

MANAGERS AND LIFELONG LEARNING: AN ANALYSIS OF MOTIVATION AND MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS

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ABSTRACT Lifelong learning has become imperative in today's rapidly changing world, where people must constantly improve their knowledge and skills to contribute to life and work fully. Since the success of an organization in a knowledge-based economy is highly dependent on competent and committed employees, their professional development should be encouraged and supported at all levels. Managers need to participate in lifelong learning activities. Considering that the willingness to learn is an essential prerequisite for learner engagement and success, this study investigated managers' motivation for lifelong learning. An online survey was conducted among Croatian managers to answer the research questions. They generally rated their motivation to participate in lifelong learning as very high. According to the results, the studied groups of managers were quite similar in their self-reported motivation levels, except for educational background. The study also found several important motivators for lifelong learning, such as increasing knowledge and skills, improving job performance, and satisfying the need to stay current. Some other potential motivators were not considered important, including gaining social recognition and job insecurity. An exploratory factor analysis revealed three underlying dimensions of motivation: job satisfaction and compensation, competence development, and recognition and respect. In addition, some significant group differences in the factors were found. Given the limited literature on this topic, this study contributes to a better understanding managers' motivation for lifelong learning.

KEYWORDS: *managers, lifelong learning, motivation, underlying dimensions, group differences, professional development, knowledge-based economy*

1. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge has become one of the most important assets of organizations, helping them to create competitive advantage, improve performance, and make effective strategic decisions (Liao & Wu, 2009; Zwain et al., 2014; Hossain, 2018). Accordingly, knowledge is

critical to business success and growth (Metaxiotis, 2009; Mas-Machuca & Martínez Costa, 2012; Sedighi et al., 2015). In today's complex, fast-changing, and highly technological environment, companies need employees with appropriate and up-to-date knowledge and skills more than ever. Since human resources are considered the organization's greatest asset,

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their development should not be left to chance. Formal, non-formal, and informal education and training must be prioritized to ensure a competent workforce, which is the key to long-term progress. It is important that managers, who are responsible for deploying available resources to achieve set goals through planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling (DuBrin, 2012), have a range of skills that enable them to perform their duties. Globalization and migration, economic instabilities and crises, market volatility, technological advances, the changing nature of work, and the increasing diversity of the workforce are just some of the reasons why management practices have become more complex and challenging (Zakarevičius & Župerkienė, 2008; Turkalj et al., 2016; Pirson & Turnbull, 2018). Under these circumstances, managers must continuously improve their knowledge and skills through lifelong learning.

In recent decades, lifelong learning has attracted considerable attention in academic and practitioner circles. Although there is much discussion about lifelong learning in the academic and popular literature, it is not always clear what the term means. According to Steffens (2015), lifelong learning is a very general concept encompassing all learning activities that individuals undertake in formal, non-formal, or informal settings. Hojat et al. (2009) defined lifelong learning as "an attribute involving a set of self-initiated activities and information-seeking skills with sustained motivation to learn and the ability to recognize one's own learning needs." Lifelong learning is also described simply as the continuous building of knowledge and skills at all life stages (Laal, 2011). A more detailed definition has been proposed by Jarvis (2006), who suggested that lifelong learning is "the combination of processes throughout a lifetime whereby the whole person's body (genetic, physical and biological) and mind (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs, and senses) - experience social situations, the perceived content of which is then transformed cognitively, emotively or practically (or through any combination) and integrated into the individual person's biography resulting in a continually changing (or more experienced) person." The term lifelong learning is often used interchangeably with lifelong education, which is incorrect. Lifelong learning is a personal process initiated and carried out by individuals, while lifelong education is an institutional fact that results from the social context (Billett, 2018). In this study, lifelong learning is any voluntary learning activity that a manager undertakes throughout his or her working life to maintain and improve the knowledge and skills needed in the current and future workplace.

