

## **An Analysis of Human Resource Management for Knowledge Workers: Using the Three Axes of Target Employee, Lifecycle Stage, and Human Resource Flow**

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### **ABSTRACT**

It is more important for companies to manage knowledge workers in the 21st century. However, most organizations give employees little control over their careers, preferring to make placement and promotion decisions without consultation. If companies do not improve the process of human resource flow for knowledge workers, most firms will lose their competitive advantage. Therefore, firms should construct an appropriate human resource flow to attract knowledge workers and improve corporate performance while considering flow patterns. In this paper, we clarify research areas to advance human resource flow management, which is a competitive advantage amongst companies. We created a new matrix to use the three axes of target employee, lifecycle stage, and human resource flow. As a result, the matrix reveals the relevance between areas of research on existing human resource theory and domains that have not yet been studied. We identify areas in the Production Stage of Human Resource Flow, areas in the Retirement Stage of Human Resource Flow, and areas ranging from the Production to Retirement Stage of Internal Flow for Temporary Employees.

Keywords: HRM, Harvard Model, Human Resource Flow, Knowledge Workers.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Drucker states that the most important, and indeed truly unique, contribution of management in the 20th century was the fifty-fold increase in the productivity of the manual worker in manufacturing. The most important contribution management needs to make in the 21st century is similarly to increase the productivity of skilled work and knowledge workers. (Drucker, 1999) Most organizations gave employees little control over their careers, preferring to make placement and promotion decisions without consultation. (Beer, 1984)

Meanwhile, in a questionnaire survey conducted by Miwa, the more companies that utilize HRM as a way to emphasize individual achievements, utilize the external labor market, and to invest human resources development, the more knowledge workers continue to work for these companies. (Miwa, 2015) Abdullah describes that there is a positive correlation relationship between effective HRM practices and financial performance. (Abdullah, 2014) Therefore, it is important to construct an appropriate human resource flow as a way to attract knowledge workers and improve corporate performance in the future. Boxall divides competitive advantage into "Human Capital Advantage" and "Human Process Advantage". He also explains that "Human Process Advantage" is more difficult for other companies to imitate. (Boxall, 1999) In other words, improving the process of human resource flow for knowledge workers is a factor that increases the competitive advantage of companies.

Therefore, we have clarified research areas to advance human resource flow management, which is a competitive advantage amongst companies. We created a new matrix that uses the three axes of target employee, lifecycle stage, and human resource flow. As a result, the matrix revealed the relevance between areas of research on existing human resource theory and domains that have not yet been studied. We separate target employee into permanent employee and temporary employee because it is known that companies may change the flow pattern according to the external environment and the type of employees. (Beer, 1984)

In the following, first, in Chapter 2, we outline the Human Resource Management studies, especially the Human Resource Flow of the Harvard Model. We also refer to Human Resource Planning (HRP), Human Resource Development (HRD), and Human Resource Utilization (HRU). Then, in Chapter 3, we structure and show the relationship between the areas of these previous studies and clarify areas that have not yet been studied. Finally, in Chapter 4, we summarize what we indicated and explain the direction of future research as a conclusion.

## **2. PREVIOUS STUDIES**

### **2.1. Definition of HRM (Human Resource Management)**

In Beer defines HRM as "all management decisions and actions that affect the nature of the relationship between the organization and employees-its human resources." (Beer, 1984) In this paper, we use Beer's definition because we created the matrix based on the Harvard Model proposed by him.

### **2.2. Features of Harvard Model**

Beer offers the "Map of the HRM Theory" for diagnosing not only the impact of management decisions on the human resources of the firm, but also whether or not the policies that guide those decisions continue to make sense and what changes might be considered in them. (Beer, 1984) Beer shows the analytical approach in Figure 1 which is a broad causal mapping of the determinants and consequences of HRM Policies.

