



STRUCTURE OF THE MOTIVATION OF ENTREPRENEURS IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

This motivation research complexity stems from the extreme diversity in personality traits, and in context, including the way people perceive social and natural environments as well as their own place in them. The theoretical basis for this empirical research is the theory of intrinsic motivation. The subjects of the survey conducted between 2018 and 2020 comprised 120 entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector. The aim of the study is to establish the structure of work motivation and its influence on work parameters. The main conclusions relate to prevailing intrinsic work motivation in entrepreneurs, as well as to hypotheses: the internal motives operationalizing competence needs tend to create not only satisfaction with the executed work but also a sense of future purpose; when external motives such as prestige and respect from others are strong, the results of the executed work are perceived as unsatisfactory and with a negative effect on the self-esteem of the respondents.

Key words: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-determination, agriculture, entrepreneurial motivation

INTRODUCTION

Both the thesis of polymotivation of work behavior and the idea about its polyparametric evaluation are widespread in studies in this field. The fact of the straight connection between motivation and the efficiency of the activity and of the organization is generally recognized in the psychological literature (Hekhausen, 1986 and others, Mitev, 2012, Manzoor Quratul-Ain, 2015, Ilieva, 2009, Shoraj & Llaci, 2015).

The constant interest in the study of work motivation is caused by the permanent need to answer the extremely complex question “why do people do what they do?”. Managers need to identify the factors which increase people's motivation so that they work better, more effectively, more creatively and, if possible, long-term. This determines the exponentially growing interest in basic psychological needs. Ryan and Deci (2017) claim that differences between people are a function not only of genetic endowments, but also of contextual variations in

the satisfaction of basic needs and their interaction (Van Assche et al., 2016).

Within the Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT), Deci and Ryan (1992, 2017) have created the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which is based on the argument that people possess a limited set of basic psychological needs, whose satisfaction is essential for personal development and well-being – these are the needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 2020). These basic psychological needs are crucial resources for individuals' ability to increase self-organization, adjustment, integrity, and growth (Deci and Ryan, 2020). Frustration of these three needs is a stronger and more threatening experience than incomplete satisfaction and can cause passivity, low self-esteem and dysfunction (Ryan and Deci, 2020; Vansteenkiste, Ryan & Soenens, 2020).

This narrower definition deprives from the formal status of needs those desires which, even

if strong and satisfied, do not significantly affect well-being (Howell and Hill 2009; Van Boven 2005).

Autonomy refers to the freedom of action and choice, free will and self-determination. Relatedness means satisfying and supportive social relationships at work and out of work. Competence is the belief that one possesses abilities and skills to influence the degree and manner in which he achieves goals and tasks (Deci and Ryan, 2020; Vansteenkiste, Ryan & Soenens, 2020; Kanev, 2017). Satisfying these three needs in the process of professional functioning tends to increase work motivation and subjective well-being. (e.g. Bartholomew et al., 2001; Haerens et al., 2015; Patall et al., 2018). A number of authors consider whether the list of basic psychological needs should be expanded (Baxter and Pelletier, 2019).

Applied to entrepreneurship, SDT as a motivational theory contradicts one of the limitations of economics on the nature of abstract economic entities as rational, calculating, following selfish goals to maximize profits, in a sterile environment (Chen a. Lee, 1996; Gupta a. Murray, 2005) The homo oeconomicus model often interprets human behavior according to a simplified scheme of universal economic laws. Real practice constantly refutes attempts to simplify explanatory models of human behavior through empirical research in the social sciences. A major problem, especially in recent years, is the provability of theories (Vansteenkiste, Ryan & Soenens, 2020). For example, common theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs are interpreted by some researchers as empirically unsupported and therefore poorly predictive of behavior (e.g. Ilieva, 2009; Vansteenkiste, Ryan & Soenens, 2020; Taormina, 2013). This adds value to empirical research that can verify the explanatory value of basic theories about real behaviors of real actors.

The present study focuses on one of the aspects of SDT – the Theory of Intrinsic Motivation as one of the main driving forces in professional and personal development.

Ever since Leontiev (1979) until now many studies have shown strong positive links between intrinsic motivation, satisfaction, psychological

health and well-being (Deci, 2017). Thus, such research clarifies why the differentiation of types of motivation is so important and confirms that the distinction between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation is empirically useful. (Deci, 2017)

Self-esteem and self-actualization or meaning are discussed as such potentially basic needs (e.g. Sheldon et al., 2001). The reason why these are not considered as basic needs in BPNT is that they appear only when basic psychological needs are frustrated (Bartholomew et al., 2001; Martela and Steger, 2016). When the three basic psychological needs are satisfied at a good level, they support self-esteem, meaning and self-actualization.

