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Strategic talent management in agricultural and forestry companies

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Abstract: In a time of a constant change, a company with high-quality, talented employees not only has an advantage in the competitive environment but it is also a more attractive proposition for the potential employees. It is also a 'great place to work' for the existing employees. The article therefore focuses on the approaches to implementing the strategic talent management which are taken by the agricultural and forestry companies. The paper investigates the position taken regarding the talent management in theory. It is based on the aims of a primary survey, the purpose of which was to develop a deeper understanding of the supporting theoretical concepts underpinning the company approaches to talent. The objective of the work is to identify the main components of the strategic talent management based on the primary survey of companies operating in agriculture and forestry. This is accomplished by evaluating the data obtained from the primary analysis of the methods and approaches used on 101 farms and other agricultural companies. The data comes from the manager surveys for which a single manager represented the given company. The mono-dimensional and multi-dimensional statistics were used to evaluate the data. The results indicate that in 62% of the companies examined are familiar with the principles of the talent management and that the talent management forms part of the mission of the company (48%). A deeper analysis is used to further examine the differences in the approach of the companies included in the study. The paper contains an in depth discussion of the concept of the strategic talent management, as well as identifying the main processes connected with it. Moreover, the paper presents new research findings by defining and validating the main attributes of the strategic talent management (TM); additionally the gap between the awareness of the top management of the talent management concept and its use in practice is found and discussed.

Keywords: agriculture, development, employee, forestry, organization

A greater attention has been devoted to the talent management issues in the recent years. A number of factors may be included among these issues, such as the demographic changes associated with the general ageing of the population, the increased employee mobility, or globalisation, for example (Beechler and Woodward 2009, Tarique and Schuler 2010). This topic has also become the subject of a wide range of expert studies and analyses. And yet it still cannot be said that the theoretical perspectives of the talent management have been sufficiently researched (Collings and Mellahi 2009; Thunnisen et al. 2013).

According to Schuler et al. (2011), the success of modern companies depends on their ability to identify and manage the coming challenges in the area of the talent management and to adapt to these challenges. Yapp (2009) adds that the companies that practice an effective talent management may obtain quite a significant competitive advantage. Talent may be one

of the factors leading to the company competitiveness. Therefore, this paper focuses on investigating the approaches to the talent management in theory and based upon a primary survey, it aims to develop a deeper understanding of the supported theoretical concepts underpinning the area of the company's approaches to talent: namely, the strategic talent management and the talent philosophies.

Talent management, along with the need for working with talent and its development, already enters into all fields. It is for this reason that this article pays attention to the employee development and talent management in agricultural and forestry companies. The objective of this article is to draw on data evaluated from a primary analysis carried out on 101 agricultural companies, in order to identify the approaches taken to the employee development strategies, as well as the practical application of the employee development in these companies.

The paper focuses on agricultural and forestry companies, as the share of agriculture and forestry in the gross value added in the national economy is drawing closer to the average of the former EU 15 (Czech Statistical Office 2014). Czech agriculture has a long tradition that guaranteed not only the nation's self-sufficiency in the basic food, but also made this Central European part of the world famous abroad (Ministry of Agriculture 2015).

Agriculture and forestry make up a primary sector of the economy. These two areas are very specific for the Czech Republic because they are affected by the same or similar external and internal factors. The competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, not only in the Czech Republic, is based on both the technical and technological levels of the processing industry and the existence of various forms of imperfect competition in these sectors (FADN 2014). Agricultural and forestry companies in the Czech Republic are increasingly determined by their environment, especially by the successive vertical parts of the agribusiness. It can be stated that agriculture and forestry in the Czech Republic is characterized by the biological character of production, which means that it is manifested by its high dependence on natural conditions, the time discrepancy between the production and the associated working processes, long production cycles, the demands for large stocks of own production and the seasonality (Ministry of Agriculture 2015). These factors greatly affect human resources in the agribusiness and forestry (Agricultural Union of the Czech Republic 2014).

To summarise, the key factor accounting for the economic backwardness of the Czech Republic is the low productivity of this sector of the economy. The main source of its increase is particularly the intensification of the activities as far as the qualitatively intensive inputs are concerned, as well as the competent employees and managers of agricultural and forestry companies.

