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Employee Experience Models – a Comparative Analysis. Notes on the Methodology of Global Research on Employees' Experiences and Their Perceptions of the Meaning of Work*

Abstract:

Purpose: The article constitutes a conceptual paper. It aims to identify areas of inconsistency between the content of Employee Experience (EX) models and the Customer Experience (CX) approach. For this purpose, the content of EX models is confronted with the results of the global research defining the values of the Employee Experience Index worldwide, and on this basis, the directions for improving the methodology used in the above-mentioned research are specified.

Approach: Based on the content analysis, 78 sub-determinants of experiences and sensations found in the five models of EX described in the literature were assigned to one of the five modules distinguished in the CX framework, and then the equivalence of treatment of all modules was addressed. Furthermore, the presence of the five axial dimensions of work according to the job characteristics model was identified in the five EX models, and the results were compared with those of the global study.

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Results: Underrepresentation in all five EX models of the sensory module was shown, as was the absence of axial dimensions of work such as skill variety, task identity or task significance.

Implications: The conducted comparative analysis includes practical implications, as enriching EX models and the relevant research with sensory sub-determinants and all axial dimensions of work will not only give a more reliable picture of positive employee experience than before but will also indicate the opportunities to influence them.

Value/Originality: EX models have not yet been compared from the perspective of the modular approach used in CX or from the perspective of the job characteristic model. The combination of the above-mentioned study type of qualitative and quantitative analysis is original. Their application helped to identify the existing gap in the form of sub-determinants not included in EX models.

Keywords: Employee Experience models, experience modules, Employee Experience Index

JEL: M12

1. Introduction

The source literature presents interpretations of the term ‘employee experiences’ that harmonise with a new approach in HRM, namely – EX. On the basis of a study of the literature, which also refers to the idea of EX, it is possible to gather (as is done below) arguments in favour of the sustainability of this approach.

To date, only a few works have been published on the conceptualisation and dimensions of EX. The core subject of the following discussion consists in the content of the five EX models, **i.e. all models whose descriptions are available** and presented in the source literature (Katzmayr, 2000), namely models:

- 1) of IBM and Globforce (2016),
- 2) according to Bersin, Flynn, Mazor, Melian (2017),
- 3) published by Maylett and Wride (2017),
- 4) prepared by Morgan (2017),
- 5) developed by Yidiz, Temur, Beskese, Bozbura (2020).

So far, these have been compared from a perspective of (Katzmayr, 2020: 28):

- 1) determinants and sub-determinants – their chronology and their superior/subordinate relationship,
- 2) approach to leadership (from the position of the output or outcome variable in EX),

3) the most common sub-determinants (namely: trust, purpose, leadership, empowerment, coaching, learning/training, flexibility, recognition, fairness, and transparency), but not from the perspective of EX and CX coherence, which constitutes the content of the conducted study (according to the methodology proposed below) due to the perceived cognitive and practical implications of a possible inconsistency between the two, as mentioned above.

EX models find applications for practical and cognitive purposes. An example of these consists in the global EX findings presented in the source literature. They are based on one model (the IBM and Globforce model), which does not meet the condition of multilateralism. More precisely, this concerns sub-determinants 4–7 used in this model (see Table 1). It constituted a base for a 2016 study that surveyed 22,292 employees in various countries around the world and found that (The Employee Experience Index around the globe):

- 1) the average value of the Employee Experience Index worldwide is 69%; the highest for India (84%) and the lowest for Hungary (49%);
- 2) the average value of the EX index for European countries is 65%; Norway and Portugal account for the highest in Europe (74% each), while Poland as well as the UK and Italy account for 64%;
- 3) the most important HRM practice creating positive feelings and experiences is meaningful work (globally – for an average of 27% of respondents; in Poland – for 28%); empowerment and voice of employees is of lesser importance (17%), followed by feedback, recognition, and growth (16%); co-worker relationship (16%); and organisational trust (15%); the last place goes to – apparently overestimated – work life-balance practice (9%).

The above-presented results prompt a closer analysis of the ‘meaningful work’ construct. It is related to the job characteristic model developed by Hackman and Oldham, which has been confirmed by psychological research. According to these authors (Hackman, Oldham 1976: 162): ‘[t]he degree to which the employee experiences the job as one which is generally meaningful, valuable, and worthwhile.’ This popular (Miner, 2015) model highlights – as in the case of EX – the meaning of experience. Namely, according to it, experiencing a sense of meaningful work, feeling responsible for the results, and having knowledge in this regard all contribute to job satisfaction. Similarly, Tummers and Knies (2013) use the concept of employee perception to define ‘work meaningfulness.’ According to Martela and Steger (2016: 536), meaningful work constitutes a specific type of evaluation. Meaningfulness of work according to Hackman and Oldham (1976) is defined similarly (Martela, Pessi, 2018) by other authors (Renn, Vandenberg, 1995: 282; Chalofsky, 2003: 69–83; Bunderson, Thompson, 2009: 40; Rosso, Dekas, Wrzesniewski, 2010: 95; Berg, Dutton, Wrzesniewski, 2013; Raub, Blunschi, 2014: 11). Furthermore, in diagnosing the work design geared towards positive employee

experiences, it is important to note the ones striving (Kamdron, 2005; Steger, Dik, Duffy, 2005; Humphrey, Nahrgang, Morgeson, 2007; Lips-Wiersma, Wright, 2012; Rub, Blun-schi, 2014) to integrate different elements of the work environment, which corresponds with the idea of EX.

