for everyone who is affected by the action. A fair distribution is one in which individuals who are similar in relevant respects receive similar benefits and costs (Velasquez, 1998). The challenge in applying this principle is in deciding on what bases individuals are similar. That is, what characteristics are relevant in deciding whether people are similar and therefore deserving of similar benefits and costs? There are at least five different perspectives people use in evaluating whether or not a distribution of good and harm is fair. One approach to defining a fair distribution of benefits and costs is egalitarianism, which maintains that humans are similar in all relevant respects (Velasquez, 1998). Therefore, to an egalitarian, the only fair distribution of good and harm is an equal distribution.

Thus, for example, an egalitarian would argue that everyone should receive the same compensation regardless of the facts of their employment. Critics of egalitarianism, however, point out that an equal distribution ignores important considerations such as effort and need (Velasquez, 1998). For example, if everyone receives an equal distribution of benefits and costs, then the lazy person gets as much as the industrious person, which might tend to weaken the incentives for industriousness. In the example of an employer concealing chemical hazards from employees, the egalitarian would be concerned because this would probably result in unequal good and harm to the employer and the employees.

A second approach to defining a fair distribution of benefits and costs is capitalism, which maintains that what is relevant in deciding the benefits and costs the individual should receive are the contributions of each individual (Velasquez, 1998). Therefore, according to the capitalist definition of distributive justice, it is fair for a person who has made a larger contribution to some success to get a larger share of the benefits that flow from the success, and it is fair for a person who has made a larger contribution to causing some problem to shoulder a greater share of the costs associated with the problem. In this way, capitalism creates incentives for people to create success and avoid creating harm. For example, a capitalist would endorse as fair the use of pay-for-performance systems precisely because of the linkage it creates between the pay the person receives and that person's contributions. As another example, a capitalist would be concerned by an employer hiding the dangerous nature of chemicals from employees because the employees have done nothing to earn the harm that they might suffer as a result of the deception.

A third approach is socialism, in which incentives are thought to be corrosive to the wellbeing of members of society. Instead, the socialist points to the importance of abilities and needs in deciding what constitutes a fair distribution of good and harm. In particular, socialists argue that individuals

with greater needs should receive more of the benefits while individuals with greater abilities should shoulder more of the costs. As with egalitarianism, the capitalist critics of socialism worry about the effects of weakened incentives when benefits are not awarded based on a person's contributions.

A fourth approach is libertarianism, which maintains that what is relevant in deciding what constitutes fair treatment are the free choices that individuals make (Velasquez,1998). That is, to a libertarian, whatever happens as a consequence of the free choices of individuals is fair. For example, if employees have freely chosen to work for a manager who the employees know lies to them and cheats them, then it is fair because no one forced or coerced them to work under those circumstances. On the other hand, a libertarian might question the fairness of a manager who convinces individuals to work for the company through deception because such deception calls into question whether the choice to work for the manager was in fact a free choice. Thus, for example, a libertarian would be concerned about an employer who deceives employees about the nature of dangerous chemicals. However, once the employees discover the deception, if they continue to work for the manager, then the libertarian might once again argue that it has become fair because the employees have exercised their free choice not to quit.

Finally, a fifth approach to defining a fair distribution of good and harm is Rawls' Principles of Distributive Justice. In essence, Rawls argues that people disagree about how to define a fair distribution because individuals tend to want to adopt a definition of fairness that favors each individual's own position. To solve this problem, Rawls argues the use of the following procedure. Imagine a hypothetical meeting of all humans before anyone is born. In this meeting, each human knows nothing about their future life people do not know into which generation they will live, what their sex will be, what their race will be, what their nationality will be, whether they will be born into a rich family

or a poor family, and so on. That is, this meeting takes place behind what Rawls calls a veil of ignorance.

In the hypothetical meeting behind the veil of ignorance, everyone will have to reach agreement about the principles of distributive justice that will govern each person's future life. Since no one knows anything about their future life, no one can try to twist the definition of distributive justice to suit their situation. Rawls then argues that people will reach agreement on three principles of distributive justice.

First, he argues that everyone will want to ensure that they have the same basic set of freedoms and liberties as everyone else, which he terms the equal liberty principle. In particular, he argues that people would not agree that some groups should have more freedoms than others out of fear that they might be born into the less favored group.

Second, Rawls argues that everyone will want to ensure that they have the same right to develop the interests, skills, talents, and abilities with which they are born, which he terms the equal opportunity principle. In particular, he argues that people would not agree that some groups should have a greater opportunity than others to develop talents and abilities out of fear that they might be born into the less favored group. While the equal opportunity principle seeks to ensure that everyone has the same opportunity to develop their talents and abilities through hard work, the principle does not seek to guarantee equal results. That is, if some people work harder than others to develop their talents and abilities, then it would be fair that they get the benefits that result from their hard work equal opportunity, not equal results. Thus, the equal opportunity principle preserves incentives for effort.

Finally, in what Rawls terms the difference principle, he argues that people will want to protect themselves from the possibility that they might be born into desperate circumstances in which they have extremely limited resources, talents, and abilities. That is, he argues that people would want some insurance

against the possibility that they might be born with virtually nothing on which to survive. Rawls thus argues that people would agree to help those in need as much as possible. In particular, the difference principle asserts that members of society who have resources, talents, and abilities have an obligation to help those in need to the point at which further assistance would so burden society that it makes everyone, including those in need, worse off. Thus, for example, a welfare program that is so generous to the needy that it makes everyone worse off, including those needy people it is supposed to help (perhaps because it encourages dependency on the welfare program), would be judged as being unfair (Schumann 2001).

1.3.6. The ethics of human rights

This moral principle evaluates the means to the ends by ensuring that the person performing the action has the moral right to do so (Velasquez, 1998). In particular, the moral principle of rights can be summarized as follows:

The morally correct action is the one that the person has a moral right to do, that does not infringe on the moral rights of others, and that furthers the moral rights of others. A right is an entitlement. That is, if a person has a moral right to perform some action, then that means that the person is entitled to perform the action. The function of a right is to protect a person's interests. For example, a person's right to freedom of religion exists to protect the person's interest in practicing religious beliefs. Thus, rights and interests go together. Similarly, rights and duties go together. That is, if a person has a right to do some action, then that right creates duties on other people not to interfere and to provide assistance as necessary. For example, a person's right to freedom of religion creates the duties on others not to interfere. The rights of one person can conflict with the rights of others in this case people must identify the competing interests, judge which interest is more important, and then give

precedence to the right that protects the more important interest (Schumann 2001).

1.3.7. Care

This moral principle emphasizes the importance of the special relationships that may exist among individuals by examining whether or not care is shown for the people with whom the person performing the action in question has special relationships (Velasquez, 1998). In particular, the ethics of care moral principle may be summarized as follows: The morally correct action is the one that expresses care in protecting the special relationships that individuals have with each other.

The care principle emphasizes that ethics is more than impartiality, it also involves caring showing partiality for the people with whom one has special relationships. For example, the care principle would justify a parent showing more love, concern, compassion, and kindness for a son or daughter than to a stranger. That is, the ethics of care argues that a person's moral obligation is not to follow impartial principles, but rather to care for the good of the particular individuals with whom the person has concrete special relationships. This principle emphasizes that humans live in a web of special, valuable relationships with specific individuals, and this web of relationships should be nurtured. This principle therefore argues that each of us should care for ourselves by attending to our own particular needs, desires, and well-being, and by positively responding to the needs, desires, and well-being of those with whom we have special relationships, especially those who are vulnerable and dependent on us. Thus, the ethics of care argues that each of us needs to attend to our own needs as well as the needs of the people in our web of relationships. This web of relationships includes the people with whom we have close relationships (e.g., family, friends, and coworkers), but also the people in the

larger communities within which we live. At the same time, however, the ethics of care emphasizes that caring for others does not mean encouraging them to remain dependent on our care. Instead, the ethics of care maintains that we express care for others with whom we have special relationships by nurturing their development in a way that allows them to make their own choices and live their own lives. In addition, the ethics of care does not mean that all relationships are to be nurtured. In particular, the ethics of care does not maintain that we should nurture relationships based on domination, oppression, hatred, violence, disrespect, injustice, or exploitation. Furthermore, there may be situations in which the care we wish to express to some individuals with whom we have special relationships conflicts with the care we wish to express to others.

For example, a manager making a hiring decision may wish to favor a friend over strangers for the job, but this desire to care for a friend might conflict with the desire of the manager to care for the relationships the manager has with employees, customers, and stockholders by hiring the most qualified. In this example, the manager might attempt to resolve the conflict by deciding to excuse himself or herself from the hiring decision that involves a friend (Velasquez, 1998).

1.3.8. Virtue Ethics

This moral principle emphasizes that we evaluate a person's morality by examining the person's character (Velasquez, 1998). In particular, virtue ethics can be summarized as follows: The morally correct action is the one that displays good moral virtues, and does not display bad moral vices. Philosophers have traced the history of virtue ethics at least as far back as Aristotle in the fourth century B.C. A virtue can be defined as a trait of character that manifests itself in the actions of an individual Examples of

virtues include benevolence, civility, compassion, conscientiousness, cooperativeness, courage, fairness, generosity, honesty, industriousness, loyalty, moderation, self-control, self-reliance, and tolerance (Schumann 2001). Solomon (1993) draws on Aristotelian accounts of virtue to present a contemporary view of virtues for business ethics. He identifies six: community, excellence, role identity, holism, integrity and judgment. Virtue ethics is at the same time appealing and frustrating.

These virtues should be embedded in the contemporary social, economic or political context (Winstanley, Woodall 1998). For example integrity is a key issue for managers and appears in the debate around professional codes of practice in both the UK and US, but academic critics argue that it has been markedly absent in contemporary HRM (Woodall, 1996).

The table 1.1 illustrated the fundamental theory previously described, based on information taken from Shaw (1999) and Reidenbach & Robin (1990).

Moral philosophy	Main Attribute	Basic ideas
Utilitarianism	End result	Morality is measured based on the consequences of actions. Evaluation of actions should consider all of society. Individuals should act so as to produce the greatest possible ratio of good to evil for all of society.
Egoism	Self-interest	Morality is measured based on consequences of actions that are evaluated solely by the benefit to the individual. The individual acts so as to achieve the best personal consequences in the long term.
Deontology	Good intentions	The individual has a duty to satisfy the legitimate claims or needs of others, and to 'do the right thing'. The focus is on the morality of the procedure.
Relativism	It is all normative	Universal ethical rules do not exist and no rule applies to everyone. Ethical rules are relative to a specific culture and could be considered immoral or wrong in another.
Justice	Fairness and equality	Distributive justice, which implies equality according to either: equal share, need, rights, effort, contribution and merit. Procedural justice, which implies that employed procedures should result in fair outcomes.
Virtue ethics	Moral virtues	The morally correct action is the one that displays good moral virtues, and does not display bad moral vices.
Care	Special relationship	The morally correct action is the one that expresses care in protecting the special relationships that individuals have with each other.
Human rights	Rights	The morally correct action is the one that the person has a moral right to do, that does not infringe on the moral rights of others, and that furthers the moral rights of others.

Table 1.1.: Fundamental moral theories

1.4. Moral development

1.4.1. Introduction

If we transfer all the philosophical framework reviewed before into a theory of organizational ethics, one of the most important basis is the idea of moral development, introduced by the developmental psychologist Kohlberg (1976): he argued that the moral development theory focus itself on the individuals inside organization and it has the propose to understand how individuals develop moral and ethical judgment. He began a long academic discussion with his idea of a 6 stage moral development process. Today moral development is not only a theoretical concept, but also a link with real life situations and to organizational work climate (Bart Victor and John B. Cullen, 1988). People cross moral development stages from the lowest but only few are able to reach the highest. The scale contains six stages of moral development ranging from egocentric obedience and punishment to universal principle. The six stages of development have three bases of moral judgment, following the three major classes of ethical theory (egoism, benevolence and deontology). The first maximizes self-interest, the second maximizes joint interest and the third adherences to principle.

1.4.2. Stage 1: Heteronomous Morality

At the lowest stage of moral development, individuals take an egocentric point of view (Kohlberg, 1976). What motivates a person to act is his self-interest. Furthermore, individuals at Stage 1 do not consider the interests of others. The rules and expectations of society are external to the individual and perceived as being imposed on them by others who have the power to do so. What motivates individuals at Stage 1 to follow rules and expectations is the fear of being caught and punished for failing to follow the rules. If managers

want to stop Stage 1 employees from committing unethical actions, they must increase the probability of being caught and the sanctions imposed on employees when they are caught. Even if compliance-based rules and procedures have limitations, they nevertheless provide a useful starting point in motivating ethical behavior by employees. Managers can also use brainstorming, their own experience and the experiences of other managers in trying to identify possible undesirable employees behaviors.

1.4.3. Stage 2: Individualism, Instrumental Purpose, and Exchange

As in Stage 1, the person in Stage 2 is still motivated to act based on self-interest (Kohlberg, 1976). However, unlike the Stage 1 person who does not realize that other people have their own interest, as individuals develop from Stage 1 to Stage 2, they come to realize that everyone has their own interests to pursue. This realization opens the door to exchange that are mutually beneficial. That is, Stage 2 employees see others as instruments to their own self-satisfaction. They will be willing to work hard and behave ethically if there is something in it for them. Thus, stage 2 employees are motivated by incentives, including incentives to get them to behave ethically. In creating the incentives, the goal for managers is to create a work environment in which employees have a stake in ethical behavior. Some of the incentives might be negative and some might be positive.

Unlike the Stage 1 employee, the Stage 2 employee realizes that the organization has its own interests to protect. Positive incentives for ethical behavior can be created, but care should be taken to ensure that there are not inadvertent incentives for unethical behavior. For example, a merit pay system that ties an employee's pay to that employee's job performance will motivate a Stage 2 employee to try to improve his or her job performance. The incentives might take the form of money (such as merit pay or bonuses) when employees

engage in ethical behavior or the incentives might take the form of any kind of reward that is valued by the employees (such as an increased chance for promotions).

1.4.4. Stage 3: Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships and Conformity

In the Stage 3 of moral development, the person becomes aware of shared feelings, agreements and expectations with others that take primacy over the person individual interest (Kohlberg 1976). As a result, people are able to put themselves into the shoes of others, developing empathy. In this stage individuals are motivated by the need to be seen as a good person, not only in their own eyes but also in the eyes of others with whom they have close relationship. To the Stage 3 employees, merit pay increases motivate them to work hard because of the desire to be recognized by their direct supervisors as good employees. To motivate stage 3 employees, who are concerned with the opinions of the people immediately around them, managers need to focus their efforts on direct supervisors and co-workers. At Stage 3, group norms and expectation are important. As a result, it is important for managers to take steps to ensure that employee groups have the desired norms and expectation.

1.4.5. Stage 4: Social System and Conscience

As individuals develop from Stage 3 to Stage 4, they begin to broaden the groups that are relevant to them from the smaller groups of Stage 3 to entire institutions and to society at large at Stage 4 (Kohlberg, 1976). The person not only has empathy for specific individuals with whom he interacts, the person also values institutions and the social system as a whole. So Stage 4 employee is motivated by a desire to keep entire institutions and the integrated social system of institutions working well. People want to be good citizen and to do

their duty. Stage 4 employees are unlikely to engage in unethical behavior that would threaten the business in which they work, threaten other institutions that might be affected or threaten business system and society at large. Even so, a corporation could create company-wide awards and recognitions in addition to departmental awards in order to stimulate ethical behavior at this Stage. The awards also send a message to all Stage 4 employees of examples of good corporate citizenship that they will want to emulate.

1.4.6. Stage 5 Social contract or Utility and Individual Rights

At the stage 5 of moral development, individuals are aware of fundamental values and rights that are independent of any particular attachment institution (Kohlberg, 1976). Stage 5 individuals consider moral and legal points of view that cut across the beliefs, principles and laws of particular societies. They recognize that individuals can disagree and value formal mechanisms by which disagreements can be resolved, such as majority rule. They value impartial due process procedures and they are willing to make personal sacrifice if this will produce benefits for others. Stage 5 employees are unlikely to engage in unethical behaviors. Managers can help Stage 5 employees by creating and using impartial due process procedures that are so important to Stage 5 employees. Furthermore, Stage 5 employees will want to participate in decision making and they are able to help establish ethical behavior within the organization and thus put into practice the factors that motivate them.

