

EXAMINATION OF THE ATTITUDES TOWARDS ATYPICAL EMPLOYMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SLOVAK AND HUNGARIAN UNEMPLOYED

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Summary: Employment is today one of the crucial questions, since the crisis started in 2008, its impulses expressed their impacts among others in the labour market. A series of job losses and cost reductions induced greater rationalization and flexibility of employment. One of the features of that is the fact that the perception of atypical employment has recently undergone a transformation. The figures of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office show, inter alia, that these forms of employment are increasingly in the focus of interest of employers and areas of application are broadened, furthermore their frequency increases. Similarly to the employer, the workers will see new perspectives in atypical solutions, but of course the question is how the employees' attitudes are formed and how these opportunities determine expansion. This study summarizes the partial results of a research carried out in the past few years. The study, based on a survey conducted among the unemployed basically examined attitudes of this social group towards atypical forms. The research was conducted in two countries simultaneously, namely in Slovakia and Hungary, and provided the opportunity to discuss the issue from different angles. The current specification is for examining whether there is a difference between the opinions of the Slovak and Hungarian unemployed in regard to atypical work.

Keywords: Employment, unemployment, atypical employment, Hungary and Slovakia

1. Summary of the literature

The Hungarian literature of atypical - non-traditional forms of employment can be regarded as relatively rich. Already in the nineties appeared some studies on the concept clarification and interpretation - including Laky (1998) and Frey (2000), and in the next few years, economists analysed the possibilities and limits of the spread of atypical forms. Publications of the last decade examined the opportunities of atypical work from the perspective of employment policies. Laky (2002), Frey (2000) and Seres (2010) presented the international experience and benefits of atypical employment and stressed the need for its spread. Looking at the labour market effects of atypical work Köllő - Vince (1999) and Scharle (2000) found that in addition to the increase in unemployment in the new forms did not appear to be an alternative to jobs, and the dissemination of atypical forms of employment was a relatively slow process. Structure and spread of atypical employment are excellently presented by Hárs in his study which covers two decades (2012) and presents besides the summary of the international and national literature as well as a concept description the results of research on the impacts of participation in atypical work on households and regional characteristics. Teréz Laky (2000), provides a brief economic-historical overview of the continuous change of employment, defines the various forms of atypical employment, points out the international differences,

describes the conditions of the dissemination of each single form in Hungary. In recent years, several studies have examined the spread and role of non-standard forms of employment in the labour market. The Research of the Department of Sociology and Social Policy of the University of Debrecen, (Rév, 2010) was carried out in the service sector. Ékes (2009), analysed part-time, fixed-term contracts, as well as the incidence of self-employment forms in Hungary and the European Union and attempted to outline the future of atypical employment. Atypical work, but more flexible forms of employment have attracted the interest of Slovak economists as well. Not just theoretical writings, but research results have also been published on the issue. This topic appeared in literature for the first time in 1992, when the attention was called to the psychological context of atypical employment (Zelmanov 1992a), respectively, this time it was done in social context. Then, for a long time the problem occurred rarely. A paper mentioned the specifics of agricultural employment (Buchta, 1994) another one dealt with atypical employment contracts (Barancová 1998). In 2005 a study was born on trends in Slovakia. (Hanzelová, E. - Kostolná, Z. - Reichová, D) The real breakthrough, however, comes from the 2010's. Scientific papers appear on the legal background of the shared workplace (Mičudová 2011), and on the shared workplace itself (Mičudová, 2013), on working conditions of the typical and atypical jobs and on the significance of flexible work (Grenčíková - Španková, 2014). Conferences are also devoted to the problem (Factors of making the workplace more flexible in Slovakia from the perspective of the family and integration into the social system, Banska Bystrica 2014). Relevant presentations are also given on other conferences, which examined the atypical employment relationships (Bačišín, 2013) or atypical forms of employment and social security relations among others. (Macková 2014) There are instances for the analysis of the theme in terms of the regional employment. (Pšenková 2014)