The idea of EX – based on the source literature – as well as arguments for the need to implement it in organisations, especially under the conditions of the so-called new (i.e., post-pandemic) normalcy, have been presented at the beginning of the article. The relationship of EX with other concepts has also been shown. Then, the methodology of own research has been presented, followed by the obtained results and a discussion concerning them in the context of conclusions for improving the methodology/indicator of global research.

2. Literature review: the idea of employee experience

The idea of experience in the framework of EX refers to the sum of employees' experiences in interacting with a variety of (sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and relational) stimuli while performing work at a company (Gentile, Spiller, Noci, 2007; Verkoef et al., 2009; Maylett, Wride, 2017), as well as reflections on these experiences (Fischer, 2007). They can – despite their ephemerality – have a significant impact on employee decisions (including those concerning staying with or changing companies), constituting the so-called critical/most disruptive moments, or – pain points, moments that matter. Thus (Maylett, Wride, 2017: 13):

$$\text{EX} = \text{Experiences} + \text{Expectations} + \text{Perceptions.}$$

Therefore, EX as a modern manner of management implies both corrective redesign of the work environment as quick feedback on the experiences of employees reported 'live' and as – anticipating the needs and expectations – prospective design of experiences (although the source literature (Lammer, 2023: 104) includes also warnings against reducing EX to a project). Therefore, it can be implemented at both operational and strategic levels.

The EX concept can be considered – in analogy to CX – as a strategy (Grewal, Levy, Kumar, 2009), a process (Schmitt, 2003), a new approach, or even a paradigm (Schmitt, 1999b: 3) of thinking about HRM (Lipka, 2022). It constitutes a transfer of the CX concept to the field of people management, and therefore an expression of seeing the connection between customer and employee experience. In fact, it is not the only example of this type of transfer – others include personnel marketing or the concept of Employee

Relationship Management. **It is also important to recognise both the similarities and the differences between EX and Employee engagement, which are sufficiently detailed in the source literature** (Smit, 2021: 38–39).

It is necessary to pay attention to matching the EX concept not only to the stage of market development (market of experiences) (Kostera, 2008; Lipka, Król, 2021) and to the generational requirements of the Millennial generation (the need to obtain benefits from experiences in order to achieve status and completeness of life) (Smit, 2021: 145–169) but also to the post-covid and crisis reality (geopolitical crisis, climate crisis), changing organisations (e.g., to remote or hybrid) and the expectations of employees in the form of their striving to experience something positive – despite the mentioned conditions (in particular, building a sense of security, coherence, and strengthening affiliation ties). For introverts, this can be remote work (Morgan, 2021). The impossibility of performing it from home, so experiencing, for example, silence and greater autonomy, may contribute to employees leaving the company, which may stimulate interest in EX in remote or hybrid working. That is because changes in workspaces (Molek-Winiarska, 2022) imply the transformation of workplaces and intensifying dialogue with workers, **using a new, relevant language**, which is the essence of EX. **This language combines the communication of emotion with the use of logical argumentation and does not shy away from story-telling.** As T. Maylett and M. Wridge (2017: 19) rightly point out, we are living in the age of the employee where there are many options to choose from, which has more impact on the present than it ever had. Therefore, it is possible to choose from a variety of sensation options and experiences also within online EX. Similarly, as in CX (Schneider, Bowen, 1999; Rust, Oliver, 2000; Berman, 2005; Finn, 2005), this can even concern exceeding employees' expectations and seeking delight on their part (Gouthier, Giese, Bartl, 2012: 78).

Thus, despite the outlay to prepare for implementing the EX concept (including the outlay to acquire the above-mentioned knowledge and skills), investing in its implementation can be worthwhile due to its financial effects, as well as better adaptation to change, more effective innovation, higher employee satisfaction, and a greater chance of attracting and retaining Most Value Employees/talents, their commitment, and a positive image of the organisation (Josh Bersin, n.d.).

According to a study of 250 global organisations, in companies investing in EX, employee turnover is 40% lower and profits 25% higher (*Building Business Value...*, 2017) than in companies not making such investments. It is even said that knowledge concerning specific experiences (e.g., relational) can be a source of competitive advantage for organisations. This is related to the fact that: experience is a carrier of intangible value (Halbrook, 1999: 5), and the basis of economic exchange (Vargo, Lusch, 2004). The impact of the experiences of stakeholders (and not, as before, of cost-effectiveness in acquiring goods and providing services) on the competitive position of organisations has

already been pointed out by the pioneers of research concerning the experience economy – B.J. Pine II, J. Pine, and J.H. Gilmore (1998; 1999), and the priority role of experiences in the conditions of globalisation was addressed by sociologists (Bauman, 1998), who actually write about a society of experiences (Schulze, 1992). However, some authors (McGrath, 2013) point out that managing experiences is inherently not about sustainable but temporary competitive advantage.

