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**A STUDY OF MANAGEMENT TASKS AND FUNCTIONS IN
AGROECONOMIC ORGANISATIONS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Today's managers have to face great challenges under continuously changing circumstances. They have to manage their corporation successfully, while satisfying many roles and expectations that sometimes cannot be fulfilled by one single person. This work is a difficult and complex activity. The question arises how these managers' roles can be determined and differentiated. Management science answers this question. Management is an activity that is often insensibly present in the social and economic processes of human work and daily routines. However, the issues of managing and organising the human work and productive activity did not use to be separated from the professional knowledge of the given activity for thousands of years. By today, management is one of the most dynamically developing disciplines. It has rich and diverse literature; numerous theories, management methods, procedures and models have been developed and have become known and recognised.

Researchers and scholars, often arriving from other areas such as psychology, sociology or engineering, extend the borders of management science, and enrich its topics and knowledge. Today the discipline of management deals with lots of fields that earlier were not thought to be related to management. From human factors to the issues of behaviour, from motivation to conflict management, through information management to decision, quality management, organisation and logistics are individual topics of management. Human resources management, career management, control, logistic management and special themes like delegating, authorisation, authority are all studied and to a certain extent explored areas of management.

Nevertheless, new and new areas have been integrated and processed into management science. The management boom indicates that the role of management have become determinant in all walks of life. After the findings of production organisation, we can already talk about the management of the servicing, educational and health organisations today. Another aspect of the expansion is that after the globalised, large multinational organisations, the management issues of medium- and small-sized organisations as well as the research of the answers arise more and more strongly.

"Management tasks undergo a continuous change" (BERDE, 2000). The judgement and evaluation of the tasks differs from age by age and from society to society, which results in more and more differentiated management. This tendency, the permanently changing political and economic circumstances can be observed in our country, too.

In a management scientific aspect, a specific situation has evolved owing to the economic and social changes of the past years in Hungary. The size, structure, entrepreneurial form and volume of producing organisations have changed. The earlier dominance of state property has been replaced by private property, and market competition has strengthened. Production structures have become simpler, management levels have decreased, and the proprietary functions have become stronger.

Studying this process from the side of management, we can see a particular situation. The majority of new proprietors are personally involved in the management of their own enterprises, organisations, so they fulfil the management tasks from a proprietary or proprietor-employee position. The various organisations and their staff, regardless of their size, activity or volume, always need a manager who makes sure that the problems are solved, and the conditions for effective and competitive work are established. Therefore, it is essential for them to acquire the practice of skills and methods. The manager of our age has to fulfil numerous expectations and challenges in the dynamic environment. The basic issues of management science include the determination of the scope of managerial duties. Lots of systems and classifications are accepted. Generally, scholars focus on a certain activity area of management and group the managerial tasks among it.

Management researches and investigations have no static, finished state, since the interest of management science focuses on the man itself. Thanks to the human factors, the fields and theories that were already considered surely recognised and revealed must be re-evaluated again and again. Everything is in motion and change, and even an insignificant circumstance may result in new contexts, different consequences and relations.

In Hungary, knowledge on management only received a role in organisation science, and could only be managed and cultivated as part of organisation science in the past decades. The individual development only started after the change of regime, and has brought particularly dynamic and striking results. In our country, the researches, adaptations and method elaborations started in relation to the industrial co-operatives, and “management thinking” quickly overwhelmed nearly all walks of life.

The differentiation of management science clearly shows two tendencies. As a result of the smart-pace development, some of its themes have soon become individual disciplines, such as decision, organisation development, management psychology,

management sociology, organisational behaviour, organisational culture or compensation management.

The other well-recognisable development tendency is that a differentiation process has evolved based on the special management issues of certain professional fields, and we more and more often speak about technical, health, pedagogical or agricultural management today.

In each sector, special management questions deriving from the character of professional processes arise that are only typical of organisations operating in the given special field. As for agroecology, the difficulties of human resources management owing to seasonality or the increasing value of the time factor both in the organisational and management activity can be considered as special management problems. The management questions arising from the biological determination, and the ecological, natural, climatic and weather exposure of the processes are exclusively the properties of agroecological organisations. The simple adaptations often result in methods and management procedures that are strange to agriculture and often cannot be used. The features and relations of agricultural management have raised my interest and drawn my attention to their detailed study.

In my dissertation I intend to present some general tasks of management theory in the agroecological processes and organisations. At the beginning of the topics under study, I present and evaluate the relevant findings, theories and methods available in literature. Accordingly, I compare the general approaches with organisations operating in other scopes of activities and then refer them to the agroecological processes and organisations. Based on the research program elaborated by me, I summarise such findings and conclusions in each section that I have developed in accordance with the study of the given problem at agricultural organisations.

1.1. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF RESEARCH

When elaborating my research program and studying the topics, I have assumed the following based on my readings, earlier technical experience and research findings:

- The functional research method built on the study of management tasks is in accordance with the character of the agroeconomic process and can be suitable for revealing the management and management features of the organisations within the sector.
- The empirical cognition and researching of corporate processes may produce results that enable managers to further develop their management methods and procedures.
- The corporate structure, composition and colourfulness of agro-economy, the process, determinateness and environmental affectedness of production processes raises special management issues not present in other sectors.
- The rank of management tasks and the related managerial preferences are affected by several organisational (size, form of operation, scope of activity) and personal factors (school education, position, age).
- The interview questions on the judgement of the role of management tasks, focusing on the past, present and future makes the studying of the transformation and changes of management functions possible with a dynamic and process-oriented approach.
- The value judgement of interviewees is theoretical; the social environment, expectations and norms are fundamentally determinant. I have assumed that by qualifying the managerial tasks and studying the frequency of applications, we can detect such differentiations and contradictions that may promote the clear understanding and better knowledge of the management tasks.

