

The Role of Workplace Well-being in Organizational Adaptation to Global Changes based on the Results of Research Conducted among Hungarian Enterprises

Улога благостања на радном месту у организационој адаптацији на глобалне промене на основу резултата истраживања спроведеног међу мађарским предузећима

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Abstract

Purpose: Our study aims to draw attention to the role and significance of the factors influencing workplace well-being and the relationships between them in the process of developing an organizational HR strategy. In our study, we will deal with the concept of workplace well-being, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and the effects of the relationships between dimensions on organizational operational efficiency.

Methodology: In a questionnaire survey conducted among enterprises operating in Hungary, we processed data from 205 respondents using computer-based mathematical and statistical methods.

Findings: The research results confirmed our hypothesis that workplace well-being and its determining factors are closely interconnected and have a significant impact on work motivation and job satisfaction.

Originality/Value: Based on the results, it is recommended to introduce interventions that increase work motivation and employee satisfaction, and to integrate well-being measures more closely into HR strategy.

Practical implications: The results of the article highlight that the complex interrelation of influencing factors of workplace well-being, job satisfaction, and work-life balance should not be treated separately, as it is clear from exploratory results that intervention in one factor has a direct impact on the others. Consequently, non-systematic treatment may lead to a counterproductive HR strategy.

Limitations: The results of our research, which cannot be considered representative, were influenced by the

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relatively low number of samples, which we are constantly expanding since our present study reports the first partial results of our research project.

Keywords: adaptation, employee satisfaction, global changes, work and family, workplace well-being

JEL classification: I31

Сажетак

Циљ: наше студије је да скрене пажњу на улогу и значај фактора који утичу на благостање на радном месту и односе између њих у процесу развоја организационе HR стратегије. У нашој студији ћемо се бавити концептом благостања на радном месту, равнотеже између посла и приватног живота, задовољства послом и ефектима односа између димензија на оперативну ефикасност организације.

Методологија: Наше истраживање има за циљ да скрене пажњу на истакнуту улогу коју благостање на радном месту игра у прилагођавању променама у спољашњем окружењу и задржавању радне снаге. У анкетном истраживању спроведеном међу предузећима која послују у Мађарској, обрадили смо податке од 205 испитаника користећи рачунарске математичко-статистичке методе.

Налази: Резултати истраживања потврдили су нашу хипотезу да су благостање на радном месту и његови одлучујући фактори уско повезани и да имају значајан утицај на мотивацију за рад и задовољство послом.

Оригиналност/вредност: На основу резултата, препоручује се увођење интервенција које повећавају мотивацију за рад и задовољство запослених, као и да се мере благостања ближе интегришу у HR стратегију.

Практична примена: Резултати чланка истичу да сложену међусобну повезаност фактора који утичу на благостање на радном месту, задовољство послом и равнотежу између посла и приватног живота не треба третирати одвојено, јер је из истраживачких резултата јасно да интервенција у једном фактору има директан утицај на друге. Сходно томе, несистематски третман може довести до контрапродуктивне HR стратегије.

Ограничења истраживања: На резултате нашег истраживања, који се не могу сматрати репрезентативним, утицао је релативно мали број узорака, који стално проширујемо откако наша садашња студија извештава о првим делимичним резултатима нашег истраживачког пројекта.

Кључне речи: адаптација, задовољство запослених, глобалне промене, посао и породица, благостање на радном месту

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Introduction

The intense changes taking place in the world and the new challenges they pose – including the problems of supply chains, the transition to digital technology, the lack of skilled labor, demographic restructuring or climate catastrophe – result in a continuous need for adaptation and growing economic uncertainty, making it increasingly important for organizations to retain a valuable workforce. Identifying the factors that influence the satisfaction and well-being of an adaptable, properly trained, well-motivated workforce places both work and private life dimensions in the focus of studies.

The most important domains of life are work and family, which often convey conflicting expectations towards the individual. Numerous studies have shown that the factors causing stress in the dimensions of work and personal life can lead to emotional exhaustion, burnout, dissatisfaction with work and life, a decrease in motivation and

performance, and the occurrence of work efficiency problems over time (Adame et al. 2016; Bakker et al. 2005; Firth-Cozens 2001).

