

## A munkahelyi jóllét befolyásoló tényezői

### **Absztrakt:**

A hatékony humán erőforrás gazdálkodás szerepe az elmúlt évtizedben felértékelődött. A globalizációs folyamatok, a makro- és mikrokörnyezeti hatások, ezeken belül kiemelten a munkaerőpiaci helyzet, a törvények, rendeletek változásai megkövetelték a felkészült HR szakemberek alkalmazását, illetve a szakismeret, a jó gyakorlatok elsajátítását szervezeti mérettől függetlenül. A felmérések alapján napjainkban a HR tevékenységek közül a megtartás, az elköteleződés kialakítása, a lojalitás növelése vált az elmúlt évek egyik legfontosabb HR feladatává, ami szoros összefüggésben van a munkahelyi jóléttel. A humán erőforrás gazdálkodás sajátossága az integrált szemléletmódszerrel, azaz minden minden összefügg, és egymásra hatást gyakorolnak. A változások hatására új HR funkciók jelentek meg, mint például a megtartás-, diverzitás-menedzsment a generáció-, a tehetség-, a munkaélmény-, a HR branding, illetve előtérbe kerültek a digitalizációs HR megoldások, illetve a gamifikáció. A korábbi, tradicionális humán erőforrás gazdálkodás tevékenységterületeinél is szemléletváltás következett be. A munkavédelemmel összefüggő tevékenységek közül előtérbe került az egészség megőrzés szerepe a szervezetben, ami a munkahelyi jólétre is hatással van. A tanulmány célja, hogy hazai és nemzetközi szakirodalmak alapján feltárja a munkahelyi jóllét fogalmait, megközelítési módjait, illetve kapcsolatát az egyes HR tevékenységekkel, különös tekintettel az egészségmegőrzés szerepére. A munkahelyi jóléttel összefüggésben ismertetjük a munkahelyi jólétre ható tényezőket, melyek az egészségmegőrzéssel is összefüggésben vannak. Ilyenek a stressz és az elégedettség, illetve ez utóbbiban szerepet játszó tényezők.

**Kulcsszavak:** stressz, elégedettség, elkötelezettség, munka-magánélet egyensúly, sport

Krisztina Dajnoki, Péter Miklós Kőmíves, György Norbert Szabados, Éva Bácsné Bába

## Factors influencing well-being at work

### **Abstract:**

The role of the effective human resource management became more important in the last decades. The globalisation trends, the effects of the micro- and macro environment including the labour market situation, the changes of acts, laws and regulations requires the employment of well-trained HR specialists and the adaption of skills and best practices regardless to the size of the organisation. Based on surveys nowadays the labour-hoarding, building commitment and increasing the loyalty became the most important activities of the human resources management. These topics are all strongly related to the workplace well-being. One of the special characteristics of the human resources management is the integrated approach means all the fields of human resources management belongs to each other and they all have effects on each other. Because of these changes new functions of the human resources management formed including retaining, diversity management, generation management, talent management, work-experience management and HR branding. Recently, more attention is paid to those HR solutions which are combined with digitalisation and gamification. The attitudes regarding to the traditional areas of human resource management also changed. The role of

health preservation in the organisation in connection with the labour safety activities also became important. The health preservation also has impacts on the workplace well-being. The aim of the study is to clarify the most important notions, concepts and approaches of the workplace well-being, their connections to other HR activities with special regard to the role of the health preservation based on domestic and international literature. We also expound the factors affecting the workplace well-being connected with the health preservation like commitment, stress, satisfaction, work-life balance, and health development.

**Keywords:** stress, satisfaction, commitment, work-life balance, sport

## 1. Introduction

We spend a significant time of our life with working so it matters how we are feeling at the workplace since it affects numerous other factors in the organization. Workplace environment, fellow workers, organizational culture, the nature of work and the work-life balance fundamentally determine the employees' performance and satisfaction which contributes to well-being at work.

Our world and, at the same time, the workplace environment are undergoing continuous changes. So that the changes can be managed effectively, we need to strike a balance in order to create well-being at work which requires a harmonisation of the influencing factors. In this systematic review, after clarifying the concepts, factors related to well-being at work will be analysed such as commitment, satisfaction, stress and work-life balance, furthermore, the role of sports will be described as a factor affecting the well-being at work.

## 2. Definitions

Concept of well-being has been being present in the technical literature for a considerable period of time. **Well-being**, simply approached, is no other than a favourable, carefree financial situation (Juhász et al., 1982). We all strive to live our lives in a way during which we can optimally ensure both physical and mental well-being balance of our organisms. At the same time, well-being does not mean only a carefree financial situation but a more complex life situation.

