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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES THROUGH TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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The basis of the global index is the concept for sustainable development of human resources. According to this concept every person needs an equal degree of good income, good health and good education. These three indicators are interrelated. The income is perceived to be the leading one, but it is obvious the income is not enough to achieve sustainable and harmonious development of the human being. Human development depends on the level of education and the possibility of keeping a long and healthy life also.

Governments, social partners and international institutions have big responsibility for the development of human capital. New tendencies such as globalization and technological innovations have transformed the development and management of human resources. The phenomenon of high-tech communications and Internet changed radically the prerequisites for success [1].

The future development in Europe in the light of economic growth requires the development and improvement of knowledge and skills to a new level. Knowledge, skills and competences of the human resources appear as a commodity which price will grow increasingly. The modern economy is increasingly based on the development of high technology and this determines the need for workforce with relevant skills and knowledge. In this sense, investments in human resources are the most promising investments [2].

One of the challenges facing the management of XXI century is the new understanding of human resource in the company as human capital. Traditionally, in economic terms, capital is regarded as a category associated with the acquisition as a result of investment of tangible, intangible and financial assets which over the time bring stream of incomes.

The Investment is a process of putting in means with the aim in future period to be returned with an increased amount or benefit for the investor. For example, when a company invests money by buying the means of production, the company expects to increase its profit. When the company invests in the quality of the human resources, the objective again is the same – providing more growth, but at this time through investment in people. There is an investment character in the

creation of professional skills and abilities of people to work, their development and use in the labour process.

The initial human capital is formed when a person (alone or with his parents) invest in himself, pay for education and acquire a profession or specialty. When that person starts work this investment pays off over the time in the form of higher salary or ability to work at a position which brings him bigger satisfaction. From this perspective it can be stated that education, human resources development and lifelong training is important both for companies and for the people which make them mobile and adaptable.

Sustainability of human capital development depends on many factors. The most important are: the access to education and professional training and its quality; employment opportunities and career development; effective health system; respect for cultural rights and pluralism. These factors influence over social and professional development of the individual, his cultural identity, health status and physical condition, personal value orientation and the characteristics of social security. All these affect aggregate on the economic prosperity of society as a whole. The main objective in the sustainable development of human resources is to provide a higher quality of working life and enough income for a gradually improving standard of living. Sustainable development includes two important components. First, the development of management that deals with the question "what managers and specialists will be necessary to the organization in future, in order to achieve its objectives in the changing environment".

The aim of this study is to clarify theoretically the nature and importance of training and education for sustainable development of human resources for each organization.

It is very important the improvement of knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees. Training is often used in parallel with the term human resources development. It is difficult to detect the dividing line between education and development and the relation between them is extremely strong. On this occasion, some authors [3] use these two terms in parallel, which sounds very convincing in the time of the contemporary changes in the organizations.

Training and development include multilateral objectives and content. Training is an activity to improve the performance of the employee for his occupied position at the moment. It includes usually acquiring technical skills, communication skills and is performed both for managers and for non managers.

On the issues about the nature of learning there are different ideas, requirements, features in theoretical and applied aspects. The common in them [4] is:

- Training should be systematic (continuous) process.
- Training change knowledge, skills and attitudes to work.
- Training improves the working results.
- The training is closely related to the work position
- Motivation is a prerequisite for learning and the result of it.

Its ultimate objective is connected with the interest of the organization to increase the efficiency of use of the main factors of production and improvement of the parameters of organizational performance. Human resources are considered as

a strategic resource, allowing investments which increase the potential of companies and enterprises.

The problem of education as a tool for many-sided socialization of the individual is a subject of study by almost all sociologists in the past [5]. Emile Durkheim sees it as the main form through which are transmitted the values of the above mentioned culture. According to Neil Smelser it is a formal process, based on which the society transmits the values, habits and knowledge from one person or a group to others. According Michael Armstrong “Training fills the gap between what a person can do and what that person should be able to do. His first goal is to provide the opportunity people to achieve an acceptable level of work as soon as possible. Then at this base the training provides expand of the skills and knowledge necessary to improve the current work or development of the potential for the future” [5]. Those definitions are correct and interesting. In terms of human resource management in the company Michael Armstrong’s definition define the process the best as there is no other institution to fill the gap of the preparation of the employee than the company. If the employee does not do that, he will not be able to perform his work successfully which will lead to losses. The mission is to be determined the form, the place and terms of training and to happen immediately.

Second, the interest of the company is not limited to training, which will provide only implementation of obligations of the employee, but to improve it also.

Third, training should create a reserve of knowledge and skills to meet future needs. Only by simultaneously solution of these three tasks it will perform fully its social function.