According to the author of this discussion, the EX concept, which considers the internal perspective of employees (intersubjective reality) as its basis, has points of convergence with the concept of sustainable HRM. In addition, the source literature (Katzmayr, 2020; Smit, 2021) points to such EX-related concepts as: Employee Journey, Employer Life Cycle, Employer Value Proposition, Employee-Centric Management, Employer of Choice, Employer Branding, or High Performance. Management focused on situations critical for employees, the balanced scorecard and human-centred design, or value-centred design should also be added to this list. The aforementioned concepts are not in competition with each other but constitute a complementary puzzle. The above-presented convergences strengthen the argument in favour of the sustainability of the EX paradigm.

3. Methodology

The formulated research question is: whether and to what extent are the experience and experiential modules (**determinants**), i.e., sensory, emotional, intellectual, behavioural and relational modules, comparably addressed in EX models? **Finding an answer to the above-presented problem is important as it has to do with employees' job satisfaction, their well-being, and their work outcomes. These depend on the implications of the impact of differentiated modules of experiences according to the de facto individual differences that exist between employees** (Strelau, 2015). Determining the extent to which the modular approach used in CX (Schmitt 1999a; Schmitt, Mangold, 2004; Brakus, Schmitt, Zarantonello, 2009) is considered in individual EX models requires therefore determining which modules in these models dominate vs. which are considered to a small extent. That is because there is no reason why cognitive knowledge of memory modularity could not also be used in EX.

This is based, firstly, on the assumption that an employee is an internal customer of the company, who is affected by the same modules as the customer within CX (Kirchgeorg, Ermer, 2012: 254). There are no doubts as to this assumption when faced with signalling the congruence of experiences and notation: EX = CX (Maylett, Wride, 2017: 10). That is because an employee is otherwise a 'consumer of the workplace.'

The second assumption consists in the unambiguousness of assigning EX sub-determinants to only one module except when specific sub-determinants cover more than (signalled by conjunction) one aspect. Therefore, the analysis concerns the level of the sub-determinants, not the EX determinants, i.e., their grouping into sets.

The third assumption concerns assigning sub-determinants (**i.e. the components of the determinants/modules of experiences**) with the same, though sometimes dictionary-different, content to the same types of modules.

In terms of the types of modules, and drawing on the source literature concerning CX and the method of analogy, it was assumed that:

- 1) the sensory module – involves an impact on one or more of the employees' senses (Halbrook, Hirschman, 1982; Kilian, 2019; Schmitt, Simonson, 2019) with the latter involving a combination of stimulation and multisensoriality (Childers et al., 2001: 511–535; Schubert, Hehn, 2004: 1248; Regenbogen, Meyer, 2005: 607; Balderjahn, Scholderer, 2007: 28; Gerrig, Zimbardo, 2008: 108; Steiner, 2011: 12; Cachero-Martinez, Vazquez-Casielles, 2017: 473–486);
- 2) the emotional module – includes an entire range of differently classified (Richnis, 1997; Schmitt, 1999a: 66) emotions, such as satisfaction or excitement;
- 3) the intellectual module – stimulates the creative imagination, forces divergent (characteristic of creativity) thinking (Tinsley, Eldredge, 1995: 128; Schmitt, 1999a: 67);
- 4) the behavioural module – encompasses conative factors, including those relating to job crafting behaviours (Wrzesniewski, Dutton, 2001: 179);
- 5) the relational module – concerns creating bonds, attachment to other employees, and jointly created work outputs, including in online collaborative settings (Schmitt, 1999a: 171; Bell, McAlpine, Hill, 2019).

The research procedure **will be as follows: the author of the paper in her considerations will assign** each of the sub-determinants of each of the five models to one of the five modules (or determine their membership in more than one module) based on the content analysis method described in the source literature (Krippendorff, 2004; Fereday, Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Then, the presented results of a frequency analysis will be used to determine the diversity index, which is the number of modules present in the individual EX models, and the index of deviation from an equal distribution, which indicates the percentage by which fewer/more modules are present in a given model than would result from an equal distribution of the individual modules. The findings will be contrasted with the results of the Global EX study (IBM and Globforce, 2016). The occurrence of variables describing the axial dimensions of work (according to the job characteristic model) in EX models will also be contrasted with these results.

