

MANAGERIAL DECISION MAKING IN MOTIVATE AS SUPPORT FOR SAFE AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR AT PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract. Paper deals with creating conditions for building a safe and ethical work environment and behaviour at public universities in Slovak Republic through the quality managerial decision-making in motivating employees/academicians. An assumption is that only motivated teachers and managers are able and willing to maintain all policies and security features that are necessary for good functioning of the universities. The examination of this issue was carried out through a content analysis of the documentation capturing the managerial decisions of 20 public universities in Slovak Republic. The documentation examined was focused on the ethical behaviour of employees, the quality of higher education, and strategic management and development of human potential. It is these three areas or perspectives that unify a comprehensive view on management decisions in motivational processes. Results of the analysis confirm our assumption that the management systems of universities show some imperfections. These include, in particular, inadequate interpersonal (motivational, communication, leadership) competencies of university managers.

Keywords: content analysis, public universities, managerial decision making, motivation, motivating, university teachers, ethical code.

INTRODUCTION

Security at public higher education institutions in the Slovak Republic is ensured through their employees, namely university teachers, managers, as well as other administrative staff. On the one hand, it is the safety of students (ensuring the quality of their education) and, on the other hand, the safety of the university teachers themselves and the managers. To ensure that all university staff are motivated to maintain such security, it is necessary for university managers to make good and effective decisions, particularly in the field of employee motivation. Moreover, in order for these processes to be performed and implemented in a binding way, it is necessary for public higher education institutions to have detailed documentation that regulates the motivation processes and improves relevant managerial decision-making.

The aim of this article is to analyse the level and application of managerial decision-making in motivation at public higher education institutions in Slovak Republic through a content analysis of documentation focused on the management and development of human potential. It is in the selected documentation of universities that it is possible to reveal whether managerial decisions are made in the motivational process and whether other management decisions are also made that do not directly derive from the motivation process, but influence the motivation of academicians and the development of their potential.

Methodology of the Research. The basic set of surveys consists of all documents of public universities regulating the employment relationship of employees and universities, codes of ethics, strategic management and development of human potential, documents describing university culture, rules of safe behavior, and so on. The actual analysis is performed in the selected samples of documents that constitute a representative sample of the basic set.

Three analytical categories were created for a closer look, namely the perspective focused on the quality of higher education, the code of ethics, and the area of strategic development of human potential. In each perspective, we have defined specific indicators that are a semantic unit of each analytical category.

DECISION MAKING IN MOTIVATING

Decision-making in motivate is the complex process of implementation of a series of successive steps by which the manager searches, compares and selects appropriate solutions, through which it will be possible to do motivational process really interesting and beneficial for all employees.¹ These are the decisions about their own behaviour and influence on others, decisions on how to lead their subordinate employees and choose motivational tools to motivate them to be their motivation harmonized with growth trend and beneficial for meet the needs of all stakeholders and increase the success of the organisation. All decisions must be carefully considered in view of the unique personality and individuality of each employee.²

Decision-making is an important cross-cutting management process, a managerial function, a priority of the manager's activities in all organizations and at all levels of management. It is overwhelmed by the entire management process, all management functions and all the executive functions of organizations.^{3, 4, 5}

¹ Burstein F., Holsapple, W. Handbook on decision support systems 1. Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 2008

² Alexy, J. Knowledge management and organisation behaviour. Bratislava: Ekonom, 2011

³ Mišún, J., Mišúnová, K., Hudáková, I. Management control. Bratislava: Kartprint, 2017

⁴ Bajcura, A. Management. Organisation management. Bratislava: Kasico, 2012

⁵ Organ, D. W., Bateman, T. S. Organizational Behavior. 4th ed. Irwin, 1991

When the public universities carry out decisions involving complex issues – issues and decisions concerning the motivation, it is necessary that the decisions involve all decision-making skills and opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary for such decisions to make effective use of the attributes of a comprehensive decision-making process to improve the quality of all decisions taken.^{6, 7} The complexity and completeness of decision-making predetermines the achievement of long-term excellent results: strong enough and properly targeted motivation, and thus the sustained success of the organisation. It is a principle that the decision-maker must have at least some knowledge on the given phenomenon because otherwise s/he is not able to make reasonable and justifiable decisions.^{8, 9}