1.2. OBJECTIVES

Studying the past of managing and organising domestic agricultural production and farming more thoroughly, we can observe that first the management of large estates and then of large plants was determinant. This means that the approach of agricultural management was traditionally “large-scale” until the transformation of regime in 1989/90. Following this, a new organisational structure, with the dominance of micro, small and medium-sized estates, evolved in the Hungarian agriculture. Studying this process from the management size shows us a particular situation. A considerable part

of new proprietors personally takes part in the management of their enterprises and organisations, too, so they fulfil the management tasks from proprietary or proprietor-employee positions. In the light of this, the question arises what management and organisation tasks must be solved in these organisations, whether the new proprietors are well-prepared for these tasks and how their existing management and organisation knowledge can be utilised?

In my dissertation I have aimed to answer the question what tasks the managers under survey consider important, what factors influence their judgement, how the basic managerial tasks can be grouped and systemised.

- My purpose has been to present such changes in their process that have appeared in management work or changed in the judgement of tasks in the past decades. Accordingly, I have applied two study procedures in my doctorate work: I named the functional approach “task studies” and the process-oriented approach “change study of management tasks”.
- My task has also involved the revealing of correlations, based on which the theory and practice can be fit together, and the drawing of conclusions that can help us improve the efficiency of managerial work.
- I have assumed that certain differences arise in the managerial practice and thinking of the respondents, so I have assessed my databases according to several study aspects.
- One of the tasks of the dissertation is to synthesise the management theories and tendencies through a historical presentation of the evolvement and development of management science.
- Furthermore, I have aimed to process and introduce the management relevance present in Hungarian management science and Hungarian agricultural literature until today. In my empirical researches, I have searched an answer to the following questions:
 - According to managers, to what extent has the judgement of management tasks changed in the past 20 years?
 - What differences can be observed in the judgement of management tasks in practice based on the opinion of different generations?
 - Is there a difference between the value scale on management tasks and the frequency of managerial actions and applications?

- To what extent do management tasks differentiate based on the extent of corporate loyalty?
 - What is the relation of the managers of organisations to management, what management tasks are considered as determinant for survival?
 - How educated and qualified are the managers under survey?
 - How do the respondents forecast the future of the tasks of corporate management based on their current experience?
- The final purpose of my dissertation is to make statements built on the survey findings that may promote the more thorough learning of managerial tasks and the disclosing of change tendencies. My task has also involved the revealing of questions and relations based on which theory and practice can be harmonised better, and the drawing of conclusions, which can promote the efficiency of managerial work.

2. PRELIMINARIES AND APPLIED METHODS

My dissertation could be prepared as part of the research program entitled “A functional study of corporate management in agriculture” and developed by the Department of Management Science, Centre for Agricultural and Technical Sciences of the University of Debrecen. According to the research structure, corporate tasks can be divided into three large categories: organisational management; Human Resources Management; process management. My selected topic fits into the topic of organisational forms and management tasks within the research field of organisational management (table 1).

The table clearly demonstrates that the three task groups can be divided into other topics and subtopics. This research structure can be divided further by narrowing the topics. Thanks to this, its structure can be considered modular, and the study results conforming the research demand and expectations can be integrated in large topics. The research topics are unambiguously determined by the management tasks under survey, so the research method can be deemed as functional. However, its approach can be named empirical, since it is based upon the survey of the participating managers’ experience.

Since each managerial task is present in manager’s work not in an isolated but integrated way, their correlation, interactions and complexity can only be well revealed with the functional investigation method. The various functions can only be separated through

theoretical abstractions, in reality it appears in a different way. Based on this consideration, I have carried out the analysis of managerial tasks in parallel with my functional studies. I have aimed to present the process of the new changes in the past decades.

Table 1: Construction and researcher structure of the research program entitled “A functional study of corporate management”

Head of Program: Dr. Csaba Berde

| 1. Studies on organisational management Supervisor: Dr. Csaba Berde | 2. Studies on Human Resources Management Supervisor: Dienesné dr. Erzsébet Kovács | 3. Studies on process management Supervisor: Dr. Tibor Nagy Dr. Miklós Pakurár |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.1. Organisational forms and management tasks (Ágnes Bilanics) | 2.1. Motivation (Dr. Csilla Juhász) | 3.1. Planning as managerial activity |
| 1.2. Organisational development (Krisztián Szabados) | 2.2. Conflict Management | 3.2. Decision (Dr. János Felföldi) |
| 1.3. Organisational communication (Dr. Krisztina Dajnoki) | 2.3. Human Resources - planning, organising (Balla Gyula) | 3.3. Enforcement of decisions, Disposal |
| 1.4. Information management | 2.4. Selection of labour force | 3.4. Organising |
| 1.5. Organisational culture (Szilágyi Barnabás) | 2.5. Competence studies (Dr. Barta Ágnes) | 3.5. Logistic management (Réka Villányi) |
| 1.6. Group Management (György Szabados) | 2.6. Performance evaluation (Dr. Tóth Anikó) | 3.6. Control (Dr. Mária Szima) |
| 1.7. Study of management structure and hierarchy | 2.7. Human Resources Development (Dr. Márta Piros) | 3.7. Quality management (Dr. József Gályász) |
| 1.8. Change management (Dr. Gábor Kerékjártó) | 2.8. Career management | 3.8. Time management (Dr. Éva Bába Bácsné) |
| | 2.9. Security Management (László Terjék) | |

