

Engagement of Employees as Important Motivator in Telecommunication Industry in Latvia

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Abstract. Aim of the paper was to inspect the mutual relations in telecommunication companies personnel motivation tools in relation to job satisfaction, in relation to engagement and in relation to motivated work behaviour in Latvia and to evaluate the possibilities of telecommunication companies to realise the employee engagement and create the tool could be used to measure this aspect. For a more thorough data analysis (used evaluation scale 1-7) statistical indicators measuring of central tendency or location degree means and structural means, as well as dispersion, methods of multivariate analysis for dimension reduction, regression, correlation. Research results reveal on use in more work engagement is one of the most motivating factors in telecommunication industry.

Keywords: Employee motivation, engagement, information technologies and communication, salary, factor analysis.

1. Introduction

Many countries around the globe are looking for innovative tools for keeping employees in information technologies and communication as the technologies has fast development and employees have to be retrained and their skills updated from one side and motivation to stay in the industry from other side and specialists are under big attention of “head – hunters” and involving high level specialists in other branches. Need for specialists in information technologies and communication in Latvia is increasing but in many telecommunication companies employees are loyal to the companies and are ready to go on with their work there. The statistical data of salaries in different branches confirm that information technologies and communications branch are motivating their employees with bigger salaries and developed motivation systems to keep and motivate employees. Motivation of people becomes increasingly important. One of motivation aspects is engagement which has big importance for loyalty of the employees to their company and respective branch.

2. Theoretical Findings

Researchers world – wide are analysing competitive employees aspects in several dimensions and offer findings related to involvement in employment (Raudeliūnienė, et al, 2021, Raudeliūnienė & Szarucki, 2019; Davidaviciene, et al, 2019; Tang, & Cheung, 2010; Tang, et al, 2017), training on required skills as in information Technologies and communication there are big and rapid changes annually.

Employee motivation and related to it factors and various– aspects are investigated by many researchers (Kumar & Pansari, 2014; Xanthopoulou, et al, 2009; Zigarmi, et al, 2009; Cerasoli & Nicklin & Ford, 2014; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Sloka, Kersule& Skruzkalne, 2020). Several changes are taking place in the economic development especially in several industries, like telecommunications where the technology changes very often and it is important to update the requirements for employees to fulfill their duties and devote their creative involvement taking into account psychological requirements in regularly changing work environment leaving back physical requirements. To observe the influence of changes in longer or shorter time period on different levels at the company, human capital and management of the human capital has become one of the recent century as most important aspect in the actively producing companies. For the employee engagement has to be found the ways of reaching higher results and especially for suggesting better possible management decisions.

Telecommunications service branch strategically has shown that human resources are very sensitive in comparison with than other production factors, as it is recognised that human resources is the main factor in getting and keeping skilled personnel in the field – researchers are investigating several other aspects as well

(Rezghdeh & Shokouhyar, 2020; Rana & Chhabra, 2011; Xu, Zhao, Xi & Zhao, 2018; Sloka, Kersule & Skruzkalne, 2020; Kersule, Sloka & Skruzkalne, 2019; Kersule, 2018). In the respective branch companies have created and developed telecommunication products and services as it is recognized also by academic researchers that the engagement of very skilled employees become a very attractive and wanted source regarding demand for highly qualified specialists (Sloka, Kersule & Skruzkalne, 2020).

Employee engagement has been researched by researchers for different research fields (psychology, management, human resources and is recognized as an interdisciplinary issue. Theoretically it was analysed deeply and definitions developed in the field of psychology which is used in practical work of companies especially in the telecommunications industry where the employee engagement is recognized in relation to the development as well as to the improvement of various final performance indicators which are very important for the respective company.

The current research findings indicate that in Latvia documents and research the definitions of employee engagement, employee engaging and employee job involvement are used as synonyms, but by author's thoughts they should be conceptually separated. The authors (Sloka, Kersule & Skruzkalne, 2020) have recommended for use in the research.

Employee engagement is analysed in relation with the expression of their behaviour, integrating together attitudes and behavioural aspects (Rezghdeh & Shokouhyar, 2020; Recalde & Gutiérrez-García, 2017; Vankatesh, Bala & Sykes, 2010; Kersule, Sloka & Skruzkalne, 2019; Kersule, 2018).

In research findings two engagement approaches are suggested that have inspired other researchers by Kahn (Kahn, 1990) and Schaufeli (Schaufeli, 2013; Schaufeli, et al, 2002) as well as in recent research results presentations (Sloka, Kersule & Skruzkalne, 2020; Kersule, Sloka & Skruzkalne, 2019; Kersule, 2018).

In scientific findings there are different ways to measure employee engagement with the most often used scale (UWES or Utrecht scale) which is used in 85% of researches (Bailey, et al, 2017, p.43), different scales are suggested as well (Buligina & Sloka, 2013).

The engagement scale should reflect the main aspects covered by the founder of the engagement theory Kahn in 1990 (Kahn, 1990) and often are used in other author's scientific publications (Foster, 2010; Katou & Budhwar, 2015; Kersule, Sloka & Skruzkalne, 2019; Kersule, 2018) integrating in the concept of engagement very important aspects: behaviour, emotional and cognitive dimensions.