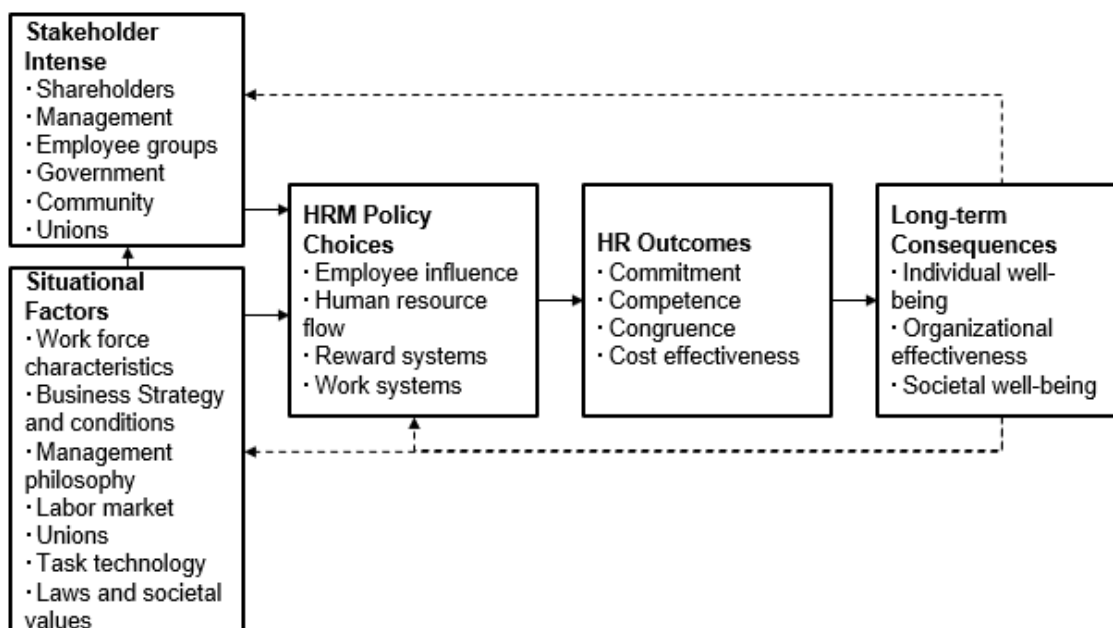


Figure 1. Map of the HRM Theory (Beer, 1984)

Beer proposes that many diverse personnel and labor relations activities may be subsumed under four human resource policy areas, which are Employee Influence, Human Resource Flow, Reward Systems, and Work Systems. (Beer, 1984) Beer depicts these four areas as “Human Resource Systems” in Figure 2.

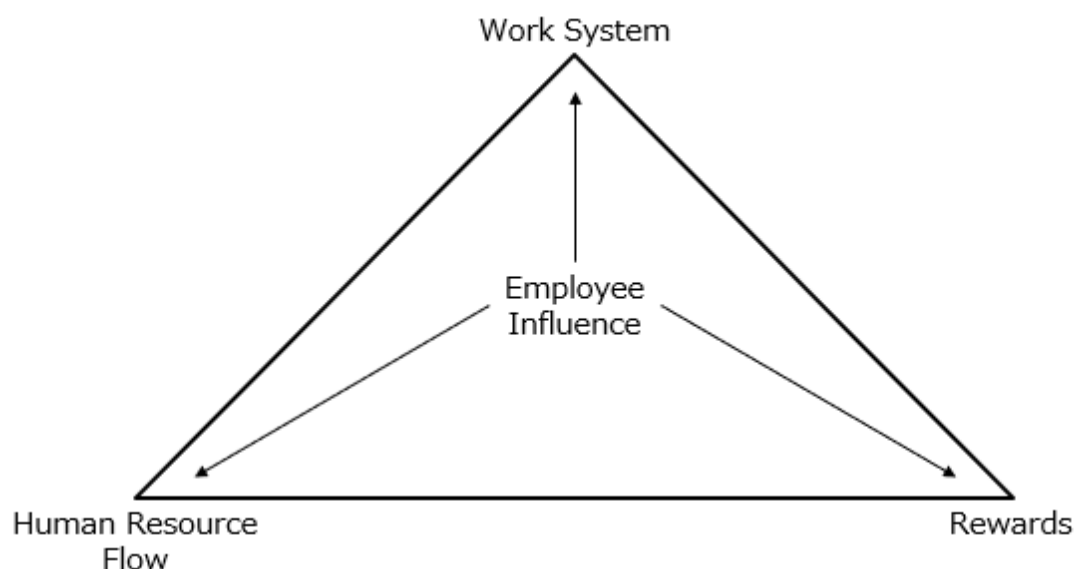


Figure 2. Human Resource Systems (Beer, 1984)

Beer describes that “this policy area has to do with the responsibility shared by all managers in an organization for managing the flow of people (at all levels) into,

through and out of the organization. Beer divides human resource flow in to three areas, which are Inflow, Internal flow, and Outflow. (Beer, 1984)

Inflow includes Recruitment, Assessment and selection, as well as Orientation and socialization. Internal flow consists of Evaluation of performance and potential, Career development, Internal placement, Promotion and demotion, as well as Education and training. Outflow is composed of Termination, Outplacement, and Retirement. We show these three areas in Figure 3.