Deci and Ryan (1992, 2020) construct the thesis that people have a primary motivational tendency to deal effectively with the environment and to successfully produce changes in their surroundings. Cognitive mastery of the extrinsic environment and increased adaptive capabilities of mental regulation are sources of intrinsic motivation. In this way inner interest and enthusiasm for the task increase and the behavior becomes internally motivated. Intrinsic motivation encourages development and widens behavioral effectiveness.

A central concept in the theory of intrinsic motivation is the goal or intention as the reason why a certain behavior takes place. Therefore, human motivation can be interpreted as a function of the expected results and the psychological value attributed to them (Mitev, 2012).

These results, as potential motivators, can be summarized in two broad categories, if the situation is structured in such a way that the results follow directly from the behavior (Deci, Ryan, 1992),

EXTERNAL RESULTS – these result from activities that are carried out as a means to an end – to receive an external reward or to avoid a negative consequence. The person acts not because he enjoys it or it gives him pleasure, but to get an external result - money, respect, approval, prestige, or to avoid criticism, etc. (Levesque, Cara, Pattie a. Deci, 2010). The results are external to the activity, generally

external to the person as well, and can be achieved through various individually preferred or non-preferred activities. SDT identifies four types of extrinsic motivation depending on the degree to which it has been internalized (Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2020),

a. External Regulation – motivation with an external source - reward, avoidance of punishment. The behavior is due to pressure, obligations or restrictions;

b. Introjected Regulation – motivation with an internal source, but which is extrinsic for a specific behavior performed out of guilt, ego involvement, or some other kind of internal pressure;

c. Identified Regulation – behavior is regulated when a person identifies with his behavior, awarding it personal value and considering it important because behavior adds value to the person. The behavior is autonomous but externally motivated;

d. Integrated Regulation – the most self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. The results of the behavior are integrated within the self and are in harmony and coherence with other aspects of the self - for example in entrepreneurship - development, career, affiliation, contacts, respect, significance, etc. The motivation that underlies such behavior is a completely self-determining extrinsic motivation - integrated external motives (Levesque, Cara, Pattie a. Deci, 2010).

INTERNAL RESULTS – the rewards of the activity are specific to that activity, appear spontaneously, are related to the fulfilment of the human desire for competence and autonomy, and are not the result of internalization (Deci, 2017). Intrinsic motivation is characteristic of activities which bring pleasure and internal interest to the person and are not focused on other values and goals. Intrinsic motivation is the prototype of self-determination and means engaging in activities that are rewarding in themselves, such as those that are new and challenging (Levesque, Cara, Pattie a. Deci, 2010; Deci, 2017). Internal motivation decreases firstly if any external influence suggesting that the source or prime cause of the activity were external factors, creates a feeling of loss of control, and secondly, when external factors suppress the sense of competence

and give the impression that the person is not performing well (Kanev, 2017).

In this sense, people can be externally and internally motivated to engage in a particular activity. In the first case, they would expect to receive a significant external reward. The internally motivated people would expect to be intrigued by the activity and to feel good they involved in it. Intrinsic motivation increases cognitive flexibility and spontaneity of mental activity, and facilitates creativity and conceptual understanding (Deci, 2017), Ryan et al.,1990). Internally motivated behavior can last long enough in the absence of any visible incentives, it is oriented towards tasks with optimal difficulty, brings pleasure from work, improves mnemonic processes, increases self-esteem, productivity, satisfaction and general well-being (Ryan et al., 1990; Deci,2017).

In this way routine activity can be externally motivated but conceptualization and innovation require intrinsic motivation. It can be logically hypothesized that those entrepreneurs who possess intrinsic motivation to carry out their activities are more likely to be successful in real practice.

Research methodology, The research which was conducted between 2018 and 2020 covered 120 entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector, dairy cattle farms. By age, sex and education, they are distributed as follows, men - %, women - %; with higher education - %, secondary education - %, primary education - %, and age from ===== years.

Aim of the research, To establish the structure of work motivation in the entrepreneurs on the axis intrinsic-extrinsic motivation as well as its influence on work parameters.

Hypothesis, Intrinsic motivation has a main impact on entrepreneurs' activities, and it is expected to influence activity parameters.

The **methods** used include, 1. Questionnaire for activity motivation analysis which contains 18 statements operationalizing work motivation and summarized from own research conducted over the last 15 years. In this way, the researchers hope to get as close as possible to the studied reality which will increase the objectivity of the analysis. The survey subjects have to determine the degree of satisfaction of each need based on

whether each statement is true or false for them. Possible responses are measured on a 4-point true-false Likert scale ranging from 1 = false for me to 4 = true for me. 2. Questionnaire for research of activity parameters and demographic characteristics.

