

EMPLOYEES SATISFACTION IN WOOD PROCESSING PLANTS IN SLOVAKIA AND CROATIA

DENIS JELAČIĆ – VIERA GALAJDOVÁ – ANDREA SUJOVÁ

Abstract

This research was conducted to establish and to analyze the level of satisfaction of employees in wood processing and furniture manufacturing companies in Slovak Republic and in the Republic of Croatia. Research was conducted using method of survey. In three survey questionnaires total of 14 questions were asked. Questionnaire had questions regarding relationships among employees within work environment. Total of 800 production workers and 60 management and administrative employees were surveyed in 3 companies of wood processing and furniture manufacturing in Croatia and total of 100 production workers and 40 management and administrative employees were surveyed in Slovakian enterprises. Production workers and management in Slovakia and Croatia both, are most displeased with their salaries and with possibilities for those salaries to grow. Production results are highly dependable on employees satisfaction, so this kind of research is necessary if wood processing and furniture manufacturing company wants to increase the production results and competitive strength on international market.

Key words: motivation, employees satisfaction, wood processing and furniture manufacturing.

Classification JEL: M12 – Personnel Management

1. Introduction

Wood processing and furniture manufacturing of the Republic of Croatia and in Slovak Republic are among most important industrial branches which are highly export oriented. About 23.000 employees in wood processing and furniture manufacturing in Croatia, which is about 8 % of total number of employees in industry, make total annual income over 800 million EUR. In Slovakia there are about 30.000 employees in wood processing and furniture manufacturing which is close to 7 % of total number of employees in industry. At the same time, that industrial branche participate in total export of the Republic of Croatia with about 9.5 %, and over 10 % in Slovakia. In Gross Domestic Product of Croatia wood processing and furniture manufacturing participate with about 5 %. Situation in Slovakia is similar [4].

Beside influencing technical-technological factors, one of the most influencing factors for quality production result is certainly employees satisfaction. Satisfied employees come to work with enthusiasm and wish to fulfill their daily duties on satisfying way, because it guarantees that their production and business results will be on the level required. Also, it guarantees that their satisfaction with production results, and by that their salaries, will be higher. On the other hand, employees who are not satisfied hardly fulfill their obligations, so their production results are at much lower level then firm and market require. Business results can not be on the level required, so the salaries of such employees are lower. In that circle it is important to realize which motivation factors can encourage employees to work with more enthusiasm and wish to success.

In this research we were trying to find out which motivation factors directly or indirectly influence on work quality and satisfaction of employees in wood processing and furniture manufacturing plants. We wanted to establish were the motivation factors important to production plant employees equally important to management and to administrative staff in firms. Satisfaction with work, work environment, social and other conditions are factors that highly contribute to production and business results, so the goal of this research was to establish

how much are certain employees satisfied with conditions they work in, with their salaries, with their free time, ergonomic and other factors.

2. Problem and aim of the research

Employees motivation to achieve quality production process result plays important role in human resource management. Different motivation factors have different influence on employees motivation. Nowadays enterpreneurial practice often underestimate the influence of motivation and motivation factors, so they are not considered enough in human resource management [1].

Motivation is considered as readiness to do something and it is influenced by suitability of that action to satisfy the needs of a person. The need is physiological or psychological lack that makes some goals attractive [8]. Unsatisfied need creates tension which stimulates motives inside a person. Those motives create need to find certain goals which, if achieved, will satisfy the need and lead to tension decrease.

Motivated employees are in a state of tension. To decrease the tension, they take some activities. The higher the tension, the more activities are required to decrease it. Therefore, when employees are doing some activity enthusiastically, it can be concluded that wish to achieve the worthy goal is pushing them, i.e. they are motivated.

Probably the best known motivation theory was given by A. Maslow. He set the thesis that there is a hierarchy of five needs inside every human being [5]:

- Physiological needs.
- Needs for safety.
- Social needs.
- Needs for reputation.
- Needs for achievement.