Lifelong learning is a cornerstone of the knowledge-based economy. McLean (2005) pointed out

that people who engage in lifelong learning increase their productivity and enjoy greater job satisfaction. They are also more creative, innovative, and career-resilient. In addition, these individuals can maximize their intellectual potential and help organizations better adapt to change. Because lifelong learning is an active and continuous process, it requires a high level of motivation and commitment from learners. There is no doubt that enthusiasm and willingness to engage in learning activities are closely related to personal development and growth. In line with this, the present study explored what motivates managers to learn and acquire new knowledge and skills

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Many theories try to explain what makes people behave in certain ways. Although this is not entirely accurate, as there is overlap in approaches, theories of motivation can be classified into four main groups: content theories, cognitive theories, psychoanalytic theories, and environmental theories (Buetow, 2007). Several other categorizations are also used (Roberts et al., 2007; Fisher, 2009; Holbrook & Chappell, 2019). Motivation for learning is a complex and intricate concept that has been interesting for several decades (Harlen & Deakin Crick, 2003; Stafford et al., 2010; Abramovich & Wardrip, 2016). As a result, various theories have been developed and applied in education to describe and predict learning motivation. Probably the most well-known and influential theories of academic motivation are expectancy-value theory, social-cognitive theory, self-determination theory, goal-orientation theory, and attribution theory (Koenka, 2020; Anderman et al., 2022; Fong, 2022). According to Cook and Artino (2016), in expectancy-value theory, "motivation is a function of the expectation of success and perceived value."

In contrast, social cognitive theory "emphasises self-efficacy as the primary driver of motivated action, and also identifies cues that influence future self-efficacy and support self-regulated learning." Svinicki (1999) stated that in self-determination theory, "motivation is based on the learner's perceptions of being in control of his or her own destiny." In goal orientation theory, as pointed out by Anderman et al. (2010), "motivation is conceptualized in terms of the goals that students hold when they engage with academic tasks," while from the perspective of attribution theory, "the attributional beliefs that students form after receiving assessment results can affect subsequent motivation and achievement."

Several factors can influence motivation for lifelong learning. In general, a distinction can be made

between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators (Alejandro, 2001; Gravells & Simpson, 2009; Dale et al., 2010; McLay et al., 2010; Armitage et al., 2012; Mihalj, 2019). Intrinsic motivation comes from within and is related to the need for self-esteem and self-confidence. It includes the desire to satisfy one's curiosity, to enjoy one's work, and to provide greater service to society. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation to learn is related to external factors such as expected financial rewards, promotions, social benefits, threats of punishment, and the need to compete. Understanding motivation is critical to explaining learners' achievements and intentions to participate in lifelong learning.

The motivation for lifelong learning among some populations, such as health professionals (Hojat et al., 2006; Hanson et al., 2007; Kinsella et al., 2018; Van der Burgt et al., 2018; Younes et al., 2019; Lera et al., 2020) and teachers (Drage, 2010; Majerič et al., 2011; Dabija et al., 2016; Demir-Basaran & Sesli, 2019; Popescu et al., 2020), is relatively well researched and documented. In contrast, managers' motivation for lifelong learning has not yet received adequate attention. There are only a few studies on this topic in the available literature, the main findings of which are presented below.

Kinman and Kinman (2001) examined the motivational factors that prompted U.K. managers to participate in a degree program and influenced their approaches to learning. The factors most frequently cited by participants in their study were fear of being academically disadvantaged and "catching up" with younger colleagues, the prospect of promotion, fear of dismissal, pressure from management, peer competition, concern about diminished authority and credibility, fear of diminished self-image, desire to further their education, and developing an interest in the curriculum. The study conducted by Kettunen (2002) aimed to investigate the factors influencing the demand for continuing education among Finnish managers enrolled in the MBA program. According to the results, managers' motivation to increase their expertise seemed to be an important motivator for participation in continuing education, while career considerations played a minor role.