The main factors that occur at the workplace and generate tension and conflict in the family and other areas of personal life are a lack of satisfaction with work, workplace stress, workplace burnout, and role conflict experienced in the work environment (Bakker et al. 2007; Ford et al. 2007).

Lack of work-life balance reduces the positive experience of well-being due to high psychological burden and the resulting mental exhaustion (Obrenovic et al. 2020), which can eventually lead to a decrease in performance (Donald et al. 2005; Harter et al. 2003). On the other hand, improving employees' job satisfaction can have a positive impact on overall well-being and life satisfaction, which can also enhance the level of commitment to work and the employer, while at the same time reducing the frequency and intensity of conflicts in private life and family environments (Voydanoff 2002; Eby et al. 2005).

Exploring the connections between workplace well-being and employee satisfaction can provide employers with important information for making decisions and taking measures related to attracting and retaining valuable, talented employees for the organization (Venczel-Szakó 2023).

Based on the above, we raised the following research questions:

Q1: What are the factors that influence well-being at work and job satisfaction, as well as the balance between family and work?

Q2: What specific connections and mutual effects can we identify from the relationships between the examined factors?

Q3: What guidance and suggestions do the identified relationships provide when shaping the human strategy of companies to increase the resilience of employees and organizations to the challenges arising from changes?

Our study aims to draw attention to the role and significance of the factors influencing workplace well-being and the relationships between them in the process of developing an organizational human strategy. The topicality of the research lies in the pressure to respond to tensions and new challenges generated as a result of the events taking place in an external environment burdened with turbulent changes on individuals, families, and organizations (Jarjabka 2001). Accordingly, in our study, we will deal with the concept of workplace well-being, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and the effects of the relationships between dimensions on organizational operational efficiency.

1. Literature review

1.1. Workplace well-being, quality of life at work

Research on workplace stress and employee satisfaction, and the concepts of quality of life and resilience, has provided the basis for studies related to the concept of workplace well-being in recent decades (Cox et al. 2000; Houtman et al. 2007). According to published results, workplace well-being and quality of life at work are strongly related to work motivation, commitment to the employer, and employee performance, as well as to job and life security, work-life balance, and well-being (Rethinam & Ismail 2008).

Myers and his colleagues contributed to expanding the meaning of the concept by creating a “Wheel of Wellness” model that includes seven different dimensions of an individual’s well-being at work – physical, environmental, professional, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual (Myers et al. 2000).

Seligman and Csíkszentmihályi identified five pillars of well-being – Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships Meaning, Accomplishment (PERMA) (Seligman 2011, 2018; Seligman & Csíkszentmihályi 2014).

According to Fisher, workplace well-being includes, in addition to cognitive judgments about work, positive feelings that provide a pleasant atmosphere and job satisfaction, as well as negative feelings experienced during work, such as feelings of isolation and alienation (Fisher 2014).

Workplace well-being is thus a complex concept represented by closely related concepts, areas of activity, and influencing factors, which include the environmental conditions at work (workplace safety, health, and ergonomics), the applied social interventions (supporting employees to maintain work-life balance, for example by using flexible working hours, teleworking or parental support programs) and inspiring and supportive management practices based on the recognition of employee performance, empathy, and cooperation. We can also mention here the interventions aimed at developing employee competencies to increase individual and organizational resilience (Bourbeau 2013; White & O’Hare 2014; Raab et al. 2015).

Through the above, the ultimate goal of enhancing workplace well-being, or, in other words, quality of life at work, is for employees to be satisfied, committed, and motivated at their workplace, which is reflected in their performance (Rethinam & Ismail 2008).

Based on the aforementioned factors and the relationships between them, we used Seligman's PERMA model to assess workplace well-being (Kun et al. 2017).

1.2. Work-life balance

Work-life balance can be defined as the compatibility of work-related and family-related roles and activities (Putra 2022). In practice, this means that meeting work-related expectations does not cause significant difficulties and conflicts in the family and that

meeting demands and expectations in private life do not lead to problems and tensions at work, which does not jeopardize taking steps towards the realization of personal career paths (Dennira & Ekowati 2020).

By implementing well-being measures, employers can contribute to reducing tensions arising from conflicts and crisis situations affecting employees, and can also influence work motivation, employee satisfaction, and, through this, performance and the effective achievement of organizational goals (Destilasilika & Perdhana 2023).