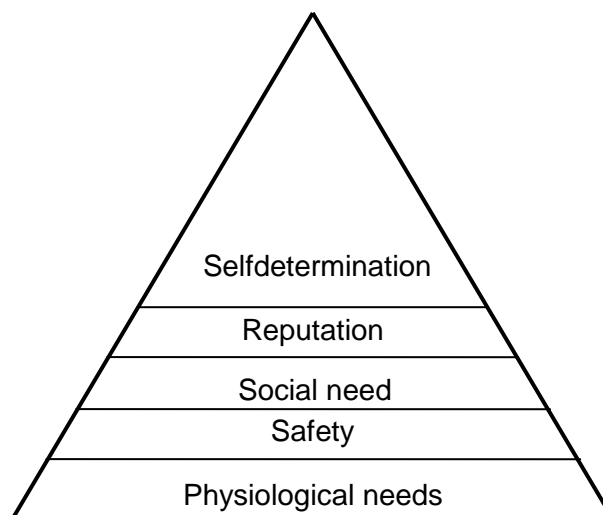


Figure 1. Maslow needs hierarchy

Two theories were given by D. McGregor, who placed positive and negative in every human being into Theory X and Theory Y [6], and by F. Herzberg, who gave the theory „Motivation – hygiene“, which is based on how a person relates to a job.

Modern motivation theories give more detailed explanations of employees motivation. One of theories was given by D. McClelland who thinks that there are three main motives or need on a working post:

- Needs to achieve.
- Needs for power.
- Needs to belong.

Beside that theory, there are following theories: Theory of setting goals, Theory of reinforcement, Theory of impartiality and Theory of expectations [10, 11, 9].

Employees motivation is one of the most important factor of increasing the productivity of a person or a group in production and business process. Therefore, the goal of this research was to analyze different motivation factors for particular groups of employees, to establish their influence on production and business process efficiency, and to establish the satisfaction of employees with the current situation in Slovakian and Croatian wood processing and furniture manufacturing enterprises.

3. Research methods

Research method consisted of gathering the information regarding employees motivation factors through a survey with questionnaire in which total of 14 questions were asked. Questionnaire consisted of questions regarding relationships within the working environment. Total of 800 direct production employees and 60 employees on management and administrative working posts were surveyed in 3 wood processing and furniture manufacturing firms in Croatia. At the same time total of 100 direct production employees and 40 employees on management and administrative working posts were surveyed in Slovakia. Questionnaire is shown in further text.

QUESTIONNAIRE

For every question circle one of the given answers.

1. What is your relationship with the firm?

- A. Satisfied to work here
- B. I have to work somewhere
- C. I would rather work in a better firm.

2. Are you satisfied with your current work?

- A. Yes, I love my work
- B. I do what I am asked to do
- C. My job is not interesting.

3. Do you think to change the work?

- A. No, I am satisfied
- B. I want to stay here and prosper
- C. I want to do the same in other firm
- D. I want to change my work and a firm both.

4. How would you mark your working post?

- A. More demanding then my qualifications
- B. Satisfied with my working post
- C. My working post does satisfy me.

5. How would you mark your work occupiers you?

- A. Not to busy, satisfied
- B. What is asked of me, suits me
- C. Demands are too high.

6. How would you mark you work environment?

- A. Satisfied with my environment
- B. It should be better and nicer
- C. It is not important to me.

7. How are you satisfied with your salary?

- A. Very satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. It is sufficient
- D. Not satisfied
- E. Very unsatisfied.

8. How would mark the possibility for your salary to grow?

- A. It is beyond my expectations
- B. It suits my expectations completely
- C. Not satisfying.

9. How are you satisfied with your colleagues?

- A. Very satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Moderately satisfied
- D. Unsatisfied
- E. Very unsatisfied.

10. Are there possibilities for further education and promotion?

- A. Possibilities are higher then my expectations
- B. Possibilities match my expectations
- C. Not interested in further education.

11. Do you receive information from your superiors on time?

- A. Yes, clear and on time
- B. Mostly on time
- C. Superiors do not give enough information
- D. Superiors do not give me information at all.

12. Do you know about the advantages your firm offers to employees?

- A. I know all about them
- B. I know most of them
- C. I know just a few of them
- D. I don't know anything about it.

13. Do you receive praises from your superiors for your work achievements?

- A. Yes, suitable and sufficient
- B. Sometimes I receive praise
- C. No, my superior doesn't do that.

14. Does your superior criticize your work?

- A. No, my superior doesn't do that
- B. He criticize when necessary, only on mistake
- C. He criticizes all the time and for no reason.

Information gathered by particular questionnaires were processed and analyzed with usual statistical methods and the results were presented graphically. The arithmetic average and frequency distribution of particular values were established.