In case of both studies, I have built my research work on questionnaire interviews. The questionnaires are guided and closed, as I provided the possible answers in advance for each question under survey. The advantage of closed interviews is that they can be processed easily and the generalisation of the received findings is simpler thanks to the uniformity of the questionnaires. In the present case the interviewees had to qualify the given factors on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. The respond scores of the questionnaire are assessed with a nominal scale.

To **investigate the management tasks**, I have compiled an individual questionnaire consisting of three main parts: the data of the organisation under survey, characteristics

of the respondent, and the interview questions with the factors to be qualified and specified by me in advance.

I have collected the following data about the organisations under survey: operating form of organisation (public limited company, co-operative, limited liability company, deposit company, public administrative institution); scope of activity of the organisation, volume of activity, number of staff. As for the personal features of respondents, I have asked the interviewees' age, qualification, professional field and position. This information has also enabled me to conduct detailed analyses by breaking down the studies of the entire sample.

To perform the surveys, I have established variables classified on the basis of various aspects by applying the features of the organisations first and then of each respondent. In the survey interview, I have analysed 10 management tasks expressed in 14 questions. I have determined 8-10 factors to be qualified for each question, so the total factors studied (management tasks) amounts to 126. The research includes the managerial judgement and preference changes of the following management tasks:

- decision tasks
- control
- instruction, disposal
- planning tasks
- organisation
- motivation,
- in-company,
- out-of-company information collection
- conflict management,
- communication,
- personnel tasks
- quality management

By studying these issues, I have aimed to find out how the managers under survey qualify each management task on a scale from 1 to 5 and to what extent they think the realisation of the tasks is affected by belonging to the different groups. The sample underlying my research is dominantly based on the opinion of male managers who work for small- and medium-sized organisations (limited liability companies and joint-stock company) pursuing agricultural activity, are between the age of 30 and 49 and have a college or university degree.

Besides studying the task of functional approach, I have conducted a separate research **to examine the changes in management tasks**. After elaborating and evaluating the functional researches, I have become convinced that my statements are static for a given time; they refer to the time of study. When selecting my doctoral topic, I have set the

aim to study the changes in management tasks. As I can not draw conclusions on this from the functional task study, I have decided to initiate a new research based on a process-oriented questionnaire. With these studies, I would like to elaborate a detailed, complex picture of the changes in managerial tasks. In my opinion, the information of the questionnaires applied by me offer an opportunity to reveal the value judgement and attitude of various managerial groups more sharply, define their perspectives and specify the differences of managerial tasks in practice. The research structure is illustrated in Table 2.

*Table 2: Structure of the research entitled
“A study of changes in management tasks”*

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tasks representing proprietary interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – proprietary managerial tasks – obtaining and providing information – keeping and building contacts |
| The managerial tasks of passing and enforcing decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – passing decisions – disposal, instruction, regulation |
| Organisational and control tasks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – control, measurement of performance – organisation |
| Management tasks of influencing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – motivating – Human Resource Management – Conflict management, disorder relief |
| Planning and strategy creation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Planning, strategy creation |

Source: my own research

The characteristics of the questionnaire on **change studies** is that it has undertaken nearly the same and new topics as compared to the task studies, applying past, present and future time dimensions.

I have searched for an answer to the question how these tasks were seen in the past, are judged in the present and forecast in the future by today’s managers. The assessment regarding the past, present and future has aimed to present the changes in the judgement of management tasks. During the sample classification of change studies, the legal relations to the managing organisation have been a criterion. Managers that are both proprietors and employees of the company, and managers that are only employees of the company comprised separate groups. I have presumed that certain differences arise in their managerial practice and attitude, so I have also evaluated them separately in the sample according to various study aspects. In my questions, the past is considered the

period before 1990, the present is the time of completion (years 2006-2007). The questionnaire applied for the study “The change in management tasks” examines 113 partial tasks in three time dimensions, specified in 11 questions. Concurrently with the questionnaire interviewing concerning the importance of management tasks, various identifiers on the organisations and managers under survey have been collected, too.

The data collection system applied can be broken down to the following groups:

- information on workplace,
- personal data of manager under survey,
- relations between the manager and the workplace
- interview questions.

The questions of the workplace data include the name, address, seat, special field, age, size (number of staff, sales revenue) and legal predecessor of the workplace.

As for the manager under survey, I have gathered information on their sex, age, current position, qualification and management studies.

A separate group of questions covers the legal relationship between the manager and the organisation, the number of years of employment, the manager’s career at the organisation and other organisations. It can be stated about the database underlying the change studies that over 50% of the respondents work for agricultural organisations. Their employment period generally ranges from 15 to 25 years. 57% of the managers under survey are between the age of 50 and 59. 49% of them have managerial experience of 15-25 years, while 25% have 5-15 years of experience. Nearly a fourth of the sample have only some years of managerial experience, while 3% have been working as manager for more than 25 years. In my case, 25% of the sample is proprietor managers, and 72% work as employed managers.