Nowadays, in the context of intense changes, crises, and conflicts, it has become increasingly problematic to achieve and maintain a balance between work and private life. Following the measures introduced in response to the pandemic (Dajnoki et al. 2023), due to ongoing technological changes the burden on employees is increasing, which significantly complicates the coordination of work and private life expectations, and the blurring of the boundary between the two spheres is also noticeable (Jarjabka et al. 2024).

The labor shortage, which is increasingly affecting developed countries in Europe, including Hungary, and also has an impact on organizational operational efficiency, has drawn attention to the need to retain valuable employees for employers by applying new types of incentive methods (Jarjabka et al. 2024).

Due to the above, studies on work-life balance, employee satisfaction, and, in connection with these, workplace well-being raise current and relevant questions and problems that need to be addressed both within scientific and policy frameworks (Nagy et al. 2018). When exploring the connections between work and private life, we used the questionnaire of Makra et al. (2012).

1.3. Connections between job satisfaction and workplace well-being

Empirical studies have shown that job satisfaction is associated with increased work motivation and performance, and improved workplace well-being, and through all of these, it can have a positive impact on productivity (Robertson & Taylor 2008).

According to Klein, job satisfaction is determined by various factors, such as individual (personality, attitude, interest, education, intelligence, etc.), social (collegial relationships, cooperation opportunities), as well as cultural (values, habits, views), organizational (organization size, characteristics of human resource management, leadership) and environmental (economic, social, environmental and technological) factors (Klein & Klein 2020).

The starting point for the study by Imola Csóka and Tamás Szőke (2020) focusing on job satisfaction and its determinants was provided by the work-related data for 2015, relevant to Hungary, taken from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) covering 37 countries. Their results show a strong relationship between job satisfaction and variables related to workplace flexibility, such as the possibility of working from home, flexible

working hours, and task organization (Csóka & Szóke 2020). The results of studies conducted in this area show that job satisfaction is closely related to individual performance and work quality, which directly affect the effectiveness of the organization (Sypniewska 2014).

In our research, we used the Mueller and McKloskey satisfaction questionnaire to identify job satisfaction (Lee et al. 2016).

2. Material and method

2.1. Literature research and processing

We examined workplace well-being and other related concepts in the Hungarian and international literature using the so-called rapid evidence assessment method. We searched and collected scientific publications related to the topic in Hungarian and English in electronic databases, such as Google Scholar, Wiley, Sage Journals, Springer, Scopus, Ovid, EBSCO, ERIC, Sociological Abstracts, Web of Science, ResearchGate. During the systematic review, we focused primarily on the concept of workplace well-being, but our search terms also included keywords like satisfaction with life and work, work-family and work-life balance, quality of life at work, as well as Hungarian and English terms with similar meanings to the aforementioned.

The publications collected during the empirical literature review were categorized according to the search terms. Our study aimed to create a relevant database while also performing a thematic mapping of research related to the topic.

2.2. Data collection and processing

During the data collection, we used a complex, online questionnaire compiled from validated questionnaires taken from previous research on the areas of study covered in this article. This methodological innovation allowed us to explore and analyze the correlations between the study dimensions and the multiple factors related to them on a broader scale, which has led to new research results.

The online questionnaire compiled in Google Forms, in addition to general sociodemographic questions, included questions exploring the relationship between work and family, for which we used the validated measurement tool presented in the publication "Hungarian validation of work-family conflict and factors affecting work-family balance" (Makra et al., 2012). Employee satisfaction was assessed using the (also validated) "Satisfaction Questionnaire" by Mueller and McKloskey (Lee et al., 2016) in the complex questionnaire. The third dimension of the study, workplace well-being, was compiled in accordance with the validated measurement tool based on the Hungarian adaptation of Seligman's PERMA Model (Kun et al., 2017).

When studying the development history of workplace well-being systems in Hungary, we focused primarily on large and medium-sized enterprises in terms of the

number of employees, assuming that in these cases, we are more likely to find workplace well-being policies and measures integrated at the strategic and operational levels.

After the data collection, a total of 205 evaluable questionnaires were selected and then forwarded for computer statistical processing (SPSS). In addition to basic descriptive statistical calculations, we examined the existence and strength of relationships between different factors using a correlation matrix.

