WORK MOTIVATION AND WORKING LIFE QUALITY IN CZECH COUNTRYSIDE: CONSIDERATIONS ON SOME PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

MOTIVACE PRACOVNÍ ČINNOSTI A KVALITA ŽIVOTA PŘI PRÁCI NA ČESKÉM VENKOVĚ

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Summary:
The paper referes the first and preliminary results of a project of the same name, Which is supported by a GA ČR grant. The project is grounded in the use of the Extended Delft Measurement Kit for Quality of Working Life (EDMK)research instrument, which was developed by Dutch colleagues and used by them in several European countries. The paper will convey the results of its use in surveys in Bulgary, Hungary and Netherlands, as well as preliminary findings on work motivation in Czechia.

Anotace:
Příspěvek referuje o prvních a předběžných výsledcích práce na stejnojmenném projektu, řešeném na základě grantu GA ČR. Projekt je založen na využití výzkumného nástroje Extended Delft Measurement Kit for Quality of Working Life (EDMK), který vyvinuli holandští kolegové a využili v několika evropských zemích. V příspěvku budou popsány výsledky dosažené dosud pomocí tohoto nástroje v Bulharsku, Holansku a Maďarsku, a také výsledky převýzkumu pracovní motivace u nás.

Key words:
motivation, life quality, Czech countryside

Klíčová slova:
motivace, kvalita života, český venkov

This paper deals with some preliminary results obtained in the first stage of work on the project Work motivation and working life quality in Czech countryside[*]. Motivation concerns key characteristics of work and organizational behavior and, because of it, knowledge and data on motivation might be central to regional and social development in the Czech Republic. The aim of the project is to get data on work motivation and work life quality in the Czech countryside, as compared to city (or, more specifically, Prague agglomeration) dwellers. A subordinated objective of the project is to get information on motivational patterns of age and gender categories of the Czech population. Important part of the project is the use of Extended Delft Measurement Kit for Quality of Working Life (EDMK), which was developed by a team of European psychologists based on a commission of European Commission. This instrument was put to use in several internationally based surveys already. The applicants have got some experience in the use of this method, as they have helped to gather data on Czechia for a comparative study of work motivation and work life quality in several European countries. The first results based on these data were published by now (Roe

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et al., 2000). Besides this, the applicants, closely cooperating with the research instrument designers, used the method in a number of student projects, which helped them to form preliminary hypotheses used as a baseline of this project proposal. The analysis of the Czech data sample have shown some possibility of differing motivational patterns to be found in the Czech population, one of them seemingly associated with the ways of the times before the political change in 1989 and the other with the contemporary attitudes to work and performance. These results were published elsewhere (see Kolman, 2001). The study of the international team, as quoted above, deals with the same problem in other post-communist countries. So, it seemed indispensable to find out more in this direction before the inception of the survey proper. In connection to this it seemed necessary to find out, if the Czech population feels, or feels not, to be prevalently motivated unilaterally, so to speak, by external forces or stimuli, which could not be influenced by a person involved (external locus of control). To this end the authors have analyzed data gathered by their students and arrived at results, which they think might be used to develop the hypotheses for the project proper to a higher level.

Background

As Roe *et al.* (2000) convey, central to their model of work motivation are job involvement and organizational commitment. These variables, although often conceived as work attitudes, could be considered to be key variables in organizational behavior (Pinder, 1998). Roe *et al.* explain that they have put these two variables to central position in their model, as they appear to take the intermediary position between antecedent and consequent variables (see, e.g. Ayree *et al.*, 1991; Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Katzell, 1980; Lance, 1991; Michaels & Spector, 1982; Williams & Hazer, 1986). In the model three sets of situational variables acting as antecedents of involvement and commitment were used: job characteristics, opportunities for the fulfillment of the workers' needs, and extrinsic conditions. Job characteristics relate to job involvement, organizational commitment, and satisfaction (Kim, Price, Mueller & Watson, 1996; Pearson & Chong, 1997), even if the causal links are not altogether clear. Since job characteristics pertain to the job content rather then the organizational settings, Roe *et al*. expect its direct effect on job involvement and indirect effect, mediated by involvement, with commitment and satisfaction.