Nowadays it is possible to see how the decision-making in organisations changes from an instinctive ‘art’ to a decisions driven by data, facts, and information^{10, 11, 12, 13} using different methods, analyses, and computational techniques. As people are getting more and more demanding, not only from the viewpoint of customers but also from the viewpoint of employees, their demands are becoming more and more challenging and changing rapidly. If the employer cannot meet the needs, desires and needs of its management and executive employees, their motivation quickly drops and thus also decrease their total (dispositive) performance. The decreasing motivation of employees as well as managers suggests an ineffective motivation process. *Inappropriate managerial decisions may, in particular, result in the failure of process of motivate.* Managerial decisions made in the motivation process can be seen and analysed within the university environment from the *relevant documentation*. These include, especially, the code of ethics, documents on the quality improvement of higher education, and documents on strategic management and the development of human potential.

The *code of ethics* is a set of generally accepted and generally applied moral norms, ideals and principles of the public higher education institution which they are intended for. These elements go beyond the legally regulated laws. It is one of the most important ways of

⁶ Broggi, G. Decision Modeling in Policy Management: An introduction to the analytic concepts. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999

⁷ Klein, D. Decision-analytic intelligent systems: Automated explanation and knowledge acquisition. Lawrence Erlbaum, 1994

⁸ Thierauf, R. Creative computer software for strategic thinking and decision making: A guide for senior management and MIS professionals. Quorum Books, 1993

⁹ Chako, G. K. Decision making under uncertainty: An applied statistics approach. New York: Praeger, 1991

¹⁰ Brynjolfsson, E., Hitt, L. M., Kim, H. H. Strength in numbers: How does data-driven decisionmaking affect firm performance? Online, 2011

¹¹ Davenport, T. H. BI and organizational decisions. International Journal of Business Intelligence Research, 2010, 1(1), 1–12

¹² May, T. The new know: innovation powered by analytics. Hoboken: Wiley & Sons, 2009

¹³ Majtán, M. Management. 2nd ed. Bratislava: Sprint, 2005

introducing ethics into everyday life and guiding the behaviour of members of a particular organisation. It should also reflect the specifics of the organisations and be based on the needs of the organisation/institution for which it was established.¹⁴

The documents aimed at enhancing the quality of higher education are focused on practical and research modelling the process of improving the quality of higher education by defining and verifying the quality indicators in the context of a diversified approach which includes the identification of barriers (institutional, national and supranational), including defining options for their removal in compliance with the existing quality assurance legislation (in the country concerned).¹⁵

The strategic management and development of highly qualified human potential is mostly at universities included in long-term plans as a separate part. It mostly focuses on raising the qualification level of teachers, matching the number and qualifications of the staff so that each job is filled by qualified candidates, and so on.¹⁶

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis of texts is a method that is applied to all research procedures in which it is working with the word (analysis of questionnaires, transcripts of interviews, observation protocol, etc.). But also it represents a particular research method for the analysis of text documents. By analogy with the content analysis of verbal text page, there is also an analysis of nonverbal products – pictures, diagrams, graphs and so on.¹⁷ Content analysis of texts consists of determining a research sample, choosing a meaningful content unit, determining analytical categories, quantifying analytical categories, and interpreting the observed frequencies.^{18, 19} Reliability of content analysis is usually determined by the degree of matched analysis results of two or more trained people. This match level is determined for each analytical category and for all categories in a set.²⁰ Content analysis has been used in our research to

¹⁴ Sičáková, E., Zemanovičová, D. Conflict of interests, ethics and code of ethics in public administration. Prešov: Róbert Vico, 2000

¹⁵ Hašková, A. et al. Information and internal quality assurance in European and Slovak higher education institutions. Drivers and barriers to achieving quality in higher education. Rotterdam: Springer, 2014, 99–107

¹⁶ Ondek, P. et al. Designing a strategy for the development of Slovak higher education. Bratislava, 2017

¹⁷ Gavora, P. Introduction to pedagogical research. 2nd ed. Bratislava: Univerzita Komenského, 1999

¹⁸ Charmaz, K. Qualitative interviewing and grounded theory analysis. In J. F. Gubrium and J. A. Holstein (Eds.). Handbook of interview research: Context method. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002, 675–694

¹⁹ Charmaz, K. Grounded theory in the 21st century: Applications for advancing social justice studies. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.). The Sage handbook of qualitative research Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005, 507–535

²⁰ Proška, Hedl et al. Methodology of pedagogical research and its application in didactic natural sciences. Bratislava: Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave, 2008

analyse documents of public universities and its results were being compared with the opinion of other two independent researchers.