The main implications of the model, proposed by McCracken (2004) and further validated by McCracken and Winterton (2006), are that managers' characteristics influence their views on learning and, ultimately, their willingness to participate in learning activities. Analysis of data collected in semi-structured interviews with mid-career managers from Scottish life assurance organizations also revealed that women are more aware of the need for lifelong learning than their male counterparts. The study by Walston et al. (2010) was based on a professional

development survey of U.S. hospital chief executive officers (CEOs). Their findings suggest that organizational and individual factors influence how much time CEOs spend on continuing education. The involvement of U.S. healthcare managers and executives in professional development was also examined by Gumus et al. (2011). They found that the primary reasons for participating in such activities were personal and professional development and staying current.

Starc et al. (2014) investigated what motivates tourism managers to engage in education and training. The surveyed managers most frequently cited motives such as knowledge improvement, testing one's abilities, higher reputation, professional development, and job success. In their study, Dejoux and Charrière-Grillon (2016) investigated French managers' motivation to attend a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course). The results showed that managers' motivation to enrol in the MOOC was more related to personal fulfilment than organizational goals. According to Cukanovic-Karavidic et al. (2018), professional development was the most important reason for Serbian agricultural managers and experts to participate in educational programs. Based on interviews with Polish sports managers, Nessel and Drewniak (2020) found that their motivation for continuing education in football management was mainly extrinsic. It should also be noted that a recent study by Rigolizzo et al. (2022) showed that supervisors who had positive associations with school were more motivated to learn.

3. RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS

Managers must possess different competencies depending on their role in the organization and the environment in which they operate (Hunt & Wallace, 1997; Hayes et al., 2000; Harvey et al., 2002; Alawneh & Sweis, 2016; Gyemang & Emeagwali, 2020). Specifically, managers must have cognitive skills to deal with highly technical systems, interpersonal skills to work successfully in teams, and leadership skills to manage effectively (Carnevale & Desrochers, 1999; Enos et al., 2003). The development of managerial competencies is a never-ending process. It does not stop after completing formal education and receiving a diploma. However, with all the demands and obligations they face daily in their jobs, it is not easy for managers to be motivated to learn. Motivation for learning is a mixture of individual, organizational, and societal pressures, desires, and inclinations that can be conceptualized in various ways (Brophy, 2011; Blando, 2011). As a complex human trait, learning motivation is viewed as the tendency to find learning

activities valuable and meaningful (Harlen & Deakin Crick, 2004; Wlodkowski, 2008). Learning motivation is also viewed as an internal force that stimulates, directs, and sustains behavior to achieve desired learning goals under specific circumstances (Bishara, 2016; Snowman et al., 2012; Woolfolk, 2021). Learning motivation is considered extremely important in the context of efforts to develop lifelong learners as required in the rapidly changing world (Andrews & Harlen, 2006). In light of this, the purpose of the present study was to examine managers' motivation for lifelong learning and thus contribute to the existing limited literature on this topic. More specifically, the research aimed to determine Croatian managers' motivation to participate in lifelong learning, identify factors that influence their commitment to such activities, and examine possible differences concerning socio-demographic variables. To this end, the following five research questions were posed:

1. How do Croatian managers rate their motivation for lifelong learning?
2. Are there significant differences in self-reported levels of motivation by socio-demographic characteristics?
3. What motivates Croatian managers to participate in lifelong learning?
4. What factors underlie the Croatian managers' motivation to engage in lifelong learning activities?

5. Based on these factors, are there significant differences concerning managers' socio-demographic characteristics?

4. PARTICIPANTS AND METHODS

The study was conducted with a sample of managers from Croatia. The sample was drawn from the Croatian Chamber of Commerce database. About 1,500 managers were invited by e-mail with a link to the survey, followed by at least one reminder e-mail a few weeks later. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire created in Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section was designed to obtain background information about the respondent. The second section of the questionnaire contained questions related to the research topic. The questionnaire contained only eleven motivational items, selected after an initial survey of several managers willing to review the research instrument. They were presented with a list of 27 potential motivators. A pool of preliminary items was selected from the relevant literature and previous research. It should be mentioned that the items used in the study were not derived from only one motivational theory.