Therefore, a research focusing on the strategies of the human resource management and specifically the talent management was made in order to fill the gap of the missing information concerning the strategic work with employees in agriculture and forestry.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE WORK

Among the basic theoretical concepts of the talent management (TM), it is possible to highlight the

strategic talent management (STM), the integrated talent management (ITM), the global talent management (GTM) or the total quality management (TQM) when applied to the talent management.

Those concepts of the talent management are widely known, but they may be considered to be too broad and simplified, with a lack of concrete descriptions of the related activities focused on the human capital and companies' processes. Therefore, an investigation into the concepts of talent management is necessary. The survey presented in this paper is focused on the main companies' practices connected to the talent management, and it thus reveals the actual current approach taken by the agricultural and forestry companies to the talent management.

Höglund (2012), in his study, showed the direct and indirect impact of the strategic talent management practices on human resources from the of talent management perspective. The results clearly showed that the usage of the human resource management (HRM) practices which develop skills (skill-enhancing HRM practices) have a positive impact on human capital. Other specific areas of impact are inferred from these findings. These indications show that all HRM practices always send signals to employees, who in some way interpret them. Such interpretation on the part of employees has an impact on their understanding of what is the desirable behaviour, as well as what are the connected rewards.

The study is evaluated to a greater extent by this paper. The outcomes of the study are very broad and generalised, while the (HRM) practices; as defined in the study; bear no relation to the labour management activities in the company, and so they do not lead to a deeper understanding of the talent management. This paper takes the study of this concept further, and focuses more sharply on the HRM practices within the company in order to define those which are specific and crucial for the talent management and development.

Sparrow and Makram (2015) defined, in their study based on the meta-analysis, four basic philosophies of the talent management. The first philosophy considers the talent management to be the categorisation of employees. The second approach is more practical, and develops the necessary specialized and sophisticated processes in order to manage talent more efficiently. The third one perceives the talent management to be the management of positions, while positions are more important than people, while the fourth philosophy highlights the identification of strategic pools, as well as the management of human capital (as a collective).

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The philosophies of the talent management are currently fragmented and unstable. Each company works either with a different philosophy, has its own or none at all. The philosophies presented here are theoretical concepts, having no practical use. However, the aforementioned philosophies give an overview of how the talent management is perceived in the HRM practice. In this paper, an approach to the stated philosophies will be discussed.

It is possible to view the talent management itself, similarly to the method for defining talent in the companies (Garavan et al. 2012). This means that we can view it from two different perspectives in association with the so-called inclusive or exclusive approach (Powell et al. 2012).

As a part of the inclusive approach, all employees, without exception, are considered as the potential talents. Stainton (2005), and Brown and Heskett (2004) maintain that each person has the potential and ability to express talent. Nijs et al. (2013) emphasise the positive psychological impact of this concept on the employees. Armstrong (2006) adds that for this very reason, the talent management should not be focused solely on a few selected individuals. The results of a study by Reilly (2008) indicate that this approach can be found particularly in the companies working in the public sector.

Critics of this approach counter that this conception of talent can be easily exchanged for the classical concept of the employee, and that the approach in question does not offer any added value (Lewis and Heckman 2006).

On the other hand, Ledford and Kochanski (2004) argue that in order for the concept of talent management to be effectively applied, a differentiation or segmentation is crucial. It is therefore characteristic of this exclusive approach that only the individuals who in some way offer an above-standard benefit to the company are included in the talent programs (Morton 2005; Pilbeam and Corbridge 2010). According to Stahl et al. (2012), the exclusive approach to the talent management is far more common in practice than the above mentioned inclusive approach.

Meyers and van Woerkom (2014) argue that these philosophies determine the nature of the HRM and the talent management in practice, and consequently influence valuable outcomes such as the employee well-being and performance.

Reilly and Williams (2012) defined four focus areas of the talent management. Similarly to the above mentioned, they identify the inclusive (1) and exclusive

talent management, while the second area (exclusive TM) is described in depth. It is the exclusive talent management based on grade (2), rather than the really executive TM (3), which is focused on the succession planning, other focus area is based on the high potential and on skills, as well as the key knowledge (4). Collings and Mellahi (2009) and Chuai et al. (2008) have discerned in this segmentation a basic difference between the human resources management and the talent management.