1.4.7. Stage 6: Universal Ethical Principles

At the highest stage of moral development, individuals have chosen to live their lives according to universal moral principles (Kohlberg, 1976). Examples of universal moral principles might include the utilitarian, rights, distributive

justice, ethics of care and virtue ethics principles. Stage 6 individuals respects the dignity of human beings as individual persons and the equality of human rights. They believe in the rational validity of the universal moral principles and are personally committed to living their lives in accordance with the principles, even if to do so requires sacrifice. Stage 6 employees are unlikely to engage in unethical behaviors no matter what the pressure. For this reason, a company could create a formal procedure in which employees who feel that their supervisors are issuing unethical orders can go over their supervisor's head for review without fear of retaliation. A company can also create a special webpage that employee could use to report illegal or unethical behavior.

1.4.8. Moral development conclusion

Stage 1	what is right based upon concern for obedience to authority and fear of punishment
Stage 2	what is right based upon exchange in relationships
Stage 3	what is right based upon the expectations of significant others
Stage 4	what is right based upon rules or laws
Stage 5	what is right based upon fundamental values and rights
Stage 6	what is right based upon universal principles

Table 1.2.: The Six-stages of Moral development theory

At the lowest two stages (preconventional level), the self-centered yet outward-looking individual reasons about what is right based upon either concern for obedience to authority and fear of punishment (Stage 1) or exchange in relationships (e.g., one hand washes the other) (Stage 2). At the

middle two stages (conventional level), moral judgment is more externally oriented, relying on the expectations of significant others (Stage 3) or rules or laws (Stage 4). Finally, at the highest stages (principled) the individual determines what is right more autonomously by looking to universally held principles of justice and rights. Research has found that most adults are at the conventional level, meaning that their thinking about what is right is largely influenced by significant others as well as rules and laws. Fewer than 20% of American adults reach the principled level, Stages 5 or 6 (Rest et al., 1999), where actions should be more consistent with moral thought. It is also important to note that Stage 6 is considered a theoretically postulated stage only, because empirical evidence of it is rare.

These findings have clear implications for behavioral ethics in organizations. If most adults' thinking about right and wrong is highly susceptible to external influence, then the management of such conduct through attention to norms, peer behavior, leadership, reward systems, climate, culture, and so on becomes important. Treviño's (1986) model of ethical decision making in organizations builds on the assumption that the influences of contextual variables on decision making and behavior depend upon the individual's cognitive moral development, with those at the highest stages being less susceptible to contextual influences. Cognitive moral development is also relevant to the study of cross-cultural business ethics, and types of moral reasoning appear to be universal (Gielen & Markoulis, 1994), with similar age and education trends found across cultures.

1.5. Conclusion

Ethical issues in organizations increasingly preoccupy theoreticians and practitioners and ethics is always more a central topic to understand the contemporary business world. It concerns the rightness, wrongness and fairness of managerial behavior, and this are not easy judgments to make. In this chapter we have introduced the concept of business ethics and then we have summarized the most important classical moral theories (most of them emphasis themselves on concern for others over self-interest) and the six stage of moral development (it starts from a absolutely individualistic self-oriented point of view in the first stage and arrives to a universalistic and other-oriented ethical point of view in the last stage), finding a basis to discuss ethics in an organizational contest. Understanding how moral judgment develops is helpful to aspiring managers and to understanding how managerial practices can influence it. Moreover, the moral development theory provides the theoretical background for an organizational translation from an egoistic point of view to a benevolence/principle one, but a more practical and specific tool to investigate ethics inside organization is compulsory.

2. Ethical climate

2.1. Introduction

The scope of this chapter is to investigate the concept of ethical climate, his scope in the research field, what has already been discovered about his relations with the organizational environment and what is still to be found. Ethical climate give us a solid basis to relate business ethics and managerial practices for an empirical investigation proposal.

2.2. Introducing ethical climate

As we have already said, the discussion about business ethics focus itself on the organization. In this research field, one of the most useful theory to investigate ethics in organization is the ethical climate theory (Victor and Cullen, 1988): distinct from both moral philosophy and individual moral development, ethical climate is an organizational theory: from the classical moral theory, that focus on the individual ethics, passing throw the moral development theory, that focus itself on the individual ethics in the organizational contest, we have finally arrived to the ethical climate theory, that focus itself on the organizational ethics, having as background exactly the individual ethics and its ethical choices in the organization, adding the concept of work climate.

Following Schneider (1975) there is no single type of organizational work climate. Researchers have studied the existence and extent of autonomy/control, degree of structure, nature of rewards, consideration, warmth, and support as examples of organizational climates(Schneider and Reichers, 1983). The majority of these climate types fall into two very broad classifications: aggregated perceptions of organizational conventions regarding

forms of structure and procedures for the use of rewards and control; and aggregated perceptions of the existence of organizational norms supporting values such as providing warmth and support to peers and subordinates.

Following Arnaud & Schminke (2011): "Organizational work climates reflect the shared perceptions employees hold regarding the policies, practices, and procedures that an organization rewards, supports, and expects (Schneider and Reichers 1983). Based on the patterns of experiences and behaviors individuals encounter in their organizations (Schneider al. 2000), work climates influence employee decision making about what constitutes appropriate and desired behavior (Zohar and Luria 2005). Some of the climate types that represent organizational norms have an ethical basis in that they inform organizational members what one can do or what one "ought" to do regarding the treatment of others. Climate types such as support for conflict resolution and the acceptability of aggression represent perceived norms of an organization or group with an ethical basis. However, at least in the organizational literature, before Victor and Cullen (1988) no other researchers did rely explicitly on any theoretical or philosophical bases to focus on ethical climate. In the literature on individual moral development there is now recognition that individual characteristics alone are insufficient to explain moral and ethical behavior. As such, there is an increasing concern for the impact of social factors on individual moral behavior.

Even Kohlberg and his colleagues (Higgins, Power, and Kohlberg, 1984) have introduced the concepts of a "moral atmosphere" and "just community" to consider the social context of moral and ethical behavior. The concept of moral atmosphere is similar to ethical climate in that it represents the prevailing norms of the group and not the individual's level of moral development. However, the focus of Kohlberg's research on moral atmosphere was somewhat narrow, considering only the development of collectiveness norms and valuing of the community, with a prime emphasis on moral education. Kohlberg did

not relate his approach, either methodologically or theoretically, to the work climate literature. Following Schneider's (1983) definition, the existence of an ethical work climate requires that normative systems in the organization be institutionalized. Therefore, ethical reasoning may vary relative to the use of the concept of organization as a referent (as individual moral development varies relative to the use of the concept of self as a referent). That is, organizational members must perceive the existence of normative patterns in the organization with a measurable degree of consensus.

Victor and Cullen (1988) defined ethical climate as a type of organizational work climate that reflects the shared perception of what is the correct behavior and how ethical situation should be handled in the organization, knowing that the social context of the organization plays a pivotal role in determine how employee will behave. Organizational members are asked with the ethical climate questionnaire (Victor and Cullen, 1988) to report not on their own behavior and values but, rather, on the practices and procedures that they perceive to exist in their organizations. The strengths of the approach are the large number of observers and the necessity that some consensus exist before aggregated climate perceptions can be said to represent a group or organizational climate. Observers of organizational ethical climate report only on those organizational norms concerning practices and procedures with ethical consequences, only a segment of their organizational culture.

The climate questionnaire, then, is simply an instrument to tap, through the perceptions of organizational participants, the ethical dimensions of organizational culture. The types of ethical climates existing in an organization or group influence what ethical conflicts are considered, the process by which such conflicts are resolved, and the characteristics of their resolution. For example, Kohlberg (1984) believed that the "socio-moral atmosphere" of an organization has a significant impact on the moral decision making of individuals.

Victor and Cullen (1988) originally proposed three types of ethical climate: benevolent, principled and egoistic ethical climate. In an organization characterized primarily by a benevolent climate, a teleological consideration of the well-being of others may be the dominant reasoning used by employees to identify and solve ethical problems. With a largely principled climate, the application and interpretation of rules or law might be the dominant form of reasoning. In a largely egoistic climate, self-interest might be the dominant consideration. The second dimension considered is the locus of analysis, which complements the two-dimensional theoretical typology of ethical climates proposed by Victor and Cullen and reported below in the figure 2.1:

LOCUS OF ANALYSIS

		Individual	Local	Cosmopolitan
ETHICAL CRITERION	Egoism	Self-Interest*	Company Profit	Efficiency
	Benevolence	Friendship	Team Interest	Social Responsibility
	Principle	Personal Morality	Company Rules and Procedures	Laws and Professional Codes

*Typical decision criterion.

Figure 2.1 Ethical criterion and locus of analysis dimensions

Egoism, benevolence and deontology (or principle) can be identified as three main moral philosophic areas as they differ in terms of the basis criteria used in moral reasoning: egoism maximize self-interest, benevolence maximize joint interest, deontology maximize the adherence to principle. Psychological theories of moral development suggest that individuals use similar criteria in the development of moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1976). The three types of ethical reasoning compose the Y axis in the table 2.1 and are labeled egoism, benevolence, and principle. Because climate is a group or organization concept, types of ethical climates are classifications of groups or organizations only and are not assumed to follow the developmental sequence that is hypothesized for individuals. The three types of locus of analysis compose the X axis and they identify the source of moral reasoning used for applying ethical criteria to organizational decisions. In the individual locus of analysis, moral reasoning originates in the individual (e.g., personal ethics). In the local locus of analysis, moral reasoning emanates from the individual's immediate social system (e.g., the organization). In the cosmopolitan locus of analysis, moral reasoning originates outside of the focal organization or group (e.g., from a professional association).

2.3.Ethical climate antecedents, consequences and knowledge gaps.

2.3.1. Why ethical climate is a pivotal organizational concept

Ethical climates have received tremendous attention from researchers and have been applied by many academics to research on identification and related issues of ethical climates. Ethical climate reflects the shared perceptions employees hold regarding the policies, practices, and procedures that an organization rewards, supports, and expects with regard to ethics. As such,

ethical climates provide valuable guidance to employees by reinforcing the normative systems that guide ethical decision making and behavior". (Victor and Cullen 1988, Vidaver-Cohen 1998).

2.3.2. *Consequences of ethical climate*

Ethical climate has been shown to be related to a number of important organizational outcomes, as shown by many studies from the late 90's, most of them focusing on job attitudes and behavior. For example Schwepker (2001) found that salespeople's perceptions of a positive ethical climate are positively associated with their organizational commitment. Cullen et al. (2003) also demonstrated a benevolence or principled climate is related to organizational commitment.

Martin and Cullen (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of the ethical climate literature and concluded ethical climate is associated with positive job attitudes such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction. They added that the findings of their analysis underlined the importance of ethical climate perceptions for organizational decision makers if they wished to achieve high levels of commitment, satisfaction and psychological well being for their employees. In addition, in a study of Korean tourism industry employees, Kim and Miller (2008) confirmed the findings of Cullen et al. (2003), these connections may be due to the fact that ethical climates serve as a perceptual lens through which employees diagnose and assess situations. If their perceptions of acceptable and ethical behavior are cumulated continuously over time, employees are likely to increase trust in their organization. Subsequently, this will induce a loyalty toward the organization. Therefore, the higher level of perceived ethical climates, the more likely employees will trust organizational goals and increase emotional attachment to the organization. Moreover, Stewart, Volpone, Avery, and Mckay (2011) in their study of warehouse

employees in a large American retail organization found turnover intentions were lowest among workers perceiving both a pro-diversity and highly ethical climate. This supports earlier findings where, for example, Mulki, Jamarillo and Locander (2008) argued the perception of an ethical climate presents employees with a clear guide as to appropriate behavior, leading to a reduction in role conflict, ambiguity and stress thus resulting in lower turnover intentions, but it also influence collective organizational citizenship (Shin, Y. 2012) Vardi (2001) in a study of employees of a metal production plant found ethical climates to be negatively related to negative employee behaviors such as, drinking at work, spending time on personal telephone calls and sexually harassing others at work.

Ethical climate has also been described to be a significant factor in the level of conflict reported between employees and managers (Schwepker, Ferrell & Ingram 1997), in the supervisory trust and organizational identification (DeConinck, J.B. 2011), in the project status misreporting (Smith, H.J. , Thompson, R. , Iacovou, C. 2009) and in the firm's risk taking propensity (Saini and Martin, 2009).

2.3.3. *Antecedents of ethical climate*

A considerable amount of researcher have also analyzed the antecedents of ethical climate, both individual and collective. Individual antecedents concern employee and managers. In addition to sex and demographic characteristics, which don't fit with our organizational propose, researcher have found a positive relationship between some personality characteristics and ethical climate. In support of the theoretical relation between this two topics, personal moral development and ethical climate resulted linked (Schminke at al., 2005). Researchers have also just began to examine how different types of leadership can influence ethical climate: it is also been demonstrated that a manager self

rated (Shin, Y. 2012) and paternalistic ethical leadership (Ötken, A.B., Cenkci, T. 2012) can positively influence the ethical climate of the firm. Most of research analyzing the antecedents of ethical climate have focused themselves on the organizational antecedents. For example Parboteeah et al. (2006) demonstrate a relationship between organizational communication and empowerment efforts and the ethical climate of the firm.

Table 2.1 reports the most important antecedents and consequences of ethical climate at the current state of the art. However the majority of studies are cross-sectionals and they often use different measures of ethical climate, thus there are conceptual and methodological limitations of the extant research, even if Forte (2004) found no differences between different industry types.

Antecedents		
Antecedents	Title	Author
Moral development	The effects of leader moral development on ethical climate and employee attitudes	Schminke et al., 2005
Paternalistic Leadership	The Impact of Paternalistic Leadership on Ethical Climate: The Moderating Role of Trust in Leader	Ötken & Cenkci, 2012
Empowerment and communication	Establishing Organizational Ethical Climates: How Do Managerial Practices Work?	Parboteeah et al., 2010
CEO leadership	CEO Ethical Leadership, Ethical Climate, Climate Strength, and Collective Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Shin, 2012

Table 2.1 Antecedents of ethical climate

Consequents		
Consequences	Title	Author
Increasing organizational commitment	The effect of ethical climates on organizational commitment: a two-analysis	Cullen et al., 2003
Increasing job satisfaction	Continuities and Extensions of Ethical Climate Theory : A Meta-Analytic Review	Martin & Cullen, 2006
Increasing psychological well being	Effect of ethical climate on turnover intention: Linking attitudinal- and stress theory	Mulki et al., 2008
Reducing in role conflict, ambiguity and stress	You support diversity, but are you ethical? Examining the interactive effects of diversity and ethical climate perceptions on turnover intentions	Stewart et al., 2011
Reducing turnover intentions	The influence of ethical climate and ethical conflict on role stress in the sales force	Schwepker et al., 1997
Reducing conflict between managers and employees	The effects of organizational and ethical climates on misconduct at work	Vardi, 2001
Reducing negative employee behaviors	CEO Ethical Leadership, Ethical Climate, Climate Strength, and Collective Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Shin, 2012
collective organizational citizenship behavior	Exploring the Influence of Organizational Ethical Climate on Knowledge Management	Tseng & Fan, 2011
participation to knowledge management activities	The effects of ethical climate on organizational identification, supervisory trust, and turnover among salespeople	DeConinck, 2011
supervisory trust and organizational identification	Strategic Risk-Taking Propensity: The Role of Ethical Climate and Marketing Output Control	Saini & Martin, 2009
firm's risk taking propensity	The Impact of Ethical Climate on Project Status Misreporting	Smith et al., 2009
project status misreporting	'Hospital ethical climate and teamwork in acute care: The moderating role of leaders')	Rathert & Fleming, 2008
team working	Ethical Climates and Safety-Enhancing Behaviors: An Empirical Test'	Parboteeah & Kapp, 2008
safety compliance and safety participation	The Relationship between Ethical Climate and Ethical Problems within Human Resource Management	Bartels & Martell, 1998
ethical violations		

Table 2.2 Consequents of ethical climate

It is immediately clear that researchers have found many consequences of ethical climate, however, “It is surprising to note that, even though empirical research has addressed the roles of leaders and organizational structure in influencing ethical climates, little empirical research has investigated the antecedents of ethical climates.”(K. Praveen Parboteeah, Hsien Chun Chen, Ying-Tzu Lin, I-Heng Chen, Amber Y-P Lee, Anyi Chung, 2006).

