



Creating social value in the triple bottom line: the case of Farm Flower Fragrance

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Background

Farm Flower Fragrance (FFF) is a sustainable start-up pursuing triple bottom line



Economic: production and sales of luxury high-end perfume

Environmental: crops diversification and organic production

Social: employment of hard-to-employ disadvantaged groups

Objective

- explore the ways of organising work engagement of hard-to-employ disadvantaged people – *refugees and asylum seekers, people with autism spectrum disorders, and victims of abuse* - in different phases of the FFF's production process
- determine what kind of collaboration needs to be established in order to organise this type of engagement

Introduction

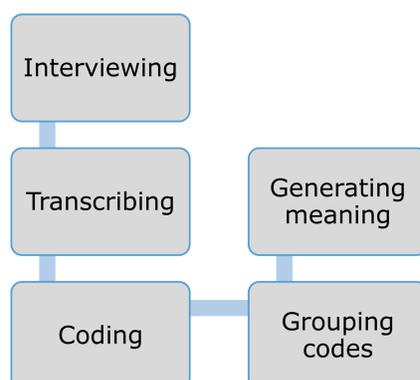
Research question:

How can Farm Flower Fragrance involve hard-to-employ groups in its activities, while ensuring a positive impact on their wellbeing, and what role can collaborations play in it?

- Hard-to-employ groups are "antagonistic assets": in order to turn them into *complementary assets* generating value for an enterprise, specific knowledge to recognise their specialised skills and capabilities needs to be acquired and utilised (Hockerts, 2015)
- Overcoming work barriers of hard-to-employ people: *designing work settings* responsive to the needs of the targeted groups which are highly *socially supportive*:
 - *Instrumental* support – modification of work processes
 - *Emotional/appraisal* support – consistent encouragement
 - Tailored to the person (Chan, 2016)
- Alliances can compensate for lacking resources in support provision:
 - *Pooling alliances* – focal enterprise acquires unique knowledge from partners
 - *Trading alliances* – focal enterprise leverages the knowledge of partners (Montgomery, Dacin, & Dacin, 2012; Cummings & Holmberg, 2012)

Methods

- Semi-structured face-to-face interviews
- Representatives of 7 organisations, employing or providing support to labour market integration of the target groups, interviewed:
 - 4 organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers
 - 2 organisations working with people with autism spectrum disorders
 - 1 organisation working with female victims of violence



Results

Employment of refugees and asylum seekers

- *Main opportunities*: motivated, hardworking, willing to learn
- *Main challenges*: low proficiency in Dutch, cultural differences, irrelevant working experience, varied level of education
- *Support*: expose to Dutch; facilitate communication; demonstrate work; approach individually; learn about the background; build trust

Employment of female victims of abuse

- *Main opportunities*: relevant work experience in some cases
- *Main challenges*: psychologically vulnerable group, case-by-case readiness to work, external circumstances (e.g. child care)
- *Support*: ensure supportive and safe work environment; approach individually; learn about the background

Employment of people with autism spectrum disorders

- *Main opportunities*: loyal, honest, with specific talents, focused
- *Main challenges*: sensitivity to stimuli, stress, and change of plan; unconventional social interaction
- *Support*: ensure part-time work, job design, fixed work planning, clear instructions, and supportive work atmosphere; approach individually; learn about the background

Collaborations

- Diverse actors collaborate through exchanging resources
- Possible collaboration with FFF: access to the target groups, information and training on characteristics, and external support
- Challenges: competition, lack of commitment and willingness to truly cooperate, quality of work

Conclusions

- All researched target groups require both instrumental and emotional/appraisal support, but of different kinds.
- Individual approach is necessary in determining suitable work and support.
- In-house expertise for support provision can be developed through learning, but empathic and understanding personality of employees is also needed.
- Only trading alliances were identified in support provision.
- Different approaches and priorities caused challenges for alliances.
- **Recommendation**: start with one target group and expand with others when more experienced; select empathic employees willing to provide support; seek alliances, but also build own capacities

References

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