According to Crisp (2011), based on the common definition, many people associate well-being with health when they hear the word. According to the Author, well-being includes everything which is good for an individual. Based on Eckersley (2007), well-being, however, goes beyond that because it involves those things which make our lives meaningful and make us feel valuable. According to Diener et al. (1999), well-being includes happiness, life satisfaction, positive and negative emotional factors as well as situative satisfaction (for instance, with work, private life or health). Schimmack (2008) defines well-being as a preference realization which can be measured by affective and cognitive measures.

"As an integral part of life, work is also decisive from the aspect of well-being" (Kun, 2010, p.35). As the concept of well-being is not easy to apprehend, it may be even more difficult to circumscribe its meaning with respect to the workplace. Based on the approach of Szombathelyi (2012), **well-being at work** means an individual's health in physical, mental and social sense. Professional success and recognition are the two most important components of well-being which means that work has a positive impact on an individual's well-being. Different factors determine which type of well-being is just affected. For instance, an appropriate workplace environment has well-being impact on the physical well-being, employment security determines an individual's psychological well-being and workplace community influences the social well-being while the income affects the economic well-being. We can talk about well-being at work when an individual's sense of well-being can be derived from work. Stress-free

workplace and recognition of work can greatly contribute to the sense of well-being at work. (Deutsch et. al., 2015).

Well-being at work, to put it simply, is the workers' feeling of well-being originating from work. Its parts are a basic emotive approach to work and satisfaction with the external and/or internal labour values. On the whole, it includes all work-related factors from the quality and security of the physical workplace environment through the workers' feelings about work to workplace relationships (Kun, 2010) By all means, it is important to mention Vitamin model of Warr (2007) with regard of well-being at work. In the model, 12 environmental components can be found which have an influence on well-being at work. The appropriate rate and extent of those are important since those ones lead to well-being. The 12 "vitamins" are the following: control over activities, opportunity to use skills, goals arising from external environment, variety, clarity of environment, relationship with others, income, physical security, collective position, supportive management, career opportunity and equity. The appropriate rate and extent of these components are important since the state of well-being can be reached in this way.

In connection with well-being at work, from the point of view of HR, Burnout model can be highlighted which examines the reasons and consequences of workplace burnout. Its measuring instrument is MBI (Maslach Burnout Inventory); its scales are Fatigue, Performance and Depersonalization. Given the well-being, the scale of Fatigue is decisive; relevance of the other two scales is remarkable (Szombathelyi, 2012a).

There is sometimes need for measuring the well-being at work from individual and organization aspects as well. By exploring the individual well-being, a company can acquire such knowledge which, by developing action plans, can help the employees work productively. Regarding the well-being at work, Kun (2010) emphasizes 5 main groups which are as follows:

- Physical: includes the security and the physical environment.
- Emotional: beyond the emotional intelligence, the community responsibility may be mentioned here.
- Values: acceptance of otherness and the moral norms belong here.
- Personal development: lifelong learning, career development and autonomy can be mentioned.
- Work/organizational: job requirements, change management.

The emergence of problems helps the managers to lay the foundation of conscious decision-making and highlights the needed training and development activities. From the employees' perspective, leaving the organization can be avoided because the employees will feel that the employer cares about them, contributes to the consolidation of their well-being and it will increase the loyalty to the organization in the long term (Szombathelyi, 2012).

### **3. Effect of well-being at work and its relation with other factors**

#### **3.1 Well-being at work and commitment**

In relation to well-being, it is considered important to mention the relationship between well-being and commitment which is closely linked to the retention and retention management. It is a challenge and also a priority for an organization to keep the employees committed to the organization. An employee committed to the organization can identify with its goals better and strives to perform the tasks as well as possible.

Commitment consists of three components (Table 1). In the course of affective commitment, the individuals are emotionally tied to the organization. They stay with the organization because they would like to stay there. In case of normative commitment, the individuals stay in the organization because they need to. However, not only the consideration of costs emerging as a consequence of leaving the organization but the lack of possible alternative job opportunities can lay the foundation of this kind of commitment. During continuous commitment, the

individuals are tied to the organization because it is necessary, viz. they would lose the attractive allowances and relationships in case of leaving.