In this regard, a great advantage of the content analysis is its *independence* from time and space. Therefore, it can help investigate the events that have been done, as well as motions at all public higher education institutions, without the research being deprived of being absent from the scene.²¹ The main advantage is an independence from the presence of persons other than the researcher. It is therefore a simple interaction between the researcher and the researched object. This is also the method that is ethically neutral because it does not directly explore the behaviour of individuals but the subsequent artefacts of that behaviour.²² Another advantage of the content analysis is its combinability with other methods which makes it possible to predict the consequences of the phenomena studied.

RESEARCH

In our previous related surveys, the tertiary education segment clearly showed a lack of motivation from university management and a strong need for motivation from employees. In particular, universities are staffed with high and permanently upgraded qualifications, i.e. highly qualified human potential work here. This human potential is very specific and needs to be intensively motivated.

Through the content analysis, it is possible to obtain a relevant background material for assessing the current situation regarding managerial decision-making in employee motivation, as these documents has been selected to include individual management decisions regarding employees and the development of their potential.

The content analysis is based on the theoretical knowledge of the studied subject; a qualitative analysis of the content of documentation focused on the management and development of human potential, which public higher education institutions have been prepared and published on their website, has been chosen for a closer examination. In the documents, the dichotomy of indicators in the individual analytical categories and the frequency of analytical category are monitored in an absolute and relative frequency. In this way, the qualitative and content (verbal) side of the dossier is translated into the quantitative measure.²³

²¹ Beck, S. E., Manuel. K. Practical research methods for librarians and information professionals. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2008

²² Wildemuth, B. M. Applications of social research methods to questions in information and library science. Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited, 2009

²³ Amis. J. Interviewing for case study research. In D. L. Andrews, D. S. Mason, M. L. Silk. (Eds.). Qualitative methods in sports studies. Oxford: Berg, 2005, 104–138

The perspective focused on the quality of higher education was determined by the pre-existing knowledge that employees and managers are motivated to quality work (despite considerable problems in the motivational behaviour of superiors), and on the basis of a university law which instructs universities to ensure the quality of higher education by improving the quality of individual processes. Focus on the perspective of ethics code was chosen because of the importance of ensuring ethical behavior, fairness, trust and support of ethics, and integrity in the academic world. Its goal is to encourage and assist employees in the best and safer performance of their work. The third perspective was focused on the strategic development of human potential, because especially in the strategic management and development are reflected managerial decisions that directly affect employee motivation.

For a closer look at the documentation, we define in each category the appropriate **identifiers** that best describe the specific perspective. Identifiers of the first analytical category for documents focusing on the *quality of higher education* (perspective A) are as follows:

- Defined mission and vision;
- Defined quality objectives;
- Competence and main tasks of the Quality Council;
- Measurable quality indicators;
- Distribution of competencies and responsibilities for the creation, maintenance and use of subsystems;
- Ensuring the quality of higher education teachers;
- Mechanism for the use of teacher and employee evaluation results;
- Monitoring staff satisfaction;
- Evaluation of surveys.

Identifiers of the second analytical category for documents focusing on the *ethics code* (perspective B) are as follows:

- Ethical behaviour of employees – expected standards of action and behaviour;
- Key values of the profession, general and specific values of the profession;
- Values and principles relating to the mission of higher education institution;
- Relationship of managers to employees;
- Relationship of teachers to students;
- Relation of employees and executives to the public;
- Relation to the social environment;
- Possible conflict situations and their solutions;
- Indication of the name of person responsible for the code creation;
- Method of control and sanction for a violation of code requirements/ethical behaviour.