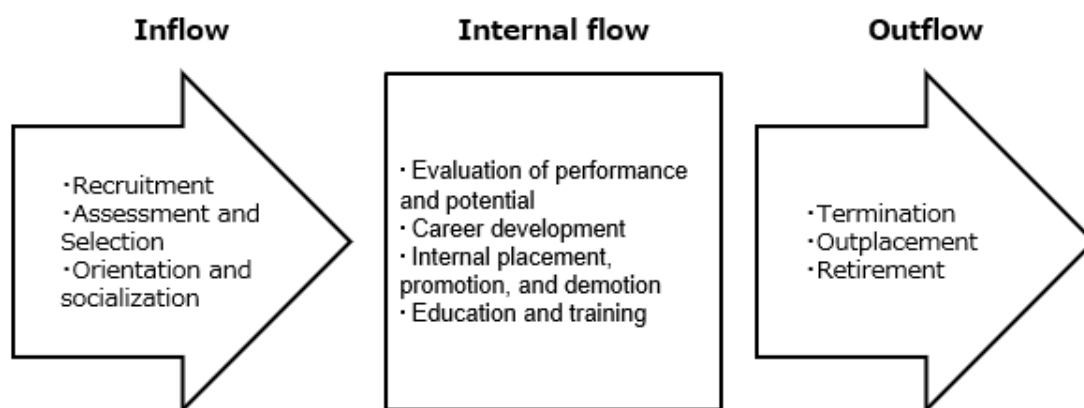


Figure 3. Three Human Resource Flows

Beer explains that there are three basic types of human resource flow patterns that may exist in an organization, and a fourth type that is a mix of the first three. Each of the patterns has different effects on employee well-being, organizational effectiveness, and the role of the corporation in society. (Beer, 1984)

The first pattern is the “Lifelong employment system”. People usually enter the organization at the bottom and stay with the organization throughout their career. The bottom may be defined differently for different employee groups. No one is laid off as a result of economic cycles, but people may be asked to leave because of poor performance, depending on the company and on national practices. Large companies in Japan operate under this system. A select group of their employees are not discharged because of poor performance; instead, they may be sidetracked to less important jobs. (Beer, 1984)

The second pattern is the “Up-or-out system”. Employees enter at the bottom and move up through the organization through predetermined tracks until they reach the top rank, which offers full partnership in the organization and usually tenure. Inability to be promoted through any of the ranks along the way or to the highest rank usually means that the person must leave. This system has high levels of turnover at the bottom and relative stability at the top. (Beer, 1984)

The third pattern is the “Unstable in-and-out system”. Employees enter at any level in the organization, depending on the organization’s need and may be asked to leave at any level or point in their career due to economic conditions, poor performance, or a bad fit with new management. Sometimes, employment contracts exist for given periods to ensure individual performance (rather than group) and is highly variable (often due to factors outside the control of the individual). (Beer, 1984)

The last pattern is a mix of patterns. There are few corporations that are clear-cut examples of any one of the above. Large Japanese companies have lifelong employment for their core employees while using an in-and-out system for temporary workers and women. Some companies operate a lifelong employment system for top management, but an in-and-out system for middle and lower management. (Beer, 1984) We depict this in Figure 4.

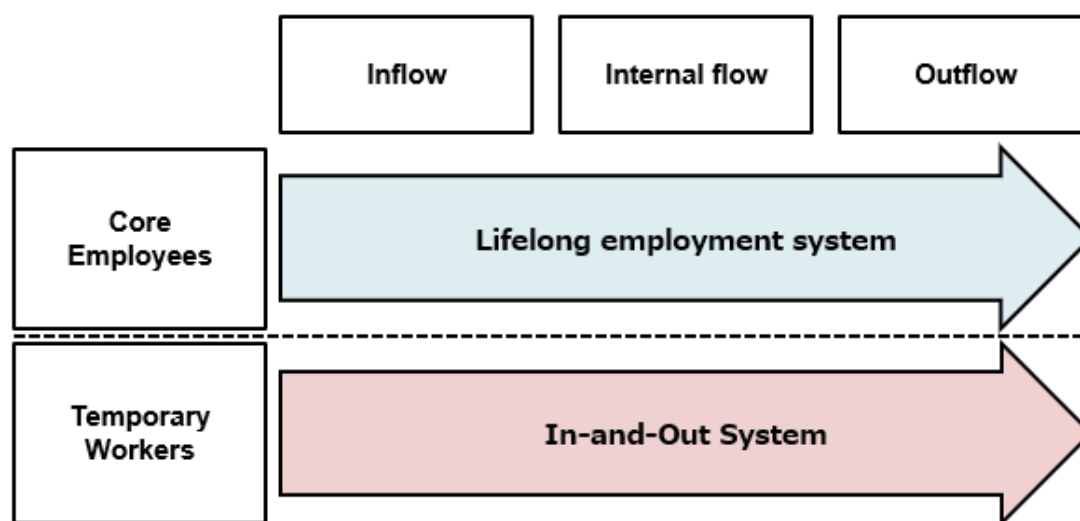


Figure 4. Application of Different Flow Pattern in Large Japanese Companies

Furthermore, flow patterns shift over the life cycle of an organization. In the United States, mature companies under competitive pressure from Japan have moved from de-facto lifelong employment for management to an in-and-out pattern in an effort to revitalize the firm. (Beer, 1984) When the economy got worse in the late 1990s, large Japanese companies changed flow patterns from previously lifelong employment systems to in-and-out systems. We separate target employee into permanent employee and temporary employee because it is known that companies may change the flow pattern according to the external environment and the type of employees. (Beer, 1984)

Regarding flow patterns, Takahashi introduced "Natural Selection", "Work Separated", "Integrated Career Path" type. (Takahashi, 1998) Miwa extracted four types of "Strong Result / Ability Principle", "Process-Oriented", "Market-Oriented", "Non-Competitive" from a questionnaire survey of companies. (Miwa, 2015) We can develop patterns of human resource flow in the future.