4. Findings

The results presented include:

- 1) **the results of the analyses of the affiliation of the sub-determinants and the experiences of employees to the individual modules, according to B.H. Schmitt's approach;**
- 2) **the results of the frequency analysis and the analysis of the development of the index of deviation from equal distribution, as well as the coherent results of the global study presented in the introduction: the results of consideration of the models in terms of the so-called axial dimensions of work, the development of which is, according to the study (see the Introduction), the most important HRM practice for creating positive experiences for employees, i.e. meaningful work.**

In the first analysed EX model, the IBM and Globforce model (Table 1), there are 15 sub-determinants grouped into four sets of determinants. The first set, defined as leadership and management, is single-element (sub-determinant 1 (**Behaviours and actions**) in Table 1). The second, a six-element set, includes positive practices towards people in the work environment (sub-determinants 2–7 in Table 1). The five following sub-determinants defined simply as sensations and experiences (sub-determinants 8–12) relate to employees, forming the third set, while the fourth set consists of three sub-determinants concerning EX effects for the organisation (sub-determinants 13, 14 and 15). In the case of sub-determinant 5 (**Recognition, feedback, and growth**), a double classification was made due to its content.

The effects of EX for the organisation are behavioural: sub-determinant 14 (**Discretionary effort**) expresses activities directly, sub-determinant 13 (**Work performance**) is defined by activities, and sub-determinant 15 (**Retention**) also expresses behaviour, specifically constructiveness and passivity. The behavioural nature of sub-determinant 13 is similar to that of sub-determinant 10 (**Achievement**). Sub-determinant 7 (**Work-life balance**) expresses activities/behaviours oriented towards achieving an optimum use of working time that is self-appropriate. They take place in different working spaces, and therefore constitute a factor related to the physical environment/sensory module. Sub-determinant 1 includes behaviourism in its name, so there is no doubt as to its belonging to a module including this term in its name.

Assigning sub-determinants 2 (**Organisational trust**), 6 (**Empowerment and Voice**), and 8 (**Belonging**) to the relational module follows from the definition of these criteria, in which relationality is the key word. 'Relationships' is a word occurring in the case of sub-determinant 3, which precludes any other assignment.

Sub-determinant 4 (**Meaningful work**), defined, among others, in Hackman and Oldham's (1976) model, is associated with emotions, but also with intellectual and relational elements, and that part of sub-determinant 5 which concerns recognition with the emotional module. Its remaining part (feedback and development), as well as sub-determinant 9 (**Purpose**), including conceptualisation, and therefore cognitive content, belong to the intellectual module.

Table 1. Assigning the sub-determinants of the IBM and Globforce Framework model to modules of experiences according to B.H. Schmitt

EX sub-determinants		Sensory module	Emotional module	Intellectual module	Behavioural module	Relational module
1	Behaviours and actions				+	
2	Organisational trust					+
3	Co-worker relationships					+
4	Meaningful work		+	+		+
5	Recognition, feedback, and growth		+	+		
6	Empowerment and voice					+
7	Work-life balance	+				
8	Belonging					+
9	Purpose			+		
10	Achievement				+	
11	Happiness		+			
12	Vigour				+	
13	Work performance				+	
14	Discretionary effort				+	
15	Retention				+	

Source: own elaboration based on: IBM and Globforce (2016: 4), Katzmayer (2020: 27) and Schmitt (1999a)

The model of Bersin et al. (Table 2) contains five subsets **of determinants**: 'Varied work,' 'Supportive management,' 'Positive work environment,' and 'Development opportunities,' but a stereotypical approach to all the sub-determinants of a given subset, i.e., classifying them into the same module, would be incorrect, as shown in the following analysis.

Thus, the argument for assigning sub-determinants 1 (**Autonomy**) and 2 (**Select to fit**) to the behavioural module is analogous to that for sub-determinant 1 in the IBM and Globforce model, and for sub-determinants 4 (**Time for slack**) and 9 (**Flexible work environment**) to that for sub-determinant 7. Sub-determinant 14 (**Facilitated talent mobility**) relates directly to the type of behaviours and sub-determinant 13 (**Training and support on the job**) relates to them, but also to the relational (support) component, which determines its ‘double’ classification. Sub-determinant 19 (**Transparency and honesty**) contains the word ‘honesty,’ in turn contained in the definition of trust, and therefore, its assignment must be that of sub-determinant 2 in the IBM and Globforce model.

All three components of sub-determinant 12 (**Fair inclusive, diverse work environment**), as well as sub-determinants 6 (**Coaching**) and 11 (**Culture of recognition**), concern relationality, and sub-determinant 10 (**Humanistic workplace**) concerns sensoriality. Investment and management – sub-determinants 7 (**Investment in development of managers**) and 8 (**Agile performance management**) – contain primarily a cognitive element, while sub-determinants 5 (**Clear and transparent goals**) and 17 (**Mission and purpose**) are concerned with objectives, hence – as in the previous model – there are no doubts as to their assignment to the intellectual module. The same can be said about learning, which is the content of sub-determinants 15 (**Self-directed and dynamic learning**) and 16 (**High-impact learning culture**).