In the Czech companies, which were studied (Urbanová and Vnoučková 2015; Vnoučková et al. 2015), these methods are rarely used. Instead, the simple HRM practices are used. Therefore, their impact draws attention to the identification of usable techniques in the talent engagement.

Strategic talent management

As far as the talent management strategies are concerned, Horváthová (2010) states that they are an important prerequisite for the effective work with talent. A fundamental condition is that they conform to the overall business strategy of the company. Their objective is to support those individuals who can be considered to be talented, engaged, qualified, dedicated, and capable, and who are helping the company to achieve its goals and objectives. The talent management strategies are focused on five basic areas, namely the acquisition, selection, engagement, development, and retention of the employees (Towers Perrin 2003).

A well-developed strategy can help to overcome various challenges and problems and it can also increase the success of the given company (Rowland 2011). In the same manner, it contributes to the creation of a positive employer brand (Hughes and Rog 2008; Stachová et al. 2015). According to Venkateswaran (2012), it has been demonstrated that a strategic focus on the talent management can lead to the improvement of an entire range of financial and non-financial results. These include the company's profits, productivity, and market value, as well as the achievement of the company's objectives: the attractiveness of the company, customer satisfaction, work satisfaction, and the increased quality of work.

From the Deloitte study (2010), it can be seen that a mere 20% of the companies surveyed have these strategies sufficiently detailed and well developed (according to the perceptions of top managers and talent

management specialists). Such a result is low; on the other hand, neither the talent management strategy, nor the whole concept of the talent management is widely understood, or used, in those companies which were surveyed. Surprisingly, the number of companies where it is used is quite high. Companies usually call the “talent management” practices by different names inside the company. In the same manner, the strategies are perceived differently.

According to Tucker et al. (2005), the talent management strategies (as the overall strategies of the company) will be influenced in the future by various trends such as the global or virtual work environment, the intergenerational cooperation, or a longer average lifespan. McCartney and Worman (2013) have studied the contemporary tendencies in the talent management field. The authors emphasise the current focus of companies is on the development of talent “in-house”; of retaining the talented employees instead of recruiting them, and using new media and technology in the recruitment process.

While it can be said that the benefit of the talent management has been demonstrated, the results of the study by Horváthová (2010) indicate that they are still used only by a small percentage of companies. The primary reasons include a scant information about this strategic trend, insufficient financial and human resources, and a subjective perception that the given approach is excessively difficult or unsuitable for the company in question. Globally, of course, the situation is somewhat different, as illustrated by the example of the financial resources allocated to the talent management. This has been confirmed by Kormancová (2011), whose study demonstrated that a mere 4.74% of companies in Slovakia practice the talent management ($n = 347$). From the CIPD study (2012), it can be seen that during the past year only one company out of ten has reduced the resources allocated to the talent management. On the other hand, one quarter of the total number of 522 companies which were examined indicated an increase in the amount of resources allocated to this area. Approximately one half of these companies later indicated that their current economic situation had led to a more intensive focus on the talent management.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The article has been based on the analysis of secondary sources, the synthesis and the evaluation of

the results of the primary research. The sample of companies in agriculture and forestry was carried out in the Czech Republic. The total number of Czech agricultural companies by 31st December 2014 was 96 178, according to Czech Statistical Office. On the same date, in the Czech Republic, there were 12 647 forestry companies. Out of all these, 35 242 of agriculture economic subjects were family farms or private farmers. Those companies were included in the survey, as family farms and private farmers employ (seasonal) workers and take care of them according to the standards of the human resource management.

