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Contentment-analysis of work environment in ways of safety at agricultural companies leaders and workers in Hajdú-Bihar county

Summary

In this paper the author has collected together his examinations about work place environmental and psychosocial contentment in the circle of farm-leaders and labourers. The direct aim of his examinations was to survey the occupational safety and health (OSH) related contentment in the circle of agricultural enterprises of Hajdú-Bihar County. The used data collection methods were questionnaires and guided interviews. In the questionnaire there is a seven-grade Likert-type scale (Malhotra 2005), to evaluate the questioned factors. The result of the examinations shows the similarity and the differences among the two groups regarding to their OSH complacency.

1. Introduction

The agriculture is a specific area of the OSH related researches mainly which connected to organizational safety climate and culture. Bagdy & Klein (2006) had formed three approaches in relation to accident prevention. These are engineering, human resource and motivational approaches. In our days all of these three aspects are playing important roles in the accident prevention. The question is supposable, how can we improve the OSH performance? Approximately 10 million work related accidents happen in Europe annually. The same data in Hungary is 20–30 thousand registered cases annually. From these cases in Hungary the number of fatal accidents is from 130 to 140 cases annually. At the agricultural area the number of fatal accidents is from 13 to 16 annually. With this result the agriculture is on the second or third position among the economic sectors every year. Based on the examinations of Nagy & Dienesné (1997) the estimation of the work related safety factors are unfavourable for farm-workers. A significant part of our active lives we spend in the workplace. We are doing all this in order to satisfy our needs, and to achieve our personal goals and volitions. This moves on within the framework of complex rules, norms and laws. These are complex situations, employers are in connection with employees, leaders are in connection with workers, and vice versa, which generate many mutual and legal expectations. Achieving the aims and realizing the expectations flood people with contentment. The contentment mainly has affective and strongly subjective character. For this reason it is very complicated to apply quantitative methods in the examinations. The contented person agrees with the organization in its aims, accepts the norms of the team and the organization can motivate him (Szabados 2006). By this means the person satisfies the organizational expectations much better than a discontented employee. The leaders' expectations are larger than the workers'. The leader owes allegiance to the organization and with this a larger vocation at the representation of interests. The organizational and leading expectations coincide in that case when the leader simultaneously the owner too. The system of the organizational expectations distributed among the membership. There-

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fore, most of the expectations linked to the person. The focus points of the expectations and responsibilities are changing depending on the examined leading level (Berde 2006). On the level of management so many expectation, purpose, and need summed up which fulfilment creates a leading contentment. Inside the organization the leaders have the largest possibility to make outsider connections and gather information about another organizations and by doing so they can compare the other organizations with their own organization. According to Gályász (2006) this is necessary because the leaders are able to solve a new problem or activity most successfully when they build on the wisdom: Learn from the fault of others – naturally within the framework of their own organizational possibilities. These possibilities were strongly influenced by economical environments of the area for example deficiency of capital and unsuitable financial and credit conditions (Oláh 2001). The carrying of the managing expectation in the direction of subordinate posts is a very important factor. Dajnoki (2006) identified that the efficiency of the forms of communication depends on many factors namely the organizational and managing features. In the given case the leaders always choose the most efficient form of the communication. Pakurár (2006), has verified the unity of the theory and practice when he established that the efficiency of the given communication form has positive correlation with the frequency of the application. According to Juhász, (2006) the expression of the opinions has strong influence on contentment management. For this reason we have to interpret another level of the contentment of the leaders like the subordinate post or worker contentment (Klein et al. 2001, Vántus 2007). The OSH contentment is a special stage within the framework of the general contentment of leaders and workers, and also one dimension of safety culture and climate. In this matter become amalgamated the accomplishment level of the related OSH managing and worker expectation. In addition there are the expectation of law and accountability which often, like sword of Damocles, hangs above the heads of leaders. Naturally the accountability divided – through the help of law, organizational culture, order of values and norms – among the workers and employees.