Inspiration (sub-determinant 20) also requires an intellectual background. The final classification refers to sub-determinant 3 (**Small, empowered teams**), which includes engagement as its content, corresponding to the motivational-emotional component (one even speaks of emotion because of the play on words: emotion – ‘emotion,’ ‘motion’ – movement (Lowen, 2021: 73).

Table 2. Assigning the sub-determinants of the Bersin et al. model to modules of experience according to B.H. Schmitt

	EX sub-determinants	Sensory module	Emotional module	Intellectual module	Behavioural module	Relational module
1	Autonomy				+	
2	Select to fit				+	
3	Small, empowered teams		+			
4	Time for slack	+				
5	Clear and transparent goals			+		
6	Coaching					+

	EX sub-determinants	Sensory module	Emotional module	Intellectual module	Behavioural module	Relational module
7	Investment in development of managers			+		
8	Agile performance management			+		
9	Flexible work environment	+				
10	Humanistic workplace	+				
11	Culture of recognition					+
12	Fair inclusive, diverse work environment					+
13	Training and support on the job				+	+
14	Facilitated talent mobility				+	
15	Self-directed dynamic learning			+		
16	High-impact learning culture			+		
17	Mission and purpose			+		
18	Continuous investment in people			+		
19	Transparency and honesty					+
20	Inspiration			+		

Source: own elaboration based on: Bersin et al. (2017: 55), Katzmayr (2020: 26) and Schmitt (1999a)

The following model of T. Maylett and M. Wride differs from that of Bersin et. el. in that it does not indicate the direction of influences but the assignment of variables (determinants and sub-determinants), and resembles that of IBM and Globforce, according to which specific practices in the work environment result from specific leadership and management, and these result in the sensations and experiences of employees as well as the company's performance.

In the case of the Maylett and Wride model, the logistic order is formed by (Table 3): matching expectations (sub-determinants 1–6 in Table 3), three contracts (sub-determinants: 7, 8 and 9), and testing confidence in contracts. The latter includes the testing process, and therefore activity/behaviour (see Table 3). The Psychological Contract and Brand Contract are emotionally dominant, while the Transactional Contract indicates

the nature of interpersonal relationships within the organisation. Relationality also constitutes the heart of sub-determinants 1 (**Fairness**), 5 (**Transparency**), and 6 (**Accountability**), while emotionality is at the heart of sub-determinant 3 (Empathy). Clarity (sub-determinant 2) is primarily associated with the intellectual module. On the other hand, sub-determinant 4 (**Predictability**) concerns primarily behavioural predictions related to trust and therefore – relationality (Table 3). It is important to add that Maylett and Wride also identified the keys to unlocking employee engagement defined by the acronym MAGIC – meaning, autonomy, growth, impact, and connection (Maylett, Wride, 2017).

Table 3. Assigning the sub-determinants of Maylett and Wride’s model to modules of experiences according to B.H. Schmitt

EX sub-determinants		Sensory module	Emotional module	Intellectual module	Behavioural module	Relational module
1	Fairness					+
2	Clarity			+		
3	Empathy		+			
4	Predictability					+
5	Transparency					+
6	Accountability					+
7	Brand contract		+			
8	Transactional contract					+
9	Psychological contact		+			
10	Moments of truth (contracts put to test)				+	

Source: own elaboration based on: Maylett, Wride (2017: 168), Katzmayr (2020: 25) and Schmitt (1999a)

In the following EX model, Morgan’s model (Table 4), there is a division into sub-determinants referred to as the physical work environment (sub-determinants: 1–7) and the cultural environment (sub-determinants: 8–17). However, only sub-determinants 2 (**Offers flexibility**), 4 (**Leverages multiple workplace options**), and 6 (**Consumer grade technology**) of the first set can be considered to belong to the sensory module (visual or tactile experience of the technologies used). Others, such as accessibility, providing recommendations, or operating in a world of specific values, harmonise with the relational module. Meeting specific cultural requirements is also linked to this module.

Sub-determinant 14 (**Ability to learn new things and given resources**) is clearly associated with the intellectual module, which is consistent with such a classification of a similar sub-determinant in the model of Bersin et. al. In this model, sub-determinant 10 (**Legitimate sense of purpose**) also requires identical assignment as sub-determinant 17. Whereas sub-determinants 11 (**Employees feel like they are part of team**) and 13 (**Referrals come from employees**), as well as sub-determinants 15 (**Treats employees fairly**), 16 (**Executives and managers are coaches and mentors**), and 17 (**Dedicates to employee health and wellness**) relate to interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, feelings and emotions are affected by the content of sub-determinants 8 (**Company is viewed positively**) and 9 (**Everyone feels valued**). Sub-determinant 12 (**Believes in Diversity and Inclusion**) is all about beliefs, and therefore views, which is related to the intellectual module, because relational connotations as the content of these beliefs are only in the background (Table 4).