For the purposes of the research presented in this paper, our own database of agricultural and forestry companies was made, based on the quota sampling. The quotas used to create the database were specified based on data and sampling of the Czech Statistical Office. The sampling used the size of company, the number of employees, the type of company (all types were used for the sampling – business companies, cooperatives, state farms and family farms), and the address and district of the farm or company in the Czech Republic. The database respects the proportion of size and type of companies in the Czech Republic. The database created for the purposes of this survey consists of 680 companies. The companies selected for the survey were contacted based on their registration in the database of agricultural and forestry companies operating in the Czech Republic. The overall questionnaire return rate was 14.8%, i.e. 101 companies completed and returned the questionnaire. The Czech companies involved were mainly small-sized (60.4%) including family farms; 32.7% were medium sized, while large companies (with more than 250 employees) made up 6.9%. The sampling error was measured and the results are positive; it is possible to generalize the results.

The paper focuses on a more in depth discussion of the concept of the strategic talent management, as well as investigating the main approaches taken by the participating companies to talent philosophies. In addition, the differences between the results of similar studies are discussed. The data was collected by the means of using an electronic questionnaire which automatically recorded and pre-categorised respondents' answers (CAWI method – 85 respondents). The telephonic interview (CATI) method was also used with 16 respondents. The sample selection took into account the size of the company (small companies of up to 50 employees; medium-sized

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companies employing between 51 and 249 people and large companies with more than 250 employees). Only respondents from the upper or top management (HR managers were excluded) answered the questionnaire. Only one respondent per company was questioned. This part of the survey took place at the beginning of 2015 (January–March).

The respondents addressed individual statements based on the theoretical perspectives of the work and indicated their agreement or disagreement. They also had the opportunity not to answer in the event that the given statement was not relevant to their company.

The respondents' answers were classified according to identification questions that constituted the first section of the questionnaire. Measurements in the survey were derived from closed questions with one or several possible answers that had been selected based on the study of literature, documents and other related surveys. The semantic differential was also applied.

All the primary data were evaluated using descriptive statistics. Further analyses were based on the method of multidimensional statistics – factor analysis. To evaluate the data, the IBM SPSS 22 Statistic and MS Excel 2007 were used.

During the research, the procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards and the Czech law relating to the use of sensitive information.

RESULTS

As a part of the section on results, the outcomes of the quantitative analysis of the agricultural and

forestry companies are represented, while the discussion section contains a comparison of the results with regard to the issues in question. It also discusses the future development of the talent management in this specific industry.

Evaluation of the current level of the talent management and employee development in agricultural and forestry companies

According to the results shown in the Table 1, it can be summarised that most of the companies addressed incline to the opinion that the talent management is of tremendous importance for their company. Based on such results, the survey deeply focuses on the attributes which may have a connection with the strategic talent management (TM). The representatives of the surveyed companies were less equivocal in their responses to whether the talent management forms an integral part of their company. On the basis of the results, it can be stated that the representatives of the participating agricultural and forestry companies agree with the statement that leadership advocates a unified approach to managing talent, that they have defined strategies for talent management, and that these are a component of the strategic goals of the company. Within the given companies, senior executives (59.4%) contribute most to the work with talent and the external consultants (9.9%) the least – the TM is supported by the top management in one half of the studied companies. In consequence, those surveyed companies have a defined strategy of the HRM; on the other hand, the TM strategy is

Table 1. Relative frequencies of responses

Statements	Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Mostly agree	Totally agree
Importance of TM	6.9	16.8	45.5	15.8
TM is part of mission	5.0	32.7	37.6	9.9
Top management support TM	12.9	20.8	35.6	9.9
Defined strategy for HRM	8.9	26.7	38.6	12.9
Defined TM strategy	23.8	23.8	29.7	5.0
TM strategy is integrated with strategic goals	18.8	19.8	31.7	4.0
The necessity for talents in the future	14.9	25.7	30.7	6.9
Performance is systematically evaluated	4.0	19.8	46.5	23.8
Criteria for evaluating performance are defined	6.9	19.8	40.6	25.7
Assessment of performance is used	8.9	21.8	40.6	21.8
TM is integrated with employee compensation	21.8	18.8	32.7	7.9

Source: own survey

defined in in fewer of the respondent companies – the TM strategy is more specific and requires a deeper focus on the human resource management and talent management in a company. A similar percentage of the surveyed companies interconnects the TM with strategic goals, and they are aware of the necessity of talents in the future. The presented results in Table 1 reveal an overall knowledge of the importance of the human resource management (HRM) in the surveyed agriculture and forestry companies. More than one third of them use the TM practices and strategies on a regular basis. The results also show that the surveyed companies are aware of the necessity to interconnect the practices of the HRM and TM to use them efficiently.