2.4.Conclusion

Since ethical work climates have their basis in ethical reasoning, a consideration of ethical climates extends organization theory into a new arena of ethical systems and management and this theory brings ethical content into the mainstream of organization theory. Thus ethical climates, in particular in his local locus of analysis, is a useful tool to investigate ethics inside the organization. Moreover, the presence of a principle or benevolence ethical climate is being demonstrated to increase a series of outcomes, (employees well-being, satisfaction and job commitment at all), even if the discussion about ethical climate consequences and, most of all, antecedents is still in progress.

3. Business Ethics and the role of HR

3.1.Introduction

In this chapter we resume our literature analysis about business ethics and HR, this one identified as the most important function in the implementation of business ethics themes in the firm. Our analysis results is divided in three cluster : basic HR and ethics papers, ethics for HR papers and HR for ethics papers. Our investigation starts from the last one in order to find the most relevant ethical practices (each with its reference) and to divided each practice using the AMO theory.

3.2.Literature Analysis

The literature suggest that HR practices can influence the ethical climate of the organization. There has been some interest in the role of the HR specialist as a guardian of ethics, with the HR function assuming the role of 'ethical stewardship' and ethical leadership. Most discussion of this has appeared sporadically in professional HR journals. For example, some writers have stressed the HR manager 's role in raising awareness about ethical issues, in promoting ethical behavior and in disseminating ethical practices more widely among line and project managers. Another ethical role for HR professionals involves communicating codes of ethical conduct, providing training in ethics, managing compliance and monitoring arrangements, and taking a lead in enforcement proceedings (Wehrmeyer, 1996).

Starting from this assumption, we performed a literature analysis, with the goal of reviewing the finding from the year 2000 on the reported relationship between HRM Practices and Ethics at the organizational level, focusing on

either top journals of Business Ethics, HRM, General Management and Organization Studies and books on that topic.

We use a framework proposed by Snow and Thomas's (1994) in which their work points out some of the issues that need to be measured to identify the research approaches followed by management scholars. In this sense, they provide us reliable items to describe the objectives pursued in each of the six stages of theory development and the different field research methods used to build and test theory. Nevertheless, as Snow and Thomas's (1994) framework was not specifically designed for the HRM field, it was necessary to include other variables in order to describe scholars' approaches to HRM research. Thus, the original items provided by Snow and Thomas (1994) were completed with six other questions.

94 contributions meet the criteria: 48 papers and 47 chapters in 6 books. At a second step we organized the data set into Scholars' objectives and Data-obtaining methods.

For the first one we extracted information about scholars' research purposes: (1) identification of key concepts, (2) establishment of how and why these key concepts are related, (3) prediction of the future behavior of variables, (4) measurement of key concepts, (5) measurement of the relationships among variables and (6) testing competing theories explaining the same phenomenon. This first set of factors was defined drawing on the variables used by Snow and Thomas (1994) to define their matrix, so it was useful for us to identify scholars' research purposes and the stages of theory development to which they contribute.

Also taking Snow and Thomas's (1994) list of field research methods into account, the last section of our analysis was designed to describe the methods used by the authors to obtain information: (1) direct and participant observation, (2) interviews, (3) questionnaires, (4) computer databases, (5) simulations, (6) laboratory experiments or (7) computer simulations.

Table 3.1 (see Appendix 3.6) provides a synthesis of the studies reviewed based on authors, study, purpose and data collection method.

As we can see from the table 3.1 there is a preponderance of theoretical contributions from which we are able to begin our research and this fact let us to fill this empirical gap; in fact we begin to work when we understood that in the past few years were made less empirical research in this HR field.

It is shown that from the initial pool of 95 papers and books chapters from 2000 to 2012 only 22 that represent the 23% of the entire pool are empirical and the other 77% are theoretical.

Also we can notice that 54 are identification of key concept (56%), 24 are establishment of how and why these key concepts are related (25%), 7 are measurement of the relationship among variables(7%), 8 are measurement of the relationship among variables(8%), 2 are measurement of key concepts (4%), so we understand that more than half deal on a problem without consider the measurement of it but only identify and explain it.

3.3.Content Analysis

The next level of analysis focused itself on the content, and as such is organized and divided:

- HR and Ethics: studies that focused on the risk and the opportunities related to the linkage between HR and Business Ethics literature;
- Ethics for HR: studies that focused on Codes of Ethics and Ethical Dilemmas;
- HR for Ethics: studies that focused on HR ethical practices linked to the role of the HRM for ethics;

3.3.1. *HR and Ethics*

This first area, regarding the risk and the opportunities related to the linkage between HR and Business Ethics literature, represent for us the basic contribution for our analysis; in fact from these 11 papers and 12 book chapters we were able to delineate all of the first part of our work. We selected these papers and chapters to built the theoretical section also because, in particular the papers, were published in the first part of the 2000 years, so we believe that they represent the basis for all of further analysis and in particular our analysis on the ethical work climate. In this first area we find content regarding for example organizational justice, equity and the most important theories inherent with ethics, as we can see in chapter 1.

Table 3.2 and 3.3 (see Appendix 3.6) summarize this first type of list of papers and books chapters.

3.3.2. *Ethics for HR: Codes of Ethics and Ethical Dilemmas*

Furthermore we analyze the area of the HRM ethical dilemmas, in particular human resource professionals must frequently make and execute decisions with ethical implications (Hosmer, 1987; Rosen and Juris, 1996).

About this research field we found 7 paper and 12 book chapters, as shown in tables 3.4 and 3.5 (see Appendix 3.6).

More than 30 years ago, Legge (1978) highlighted a range of challenges and ambiguities in the role of the personnel manager. One of these concerned the conflict inherent in personnel managers' responsibilities as an integral part of management alongside their distinctive responsibility to take account of the concerns and wellbeing of the workforce. The latter reflects, in part, a hangover from a welfare and human relations tradition, perceived by many in

personnel management to be a burden from which they have sought, over many years, to escape.

A second major challenge concerned personnel managers' lack of power to enact personnel management. An important reason for this was that while personnel managers could develop policy and practice, line managers had to implement them on a day-to-day basis. This meant that everyone was, in some sense, a personnel manager, resulting in ambiguity about the boundaries of the respective roles and a difficult decision for personnel managers about how far they should seek responsibility for implementation in the face of potential reluctance or even hostility from line managers. These two key challenges, one concerning the focus of the role and the other concerning its enactment, present ethical dilemmas for personnel managers, since rebadged as human resource (HR) managers, because they can have an important bearing on their ability to influence the wellbeing of the workforce in any organization.

Dilemmas involving *favoritism* in employment, *inconsistencies* in pay and discipline, sexual *harassment*, sex and race *discrimination*, and *breaches of confidentiality* are among their most serious problems (Wiley, 1993). These problems also are difficult to resolve (Wiley, 1993), mainly because they are complex and characterized by ambiguity (Pastin, 1986). Nevertheless, many businesses give the HR department a key leadership role in establishing and maintaining their ethics programs (Wiley, 1993). Often this role is underestimated in defining the ethical tone of the organization. Yet, clearly this is a critical element to support the hardwiring of ethics into the organization. In fact, one skill that is highly regarded in organizations is a leader's ability to demonstrate adeptness in moral reasoning and, further, to make decisions based on an ethical framework. Emphasis is also increasingly being placed on a leader's ability to impart moral judgment in the highly subjective process of resolving morally bound decisions. Moreover, modern leadership theories highlight that often times a leader's moral subjectivity reflects their personal

philosophical bias in the ethical decision-making process. Moral leadership and management is also considered to be at the crux of an ethical climate and the organizational culture (Foote and Ruona, 2008).

A recent publication of the *Ethics Resource Center* showed that significant numbers of HR practitioners across all major industry sectors in the U.S.A. are active in areas involving ethics. These include providing sources of ethics information and advice as well as taking the lead in developing and implementing ethics initiatives (Driscoll and Hoffman, 1998). Results from focus groups and national surveys of HR managers indicate their willingness to make the HR department the organizational locus of responsibility for ethical behavior at work (Wiley, 1993). In many corporations, HR managers conduct management-level or companywide ethics awareness programs. These companies encourage employees to approach HR with problems that cannot be taken to a supervisor.

Ethics hotlines, ombudspersons, and ethics officer positions are frequently staffed by HR personnel (Driscoll and Hoffman, 1998). In addition, HR managers work with senior managers to ensure that their conduct is aligned with the company's ethics codes (Edwards and Bennett, 1987), and with other employees to make sure they fully understand the repercussions of ethical transgressions (Greengard, 1997). But, where do HR managers turn to gain a clear understanding of their own professional standards?

Decisions about what a professional ought to do can be significantly more difficult to determine (Robison, 1994). For this reason, nearly all professions have a code of ethics (Jamal and Bowie, 1995) and members of that profession look to the code for guidance in making ethical decisions. In fact, 83 percent of the personnel directors, responding to a national survey, selected conformance "to professional codes" as one of their most important principles (Cava, West and Berman, 1995). Buchholz (1989) indicated that these codes function as the enlivening spirit of a profession. In many ways, they are more important than

the law because they offer a larger ethical vista. Hence, when confronted by ethical dilemmas, professionals should be able to find specific guidance in the official code (Buchholz, 1989). Having a code of professional conduct is one part of the self-regulatory efforts of professional organizations. Understanding that it is fundamental to have a code of ethics within the organization, we are now able to propose an existing taxonomy proposed by Wooten and White (1983).

The five ethical dilemma categories considered to be applicable include misrepresentation and collusion, misuse of data, manipulation and coercion, value and goal conflict, and technical ineptness. Misrepresentation and collusion can occur when the HRM professional misrepresents his/her skill base, education, expertise, certification, or specialized training.

This form of dilemma may also be seen as occurring when the HRM practitioner attempts to exclude other parties for personal gain or self-protection or when professional objectivity is lost by inappropriate structuring of the relationship. Here, misrepresentation and collusion occurs when personal values or needs is optimized, to the exclusion of professional standards or organizational expectations. There is little convergence between personal, professional, and organizational interest, resulting in the potential for unethical behavior. Collusion may also occur through loss of objectivity by means of assimilation into the organization's culture. An example of this type of dilemma in HRM practice involves a practitioner who portrays himself as knowledgeable about employment law yet does not have a sufficient background to protect the best interest of the organization.

The second type of general dilemma that could potentially produce unethical behavior is that of misuse of data. This occurs when the voluntary consent or confidentiality of organization members is violated or abridged, or when data are distorted, deleted, or not reported. Further, this can result in using data to punitively assess persons or groups resulting in harm doing. This

type of dilemma can be produced, for example, when organizational interest and politics are not congruent with personal values or professional practices. If this conflict or lack of congruence is not resolved, harm doing may likely result. This type of ethical dilemma is particularly relevant in contemporary HRM practice through employee records and HR information systems. For example, HRM professionals frequently know information about personality traits or career interests of employees. Should this information not be handled confidentially, great harm can occur.

Manipulation and coercion constitutes the third category of general ethical dilemma. This dilemma type can occur when the implementation of HR roles, practices, or programs requires organizational members to abridge their personal values or needs against their will. For example, forcing an employee to submit to a random drug test without prior notification or previous agreement is illustrative. Many HRM programs, policies, and activities involve issues of voluntary participation or issues of consent by organizational members. For example, forcing an employee to divulge personal information in a training program is another example of this type of dilemma. Thus, if the expectation on the part of the organization involving training practices and expectations is not congruent with personal values of the trainer, unethical behavior could result in the form of harm doing.

The fourth dilemma category, value and goal conflict, occurs when there is conflict or ambiguity concerning whose needs will be fulfilled by meeting specific goals. Value and goal conflict can also be seen when there is ambiguity in defining HRM goals or targets of HRM programs and policies. Further, this type of dilemma can be seen when HRM professionals engage in resistance to altering HRM strategies or when the professional withholds services or needed resources. For example, withholding a benefit (e.g., Employee Assistance Program) from a union employee during negotiations so as to maximize leverage in settling a favorable contract well depicts this type

of dilemma. Here, the lack of congruence between organizational concerns and the needs and expectation of professional practice can produce the opportunity for unethical behavior to arise from such a dilemma.

The fifth dilemma category is that of technical ineptness. This dilemma occurs when there is a lack of knowledge or skill in the use of techniques or procedures to effectively diagnose HRM issues, formulate HRM targets, choose and implement programs, HR strategies, and technologies, or to apply HRM programs at the appropriate depth and scope. This dilemma may also occur when there is an inability to effectively evaluate or terminate a program or policy. Technical ineptness may also occur when there is resistance to transfer the knowledge and responsibilities for HRM to internal parties (e.g., line managers). An example of this type of dilemma can be illustrated when internal HRM practitioners attempt to work with survivors of downsizing and layoffs, even though they do not have the specialized training needed to address complex psychological issues nor the objectivity to assess counseling needs. Here, the lack of overlap between the organization's needs and the standards for professionalism emanating from the HRM field may create a dilemma, which if not properly handled can again result in harm.

Finally, D.Foote and K.Lamb(2002) extrapolated a list of ethical dilemmas that originate from as many organizational scenarios, giving us a final list of ethical dilemmas' examples that an HR manager could frequently find on his way. These ethical dilemmas, proposed as questions to an HR manager, can identify a series of important ethical issues that an HRM professional must take into consideration when he finds himself involved into an ethical ambiguous situation:

- What if your managing director's son has applied to your company for a place on the graduate training scheme but has not come up to standards in the selection process and the managing director comes

to you asking that you offer his son a place at the expense of one of the other candidates?

- What if your long serving line managers is recruiting a new supervisor and he has made up his mind to offer the position to an existing member of his department even if the company procedure states that the post must be advertised internally and he will offer the post to his candidate regardless of the performance of the other candidates?
- What if your finance director comes in from a board meeting and tells you that there is a potential redundancy situation looming which could result in the closure of one of your offices which will cause the loss of ten jobs? Meanwhile the union representative calls in to see you asking if the wind of the potential job losses are confirmed because there is another company that is looking for the sort of people you would be making redundant.
- What if you see a colleague who is also a good friend putting a company computer into the boot of his car?
- What if you are interviewing with a senior manager for a new clerical officer in his department and you see two candidates, one is a mature experienced male external candidate and the other a young female with less relevant experience from within the department? At last you know that the manager has been seen with this girl socially in what could be interpreted as compromising situations.

- What if you are authorizing expense claims for members of your department when you see one from a colleague claiming for journeys you know she did not make?

This flow of ethical issues opens up the opportunity for greater understanding of what being an ethical professional actual means, of the factors that influence ethical behavior and how we can integrate ethical frameworks and principles appropriately.

3.3.3. *HR for Ethics*

Last we analyze a series of papers and book chapters in order to be able are able to extrapolate a list of HR practices that could be classified as ethical practices. This is clearly the most important field for our research purpose in fact, with our work, we are trying to understand how HR can influence the organizational climate and in particular its ethical climate; this is also the most analyzed one by the researchers as we can see from the tables below in which we analyze 29 papers and 23 book chapters that already studied the contribution of ethical practices to the organizational contest. So with our research we are trying to bring useful practical results to HR professionals through an empirical work on the influence of ethical practices and ethical work climate.

Table 3.6 and 3.7 (see Appendix 3.6) show this last list of papers and books chapters.

3.4.AMO Theory clusters

From this list of paper and books we are able to begin to extract our list of HR practices that we are trying to understand in which way they could influence the ethical work climate.

Focusing our empirical research on the HRM implication for ethics, we have decided to empirically study the correlation between some HR practices that previous research (both by empirical analysis and theoretical arguments) has seen as correlated to ethics at the organizational level. As research on the relationship between HRM and performance has grown, workers have moved centre stage as it has become accepted that HR practices have their impact mainly via their effect on workers' attitudes and behavior. Indeed, the dominant model suggests that the core purpose of HR practices is to promote workers' ability, motivation and opportunity to contribute to high performance in their jobs (Wright and Boswell 2002). This model, sometimes described as the AMO model, is helpful in pointing to the kind of HR practices that should be present. For example, ability might best be ensured through careful selection and training.

We decided to divided all the most important HR ethical practices emerged by the literature analysis using the AMO model (Renwick, Redman, Maguire 2012). This theory is one of the most commonly used conceptualizations of the impact of HRM practices on organizational performance in empirical studies (Boselie et al. 2005). Ability–Motivation–Opportunity theory (Appelbaum et al. 2000) suggests that HRM practices that enhance the firm's human capital via increased human capabilities translate into performance outcomes, such as higher productivity, reduced waste, higher quality and profit. According to AMO theory, HRM works through increasing employees' Ability through attracting and developing high-performing employees; enhancing employees' Motivation and commitment through

practices such as contingent rewards and effective performance management; and providing employees with the Opportunity to engage in knowledge-sharing and problem solving activities via employee involvement programs.