Human resources’ training is a process in which the trainees acquire new knowledge and new skills for their professions, but also enrich their positive attitude towards the profession, toward the company, toward the workplace and the tasks it performs. Education when it is considered as relatively independent subsystem it interacts with all other subsystems of the social reality, with the society as a whole and especially with its social structure. This interaction has a positive impact over the subsystems such as: economy; culture; science; politics, etc. This applies to institutions that implement it also. Regardless of the different statements about the nature of the training, the majority of the authors consider it as a systematic process, which is done by initiative of the organization and leads to better performance of employees at the working place.

By follow [5] the differences between the desired and actual level of performance of the employees at the working place may become targets of the organization by two conditions:

- They must be identified as important enough so to deserve the attention of the organization;
- They must be determined by the training.

The training targets are formulated based on the analysis. Without these targets can not take place the relation “needs of training – training programs”.

The employees have interest to affirm professionally at working place due to constant changes in the organization and through training they increase their value. These reasons determine the needs of training in the organization.

People are interested to promote professionally due to constant changes in the organization and the training will increase their price. These are some of the reasons which determine training needs of the organization.

One of the tendencies in company training is the diversifying and enriching the forms and methods of training.

There is a sustainable tendency in Europe of increase of training inside the company and quite often training without leaving the working place. More than half of the surveyed organizations report an increase in internal training in some countries. This applies to as well to Northern Europe countries (Ireland, Denmark, the Western provinces, the Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom) as part of the Southern countries (Turkey, Cyprus, Spain and Italy). There is a fast growth in computer training, as most dynamic is reported in Turkey (63 % of companies), Cyprus (58 %) and Greece (57 %). Open training programmes become increasingly popular in United Kingdom, Ireland and France.

The participation of managers in internal training increases in the recent years. It is focus more toward to specific work environment. It is looking for more and more close link between individual development and organizational changes, which are considered as interdependent and synergistic developing processes.

It is observed the effect of training in most of the European countries, although variations by countries are big. In Spain The proportion of organizations that appreciate this efficiency is highest – 83 % in Spain, followed by France with 82 % and the United Kingdom with 81 %. The effect of training is assess low is in Denmark – 31 % and in Norway – 36 % [6]. For this purpose they use a variety of approaches: formal evaluation immediately after training, testing, formal assessment several months after the training, informal assessment by the supervisor, an informal assessment by the trainer and others.

Need for Lifelong Learning

It is already clear for many employees that the dynamic of jobs drastically changed nowadays. They believed that the qualifications, skills and experience with which they contributed to the organizations will be in their favour for many years to come. But their experience shows them otherwise.

The fast pace of technological and entrepreneurial changes have led many skills considered important in the past, experience quickly their peak of demand and became anachronism. Many people will find out in future that despite the shortage of working power, which seems to them a good reason to secure their jobs, their skills and experience to be outdated and no longer in demand. The “hot” professions “cool down” almost as fast as the changes occur in the life cycle of a product. The cycle of a skill that lasted three years before, it lasts just nine months now. The Profession “Webmaster” quite in demand not long ago was replaced with suitable software that everyone may create a website alone with cheap and accessible programme. The demand for such jobs decreases.

The webmasters and other high-tech specialists understand that as fast a possibility disappears, as quickly it is likely to appear another possibility. There is a big demand of specialists working with JAVA and project managers nowadays. If the

former webmasters can improve their skills appropriately, they will find that their ability to adapt toward the technological changes will increase their price at the labour market — both in the short and in the long term. Each sector has its own speed of “shrinkage”. There is a constantly working mechanism for enhancement of the capabilities, which underline the importance for the employee to retrain. It is essential in today's rapidly evolving business environment, for employees to take the initiative to maintain and improve the level of their skills in order to remain “hot” job applicants

Maintenance and upgrading of skills

After [7] most studies show that the average person will change his jobs at least seven times in his life. Individuals should regularly revise their professional interests and identify additional or alternative potential career paths in case that their current professional functions outdate. To help their employees in this respect, the leading companies have even provided them with an opportunity for access to individual tools for career management. Those individuals, who restrict their own ability to adapt to the changing requirements at the workplace will find out that their opportunities for future development shrink significantly. Continuous development of skills and training as well as lifelong learning are at the forefront nowadays.

While this supply should be a joint responsibility of governments and employers, from the employees depends to grasp every available opportunity which is available for preparation, training or retraining. The employers provide access to training materials nowadays, but no longer send employees in their corporate preparatory centers for several weeks to practice the work itself. The preparation is offered at night, at the weekends or at lunchtime and employees ignore it. Individuals can take advantage of training opportunities if they are directly tied to a scholarship, but most of them do not do it, but should. The employees will help themselves and the community as a whole, if they remain active at the labour market and they are ready to work — no matter whether full or part-time employment.