Most of the surveyed companies incline to the statement that the performance of their employees is systematically evaluated. Moreover, the criteria for performance evaluation are defined in surveyed companies. Performance and its evaluation seem to be crucial in most of the respondent companies. It can be stated that the quality of the performance of tasks within the given job is predetermined by the knowledge, capabilities, and skills of the employees. These must be continually developed in order that the employees might achieve not only the above average performance results but also that they might be more competitive on the labour market.

Table 2. Results of the factor analysis

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2
Importance of TM	0.548	-0.009
TM is part of mission	0.568	0.140
Top management support TM	0.638	0.323
Defined strategy for HRM	0.417	0.413
Defined TM strategy	0.806	0.100
TM strategy is integrated with strategic goals	0.855	0.085
The necessity for talents in the future	0.087	0.377
Performance is systematically evaluated	0.200	0.804
Criteria for evaluating performance are defined	0.103	0.837
Assessment of performance is used	0.090	0.827
TM is integrated with employee compensation	0.695	0.172
Total % of variance	37.475	10.559
Name of the factor	Strategic TM	TQM

Source: own survey

It is also possible to highlight the fact that less than one half of respondents stated that the TM is connected with the employee compensation (less than one half of the companies surveyed).

To summarize, the surveyed companies are mostly aware of the TM practices and concepts on the top management level, on the other hand, there are less practices used in the HRM practice. Therefore, the concept of the STM will be further evaluated by the multidimensional statistic.

The factor analysis was used to validate the results. First, a correlation analysis was conducted. Given that a sufficient quantity and quality of correlation coefficients was found in the correlation table, a subsequent analysis was conducted: i.e. the factor analysis. According to the evaluation of the calculated data, a total of 6 significant factors were identified following evaluation of the survey. Four of them only slightly exceeded the value of 1.0 and for this reason, they were eliminated from a further assessment. In total, therefore, 2 significant factors were identified that met the criteria according to this methodology (Table 2).

The first factor is composed of 8 variables, for the integration of the talent management strategy with the strategic goals of the company. According to the variables represented by Factor 1, which are focused on the long term concepts of the human resources management, as well as the alignment of the component objectives with the company objectives. This factor may be called the “Strategic TM”. It can be stated that 37.5% of the agricultural and forestry companies examined have a very good concept of the human resources management, which is integrated with the strategies of the company. Likewise, these companies work with the talent management, they have succession plans, and the talent management is of a significant importance for the company and is carried out in practice.

As mentioned in the theory, the strategic approach to the talent management may be found in the participating companies. Based on the results presented, it is also possible to clearly specify this approach. The factor analysis discovered single attributes of the human resources management which are used, and which are strongly connected to the strategic talent management.

The strategic talent management may be defined by the acknowledged importance of the TM through the whole company, its incorporation in the company’s vision and mission, as well as a definition of the TM strategy. The TM is supported by the top manage-

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ment and integrated with the strategic goals. The strategic TM also defines a list of the key talents in the company and the criteria for the promotion are known and used. Promotions and development are based on the evaluation of the employee performance. In addition, the TM is also integrated with the employee compensation.

Such practices are crucial parts of a successful strategic approach to talent management. This factor is predominantly composed of the systematic evaluation of the employee performance, clearly defined criteria for evaluating employees, as well as the formulation of conclusions from the employee performance evaluations. Therefore, this factor may be called the “Total Quality Management”. Companies grouped in this factor place a strong emphasis on the performance and productivity. They closely track and assess these areas, evaluate the employees accordingly, and integrate the entire system with the company strategies.

The second approach to the talent management may specify the methods for the connection of the talent management and the total quality management. Companies grouped in the factor are aware of the necessity for talent in the future. So, they systematically evaluate the performance, while the criteria for evaluating the performance are strictly defined. The assessment of the performance and the criteria for the promotion are also used by the company. Plus, the evaluation of the employee performance is used for the development plans in the company.