One hundred ninety-eight managers completed the survey, and their responses were used to answer

TABLE 1. Distribution of participants by socio-demographic characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	96	48.5
Female	102	51.5
Age group		
22 – 37	54	27.3
38 – 52	99	50.0
53 – 68	45	22.7
Level of education		
Secondary school	28	14.1
Undergraduate or graduate degree	139	70.2
Postgraduate degree	31	15.7
Management level		
Lower-level management	25	12.6
Middle-level management	44	22.2
Top-level management	129	65.2
Educational background		
Economics and business	93	47.0
Other disciplines	105	53.0

the research questions. Table 1 shows the distribution of participants by socio-demographic characteristics.

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were employed to describe the sample's characteristics and summarise the responses to the items. Inferential statistics included both nonparametric and parametric tests, as appropriate. In addition, exploratory factor analysis was conducted to identify the underlying dimensions of Croatian managers' motivation to participate in lifelong learning activities. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each subscale to estimate internal consistency reliability. The criterion for statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

5. RESULTS

In the survey, managers rated their motivation for lifelong learning on a 5-point Likert scale (1=not at all motivated, 2=slightly motivated, 3=somewhat motivated, 4=quite motivated, 5=extremely motivated). Overall, their responses were very positive. When asked about their level of motivation, of the 198 par-

ticipants, three (1.5%) said they were not motivated at all, five (2.5%) said they were slightly motivated, 14 (7.1%) said they were somewhat motivated, 65 (32.8%) said they were quite motivated, and 111 (56.1%) said they were extremely motivated. The mean score for this item was 4.39, well above the scale's midpoint, with a standard deviation of 0.85. The median response was five, and the interquartile range was 1. Because the data were measured at the ordinal level and were not normally and symmetrically distributed, the nonparametric one-sample sign test was used to test the null hypothesis that the population median rating equals four against the alternative hypothesis that the population median rating is greater than 4. The null hypothesis was rejected at $p < 0.001$, meaning that at least half of Croatian managers consider their motivation for lifelong learning very high.

Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests were applied to answer the second research question, which concerns the significance of differences in self-reported motivation levels for lifelong learning by socio-demographic characteristics. The results of these tests are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Analysis of differences in self-reported levels of motivation for lifelong learning

Characteristics	Mean rank	Test results
Gender		Mann-Whitney test
Male	92.43	$Z = -1.898$
Female	106.16	$p = 0.058$
Age group		Kruskal-Wallis test
22 – 37	98.02	$H = 1.695$
38 – 52	103.71	$p = 0.428$
53 – 68	92.02	
Level of education		Kruskal-Wallis test
Secondary school	88.46	$H = 2.731$
Undergraduate or graduate degree	99.30	$p = 0.255$
Postgraduate degree	110.35	
Management level		Kruskal-Wallis test
Lower-level management	80.36	$H = 4.311$
Middle-level management	98.89	$p = 0.116$
Top-level management	103.42	
Educational background		Mann-Whitney test
Economics and business	109.40	$Z = -2.577$
Other disciplines	90.73	$p = 0.010^*$

* Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

According to the mean ranks, those who were female, middle-aged, holding a postgraduate degree, and among the top management tended to rate their motivation for lifelong learning higher than respondents from the other groups. However, none of these differences were statistically significant. The Mann-Whitney test revealed only that managers with degrees in economics and business were significantly more motivated to participate in lifelong learning activities than those with backgrounds in other disciplines, such as lawyers, engineers, and architects. Due to the lack of respondents from other disciplines, conducting additional analyses to further examine the similarities and differences in motivation among

managers with different educational backgrounds was impossible.