Table 4. Assigning the sub-determinants of Morgan's model to modules of experience according to B.H. Schmitt

EX sub-determinants		Sensory module	Emotional module	Intellectual module	Behavioural module	Relational module
1	Chooses to bring in friends and visitors					+
2	Offers flexibility	+				
3	Organisation's values are reflected					+
4	Leverages multiple workplace options	+				
5	Availability to everyone					+
6	Consumer grade technology	+				
7	Employee needs versus business requirements celebrated culture					+
8	Company is viewed positively		+			
9	Everyone feels valued		+			
10	Legitimate sense of purpose			+		
11	Employees feel like they are part of a team					+

EX sub-determinants		Sensory module	Emotional module	Intellectual module	Behavioural module	Relational module
12	Believes in Diversity and Inclusion			+		
13	Referrals come from employees					+
14	Ability to learn new things and given resources to do so and advance			+		
15	Treats employees fairly					+
16	Executives and Managers are coaches and mentors					+
17	Dedicates to employee health and wellness					+

Source: own work based on: Morgan (2017: 61, 79, 91), Katzmayr (2020: 22) and Schmitt (1999a)

The last of the analysed models, the model of Yidiz et al., includes four sets of sub-determinants (Table 5):

- 1) communication (sub-determinants 1–4);
- 2) leadership (sub-determinants 5–8);
- 3) positive organisational culture (sub-determinants: 9–12);
- 4) possibility for developing human capital (sub-determinants: 13–16).

The seven initial sub-determinants belong to the relational module, and sub-determinant 8 – ‘being inspired,’ which also occurred in the model of Bersin et al., belongs to the intellectual module. Sub-determinant 9 (**Common Vision and commitment**) is complex in nature, encompassing both cognitive and motivational elements, and thus belonging to the emotional module. Sub-determinant 10 (**Fairness and Trust**) also consists of two elements, but each is relational.

Similar contents as in the case of sub-determinants 11 (**Flexibility and Trust**), 12 (**Recognition and reward-based culture**), 13 (**Training opportunities**), and 15 (**Empowerment**) were already present in other EX models, which determines the manner of their classification. The openness to experimentation belongs to the intellectual module. The last sub-determinant is complex, dealing with goals (intellectual module) as well as expectations (emotional module).

Table 5. Assigning the sub-determinants of the Yidiz et al. model to modules of experience according to B.H. Schmitt

EX sub-determinants		Sensory module	Emotional module	Intellectual module	Behavioural module	Relational module
1	Transparent and open communication					+
2	Collaborative work environment					+
3	Knowledge sharing					+
4	Continuous and constructive feedback					+
5	Transformational Leadership					+
6	Participative management					+
7	Coaching					+
8	Inspiration			+		
9	Common vision and commitment		+	+		
10	Fairness and trust					+
11	Flexibility and work-life balance	+				
12	Recognition and reward-based culture		+			
13	Training opportunities			+		
14	Open to experimentation			+		
15	Empowerment		+			
16	Clear goals and expectations		+	+		

Source: own elaboration based on: Yidiz et al. (2020: 1046), Katzmayr (2020: 28) and Schmitt (1999a)

Table 6 presents a synthesis approach to the obtained partial results (attendance analysis), Table 7 presents the results concerning the value of the deviation index from the equal distribution based on that approach, and Table 8 shows the occurrence of variables describing the axial dimensions of work in the different EX models.

Table 6. Synthesis of the results of the attendance analysis (quantification of assigning into modules of experiences)

Module	IBM and Glob-force model	Bersin et al. model	Maylett and Wride's model	Morgan's model	Yidiz et al. model
Sensorial	1	3	0	3	1
Emotional	3	1	3	2	4
Intellectual	3	8	1	3	5
Behavioural	6	4	1	0	0
Relational	3	5	5	9	8

Note: Due to the multi-component nature of some sub-determinants, their number does not add up to the number of variables in the models in every case.

Source: own elaboration

Table 7. Value of the index of deviation from an equal distribution of assignments to the experience modules (in plus or in minus in percentage points rounded to hundredths)

Module	IBM and Glob-force model	Bersin et al. model	Maylett and Wride's model	Morgan's model	Yidiz et al. model
Sensory	- 2.20	- 1.20	- 2.00	- 0.40	- 2.60
Emotional	- 0.20	- 3.20	+1.00	- 1.40	+0.40
Intellectual	- 0.20	+3.80	- 1.00	- 0.40	+1.40
Behavioural	+2.80	- 0.20	- 1.00	- 3.40	- 3.60
Relational	- 0.20	+0.80	+3.00	+5.60	+4.40

Source: own elaboration.

Table 8. The occurrence of variables describing the axial dimensions of work in EX models

Axial work dimensions	IBM and Glob-force model	Bersin et al. model	Maylett and Wride's model	Morgan's model	Yidiz et al. model
Skill variety					
Task identity					

Axial work dimensions	IBM and Globforce model	Bersin et al. model	Maylett and Wride's model	Morgan's model	Yidiz et al. model
Task significance					
Autonomy		+ (sub-determinants: 1 and 2)		+ (sub-determinant 2)	
Feedback	+ (sub-determinant 5)				+ (sub-determinant 4)

Source: own elaboration

A content analysis of the detailed descriptions of the five EX models reveals the presence of sub-determinants ranging from 10 to 20 (see Table 6).