Those characteristics are directly linked to the talent management in close connection with the performance. This type of company is strongly focused on the performance; it may show the philosophy of specific positions, and the key positions used for the TM.

It is possible to summarize the survey as follows; 37.5% of the surveyed companies use the strategic TM. It clearly specifies the practices connected to the strategic TM. The other part focuses on the connection between the TM and TQM. The results of clearly defined key components of the strategic talent management (STM): the acknowledged importance of TM through the whole company, the incorporation in the company’s vision and mission, the definition of the TM strategy, its support by the top management, the integration with strategic goals, the existence of the list of key talents, defined criteria for the promotion which are based on the evaluation of the employee performance, and the integration with the employee compensation.

It is possible to mention the overall impact of the talent management on the top management and the strategy of a company. The results show that higher-level human resource practices are managed by the leaders of companies, and they are less known and used in the day-to-day work. The survey also analysed other human resource practices used and connected to the talent management. However, the statistical tests revealed significant correlations mainly between the talent management and the top management regarding the company and the use of those processes. It is thus necessary for the top management to be an active partner of the human resource department, to support the talent management processes, and to work on the application of talent management processes. The benefits of the talent management would not otherwise make a significant contribution to a company. The specification of strategic talent management may be seen in the ability of the top management to share the importance of the concept of the TM throughout the whole company. They must be able to incorporate the TM into the vision and mission as well as to define the TM strategy and to integrate it into the company’s strategic goals, and also to create a list of key talents and planned promotions which are based on the employees’ performance.

The whole process of the STM, therefore, rests on the relationship between the managers and their subordinates at the higher levels of a company and subsequently on to those at the lower levels. The talent management and its practices were found to be personal, depending on the performance of each individual (see factor 2) systematically evaluated, and monitored by the set criteria. The results identify the specifics of talent management out of other human resource practices. It clearly refers to the systematic work with the employees as individuals using specified plans of development and assessment, the criteria of which are periodically updated.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research presented in the paper, there is a correlation between the TM and company performance in the Czech Republic. This may be the challenge for the future research in the TM. This conclusion is in accordance with surveys such as those from Kulkarni and Scullion (2015) or Marchington (2015). There is a similar situation in Russia, according to Latukha (2015) and Thunnissen

and Arensbergen (2015). Their surveys summarize that the talent management system is influenced by factors inside the company. The right setting for the talent management system can be one of the most important components of the business model which is important for every company, not excluding the agricultural ones. The results of the study presented in this paper show that agricultural companies are aware of the necessity to set the whole talent management system. Additionally, the crucial components of setting this system were found. The findings refer to the key role of the top management, the performance evaluation, and the interconnection with the company mission and vision.

As McDonnell et al. (2010), explained; the companies have a problem, as the managers might fail to understand where the talent resides within their companies, and where they can find the human capital required to implement the designated business strategies. This paper finds that it is important to plan and develop each employee individually and specifically according to the results of a periodical evaluation and assessment based on the set and monitored criteria. Marchington (2015), states that there has been a major focus on the meaning and significance of the human resource management nowadays. The talent management in agricultural companies is a challenge in the Czech Republic, even though Horváthová (2010) indicates that it is still used by a minority of companies. The survey was conducted in 2010, and the area is on the rise. The results of the current survey show that 37.5% of the surveyed agricultural and forestry companies have a very good concept of the human resources management, which is integrated with the strategy of the company. The number is higher for companies in all sectors in the Czech Republic.

Collings and Mellahi (2009) and Marchington (2015), summarized that the talent management is about the identification, nurturing, progress, rewarding and retention of the key individuals who can add to the development of the company's sustainability. That means to assess and lead each employee and talent through the whole work process in a company.

McDonnell et al. (2010) focused too much on how to build a top talent, as well as how to develop charismatic leaders, rather than trying to engage all staff. This has led to an increased emphasis on the talent management and leadership, but, as a consequence, it also meant that there has been a parallel lack of the recognition for those making up the main body of the

company's workforces. This supports the strategic TM, or the integrated TM, rather than the TM focused on the individual (exclusive approach). Management practices identified by the factor analysis help to manage talents in a strategic way, in order to avoid such a pitfall.