As identifiers of the third analytical category for documents focused on the *strategic development of human potential* (perspective C), we determined the following:

- Defining objectives for the development of human potential;
- Organizational structure – definition of functions;
- Definition of relationships and competencies within the university;
- Principles of selection procedure;
- Career growth opportunities;
- Training opportunities for employees;
- Employee benefits;
- Support for publishing activities;
- Support for international cooperation;
- Getting feedback from students;
- Psychological support for employees and students.

Table 1 shows the occurrence of individual analytical categories in documents of all public universities in Slovakia. It contains the relative frequency and absolute occurrence of each perspective for every university individually and the average occurrence of concrete perspective globally for all schools together.

CONCLUSION

From the content analysis of the documentation of public universities in Slovak Republic, the following knowledge arises: in a global point of view on all public higher education institutions, we can state that most of universities have mastered defined perspectives only partially. Individual documentation showed that there absent major components focused on management decisions in motivational processes. If we want to build a ranking of universities that have the most successful interpersonal processes, we can include the Prešov University in Prešov, Trnava University of Trnava, Comenius University in Bratislava, and University in Žilina. The documentation of these four universities demonstrates positive elements of managerial decision-making. The documentation of other public higher education institutions shows significant shortcomings and gaps in this area. It follows that in order to ensure the smooth running of universities and their continuous development, public higher education institutions in Slovakia must improve the motivation processes through the advanced managerial decision-making.

Table 1. Occurrence of individual categories in documents of public universities in Slovakia

| Public universities | Perspective A | | Perspective B | | Perspective C | | Together | |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|
| | % | Absolute frequency | % | Absolute frequency | % | Absolute frequency | % | Absolute frequency |
| AKU | 55.55 | 5/9 | 30 | 3/10 | 72.72 | 8/11 | 53.33 | 16/30 |
| EUBA | 44.44 | 4/9 | 30 | 3/10 | 54.54 | 6/11 | 45.33 | 13/30 |
| KU | 22.22 | 2/9 | 30 | 3/10 | 63.63 | 7/11 | 40 | 12/30 |
| UNIPO | 100 | 9/9 | 100 | 10/10 | 100 | 11/11 | 100 | 30/30 |
| UNIAG | 66.66 | 6/9 | 70 | 7/10 | 36.36 | 4/11 | 56.66 | 17/30 |
| STUBA | 33.33 | 3/9 | 60 | 6/10 | 36.36 | 4/11 | 45.33 | 13/30 |
| TUKE | 33.33 | 3/9 | 0 | 0/10 | 72.72 | 8/11 | 36.66 | 11/30 |
| TUZVO | 22.22 | 2/9 | 90 | 9/10 | 9.09 | 1/11 | 40 | 12/30 |
| TNUNI | 33.33 | 3/9 | 60 | 6/10 | 45.45 | 5/11 | 46.66 | 14/30 |
| TRUNI | 100 | 9/9 | 100 | 10/10 | 54.54 | 6/11 | 83.33 | 25/30 |
| UJS | 0 | 0/9 | 0 | 0/10 | 9.09 | 1/11 | 3.33 | 1/30 |
| UNIBA | 66.66 | 6/9 | 90 | 9/10 | 81.81 | 9/11 | 80 | 24/30 |
| UKF | 100 | 9/9 | 70 | 7/10 | 36.36 | 4/11 | 66.66 | 20/30 |
| UMB | 77.77 | 7/9 | 90 | 9/10 | 36.36 | 4/11 | 66.66 | 20/30 |
| UPJS | 55.55 | 5/9 | 80 | 8/10 | 18.18 | 2/11 | 50 | 15/30 |
| UCM | 66.66 | 6/9 | 0 | 0/10 | 18.18 | 2/11 | 26.66 | 8/30 |
| UVLF | 11.11 | 1/9 | 80 | 8/10 | 45.45 | 5/11 | 46.66 | 14/30 |
| VŠMU | 0 | 0/9 | 0 | 0/10 | 45.45 | 5/11 | 16.66 | 5/30 |
| VŠVU | 1.11 | 1/9 | 10 | 1/10 | 9.09 | 1/11 | 10 | 3/30 |
| UNIZA | 100 | 9/9 | 30 | 3/10 | 90.9 | 10/11 | 73.33 | 22/30 |
| Average | 49.49 | | 51 | | 46.81 | | 49.36 | |

Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica – AKU; University of Economics in Bratislava – EUBA; Catholic University of Ružomberok – KU; Prešov University in Prešov – UNIPO; Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra – UNIAG; Slovak University of Technology in

Bratislava – STUBA; Technical University of Košice – TUKE; Technical University of Zvolen – TUZVO; Alexander Dubcek University in Trenčín – TNUNI; Trnava University of Trnava – TRUNI; J. Selye University, Komárno – UJS; Comenius University in Bratislava – UNIBA; University of Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra – UKF; Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica – UMB; Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice – UPJS; University of St. Cyril and Method in Trnava – UCM; University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Košice – UVLF; Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava – VŠMU; Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava – VŠVU; University of Žilina – UNIZA.

Based on this result, we can recommend to public higher education institutions in Slovakia that their effort in the field of progress be more actively devoted to managerial decision making, in particular by ensuring the *development of interpersonal skills of all managers*. Indeed, in most cases on management positions at universities, they are experts specialized in different vocational skills than skills of leading and motivating people. Even the development of soft skills not only of managers but also of teachers and administrative staff is crucial for the continuous success of the whole university. This area of knowledge and skills is gradually over the years even proved to be essential for the successful operation of the organization.^{24, 25, 26} The ability of senior managers (rectors, vice-rectors, deans, vice-deans, heads of departments, etc.) to mobilize and involve their followers at all organizational levels in development and strengthen their motivation, expected behavior, and satisfaction of their aspirations and needs,²⁷ while at the same time flexibly and proactively solve the emerging managerial issues,²⁸ is widely recognized as critical to the successful management of the organization and its constituents.²⁹

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²⁴ Hyvari, I. Project management effectiveness in project-oriented business organizations. *International Journal of Project Management*, 2006, 24(3), 216

²⁵ Turner, J. R., Muller, R. The project manager's leadership style as a success factor on projects: A literature review. *Project Management Journal*, 2005, 36(2), 49–61

²⁶ Thamhain, H. Team leadership effectiveness in technology-based project environments. *Project Management Journal*, 2004, 35(4), 35–46

²⁷ Homrig, C. M. A. Transformational leadership. *US Airforce Center for Strategic Leadership Studies*, 2006

²⁸ Bass, B. M., Avolio, B. J., Jung, D. I., Berson, Y. Predicting unit performance by assessing transformational and transactional leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 2003, 88(2), 207–218

²⁹ Prabhakar, G. P. Switch leadership in projects: An empirical study reflecting the importance of transformational leadership on project success across twenty-eight nations. *Project Management Journal*, 2005, 36(2), 53–60

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MOTYVUOTO VADOVO SPRENDIMO PRIĖMIMAS KAIP SAUGAUS IR ETIŠKO ELGESIO UŽTIKRINIMO BŪDAS VISUOMENINIUOSE UNIVERSITETUOSE

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S a n t r a u k a

Straipsnyje analizuojama, kaip sukurti sąlygas saugiam ir etiškam darbui Slovakijos visuomeniniuose universitetuose priimant kvalifikuotus ir motyvuojančius vadovo sprendimus, kurie paskatintų akademinius darbuotojus. Suformuluota prielaida, kad tik motyvuoti vadybininkai ir mokytojai geba išlaikyti ir išsaugoti tuos saugumo požymius, kurie svarbūs universitetų funkcionavimui. Šios problemos tyrimas buvo atliktas remiantis dokumentų turinio analize, apimančia vadovavimo 20 Slovakijos viešųjų universitetų praktiką. Analizuota dokumentacija apima etinį darbuotojų elgesio aspektą, aukštojo mokslo kokybę, strateginį valdymą ir žmogiškojo potencialo vystymą. Šie aspektai apima esminius motyvavimo procesus vadovybei priimant sprendimus. Analizės rezultatai patvirtino prielaidą, kad universitetų valdymo Sistema turi tam tikrų trūkumų. Ypač tai pasakytina apie neadekvačias tarpasmenines universitetų vadovų kompetencijas.

Raktiniai žodžiai: apžvalginė analizė, vadovų motyvacija, vadovų sprendimo priėmimas, etinis kodas, universiteto dėstytojas.

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