4. Research results

Survey was conducted in three different wood processing and furniture manufacturing firm in different regions of the Republic of Croatia and in Slovak Republic. Total of 800 direct production workers and 60 management and administrative employees of those firms were surveyed in Croatia and total of 100 direct production workers and 40 management and administrative employees were surveyed in Slovakia.

Questionnaire was looking for the answers on how are employees satisfied with the general situation in enterprise. Questions asked in that questionnaire should have given answers regarding relationships employee – enterprise, employee – work, employee – work environment, employee – internal relationships and employee – salary. What are the relationships in wood processing and furniture manufacturing firms in total and in particular enterprise is shown in following table.

Presented graphs clearly show that production workers in Croatia are much less satisfied with relationships in general. The percentage of very satisfied and satisfied employees with relationships within the firms among management and administrative employees is significantly higher then among production workers.

However, what is interesting is the salary, i.e. the possibility of its growth. Even 80 % of production workers and almost 50 % of management and administrative employees are unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with their salaries, while 78 % of production workers and even 66 % of management and administrative employees find the possibility of its growth unsatisfactory.

The situation with salaries and possibilities of its growth is similar in Slovakia. Almost 77 % of production workers and 43 % of management and administrative employees are unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with their salaries. The possibility of the salaries growth is unsatisfactory for 63 % of production workers and for 37 % of management and administrative employees.

Second cause of displeasure with relationships and situation within firms, for production workers as well as for management and administrative employees in Croatia, is not enough knowledge on advantages firms are offering to their employees, which is connected to information of employees within the firm are provided with. Almost 85 % of production workers and 57 % of management and administrative employees don't know anything or know very little about advantages enterprises are offering to their employees. In Slovakia, management and administrative employees are not pleased with the possibilities of further education and promotion at work.

The most disturbing for Croatian enterprises is the fact that even 21 % of production workers are willing to change the work and enterprise they are working in (4 % of that would like to change the firm but to stay in the same industrial branch, while even 17 % would like to change the firm and work). The percentage among management and administrative employees is 8 % (4 % would like to change just the firm, and 4 % would like to change the firm and work both).

The situation in Slovakia is even worse. Almost 30 % of production workers are willing to change the work and enterprise they working in (23 % would like to change the firm and the work both, and 7 % would like to change the firm only). Among management and administrative employees that percentage is 33 % (22 % would like to change all, 11 % would change just the enterprise).

Table 1. Questionnaire – employees satisfaction with relationships within the firm