3. Results

The results obtained using basic statistics provide detailed insight into various aspects of workplace well-being, including work and family conflicts, job and life satisfaction, as well as the impact of workplace conditions and relationships on workers' quality of life. (Table 1).

Table 1: The results of the survey on corporate well-being using basic statistics

Variables	N	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Family conflict arising from work (FW)	205	3,75	4,00	5,00	1,20
Work conflict arising from family (WF)	205	4,25	4,60	5,00	0,95
Involvement in the family (IF)	205	3,55	3,65	4,35	1,20
Involvement in work (IW)	205	2,50	2,65	2,35	1,05
Job satisfaction (JS)	205	3,50	3,90	3,90	1,30
Life satisfaction (LS)	205	2,85	3,00	3,35	1,15
Workplace culture and conditions (Sat_WorkCultCond)	205	3,00	3,05	2,40	1,20
Balance of family and work (Sat_SchedulingAndFamilyWorkBalance)	205	3,75	4,05	4,05	1,00
Collegial relations (Sat_CollegialRelation)	205	2,95	3,00	2,50	1,15
External rewards (Sat_ExtrRew)	205	3,20	3,35	3,75	1,15
Professional opportunities (Sat_ProfOpp)	205	2,50	2,50	2,50	1,40
Positive emotions (WorkSat_PositiveEmotions)	205	3,45	3,45	3,15	1,10
Deepening (WorkSat_Deepening)	205	3,25	3,45	3,45	1,15
Positive relations (WorkSat_PositiveRelations)	205	3,60	3,65	3,65	1,10
Meaning (WorkSat_Meaning)	205	3,50	3,35	3,35	1,15
Performance, success (WorkSat_PerformanceSuccess)	205	3,35	3,35	4,00	1,05
Negative aspects of work (WorkSat_WorkNegativeAspects)	205	3,25	3,35	2,50	1,15

Source: based on own data

After transforming the values of the variables obtained from the different factors onto a scale from 1 to 5, the results became comparable. The highest average value is

shown by the “Work conflict arising from family” (WF) (4.25), which indicates that a significant proportion of the participants feel that family obligations negatively affect their work. Its low standard deviation (0.95) also confirms that the opinion on this issue is relatively uniform.

From the strong standard deviation (1.40) observed for the “Professional opportunities” (Sat_ProfOpp) indicator we can conclude that the respondents judge their own career opportunities very differently. This significant variation clearly indicates that the opportunities for professional development are not defined specifically enough, and some may experience significant obstacles in this area.

The relatively high average value of “Balance of family and work” (Sat_SchedulingAndFamilyWorkBalance) (3.75) shows an interesting contrast with the same average value of “Family conflict arising from work” FW: 3.75), which demonstrates the contradictory relationship between work and family, the fragile nature of the balance between them, as a result of which conflict situations can often occur.

Overall, the data suggest that the relationship between family and work is a significant source of conflict for respondents, while their assessment of job satisfaction is mixed. The perception of “Professional opportunities” varies greatly, and “Positive emotions about work” and “Performance” (WorkSat_PositiveEmotions: 3.45; WorkSat_PerformanceSuccess: 3.35) are not outstanding either. All this suggests that the respondents’ work-related engagement and satisfaction are not balanced and that family-work conflicts are particularly determining factors in terms of employee well-being.

The correlation matrix was used to examine the relationships between different factors (Table 2.). The results reveal significant connections between several factors, in particular between “Work conflict arising from family”, “Job Satisfaction”, and “Balance of family and work”. In the following analysis, several factor groups can be identified based on the correlation matrix, which are interrelated but belong to different dimensions. These are as follows.

With regard to “Family conflict arising from work” (FW) and “Work conflict arising from family” (WF), a strong, significant positive relationship can be observed between the variables ($r = 0.590$, $p < 0.01$), which indicates that those who experience conflicts between the two areas of life more intensely may experience that the conflict in one direction is strongly associated with the conflict in the other direction.

Regarding the impact of both types of conflict on “Job and life satisfaction”, it can be stated that they are negatively and significantly correlated with job (JS) and life satisfaction (LS), as well as with dimensions measuring positive experiences at work (e.g. Positive Emotions, Deepening, Positive Relations). This suggests that conflicts significantly reduce the satisfaction and positive psychological state of employees.