The study examined eleven motivators for lifelong learning. Participants were asked to indicate the importance of each factor on a 5-point Likert scale (1=not important at all, 2=somewhat unimportant, 3=neutral, 4=somewhat important, 5=extremely important). The percentage distribution of responses and descriptive statistics are shown in Table 3. The table also includes the results of the one-sample sign test. This test was used to test the null hypothesis that the population median rating equals three, i.e., a neutral response. The alternative hypothesis was that the population median rating was greater than three.

TABLE 3. Percentage distribution and descriptive statistics of importance ratings of factors that influence managers' motivation for lifelong learning, and one-sample sign tests p-values

Motivators	Importance ratings (%)					Descriptive statistics				One-sample sign test (p-value)
	Not important at all	Somewhat unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat important	Extremely important	Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Interquartile range	
Finding a better job	25.8	14.1	22.7	23.7	13.6	2.85	3.00	1.39	3.00	0.686
Job insecurity	42.4	16.7	21.2	12.6	7.1	2.25	2.00	1.31	2.00	1.000
Getting a better salary and benefits	15.2	13.6	27.8	27.3	16.2	3.16	3.00	1.28	2.00	0.010*
Career advancement	14.6	18.7	26.8	24.2	15.7	3.08	3.00	1.28	2.00	0.159
Increasing knowledge and skills	1.0	0.5	6.6	28.8	63.1	4.53	5.00	0.73	1.00	0.000*
Improving job performance	1.0	3.0	11.6	25.3	59.1	4.38	5.00	0.88	1.00	0.000*
Satisfying the need to stay current in the field	2.0	3.0	10.1	25.3	59.6	4.37	5.00	0.93	1.00	0.000*
Broadening horizons and perspectives	3.5	4.5	16.7	29.8	45.5	4.09	4.00	1.06	1.00	0.000*
Gaining social recognition	39.9	23.7	21.2	8.1	7.1	2.19	2.00	1.24	2.00	1.000
Gaining respect from colleagues	34.8	22.7	19.7	15.7	7.1	2.37	2.00	1.29	2.00	1.000
Gaining self-esteem and self-confidence	9.6	7.6	23.7	25.3	33.8	3.66	4.00	1.28	2.00	0.000*

* Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

More than half of respondents indicated that increasing knowledge and skills, improving job performance, and satisfying the need to stay current are extremely important motivators for lifelong learning. In contrast, about 42% of the surveyed managers believed job insecurity did not affect their motivation to participate in lifelong learning activities. According to the mean scores, increasing knowledge and skills was the strongest motivator for participants in this study, followed by improving job performance and satisfying the need to stay current. The median score for these items was five, corresponding to "extremely important." As can be seen in Table 3, these variables were characterized by the lowest dispersion. In addition, the results suggest that broadening horizons and perspectives also strongly motivated Croatian managers to learn, while other factors negatively impacted their motivation. There were three items with mean scores ranging from 3.08 to 3.66 (career advancement, better salary and benefits, and gain in self-esteem and self-confidence). All other motivational factors examined (finding a better job, gaining respect from colleagues, job insecurity, and gaining social recognition) received average ratings of less than three, the midpoint of the scale. The standard deviation and the interquartile range indicate considerable disagreement among respondents about whether finding a better job was an important motivator and enabler for lifelong learning.

One-sample sign tests confirmed that at least half of Croatian managers considered better salary and benefits, increasing knowledge and skills, improving job performance, satisfying the need to stay current, broadening horizons and perspectives, and gaining self-esteem and self-confidence important motivators for lifelong learning. On the other hand, finding a better job, job insecurity, career advancement, gaining social recognition, and gaining respect from colleagues were not considered by most managers to be as important to their commitment to lifelong learning.

To answer the fourth research question, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy confirmed the suitability of the data for conducting factor analysis (KMO=0.779). Bartlett's test of sphericity indicated that the observed correlation matrix was significantly different from the identity matrix ($\chi^2=939.979$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, a dimension reduction technique was appropriate for analyzing the data. A principal component extraction method with varimax rotation was used for the items. The Kaiser criterion was applied to determine the number of dimensions to retain. Three interpretable factors were identified, which accounted for 68.2% of the total variance. Table 4 presents the factor analysis results and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients, which indicate a satisfactory level of internal consistency.