2.1. STATISTICAL METHODS APPLIED DURING THE STUDY OF TASKS

I have analysed the collected data in various aspects, with different statistical methods. The composition, distribution of samples of high element number, i.e. the populations can clearly be presented with descriptive statistical methods. In the most concise manner, populations can be characterised with some of their mean value and dispersion index. For this purpose, descriptive statistics generally uses the arithmetic average. Median is the value of the $(n+1)/2^{\text{nd}}$ element of the ranked data, is located in the middle of the data queue arranged according to size. Mode is the most frequent criterion value in the statistical queue, surrounded by the value data of most elements.

During the processing, I have set up the ranking of the questions on the basis of the average points calculated. The ranking analyses and the distribution studies have been built on the values of the average points. Certainly, while the studying of a large number of variants may offer an opportunity to establish a detailed picture and thorough hypotheses in case of the independence among variants, the use of many variants also makes the creation of a proper overall picture more difficult. During my research, the large number of variants has necessitated data reduction and summarising. To check the question whether there are any variants showing relations with each other in the sample studied by me and whether these variants can be grouped, I have applied the main component analysis and then the factor analysis. In my dissertation, I have established 41 main components of the 115 variants under survey with the method. I have also aimed to carry out researches that point out whether there is difference in judging the importance of management tasks in the relevant organisational groups formed according to different aspects. I have studied whether there is a significant difference between the groups formed on the basis of the managers' qualifications, age, sex, positions and the sectoral types of the organisations. Here I have compared the averages of groups belonging to the same aspect on the basis of the most appropriate method to filter out the differences, i.e. the one-aspect independent sample variance analysis. The main components have proved to be suitable in respect of final communality, the sufficient information content and the KMO test. I have accepted the critical value of the t trial and the SD value at $p=5\%$.

2.2. STATISTICAL METHODS APPLIED FOR STUDYING THE CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT TASKS

In my research, I have attempted to reveal the respondents' opinion and evaluate it in a measurable manner. Measurability is a requirement concerning information collected during social research. For one group of information (quantitative criteria) it is obvious. During my studies, I have calculated mean values and distribution ratios from the quantitative criteria.

Regarding the application of managerial tasks under survey, I have calculated relative frequency from a nominal scale. During a statistical study, a trial is always conducted several times. The occurrence number of each event is named the frequency of the event. Frequency itself carries little independent information as it depends upon the number of trials. If frequency is divided by the number of trials, we get the relative frequency. During my studies, I have also searched for the answer to the question what effect one or more independent variants of the variants studied by me have on the dependent variant, how strong the relationship is between them and how this relation can be described, expressed. Correlation calculation is a suitable method for the relationship analysis.

3. MAIN STATEMENTS OF THE DISSERTATION

In my dissertation I have presented the development process during which the management-related practical knowledge has first formed into management knowledge and then, with the involvement of the expanding management knowledge and findings of other disciplines usable in management, management has formed into an interdisciplinary science.

In the first part of my dissertation I have systemised the appearance of general management theoretical tasks both in the agro-economic processes and organisations.

In my doctoral dissertation I have also searched for the answer what attitude the managers under survey have today to the basic management tasks, and how they judge the importance of the most frequent management tasks on the basis of their own professional experience. To answer my questions, I have conducted analyses based on empirical data entering. To achieve my purpose, I have performed a questionnaire survey, and then I have prepared a database from this and made comparisons with

mathematical-statistical procedures. My studies have led me to the following conclusions:

- The **managers of the organisations under survey are aware of the importance and responsibility of management**, and basically consider all factors important for effective management. Studying the ranking, it can be stated (Table 3) that gaining in-company information is deemed as the most significant management task. Decision and organisation tasks also play an important role. Decision is really an essential managerial task, though it is not exclusively; still, the study findings show that it is one of the most well-known manifestations of power status even today. The importance of organising is also reasonable, since without the establishment and continuous improvement of operation, the implementation of even the best decision is hindered.

Table 3: Qualification of basic managerial tasks

| | Average | Median | Mode | Dispersion |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|
| gaining in-company information | 4.19 | 4 | 5 | 0.936 |
| decision tasks | 4.13 | 4 | 5 | 0.932 |
| organisation tasks | 4.04 | 4 | 4 | 0.934 |
| control | 4.03 | 4 | 4 | 0.948 |
| instruction, disposal | 3.82 | 4 | 4 | 1.004 |
| planning tasks | 3.81 | 4 | 4 | 1.067 |
| gaining out-of-company information | 3.69 | 4 | 4 | 1.149 |
| personnel tasks | 3.34 | 3 | 4 | 1.079 |

Source: my own research

n=421

- Since managers and leaders' days are mostly filled by the solution of problems related to people and the disclosure of opportunities hiding in people, the management of human resources must be a strategical question. Nevertheless, the respondents have not set a high value to this function, such as the control, the organising, decision or information tasks.
- **The judgement of tasks varies at the different managerial levels.** First-line managers have determined an answer score below the total average for all main questions, the values of middle managers approximates to the general opinion mostly, while top managers tend to overvalue the tasks under survey as compared to the average (Table 3).