In the HR practices' field, we improve a division in: HR ethical practices related to ability (related to selection and training processes), HR ethical practices related to Motivation (related to performance appraisal and pay management processes), HR ethical practices related to Opportunity (for example those related to empowerment or industrial relation processes) .

We use Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) theory (Appelbaum et al. 2000) to identify the key HRM areas that will have an impact on ethical climate. AMO is a formal theory designed for studies of behavior involving ability, motivation and opportunity generally, and thus could be used to develop a series of mid-range theories, which have more limited scope and generate testable hypotheses. The examples of uses of the AMO framework are mid-range AMO-derived theories built upon the formal theoretical basis. The validity of the fundamental AMO formal theory itself would rely not only upon the logic of its internal structure, but also upon the mid-range theories it spawns, which then collectively would indicate the usefulness or lack thereof of the AMO framework as a generalized means of understanding human behavior. An AMO-based mid-range theory would produce a probabilistic causal analysis. Such analyses posit causal relationships between the independent variables (here Ability, Motivation and Opportunity) and the dependent variable (here the ethical climate).

Now we could see two fundamental tables, 3.8 and 3.9, that represent the real focus of our empirical research; in fact we selected a list of papers and book chapters in which we classified the classical HR levers with the AMO theory insert them either in A, M, and O. We could see that all the four empirical paper are measure with questionnaire, like our work. Then we identified for each paper the key concept, the role of respondent and the scope

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area from which we notice that all the respondents are HR professionals and the scope is specific for each paper. We classified in this way only the empirical ones while the theoretical are divided only into the first four columns.

Author	AMO Theory	HR Levers	Method	Methodology	Key concepts	Role of respondent	Scope Area	
Koonmee et al., 2009	A		MRV	Questionnaire	Institutionalization of ethics	Human resource managers of all Thai companies listed on the Stock Exchange of Thailand	Thailand	
	M	Job satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Team Spirit						
	O							
Kang et al., 2011	A	Turnover intention, Motivation to participate in training Organizational/Career Commitment Selection	MRV	Questionnaire	Ethical Climate	middle or low level personnel	South Korea	
	M							
	O							
	A							
Martin & Woldring, 2001	M	Performance, pay management	MRV	Questionnaire	"Ethical issues"	HR professionals	Australia	
	O							EEO, Fairness
	A							Selection, Training
Beatty et al., 2003	M	Performance	MKC	Questionnaire	Trust and ethical issues	HR professionals	U.S.	
	O							

Table 3.8 Empirical fundamental HR for Ethics papers

Table 3.9 Theoretical fundamental HR for ethics papers and book chapters

Author	AMO Theory	HR Levers	Method
Weaver & Trevino, 2001	A	Selection, Training	IHW
	M	Performance	
	O		
Buckley et al., 2001	A	Selection, Downsizing	IHW
	M	Pay management	
	O		
Pless & Maak, 2004	A	Selection, Training	IHW
	M	Performance, Pay Management	
	O		
Spencer, 2002	A	Selection	IKC
	M		
	O		
Heery, 2002	A		IKC
	M	Pay management	
	O		
Winstanley, 2001	A		IKC
	M	Performance	
	O		
Sillanpaa & Jackson, 2002	A	Training	IKC
	M	Performance	
	O	Commitment, Leadership	
Wells & Schminke, 2001	A	Training	IKC
	M		
	O		
Orlitzky & Swanson, 2006	A	Recruitment and selection Training and development	IKC
	M	Performance, Pay Management	
	O		
Werbel & Balkin, 2010	A		PFB
	M	Performance	
	O		
Lewis, 2002	A		IKC
	M		
	O	Team spirit	
Scott, 2005	A		IHW
	M		
	O	Empowerment and social opportunity	
Cornelius and Gagnon, 2004	A		IHW
	M		
	O	Career opportunity	
Ardichvili & Jondle, 2009	A		IKC
	M		
	O	Unethical behavior reduction	

Looking at table 3.9, the first thing to note is the preponderance of theoretical papers compared to the empirical ones as shown in the first table: only few researches have empirically investigated the correlation between HR practices and ethics and no one of them had an international scope. Furthermore no one, at least in the most important scientific journals, has ever tried to relate some HR ethical practices with the ethical climate of the organization. Some papers, most of all theoretical ones, suggest that in some way HR practice can be related to the business ethics field, but none of them has ever studied the specific linkage between the practices that they proposed as 'ethical practices' and a questionnaire based upon a strong theoretical background, such as the ethical climate questionnaire as our work would bring to.

3.5.Conclusions

A wide literature research brought us to select a large pool of papers and books that, after a first division in 3 macro-areas and a second division using the AMO theory, let us to extrapolated a list of HR ethical practices that could compose a so called values-oriented ethics program (Weaver and Trevino, 2001) in which each practice is supposed by the literature to have a strong and valuable influence on the ethics of the firm. The development of our empirical model we are going to find out how they can influence the ethical work climate. With this chapter we delineated the gaps that exist in literature in particular it lacks of empirical research in the correlation between ethical practices and ethical climate. But thanks to this literature research we understand what concern about HR practices and about ethical climate. The following chapter introduce the last variable of our model: the sustainability. After that we have all of the pieces to begin our empirical work.

3.6. Appendix

Table 3.1 HR literature analysis

	Author	Typology		Scholars' objectives	Data-obtaining methods
		Paper	Book		
1	Ardagh, 2007		X	IKC	
2	Ardichvili & Jondle, 2009	X		IKC	
3	Ardichvili et al., 2010	X		MKC	Q
4	Baker & Cooper, 2002		X	MRV	
5	Beatty et al., 2003	X		MKC	Q
6	Bennington, 2006	X		MKC	I
7	Bennington, 2007		X	IKC	
8	Beu & Buckley, 2004	X		EHW	
9	Booth et al., 2005		X	IKC	
10	Boxall & Purcell, 2007		X	EHW	
11	Buckley et al., 2001	X		EHW	
12	Budd & Scoville, 2005		X	EHW	
13	Caldwell et al., 2011	X		EHW	
14	Cardy & Selvarajan, 2006		X	MRV	Q
15	Claydon, 2002		X	IKC	
16	Cornelius & Gagnon, 2004	X		EHW	
17	Craft, 2010	X		EHW	
18	Creighton, 2007		X	EHW	
19	Cropanzano & Byrne, 2009	X		IKC	
20	Demuijnck, 2009	X		IKC	
21	Doherty & Tyson, 2002		X	IKC	
22	Fisher, 2001	X		IKC	I
23	Fisher, 2005	X		IKC	
24	Foote & Lamb, 2002	X		EHW	I/Q
25	Foote & Ruona, 2008	X		EHW	
26	Frisque & Kolb, 2008	X		MRV	S
27	Fryer, 2009		X	IKC	
28	Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010	X		IKC	
29	Greenwood & De Cieri, 2007		X	EHW	
30	Greenwood & Simmons, 2004	X		EHW	
31	Greenwood, 2002	X		IKC	
32	Grossman & Schoenfeldt, 2001	X		EHW	
33	Guest, 2007		X	EHW	
34	Hatcher & Aragon, 2000	X		IKC	
35	Hatcher, 2006		X	EHW	
36	Heery, 2002		X	IKC	
37	Hemphill & Lillevik, 2011	X		IKC	
38	Hodmer & Kiewitz, 2005	X		IKC	
39	Kamoche, 2007		X	EHW	
40	Kang et al., 2011	X		MRV	Q
41	Kasser et al., 2006		X	IKC	
42	Keep, 2007	X		IKC	
43	Kolodinsky, 2006		X	IKC	
44	Koonmee et al., 2009	X		MRV	Q
45	Köster, 2002		X	IKC	
46	Kozica, 2011	X		EHW	
47	Lafer, 2005		X	IKC	
48	Lefkowitz, 2006	X		IKC	
49	Legge, 2002		X	IKC	

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	Author	Typology		Scholars' objectives	Data-obtaining methods
		Paper	Book		
50	Legge, 2007		X	EHW	
51	Lepak & Colakoglu, 2006		X	IKC	
52	Lewis, 2002		X	IKC	
53	Liff & Dickens, 2002		X	IKC	
54	Macklin, 2007		X	MKC	I
55	Margolis et al., 2007		X	IKC	
56	Martin & Woldring, 2001	X		MRV	Q
57	Maxwell & Beattie, 2004	X		EHW	I
58	McClendon, 2006		X	IKC	
59	Moberg, 2004	X		IKC	
60	Orlitzky & Swanson, 2006		X	IKC	
61	Palmer, 2007		X	EHW	
62	Pinnington & Bayraktaroglu, 2007		X	MRV	DPO
63	Pless & Maak, 2004	X		EHW	
64	Reed, 2007		X	IKC	
65	Rose, 2007		X	IKC	
66	Rosenberg, 2005		X	IKC	
67	Ryan, 2006	X		MKC	I
68	Schumann, 2001	X		IKC	
69	Schumann, 2006		X	IKC	
70	Scott, 2005		X	EHW	
71	Sekerka, 2009	X		IKC	Q
72	Shultzand & Brender-Ilan, 2004	X		MKC	Q
73	Sillanpaa & Jackson, 2002		X	IKC	DPO
74	Simpson, 2002		X	IKC	
75	Sorell, 2007		X	IKC	DPO
76	Spencer, 2002		X	IKC	
77	Stanworth, 2007		X	IKC	
78	Svensson & Wood, 2004	X		IKC	DPO
79	Taskin & Devos, 2005	X		IKC	
80	Taylor & Jones, 2002		X	IKC	DPO
81	Valentine, 2010	X		PFB	
82	Waheeduzzaman & Myers, 2010	X		MRV	I
83	Walsh, 2007		X	IKC	
84	Waring & Lewer, 2004	X		IKC	
85	Watson, 2007		X	MKC	I
86	Weaver & Trevino, 2001	X		EHW	
87	Wells & Schminke, 2001	X		EHW	
88	Werbelt & Balkin, 2010	X		PFB	
89	Wiley, 2000	X		IKC	
90	Winstanley & Woodall, 2002		X	IKC	
91	Winstanley & Woodall, 2000	X		IKC	
92	Winstanley, 2001	X		IKC	
93	Winstanley, 2007		X	IKC	
94	Woodall & Douglas, 2002		X	IKC	
95	Wooten, 2001	X		IKC	

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Legend:

- IKC: identification of key concept;
- EHW: establishment of how and why these key concepts are related;
- MRV: measurement of the relationships among variables;
- PFB: prediction of the future behaviour of variables;
- MKC: measurement of key concepts;
- I: interview;
- Q: questionnaire;
- S: survey;
- DPO: direct and participant observation;

Table 3.2 Basic HR and ethics papers

Author	Title
Wiley, 2000	Ethical Standards for Human Resource Management Professionals: A Comparative
Fisher, 2001	Managers' perceptions of ethical codes: dialectics and dynamics
Greenwood & Simmons, 2004	A stakeholder approach to ethical human resource management
Greenwood, 2002	Ethics and HRM: A Review and Conceptual Analysis
Hodmer & Kiewitz, 2005	Organizational justice: a behavioral science concept with critical implications for business ethics and stakeholder theory
Schumann, 2001	A moral principles framework for human resource management ethics
Svensson & Wood, 2004	Corporate ethics and trust in intra-corporate relationships
Waring & Lewer, 2004	The Impact of Socially Responsible Investment on HRM: A Conceptual Framework
Winstanley & Woodall, 2000	The ethical dimension of human resource management
Winstanley, 2001	Ethical issues in the management of human resources
Wooten, 2001	Ethical dilemmas in human resource management An application of a multidimensional framework, a unifying taxonomy, and applicable codes

Table 3.3 Basic HR and Ethics book chapters

Chapter Author	Chapter Title	Book Title	Editor
Amanda Rose, 2002	Ethics and Human Resource Management	EHR	
Ardagh, 2007	The ethical basis for HRM professionalism and codes of conduct	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Bennington, 2007	HR managers as ethics agents of the state	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Boxall & Purcell, 2007	Strategic management and human resources: the pursuit of productivity, flexibility, and legitimacy	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Breen Creighton, 2007	Ethical employment practices and the law	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Fryer, 2009	An ethical prospective	Human resource management. A critical approach	David G. Collings and Geoffrey Wood
Greenwood & De Cieri, 2007	Stakeholder theory and the ethics of HRM	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Kasser et al., 2006	The ethical problems of a materialistic value orientation for business	Human Resource Management Ethics	John R. Deckop
Lepak & Colakoglu, 2006	Ethics and strategic human resource management	Human Resource Management Ethics	John R. Deckop
Palmer, 2007	Socio-political theory and ethics in HRM	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Sillanpaa & Jackson, 2002	Conducting a social audit lessons from The Body Shop experience	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Winstanley & Woodall, 2002	Introduction	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall

Table 3.4 Ethics for HR papers

Author	Title
Caldwell et al., 2011	Strategic Human Resource Management as Ethical Stewardship
Cropanzano & Byrne, 2009	Organizational Justice and Behavioral Ethics: Promises and Prospects
Fisher, 2005	HRD Attitudes: Or the Roles and Ethical Stances of Human Resource Developers
Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010	Ethical Considerations in Organizational Politics: Expanding the Perspective
Hemphill & Lillevik, 2011	The Global Economic Ethic Manifesto: Implementing a Moral Values Foundation in the Multinational Enterprise
Ryan, 2006	Current Ethical Issues in Polish HRM
Shultzand & Brender-Ilan, 2004	Beyond justice: introducing personal moral philosophies to ethical evaluations of human resource practices

Table 3.5 Ethics for HR book chapters

Chapter Author	Chapter Title	Book Title	Editor
Budd & Scoville, 2005	Moral Philosophy, Business Ethics, and the Employment Relationship	The Ethics of Human Resources and Industrial Relations	John W. Budd and James G. Scoville
Cardy & Selvarajan, 2006	Beyond rhetoric and bureaucracy	Human Resource Management Ethics	John R. Deckop
Doherty & Tyson, 2002	HRM and employee well-being: raising the ethical stakes	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Kolodinsky, 2006	Wisdom, ethics and human resources management	Human Resource Management Ethics	John R. Deckop
Macklin, 2007	The morally decent HR manager	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Margolis et al., 2007	Expanding ethical standards of HRM: necessary evils and the multiple dimensions of impact	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Reed, 2007	Engineers of human souls, faceless tech-nocrats or merchants of morality?	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Scott, 2005	The ethics of human resource management	The Ethics of Human Resources and Industrial Relations	John W. Budd and James G. Scoville
Simpson, 2002	Presenteeism and the impact of long hours on managers	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Watson, 2007	HRM, ethical irrationality, and the limits of ethical action	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Winstanley, 2007	Conditions of worth and the performance management paradox	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Woodall & Douglas, 2002	Winning hearts and minds: ethical issues in HRD	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall

Table 3.6 HR for ethics papers

Author	Title
Ardichvili & Jondle, 2009	Integrative Literature Review: Ethical Business Cultures: A Literature Review and Implications for HRD
Ardichvili et al., 2010	Dimensions of Ethical Business Cultures: Comparing Data from 13 countries of Europe, Asia, and the Americas
Beatty et al., 2003	HR'S ROLE IN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE
Bennington, 2006	HRM Role in EEO: Sheep in Shepherd's Clothing?
Beu & Buckley, 2004	Using accountability to create a more ethical climate
Buckley et al., 2001	Ethical issues in human resources systems
Cornelius & Gagnon, 2004	Still bearing the mark of Cain? Ethics and inequality measurement
Craft, 2010	Making the case for ongoing and interactive organizational ethics training
Demuijnck, 2009	Non-Discrimination in Human Resources Management as a Moral Obligation
Foote & Ruona, 2008	Eliciting informations about the value of HRM practitioners using laddering interviews
Foote & Ruona, 2008	Institutionalizing Ethics: A Synthesis of Frameworks and the Implications for HRD
Frisque & Kolb, 2008	The Effects of an Ethics Training Program on Attitude, Knowledge, and Transfer of Training of Office Professionals: A Treatment- and Control-Group Design
Grossman & Schoenfeldt, 2001	Resolving ethical dilemmas through international human resource management A transaction cost economics perspective
Hatcher, 2006	Rational for and development of a standard on ethics and integrity for international HRD research and practice
Kang et al., 2011	The effects of perceived external prestige, ethical organizational climate, and leader-member exchange (LMX) quality on employees' commitments and their subsequent attitudes