Roe *et al.* (2000) make a strong distinction between need strength and need fulfillment (Ten Horn, 1983). High need strength is likely to produce a drive toward achieving an outcome gratifying the need; however the role of need fulfillment is ambiguous (Pinder, 1998). Opportunity to fulfill a need does not suffer from this setback and it is likely to promote commitment to the source of need gratification. As opportunities to satisfy needs have been shown to predict satisfaction, tendency to leave, work centrality, and work stress (Zinovieva, Horn & Roe, 1994) and organizational commitment (Shouksmith, 1994), measure of it was made part of the international team research instrument (EDMK).

As goes about extrinsic conditions, there are studies showing that pay predicts commitment (Buchko *et al.*, 1997, Shouksmith, 1994) and turnover intend (Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid & Sirola, 1998). Participative climate and career opportunities have been found to predict organizational commitment (Barling, Wade & Fullagar, 1990; DeCortis & Summers, 1987; Shouksmiths, 1994; Wallace, 1995). In some of the studies mentioned there was found positive relationship between extrinsic condition and satisfaction; however the relationship to commitment seems to be generally stronger.

The international team research instrument was build taking all these considerations into the account and so it includes five outcome variables: effort expenditure, performance, job

satisfaction, tendency to leave and work stress. There is quite an amount of research evidence concerning those variables. Several studies have shown that job involvement is directly related to performance (Keller, 1997; Somers & Birnbaum, 1998) and in some cases there was shown an indirect relationship mediated by effort (e.g., Benkhof, 1997). Both involvement and commitment predict turnover (absenteeism) (Barrick, Mount & Strauss, 1994; Cohen, 1993; Tett & Meyer, 1994). As Roe *et al.* noted, the role of stress in these connections is rather equivocal. It seems, it could serve both as an antecedent (see, e.g., Jamal, 1990) and a consequent of involvement and commitment (e.g., Bhatt, 1998).

As the review of relationships build in the research instrument (EDMK) covers only a sample of the components of the model (for the full overview, see Roe *et al.*, 2000 and the CD edition of EDMK), it is clear that the model is rather complex. Accordingly, the research instrument (EDMK – Ten Horn *et al.*, 1996) is composed of several hundreds of items, and for practical reasons it is organized in modules, which might be used separately. The complexity of the model and the research instrument is both an advantage and a disadvantage for its use in the field. It would feel tempting for the present authors to use all the items (and modules) of EDMK in researching work motivation in the Czech countryside. However, it seems that to do it would not be practical, and might even make the project unfeasible. Respondents in general, and the Czech respondents specifically, do hate long questionnaires with huge numbers of items and to use an instrument of such a kind might quite easily put the project in jeopardy. Because of it, it is necessary for the present project team to choose suitable modules and items of the research instrument. Decisions in this direction would, of course, influence the definitions of research samples, as well. The best way how to arrive at suitable choice of modules and samples for the project will be to consider available evidence on work motivation and attitudes to work in Czech subjects. As part of the relevant information to be used in this way the present researches utilized data from students' projects, which were carried on as part of seminars on work psychology for senior students in the winter term of 2002. The analysis of these data brought about results, which might be of some interest even taken on their own. What follow are description and analysis of the data relevant to the questions concerning respondents' attitudes to work and their locus of control attributions. The scope and relevancy of the results described, however, should be understood as preliminary and auxiliary, only. The reason for this is the origin of the data, which were collected for a different purpose, as to which they have been put in this paper.

Sample and Method

The data from the student projects were gathered by means of a questionnaire, which is going to be described below. The students used the data to diverse purposes according to the tutorial project they were working on. As the projects differed in their respective scopes, aims, etc., not all the data collected by the students it was possible to use for the purpose of this paper. In the end we were able to analyze questionnaires filled in by 384 respondents. 65% of the respondents were women and 75% of them were in the 20 – 45 age diapason. The students admitted, they have mostly turned to people easily accessible to them, i.e. to their colleagues, their family and acquaintances.