Table 4: A comparison of the average of the basic management tasks for each management level

| Position | First-line managers | Middle managers | Top managers |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| obtaining out-of-company information | 3.39 | 3.62 | 4.02 |
| obtaining in-company information | 3.97 | 4.20 | 4.40 |
| planning tasks | 3.72 | 3.93 | 3.86 |
| decision tasks | 4.09 | 4.25 | 3.98 |
| instructions, disposal | 3.75 | 4.13 | 3.50 |
| organisation tasks | 3.93 | 3.80 | 4.14 |
| control tasks | 3.72 | 3.93 | 3.87 |
| personnel tasks | 3.25 | 3.50 | 3.55 |

*Purple boxes indicate averages beyond the total average, while the green the values below the total average.

Source: my own research

n=421

- The results of the break down by the qualification shows that respondents with a university degree consider the management issues more important than the other qualification groups, and the interviewees with a secondary school degree tend to qualify the above questions less important than the average. As for respondents with a university degree, the differences are of positive direction as compared with the average; their qualification is below the average only in one case, i.e. in the case of control built into the process. It is important that those completing a technical school deem the enforcement of their interests, oral disposal and its frequency relatively very important. Technicians attribute special importance to the role and importance of control built into the process and the technological control in management.
- **Age and the related experience may considerably influence people's value judgement.** Task judgement beyond the average is mostly typical of young managers and the age group of 50-59. In my opinion, the positive change in the values of the age group of 20-29 on the one hand follows from the dynamism and idealism of the young; on the other hand, with less managerial experience, they are more inclined to value their tasks higher. Positive attitude, the motivating force of the new task and the evaluation of performance control beyond the average may serve as a useful basis in later managerial work, too. The managerial generation of 50-59 is the age group that typically work in top and middle-level managerial

positions today. I suppose that their task evaluation above the average and their value system affects the value system of their organisation and offers a sample to their younger employees, subordinates, too.

- The importance of labour force supply, planning, Human Resource Management tasks decreases as the age progresses, so the most important role is attributed to it by younger age groups, and it is considered the least important by the older. The above statement is also true for informal communication. According to the studies, the managerial tasks resulting from status differences mean the least problems to managers (as the total average has been the lowest in the case of this factor). However, the judgement of this question greatly varies among the age groups. The respondents between 20 and 29 and the respondents between 50 and 59 have supposed that these factors make managerial work more difficult than the average. The applied quality systems are more important than the average to the age groups of 20-29 and 40-49, while organisational culture and tradition is determinant for respondent from 50 to 59. The control of performance and the deadlines have been more important than the average for the age group from 20 to 29 and managers over 50.
- During my research according to sexes, I have drawn the conclusion that **the opinion of men and women is different in the judgement of certain managerial tasks**. Informal communication and contact net based communication is more important to men than women. In the management of organisations, fulfilling the market demands, technological control and the organising of organisations is more important for them than the average. The opinion of women managers is in many cases similar, but in communication they prefer formal communication and continuity in the fields of both the control and organising. When making decisions, they are less guided by their own interests, and the form and frequency of disposals is less important. According to my surveys, women managers set a higher value to the human factors of work and Human Resource Management.
- **The task content of managerial work is strongly influenced by not only the manager's personality and value judgement but another factor, the "organisation" itself**. The activity, type and size of the organisation can already on its own differentiate our values shaped against management tasks. In my dissertation I have studied what differences and differentiations can be specified in the managers' values in relation to the management tasks on the basis of the

classifications according to the different organisational parameters. According to my research, of the organisational parameters, the scope of activity differentiates the judgement of management tasks to the largest extent.

Table 5: Analysis of the averages of basic management tasks based on scopes of activities

| sector | obtaining out-of-company information | obtaining in-company information | planning tasks | decision tasks | instruction, disposal | organisational tasks | control | personnel tasks |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------|-----------------|
| agriculture | 4.04 | 4.44 | 4.17 | 4.44 | 4.03 | 4.19 | 4.15 | 3.63 |
| industry | 2.88 | 4.06 | 4.00 | 4.13 | 3.69 | 3.88 | 4.19 | 2.69 |
| public administration | 3.32 | 4.15 | 3.78 | 4.19 | 3.89 | 4.15 | 4.05 | 3.38 |
| commerce | 3.68 | 3.92 | 3.51 | 3.76 | 3.42 | 3.72 | 3.75 | 3.21 |
| bank, insurance | 3.65 | 4.05 | 3.47 | 3.88 | 3.79 | 3.89 | 3.92 | 3.06 |
| economic service | 3.55 | 4.15 | 3.30 | 3.80 | 3.50 | 4.05 | 4.25 | 3.05 |
| other | 4.00 | 4.00 | 3.88 | 4.13 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 3.38 |
| total | 3.69 | 4.19 | 3.81 | 4.13 | 3.82 | 4.04 | 4.03 | 3.34 |

*Purple boxes indicate averages beyond the total average, while the green the values below the total average.

