

How can the competitiveness of a Hungarian agricultural enterprise be increased? The mushroom *verticum* in focus, in light of the employees' contentedness

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*Abstract: The population increase across the Globe made humanity reach 7,5 billion by 2017. The expected population assumed by 2050 is only higher, meaning our planet will be shared by 9,1 billion humans. Never have so many people lived on Earth before at the same time, and as these people have to be fed, a simple question comes to mind: how will we take up the challenge, and what tools will help to keep, and to increase the competitiveness of the Hungarian agriculture sector? Hungary is a country with strong roots in agricultural tradition. The result of the instances of innovation completed in the XX.th and XXI.st Centuries was that the ratio of added value gained during production made a turnaround. While this ratio was 80-20 between basematerials and processing, currently, it's 20-80. This also means that foodstuffs production, which has its basis in the XIX.th Century, but aims to support the demands of the XXI.st Century, has to be kept competitive at all costs. Our analysis focused on one peculiar part of the Hungarian agricultural sector, the mushroom *verticum*, as we believe that this sub-sector began a dynamic development recently. This is due to the tendency of consumers, wishing for more functional and healthy foodstuffs. Additionally, we can find mushroom not only as traditional foodstuffs, but in the shape of coffees, chocolates, and immunesystemstrengthening supplements as well. Waste management also uses mushrooms on the producer side, which clearly validates its usefulness. As this sector is firmly dependent on physical labour, we began to analyse it from the employees' perspective, which is also the basis of our results to be introduced in the study.*

Keywords: Porter's Diamond model, valuechain of mushroom verticum, role of vertical relations.

1. Literature sources

Human resource management differs significantly from other resources. Its positive attribute is that it's a special kind of resource, which has a long lifespan, and has a possibility to increase its productiveness as the time goes by. Furthermore, this is the resource which is capable of renewing itself. Its danger, however, is that it's not the possession of the company, therefore, it can freely decide if it wants to leave the organisation, or does not. The possible reason for leaving is either the low rate of motivation, or the offer coming from another place (Magda et al., 1998). Before determining the contentedness of employees, I think it's important to familiarise ourselves with characteristics of different attitudes. Staw and Ross' (1985) research results show us that employee contentedness is a firm attribute of people which can be replaced with extreme hardship only. We can only gather information on it through the behaviour of employees. Kieser (1995) stresses in his book that Smith, Kendall and Hulin differentiated the importance of wages, the kind of work done, the possibilities of promotion, colleagues, and leaders as important to the employees' contentedness. Locke determined that employee contentedness is a positive sentiment which comes from evaluating their work experiences. Ladahl and Kejner thinks that burying oneself in work can be interpreted as the level the person can familiarise themselves with their work, and the importance of the work they're doing (Ladahl-Kejner, 1965). Greenberg and Baron state that contentedness is the emotional and behavioural reaction of a person to their work. (Szlavik, 2010). Kieser says that until the XX. Century, nobody was interested in the fact that people can actually be content with their work (Kieser, 1995). Bakacsi's opinion is that one of the most important attitudes related to work is employee contentedness. This relates to how much the employees find their work a challenge, and how advantageous they consider their wages earned for it, furthermore, how cooperative their colleagues are (Bakacsi, 2000). Klein stresses that employee contentedness is a general attitude, which comes from the following attitudes' mix: specific work factors, workplace group relations, and unique characteristics (Klein, 2006). According to Porter, being dedicated to the organisation has the elements of accepting the organisation's goals, initiative to reach the goals of the organisation with loyal work, and the wish of the employee to remain part of the organisation. He thinks that employees with high devotion will remain in the organisation even if they are sometimes unsatisfied with various aspects of their work (Porter, 1974). Levy wrote that employees work for their livelihood, therefore, most of their time is spent on work. Employers have the obligation to reward people for this devotion (Levy, 2003). Dawis, Lofquist and Weiss created the work adaptation theory, according