TABLE 4. Results of factor and reliability analysis

Motivational factors and items	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's alpha
Factor 1: Job satisfaction and compensation		2.767	25.2	0.818
Finding a better job	0.846			
Job insecurity	0.766			
Getting better salary and benefits	0.738			
Career advancement	0.705			
Factor 2: Competence development		2.737	24.9	0.793
Increasing knowledge and skills	0.861			
Improving job performance	0.807			
Satisfying the need to stay current in the field	0.773			
Broadening horizons and perspectives	0.661			
Factor 3: Recognition and respect		1.998	18.2	0.754
Gaining social recognition	0.796			
Gaining respect from colleagues	0.782			
Gaining self-esteem and self-confidence	0.645			

The first factor, which explained 25.2% of the variance, included four job satisfaction and compensation items. All variables were relatively highly correlated with this construct. The second factor accounted for 24.9% of the variance and consisted of four items related to competence development. According to the results, the second factor loaded most strongly on increasing knowledge and skills and improving job performance. Finally, three items comprised the third factor, which explained an additional 18.2% of the variance. This factor included variables that focused on recognition and respect as a motivating dimension of lifelong learning. Combined with the previous results, it can be concluded that competence development motivates managers to partic-

ipate in lifelong learning. In contrast, job satisfaction, compensation, recognition, and respect from others seemed to motivate them less to engage in lifelong learning activities.

Regression-based factor scores were then computed for each subject on the three factors. Because the principal component extraction method was used, the scores obtained had a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Factor scores greater than zero were associated with higher ratings, and those less than zero were associated with lower ratings. The independent-sample t-test and the one-way ANOVA (assuming equal variances) were employed to determine if there were significant differences concerning the socio-demographic characteristics of managers

Table 5. Analysis of group differences in the factors

Characteristics	Factor 1: Job satisfaction and compensation	Factor 2: Competence development	Factor 3: Recognition and respect
	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD
Gender			
Male	-0.08 ± 0.94	-0.15 ± 1.14	-0.05 ± 1.01
Female	0.07 ± 1.05	0.14 ± 0.83	0.04 ± 1.00
Test results	$t = -1.069^a$ $p = 0.286$	$t = -2.089^b$ $p = 0.038^*$	$t = -0.622^a$ $p = 0.535$
Age group			
22 – 37	0.38 ± 0.87	-0.08 ± 1.02	-0.05 ± 1.14
38 – 52	0.05 ± 1.00	-0.06 ± 1.03	0.10 ± 0.94
53 – 68	-0.56 ± 0.92	0.22 ± 0.89	-0.16 ± 0.93
Test results	$F = 12.296^c$ $p < 0.001^*$	$F = 1.477^c$ $p = 0.231$	$F = 1.174^c$ $p = 0.311$
Level of education			
Secondary school	-0.13 ± 1.06	0.14 ± 1.01	0.29 ± 1.16
Undergraduate or graduate degree	0.07 ± 0.94	-0.05 ± 0.98	0.04 ± 0.97
Postgraduate degree	-0.18 ± 1.20	0.10 ± 1.10	-0.46 ± 0.86
Test results	$F = 0.886^d$ $p = 0.419$	$F = 0.607^c$ $p = 0.546$	$F = 4.730^c$ $p = 0.010^*$
Management level			
Lower-level management	0.82 ± 0.80	-0.15 ± 0.84	-0.01 ± 1.16
Middle-level management	0.26 ± 1.01	-0.15 ± 1.05	0.18 ± 1.03
Top-level management	-0.25 ± 0.93	0.08 ± 1.01	-0.06 ± 0.96
Test results	$F = 16.003^c$ $p < 0.001^*$	$F = 1.211^c$ $p = 0.300$	$F = 0.959^c$ $p = 0.385$
Educational background			
Economics and business	0.04 ± 0.95	0.06 ± 0.95	-0.13 ± 0.98
Other disciplines	-0.04 ± 1.04	-0.05 ± 1.04	0.11 ± 1.01
Test results	$t = 0.581^a$ $p = 0.562$	$t = 0.765^a$ $p = 0.445$	$t = -1.725^a$ $p = 0.086$