Source: my own research

n=421

- The columns of Table 5 shows that, regardless of the scope of activities, managers have deemed the obtaining of in-company information, the tasks related to decision-making and the control as the most important. Studying the tasks line by line (according to the scope of activity), we get a more detailed picture of judgement. While in agriculture each task is of high priority, the evaluations are below the average in the banking, insurance and commercial sectors as compared to the general judgement. As for the industry, the planning, decision and control tasks have a greater role, while in the economic sector the organisational, control tasks. In public administration, the obtaining of in-company and out-of-company information and the planning tasks are of less importance than the others.
- The control and organising tasks have received special attention in each case. Their role has been the most important in the respondents' managerial activity in the agriculture, industry, banking and insurance. The values mostly approximating the average are typical of the public administration. This can be the result of the fact that during the interview I have used the most middle managerial level questionnaires in the public administration. To reveal the differences according to

the scope of activities, I have also conducted a main component analysis with a one-factorial variance analysis, based on which lots of differences and sharp differentiation can be observed in the main components.

- In agriculture nearly all listed factors have a more important role than the average. The highest value has been attributed by the managers to conflict management under organisational force, contact-origin information gaining, the significance of technology standard and the informal communication. These values show that agricultural managers find these tasks especially important as compared to the judgement of the average. The representation of the organisational and managerial interest, and the judgement of conditions related to the establishment of work conditions have approximated the average to the largest extent. However, I find it regrettable that the respondents have not attributed the importance specified in technical literature to the management tasks arising in relation to Human Resources.
- As for the industry, positive, co-operative attitude, training, incentives, performance management, performance, the keeping of deadlines and formal communication play a more important role than the average. Rationality, the co-ordination of technological organisation with the external organisation, the technology, quality themselves, technological discipline, occasional control are of special priority.
- In public administration it can be observed that the role of enforcement and the communication specified by the official organisational ways are important. Besides the knowing of legal provisions, rationality, unambiguity and harmony are important managerial tasks. The establishment of proper training and compensation system is considered important, too. In my studies these are the most structured organisations (in terms of coordination, configuration, scope of authority and labour division), so it is obvious that the establishment of tasks related to work, workplace, and the management of conflicts arising from the organisational structure are more important to them than to other organisations. The attitudes formed on the public administrative (bureaucratic) work are supported by this value research. In this case, besides the application of organisational communication and the upvaluing of obtaining legislative information, the representation of organisational interests and the frequent and professional application of disposal tasks is also an important managerial criterion.
- The managers acting in commerce devalue the importance of their managerial role, as they have given qualification below the average in 27 of the 42 cases. In

commerce, mainly two factors have a more important role than the average: the representation of their own interest in decision and the individual planning, of which own interest is more considerable.

- In banking and insurance, considerable factors include the preference of formal communication ways, the establishment of training and compensation systems, and the management of extra tasks arising from the lack of time and information. Organisational interest and economic efficiency are expectations in this sector. I find it interesting that it is the public administrative, commercial organisations as well as banks and insurers that devalue the compliance with market demands considered important by others.
- **In agriculture, each managerial task is of special importance**, while in the banking, insurance and commercial sectors the values are below the average judgement. As for the industry, the planning, decision and control tasks receive a larger and larger role, while in the economic service the organisational and control tasks. In public administration, obtaining in-company and out-of-company information and planning tasks are less significant than the others.
- In my change studies, I have observed two sharp changes in the values on the tasks. On the one hand, **management attitude has obviously been upvalued among the managers**. This tendency is expected to remain determinant in their values.
- On the other hand, **the shift in the cornerstone of the judgement of managerial tasks** is also a decisive change. While regulation and organising used to be considered the most important, today, besides the organising tasks, control and performance evaluation are in the centre of interest. In the future, according to the managerial values, we must focus on the representation of proprietary interests, the tasks related to decisions and the motivation (Table 6).

Table 6: Managerial tasks under survey

| <i>Managerial tasks under survey</i> | | <i>Past</i> | <i>Present</i> | <i>Future</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| Tasks representing proprietary interests | Exercising of proprietary tasks | 2.70 | 4.10 | 4.84 |
| | Keeping and building contacts | 3.63 | 4.35 | 4.64 |
| | Obtaining and providing information | 3.25 | 4.28 | 4.72 |
| The managerial tasks of passing and enforcing decisions | Passing decisions | 3.35 | 4.60 | 4.88 |
| | Disposal, instruction, regulation | 4.04 | 4.48 | 4.64 |
| Organisational and control tasks | Organisation | 4.00 | 4.75 | 4.79 |
| | Control, measurement of performance | 3.65 | 4.60 | 4.78 |
| Management tasks of influencing | Motivating | 2.78 | 4.43 | 4.88 |
| | Human Resource Management | 2.71 | 4.15 | 4.69 |
| | Conflict management, disorder relief | 3.58 | 4.60 | 4.64 |
| Planning and strategy creation | Planning, strategy creation | 3.75 | 4.48 | 4.77 |

Source: my own research

n = 80

- The detailed findings of the change research show that **the effect of proprietary interests on corporate management and the presence of proprietary interests in the management attitude have become stronger**. The present experience shows that this tendency is expected to become even more dominant in the future. An important aspect is that the representation of proprietary interest as approach is a significant value for even managers who are not proprietors of the organisation directed by them. One of the reasons for this may be the will to comply with proprietors' expectations, the excessive performance-orientation, the inclination to position, and the fear of jobs being lost. On the other hand, a type of managers is so strongly committed to the organisation that they think about the tasks nearly as if it were their own property.
- In any period under survey, **organisation is of special importance** as compared to the same periods of the other tasks. The difference arises from the preference of partial tasks. With the control, **performance orientation** has become stronger.
- **The sharp difference between proprietor managers and employee managers in most cases lies not in the value judgement but the frequency of applying the tasks.**
- It can be concluded that **the picture of managerial values is not always in accordance with managerial action**, as in many cases the frequency of applying

the least important tasks is more regular at the level of daily work performance. The frequency of applying really important tasks is often ad hoc. **This tendency can clearly be observed among the employee managers.**