The statistical analysis package used for statistical processing of the results was "Statistica for Windows". Conclusions were drawn on the basis of regression analysis, percentage analysis and Student-Fisher t-test for statistical significance of differences in bilateral formulation of the problem and probability of error $p < 0.05$.

Table 1 shows the intensity of the motives for entrepreneurial activity. After analysis of the average values and modes, a secondary ranking of the motives was performed on two levels - significant motives with strong intensity and significant motives with lower intensity for the studied group. It is interesting to know what the share of the internal motives group is in the overall structure of leading motives. The first level shows the most significant motives for entrepreneurs, with average values over 3.00 on a four-point scale; the second level shows the significant motives with average values from 1.50 to 2.80; (**Table 1**).

It is noteworthy that all seven statements, operationalizing intrinsic motivation for entrepreneurial activity, are present at the first level, and are shared by more than half of the entrepreneurs covered in the study. Those in the fourth, sixth and seventh positions in the first level operationalize the need for competence and form a kind of block of motives arising from the cognitive (interest, knowledge and abilities) components of the choice of specific activities in agriculture. Apart from being descriptors of intrinsic motivation for activity, they also constitute a significant potential source of work efficiency. They identify the presence of good orientation in the problems of cattle breeding. Intrinsic motivation is not only assumed as a necessary condition for the improvement of personal competence, but also as a prerequisite for maintaining the activity. In accordance with the SDT, the need for competence inherent in intrinsic motivation can be expected to affect subjective confidence in the outcome of entrepreneurial activity.

The first and eighth positions in the first level comprise a second group of strong meaningful

internal motivators that are related to the pleasure of agricultural work and the devotion to the subject and content of the activity – "love of land and animals and a desire to care."

The nature of the motives *independence* and *autonomy*, united under the concept of *self-determination*, also located at the first level, unambiguously assigns them to the entrepreneurial type of activity. They operationalize another major internal motive related to *autonomy*, according to the SDT. This motive was significantly more often mentioned by male than by female respondents in the research. (Milyavskaya and Koestner's (2011), (Deci & Ryan, 2020). In SDT theory, satisfying the need for autonomy is considered to be of great importance for increasing intrinsic motivation. (Kanev, 2017)

All internal motives are brought to the forefront on the basis of more than half of the opinions. This convincingly speaks of prevailing intrinsic motivation in the behavior of cattle breeding entrepreneurs. The majority (almost 70%) of the respondents revealed predominantly intrinsic motivation. On this basis, a sustainable interest in the performed activity and sustainable intentions for its continuance in the future could be expected.

Among the items at the first level three external motives are also found which do not come directly from the content of the activity but can enhance intrinsic motivation - life in the countryside, among nature; secure income; high income. The motives concerning financial stability are interpreted as external in the research, insofar as they do not derive directly from the content of the specific type of activity, although they are a direct result of it.

All motives at the second level are external to the content of the activity - success, diversity, significance for others, family tradition, communication and respect. The expected benefits associated with achieving external goals are often overestimated (e.g. Sheldon et al. 2010). In fact, there is a hypothesis that the pursuit of only external goals, even if achieved, is associated with feelings of dissatisfaction and low self-esteem (Hope et al.,2019; Leung and Law,2019; Unanue et al.,2014).

Table 1. Ranking of the motives for choosing an entrepreneurial activity in the field of livestock breeding, according to their intensity in entrepreneurs

Level	Motives	Mean
First level	I love land and animals and I want to take care of them	3,68
	2) I love living in the countryside, to be in nature	3,61
	it provides me with a sufficiently secure income	3,53
	I possess abilities for this type of activity	3,47
	I organize my work on my own	3,47
	6) I possess knowledge about this work and I want to use it in practice	3,29
	7) my work is interesting	3,21
	8) my work at the farm gives me pleasure	3,2
	9) the income from this business is high	3,03
Second level	10) I have success in this activity so far	2,76
	11) the work is varied	2,57
	12) I have the feeling I have succeeded in life	2,5
	13) my work is important to others	2,31
	14) family tradition	2,25
	15) I cannot find another job	1,91
	16) I have the opportunity to communicate with different people	1,84
	17) through this I earn the respect of others	1,67

As far as the motive *importance of work to others* is concerned, in SDT there is a hypothesis that beneficence, action for the benefit of others, the sense of usefulness all contribute to the experience of well-being and meaning (Martela et al. 2016). Although the results are contradictory, the authors assume that beneficence may increase well-being and create favorable conditions for displaying autonomy (Kanev, 2017).

