

FACTORS AFFECTING THE ENGAGEMENT OF EMPLOYEES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

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Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the relationship between the affecting factors (such as: communication, organization of work, relationships with superiors, career development, relationships between colleagues, salary, bureaucracy) of employee satisfaction and the relationship between employee satisfaction, job engagement and organizational commitment on the whole and its dimensions: affective organizational commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. The presented model shows the relationship between the above factors and offers a proposal for a research tool which can be used to test the model.

Keywords: employee satisfaction, engagement, organizational commitment, public sector

1. EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The analysis of literature on public administration demonstrates the evolutionary transformation from Weber's bureaucracy through New Public Management to Public Governance. At each stage of this evolution we can observe a growing emphasis on development of a civic society and a culture of customer-centred management. Public administration increasingly implements quality management systems, such as ISO, TQM (Total Quality Management), EFQM Excellence Model (European Foundation for Quality Management) or CAF (Common Assessment Framework) which focus on professionalism, development of employees and fulfilment of the rising customer expectations. Therefore, it is important for employees, especially of local government administration which is the closest to local communities, to be engaged, have a sense of a mission, be loyal to the organization, and last but not least to feel satisfaction with their work. The presented model is dedicated to these issues and relationships among them.

2. DEFINITIONAL ISSUES

The concept of job satisfaction has been defined in many ways. However, one of the most-used definitions of job satisfaction in organizational research is that of Locke (1976) who described job satisfaction as *a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences* (p. 1304). Kahn (1990, p. 964) defined employee engagement as the harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work roles. Kahn's idea of engagement focused on the employee being able to express him/herself at work (Rakowska *et al.*, 2014).

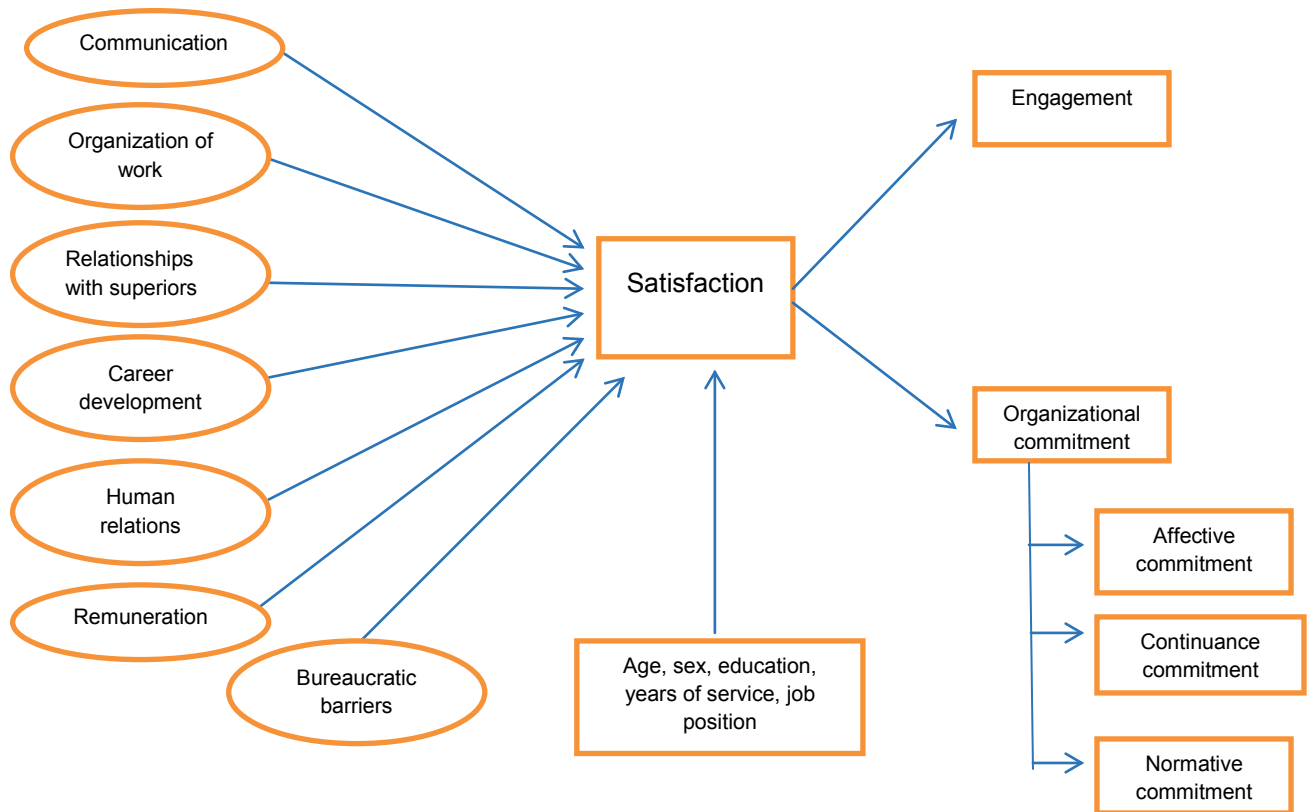
The most popular definition of organizational commitment was developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). The authors distinguish three components of organizational commitment: affective commitment (positive emotional attachment to the organization), continuance commitment (gains versus losses of working in an organization, also considered as intention to quit) and normative commitment (feelings of obligation).