Various tendencies are already leading to a big shortage of employees in different parts of the world, and these tendencies will get worse in the next decade and beyond. Employers must decide how to relieve the problems caused by this shortage and to plan how to meet the challenges they will face when these tendencies become stronger.

Detailed and integrated practices for human resources management will not only help the organizations to overcome the shortage of employees, but will also provide these financial results which will be met with the approval of the shareholders and the owners.

There will be a period of painful efforts linked with the permanent shortage of employees, until the employers begin to look at this problem seriously and become part of strategic thinking. It will be quite irresponsible and easy to delay the solution of that problem and leave it to the next generation. The winners will be these employers who find in this world of huge demand and limited supply the best ways to meet and solve the problem with the shortage of employees and find the most appropriate skills suitable for the constant changing work environment.

The individuals in working age from developing and emerging markets are looking for work elsewhere. This “leak of employees” restrain the countries to have the necessary human resources, in order to maintain their development and to invest in future opportunities. Many students leave the countries to study abroad and often they do not return, which lead to a further reduction in the number of potential employees. Some of the countries welcome such migration, but others do not accept it. And vice versa – demographic immobility can also cause shortage of employees. Some students in China leave to study abroad, but others already graduated do not want to leave the country towns, where they studied. Thus they can not be approached by most of the multinational and large local companies based in the big cities.

According to the European Commission the scale of current economic and social change, the fast transition to a society of knowledge and the demographic push in a result of the aging population and migration processes in Europe are challenges that require a new approach to education and training within lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is defined as: “All learning activities undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and abilities within personal, civil, social or related with employment perspectives” [8].

As a document of the European Commission, the European Qualification Framework (EQF) is a table for comparison of the qualifications across Europe. It has two main objectives:

- 1) to promote mobility between countries;
- 2) to facilitate lifelong learning.

Both objectives are vital to achieve more and better jobs and growth in Europe. Europe is faced to challenges to be the leading and knowledge-based economic power. Jan Figel, former European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, explained its significance: “People in Europe often face obstacles when they try to go from one country to another to learn or to work. They have difficulties sometimes even when they want to move from one part of the educational system to another in their own country, for example from professional education and training to higher education. The European Qualification Framework will make the different qualifications more understandable for countries in the European Union and thus contribute to greater mobility for work or training. It has already contributed to the development of national qualifications frameworks in the countries. The European Qualification Framework will also promote lifelong learning, for example, by facilitating the recognition of already taken credits for students” [9].

Eight reference levels – from basic to advanced – are the foundation of the European Qualifications Framework. They reflect the knowledge, understanding and skills of the student, regardless of the system in which he obtained his qualification. Therefore the European Qualifications Framework shift the focus from the criteria for education (such as duration of training and the type of educational institution), to the acquired knowledge from the training. This shift of the focus to the acquired knowledge leads to significant advantages:

- it allows a better match between what the education and training offer and the needs of the labour market (in terms of knowledge, skills and competences);

- it facilitates the recognition of non-formal and informal learning;
- facilitates the transfer and use of qualifications among the countries and among different systems in education and training.

European Qualifications Framework [10] as a tool for promoting lifelong learning will cover the general education and education of adults, professional education, training and university education. The eight levels of the European Qualifications Framework cover all qualifications: from those acquired at the end of the compulsory education to those obtained at the university level or at the level of professional or technical education and training.

The political agreement reached at the European Parliament comes after 3 years of intensive work in close cooperation with member states. EQF is already having an impact over the development of the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) in many member states. These national frameworks in many countries are often part of a bigger process of national reform. Most countries are developing now their national qualifications frameworks. The European Commission also supports this process by funding projects which gather groups of countries and sectors, which test the implementation of the EQF. Thus it will enable individuals and employers to use the EQF as a tool for references which allow comparison of the qualification levels in different countries and the different systems of education and training.

The low information as well as the existing traditions and habits lead to limited use of more modern and unconventional forms of training. The teaching material is presented oftener by standard methods. The interactive methods remain often good wishes, but they are the ones which create conditions for formation of modern knowledge and skills through real participation of students in “the gain of knowledge and experience”. The consequences of monotonous methods in the learning process are known – loss of interest, lowering the motivation of students for active participation, denial of training.

A key element of the process of modern training turns out the choice of methods and forms of education which should be adequate for the assessment of the difference between available and required competencies. Early identification of the necessary skills is a process in which the active part are the employers. This identification is necessary for planning the professional education and training. The employers must provide information for the needs of the qualified employees.

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