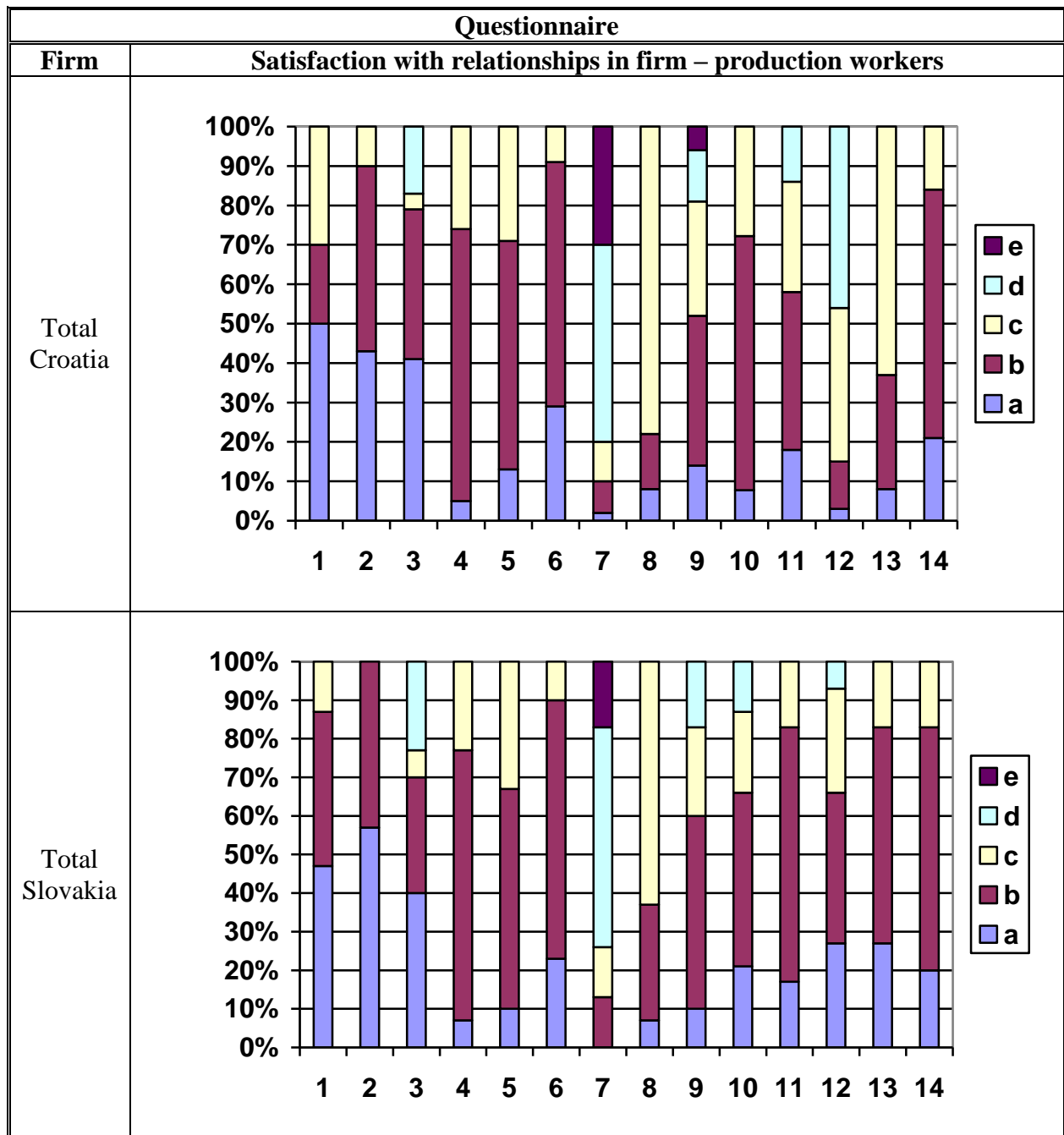
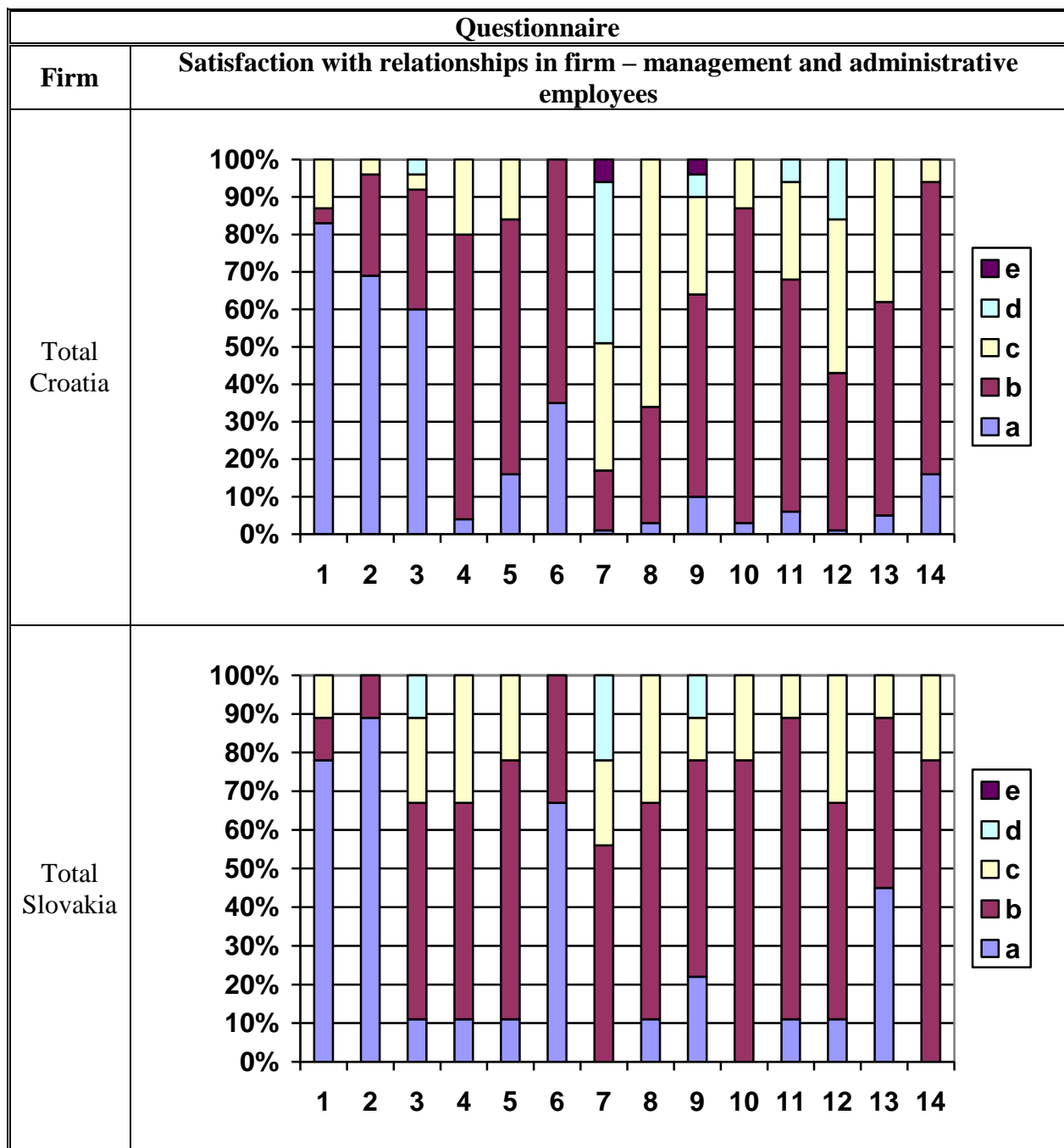