- The application of proprietor managerial tasks is the most differentiated, as each task under study is used more frequently by proprietor managers at work. Although usually assessing the proprietary tasks over value 4 on a scale of importance ranging from 1 to 5, employee managers do not apply them in most cases.
- The research leads us to the conclusion that proprietor managers have more opportunities for decision-making, and regarding the type of decisions, they unambiguously prefer the proprietary purposes (dominance of financial, market, organisational decisions).
- Regarding the managerial tasks studied by me, the respondents expect the most efficient future for the tasks of decision and motivation. The prospective importance of the market-type decisions is the question that each manager under survey considers the key managerial decision.
- Based on my researches, I have drawn the conclusion that **during the work of proprietor managers the variegation and joint application of management tasks is far more typical and common.** In practice, employee managers apply fewer managerial tasks. This can be due to their place in the organisational hierarchy and the affection to the organisation.
- I find it contradictory that managers expect their subordinates to perform efficient and co-operative work while attributing only a lower frequency to assistance motivation, inspiration and the development of job title and compensation system. Regarding the motivation solutions applied the most frequently, we can only find techniques that require no material sacrifice in terms of the workplace. In the future, these tendencies seem to get stronger.
- The above lead me to the conclusion that **the managerial tasks exercised by the managers determine and clearly demark the managers' competence within the organisation,** relieving the forces necessary to choose activities in which their possibilities and ability promise the most optimal result.

With my doctoral dissertation, I have managed to come round the main aspects of the research according to my intentions. Hopefully, this dissertation will promote the

creation of a comprehensive view on the world of management. However, it does not mean that I have dealt with all aspects of management in their entirety.

Today management covers so many areas that earlier were not thought to be discussable or studiable in a management context. From human factors to behaviour, from motivation to conflict management, from contact-building to decisions, through the representation of proprietary interests, the information and quality management, the organising are all individual fields of the management. Beyond these general management tasks, in agriculture special management problems arise, too, which require special practice and experience for the successful management. Managers need such knowledge that, accompanied by professional experience and satisfying the future challenges, may be suitable for the effective management of economies and business administration.

4. NEW AND NOVEL FINDINGS OF THE DISSERTATION

I consider one of the main results of my research that, **starting from the thinking of the managers of organisations operating in Hungary**, I made statements regarding the tasks related to the management of agro-economic organisations based on the identification of the respondents' individual subjectums, perception and conviction, value judgement. I summarise the new and novel findings of my dissertation as follows

- Based on my research, I have observed two sharp changes in managerial values. On the one hand, **management attitude has obviously been upvalued among the managers**. This tendency is expected to remain determinant in their values. On the other hand, **the shift in the cornerstone of the judgement of managerial tasks** is also a decisive change.
- The detailed findings of the change research show that **the effect of proprietary interests on organisational management and the presence of proprietary interests in the management attitude have become stronger**. An important aspect is that the representation of proprietary interest as approach is a significant value for even managers who are not proprietors of the organisation directed by them.
- It can be concluded that **the picture of managerial values is not always in accordance with managerial action**, as in many cases the frequency of applying the least important tasks is more regular at the level of daily work performance. The frequency of applying really important tasks is often ad hoc. **This tendency can clearly be observed among the employee managers**.
- **The sharp difference between proprietor managers and employee managers in most cases lies not in the value judgement but the frequency of applying the tasks**.
- Based on my researches, I have drawn the conclusion that **during the work of proprietor managers the complexity and joint application of management tasks is far more typical than in the case of employee managers**. The managerial tasks exercised by the managers determine and clearly demarcate the competences within the organisation.

5. PUBLICATIONS ON THE TOPIC OF THE DISSERTATION

TOPIC OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION:

A STUDY OF MANAGEMENT TASKS AND FUNCTIONS IN AGROECONOMIC ORGANISATIONS

WRITINGS PUBLISHED IN SCHOLARLY BOOKS/COURSEBOOKS IN HUNGARIAN:

1. ***Bilanics Á.: Management tasks and managerial roles***
In. Berde Cs. - Láczy M. ed.: Management. Faculty of Economics and Social Studies, College of Nyíregyháza, Nyíregyháza, 2005., ISBN: 963-7336-35-4, 9-21 p.
2. ***Management tasks and managerial roles in. Berde Cs. ed: Modern management studies for police managers.*** ISBN: 978-963-06-2271-4, Central Police Station of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, 2007

COLLEGE LECTURE NOTES IN HUNGARIAN:

3. ***Bilanics Á.: Practice log for 1st-year students of Business Administration,*** College Practice Log, College of Nyíregyháza, Nyíregyháza, 2000
4. ***Berde-Dienesné-Bilanics: Human Management*** College lecture notes for students of Agricultural Engineering, College of Nyíregyháza, 2001. 1-76 p.
5. ***Berde-Bilanics: Human Management*** College lecture notes for students of Agricultural Engineering, Revised edition, College of Nyíregyháza, 2002. 1-104p
6. ***Berde Cs. – Bilanics Á – Láczy M.: Management, Volume I,*** College lecture notes, College Faculty of Economics and Social Studies, College of Nyíregyháza, Nyíregyháza, 2004. 3-76 p.
7. ***Berde Cs. – Bilanics Á. – Láczy M.: Management, Volume II,*** College lecture notes, College Faculty of Economics and Social Studies, College of Nyíregyháza, Nyíregyháza, 2004. 3-69p.