Table 6 shows that the representation of various modules of employee experiences in the different EX models is uneven. The diversity index for the IBM and Globforce model and the Bersin et. al model is 100% (they include all modules). However, for the remaining models, it is 80%.

In terms of the deviation indexes (Table 7), the value for the EX – IBM and Globforce model is equal to 3.2 (16 : 5), indicating an underestimation (a lower share than would result from an equal proportion) of the sensory, emotional, intellectual, and relational modules. In the case of the Bersin et. al. model (index value of 4.2), this refers to the sensory, emotional, and behavioural module, Maylett and Wride's model (2.0) to the sensory, intellectual, and behavioural module, Morgan's model (3.4) to the sensory, emotional, intellectual, and behavioural module, and the Yidiz et. al. model (3.6) to the sensory and behavioural module. In summary, the highest scale of deviation in minus concerns the sensory module, and in plus concerns the relational module.

5. Discussion

All models (Tables 1–5) indicate the multidimensionality of the EX construct, i.e., the significant possibilities of multidirectional impacts on the organisation's interactions with employees. However, the high heterogeneity of the EX sub-determinants does not mean that – even if all the determinants were taken into consideration collectively – all the necessary elements impinging on the positive experiences of employees would be considered (because the above-mentioned approach focuses on the positive ones).

As many as three of the five EX models are dominated by sub-determinants relating to the relational module, in one case the behavioural module, and in one case the intellectual module (Table 6). This means not only that there is no dominance of sub-determinants

of a sensory nature in any of them but also that assignment to such a module takes place only eight times out of 82 total assignments. This should be interpreted, in conjunction with the values of the deviation index and their scale (Table 7), as an underestimation of positive visual, auditory, gustatory, olfactory, as well as tactile experiences and sensations in the EX models. And after all, EX research concerning remote working (in terms of the so-called new EX) and under conditions of increasing digitalisation of work, emphasises, among other things, comfort of work as well as the sensations associated also with the sensory module (e.g., touch interfaces on desktop or mobile devices). **However, taking into account the sub-determinants of sensory nature to a larger extent should not imply a reduction in the sub-determinants of the relational module, as the rank of the latter is also high and not declining** (Oldham, Hackman, 1976).

It is important to emphasise that such sensations are in the nature of features required of projected experiences and sensations (Halbrock, Hirschman, 1982; Sanchez-Fernandez, Iniesta-Bonillo, 2006: 40–58), meaning uniqueness, as well as the involvement of all the senses, various thoughts and emotions (holistic), subjectivity (personal nature, relativity of perception) and generating emotions and a memorable character, achieved thanks to using specific contextual conditions. Recognising them in an unsatisfactory manner in the construction of the EX indicator used in global studies seems to be a mistake, i.e., they cannot be downplayed, especially in the era of *homo videns* (Sartori, 2005).

Furthermore, in EX models, the sub-determinants describing the construct of ‘meaningful work’ are poorly represented (Table 8), i.e., each model does not capture all of them. Although the IBM and Globforce model, which forms the basis of global research, handles ‘meaningful work’ in general, the lack of ‘detailing’ this construct, as well as duplicating the sub-criterion of ‘Feedback’ leads to the conclusion that the methodology of this research needs to be improved.

The global research quoted above shows that meaningful work has an impact on employees’ experiences. Comparing this fact with the content of the work property model by J.R. Hackman and G.R. Oldham (1976: 250–279) shows that experiencing the meaning of work depends on:

- 1) experienced validity of the work (derived from: diversity of skills, identity of the task, and importance of the task);
- 2) experienced responsibility for results (autonomy);
- 3) feedback (receiving feedback concerning task performance).

While from the employee’s perspective, the four initial axial dimensions of work are linked with job crafting behaviours, i.e., belonging to the behavioural module, the last one is linked to the relational module. Therefore, improving global EX research methodology should move towards greater consideration of sensory elements as well as towards

considering all axial dimensions of work, taking into consideration that receiving feedback is found in only two models, autonomy is also found in two, while skill variety, task identity, and task significance are found in none (Table 8).

6. Limitation and future research

Despite the research objectives met, i.e.:

- 1) indication of the axial dimensions of work as a basis for detailed global EX studies;**
- 2) demonstrating the need to broaden the sub-determinants of workers, experiences to include those belonging to the sensory module, it must be borne in mind that the analysis carried out is not free of limitations.**

The first limitation of the above-presented research is related to the fact that the conducted analysis is based only on publications concerning EX models and EX indicator results. It is therefore possible that the authors of these models and studies possess unpublished material that would shed more light on the actual situation.

