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Improvement of Warehouse Operations Management by Considering Competencies of Human Resources

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Abstract

Clients generally require logistics services package from organizations engaged in the provision of warehouse logistics services. Successful performance of employees in organizations depend on their ability to adapt to changing environment, where personal competence is an essential factor. The article examines peculiarities of human resources impacts and its employment as a tool to develop organizations providing warehouse logistics services and ensure the quality of such services. The conducted qualitative research enabled to identify problem aspects of human resources, i.e. warehouse employees and managers, and competencies in logistics organizations

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1. Introduction

The contemporary business world of logistics is boundless in terms of logistics services, products, modern technologies, high-level of knowledge, geographical zone, thus each logistics company is taking part in a competitive business battle where companies aim to establish their position and remain in business as long as possible. According to [1–5] professionalism, skills, flexibility, reliability, attitude, behaviour, reputation and

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integrity of human resources in logistics companies are particularly important from the client's point of view. Employees are integral part of service creation, provision and consumption process reflecting client expectations and service quality.

On the basis of scientific literature, the article examines peculiarities of human resources impacts and its employment as a tool to develop organizations providing warehousing services and ensure the quality of such services. Management of human resource competencies is provided as research problem analysis by defining concepts, importance and essence of human resource competencies in accordance with theoretical modelling and other methodological aspects.

2. Defining competencies of human resources and warehouse management specialists

According to the Law amending the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania [6], competence is defined as a capability to perform a certain activity on the basis of the entirety of acquired knowledge, abilities, skills and values. [7] summarize the existing discussions on differences among human resources and personnel management. It is argued whether the introduction of human resource management was an important shift in managing people or just another development stage in personnel management. Specialist of human resources becomes a representative of employees, who must not only focus on employee demands, but also to prepare employees for the future, take care of administrative efficiency, apply his/her knowledge in improving solutions, results and strengthen confidence in the leadership. [8] state, that internal image of the company is created by employees/human resources working in a team. According to [9], not only is a competence required in professional environment. A person plays a great range of other roles as well, such as being a parent, citizen, learner, housekeeper, etc. This type of definition is attributed to qualification theory [10–12], which states that qualification – is knowledge, abilities, skills attainable through learning process and indicates person's suitability for one or other profession. [13] cites the opinion of Le Deist and Winterton. The authors claim, that the emergence of management competence and its employment in business development is attributed to modern technological changes, demographic and organizational changes as management competence is focused on learning achievements. According to [14], the concept of competence is approached as a holistic expression of individual's potential. The author highlights individual characteristics, values and abilities to implement the accumulated potential and experience through certain activities. [15] states, that if an employee is willing to conduct his work in a qualified manner, he must be characterized by certain functional abilities, i.e., professional competencies. [14] notes that successful activities of employees in globalized organizations depend on the ability to adapt to changing environment, where competence and its development potential become a key factor. Dulewicz cit. [16] states, that 70% of competencies are common to all organizations and 30% to specific organizations, thus it is very important to select suitable model to assess competencies. Competence builds on a foundation of personal competencies or levels of qualifications and accumulated professional experience [15, 17–19] highlight that employee must be characterised by certain functional abilities, i.e., professional competencies to conduct his/her work in a qualified manner. Therefore, in this case, manager of warehouse operations must have skills and abilities in his/her professional area, i.e. competence of the warehouse manager. [20] state, that modern business world of logistics is constantly changing by providing new complex challenges to companies, thus it is important not only to draw attention to personnel/human resources and focus on today's requirements applicable to person's competencies, but also to forecast which competencies determine success in the future. According to the views that competence pertains to professional activities, it is possible to state, that general abilities are linked to professional and methodical competencies depending on the developed profession. Only then professional competencies emerge. In other words, competencies are interrelated and context-dependent. According to [14], professional competence is comprised of methodical competence and competence in a specific area. [21] defines logistics as the process of strategically managing the acquisition, movement and storage of materials, parts and finished products (and the correlated information flows) through the organization and its marketing channels in order to maximize present and future profitability by filling orders at low costs.

Modern scientific literature defines warehousing as an integral part of the logistics system that stores products at and between point of origin and point of consumption, and provides managers with information on the status, condition and disposition of items being stored [1]. Moreover, warehouses occupy a special place in the overall

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