**Table 1** General model of workplace commitment

Commitment		
Affective <i>Desire</i>	Normative <i>Cost</i>	Continuous <i>Duty</i>
Its basis: sense of identity common values personal contribution	Its basis: lack of investments and alternatives	Its basis: Internalization of norms psychological contract benefits

Source: Kun (2010)

Employees who are tied to an organization in affective way are much more satisfied with their life and professional performance which can have an effect on their health and sense of health as well. It can be also said that these employees are less affected by that kind of stress which emerges from interpersonal conflicts. Relationship between the normative commitment and well-being is negative. The same applies to the relationship between the continuous commitment and the sense of well-being. Employees who are emotionally committed to an organization and have also the sense of well-being can perform much better and are much more effective because they feel happy and balanced. Furthermore, they perceive the hindering stress to a lesser extent (Kun, 2010). It can be said in this context that it is essentially important to keep the employees committed to the organization and to increase their well-being since it contributes to the organizational profit as well. There are such factors which can contribute to the sense of well-being as well as the commitment. The following factors can help these two ones. Job satisfaction because if we are satisfied with what we do then we are much more willing to do that i.e. the work enjoyment is related to here as well. Relationship between work and private life, workplace atmosphere free from stress and tension. Stress can have negative consequences and increase staff turnover as well. Misunderstandings and resulting conflicts can be clarified by means of open communication. Other supporting factors (Kun, 2010):

- appropriate working conditions;
- good workplace relationships;
- strong work motivation;
- responsibility and autonomy;
- respect for workers;
- recognition and feedback of individual performance;
- support of the leaders.

### 3.2 Connection between workplace well-being and satisfaction

In addition to the commitment, it is absolutely necessary to speak about the satisfaction. Some authors define the job satisfaction as a positive emotional respond and attitude of a worker to the work (Faragher et al. 2005). In a broader sense, not only the work-related attitudes (e.g. recognition, physical conditions, career opportunities, assessment, security, workplace relationships) but the factors relating to the working individual (pl. worker's age, health status, goals) should be also taken into consideration when the job satisfaction is determined (Klein 2001).

Examination of job satisfaction is one of the most frequently studied issues in work psychology (Mitchell-Lasan, 1987). Table 2 concludes the factors determining the job satisfaction, in light of work psychological researches.

**Table 2** Factors determining job satisfaction

Studies	Determinants of job satisfaction
Hall-Lawler, 1970 (In: Cummings,-Bigelow, 1976)	existence of challenging work tasks
Arvey et al., 1976	clarity of goals, autonomy and opportunity to take part in goal planning
Luthans, 1998	the work itself
Jawahar, 2006	appropriate feedback on the work
Vlosky-Aguilar, 2009	stability and predictability of the work

Source: Basis on Szombathelyi (2012) own editing by Bácsné et al. (2019)

The main purpose of human resource management is to maximize the organizational and employee goals at the same time i.e. to create the organizational performance and employee satisfaction. Beyond the examination of connections between these two factors, the studies focusing on the relationship between job satisfaction and performance also sought an answer to the question what circumstances these relationships can prevail under. According to the meta-analysis of Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985), two factors have a significant effect on the relationship between satisfaction and performance: the workers' role in an organizational hierarchy and the opportunity to influence their own work. Relationship between satisfaction and performance is closer at higher levels of an organizational hierarchy and slighter when the workers cannot influence the speed of their work. Later, it was increasingly recognized that satisfaction cannot be only the cause but the effect of the performance, that is to say, successful performance is what leads to satisfaction therefore the increase of performance shall be facilitated.

One of the most important things for every organization is that its employees can perform as well as possible since that is the only way they can contribute to the achievement of short- and long-term goals. To do so, account should be taken to the fact that the employees' well-being and performance are interlinked. The fellow-workers' positive well-being brings the improvement of productivity, absence and staff turnover are reduced and, last but not least, a positive picture is emerged of the company (Deutsch et. al., 2015).

It has been proven in several cases that there is a significant connection between life- and job satisfaction and well-being. According to Warr (2007), the work-related well-being can be determined based on three aspects which are as follows: autonomy, requirements and collective support. These three factors are in connection with three main elements determining the well-being at work: job satisfaction, work-related anxiety and emotional exhaustion. Relationship between satisfaction and well-being can be also observed from the perspective that a greater satisfaction has generally a positive impact on well-being as well. There is a correlation between the work-related sense of well-being and the job satisfaction, that is to say, the employees with larger sense of well-being can experience positive effects more times than negative ones during their work. However, those who meet with mainly negative experiences are much more dissatisfied in the course of their work. This is why the employee's first impression of the organization is important i.e. HR should ensure the conditions already when an employee enters the job as well as the insertion process should be well prepared (Szabó-Szentgróti et al, 2019). Based on Deutsch et. al. (2015), a company plays a decisive role in helping the formation of sense of well-being in its workers. A company can contribute to it even by creating a good workplace atmosphere, reshaping the management feedback and assigning the personalized tasks. In these cases, there is no extra burden on the managers since they can favourably form the employees' well-being at work, already with a little care.