Author	Title
Keep, 2007	Fitness to practice: can well balanced, supported HRD practitioners better deal with ethical and moral conundrums?
Koonmee et al., 2009	Ethics institutionalization, quality of work life, and employee job-related outcomes: A survey of human resource managers in Thailand
Kozica, 2011	Linking research on HRM and performance with ethics: Does the integration of employees into the HRM-performance relationship contributes to give ethics in HRM a more pivotal role?
Lefkowitz, 2006	The constancy of ethics amidst the changing world of work
Martin & Woldring, 2001	Ready for the mantle? Australian human resource managers as stewards of ethics
Maxwell & Beattie, 2004	The Ethics of In-company Research: An Exploratory Study
Moberg, 2004	The ethics of mentoring
Pless & Maak, 2004	Building an Inclusive Diversity Culture: Principles, Processes and Practice
Sekerka, 2009	Organizational ethics education and training: a review of best practices and their application
Taskin & Devos, 2005	Paradoxes from the Individualization of Human Resource Management: The Case of Telework
Valentine, 2010	Human resource management, ethical context, and personnel consequences: A commentary essay
Waheeduzzaman & Myers, 2010	Influence of economic reward and punishment on unethical behavior: an empirical study
Weaver & Trevino, 2001	The role of human resources in ethics/compliance management
Wells & Schminke, 2001	Ethical development and human resources training: An integrative framework
Werbel & Balkin, 2010	Are human resource practices linked to employee misconduct? A rational choice perspective

Table 3.7 HR for Ethics book chapters

Chapter Author	Chapter Title	Book Title	Editor
Walsh, 2007	HRM and the ethics of commodified work in a market economy	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Baker & Cooper, 2002	Occupational testing and psychometric instruments: an ethical perspective	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Booth et al., 2005	Ethical practice in corporations	The Ethics of Human Resources and Industrial Relations	John W. Budd and James G. Scoville
Claydon, 2002	Employee participation and involvement	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Creighton, 2007	Ethical employment practices and the law	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Guest, 2007	HRM and performance: can partnership address the ethical dilemmas?	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Hatcher, 2006	An examination of the potential of human resource development to improve organizational ethics	Human Resource Management Ethics	John R. Deckop
Heery, 2002	The new pay: risk and representation at work	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Kamoche, 2007	Strategy, knowledge, appropriation, and ethics in HRM	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Köster, 2002		Ethics in Human Resource Management	Marco Köster
Lafer, 2005	The critical failure of workplace ethics	The Ethics of Human Resources and Industrial Relations	John W. Budd and James G. Scoville
Legge, 2002	The ethical context of HRM: the ethical organization in the boundaryless world	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall

Chapter Author	Chapter Title	Book Title	Editor
Legge, 2007	The ethics of HRM in dealing with individual employees without collective representation	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Lewis, 2002	Whistleblowing	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Liff & Dickens, 2002	Ethics and equality: reconciling false dilemmas	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
McClendon, 2006	The consequence and challenges of union decline	Human Resource Management Ethics	John R. Deckop
Orlitzky & Swanson, 2006	Socially Responsible Human Resource Management: Charting New Territory	Human Resource Management Ethics	John R. Deckop
Pinnington & Bayraktaroglu, 2007	Ethical leadership in employee development	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Schumann, 2006	The role of moral development in motivating ethical behavior by employees	Human Resource Management Ethics	John R. Deckop
Sorell, 2007	Ethics and work in emergencies: the UK fire service strike 2002–3	Human Resource Management: Ethics and Employment	Ashly H. Pinnington Rob Macklin Tom Campbell
Spencer, 2002	What ethics in the employment interview?	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Stanworth, 2007	Flexible working patterns	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall
Taylor & Jones, 2002	Staff charters: a framework for employers and their staff	Ethical Issues in Contemporary HRM	Diana Winstanley Jean Woodall

4. The Sustainability role

4.1. Introduction

As an emerging body of knowledge, sustainability and sustainable development have been defined in many different ways. Most authors begin by citing the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987), the ‘Brundtland Commission’: “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. For us, (following Docherty et al., 2008) sustainability means the dynamic state of becoming sustainable — a process founded on conscious efforts to create new opportunities for existence in multiple domains and at multiple levels, now and in the future. As such, by sustainable development we mean the active and coordinated efforts of a number of societal actors to support this dynamic state of sustainability.

At the organization level, we agree with Holling (2001) who argued that the ability to create, test and maintain adaptive capability is at the core of the sustainability concept. Indeed, designing and developing adaptive capability is viewed as critical for organizational success (Worley and Lawler, 2010). Lastly, at the individual level, sustainability is a concept that philosophy has addressed, because it has “an inherent ethical dimension, (...) related to the orientational aspects of the term – to its normative and evaluative meaning” (Becker, 2012).

4.2. Sustainability and HRM

Sustainability can be seen as the dynamic state of human resources regeneration and growth by integrating the activities of a large variety of stakeholders. Indeed, sustainability represents a revitalization of the firm’s

strategy, processes and activities based on the direct engagement of senior managers (Reynolds et al. 2006) in a process of change (Smith, 2003). In order to successfully manage this change process, companies need to develop management systems to enhance and support the development of the organization's sustainability.

One of the management systems that is critical in the development of corporate sustainability is the HRM system, since this is positioned in most companies to have a major impact on the design and implementation of practices that can enhance the organization's sustainability drive (Vickers, 2005). Furthermore, HRM practices of the 21st century are challenged to meet needs and integrate the growing number of stakeholders' needs (Colakoglu et al. 2006) and to support the long-term viability of the company (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005). Although sustainability has become relevant in many areas of research, it has received comparatively little attention from HRM researchers (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005). The literature linking sustainability and HRM seems to present a lack in consistency, as it relies on different disciplines, assumes definitions of sustainability very diverse and sometimes contradictory, and seems not to be fully integrated with the traditional HRM literature (Ehnert, 2009). In particular, previous contributions on the issue could be traced back to two different streams: Sustainable HRM and sustainable work systems.

The first stream of HRM research, is based on the concept of Sustainable HRM, which is defined as “the pattern of planned and emerging human resource strategies and practices intended to enable organizational goal achievement while simultaneously reproducing the HR base over a long lasting calendar time and controlling the self-induced side and feedback effects of the HR system on the HR base and thus on the company itself” (Ehnert, 2009). Sustainable HRM can be considered as an extension of Strategic HRM (Ehnert, 2009), which has been defined as “the pattern of planned Human Resource

deployments and activities intended to enable the firm to achieve its goals” (Wright and McMahan, 1992). In general, the studies included in the Sustainable HRM stream of research extend the Strategic HRM focus because the contributions of the HRM system to the success of the organization is intended in a broader sense, that is a contribution to economic-financial, social and environmental performances; in addition, the temporal perspective for evaluating those contributions moves from a short-term to a long-term perspective.

The contributions included in the sustainable work system stream pointed out that the intensity of labor has negative impacts on workers’ health (e.g. Docherty et al, 2008), such as work-related stress symptoms, work-dependent psychosomatic reactions, burnout, and others (Kira, 2002). Moving from these findings, this stream of research focused on the solutions that companies should find to prevent negative outcomes of intensive HR deployment, such as fostering skills, co-operation, trust, motivation and other organizational elements (Docherty et al. 2002). Beyond this core idea, the sustainable work system perspective affirms that a sustainable firm must be one that is engaged in balancing the quality of the working life and organizational performance, with sustainable change processes and employment (Docherty et al. 2002).

4.3. Sustainability and ethics

As already said, the modern concept of sustainability has an inherent ethical dimension, related to the orientation aspect of the term, to its normative and evaluative meaning. Ethics deal with the analysis of normative and evaluative issues, with the questions of how one ought to act. The challenge of sustainability is to find an appropriate ethical approach to deal with these questions, but is much more difficult and demanding than the simple application of an established ethical theory. An encompassing sustainability ethics has the task of analyzing the sustainability relations with different ethical

dimensions. Some ethical aspects of sustainability relations have already been recognized and addressed in recent discussions in different fields of applied ethics. One has, for example, prominently referred to the concept of justice and discussed issues of intergenerational justice (Barry, 1997) as well as of intra-generational and environmental justice (Figueroa and Mills, 2003). However, research has not already point the focus on sustainability in relation to organizational ethics. Obviously also in the business contest we need a sustainability's ethics that is able to address the specific normative and evaluative aspects of organizational sustainability, and for this reason we are trying to relate the sustainability issues with the local ethical climate concept.

An organizational sustainability's ethics must be developed by analyzing the individual as a relational person within an organizational contest, enabling us to recognize if the ethics of the firm could be related to the sustainability field, using a fundamental tool as the ethical climate questionnaire in doing so. This approach (such as the path from moral development to ethical climate) transfer the ethical dimension of sustainability from an individual moral concept to an organizational one, giving us the basis to an integrative development of the organizational sustainability's ethics issue.

4.4. Conclusion

Sustainability has become a crucial concept in global public and organizational discussions in recent years and also has increasingly entered the business strategy and the business ethics discourse. To analyze the organizational impact of sustainability, both HR practices and local ethical climate could be seen as relevant topic, drawing on the insights of both HR and ethics. Such an integrated approach is a very difficult task. However, trying to give our contribution in finding the effective linkages of sustainability with HR and ethical climate, we would put the sustainability issue inside our empirical model.

5. Hypothesis and Method

5.1. Introduction

Starting from the possible or proved connection between human resource practices, sustainability and ethical climate discussed in the previous chapters, we are going to introduce our model and his hypothesis. Our model validations pass throw a survey's method with 6000 thousand European respondents and his sample, procedure and measurement are going to be explain.

5.2. Hypothesis development

Our hypotheses start from the path followed in the previous chapters, resuming all the consideration about the relationship between HR practices, sustainability and ethical climate explored by the researchers. In fact, how HR ethical practices can influence ethical climate and the mediating role of sustainability is the basis for our hypotheses development and for our survey. Then, if we want to analyze how HR can influence ethical climate (and in particular local ethical climate in his Egoistic, Principle and Benevolence variants), the first thing to do is to notice how often the literature has analyzed the influence of HR practices on business ethics. Our scope is in fact to fill the gap between theoretical concepts and empirical evidence, including in this analysis the sustainability, assuming its role as mediator between HR practices and ethical climate inside our model.

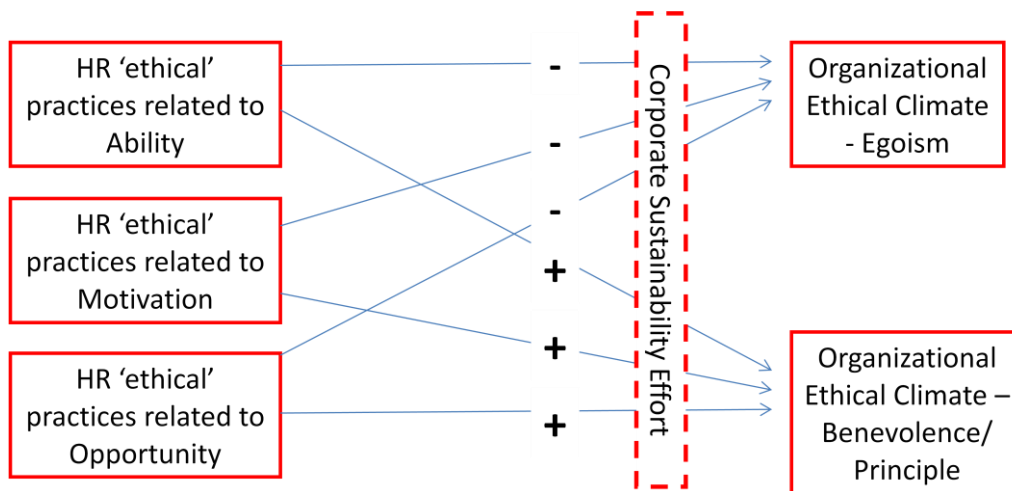


Figure 5.1.: The relations between HR ethical practices and Ethical Climate

These well-established relationships (all described in the previous chapters) provides the foundation for our hypotheses:

- 1a: HR ethical practices related to Ability are negatively directly related to egoistic local Ethical Climate
- 1b: HR ethical practices related to Motivation are negatively directly related to egoistic local Ethical Climate
- 1c: HR ethical practices related to Opportunity are negatively directly related to egoistic local Ethical Climate
- 2a: HR ethical practices related to Ability are positively directly related to benevolence and principle local Ethical Climates
- 2b: HR ethical practices related to Motivation are positively directly related to benevolence and principle local Ethical Climates
- 2b: HR ethical practices related to Opportunity are positively directly related to benevolence and principle local Ethical Climates

- 3: The positive relation between HR ethical practices (divided in Ability, Motivation and Opportunity as cluster) and all the local type of ethical climate are mediated by sustainability.

5.3. Procedures

Survey completed by the 6000 thousand employees included measures of demographic characteristics, ethical climate, HR ethical practices and sustainability.

5.4. Method

5.4.1. HR Ethical Practices

As shown in chapter 3, many authors have analyzed the importance of HR for ethics, but only few paper, as shown in table 3.8, have already empirically investigate the impact of HR practice on organizational ethics, no one with an international scope. However, some authors have suggested that theoretically some HR practices could have an impact on organizational ethics, so we have chosen the most relevant HR practices from these papers, in order to create our ethical human resource practices' list. These practices are divided using the AMO theory and they represent the most useful tools to investigate how HR can influence ethical climate. Respondents used a Likert frequency scale to evaluate the presence of these practices in their organization (Sample Ability item: presence of ethical leadership programs).

The HR system of the company (by working on people Abilities, Motivations and Opportunities) can support and stimulate corporate ethical reasoning (Driscoll and Hoffman, 1998). In particular the literature seems to suggest that, when ethical human resources management practices are

promoted within the organization, employees are more likely to take the well-being of others into consideration, whereas satisfaction of an organization's self-interest will be less likely considered by employees while making decisions, so it could be find a positive relation with benevolence ethical climate and a negative one with egoistic ethical climate.

Furthermore the literature suggests that effective ethical HR practices may be necessary to ensure that ethical expectations of the organization are well understood by employees, assuring the effectiveness of organizational codes and rules, so it could be find a positive relation with principle ethical climate. However, no one has ever investigated the linkage between ethical HR practices and Ethical Climates types (egoistic, benevolence and principle). Starting from the HR ethical practices identified in table 3.8 (see Appendix 3.6) from the previous chapter, a selection of the most important practices has been made. Every practices with its reference is shown in Table 5.1 and the HR ethical practices questionnaire is shown in table 5.3. (see Appendix 5.7). Weaver and Trevino have written, in one of the most important papers inside this review, about the primary relevance of a values-oriented ethics program for the ethics of an organization, composed by valuable HR ethical practices. Every one of our practice is supposed by the literature to have a strong influence on the organizational ethics, thus all together could be seen as an effective and values-oriented ethics program.

ABILITY		MOTIVATION		OPPORTUNITY	
AUTHOR	PRACTICE	AUTHOR	PRACTICE	AUTHOR	PRACTICE
Orlitzky & Swanson, 2006	Hiring to selection processes that enlarge workforce diversity	Buckley et al., 2001	Linking bonus to ethical behaviors based on social performance	Ardichvili & Jondle, 2009	Encouraging the reporting of unethical behavior
	Hiring employees who exhibit relatively high levels of cognitive moral development and the personality trait of agreeableness		Implementing systems that minimize the influence of wage compression	Cornelius & Gagnon, 2004	Achieving positions mechanism fair and visible to all
	Developing employee skills in the receptive stakeholder engagement and communication		Evaluating the fairness of the reward system, monitoring compliance with legislative mandates and discrimination avoidance	Heery, 2002	Ensuring consistency of application and absence of sex, race and other forms of discrimination with regular monitoring and periodic audit of pay systems
Weaver & Trevino, 2001	Attracting and selecting employees who share the organization's values	Heery, 2002	The Top Management compensation (including CEO compensation) processes are transparent and accountable	Lewis, 2002	Involving of employee representatives in the design, application and review of the Human resource management system
	Developing ethical brochures and other materials used to attract job applicants		Using variable pay as a supplement and not a replacement for a 'fair' base Basing contingent pay system on rigorous measures of performance which are subject to employee control		Avoiding whistleblowing on ethical issues
	Hiring to selection processes that avoid discrimination	Orlitzky & Swanson, 2006	Promoting awards for good citizenship	Scott, 2005	Employees are encouraged to take work-related decisions
	Training interventions to focus on the values of the organization		Developing performance goals that focus on means as well as ends, using not only outcomes based but also behavior based performance evaluations		Presence of employee volunteer programs
Presence of ethical leadership programs	Werbel & Balkin, 2010	Gathering performance assessment information from those who can most closely observe a subordinate's performance as well as understand the job itself	Giving employees the opportunity to decide alternatives that affect them, such as work hours or placement of equipment		
Creating cognitive conflict to stimulate independent decisions in ethically ambiguous situations		Welcoming members to provide solutions, when the organization meets certain problems			
Wells & Schminke, 2001	Presence of employees survey for monitoring the ethical climate of the organization				

Table 5.1.: HR ethical practices with references

5.4.2. Sustainability questions

The sustainability questions (shown in table 5.4. in the Appendix 5.7) are adapted from the 2012 MIT Sloan Management Review Research Report, considering the sustainability as a continue process that flows from the past, through the present, to the future.