to which there's a mutual abiding between employees and organisations. A part of their theory is motivational factors, human necessities, unique competencies and work requirements coming from work activities (Dawis et al., 1968). Juhász improved on this, and thinks that two processes of acceptance are conducted at the same time. The employee's competence, personal characteristics, abilities and knowledge adapts to workplace requirements, which have to be kept. Furthermore, the employee's needs and wishes are satisfied by the organisation and the work (Juhász, 2006). Eskilden and Dahlgard believe that when determining the motivational potency of a given workplace, the potential for change and importance of work tasks is added together, and their average value is what's really important. Even if one factor is missing, the employee's motivation won't necessarily decrease (Eskilden-Dahlgard, 2000). Cohrs, Abele and Dette state that the attributes of workplace atmosphere, and the satisfaction of employees have a correlation, which is higher for people who have a higher development demand. They believe employees, who are content with their work, can evaluate their own work better than those who are not satisfied (Cohrs et al., 2006). Employee contentedness is significantly impacted by the quantity of tasks to do, as overwork will sooner or later make employees dissatisfied. Mello believes that employees have to be given work which won't make them overworked, but keep them motivated (Mello, 2006). Greenberg and Baron think that employees are content with their work if they're neither overworked, nor given simple tasks (Szlavik, 2010). In light of Greenberg's and Baron's opinion, we can say that those having a higher position are more content, compared to those in lower positions. Furthermore, employees content with their work usually stay with their organisation for more time than their dissatisfied colleagues, who usually leave their workplace before they could achieve a promotion to a higher position. Drafke's interesting argument is that employment affects the satisfaction level of employees. This means that some people are more content if they've been with their corporation for longer, whereas some people are exactly opposite, as after they reach their career goals, they can't find a challenge, and are almost bored at their work (Drafke, 2009) (Szlavik, 2010). If we take a look at Gyenes' and Rozgonyi's research, we can see that hierarchic relationships have a significant effect on employees. The when and how of superior's intervention is a fundamental factor (Gyenes-Rozgonyi, 1981). Luthas stresses that as far as superiors' behaviour goes, we should analyse how much they consider the performance of their employees. Furthermore, he informs us that leaders have to include employees in any kind of large decision (Luthas, 1998). Choo and Bowley concluded that training can only increase contentedness if the presenter aims participants of the postgraduate course, and has exceptional professional knowledge. We need training and education courses where employees can learn things they may implement during their operative tasks (Choo-Bowley, 2007). Vaught and Pettit declared that if there's a strong connection between the employee and their work, neither vertical, nor horizontal communication has a strong effect on said employee. However, if the employee and their work has a

weak connection, vertical communication coming from above has a stronger effect on performance (Goris et al., 2000). Milkovich and Newman believe that the wage system fundamentally affects if the employee remains in position, or chooses another workplace to migrate to (Milkovich-Newman, 1999). Fraser thinks that after a certain level of income, wages won't shape employee contentedness (Fraser, 1983). Poór believes that flexible wages are in selection and justice. When introducing cafeteria, one has to take the needs and requirements of employees into consideration (Poór, 2005). Garai states that there are employees, whose work can also be their hobby. Those challenging more work are most notably those of more knowledge and higher wages, and if they're rewarded by their performance, the market relationship between employer and employee is what's important (Garai, 2003). Co-worker relations can be seen in information exchange during working, in cooperating with colleagues during work, and in personal interest in each other (Héthy and Makó, 1981). Group effort can affect contentedness. Well-organised teams enjoy working together, however, if they work in a team where it's hard to cooperate for members, employee contentedness will not increase at all (Luthans, 1998).

Spector and associates analysed the conflicts of work and family, and they concluded that it has different effects in different cultures (Spector et al., 2007). Geurts and Mauno also prove that females have a harder time than males, because they have to make a better balance between work and raising children (Kinnunen et al., 2004). Work conditions have to be appropriate in order to do tasks efficiently, and generate contentedness. Such work conditions are the physical factors of the workplace, its technological level and used technological solutions (Bencsik, 2004).