2. Material and methods

In this research I examined 18 agricultural juristic personality organizations in Hajdú-Bihar County. One of the main aim of the examination was to measure the safety climate related perceptions among leaders and employees. In order to do so, as an interviewer I conducted 230 personal interviews with farm workers and 46 interviews with farm leaders. To the interviews I used questionnaires which contain closed questions and establishments. One of the dimensions of the safety climate what the research examined was contentment with the OSH conditions. To the characterization and evaluation of the qualitative factors I used a Likert-type scale (-3...0...+3) (Malhotra 2005). In the scale the -3 value means the smallest contentment characteristic while the +3 value means the maximum contentment characteristic. The main consideration at compilation and arrangement of the questionnaire was to choose such agricultural organizations which have close connection with the examined OSH related safety climate dimensions. In addition I measured the participants' demographic characteristics.

3. Results and discussion

In order to contentment test – similarly attitude examinations – I constructed an index scale number. The interval of the scale is similar to the Likert-type scale. The scale is divided into interval contentment levels in accordance with the following degrees: from -3 to -2,6 extremely discontented; from -2,5 to -0,6 discontented; from -0,5 to +0,5 medium-level contented; from +0,6 to +2,5 high-level contented; from +2,6 to +3 extreme-level contented. The leaders and workers OSH related contentment estimations' summarized results are shown in *Table 1*.

Table 1. The leaders and workers OSH related contentment estimations summarized results in descending orders

Contentment with (the):	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. ... your fellow-workers readiness for to help each other	+1,17	1,397
2. ... relations between leaders and workers	+0,99	1,603
3. ... your own work-safety situation in which you are working now	+0,97	1,380
4. ... severity of OSH requirements	+0,88	1,446
5. ...work environment of this place compared with another workplaces	+0,78	1,486
6. ... cleanness of your work environment	+0,58	1,581
7. ... efforts for reduction of the monotonous work	+0,55	1,731
8. ... safety culture of your organization	+0,55	1,678
9. ... supply level of OSH equipment	+0,46	1,744
10. ... supply level of work-clothes	+0,42	2,083
11. ... effort to prevent the work related injuries and disorders	+0,31	1,722
12. ... general situation of agricultural workplace safety	+0,30	1,452
13. ... your own work environment effects on health	+0,08	1,743
Scale index (from -3 to +3)	+0,618	–

Source of data: own results 2009

Table 1. shows that the chosen contentment aspects mostly ask about the elements of official or formal and in a small part unofficial or informal organizational OSH related commitments and system (Gibbons von Thaden, & Wiegmann 2006). In this manner the elements that are asking formal organizational commitments are the 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13 numbered questions. While the elements that are asking the informal OSH related safety system are the 2, 5, and 12 numbered questions. In *Table 1* it appears that generally the farm-leaders and farm-workers are on a very high level of contentment in the case of OSH related informal safety commitment like the fellow-workers readiness to help each other (+1,17) and the safety related relations between farm-leaders and farm-workers (+0,99). But not negligible the objective factors of the official or formal organizational safety commitments like work-safety situation in which the employees working (+0,97) but similarly the severity of the OSH requirements (+0,88). From the factors of official or formal organizational safety commitments like supply level of OSH equipment and work-clothes average contentment level is characterized by the participants (+0,46 & +0,42).

The participants relatively least contented with the work environment effects on health (+0,08), the general situation of agricultural workplace safety (+0,30) and the effort to prevent the work related injuries and disorders (+0,31).

Overall, it can be concluded that the contentment as assessed by test is on the high level. The general index number is +0,618. This is slightly above the average scale interval value.

If you look at the standard deviations it can be seen that it is sufficiently high, especially in the case of the supply level of work-clothes. This suggests that the compliance with the organizational expectations is on a high level. Therefore, it is worth to explain the shown values relatively. So assume that some but not every participants gave higher value to factors according to what they really think. Therefore it could be concluded that the contentment is on a lower level than the test assessed. But the truth is that this statement cannot be proven by these test results. Surely only that can be maintained that the 48,9% of participant moderately or less contented with the supplying of work-clothes. If you separate the results of the estimations by participant group-status you can conclude that there are significant differences among the participants in some contentment-factors evaluation. *Table 2.* shows the separated results of the leaders and workers contentment estimations and the results of the variance analysis.