5.4.3. EQC type selection

The choice of EQC type is very important for our research, since ethical climate is our dependent variable and the pivot for our discussion. Although there are nine possible ethical climate types proposed by Victor and Cullen, one of the most relevant climate types to understand employees within an organization is the local type (Parboteeah and Kapp, 2008). A large number of empirical studies have verified that intra-organizational dimensions (or the local referent) have a more functional and salient influence on people's perception of ethical climates (see Ford and Richardson's review, 1994; Victor and Cullen, 1988) and reflect situations that the organization has the ability to change (Parboteeah and Kapp, 2008). For the sake of a more precise investigation into the relationships between managerial practices and ethical climate in organizations, only the local level of ethical climates identified in Victor and Cullen's (1988) framework is going to be taken into consideration for our research purpose. The ECQ questions are shown in table 5.5. (see Appendix 5.7).

5.5. Sample

5.5.1. Procedure

Our sample is a probabilistic one of employees on the basis of gender, age, macro-area, industries and professions, the scope is international and involves

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6 different EU countries: Italy, Germany, Poland, U.K., Spain and France. The total number of respondent for each country is 1.000 unit, composed by employees that work for at least 1 month in the present company. First of all we have to notice that the overall Principal Component Analysis confirmed the one dimensionality of constructs, indicating an high 'content validity'. The following figure (5.2) compare our overall sample with the universe.

EMPLOYMENT DOES NOT CROSS FOR SEX, AGE, SECTOR AND PROFESSION				tot respondents	%respondents	dif	dif %
				3275	54,6%	-76	-1,3%
				2725	45,4%	76	1,3%
				6000			
Sex							
	population	% sample	tot sample				
men	8969900	55,8%	3351				
women	70913800	44,2%	2649				
Tot	160613700	100,0%	6000				
Age							
	population	% sample	tot sample				
				557	9,3%	-24	-0,4%
				1372	22,9%	48	0,8%
				1599	26,7%	21	0,3%
15- 24	15964300	9,7%	581	1531	25,5%	-34	-0,6%
25 - 34	36356500	22,1%	1324	823	13,7%	-10	-0,2%
35 - 44	43328700	26,3%	1578	118	2,0%	0	0,0%
45 - 54	42968700	26,1%	1565	6000			
55 - 64	22874000	13,9%	833				
>= 65	3237000	2,0%	118				
Tot	164729200	100,0%	6000				
Sector							
				1661	27,7%	-23	-0,4%
Agriculture	--	--	--	4359	72,7%	43	0,7%
Industry	37889500	28,1%	1684	6000			
Services (without PA)	97116800	71,9%	4316				
Tot	135006300	100,0%	6000				
Profession							
Mangers	9631300	7,4%	442				
Professionals	24671600	18,9%	1131				
Technicians and associate p	21221300	16,2%	973				
Clerical support workers	14087500	10,8%	646				
Service and sales worlors	23064800	17,6%	1058				
Skilled agricultural and fishe	--	--	--				
Craft and related trades work	15423400	11,8%	707				
Plant and machine operators	9586700	7,3%	440				
Elementary occupations	13146100	10,0%	603				
Armed force	--	--	--				
Tot	130832700	100,0%	6000				

Figure 5.2.: Overall sample

It's immediately clear that the sample reflects very faithfully the universe of workers in the six countries involved in our research. Giving the high number of respondents and the high content validity, our survey is hopefully

going to fill the already appointed gap between theoretical and empirical constructs.

5.5.2. *Data analysis*

Studying the relationships between different variables and the weight that each of them plays on the others, a PLS path model is used. Partial Least Squares (PLS) is a family of alternating least squares algorithms, which extend principal component and canonical correlation analysis. The method, developed by Wold (1982), was first introduced in the context of linear multiple regression models; more recently (Lohmöller, 1989; Wold, 1985) the PLS estimation algorithm has been adopted in the SEM-LV (Structural Equation Models with Latent Variables) framework as an alternative method to the so-called covariance structure estimation procedures (Bollen, 1989), the latter ones making use of the celebrated procedure called LISREL (acronym for Linear Structural Relationships, used for the model and also for the computer software by Jöreskog (2006)). SEM-LV models, also named path analysis models, make reference to the analysis of the relationships existing between latent variables, not directly observable, which are also defined latent constructs. See Esposito Vinzi et al. (2010) for an extensive review on PLS approach.

These models are typical in socio-economic analysis, in psychometric analysis, and in the analysis of all complex systems described by a multi-equation model of the following type

$$\eta = f(\eta, \xi) + \zeta \quad (1)$$

where η represents the vector of the so-called endogenous variables (which depend at least on one another variable internal to the model), ξ is the vector of the exogenous variables (explicative variables or input variables, eventually explicated by variables external to the model), $f(\bullet)$ represents a vector function,

usually linear, describing the relationship among all the components of the endogenous η with the exogenous ζ and possibly the other components of η ; ζ represents an error component, zero mean random variable, uncorrelated with ζ , describing both measurement errors on η and explaining factors not considered in the model.

In the model building procedure, two conceptually different models are considered. So a linear Structural Equation Model with Latent Variables (SEM-LV) consists of two sets of equations: a measurement or outer model, representing relationships among latent variables and proper corresponding measurable variables (called manifest variables or proxy variables) used to reconstruct the unobservable latent ones and a structural or inner model, describing the path of relationships among latent variables, as posited by some theories.

In our model, latent variables (LVs) are expressed by *ability*, *motivation*, *opportunity*, *sustainability*, *egoism*, *benevolence* and *principle*. They are measured by the corresponding manifest variables (MVs) reported in second column of Table 5.2.

Latent variable	Manifest Variables
<i>Ability</i>	Items 18_1 - 18_9
<i>Motivation</i>	Items 19_1 – 19-9
<i>Opportunity</i>	Items 20_1 – 20_10
<i>Sustainability</i>	Items 15, 16, 17
<i>Egoism</i>	Items 7_10 -7_12
<i>Benevolence</i>	Items 7_13 – 7_14
<i>Principle</i>	Items 7_15 – 7_18

Table 5.2: Latent and manifest variables.

The sets of exclusive proxy variables linked to the latent variables included in the model should possess a high level of reliability, also called 'internal consistency' of the scale; to measure it the Cronbach's α coefficient, obtained as an average of the correlations between every proxy variable pairs, is used. As a rule of thumb, values of α greater than 0.7 are interpreted as indicating a good internal consistency of the scale. The Cronbach's alpha for the sets of item in Table 1 are all valid and show good reliability. In particular, the Cronbach's alpha was equal to 0.91 for *ability*, to 0.92 for *motivation*, to 0.91 for *opportunity*, to 0.82 for *sustainability*, to 0.67 for *egoism*, to 0.79 for *benevolence* and to 0.80 for *principle*.

Relationships between LVs and MVs are defined by using reflective measure specification. Generally, PLS path modelling includes two different kinds of outer models: reflective (mode A) and formative (mode B) measurement models. Theoretical reasoning drive to choose the outer mode (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001). In a reflective model, the latent construct exists independent of the measure, the causality flows from the construct to the indicators and change in the latent variable must precede variation in the indicators, so the indicators all share a common theme and are interchangeable. In contrast, in a formative model, the latent construct does not exist as an independent entity, rather it depends on a constructivist, operationalist or instrumentalist interpretation; causality flows from the indicators to the construct and a change in the indicators results in change in the construct under study; the domain of the construct is sensitive to the number and types of indicators (Coltman et al., 2008). It is also possible for a construct to have a mixture of some reflective and some formative indicators at either level of abstraction.

The difference in casual direction has profound implications both for measurement error and model estimation (Diamantopoulos & Siguaaw, 2006). MacKenzie et al. (2005) found that the construct misspecification affects the

results of the structural model analysis. Freeze & Raschke (2007) provide guidelines and suggestions for researchers.

The analysis is developed by software Smart PLS 2.0 (<http://www.smartpls.de/>). The algorithm for missing value imputation is the mean replacement, but we have to note that luckily we had not missing value. Variable significance is assessed by bootstrap re-sampling, by using a minimum of 300 samples of size 1000. According to Efron & Tibshirani (1998), 200 replications are generally sufficient for estimating standard errors. Nevertheless, to establish the optimal number of samples we rerun the model with 200, 300 and 500 repetitions; we have finally chosen 300 as sample size because of nothing changes in the t-values.

To assess the 'indicator reliability' the loadings of all the PLS analysis reflective indicators were examined, all the outer loading were greater than 0.4 as suggested by Churchill (1979).

5.6. Conclusion

In this chapter we have introduced our hypotheses and our model with its sample, procedure and data analysis, both in an qualitative and in a quantitative way. We conclude this chapter showing all the final questions that composed the questionnaire we have sent to 6000 respondents.

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5.7. Appendix

QUESTION n.1: HR Practices

We would like to ask you some questions about the diffusion of some human resource management practices in your organization. Please answer the following in terms of how it really is in your company, not how you would prefer it to be. Please indicate to what extent your organization implements the following human resource management activities.

Table 5.3. HR ethical practices questionnaire

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		Do not know* (0)	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Occasionally (3)	Frequently (4)	Always (5)
ABILITY	Attracting and selecting employees who share the organization's values						
	Developing ethical brochures and other materials used to attract job applicants						
	Hiring to selection processes that enlarge workforce diversity						
	Hiring to selection processes that avoid discrimination						
	Hiring employees who exhibit relatively high levels of cognitive moral development and the personality trait of agreeableness						
	Training interventions to focus on the values of the organization						
	Presence of ethical leadership programs						
	Creating cognitive conflict to stimulate independent decisions in ethically ambiguous situations.						
	Developing employee skills in the receptive stakeholder engagement and communication						
	Presence of employees survey for monitoring the ethical climate of the organization						
MOTIVATION	Developing performance goals that focus on means as well as ends, using not only outcomes based but also behavior based performance evaluations						
	The Top Management compensation (including CEO compensation) processes are transparent and accountable						
	Gathering performance assessment information from those who can most closely observe a subordinate's performance as well as understand the job itself.						
	Linking bonus to ethical behaviors based on social performance objectives						
	Promoting awards for good citizenship						
	Using variable pay as a supplement and not a replacement for a 'fair' base salary on wage						
	Basing contingent pay system on rigorous measures of performance which are subject to employee control						
	Implementing systems that minimize the influence of wage compression						
Evaluating the fairness of the reward system, monitoring compliance with legislative mandates and discrimination avoidance							

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OPPORTUNITY	Employees are encouraged to take work-related decisions.						
	Presence of employee volunteer programs						
	Giving employees the opportunity to decide alternatives that affect them, such as work hours or placement of equipment						
	Welcoming members to provide solutions, when the organization meets certain problems						
	Ensuring consistency of application and absence of sex, race and other forms of discrimination with regular monitoring and periodic audit of pay systems						
	Involving of employee representatives in the design, application and review of the Human resource management system						
	Achieving positions mechanism fair and visible to all						
	Encouraging the reporting of unethical behavior						
	Avoiding whistleblowing on ethical issues						

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QUESTION n.2: Sustainability overall (present/past/future)

Table 5.4.: Sustainability questionnaire

	Do not know* (0)	Never considered for the agenda (1)	Excluded from the agenda, because viewed as a passing fad (2)	Temporarily on the agenda, but not core (3)	On the agenda permanently, but not core (4)	Already permanent fixture and core strategic consideration (5)
What do you believe is the status of overall sustainability in your organization's agenda?						
How has your organization's commitment to sustainability – in terms of management attention and investment – changed in the past years?						
How do you expect your organization's commitment to sustainability – in terms of management attention and investment – to change in the three years ahead?						

QUESTION n.3: Ethical climate questionnaire

We would like to ask you some questions about the general climate in your company. Please answer the following in terms of how it really is in your company, not how you would prefer it to be. Please be as candid as possible, remember, all your responses will remain strictly anonymous. Please indicate to what extent you consider the following statements to be true/false.

NOTE1: the scale is very consolidated and has been used in many other papers published in good journals (for example Establishing Organizational Ethical

Climates: How Do Managerial Practices Work? K. Parboteeah et al., Journal of Business Ethics, 2010)

Table 5.5.: The ECQ

		Completel y false (0)	Mostly false (1)	Somewhat false (2)	Somewhat true (3)	Mostly true (4)
Egoistic Local ethical climate	People are expected to do anything to further the company's interests					
	People are concerned with the company's interests – to the exclusion of all else					
	Work is considered substandard only when it hurts the company's interest					
Benevolence Local Ethical Climate	The most important concern is the good of all the people in the company					
	Our major consideration is what is best for everyone in the company					
Principle Local Ethical Climate	Everyone is expected to stick by company rules and procedures					
	It is very important to follow the company's rules and procedures here					
	People around here have a strong sense of responsibility to society and humanity.					
	People in this company strictly obey the company policies					
	Successful people in this company go by the book					

6. Results and Discussion

6.1. Results

Applying the model that is been hypothesized, using a step-by-step procedure, gradually eliminating the least significant links and running the model for re-estimation of its parameters, the following final model is formulated.

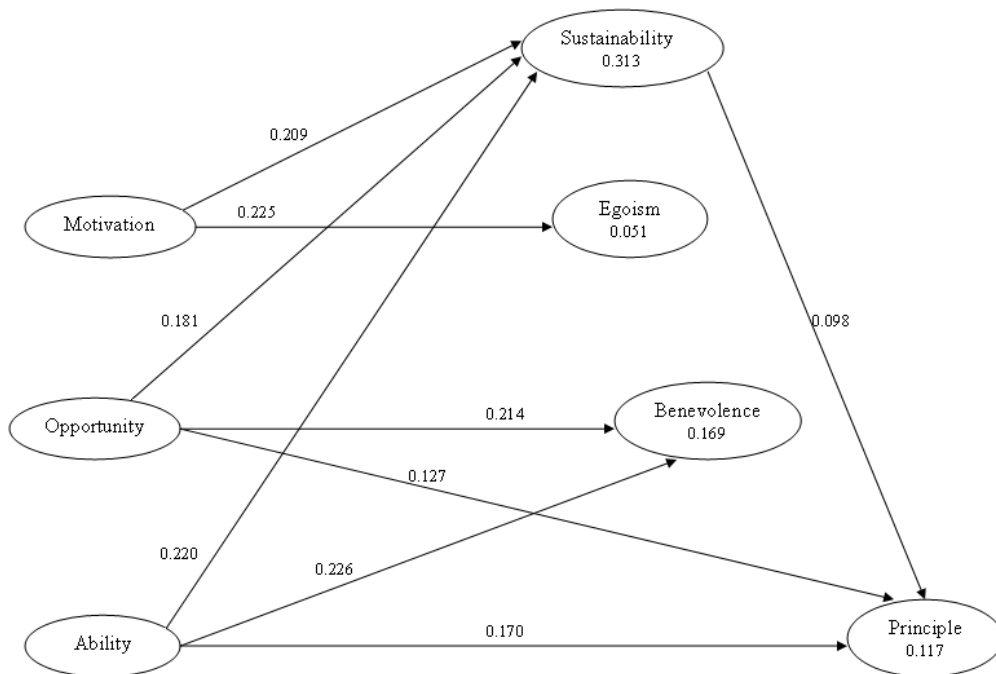


Figure 6.1: Estimation of the structural model

Path coefficients presented in Figure 1 represents, as usual, standardized regression coefficients, which connects latent variables each other and quantifies the direct impact of each explanatory variable on the concepts to which it is linked by causality constrained. Figure 1 shows that:

- Ability has a fairly direct impact on *principle*, with a coefficient of 0.170, on *benevolence*, with a coefficient of 0.226, and on

sustainability, with a coefficient of 0.220, but it doesn't significantly weight on *egoism*.