### 2.3. The Definition of HRP, HRD, and HRU

In this chapter, we confirm the definitions of HRP (Human Resource Planning), HRD (Human Resource Development) and HRU (Human Resource Utilization), which are subordinate concepts of HRM.

Mondy defines HRP as "Workforce Planning". Human Resource Planning(HRP) is the process of systematically reviewing human resource requirements to ensure the required numbers of employees with the required skills, are available when needed.

(Mondy, 2012) In this paper, we use the definition of "Workforce Planning" named by Mondy.

Kusano explains that HRD is an approach to learning, performance, change at the individual level, group level, and organization level in order to increase the effectiveness of human resources towards achieving the goals of the organization. (Kusano, 2007) In this paper, we adopt the definition of HRD that Kusano describes.

Sanno University Research Institute indicates that HRU is to utilize human resources such as the placement and treatment of employees and to operate the personal system. (Sanno University Research Institute, 1995) In this paper, we use the definition of HRU that Sanno University Research Institute shows.

### **3. STRUCTURE OF HUMAN RESOURCE FLOW MANAGEMENT**

#### **3.1. Explanation of Three-axes Matrix**

In Chapter 2, we explained about Human Resource Flow of Harvard model. We also referred to the definitions of HRP, HRD, HRU. In this chapter, we describe human resource management of knowledge workers through the use of a matrix. We created a matrix with 3 axes to organize prior studies. We express it in Figure 5. The horizontal axis shows three human resource flows. The vertical axis represents Target Employees. We divided Target Employees into Permanent Employees and Temporary Employees. A Permanent Employee are employees who have a full-time labor contract with no fixed period. A Temporary Employee are employees who have a part-time labor contract or have a full-time labor contract with a fixed period. We classify each human resource flow into Concept, Development, Production, Utilization / Support, and retirement based on the lifecycle stage of ISO/IEC/IEEE 15288 in Figure 6. (INCOSE, 2015) The concept stage is to study new ideas or enable technologies and capabilities, which then mature into the initiation stage of a new project. The development stage defines and realizes a system that meets stakeholder requirements. The production stage is where the system is produced or manufactured. The utilization stage is where the system is operated in its intended environment to deliver its intended services. The support stage is where the system is provided services that enable continued operation. The retirement stage is where the system and its related services are removed from operation. (INCOSE, 2015).

We divide papers referring to any of the three systems -Lifelong employment system, Up-or-out system, and Unstable in-and-out system- into the matrix. We demonstrate the mapping matrix in Table 1 and the list in Table 2.

Target	Lifecycle Stage	Human Resource Flow		
		Inflow	Internal Flow	Outflow
Permanent Employee	Concept			
	Development			
	Production			
	Utilization/Support			
	Retirement			
Temporary Employee	Concept			
	Development			
	Production			
	Utilization/Support			
	Retirement			

Figure 5. Explanation of the Component Three-axes Matrix

Concept stage	Development stage	Production stage	Utilization stage	Retirement stage
			Support stage	

Figure 6. Generic life cycle (ISO/IEC/IEEE 15288:2015)

Table 1. Mapping Matrix of Previous Studies

Target	Lifecycle Stage	Inflow	Internal Flow	Outflow
Permanent Employment	Concept	01,03,04,05,06,07,08,09,11,13,14,16,17,18,21,23,24,25,28,29,30,31	01,03,04,05,06,07,08,09,10,11,13,14,17,18,24,25,28,29,30,31	01,03,04,05,06,07,08,09,11,13,14,24,25,28,29,30,31
	Development	01,05,16,23,29	01,05,29	01,05,29
	Production			
	Utilization/Support	02,05,16,18,23	02,05,18	02,05
	Retirement			
Temporary Employment	Concept	01,03,05,24	01,24	01,05,24
	Development	01,05	01,05	01,05
	Production			
	Utilization/Support	01,05		01,05
	Retirement			