### **3.3 Impact of workplace stress on well-being at work**

Researches prove that the lack of employees' commitment and the job dissatisfaction are caused by workplace stress. Based on Deutsch et. al. (2015), everyday work almost involves the stress which may lead to a reduction in the sense of well-being. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that a stress-free work does not automatically lead to the development of sense of well-being.

Well-being researches were preceded in time by researches identifying the phenomenon and types of stress, exploring the root causes, effects and consequences (Selye 1976) as well as examining the fight against all of this (Lazarus–Folkman 1984). The comprehensive presentation of stress researches is not an aim of this study; it focuses on the stress as a complex process and specifically on the workplace stress and its other correlations primarily with the factors influencing the work.

Stress, as a process, includes four elements (Bagdy 2008).

- stressor which is always some kind of “load”: external or internal factor which triggers the process;
- assessment which distinguishes between harmful, bad and pleasant, good things as well as qualifies the happening according to its importance and significance;
- coping strategies so that the procedures can be controlled;
- result that was generated in the personality (at physical, mental and relationship levels).

Workplace stress researches investigated the workplace stressors as well as the short- and long-term effects of workplace stress both on the worker and the organization. “Work-related stress can be defined as a pattern of emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physiological reactions to adverse and noxious aspects of work content, work organisation and work environment. It is a state characterised by high levels of arousal and distress and often by feelings of not coping.” (Levi – Levi 2000: 3).

Relationship between the workplace stress and health was researched on the basis of several theoretical models (pl. Siegrist 1996; Karasek –Theorell 1990; Moorman 1991). Among the health consequences of workplace stress, these examinations often focused on cardiovascular diseases but also investigated other health effects of the workplace stress.

Model of Siegrist describes the stress in respect of workplace control-reward. The model determines different factors (for instance, work-life balance, resources and communication, commitment from both corporate and employee sides) from the aspect of well-being at work (Szombathelyi, 2012).

During the work, workers have the opportunity to meet their needs e.g. for establishing social relationships, self-realization and it is important to mention that their source of income is also provided. At the same time, work can also have a negative effect on their well-being in the form of workplace stress. As an effect of stress on an individual, different health problems can occur with regard to both physiological and psychological health (Waddel – Burton, 2006). As a result, symptoms of anxiety, headache, abdominal pain etc. may appear. In addition, Szombathelyi (2012) classifies the increase in the accident rate and the increase in customer/client complaints as consequences of negative stress. Well-being is not only important for an individual because it is also important for an organization so that the employees can be healthy and have sense of well-being. Their fulfilment has a positive impact on the workers' performance. Furthermore, staff turnover is reduced as well as absence becomes less (Kun, 2010).

According to the analysis of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (2018), 33% of the Hungarian population regularly suffers from workplace stress in 2013 which has an impact not only on the declining work performance but also on the deteriorating health status. In contrast, the vast majority (83%) of workers doing physical activity at least once a week feel that, albeit

they occasionally experience the negative effects caused by the workplace stress, they can fully handle the stress and ease the resulting strain typically by doing physical activity.

Individual factors can also influence the harmful effects of the workplace stress. These personality factors include persistence (commitment, involvement, belief in the ability to control, experiencing the stress as a challenge) (Kobasa et al., 1982) as well as the general attitude, optimism/pessimism of the personality. Self-efficacy is also a major factor in coping with stress (Bagdy 2008).

In relation to well-being, two kinds of stress types can be mentioned which are eustress and distress. Eustress brings hidden resources to the surface by which well-being can be modified even into a positive direction because its effective performance contributes to the improvement of self-esteem. Distress hampers the development of positive emotions through the appearance of various physical and mental symptoms. The following can be attributed to the long-term stress: decline in individual performance, lack of motivation, deterioration in the quality of relationships and reduced receptivity to positive things as well. From the viewpoint of work environment, some of those factors should be highlighted which are the most characteristic of formation of stress. These include, *inter alia*, intense workloads, unpredictability in work processes, unacceptable relationship with fellow-workers and managers or inappropriate work-life balance (Deutsch et. al., 2015). To develop these factors and to establish the proper consistency are tasks and responsibility of HR.