^a Independent samples t-test (equal variances assumed)

^b Independent samples t-test (equal variances not assumed)

^c One-way ANOVA

^d Welch's one-way ANOVA

* Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

on these factors. The homogeneity of variances was checked with Levene's test. If this assumption was not met, the t-test for unequal variances and Welch's test were used instead of the standard t-test and ANOVA F-test, respectively. The results of the analysis of group differences in the factors can be found in Table 5.

The independent-sample t-test revealed that female managers rated the competence development factor as a significantly more important motivational dimension of lifelong learning than their male counterparts. In addition, the one-way ANOVA showed a statistically significant difference in the first factor between at least two age groups and at least two management-level groups. Since the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not violated, Tukey's honestly significant difference (HSD) post hoc test was used to determine which groups were significantly different from each other. Tukey's HSD test revealed that older managers considered job satisfaction and compensation less important than younger and middle-aged managers ($p < 0.001$ and $p=0.001$, respectively).

Pairwise comparisons also confirmed that differences between all management level groups were significant on the first factor. The differences in mean factor scores between lower and middle-level managers, lower and top-level managers, and middle and top-level managers were significant at $p=0.045$, $p < 0.001$, and $p=0.006$, respectively. As expected, lower-level managers recorded this dimension's highest mean factor score. The top-level manager group had the lowest mean factor score, indicating that those with the highest authority and responsibility perceived the job satisfaction and compensation factor as a less important motivational dimension of lifelong learning compared to other managers. In addition, the one-way ANOVA on the third-factor scores confirmed a significant difference between at least two educational groups of managers. According to Tukey's HSD test, the recognition and respect dimension was perceived as significantly more important by managers with a secondary school degree or a bachelor's or master's degree than managers with a postgraduate degree ($p=0.011$ and $p=0.028$, respectively), which was expected. The other group differences in mean factor scores were not statistically significant.

This study's findings are consistent with previous research that identified professional development as an important motivating factor for managers' engagement in lifelong learning. In contrast to other work, it showed that recognition and respect from others are not necessarily the reasons for managers' participation in such activities. A more detailed comparison is impossible because only a few studies focus

on managers' motivation for lifelong learning. An additional problem is that these studies have not used the same approach and methodology as the present study.

6. CONCLUSION

Lifelong learning is an imperative in today's knowledge-driven society. In a world that is transforming faster than ever, people need to improve their knowledge and skills constantly or cannot fully engage in life and work. Lifelong learning enables individuals to realize their potential and succeed. As such, it is critical to economic development. Simply put, companies cannot gain a competitive advantage and efficiently achieve their goals without capable and competent employees. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the concept of lifelong learning has been widely recognized and discussed at the global, national, and local levels in recent decades. Today, lifelong learning is embedded in many policy and legislative documents worldwide, but its implementation varies widely. Since the scope of lifelong learning is broad and covers various settings, examining different aspects of this phenomenon is necessary. With this in mind, this study investigated managers' motivation for lifelong learning. Managers must actively engage in lifelong learning to maintain and expand their knowledge and skills. In doing so, they should not forget that they are also responsible for encouraging and supporting their employees to participate in such activities. A key challenge in understanding managers' motivation to learn is determining the factors influencing their willingness to participate in lifelong learning practices. Although this topic is very important, it has not yet been sufficiently explored in the literature.