2. Presentation of the research

2.1. Sample

As already mentioned, the research was carried out last year. The interviews took place in Hungary in the Offices of the Central Transdanubian Regional Employment Service in Komárom and Esztergom, while in Slovakia in the offices of the Labour- and Social Affairs and Family Centre in Komarno and Sturovo. The reasons for the choice of the place were that people in the study (the unemployed) are concentrated in large numbers in these areas. Another reason for the choice of the place of the examination was that the questionnaires were to fill out by individuals living certainly in the area whereas the local Labour Centres register the unemployed according to their residence.

On the structure of the questionnaire can be said that it basically consisted of closed questions based on nominal and metric scales. The questionnaires were filled out on paper, and the data were subsequently processed by using SPSS and Excel format. The evaluation methods were typically univariate and multivariate tests, including frequency, average, standard deviation, and cross-table analysis, independent sample T-test, factor -and cluster investigations.

The current study focused on proving the following hypothesis: Presumably, Slovak and Hungarian unemployed in the sample, typically representing different attitudes of atypical forms of perception and this influences their decisions regarding the acceptance of atypical employment opportunities.

The research involved 689 people attended, but actually those who declared themselves unemployed (i.e. those who were at the moment of the research not working), were only 279 people, so this sample number was used in the evaluation. The current sample cannot be regarded to be representative because of its numerousness, either.

2.2. Research results

From the 279 respondents there were 133 Slovak, while 146 people Hungarians, so the proportion of participants of two countries were relatively close to each other (47.7 and 52.3). In terms of gender, 38.7% of men and 61.3% of women participated in the study that means the proportion of women was more than one and a half times more compared to men.

According to the age of 30 years of age to 35.4% in the 30's age group, 27.8%, and then 40 years of age, 36.8% were in the research.

On the basis of marital status the highest proportion of single people and married people were represented, the former rate of 38.2%, while 33.1% of the latter, however, had the lowest proportion of widows at 1.5%.

Based on the educational attainment in the sample 25.2% is the proportion of basic qualification holders, 28.1% of those with secondary education without maturity diploma, 32.5% of maturity diploma holders, while 14.2% of university graduates.

Regarding the previous jobs the respondents had to provide where they previously worked. The table below shows the previous employments:

Table 1: Previous employments

Previous employment	Number/Head	%
Day labourer	3	1.2
Top manager	4	1.6
Lower-level leadership	7	2.7
Mid-level manager	9	3.5
Casual worker	14	5.4
Individual contractor	16	6.2
Public employment	16	6.2
Unskilled worker	40	15.6
Skilled worker	40	15.6
Subordinate staff	108	42.0
Altogether	257	100.0
Missing	22	
Total	279	

Source: Authors' own research

The above figures show well that a very small % of the respondents were employed in top manager positions and the same refers to day labourers as well, while the respondents worked in largest proportion as employees before losing their jobs. 60.3% of the respondents had heard of atypical employment opportunities. The investigation revealed that in this aspect there was a significant difference between the Slovak and Hungarian respondents, i.e. according to Pearson's Chi-Square: 11.352 df :1: sign: , 001, $p < 0.05$. While 50% of the Slovak respondents were aware of atypical employment, in the case of Hungarian respondents this percentage was 70%, however, a Cramer V index showed a not strong correlation between the two variables: Cramer V: .204 sign.: .001, $p < 0.05$.