- Opportunity has fairly direct impact on *principle*, with a coefficient of 0.127, on *benevolence*, with a coefficient of 0.214, on *sustainability*, with a coefficient of 0.181. Also this LV has no impact on *egoism*.
- Motivation directly affects *egoism*, with coefficient equal to 0.225, and *sustainability*, with a coefficient of 0.209.
- Sustainability plays a role of mediation in the model: all the three LVs *ability*, *opportunity* and *motivation* have a indirect casual relationship with *principle*.

Latent variable	AVE indices
<i>Ability</i>	0.600
<i>Motivation</i>	0.637
<i>Opportunity</i>	0.563
<i>Sustainability</i>	0.741
<i>Egoism</i>	0.597
<i>Benevolence</i>	0.824
<i>Principle</i>	0.618

Table 6.1: Total effects.

In Table 6.1 we report the total effects of the model. The coefficients of determination of the endogenous latent variables R^2 are equal to 0.117 for *principle*, 0.169 for *benevolence*, 0.313 for *sustainability* and 0.051 for *egoism*; in literature a value of the index R^2 greater than 0.1 is acceptable (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). Establishing convergent and discriminant validity in PLS requires an appropriate AVE (Average Variance Extracted) analysis. The value of AVE indices, which are used to measure the percentage of variance explained by each factor and which are applied within each latent construct, calculated

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for all the latent variables considered (Table 5.2), are greater than 0.5, thus confirming convergent validity and the goodness of the model (Henseler et al., 2009).

	<i>Benevolence</i>	<i>Egoism</i>	<i>Principle</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>
<i>Ability</i>	0.226		0.192	0.220
<i>Motivation</i>		0.225	0.021	0.209
<i>Opportunity</i>	0.214		0.145	0.181
<i>Sustainability</i>			0.098	

Table 6.2: AVE indices

Discriminant validity is satisfied, with the square root of the AVE of each construct larger than the correlation of the specific construct with any of the other constructs in the model. We have to notice that is important to consider together the means scores and the impacts for the lvs, only this joined read mode permit to identify the actions for the improvement.

Figure 2 shows scores for the variables *ability* and *opportunity* and their effect on *benevolence*. They both have a low score, but *ability* has a greater total impact on *benevolence*.

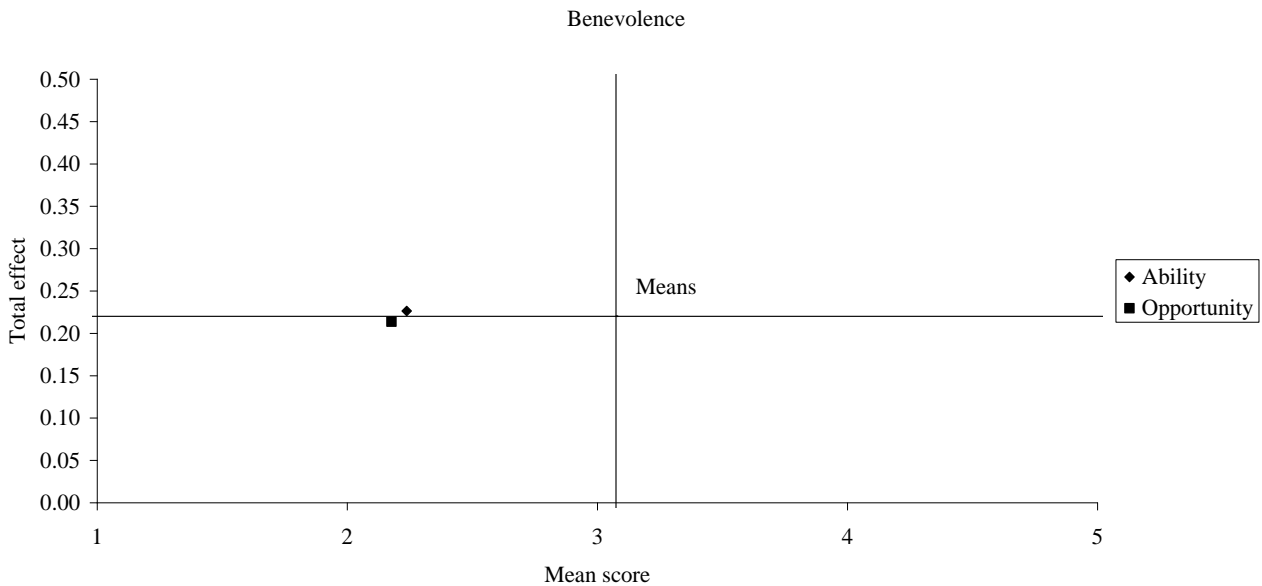


Figure 6.2: Score vs. impact for benevolence factors

Figure 3 shows scores for the variables *ability*, *opportunity*, *motivation* and *sustainability* and their effect on *principle*. All the LVs have a score above the mean, but *ability* and *opportunity* have a greater total impact on *principle*, while *motivation* has really a very small impact.

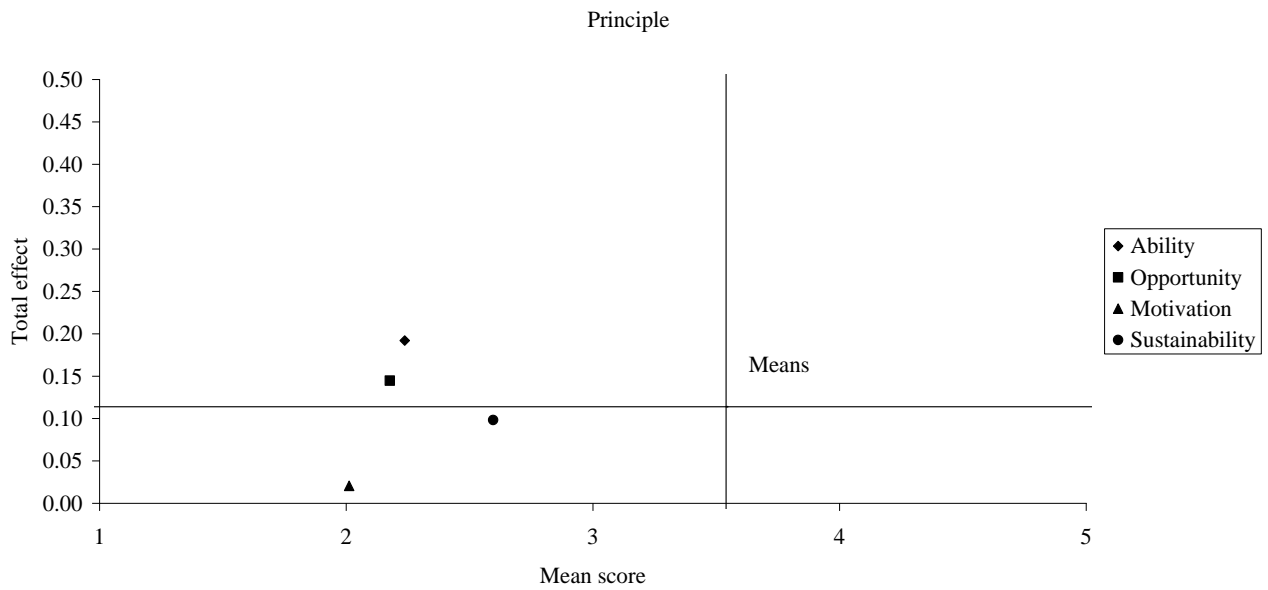


Figure 6.3: Score vs. impact for principle factors

Figure 4 shows scores for the variables *ability*, *opportunity* and *motivation* and their effect on *sustainability*. All the variables have a low score, *motivation* has an impact over the mean but *ability* has a greater total impact on *sustainability*.

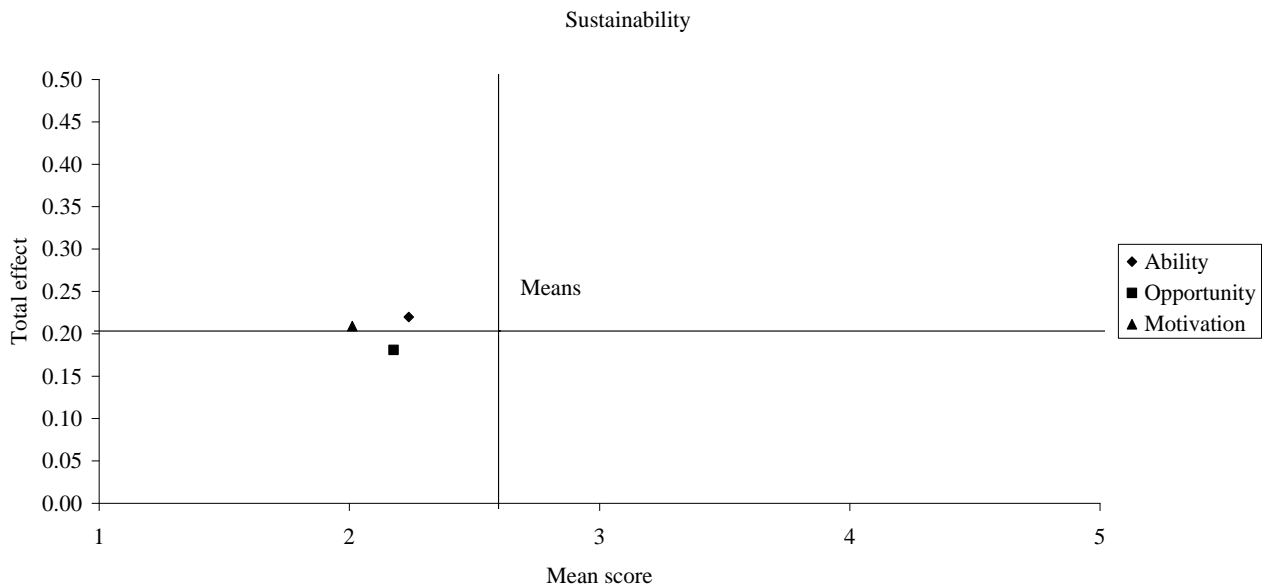


Figure 6.4: Score vs. impact for sustainability factors

After the evaluation of this model we decided to introduce in our model a moderator, to show the differences and the similarities among the six European country. A moderator is a variable that alters the direction or strength of the relation between a predictor and an outcome (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Holmbeck, 1997; James & Brett, 1984), and a moderator effect is nothing more than an interaction whereby the effect of one variable depends on the level of another. The identification of important moderators of relations between predictors and outcomes indicates the maturity and sophistication of a field of inquiry (Aguinis, Boik & Pierce, 2001; Judd, McClelland & Culhane, 1995) and is at the heart of theory in social science (Cohen et al., 2003).

Generally moderators should be measured before the independents variables, but if the moderator is a not changing variable, as the nationality or gender, there are no problem related to timing.

In our research we decided to use as moderator the variable *country*. There are two common approaches to estimate moderating effects with regression-like techniques: the product term approach and the group comparison approach. When the moderator variable is categorical in nature (as e.g., sex, race, class) it can be used as grouping variable without further refinement, and for this reason we used this approach (Henseler & Fassott, 2010). Once the observations are grouped, the model with the direct effects is estimated separately for each group of observation, in our research we had 6 groups. Differences in the model parameters between the different data groups are interpreted as moderating effects.

Results obtained by the six model are reported in the next tables only as a valuable factor of further investigation, but the discussions and implication of these specific results go beyond our propose.

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	1-Total	2-France	3-Germany	4-U.K.	5-Italy	6-Poland	7-Spain
<i>Ability->Principle</i>	0.170		0.160	0.201	0.283	0.141	0.304
<i>Ability->Benevolence</i>	0.226	0.130	0.195	0.228	0.199	0.242	0.175
<i>Ability->Sustainability</i>	0.220	0.302	0.303	0.206	0.362	0.231	0.155
<i>Opportunity->Principle</i>	0.127	0.189	0.142	0.139		0.207	
<i>Opportunity->Benevolence</i>	0.214	0.273	0.193	0.188	0.204		0.302
<i>Opportunity->Sustainability</i>	0.181	0.261		0.268			
<i>Opportunity->Egoism</i>				-0.242			0.283
<i>Motivation->Benevolence</i>						0.213	
<i>Motivation->Egoism</i>	0.225		0.275	0.383	0.296	0.103	
<i>Motivation->Sustainability</i>	0.209		0.317	0.199	0.196	0.350	0.419
<i>Sustainability->Principle</i>	0.098	0.164			0.165	0.190	0.116
<i>Sustainability->Benevolence</i>						0.140	

Table 6.3: Path coefficients in the different groups

[Digitare il testo]

		<i>Ability</i>	<i>Benevolence</i>	<i>Egoism</i>	<i>Motivation</i>	<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Principle</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>
France	AVE	0.59	0.80	0.55			0.60	0.73
	R ²		0.142				0.092	0.272
	Alpha	0.91	0.75	0.91			0.79	0.81
Germany	AVE	0.66	0.84	0.57	0.67	0.58	0.57	0.80
	R ²		0.135	0.076			0.081	0.338
	Alpha	0.94	0.82	0.63	0.94	0.92	0.78	0.87
U.K.	AVE	0.63	0.85	0.65	0.67	0.59	0.64	0.75
	R ²		0.148	0.059			0.099	0.375
	Alpha	0.92	0.82	0.74	0.94	0.92	0.81	0.83
Italy	AVE	0.60	0.79	0.61	0.64	0.57	0.62	0.72
	R ²		0.204	0.087			0.156	0.283
	Alpha	0.92	0.82	0.74	0.94	0.92	0.81	0.83
Poland	AVE	0.54	0.85	0.58	0.58	0.51	0.66	0.72
	R ²		0.266	0.011			0.203	0.298
	Alpha	0.89	0.83	0.65	0.91	0.89	0.83	0.80
Spain	AVE	0.58	0.80	0.58	0.62	0.60	0.61	0.72
	R ²		0.211	0.080			0.139	0.298
	Alpha	0.91	0.74	0.66	0.92	0.92	0.79	0.80

Table 6.4: AVE, R² and Cronbach's alpha in the different groups

	1-Total	2-France	3-Germany	4-U.K.	5-Italy	6-Poland	7-Spain
<i>Ability->Principle</i>	0.192	0.049	0.160	0.201	0.343	0.185	0.322
<i>Ability->Benevolence</i>	0.226	0.130	0.195	0.228	0.241	0.275	0.175
<i>Ability->Sustainability</i>	0.220	0.302	0.303	0.206	0.362	0.231	0.155
<i>Opportunity->Principle</i>	0.145	0.232	0.142	0.139		0.207	
<i>Opportunity->Benevolence</i>	0.214	0.273	0.193	0.188	0.204		0.312
<i>Opportunity->Sustainability</i>	0.181	0.261		0.268			
<i>Opportunity->Egoism</i>				-0.242			0.283
<i>Motivation->Principle</i>	0.021				0.032	0.066	0.048
<i>Motivation->Benevolence</i>					0.023	0.262	
<i>Motivation->Egoism</i>	0.225		0.275	0.383	0.296	0.103	
<i>Motivation->Sustainability</i>	0.209		0.317	0.199	0.196	0.350	0.419
<i>Sustainability->Principle</i>	0.098	0.164			0.165	0.190	0.116
<i>Sustainability->Benevolence</i>					0.115	0.140	

Table 6.5: Total effects in the different groups

6.2. Discussion

6.2.1. Introduction

With our survey, as already said, we have tried to fill the empirical gap between HR practice that can be related to the business ethics field and the relevance of these practices inside the organizational ethics, using a questionnaire based upon a strong theoretical background, such as the ethical climate questionnaire, trying also to find the possible role of the sustainability as mediator between HR practices and ethics questions' results. The survey is based upon a strong sample, with high content validity, and has an international scope, differencing itself from the previous empirical work that have studied HR ethical practices (see table 3.8). We are now going to discuss the results of these important empirical work, trying to find valid explanation to support them, looking at the managerial implication, limitations and future research.

Looking specifically at the results (figure 6.1 at all) we can see which of

our initial hypotheses has been verified to be valid and which not. First, as predicted, HR ethical practices related to Ability and Opportunity were positively directly related to benevolence and principle local Ethical Climates. It was expected that also HR ethical practices related to Motivation were positively directly related to benevolence and principle local Ethical Climates, in contrast HR ethical practices related to Motivation were surprisingly positive directly related to egoistic local Ethical Climates. In fact only this kind of practice has significant relation with the egoistic climate, but not as we expected. Our hypothesis that the relation between HR ethical practices (divided in Ability, Motivation and Opportunity as cluster) and all the local type of ethical climate are mediated by sustainability were not supported by our findings, but it was only valid for the principle local Ethical Climate. Starting from these findings, we are now able to perform a comprehensive discussion that try to justify them.