The study provides important and useful information about lifelong learning from the perspective of Croatian managers. The research has shown that they generally rated their motivation to participate in lifelong learning activities to be very high, which is certainly a positive finding, considering that motivation profoundly shapes learner behavior and influences learning outcomes. This means that government agencies, higher education institutions, and other relevant organizations should actively support managers' professional development by developing lifelong learning strategies, creating continuing education courses and certificate programs, and providing them with training and feedback. The analysis also found that the groups of managers studied were similar in their self-reported motivation levels, except for educational background. It was also found that there were several important motivators for lifelong

learning, such as increasing knowledge and skills, improving job performance, and satisfying the need to stay current. In addition, three underlying dimensions of motivation were identified: job satisfaction and compensation, competence development, and recognition and respect. Although many managers share common motivational dimensions, the established group differences in the factors suggest that they are not all motivated similarly. This should be considered when formulating and implementing lifelong learning policies and initiatives.

The present study has several limitations that must be mentioned. First, for practical reasons, it did not cover all motivators for lifelong learning. Instead, the focus was on the factors respondents believed had the greatest influence on managers' learning motivation. Future research could, therefore, include additional variables to examine in more detail what

motivates managers to engage in lifelong learning. Second, it was impossible to determine the sample's representativeness because population data were not available. In this context, there are also concerns about the sample size. Despite best efforts, the response rate was not as high as desired. This was expected, as managers are less likely to participate in surveys. However, given the selection process used and the diversity of respondents, it is likely that the sample is fairly representative, and the results can be generalized to the population of interest. Third, as with any survey-based study, the effect of confirmation bias cannot be ruled out. However, it is believed that this bias did not significantly affect the results. Finally, although the study makes a valuable contribution to understanding managers' motivation for lifelong learning, further research is needed to confirm its findings and the validity of the conclusions.

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MENADŽERI I CJELOŽIVOTNO UČENJE: ANALIZA MOTIVACIJE I MOTIVACIJSKIH ČIMBENIKA

SAŽETAK

Cjeloživotno učenje postalo je imperativ u današnjem svijetu koji se ubrzano mijenja i u kojem ljudi moraju kontinuirano usavršavati svoja znanja i vještine kako bi bili potpuno uključeni u život i rad. Budući da uspjeh organizacije u gospodarstvu temeljenom na znanju uvelike ovisi o kompetentnim i predanim djelatnicima, njihov profesionalni razvoj treba poticati i podržavati na svim razinama. Osobito je važno da menadžeri sudjeluju u aktivnostima cjeloživotnog učenja. Imajući na umu da je volja za učenjem ključna za angažman i postignuća učenika, ova je studija imala za cilj istražiti motivaciju menadžera za cjeloživotno učenje. Kako bi se odgovorilo na istraživačka pitanja, provedena je online anketa na uzorku hrvatskih menadžera. Generalno, oni su svoju motivaciju za sudjelovanje u cjeloživotnom učenju ocijenili vrlo visokom ocjenom. Prema rezultatima, ispitivane skupine menadžera bile su prilično slične u samoprocijenjenim razinama motivacije, osim prema području obrazovanja. Istraživanje je nadalje otkrilo da postoji nekoliko važnih motivatora za cjeloživotno učenje, kao što su proširivanje znanja i vještina, poboljšanje radnog učinka i zadovoljenje potrebe da se ostane u tijeku u svom području. Neki drugi potencijalni motivatori, poput stjecanja društvenog priznanja i nesigurnosti posla, nisu se pokazali važnima. U okviru eksploratorne faktorske analize identificirane su tri temeljne dimenzije motivacije: zadovoljstvo poslom i naknada, razvoj kompetencija te priznanje i poštovanje. Osim toga, pronađene su i određene značajne grupne razlike na faktorima. S obzirom da je literatura o analiziranoj temi ograničena, ovaj rad doprinosi boljem razumijevanju motivacije menadžera za cjeloživotno učenje.

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KLJUČNE RIJEČI: *menadžeri, cjeloživotno učenje, motivacija, temeljne dimenzije, grupne razlike, profesionalni razvoj, gospodarstvo temeljeno na znanju*