Table 2. Questionnaire – employees satisfaction with relationships within the firm



5. Discussion and conclusion

Analysis of given research data and results showed that employees in wood processing and furniture manufacturing, no matter on which work post are they working on, are most satisfied with the fact that they are members of particular enterprise. Most of employees are satisfied with the work place safety, public enterprise reputation and relationships with the enterprise. Those motivation factors are among those employees marked as the most important, with which they are satisfied with, on their work posts and in their firms. In these turbulent times for our economies, when relationships within industrial branches are changing rapidly, safety of long

term employment is one of the most important motivation factors and employees in wood processing and furniture manufacturing are marking it very positively.

Employees are most displeased with nourishment and with recreation space within the firm, i.e. with satisfying the basic physiological need. They are also unsatisfied with their salaries and possibilities for those salaries to grow. Although it is known that salaries in wood processing and furniture manufacturing are not high and that the economic situation in the Republic of Croatia is unenviable, the fact that even 80 % of production workers are not satisfied with their salaries is very disturbing. Especially if that fact is connected to the fact that 21 % of production workers are willing to change the work and the firm. The situation in Slovakia is even worse regarding salaries and willingness to leave the enterprise. Almost 30 % of Slovakian production workers in wood processing and furniture manufacturing firms is willing to change the work and the firm as well. At the same time 33 % of Slovakian management and administrative employees would like to change the work and the firm both.

Wood processing and furniture manufacturing, as one of the strategically interesting industrial branches in Slovakia and Croatia both, should put more effort to quality and in long term motivate their employees to stay on their working places and to contribute to development and growth of the enterprise as well as the industrial branch. One of the main roles should have internal relationships within the firm and satisfaction with co-workers on the work posts as well as quality satisfying the basic physiological needs of employees within the enterprise. Beside that, if wood processing and furniture manufacturing is among strategically important and if it is of the state interest, then it should be of countries interest to have satisfied and motivated employees which will bring wood processing and furniture manufacturing industrial branch to places it deserves.

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Address of authors:

Assoc. prof. Denis JELAČIĆ, PhD.
Department for production organization
Faculty of Forestry
Svetošimunska 25
HR-10000 Zagreb
HR
e-mail: jelacic@sumfak.hr

Assis. prof. Viera GALAJDOVÁ, PhD.
Wood science and technology department
Technical University Zvolen
Masarykova 24/2117
960 01 Zvolen
Slovakia
e-mail: vgalajda@vsld.tuzvo.sk

Assis. prof. Andrea SUJOVÁ, PhD.
Technical University Zvolen
Wood science and technology department
Masarykova 24/2117
960 01 Zvolen
Slovakia
e-mail: sujova@vsld.tuzvo.sk