

FACTORS AFFECTING THE ENGAGEMENT OF EMPLOYEES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR - RESULTS OF THE PILOT STUDY

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Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the results of the pilot study on the model and research tool presented during the MakeLearn Conference and TIIM Joint Conference 2016: Managing Innovation and Diversity in Knowledge Society Through Turbulent Time.

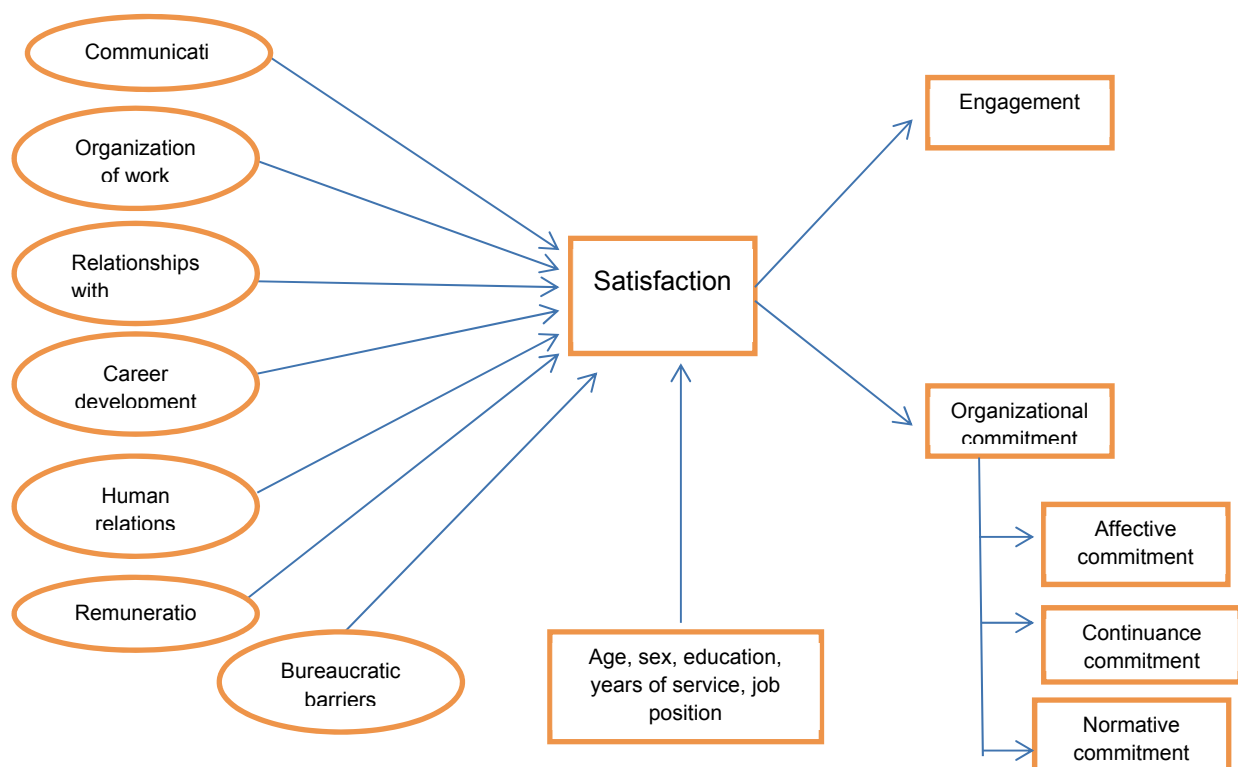
The pilot study was conducted in a group of 88 people – local government administration employees. According to the Cattell's criterion based on scree plot it would seem plausible to reduce the number of satisfaction-influencing factors from the current six to two (which are tentatively called: organizational factors and social factors). However, while estimating reliability with Cronbach's alpha it was observed that the current six factors (Communication, Organization of work, Relationships with superiors, Career development, Human relations, Remuneration) had high reliability and the questions included in them were coherent and appropriately chosen. Therefore, the author is left to decide whether to stick to the current model and research tool in further scientific studies or whether to reduce the model to two factors (organizational and social) and thus to modify the research tool used in the pilot study.

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

1. MODEL AND RESEARCH TOOL

The model presented at the MakeLearn Conference and TIIM Joint Conference 2016: Managing Innovation and Diversity in Knowledge Society Through Turbulent Time is shown in Fig. 1. It presents factors determining job satisfaction, engagement and organizational commitment.