6.2.2. The relation between the corporate HR system and the ethical climate of the organization.

The role of HR in ethics programs (such as the one compose by our practices, as said in the end of chapter 3) is already been seen as compulsory, first of all in fostering a sense that ethics and compliance programs provide an unbiased representation of employee interests, and in treating employees with appropriate respect. (Weaver and Trevino, 2001). The attention to the control orientation and integration of ethics programs, and the fairness perceptions and other outcomes they generate, suggests that HR is uniquely well-suited to manage ethics initiatives. Weaver and Trevino (2001) suggest that HR has an important role to play in both the control orientation and integration of an ethics program. Specifically, an integrated ethics program that stresses a values

orientation while also incorporating appropriate compliance based elements involve a number of characteristic domains of HR management. Weaver and Trevino (2001) also claims a strongly compliance-oriented program to be more likely to risk being inconsistent with aspects of the organizational culture and therefore it is useless to improve a benevolence/principle ethical climate. For example, additional expectations for ethical behavior may be imposed, but inconsistent organizational expectations that can make ethical behavior difficult (e.g., emphasis on quarterly profit goals) may remain.

By contrast, when a values orientation is primary in an ethics program that also includes compliance elements, employee perceptions of organizational support are more likely. The main task of the program is not to discipline, but to encourage the development of meaningful, shared ethical values within the organization. In a values-oriented program, emphasis is on activities that aid employees in decision making, provide ethical advice and counseling, and support the development of consensus about what constitutes appropriate business conduct. Also, a strong values orientation suggests that the organization embodies a collective commitment that applies equally to all persons. Employees perceive that their organization "values their contributions and cares for their well-being" (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Eisenberg, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986, p. 501), creating a sense of obligation by an employee to support the organization's goals in return. So only a strong value oriented set of practices can guarantee a better ethical climate inside organization. The HR ethical practices that we have utilized in our survey were assumed to be part of a value oriented ethics program, but maybe not all of them were really so, as our results suggest.

6.2.3. The role of Ability, Motivation and Opportunity HR ethical practices in relation to principle and benevolence local ethical climate.

As the results show, the practices related to Ability have the strongest direct relation with principle and benevolence local ethical climate (see figures 6.2 and 6.3). This is coherent not only with our initial hypothesis but also with what literature suggests. These kind of practices could be divided into two main clusters, one related to the selection process and one to the training programs. Now we will discuss why these two HR levers are fundamental for the institutionalization of benevolence and principle ethical climate by the HRM as our results confirmed.

Employee selection are particularly important for improving benevolence and principle ethical climate because ethics selection initiatives stress a values orientation and are integrated into routine organizational activities: the selection process that considers ethical ability practices as relevant contribute to a workforce that values ethical behavior as something to aspire to in the workplace, rather than as a constraint on business practices. The selection process is the process in which potential employees form their first idea of the organization's values and their own role identity within the organization itself. HR staff must see that those first impressions and resulting role identity incorporate recognition of the importance of ethics. The fairness of the selection process itself can influence a new employee's expectations about ethical behavior in the organization. If prospective employees perceive that the hiring process does not treat people fairly, they may assume that ethical behavior is not important in the company, and that "official" pronouncements about the importance of ethics can be discounted. Thus, HR staff can also play an important role by seeing that the employee selection process is fair; a lack of fairness in the process sends an unwanted but influential message to new employees (Weaver and Trevino, 2001).

A values orientation, integrated across the organization training needs to range broadly beyond knowing the rules, regulations, and policies (Weaver and Trevino, 2001). In particular, training needs to focus on the culture of the organization, shared values and associated expectations in order to improve the benevolence and the principle ethical climates. Again, the HR function is uniquely situated to insure that a values orientation is emphasized in training, that training occurs frequently and across levels, and that training related to ethics and fairness is incorporated into leadership and management development activities in appropriate ways (Weaver and Trevino, 2001).

HR ethical practices related to Motivation seem to have no relevant relation with Benevolence and Principle ethical climate. These kind of finding have a significant contrast with what the literature suggests and it is not easy to find an appropriate explanation. We can only suggest that the fact that pay systems' mechanisms are transparent and reliable, as our HR ethical practices related to Motivation suggest, does not necessarily guarantee a working environment aimed to support each other (and for this reason related to benevolence ethical climate) or aimed to respect the principles of the firm (and for this reason related to principle ethical climate), but rather it can improve an egoistic profit-oriented vision (and for this reason related to egoistic ethical climate).

Another interpretation to explain the missing relationship between 'ethical' pay systems and performance appraisal practices and benevolence/principle local ethical climate is provided by cognitive psychologists: if the activity (such as an ethical's one) has an intrinsic motivation, and the introduction of a monetary reward, which is an extrinsic motivation, displaces the first, the net effect may be a reduction in the activity (U. Gneezy and A. Rustichini, 2000). Also Weaver and Trevino, 2001, say that rewards for normally expected ethical behavior may conflict with some employees' beliefs that ethical behavior should be its own intrinsic reward, and

that ethical behavior is diminished in stature if it is rewarded. Therefore, short of customizing rewards to the specific motivations of individual employees, rewards for ethical conduct might be best presented in the form of long-term rewards such as promotions rather than pecuniary rewards (e.g., bonuses), so as not to diminish the status of ethical behavior in the mind of the person who acts ethically. In general, HR needs to see that there is visible, strong organizational support for employees who aspire to high ethical standards, so that the inspirational language of a values-oriented ethics program can be treated as sincere and meaningful. If the company says it wants employees to "be the best they can be," it must reward those who go the extra mile to do so, though in the process it must be careful not to diminish the intrinsic worth of their behavior.

Our findings also suggest that, through Opportunity ethical HR practices, managers can increase employees' sense of personal responsibility for individual decisions, thus discouraging the development of egoistic local climates and consequently reducing the incidence of ethical crises. As such, our findings confirm the literature's suggestion that managers could employ opportunity practices to motivate a sense of reciprocation and responsibility in their subordinates thanks to a benevolent local and principle local climate in the workplace.

6.2.4. *HR ethical practices and egoistic ethical climate.*

Firstly we can notice that the coefficient of determination of the endogenous latent variables R^2 is equal to 0.051 for *egoism* and in literature only a value of the index R^2 greater than 0.1 is acceptable (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). Probably in this kind of model the questions about local egoistic ethical climate were the least congruent with the others and for this reason the most

difficult to understand, because they are difficult to relate not only with ethical but also with unethical consequences. This can be an explanation helpful to explain the missed relation between HR ethical practices of Ability and Opportunity and this kind of ethical climate. Moreover, trying to find an explanation for the unexpected positive relation between Motivation practices and egoistic ethical climate, we can suggest that there have been a wrong positioning of these performance appraisal and pay system practices inside a values-oriented ethics program: employees may believe that the pay management 'ethical' program has been implemented for the only purpose of protecting top management from blame should the organization find itself in court for employee misconduct, thus suggesting a compliance-oriented program (in which, as already said, additional expectations for ethical behavior may be imposed only as a corollary, but the focus is still on quarterly profit goals) rather than a value-oriented one. Lower level employees will "take the fall" for an organization that pressured employees to be unethical (with "bottom line" goals) while paying lip service to ethical conduct expectations (Weaver and Trevino, 2001). Using the rational perspective (Ashfort & Humphrey, 1995), employee motivation is viewed as a quest for personal economic gain, so individual merit pay is presumed to be effective for increase firm profit's orientation and it more likely that individuals will view a decision from within a framework of narrowly business-driven thinking (in contrast to an ethical decision-making framework). Moreover in most cases individual pay incentives are administered on an ex ante basis so that the employees anticipate the reward in advance. Individual incentive plans, even if presented as bonus for ethical behaviors, focus an employee's attention on individual behaviors that trigger rewards. This can focus individual efforts on self-serving behaviors that may produce wealth for the individual at the expense of the organization or other parties. (J. Werbel, D. B. Balkin, 2009).

6.2.4 Sustainability role

First of all, it is confirmed that the company's HR system is perceived by workers as related to sustainability (see figure 6.4), so the presence of certain HR practices increases the workers' perception that the company is moving towards the sustainability, as previous researcher have point out (Docherty et al. 2002). Moreover, the role of sustainability as mediator inside our model has been proved to be true only in relation with the principle local ethical climate. These can be explained, in according with the literature, assuming that the sustainability topic is seen from an employee point of view as a tool in accordance with the rules and the principle of the organization, and thus it's influence is taken into consideration only when a principle local ethical climate takes place.

6.2.5 Managerial implications

Several implications for HRM can be derived from the results of this research. The first implication is that HR ethical practices related to Ability are the most relevant in improving the benevolence and principle local ethical climate as figures 6.2 and 6.3 point out. Even so, also HR ethical practices related to Opportunity have been demonstrated to be strongly related to these two kind of ethical climate. Instead, the role of HR ethical practices of Motivation in establishing these kind of ethical climate seems to be marginal and only partial relevant when mediated by sustainability. It is clear that if HRM wants to improve the two kind of climate related with positive job outcomes, such as employee well-being, job satisfaction and commitment, the most valuable practices are those related to the selection, the training and the opportunity given to the employees. Moreover, it is already not clear what can

HRM can do to minimizing the egoistic ethical climate of a firm. We can conclude that for HRM is better to create and improve an organizational ethical climate through Ability and Opportunity practices inside a structural framework instead of revising it with Motivation practices that can only be seen as a backward correction. Understanding the important role of strategic HRM in the modern organization provides an important context to understanding the ethical duties owed by HR professionals. By taking account of workers' interests and well-being in developing HR practices, there is the potential for a win-win situation. However, HR managers tend to be either ignorant of or all too ready to reject the evidence (Guest and King 2004) and there is no evidence that HR managers are associated with and by implication responsible for the adoption of these practices. Caldwell (2011) propose that if HR professionals adopt an ethical stewardship framework and the qualities of transformative leaders, they will be more aware of their ethical duties to their organizations and more effective in helping their organizations to create increased wealth, achieve desired organizational outcomes, and establish work climate that are more satisfying to employees.

However, research shows that a values orientation in company ethics programs is more likely if the highest levels of management are committed to the intrinsic value of ethics (Weaver et al., 1999a). So even though HR's involvement in ethics programs is important to their success, HR should not expect to accomplish the task alone. Linking of an organization's overall strategy with aligned human resource systems is critical to the maximization of the HR ethical practices and sustainability impact.

A growing body of empirical evidence has suggested that aligned systems in combination create superior organizational outcomes as compared to the implementation of individual human resource practices, although many scholars note that an incremental approach is more likely to occur (Sun et al., 2007). However, the goals of effective organizations are not simply

instrumental or outcome oriented. Great organizations are also value-based, and achieve their greatness because of their commitment to values and principles which guide employees (Collins and Porras, 2004) and which create strong and effective employee cultures (Schein, 2004), in doing so strongly influencing the organizational ethical climate.

6.2.6 Limitations and future research

The results from this study should be interpreted with an acknowledgment of the following limitations. A serious limitation of the current research was its reliance on self-reported survey from one source and at one point in time. Since all data were obtained from a single questionnaire, it is possible that common method variance inflated the true relationships between the antecedents and outcomes. It is also important to notice that previous research has already pointed out the extended use of a single rater within HR research (Gerhart *et al.* 2000: 806); that restrains the “opportunity to observe what actually goes on in all of its parts”.

Moreover concerns over the validity of the causality of links have been often reported (Paauwe and Boselie, 2005; Guest, 2011). Past research points out to both the overuse of cross-sections research designs (Wright and Boswell, 2002:263), the lack of longitudinal designs, that may test the directions of causality (Marchington and Zagelmeyer, 2005), and the bias caused by time-lag. Considering that the effect of HRM on performance might require years, in fact, measuring HRM and performance at the same time-point is problematic (Boselie *et al.*, 2005:79). For this reason some contributions are considering past performance as a control variable (e.g. Guest *et al.*, 2003; Wright *et al.*, 2005).

Another limitation is that previous research called for the use of mixed methods (Ichniowski *et al.*, 1996). On this topic we quote extensively from Guest (2011:10): “there is a risk that research sophistication, and more particularly statistical sophistication can become an end in itself ... It can also lead to a focus on the use of established measures, even if their appropriateness for the research context is questionable. It would be unfortunate if this deterred some good researchers, including qualitative researchers, from entering the field since there are still some basic methodological questions that remain unresolved ... There is a risk of neglecting some core questions in favor of statistical rigor and abstracted empiricism”.

We also considered HR system as the only possible explanation of organizational performances in our research even if in one of the first studies in the Strategic HRM field, Huselid and Becker (2000) recommended readers not to consider the HR system as the only possible explanation of organizational performances. More than ten years later this issue is still relevant (Guest, 2011), because the field has yet to be more open to alternative explanations rather than focusing only on HRM and outcomes (cf, also Boxall and Purcell, 2000).

Our thesis also encompasses a strict linear view of causality, which goes from inputs to outcomes through mediators. The ‘reverse causality’ argument suggests instead that outcomes exert an important role on the definition of HR practices and mediators. Successful organizations, for instance, have more resources that they might share with the employees by investing in high commitment HR practices and job security (Marchington and Zagelmeyer, 2005). High profits and market growth may also impact employees’ satisfaction, as they feel themselves to be part of an organization recognized as ‘special’ by the market. Likewise, most of the studies assume that strategic objectives of the company are HRM input, and that the company HRM system is developed basing on those objectives. On the contrary, the call for the HR

Departments to be more strategic requires that they take part in strategic decision-making (Boselie *et al.*, 2005: 78).

Furthermore, as with all research, there are contextual limitations based on the sample. In this case, the sample represented only workers in industry and service, without PA, and in only six country, all European. In this respect, generalizing beyond this may not be wise.

Finally, although the hypothesized model was consistent with the data, there may be other, untested alternatives that would adequately represent the data. The approach PLS (partial least squares) to the structural equation models, known as PLS Path modeling, has been proposed as a procedure for the estimation of the casual links between endogenous and exogenous latent variables, an alternative approach to LISREL-type models structural equation. Like all component-based estimation techniques, it is an iterative algorithm that estimates separately the different blocks of the measurement model, and then, in a second step, it estimates the coefficients of the structural model. It aims, unlike the LISRLEL, to explain the best residual variance of the latent variables and, potentially, the manifest variables in each regression model in place, which is why the PLS path modeling is considered more an exploratory approach that confirmatory. Moreover, unlike the techniques of LISREL type is an approach completely free that does not require any assumption about the distribution. That 's why the solution is called soft PLS modeling as an alternative to setting hard LISREL modeling. In our approach there aren't strong assumptions about the distribution, the sample size and the scale of measurement. Furthermore, the solution PLS path modeling provides a direct estimate of the values of the latent variables and it is not affected by the problems of parameter identification or non-convergence of the algorithms, which are sometimes found by following the setting LISREL. However, the estimators of the parameters of the structural model and the scores of the latent variables are inconsistent and the PLS does not seem to optimize a well defined

scalar function, it also appears to be missing a criterion of global optimization and the convergence is proved only for path diagram with few blocks, even if the convergence of thumb is always assured.

The following recommendations are suggested for future research.

First, the role of country as moderator should be further analyzed, trying to find the motivation that lie beyond the differences shown by each specific country. Second, other kind of moderator should be taken into consideration, both at an individual level (such as differences between men and women, between age ranges and between kind of profession) and an organizational level (such as differences between industry and service and distinguishing the different sizes of the firms). Third, future research should analyze the relation between HR ethical practices, sustainability and ethical climate in a more general and overall survey, that includes other HR practices that are not part of the AMO theory (for example downsizing, employment security, work life balance polices) and not only the local types of ethical climate. Fourth, future models should try a different statistical approach, such as the LISREL method. Finally, more research is needed to test the present model on other populations. While this sample is a suitable one for the current study, the background and practices of the European organizations may limit the generalizability of our findings to other cultural or organizational settings. Future research in additional countries and organizational settings would be valuable to investigate the possible relations between HR ethical practices, sustainability and ethical climate.

Finally we suggest that further researches could point out the relevance and the importance of the role that play the strategic HR rather than the organizational strategy within the single relations of our empirical research. These considerations could be implemented with the inclusion of questions related with the specific HR or organizational strategy of the single firm such as questions about the belonging supply chain or about the specific sector in which operate the single firm.

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