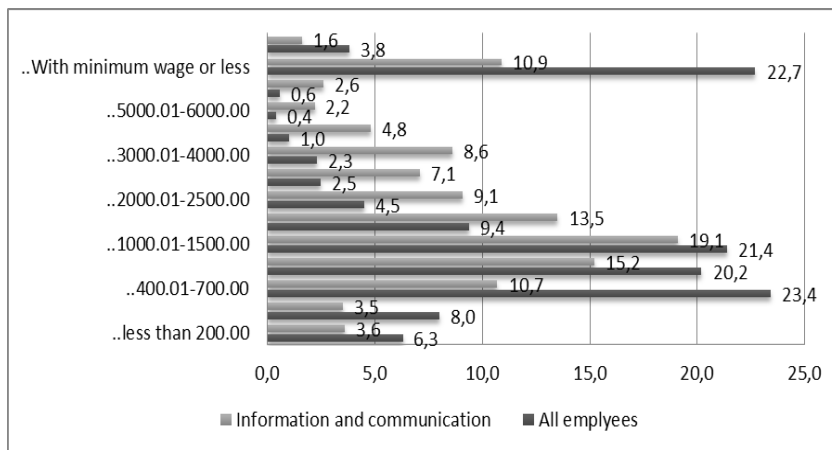
3. Empirical Research Results

Information and communication technologies employees are among the best paid employees in Latvia where there are distribution of salaries total in Latvia and employees in information and communication technologies in 2021 February is

reflected in Fig. 1.

The evaluations of different employee engagement aspects are evaluated by respondents and results are can be seen in Table 1.

The highest average evaluations given by the respondents (with the biggest arithmetic mean of the evaluations, with most often given evaluation by respondents – highest possible value from the applied evaluation scale and 50% of respondents included in the sample evaluated by 7 or less and 50% of respondents evaluated with 7) which were for the statement in the survey “I understand how my team/department facilitates the common success of the company”, distribution of responses (with one of the smallest differences in evaluations characterised by indicators of dispersion) is reflected in Fig. 2.



Source: Authors’ construction based on CSB data

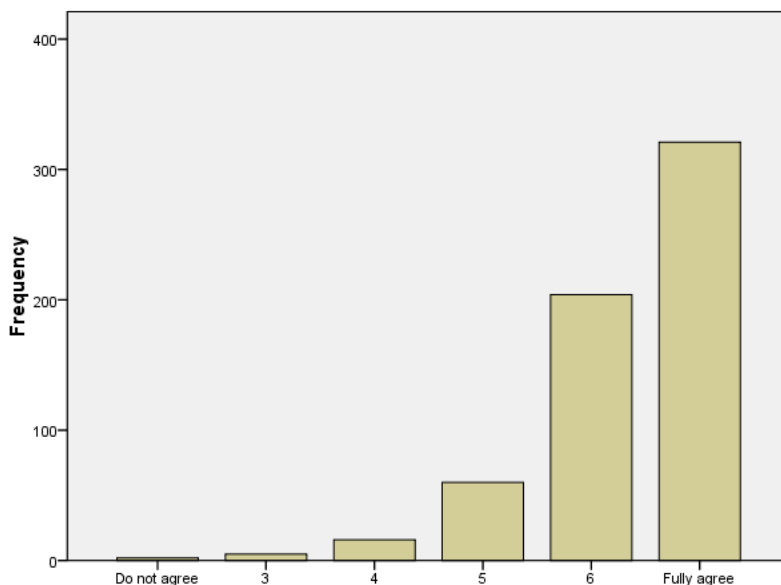
Fig. 1: Distribution of share of employees by salaries all employees and information and communication technologies employees (in percent) in February 2021

Table 1: Main statistical characteristics reflecting engagement

Statistical indicators	N		Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Range	Mini	Max
	Valid	Missing								
I am doing a significant and meaningful job	608	0	6.03	0.039	6	6	0.968	6	1	7
I feel that my job gives me professional satisfaction	608	0	5.41	0.046	6	6	1.139	6	1	7
I am proud that I work in this company	608	0	6.33	0.035	7	7	0.875	4	3	7

I understand how my team/department facilitates the common success of the company	608	0	6.34	0.036	7	7	0.881	6	1	7
I am personally motivated to make this company better	608	0	6.16	0.037	6	7	0.92	5	2	7
I care on results of our company and I am ready to devote additional efforts for that	608	0	6.19	0.036	6	7	0.895	6	1	7
I support my company in my social activities	608	0	5.65	0.057	6	7	1.416	6	1	7
In this work I try to do the best even if it make me difficulties	608	0	5.88	0.035	6	6	0.873	4	3	7
I this work I do not feel how time is running	608	0	5.83	0.045	6	7	1.121	6	1	7
I like to meet my colleagues as it is among the most important aspects in my work	608	0	4.95	0.056	5	5	1.378	6	1	7
I know clearly what is expected from me in my job	608	0	6.02	0.039	6	6	0.951	6	1	7
My opinions and ideas are important to the company	608	0	5.07	0.053	5	5; 6	1.305	6	1	7

Source: Authors calculations based on survey results with evaluation scale 1–7, sample size 608



Source: Authors construction based on survey results with evaluation scale 1–7, sample size 608.