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.

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)

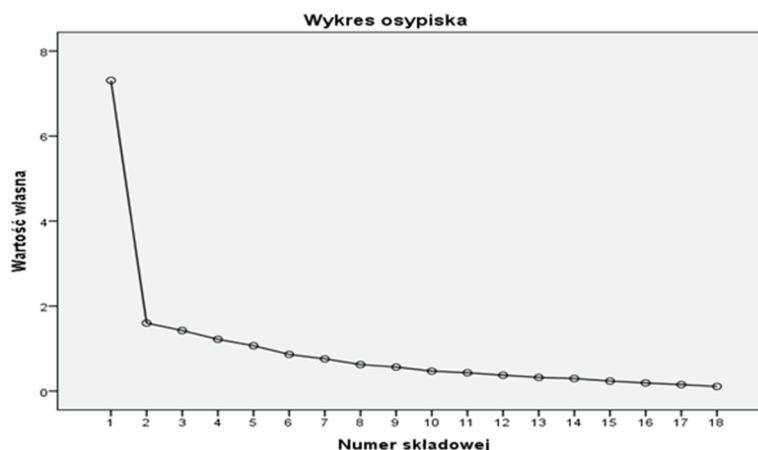
2. PILOT STUDY

The study was conducted in the first quarter of 2016. A hyperlink to the questionnaire was sent to the main cities of 16 provinces and to 60 district offices. As a result of the study, 88 replies were obtained which underwent statistical analysis.

At the beginning it was checked whether the theoretically identified factors of Human Resources Management would also be distinguished from the analytical perspective. Thus, factor analysis was carried out for six factors with the Principal Component Analysis with varimax rotation and direct oblimin rotation.

On the basis of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test $KMO=0.85$ it was found out that reduction of measurements would bring significant results. Next, Bartlett's test was used. It can be claimed that the result of Bartlett's sphericity test $\chi^2(153)=845.59$; $p<0.001$ demonstrated that there were significant correlations among parameters, so factor analysis had to be performed in order to identify factors. An important suggestion about the number of factors is Cattell's criterion based on scree plot. The component number at which the graph goes down indicates the number of factors which should be distinguished. In the analysed case, it ought to be two factors.

Picture. 2. Scree plot



Source: Compiled by the author on the basis of the pilot study results

The rotated component matrix demonstrates that the first factor comprises the following variables:

Social factor: My colleagues cooperate with each other to achieve the goals set to them, The atmosphere in my team is nice and friendly, My relationships with my superior are very good, In my office there is healthy competition, I have clearly defined goals at work, While taking decisions, my superior makes use of my opinions, advice and ideas, I have sufficient information to do my work well, My superior always gives me support necessary for efficient work, Professional contact with the superior is direct and close, I use my knowledge and skills at work;

Organizational factor: I feel that my career has come to a standstill and I don't have a chance for further development, I'm satisfied with additional benefits offered by the office, I have a chance for career development in my office, Information about the most important changes in the office is communicated to employees very quickly, My remuneration is adequate for the scope of my responsibilities, my contribution and effects of work.

Based on the abovementioned premises, the model would have the form presented in Fig. 3.

Picture. 3. Model of satisfaction and engagement with two factors



Source: Compiled by the author on the basis of the pilot study results

After performing the factor analysis, Cronbach's alpha was used to estimate reliability. Scale reliability is understood as the accuracy of its measurement. Cronbach's alpha determines coherence of values comprised in a given scale, in other words: whether the questions were answered coherently. The higher the Cronbach's alpha, the more coherent the measurements. It is assumed that values above 0.7 indicate satisfactory scale reliability in scientific research. The results are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability analysis for six factors of Human Resources Management

Factor	Cronbach's alpha
Career development	,606
Remuneration	,651
Relationships with superiors	,883
Human relations	,880
Communication	,672
Organization of work	,700

Source: Compiled by the author on the basis of the pilot study results

As shown above, despite the fact that the factor analysis did not demonstrate six factors, reliability analysis for career development, communication and remuneration was below 0.7 and for other factors slightly below. Thus, it can be claimed that Human Resources management factors had high reliability, and the questions included in them were coherent and appropriately chosen. Therefore, the author is left to decide whether to stick to the current model and research tool in further scientific studies or whether to reduce the model to two factors (organizational and social) and thus to modify the research tool used in the pilot study.

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