### **3.4 Relation between well-being at work and work-life balance**

With regard to well-being at work, it is important to mention the work-life balance as one of the fundamental aspects of quality of life. Numerous researchers and professionals tried to approach and formulate the content and quintessence of work-life balance from different aspects. According to Hill (2001), work-life balance can be interpreted as a measure according to which an individual is simultaneously able to balance the interim, emotional and behavioural requirements of both work and family. According to the wording of Work Foundation: “work-life balance is about those people who have their say on when, where and how they work. Work-life balance comes to the fruition when an individual’s right to a full life is almost a norm accepted and respected both at work and outside which is a mutual benefit for society, the others and the firm.” (Juhász, 2013)

Summarizing the concept, it can be concluded that an individual strives to achieve such a balance which helps to optimize the quality of life while complying with tasks and functions expected by the society.

The problem of harmonizing the work and private life becomes a phenomenon of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Previously, the issue had not been really in the spotlight because, over the centuries, men had been basically breadwinners and women had rather performed unpaid work and housework. However, the situation changed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the approaches to the female employment has undergone significant transformations and changes after that the women’s headway in employment became increasingly dominant both in Europe and the United States since the 1960s. Thanks to this phenomenon, compared to earlier investigations, the researchers have examined the work and the family not as separate units but as an interrelated whole system. (Juhász, 2013)

### **3.5 Well-being at work and health retention and promotion**

There is also a growing tendency for organizations to bring the employees’ health status to the forefront because they know that the employee retention is the key to the long-term commitment and sustainability.

In autumn of 2014, for the third time, Humanpolitika.com Public Benefit Organization and the All You Can Move (2014) launched their research on the Hungarian companies’ health

promotion practices and the employees' sporting habits. Aim of the research is to provide an overall picture of the Hungarian employee well-being (corporate wellness) and its effect on the business efficiency. This research has been carried out by involving 3 key groups affected. On the one hand, human resource leaders of 50 Hungarian medium- and large companies, on the other hand, more than 1600 employees who have All You Can Move Sportpass as well as more than 400 employees who do not possess All You Can Move Sportpass but have activity-friendly lifestyles. Sports have a positive effect on an individual's life. Based on the outcomes of the research, companies which play an active role in their employees' well-being can show significant results in respect of all four risk factors (obesity, lack of activity, smoking, stress), contributing to their workers' well-being significantly. According to the research, those employees feel much healthier and more energetic whose employers actively support their workers' regular sport activities; those employees' workplace performances are sustainably high. In contrast, workers who only themselves take care of regular physical activity are complaining much more about health problems, high stress level and fluctuating working performance. In opinion of an overwhelming majority of corporate executives, support has a beneficial effect on the employees' health and well-being (68%), enhances the workers' performance (65%), improves the workplace stress management (57%) and reduces the rate of sick leave (46%) at the same time.

According to the cost-effectiveness analysis of the European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (ENWHP), each euro invested in workplace health promotion results in savings of between € 2.5 and € 4 for a company for the long-term which is due to a reduction in days of absence and higher employee performance (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2010; Garaj, 2015). According to data of the Central Statistical Office (2018), now in Hungary, an employee is absent from work due to illness on average 8 days. For a researched company with an average 620 workers employed, this results in an annual loss of nearly 5000 working days which consumes 20 persons' full-time jobs per year. At the same time, in case of almost fifty researched companies actively supporting the workplace sporting, this number is much lower because the workers are absent from work due to illness on average 5 working days.

Within employers and employees, Mészáros (2019) has studied the practice of applying the well-being and health promotion opportunities at work provided by different types of undertakings. It has been determined that the primary supporting method used by employers involved in the research is the organization of team building events, followed by support of sports activities and then support of screening tests. Almost all of employee respondents demand for well-being and health promotion at work and they have resort to it in approx. 75% of the cases on average. From employee side, the largest demand would be the support of sports activities, followed by mental hygiene promotion, support of screening test and then team building and support of healthy.

## **Conclusions**

Based on technical literature, it can be stated that several factors play decisive roles in forming and judging the well-being at work. The advanced state of human resource management and the management's view of things are of paramount importance in forming and developing the factors having effects on well-being at work. Factors described in correlation with well-being at work – satisfaction, workplace stress, work-life balance, sports activities – (can) influence an individual's health and sense of health. It is no coincidences that, instead of safety at work, the health retention and promotion have come to the fore as HR functions since these have effects on an individual's performance as well. During the period of labour force and talent shortages of nowadays, the development of well-being at work must play a key role in the human resource professionals' work in forming the retention, commitment and satisfaction. Therefore, according to our plans, we would like to assess the factors affecting well-being at work in the

framework of primary research with a questionnaire survey among employees, and we would also conduct HR expert interviews.

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