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DRIVING FORCES FOR THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Abstract:

The debate regarding the status of human resource management in South Africa and its standing as a managerial profession has been a burning issue for practitioners over the last decade. Research evidence suggests that South African Human Resources practitioners are convinced that their value-added status as HR 'professionals' will only transpire through the reinvention of the South African human resources management profession.

This article examines how South African HR managers and practitioners interpret professionalisation and whether the internalization of this ideal results in an increase in professional identity. The findings suggest that while many HR practitioners and managers gain greater self-worth and understanding of professional identity, this does not equate to a broader acceptance by the broader community as a member of a 'profession'. This paper concludes with a framework to guide the professionalisation of HR practitioners in the South African workplace.

Keywords:

Human resource practitioners, Professionalisation, Work identity

JEL Classification: J24