WRITINGS IN INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES:

8. ***Bilanics Á.: A study of the changes in management tasks*** In. Inventárium Faculty of Economics and Social Studies, College of Nyíregyháza, 2007.

WRITINGS IN INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS IN HUNGARIAN:

9. ***Bilanics Á.: A functional study of corporate management.***
In. Inventárium, Faculty of Economics and Social Studies, College of Nyíregyháza, 2000. 41-43 p.
10. ***Bilanics Á.: Management change at the enterprises of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County since the change of regime.*** Scientific notice of the Institute of Economics and Social Sciences, Gödöllő University of Agricultural Sciences, Nyíregyháza, 2000., 28-33p.
11. ***Bilanics Á.: Management tasks today.*** In Inventárium Nyíregyháza, Faculty of Economics and Social Studies, College of Nyíregyháza, Inventárium, 2002. 91-93p.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS:

12. ***Bilanics Á.: Management Tasks in Today's Organisations.*** In. Acta Beregsasiensis, (Ferenc Rákóczi II. Hungarian College of Subcarpathia) Scientific Annual ISBN: 966-7966-49-6, 78-81p.

HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS WITH A FOREIGN LANGUAGE SUMMARY:

13. ***Bilanics Á.: Vezetési feladatok változásainak vizsgálata (A study of the changes in management tasks)*** In Acta Agraria Debreceniensis, 2007. (Under publication)

FOREIGN LANGUAGE LECTURE PUBLISHED ABROAD:

14. ***Bilanics Á.: Leadership in the past, present, and future - An insight into the methodology of the studying of leadership tasks*** (Ferenc Rákóczy II. Hungarian College of Subcarpathia) Scientific Conference Lecture entitled "Let's learn Europe" 26. October, 2007. Under publication

15. **Bilanics Á.: *The main tendencies of leadership development, novel challenges of leader work*** Scientific Conference Entitled “Globalisation Challenges” held by the University of Uzhgorod, November 2007 Under publication

FOREIGN LANGUAGE LECTURE PUBLISHED IN HUNGARY:

16. **Bilanics Á.: *The changes in leadership tasks*** “Economic and Cultural Co-operation along the route of Corridor V” International Conference, Nyíregyháza, 25 April 2008. 51-53p.

HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE JOURNAL

17. **Berde Cs.- Bilanics Á.: *Management in agriculture***. Agrárium, the Journal of Hungarian Agricultural Chambers. Vol. 18, Issue 1, Szaktudás Kiadó Ház Zrt., Budapest, 2008. 22 p.
18. **Berde Cs - Bilanics Á.: *Conditions and possibilities***. Agrárium, the Journal of Hungarian Agricultural Chambers. Vol. 18, Issue 1, Szaktudás Kiadó Ház Zrt., Budapest, 2008. 23 p.

HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE CONFERENCE LECTURE

19. **Bilanics Á.:** A study of the management of organisational structures in the Northeastern Region, 28th Scientific Days of Óvár, Agro-economic Section, Mosonmagyaróvár, 5-6 October 2000
20. **Bilanics Á.: *The methodological hypothesis of a research*** “The management and work organisation relations of regional development” 2nd International Discussion, University of Debrecen, Debrecen, 3 November 2000. 19-23 p.
21. **Bilanics Á.: *Characteristics of management in Szabolcs-Szatmár- Bereg County***
Georgikon Days 2001. Keszthely 2001
22. **Láczay M.-Bilanics Á.: *The possibilities of Human Resource Management in organised economic education***. 8th International Scientific Days of Agro-economics, Gyöngyös, 26 March 2002 26. 286-296 p
23. **Bilanics Á.: *Management tasks in the past, present and future***. The Day of Hungarian Science 2007. County Scientific Conference, Nyíregyháza, 11 November 2007. Under publication

24. **Bilanics Á.: Characteristics of Human management in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County.**

”Field trials, landscape production and rural development” International Conference, Debrecen-Nyírlugos-Nyíregyháza, 6 June 2002.

25. **Berde Cs.- Bilanics Á.:** Changes in managerial attitude and expectations in agriculture. “The economics of enterprises”, 11th International Scientific Days, Gyöngyös, 2008. 120 - 121. p.

Mean value calculation:

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------|-----|------|-----|------|--------|------|
| 1. | 0,17 | 8. | 0,2 | 15. | 0,15 | 22. | 0,05 |
| 2. | 0,25 | 9. | 0,1 | 16. | 0,1 | 23. | 0,05 |
| 3. | 0,5 | 10. | 0,1 | 17. | 0,05 | 24. | 0,05 |
| 4. | 0,17 | 11. | 0,1 | 18. | 0,05 | 25. | 0,05 |
| 5. | 0,25 | 12. | 0,4 | 19. | 0,05 | Total: | |
| 6. | 0,17 | 13. | 0,2 | 20. | 0,05 | | 3.63 |
| 7. | 0,17 | 14. | 0,15 | 21. | 0,05 | | |