The answers of the respondents were collected by means of a questionnaire designed by the present authors. This questionnaire was intended as a means of testing hypotheses on the Czech motivational biases, and so some of it items might appear a bit idiosyncratic. It could be said, however, that all the items were chosen for a purpose, mostly based on insiders' knowledge on Czech social life.

Besides the general information questions (gender, age, etc.) the questionnaire consists of three sets of items. The three sets were connected to three broad questions, namely What the

work brings forth?; If somebody fares well, it is caused by …; and If somebody is badly of … These three broad questions are further elaborated by proposed answers (actually, 16; 19 and 6) e.g. – work brings forth money. The respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the statements (the proposed answers) on a seven-point scale (from 1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree). All the questions could be found together with the mean scores for the questions and the results of data analysis in tables 1, 2 and 3, which are adjoined to this paper.

Analysis

The data were analyzed separately for the above-mentioned three sets of questions. The method utilized was one-way (one factor) ANOVA. In all the three cases the results of the analysis were highly significant. This means that the differences of mean scores of the questions in the respective subsets hardly might have happened by chance. We believe that so strong results reflect on something important in the attitudes to work and the perceived locus of control of the persons in the sample studied. Unfortunately, because of the character of the sample, as described above, there remains some uncertainty as to what population these findings are pertinent. Even so, they will be useful for hypotheses generation and development.

The table 1 comprises answers to "What work brings forth" questions. These questions pertain to attitudes to work. In this table we could see that the highest scores were achieved in the columns 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and the lowest in the columns 15 and 16. If we look at the content corresponding to the column numbers, we find there satisfaction, money, make oneself useful and contacts with people on the plus side. On the negative side there is waiting for retirement and illness. We understand this result as showing both involvement (#4) and commitment (#3) to be very important for the respondents. Satisfaction (#1, 2, and 5) does not to be discussed at any length here, we expect.

Table 2 comprises questions, which were derived from the daily experience of living in the country, and the many complains and/or excuses one might hear Czechs to make. However, the pattern emerging in this table is a bit different from the complainants' staple. Czech, it seems, believe that chance, luck and opportunity are important. On the other hand, they seem to believe in industry, self-determination, education and experience, as well. If the findings presented in table 3 are added to those of table 2, it seems apparent that the respondents attribute relatively high proportion of control over their own destiny to their own efforts and intentions. Their locus of control seems to be prevalently internal. Such people would be interested in and motivated by achievement and they might develop high degree of involvement in their work.

Discussion and Conclusions

Roe *et al.* (2000) tried to compare motivational patterns in Bulgaria and Hungary. They have found reduced responsiveness in Bulgaria, with feedback not too much important and extrinsic factors being the major sources of commitment. Besides this, there ware not found variables connected to belongingness and climate at the work place. They explain this by cultural traits of Bulgarians, who seem to be highly individualistic. The results concerning Hungary differed considerably from those of Bulgarians. For Hungarians feedback is very much important and the same holds for opportunity for growth. Again in contrast to Bulgarians, the opportunity to satisfy social needs play significant role for Hungarian workers.

In this study a different research instrument was used, so it is not possible to make direct comparisons. However, based on the results comprised in tables 1, 2 and 3 we can hypothesize that satisfaction and feedback will be pretty important factors in motivating

Czech employees (table 1, items 1, and 2). Internal factors will play major role for the Czechs (table 1, items 3, 4, and 5; table 2, items 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, and 17; table 3, item 1), as well as opportunity to satisfy social needs (table 1, items5, and 6; table 2, items 3, 10, and 16; table 3, item 5). If these hypotheses are going to be corroborated, or not, is to be found by means of new data, collected this time with the help of the Czech version of EDMK.