3. MODEL

No practitioner of human resources management doubts that there is a relationship between job satisfaction, employee's engagement and his/her organizational commitment. In literature it is debated whether it is satisfaction that influences engagement or just the opposite: it is engagement that affects satisfaction (Saks, 2006, p. 604). From either perspective, there is a strong correlation between these phenomena (Saks, 2006 p. 610). Thus, a question arises: What factors have an impact on job satisfaction? According to Juchnowicz (2015, p. 65) these are: communication, organization of work, relationships with superiors, career development, human relations and remuneration, and these factors have been included in the presented model.

The presented model assumes that the abovementioned factors have an influence on job satisfaction of local government employees, similarly as bureaucratic barriers, whereas job satisfaction affects employee's engagement and organizational commitment (affective, continuance and normative commitment). Owing to empirical verification of the model it will be possible to determine whether job satisfaction is also affected by such factors as age, sex, education, years of service or job position occupied by a public administration employee.

Picture 1: Factors determining job satisfaction, engagement and organizational commitment



Source: Compiled by the author.

With reference to local government administration, the proposed model enables to put forward the following research hypotheses:

H1. The processes of human resources management in local government administration offices, such as career development, remuneration, relationships with superiors, relationships with colleagues, communication and organization of work determine a level of job satisfaction.

H2. Bureaucratic barriers adversely affect job satisfaction of local government employees.

H3. Job satisfaction of employees in local government administration offices positively correlates with engagement declared by them.

H4. Job satisfaction of employees in local government administration offices positively correlates with their organizational commitment.

4. RESEARCH TOOL

In order to verify the model, a research tool is proposed, consisting of 55 questions and personal data of respondents. Eighteen questions pertain to the processes of human resources management, with 3 questions for each factor, that is career development, remuneration, relationships with superiors, human relations, communication and organization of work (Juchnowicz, 2014, p. 166). Three questions concern bureaucratic barriers, five – job satisfaction (Zalewska, 2003, p. 54), nine – engagement (UWES-9, Seppälä and others, p. 479). Eighteen questions which pertain to organizational commitment are taken from Meyer Allen test in Augustyn Bańka's version (Bańka, 2002, p. 70). These questions check continuance, affective and normative commitment (6 questions for each field of commitment). The last two questions concern resources. The survey is accompanied by an information form for respondents' personal data, namely: age, sex, years of service, education and position. Answers are given according to the seven-level Likert scale, where particular numbers mean respectively: 1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – somewhat disagree, 4 – neither agree nor disagree, 5 – somewhat agree, 6 – agree, 7 – strongly agree.