Table 2. The List of Previous Studies

No.	Title	Author	Year
01	Employment Activities and Its Expansion Form - Toward Understanding the Structure of Human Resource Management	Iwao Namie	2007
02	Human Resources Management in VietNan A Comparative Study of Japanese, Western and Vietnamese Companies. Addressing Questions of Consciousness of Vietnamese People	YoshifumiHara	2005
03	Employment System of Japanese Companies and Lifetime Employment Systems	Iwao Namie	1997
04	An Essay on Critical Analytical Viewpoint of Human Resource Management	Kazuo Tanaka	2014
05	Possibility of implementation of human resources management and strategic human resource planning in Japanese companies in China	Liu Wei	2014
06	Integrated approach of strategic human resource management theory	Nobuyoshi Oso	2015
07	On the Adjustment Effect of Self-Efficacy to the Relation Between Professional Human Resource Management Measures and Job Outcomes	Youko Sunadome	2014
08	Positioning of employees in the framework of SHRM	Tadamitsu Sakurai	2015
09	New trend of human resource management research	Yukimasa Okada	2015
10	Convergence or divergence: human resource practices and policies for competitive advantage worldwide	Paul Sparrow, Randall S. Schuler & Susan E. Jackson	2006
11	Managing Human Resource Shortages in a Unionized Setting: Best Practices in Air Traffic Control	Edward George Fisher and Vitor Marciano	1997
12	Critical Issues in Downsizing in India	Umesh Maiya	2011
13	Archetype Change in Professional Organizations	Ashly Pinnington and Timoty Morris	2003
14	Competence development and career advancement in professional service firms	Ashly H. Pinnington	2011
15	Strategic Management for Organizational Effectiveness	Lynn S. Oppenheim	1984
16	Recruiting the cyber leader: an evaluation of the human resource model used for recruiting the Army's "Cyber Operations Officer"	Nicholson, Wallace C. and Gibbs, Sean A.	2017
17	Exposing the Concept of Power	Reinoud Bosch	2003
18	Bringing Nuance into the Globalization Debate Changes in US, Japanese, and German Management, with Special Reference to the Impact of International Finance	Reinoud Bosch	2008
19	Persistent Homogeneity in Top Management	Philine Erfurt Sandhu	2013
20	HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGIES IN THE COMMERCIALISATION	Michael Wood and Evan H. Jones	1993
21	Big Business in South Korea: The Reconfiguration Process	Chris Rowley & Johnseok Bae	2004
22	A re-conceptualization of career systems, its dimensions and proposed measures	T.N. Krishnan, Sunil Kumar Maheshwari	2011
23	Teachers' recruitment and retention in Tanzania	Ayubu Japheth Chenelo	2011
24	Orchestrating the flow of human resources Insights from Spanish soccer clubs	Stav Fainshmidt, Adam Smith, and Orhun Guldiken	2017
25	The Influence of Human Resource Management on the Development and Maintenance of A Culture	Kieran Stevin	1997
26	A review of theoretical development in strategic human resource management by the application of a framework to a small firm in the credit management sector	Asquith, Margaret Main	1996
27	Exploring human resource management practices: An empirical study of the Performing Arts companies in Australia	Stanley Chibuzo Opara	2017
28	Exploring the effective use of self rostering: A contingent approach	Mondwa Mwiya	2008
29	Recruiting skilled orderlies for health care organization	Iida Pukkila	2012
30	The Art of Keeping a Contractor	Isabelle Lindgren	2009
31	Aged Care Institutions Management: A study of management's engagement strategies to support migrant careworkers' delivery of quality elderly care.	Nyemudzai Esther Ngocha-Chaderopa	2014

### 3.2. The Positioning of HRM

Figure 7 shows the positioning of HRM in Figure 5 because HRM is a conceptual framework. HRM corresponds to the whole Concept area in the Lifecycle Stage. In

fact, most of the previous studies refer to the conceptual framework of HRM. In addition, they describe both Permanent Employees and Temporary Employees.