According to Luthans, only extremely disadvantageous workplace conditions lower the employees' contentedness (Luthans, 1998). According to Levy, personal performance and contentedness is better, the higher position someone works in (Levy, 2003). Porter believes that the rewards of completed work are the key, because the employees will only be as content with their work, as possible it is for them to be, according to their wages (Porter, 1978). The physical condition of employees, and their contentedness have a connection, of course. When taking a look at this, multiple instances of research support the view that this exists, and is important. Employees that are dissatisfied with their work usually have more health problems. Dissatisfaction may generate mental and emotional problems, and may appear as signs in f. e. worrying, which derails our concentration from efficient work. If dissatisfaction is paired with larger stress or higher workplace loads, sooner or later, physical illnesses may surface. In more serious cases, depression and burnout syndrome may happen (Rozgonyi, 2000).

Being late shows negative attitude towards work, and dissatisfaction. If someone leaves before their work is over, we might want to suspect (Koslowsky, 2009). Sometimes, there are theft cases of employees in the organisation, which Kulas and associates consider a manifestation of dissatisfaction (Kulas et al., 2007).

2. Source and Method

The goal of our research is to analyse the given agricultural sector, and see how contented the employees are with their work, what motivates them, and how efficient their work is.

Our research is structured as follows: we determine the topic of the research and our target goals, then create hypotheses for it. As part of processing international and domestic expert literature sources, we conduct a secondary research, and during the primary research, we use an empirical data collection to build a database. We employ statistical methods to either validate, or invalidate our hypotheses. Sampling was non-representative. During the quantitative research, research target goals can be identified, where the research translates data to numbers, and using statistical methods, helps us evaluate them (Corbin et al., 2008). We constructed our qualitative primary data via questionnaire. The standardised questionnaire makes sure that data can be subjected to comparative analysis (Malhotra, 2001). The employee contentedness analysis was targeted at employees working in our domestic mushroom verticum, using random sampling. The questionnaire contained 25 questions for three topics, the results will be introduced in detail. The questionnaire underwent a preliminary test with 30 participants, originally faulty questions were fixed. During the time period between September 2017 and October 17, a nationwide sample was collected. The programme used for data evaluation is the SPSS 15 programme suite.

MORAKUSZI and associates (2015) deal with the research topic of consumer satisfaction, however, the statements they made are just as applicable to employee satisfaction. According to their description, contentedness can best be measured by questionnaires, focusing on different areas. However, evaluating the data received can only happen if they're converted properly into the format of Likert's scale.

3. Results

We can see on the Chart that the generation and willingness to learn of the mushroom verticum's employees have a significant relation, as the significance level is below 0,05. Most of the 31-40 employees at 65,5% would like to learn at a training related to mushroom production, whereas 34,5% would not participate.

The age of employees, and the effect their work has on the organisation's operation has no significant relation to each other, as the significance value is above 0,05. Based on our analyses, we determined that those employed in the Hungarian mushroom verticum don't know the actual value of their work, and are not clear on the fact that the competitiveness of the organisation is very dependent

on the quality of their work. One of the reasons for this is that in the mushroom verticum, physical labour are employed in the majority, and they have elementary education at most, therefore, they don't understand the connection between the work they do during their operative tasks, and the competitiveness of the enterprise. During the questionnaire, we concluded that those employed in the mushroom verticum would like to learn at training related to mushroom production, thereby beyond production of healthy foodstuffs, mushroom production could also operate as one of the economy's pulling sectors. Our hypothesis, which states that those employed in the Hungarian mushroom verticum have a need to participate in postgraduate training, which would help their everyday work, holds true. The ages of employees, and the importance of their work within the organisation has no significant connection, as the significance level was above 0,05.

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