Fig. 2: I understand how my team/department facilities the common success of the company

Table 2: Testing hypothesis with t – test on evaluations by gender on statement “I understand how my team/department facilitates the common success of the company”

Group Statistics				
Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean
Female	289	6.29	0.892	0.052
Male	319	6.38	0.871	0.049

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	0.086	0.770	-1.288	606	0.198	-0.092	0.072
Equal variances not assumed			-1.286	596.961	0.199	-0.092	0.072

Source: Authors calculations based on survey results with evaluation scale 1–7, sample size 608.

Table 3. Testing statistical hypothesis with analysis of variance - ANOVA on evaluations by years worked in the company on the statement “I understand how my team/department facilitates the common success of the company”

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	812476.560	5	162495.312	2.319	.042
Within Groups	4.219E7	602	70086.254		
Total	4.300E7	607			

Source: Authors calculations based on survey results with evaluation scale 1–7, sample size 608.

The study confirms that employee engagement can be influenced, and most likely it is the personnel management practice in organisations that will have the crucial significance in encouraging employee engagement. Both the conclusions of other researchers and this study point to the significant role of work resources, nature of the work and the organisation's support in creating and maintaining employee engagement. Consequently, personnel management practice has an essential role in motivating employees by strategically planning and offering work resources, e.g. autonomies and flexible work systems, increasing employee authorities, providing them with relevant information, knowledge and feedback, which directly and to a great extent influence employee engagement in work roles and tasks.

The main outcomes of factor analysis of the author's calculations are included in

Table 3, where from the initial variables (statements rated by respondents), as a result of the dimension reduction by most often used method of multivariate analysis - factor analysis, two complex factors were separated in 3 iterations. As a result of dimensions reduction by factor analysis it is concluded that two complex factors could be determined as:

- Employee personal attitude factor;
- Company managerial factor.

Table 4. Reduction of dimensions by factor analysis reflecting engagement engagement

	Component	
	1	2
I am doing a significant and meaningful job	.746	.230
I feel that my job gives me professional satisfaction	.747	.287
I am proud that I work in this company	.366	.662
I understand how my team/department facilitates the common success of the company	.423	.607
I am personally motivated to make this company better	.441	.681
I care on results of our company and I am ready to devote additional efforts for that	.419	.741
I support my company in my social activities	-.024	.755
In this work I try to do the best even if it make me difficulties	.297	.685
I this work I do not feel how time is running	.504	.346
I like to meet my colleagues as it is among the most important aspects in my work	.500	.152
I know clearly what is expected from me in my job	.633	.136
My opinions and ideas are important to the company	.696	.278

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Source: Authors calculations based on survey results with evaluation scale 1–7, sample size 608

During the research the author, in analysing engagement's close concepts, asked the question of whether engagement is a precondition for commitment to the organisation, or whether it is the opposite — commitment to an organisation as an emotional aspect (that creates security), causes employee engagement and activity. In his scientific publication of 1974 that is widely used in the world, Porter, in defining engagement and commitment to an organisation, pointed out that an employee committed to the organisation accepts its aims and values, shows readiness to put additional effort in for the good of the organisation and demonstrates the wish to continue to commit to the organisation. Theoretically,

engagement is defined as an attitude factor (connecting one's future with the organisation); in the author's model it partially overlaps the supportive organisation's behaviour, OCB — organisational citizenship behaviour), which, theoretically, is a concept of both attitude and behaviour.

The outcomes of this study are more in favour of the assumption that employee engagement influences commitment to an organisation. However, this statement needs further research focused on the analysis of these links: engagement and commitment to an organisation. In this case, one of the forms of commitment, emotional, is fulfilled. Both others – relation-connected commitment formed an individual factor — intention to stay with the organisation, which did not yield powerful statistical outcomes. The engagement model offered by the author includes such variables that correspond to the principles of the engagement conceptualisation published by William A. Kahn (Kahn, 1990) which is respected and applied by other researchers which states that engagement is determined by three psychological conditions: job meaningfulness, psychological safety, and the presence (experienced availability) of the employee. The author's model and the outcomes of the analysis also confirm conclusions by other researchers that they significantly affect employee engagement. There are several variables that form the factor 'satisfaction with work' in the author's model, and they can be related to the psychological conditions 'job meaningfulness', which unites intrinsic motivators connected with job autonomy, responsibility, development etc., and 'psychological safety', which unites other intrinsic motivators such as harmony of values, significance of employee opinion, identification with an organisation.

4. Conclusions

Engagement as motivation toll is on great importance in many fields and with special importance for telecommunications. Employee engagement influences commitment to an organisation. Engagement is defined as an attitude factor (connecting one's future with the organisation. Intrinsic motivators, or those directly related to work have a larger impact on engagement as a dependent or outcome variable — an increase of one's perceptions on the autonomy and growth rating by one unit would change the engagement assessment.

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