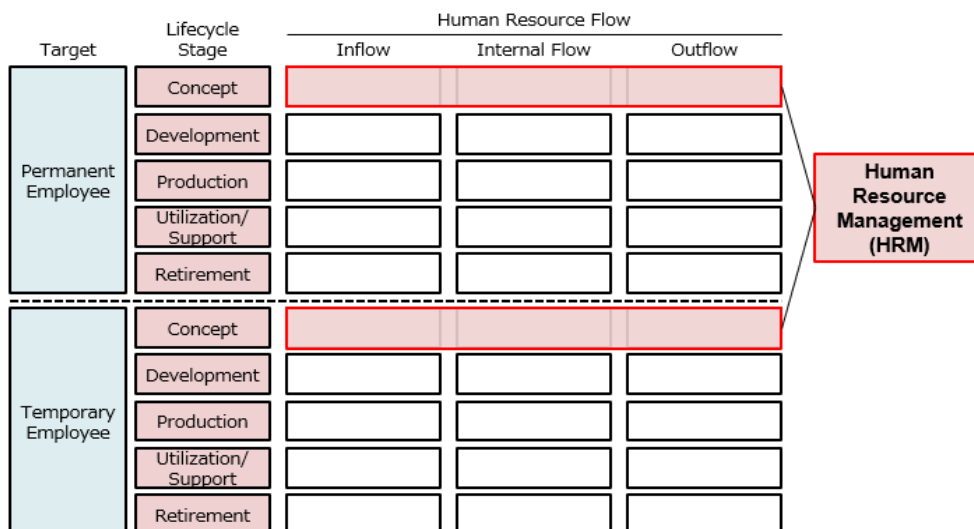


Figure 7. The Positioning of HRM

### 3.3. The Positioning of HRP

Figure 8 demonstrates the positioning of HRP in Figure 5. We can state that HRP falls under the whole Design area in the Lifecycle Stage because HRP means Workforce Planning as mentioned in section 2-3 of this paper. Some previous studies indicate personnel planning based on talent portfolios as HRP. Therefore, we believe that HRP covers the development stage because it is meant to define and realize a system that meets stakeholder requirements. They also describe both Permanent Employees and Temporary Employees.

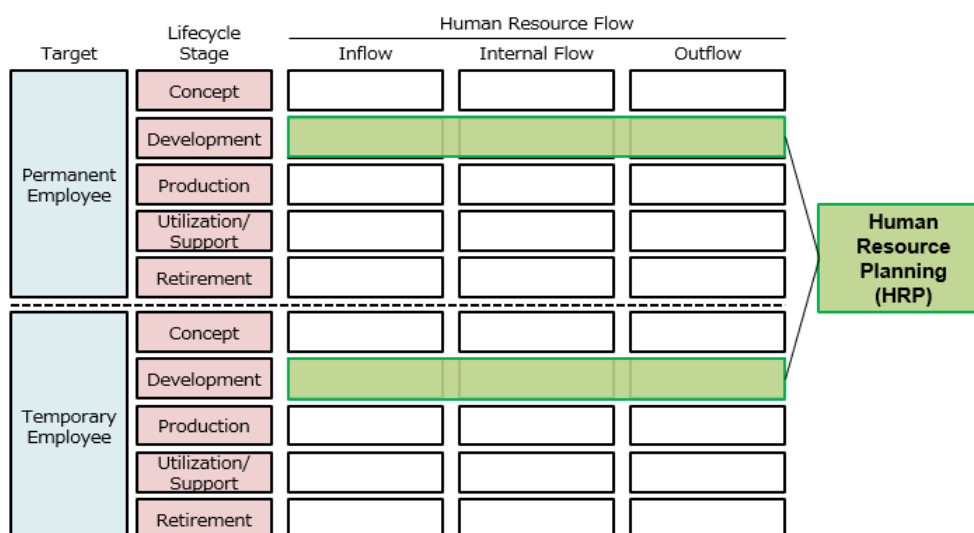


Figure 8. The Positioning of HRP

### 3.4. The Positioning of HRD

Figure 9 reveals the positioning of HRD in Figure 5 because HRD applies to internal flow. We can find papers corresponding to the Concept, Development, Utilization / Support domains for Permanent Employees. However, we cannot find papers referring to the Utilization / Support domains of HRD for Temporary Employees. This implies that HRD prioritizes Permanent Employees.

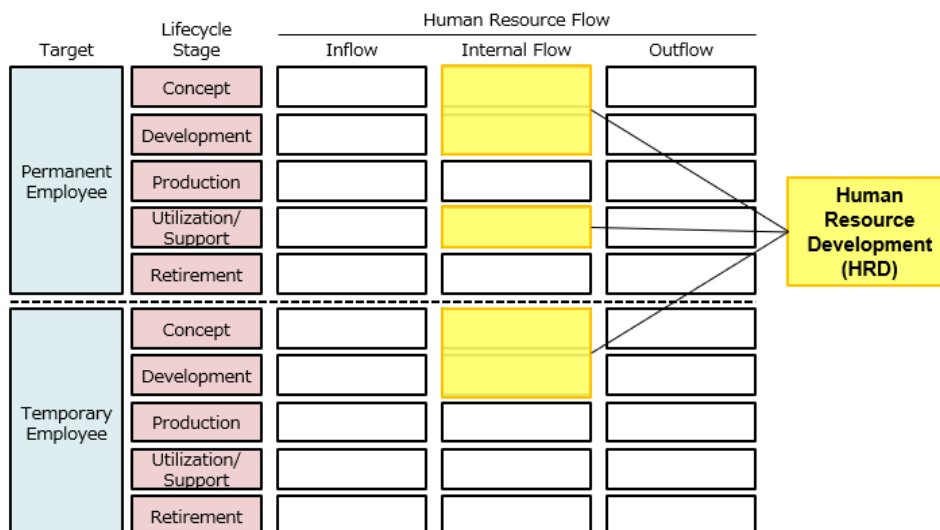


Figure 9. The Positioning of HRD

### 3.5. The Positioning of HRU

Figure 10 depicts the positioning of HRU in Figure 5 because HRU exactly presents the Utilization stage of the Lifecycle. HRU corresponds to the whole Utilization / Support domain of the Lifecycle Stage. Previous studies state both Permanent Employees and Temporary Employees.