Table 2. The separated results of the leaders and workers contentment estimations and the results of the variance analysis

Contentment with (the);	Leaders N; 46		Workers N; 230		Total N; 276		B.w. gr. ¹
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Sign.
1. ... general situation of agricultural workplace safety	-0,15	1,264	+0,39	1,473	+0,30	1,452	0,029
2. ... your fellow-workers readiness for to help each other	+0,76	1,479	+1,25	1,369	+1,17	1,397	0,029
3. ... your own work-safety situation in which you are working now.	+0,89	1,120	+0,99	1,428	+0,97	1,380	0,669
4. ...severity of OSH requirements.	+0,63	1,372	+0,93	1,458	+0,88	1,446	0,200
5. ...relations between leaders and workers	+1,17	1,253	+0,95	1,665	+0,99	1,603	0,393
6. ...work environment of this place compared with another workplaces	+0,87	1,310	+0,77	1,520	+0,78	1,486	0,664
7. ...your own work environment effects on health	+0,26	1,373	+0,04	1,808	+0,08	1,743	0,432
8. ...cleanness of your work environment	+0,37	1,388	+0,62	1,616	+0,58	1,581	0,324
9. ...efforts to prevent the work related injuries and disorders	+0,76	1,303	+0,22	1,783	+0,31	1,722	0,052
10. ...supply level of OSH equipment	+0,67	1,415	+0,42	1,802	+0,46	1,744	0,363
11. ... supply level of work-clothes	+1,02	1,757	+0,30	2,125	+0,42	2,083	0,032
12. ...safety culture of your organization	+0,67	1,367	+0,52	1,735	+0,55	1,678	0,575
13. ...efforts for reduction of the monotonous work	+0,07	1,289	+0,65	1,793	+0,55	1,731	0,036
scale index (from -3 to +3)	+0,614	-	+0,619	-	+0,618	-	-

¹ between groups. – Source of data: own results 2009

In *Table 2.* it appears that the index numbers not shown significant differences. It appears and seems that the two groups are homogeneous. But as the table shows in some examined contentment-factors evaluation cases the opinions are not the same. Thus, the

leaders evaluated significantly lower the contentment with (the) general situation of agricultural workplace safety and the fellow-workers readiness for to help each other, than the workers do. In the first case it is supposable that the leaders have more information about the situations of country-wide agricultural work environments like the workers have. In the second case supposedly this contentment-factor as part of the informal commitment, the workers have more experiences and inside information of it, like the leaders have. And because the evaluation of the readiness to help always happened through self experiences supposedly the leaders got fewer help then the workers from each other or the leaders have a higher need in this regard. In many respects, this phenomenon is explained, with psychological approach, by the laws regularity of assistance. Such regularity for example is the norm of reciprocity like universal social behavioural principle (Triandis 1978). The leader as a member of a traditional type organization cannot afford to ask for help as often as workers do from each other. At the same time the leaders in their perceptions gave higher values to formal organizational factors like workers. In this manner the followings got higher values: the supply level of work-clothes, the organizational safety culture and efforts to prevent the work related injuries and disorders. So in this case the leaders have more contentment in their perceptions like workers and the workers are relatively more discontented then leaders with the formal safety related organizational factors. At the same time the workers significantly more contented with the organizational efforts for reduction of the monotonous work then leaders.

4. Conclusion

Generally verifiable that the farm-leaders and farm-workers are on a high level of contentment in the case of OSH related informal safety commitment like the fellow-workers readiness to help each other and the safety related relations between leaders and workers. As well as the OSH related contentment in the case of examined participants are on a high level. While it is true that it is slightly above the average scale-interval value. Compared the average contentment scale-values to the group's values it would seem that the two groups are homogeneous. But in some examined contentment-factors evaluation cases the opinions are significantly different among the two groups. The farm-leaders evaluated significantly lower the contentment with general situation of agricultural workplace safety and the fellow-workers readiness to help each other than the workers did. Supposedly the leaders have more comparing information about the organizational and general OSH situations and possibilities and it creates a modified perception about the related examined factors. On the other hand the workers are locked into their everyday situation much more than their leaders therefore they evaluate their own human relations and work environments with higher values.

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