Additionally, the philosophies of the TM may be discussed. Based on the results, the philosophies are closely interconnected, and the line between them is quite weak. It is sometimes even missing. It is possible to say, that there is a difference between the exclusive and inclusive approaches, but the differences in the practical use of the TM usually combines specific processes and promotions, together with a focus on the key positions and talent pools. Therefore, based on the study, it is possible to group the philosophies into two main streams. One stream includes only the exclusive talents, while the other stream includes broad concepts connected with the HRM, the strategy and the inclusive approach.

Wilden et al. (2010) state that the changing demographic and economic conditions in many developed and developing economies are contributing to the significant growth of competitiveness in the labour market, where there is a heavy competition for good employees. The same situation seems to occur in agriculture and forestry. The companies surveyed often mentioned the necessity to keep quality employees in the future. They see a serious problem in retaining talents due to the hard seasonal work, low salaries and rewards and the challenging work (in the open air in all kinds of weather). The respondent companies try to search for suitable talents from specialists and all employees; they state that it is sometimes hard to find anyone who wants to work in agriculture, with the solution being the employment of foreigners (Ukrainians, Slovaks etc., as they accept lower rewards and longer working hours).

The positive impact of the talent management is seen by the surveyed companies in the continuous functionality and development of the whole company, the continuity of outputs, the improvement of the company climate and the professional team, the stable performance of employees and the quality relationships.

The following limitations must be borne in mind when reading the findings from this study: The data collection focused on respondents from agriculture, and the fact that most Czech agricultural companies are small and medium sized. Due to the participation of one respondent per company, we were unable to

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compare other management members' perceptions. The subsequent studies should adapt the questionnaire for the other employees of agricultural companies in order to compare the results.

CONCLUSION

The talent management may be considered a systematic approach to acquiring the right people for the right positions at the right time. To employ talented workers should be the goal of every employer, as the performance of the company and its economic success always depend on the knowledge, capabilities, and skills of its employees, which must therefore be developed.

The results of this article have led to the determination that if the surveyed agricultural and forestry companies focus in depth on the human resources management, they are aware of the talent within their companies, and integrate their human resources activities with the company's strategies. Focus on the talent management is closely connected with the total quality management. The use of the practices related to the total quality management leads to a systematic employee evaluation used for their further development.

The extension of the theory may be seen in the specification of the strategic talent management. Based on the results of the survey, it is defined by the known importance of the TM throughout the whole company. Its incorporation into the vision and mission of the company, as well as the definition of the TM strategy is also acknowledged as being essential. The strategic TM is also supported by the top management, which integrates it into the company's strategic goals. The strategic TM also defines a list of the key talents in the company, the criteria for the promotion are known and used. Promotions and development are based on the evaluation of the employee performance, and the TM is also integrated with the employee compensation.

The talent management is perceived differently in the surveyed companies. Some of them see the TM as a strategically important concept and manage it in compliance with the mission of the whole company with the interest of the top management. On the other hand, there are still blind spots in the implementation of the process. Human resource managers and line managers use non-standardised practices and they are not well versed in the specifics of the talent

management. The talent management, therefore, is exclusive, because only the leaders are aware of its use and impacts.

Additionally, it is possible to group the TM philosophies into two main ways; one includes only the exclusive talents, and the other one includes broad concepts connected with the HRM, strategy and the inclusive approach.

It is very important to highlight the trend reflected in the results, namely the focus on working with the strategic talent management, which is a conduit of the development and competitive advantage. Overall, one half of the sample of companies studied in the given sector is engaged in these areas.

The relatively narrow focus solely on the primary sector, the agricultural and forestry industry, may be considered a limitation of this article. This sector was, nonetheless, selected for the analysis in view of the conclusions of the National Training Fund (2014), according to which the agriculture ranks in the Czech economy among the industries with not only a higher average age but it also has a great shortage of the talented, predominantly young employees, compared to more promising areas, e.g. services. The results and recommendations in this article may assist those companies which were included in the study in establishing strategies for the talent management and the employee development.

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