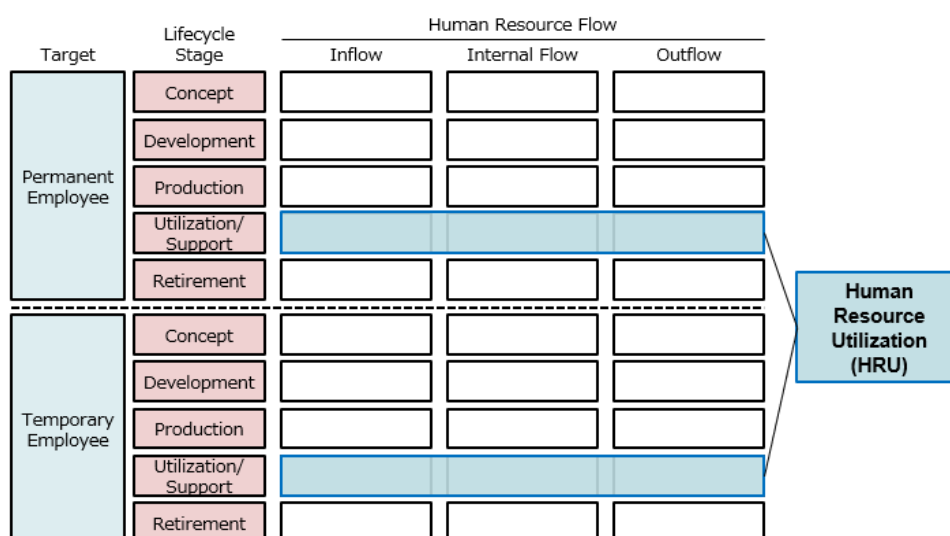


Figure 10. The Positioning of HRU

### 3.6. Explanation of the Remaining Areas

We have clarified areas that HRM, HRP, HRD, and HRU do not touch. Figure 11 demonstrates the positioning of the Production Stage of Human Resource Flow. There are no previous studies to create a concrete human resource flow for achieving a personnel plan. We believe that there are three reasons for this.

Firstly, it is not enough to use the standard of making a human resource flow. For example, we usually set channels, selection criteria, interviewer, and offer conditions to hire employees in Inflow as part of the Recruiting process from an independent standpoint. We do not arrange recruiting processes not based on standards. If we use the standard of Systems Engineering that INCOSE provides, we will be able to create the best process to recruit people by achieving Quality, Cost, and Delivery at a certain level. The creating process of personnel system is often created by relying on the experience and intuition of each personnel manager. Therefore, the standard process of Systems Engineering will support to the creating process of personnel system to achieve Quality, Cost, and Delivery at a certain level. However, it is necessary to evaluate the creating process of personnel system using the standard process of Systems Engineering, as a research topic in the future.

Secondly, best practices are seldom released. Human resource departments usually do not disclose their corporate human resource flow as the information in the human resource area is highly confidential. However, some companies disclose their human resource flow, which attracts the attention of the market, and allows them to hire excellent people. We presume that the best practices are released, the more companies use them and make the best process in human resource flow.

Thirdly, a lot of choices cause complexity in constructing human resource flow. For instance, companies decide to use various channels to attract people based on their own thoughts which leads to complexity in human resource flow. As we mentioned earlier, it is possible to choose some patterns based on best practices and to build a highly effective human resource flow.