During the examination, the questionnaire asked about the expectations of the participants concerning a future work. On a 5-grade Likert scale, respondents had to answer questions on the importance of considerations. Number 1 stood for not at all important things, while for 5-very important one. Table 2 summarizes the results for the given aspects

Table 2: What do you expect from any future work? (Average; Diversity)

Aspects	Average	Diversity
Career opportunities	3.89	1.215
Appropriate payment	4.75	.736
Good working atmosphere	4.49	.840
Appropriate coordination of family and work	4.44	.967
Appropriate coordination of work and free time (sport and entertainment)	4.07	1.188
Coordination of work and learning	3.50	1.364
Appropriate working conditions	4.58	.713
Interesting and meaningful work opportunities	4.43	.889
Opportunity to swap for an 'ordinary' position	4.45	.919

Source: Authors' own research

The evaluation of responses shows that the respondents' main considerations were payment, good working conditions and good work atmosphere. There is a high average in the case of the work-life coordination that is likely to justify that nowadays the quality of life issues are increasingly important, and tend to become a major concern as an aspect of the work-life coordination from workers' point of view. Perhaps due to the fact that really sample focused on people who were truly out of work career option among the respondents received less priority. With the help of an independent sample t-test it was examined whether the given variables differed in respect to the Hungarian and Slovak respondents. In the case of three variables no significant differences of opinion were justified concerning good working atmosphere, appropriate payment and coordination of working and learning. Looking at the other variables in the two countries, respondents had significantly different opinion.

The majority of the respondents regard the atypical ways of employment as temporary solution, except the Slovak respondents in regard to temporary agency work and public work. Slovak respondents accept the former one in higher proportion for long-term, while the latter would not be accepted by the majority. Casual work and public work have low "popularity" with the Hungarian respondents while considering the Slovak respondents temporary agency work and public work are the least popular. The Hungarians would mostly accept temporary agency work on long term, or they would work as teleworkers while the Slovaks prefer contracts with labour hire firms. The Chi-square test showed no significant disagreement on the part-time (Pearson's Chi-square 1.7 df 2 ∴ sign, 428 $p > 0.05$) between the respondents however it does in the case of the other atypical variables.

Finally, the research asked the opinion of the respondents why they thought people tended to opt for non-standard solutions. There were three possible answers to be chosen: "no other choice", "it has some advantages," and because "I do not think they accept." The distribution of answers given by the respondents is shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Distribution of answers on the reasons of acceptance of the different atypical forms of employment by country

	Country	No other choice	There are certain advantages	I think it will not be accepted
		%	%	%
Casual work; day work	Hungarian	85.4	13.1	1.5
	Slovak	37.8	61.4	.8
Part time work (less than 8 hours per a day)	Hungarian	57.8	40.6	1.6
	Slovak	18.4	81.6	.0
One-season commitment	Hungarian	61.2	34.9	3.9
	Slovak	18.5	78.2	3.2
Telework commitment; telecommuting	Hungarian	42.4	51.2	6.4
	Slovak	12.7	84.9	2.4
Contract with labour hire firms; agency work	Hungarian	59.7	37.2	3.1
	Slovak	18.7	80.5	.8
Sales agent with independent contractor's certificate	Hungarian	52.0	39.4	8.7
	Slovak	15.4	79.7	4.9
Participation in public work	Hungarian	60.9	35.2	3.9
	Slovak	35.5	55.6	8.9

Source: Authors' own research

3. Conclusion

The study presented some results of a research taking place in the past year. The hypothesis formulated during the surveys can be regarded as accepted. The research could highlight the typically different views of Slovak and Hungarian respondents on "non-standard" forms of employment.

It is a fact that the majority regards these atypical forms of employment as temporary solution. Considering the chances of acquisition of a normal work the majority assumed a neutral impact. The largest proportion of Hungarian respondents were those who basically evaluate these forms as necessity solutions (except for teleworking), while the majority of the Slovak respondents had seen even the beneficial side of them as a motivational factor in terms of the adoption of these options. It is an important message from the research that generally the respondents would have adopted these solutions in higher proportion either temporarily or on long-term, than those who would have refused which also indicates that regardless whether due to necessity or even to the benefits the penetration of these forms even from the side of the employees is gradually opening.

A contradictory attitude towards atypical jobs is shown by the fact that the respondents found "people in general" would accept such opportunities, but personally they would decline them.

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