This group contains several highly correlated variables. The variables “Job Satisfaction” (JS) and “Life Satisfaction” (LS) show a negative, significant correlation with

conflicts. Positive workplace experiences contribute significantly to job satisfaction, while negative experiences resulting from the aforementioned conflicts have the opposite effect.

“Workplace Culture and Conditions” (Sat_WorkCultCond) and “Balance of family and work” (Sat_Scheduling AndFamily WorkBalance) are strongly positively related to other positive dimensions (e.g. JS, LS, Collegial Relations, External Rewards), suggesting that a supportive work environment and appropriate scheduling and balancing of family roles are key to enhancing employee satisfaction.

Table 2: Correlation matrix of the workplace well-being survey

ID	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1	Family conflict arising from work (FW)	1															
2	Work conflict arising from family (WF)	0,59 0**	1														
3	Involvement in the family (IF)	0,04 8	0,00 2	1													
4	Involvement in work (IW)	0,02 0	0,09 9	0,0 24	1												
5	Job satisfaction (JS)	0,53 4**	0,37 1**	0,0 89	0,25 1**	1											
6	Life satisfaction (LS)	0,37 4**	0,24 8**	0,1 35	0,23 8**	0,44 0**	1										
7	Workplace culture and conditions (Sat_WorkCultCond)	0,33 7**	0,26 6**	0,0 81	0,16 1*	0,60 8**	0,48 7**	1									
8	Balance of family and work (Sat_Scheduling AndFamily WorkBalance)	0,48 5**	0,34 5**	0,0 45	0,14 3*	0,44 4**	0,38 0**	0,56 9**	1								
9	Collegial relations (Sat_Collegial Relation)	0,42 6**	0,27 5**	0,0 34	0,14 4*	0,53 6**	0,46 1**	0,72 8**	0,64 7**	1							
10	External rewards (Sat_ExtrRew)	0,40 9**	0,25 3**	0,0 01	0,16 8*	0,54 3**	0,51 1**	0,63 2**	0,66 7**	0,68 1**	1						
11	Professional opportunities (Sat_ProfOpp)	0,32 2**	0,24 2**	0,0 16	0,20 0**	0,47 3**	0,38 9**	0,55 1**	0,39 7**	0,57 5**	0,54 2**	1					
12	Positive emotions (WorkSat_PositiveEmotions)	0,49 6**	0,37 4**	0,0 51	0,30 6**	0,63 6**	0,41 6**	0,56 1**	0,44 7**	0,53 2**	0,54 4**	0,50 2**	1				

During the parallel examination of the different areas of study represented by the three sets of questions, the correlations between the factors related to them produced results that went beyond the individual blocks of study. Based on all this, it is important to emphasize that workplace well-being is a complex, multidimensional construct, which is determined by conflicts, the quality of the work environment, work-family balance, and interpersonal and psychological experiences (Raab et al. 2015).

The results clearly highlight that reducing conflicts and promoting a supportive work environment are key to increasing the overall satisfaction perceived by employees. The analysis confirms that the different dimensions of workplace well-being are closely related to each other and that improving one factor can have a positive impact on other areas.

Since workplace well-being can significantly contribute to employee satisfaction and thus to increased work performance, it is recommended that the well-being strategy created to reconcile work and family expectations be closely integrated with the HR strategy (Jarjabka 2001). Workplace well-being, job satisfaction, and work-life balance should not be treated separately, as it is clear from exploratory results that intervention in one factor has a direct impact on the others. Consequently, non-systematic treatment may lead to a counterproductive HR strategy. Strategies to motivate employees and increase their satisfaction and well-being are key to creating a supportive and dynamic work environment. These factors play a significant role in increasing employee engagement and productivity.

The results of our research, which cannot be considered representative, were influenced by the relatively low number of samples, which we are constantly expanding since our present study reports the first partial results of the aforementioned research project. Increasing the number of samples may also open up the possibility of applying higher-level statistical methodology and further correlations, which will facilitate the development of implications for various actors (management, higher education actors involved in HR education, corporate HR professionals, consultants, and policymakers).

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