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Table 1

Anova:
one factor

What work brings forth

Factor

Sample	*N*	*Sum*	*Mean*	*SD*	
Column 1	384	1888	4,916667	2,034813	satisfaction
Column 2	384	1839	4,789063	2,897948	money
Column 3	384	1895	4,934896	2,390006	make oneself useful
Column 4	384	1914	4,984375	2,516727	feeling to be useful
Column 5	384	2069	5,388021	2,368629	contacts with people
Column 6	384	1654	4,307292	2,558067	status and respect
Column 7	384	1710	4,453125	3,569599	stress
Column 8	384	841	2,190104	2,159589	humiliation
Column 9	384	1605	4,179688	9,589038	exhaustion
Column 10	384	1382	3,598958	2,909242	challenge and excitement
Column 11	384	1739	4,528646	2,798133	willingness to proceed
Column 12	384	1393	3,627604	3,377931	inclination to do something else
Column 13	384	1188	3,09375	3,526436	inclination to be lazy
Column 14	384	1461	3,804688	3,98003	waiting for free time
Column 15	384	1006	2,619792	3,949059	waiting for retirement
Column 16	384	770	2,005208	2,031304	illness

ANOVA

Source of variability	*SS*	*Difference*	*MS*	*F*	*P value*	*F crit*
Inter samples	6198,52	15	413,2347	125,5638	0	1,668017
All samples	20167,46	6128	3,291034			
Total	26365,98	6143				

Table 2

Anova: one factor

Factor

If somebody fares well, its caused by

Sample	*N*	*Sum*	*Mean*	*SD*	
Column 1	384	1701	4,429688	3,112537	chance
Column 2	384	1898	4,942708	2,774777	luck
Column 3	384	1971	5,132813	2,481009	connections
Column 4	383	2150	5,613577	1,635627	industry and determination
Column 5	384	1834	4,776042	2,357022	her/his calculation and self-interest
Column 6	384	1123	2,924479	2,592193	her/him being dishonest
Column 7	384	2087	5,434896	1,927865	education
Column 8	384	2177	5,669271	1,569184	expertise
Column 9	384	2268	5,90625	1,787533	health
Column 10	384	2065	5,377604	2,439288	family relations
Column 11	384	2041	5,315104	1,960502	opportunity
Column 12	384	1073	2,794271	2,597252	her/him being a crawler
Column 13	384	2150	5,598958	1,765639	her/his skills to come on well with people
Column 14	384	2210	5,755208	1,527388	experience
Column 15	384	2044	5,322917	1,905896	Talents
Column 16	384	1972	5,135417	1,762293	her/his personality
Column 17	384	1889	4,919271	2,915137	knowledge of languages
Column 18	384	1519	3,955729	3,358348	her/him being a lawyer or an economist
Column 19	384	1894	4,932292	2,324385	her/his understanding of people

ANOVA

Source of variability	*SS*	*Difference*	*MS*	*F*	*P value*	*F crit*
Inter samples	5275,65	18	293,0917	130,1245	0	1,605269
All samples	16388,42	7276	2,252394			
Total	21664,07	7294				

Table 3

Anova: one factor

Factor

If somebody is badly off

Sample	*N*	*Sum*	*Mean*	*SD*	
Column 1	384	2058	5,359375	1,833959	she/he could change it
Column 2	384	1691	4,403646	1,943694	she/he just got bad luck
Column 3	384	1306	3,401042	2,209503	it is hers/his own fault
Column 4	384	1034	2,692708	2,192532	bad people wrong her/him
Column 5	384	1636	4,260417	2,250544	friends are going ot help her/him
Column 6	384	1961	5,106771	2,168727	she/he should try to do something else

ANOVA

Source of variability	*SS*	*Difference*	*MS*	*F*	*P value*	*F crit*
Inter samples	1966,722	5	393,3444	187,3224	1,2E-167	2,217991
All samples	4825,401	2298	2,099826			
Total	6792,123	2303				