The results of the regression analysis show that some of the motives influence the descriptors of the activity, The internal motive, operationalizing the competence need “love for the land and animals and desire to take care of them” ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < 0.05$), has a statistically significant effect on the subjective confidence of entrepreneurs that their children will continue their business (Table 2). In this way, the activity, driven by a motive based on competence need, brings not only work satisfaction, but also additional significance for the young generation and the future. According to the results of the

Pearson correlation analysis, the more entrepreneurs believe their children will continue the business, the more they foresee the prospect of business success ($R=0.41$, $p<0.05$), and the more satisfied they are with the profit of their work ($R=0.30$, $p<0.05$). Deci & Ryan (2020) claim that meeting such basic psychological needs should lead to positive performance.

The external motive “family income” ($\beta=0.23$, $p<0.05$), which belongs to the type External Regulation, also has a statistically significant effect on the subjective confidence of entrepreneurs that their children will continue their business (Table 3). It turns out that the stronger the motive “family income”, the higher the subjective probability of success in business, according to entrepreneurs ($R=0.25$, $p<0.05$). Future analyzes should examine the extent to which the strength of this determination depends on the socio-economic situation in the country and the industry.

Table 2. Influence of motives on the willingness of children to continue the entrepreneurial activities of their parents

Motives (Factor)	Dependent	β	ΔR^2	t	M	StDev
Love for the land and animals and desire to take care of them	The children will continue the business	0,41*	0,46	2,44**	3,71	0,51
Family income		0,23*	0,17	2,28*	3,57	0,67

*p < 0,05 ** p < 0,01 *** p < 0,005 **** p < 0,001

The two external motives “successes so far in the entrepreneur activity” ($\beta=0.35$, $p<0.05$) and “significance of work for others” ($\beta=0.27$, $p<0.05$) show a relatively weak influence, but they have statistically significant effect on the sustainability of the interest in the activity (Table 3). Entrepreneurs for whom these two motives are strong affirm that if they had to choose now,

they would get involved in the livestock business again. These motives are close to the Identified Regulation (Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2020), (Levesque, Cara, Pattie a. Deci, 2010), in which a person identifies with a behavior that is considered valuable, and as a result he adds value to himself.

Table 3. Influence of motives on the willingness for possible repeated choice of entrepreneurial activity

Motives (Factor)	Dependent	β	ΔR^2	t	M	StDev
Successes so far in the existing activity	Willingness for possible repeated choice	0,35*	0,46	3,09***	2,74	0,80
Significance of work for others		0,27*	0,50	2,01*	2,30	1,12

*p <0,05 ** p <0,01 *** p <0,005 **** p <0,001

The only motive that influences the decision of entrepreneurs on the size of their farms is the external motive “respect from others” which belongs to the type External Regulation. It can be assumed that a significant part of entrepreneurs believes that the size of the farm, as a demonstration of business strength, will bring them social prestige and respect.

Table 4. Influence of motives on the size of the farm

Motives (Factor)	Dependent	β	ΔR^2	t	M	StDev
Respect from others	Size of the farm	0,31*	0,49	2,67**	1,66	0,94

*p <0,05 ** p <0,01 *** p <0,005 **** p <0,001

The results of the correlation analysis show that the larger the farms, the lower the subjective probability of success ($R=-0.44$, $p<0.05$); profit satisfaction is lower ($R=-0.21$, $p<0.05$) and the financial situation of entrepreneurs is more unfavorable ($R=-0.45$, $p<0.05$). In other words, entrepreneurs who seek respect by maintaining larger farms have to pay the price of insecurity and dissatisfaction with the business. This conclusion confirms the thesis in SDT that the pursuit of external goals results in feelings of dissatisfaction and low self-esteem (Hope et al., 2019; Leung and Law, 2019; Unanue et al., 2014).

In conclusion, empirical studies of the types of motivation continue to be key to predicting people’s work behavior, to managing it and to increasing its effectiveness. Therefore, the distinction between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation is empirically useful.

Based on the results of the empirical study, the following empirical hypotheses can be formulated,

Most of the entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector possess predominantly intrinsic motivation. Based on this, a stable interest in the executed activity and stability of intentions for its future continuation could be expected.

Internal motives operationalizing competence needs tend to bring not only work satisfaction, but also additional significance for the future.

When social prestige is a strong motive, work results are experienced as unsatisfactory and have negative influence on the self-esteem of the respondents.

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