Processes of human resources management.

- 1 I feel that my career has come to a standstill and I don't have a chance for further development.
- 2 I attend training courses in order to comprehensively upgrade my skills.
- 3 I have a chance for career development in my office.
- 4 My remuneration is adequate for the scope of my responsibilities, my contribution and effects of work.
- 5 I'm satisfied with additional benefits offered by the office.
- 6 My efforts and commitment are appreciated by the employer.
- 7 My superior always gives me support necessary for efficient work.
- 8 My relationships with my superior are very good.
- 9 While taking decisions, my superior makes use of my opinions, advice and ideas.
- 10 The atmosphere in my team is nice and friendly.
- 11 My colleagues cooperate with each other to achieve the goals set to them.
- 12 In my office there is healthy competition.
- 13 I have sufficient information to do my work well.
- 14 Information about the most important changes in the office is communicated to employees very quickly.
- 15 Professional contact with the superior is direct and close.
- 16 I use my knowledge and skills at work.
- 17 I have clearly defined goals at work.
- 18 I have an influence on choosing the way of working.

Bureaucratic barriers

1. Work procedures are complicated.
2. Legal regulations are inapplicable to the realities.
3. Decision-making processes are shared (politicians decide, office workers implement).

Job satisfaction

- 1 In many respects, my job is close to an ideal.
- 2 I have great working conditions.
- 3 I'm satisfied with my work (with the character of my tasks).
- 4 I have managed to achieve what I wanted at work so far.
- 5 If I were to decide once again, I would choose the same job.

Engagement

- 1 I'm bursting with energy at work.
- 2 I feel strong and energetic at work.
- 3 I'm dedicated to my work.
- 4 My work is my inspiration.
- 5 When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.
- 6 I'm happy when I work intensively.
- 7 I'm proud of my work.
- 8 I'm preoccupied with my work.
- 9 When I work, I forget about everything else.

Organizational commitment

- 1 I find it pleasant to work in my office with people from outside.
- 2 The office where I work has a major personal significance for me.
- 3 I would find it difficult to leave my office even if I wanted to.
- 4 I owe a lot to my office.
- 5 I can say that I feel in my office like in a family.
- 6 I feel that problems of my office are really my own problems.
- 7 It would be better for people to devote most of their working life to one organization.
- 8 I feel that having left the office I would have not enough other opportunities.
- 9 I would lose too much in my life if I decided now to leave my office.
- 10 One of several negative consequences of leaving my office could be a lack of available employment opportunities.
- 11 I would be very happy if I could work in my office until retirement.
- 12 I feel that staying in the office is a necessity for me.

- 13 Even if it was beneficial for me, I would not feel good leaving the office now.
- 14 If I got an offer of better employment, I would not feel good leaving the office.
- 15 The office deserves my loyal conduct.
- 16 One of the main reasons why I still work in this office is my belief in loyalty which gives me a sense of moral duty to stay in the office.
- 17 I would not leave my office now, because I have commitments to people who work there.
- 18 I would feel guilty if I left the office now.

Resources

- 1. I have at my disposal appropriate resources to work properly.
- 2. I think that currently available work tools should be improved.

Respondent's age:

- Up to 25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 66 and above

Sex:

- Female
- Male

Years of service:

- Below 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21 years and above

Education:

- secondary
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree

Position:

- Auxiliary or blue-collar
- Clerical (clerk, junior inspector, inspector, specialist)
- Middle-ranking manager (department manager)
- High-ranking manager (director, deputy director, head officer)
- Supreme management (district head, town mayor, city mayor, their deputies, treasurer, secretary)

During work on the paper, a pilot study is carried out among employees of local government administration. After statistical analysis, the study will verify correctness of the suggested tool.

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