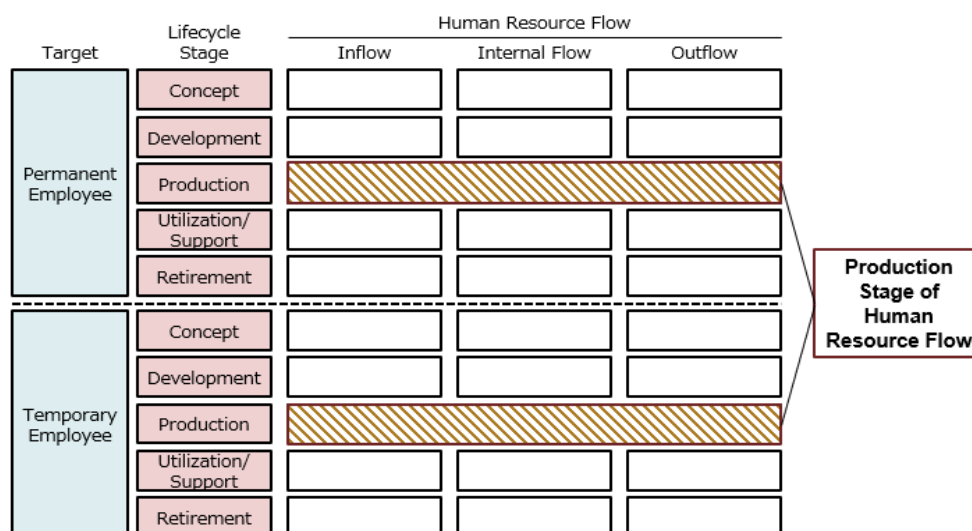


Figure 11. Production Stage of Human Resource Flow

Figure 12 shows the positioning of the Retirement Stage of Human Resource Flow that HRM, HRP, HRD, and HRD do not refer to. We assume that there are three reasons for this. Firstly, companies make human resource flow by the waterfall model, which is not an agile model. It takes a lot of effort and cost to retire some human resource processes. Most companies try to examine their existing processes only after they realize their flows are obsolete. Secondly, human resource departments tends to make conservative decisions as they need to work without mistakes and keep fairness among employees. Therefore, human resource departments do not attempt to retire existing flows and rebuild new ones. Finally, most companies do not set KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) to check the performance of their human resource flows. If they monitor it, they can decide to change or abolish existing human resource flows.

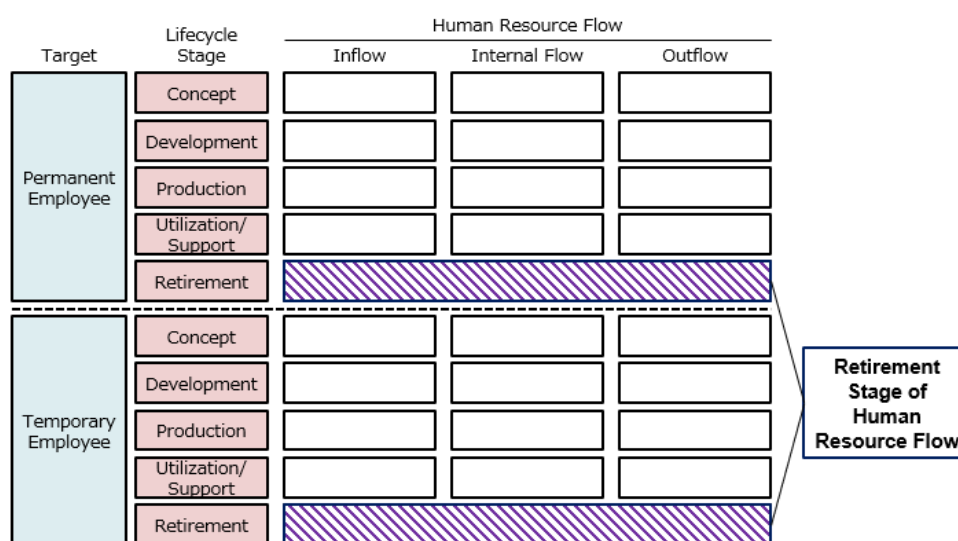


Figure 12. Retirement Stage of Human Resource Flow

Figure 13 depicts the positioning of areas from the Production to the Retirement Stage of Internal Flow for Temporary Employees. As we mentioned, most companies train Permanent Employees because they are the source of a company's competitiveness. On the other hand, firms ask temporary employees to carry out low value work. Therefore, companies tend not to invest money on the development of temporary employees. However, in recent years, knowledge workers have become independent workers and they work with a company as a temporary employee. (Daniel H. Pink, 2003) As acquiring knowledge workers become harder, firms need to provide attractive environments and conditions for them. It is important to invest more money into the development of temporary employees because HRD increases the length of service. (Miwa, 2015)

Target	Lifecycle Stage	Human Resource Flow		
		Inflow	Internal Flow	Outflow
Permanent Employee	Concept			
	Development			
	Production			
	Utilization/Support			
	Retirement			
Temporary Employee	Concept			
	Development			
	Production			
	Utilization/Support			
	Retirement			

Areas from Production to Retirement Stage of Internal Flow for Temporary Employment

Figure 13. Areas from Production to Retirement Stage of Internal Flow for Temporary Employee

It is ambiguous who is going to be the leader in each area of the matrix. Especially, the position of the human resources department is unclear. (Tanaka, 2008)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

##### 4.1. Summary

In this paper, we elucidated areas to develop human resource flow management. We made a new matrix using the three axes of target employee, lifecycle stage, and human resource flow. Consequently, the matrix shows the relevance between areas of research on existing human resource theory and domains that have not yet been studied. We identify areas in the Production Stage of Human Resource Flow, areas in the Retirement Stage of Human Resource Flow, and areas ranging from the Production to the Retirement Stage of Internal Flow for Temporary Employees.

##### 4.2. Evolution of Future Research

As we mentioned, the areas that previous studies have not researched need some improvement and the position of the human resources department is also ambiguous. On the other hand, no paper referring to human resource flow shows detailed drawing of the four Human Resource Systems. In addition, we can research flow patterns more than the three systems Beer states.

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