The second limitation results from the use of content analysis to derive classifications of EX sub-determinants to the five individual modules. Even though every effort has been made (e.g., the definition of organisational trust has been used to be able to assign this determinant to the relational module), suggestions for a different classification are possible. These have an impact on the resulting image of deviations from an equal distribution, although it should be noted that the result regarding underestimating the sensory module was obtained despite assigning it with the option of selecting the space in which employees perform work.

EX models handle the (sub)determinants that positively affect the experience capital, meaning that they do not show those of a negative nature, which can cause, for example, lower work productivity, abandoning creative activities, not engaging in citizenship behaviours, increased absenteeism, tendency for conflicts, or ceasing to work in the organisation. Disclosing them would provide opportunities to identify potential changes. Building a model to compensate for these deficits, after a comparative analysis, should not pose major cognitive difficulties. Whereas the multidirectional impact of many variables on the experiences of workers characterised by individual differences means that an empirical verification of such a model will be highly difficult.

It seems important for both theoreticians as well as practitioners to be aware of the interplay between the elements of the five modules of sensations and experiences and to be able to use software that records the variability of their content 'here and now.' This means not only presentism in shaping EX, but the continuity of work in this area in the sense of the organisation responding immediately to reported impressions.

This brings HRM closer to employees' impression management and undoubtedly implies employee-centricity. Therefore, it also means that focus should not only be placed on the knowledge and skills of EX specialists, but also on their creativity. In doing so, it may be helpful to draw conclusions from perceiving EX from the perspective of creativity theory, which may be an interesting issue for further research, with clearly utilitarian connotations.

A perspective for further research also undoubtedly consists in looking at EX in terms of co-creation. That is because despite EX's short history, it is currently discussed in terms of its second generation, assuming the involvement of employees in co-creating experiences (Poulsson, Kale, 2004), as well as communicating expectations in this area (Boswijk, Thijssen, Peelen, 2007) under conditions of shared responsibility, and adopting by the organisation the role of a provider of experience options enriching the cafeteria systems of remuneration for work (Caru, Cova, 2007; Vargo, Lusch, 2008).

It seems necessary not only to analyse experiences over time but also to assess them in a qualitative and quantitative manner, as well as to respond by shaping them. Therefore, the EX indicator must not be limited to defining the existing conditions but also show how to build a friendlier working environment. Due to this, it should be refined towards detailing information and increasing efficiency by indicating how to shape the work (re-design its content) and the environment in which it is carried out.

Moreover, for further research it would be advisable to creatively adapt the four spheres of consumer experience (Pine II, Gillmore, 1998: 102) to the area of EX. It would also be good to clarify the strategic and operational essence of EX.

Further research also requires clarifying what is the source of the employees' experiences – the employer brand, the job offer (its content, remuneration, manner of communication: employer-employee, promotion of the organisation) or the genuine quality of the personnel processes implemented in a specific organisational context.

7. Conclusions

Using the EX approach, which refers to CX, there should be no fear of HRM becoming dominated by marketing because it 'it all starts with the employee,' the employee is the most important (customers are not the most important), and using experience marketing in HRM (meaning the use of EEM – Employee Experience Management) can and should be a creative adaptation of approaches concerning customers. Thanks to this, it will be possible to ensure coherence of impacts on employees, customers, and users. **This will allow to align the objectives and instruments for influencing customers and 'internal customers' with all the positive efficiency and image implications of this. Certainly,**

new EX models will be developed over time. The proposed analysis and evaluation methodology, based on the modular approach and axial dimensions of work, can also be applied to them.

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Modele doświadczeń i przeżyć pracowników – analiza porównawcza Uwagi dotyczące metodologii badań globalnych dotyczących doznań pracowników i ich percepcja sensu pracy

Streszczenie: Cel: Artykuł ma charakter teoretyczny. Jego celem jest identyfikacja niekoherencji pomiędzy treścią doświadczeń i przeżyć pracowników (EX) a podejściem w badaniu doświadczeń i przeżyć konsumentów (CX). Treść modeli EX skonfrontowano z wynikami badań globalnych z zastosowaniem wskaźnika EX na świecie. Następnie sformułowano uwagi dotyczące doskonalenia metodologii powyższych badań.

Podejście metodyczne: Opierając się na analizie treści 78 subdeterminant doświadczeń i przeżyć w pięciu modelach EX opisywanych w literaturze przedmiotu, dokonano ich przyporządkowania do pięciu modułów opisywanych w CX, zakładając ekwiwalentność adresatów tych modułów. Później zweryfikowano występowanie pięciu wymiarów osiowych pracy według modelu właściwości pracy w pięciu modelach EX, a rezultaty tej weryfikacji porównano z wynikami badań globalnych.



Wyniki: Pokazano niedoreprezentowanie modułu sensorycznego we wszystkich pięciu modelach EX, a także nieobecność takich osiowych wymiarów pracy, jak różnorodność umiejętności, tożsamość zadania pracy i poczucie ważności jego wykonywania.

Implikacje: Przeprowadzona analiza porównawcza zawiera implikacje praktyczne, ponieważ wzbogaca modele EX i bazujące na nich badania o sensoryczne subdeterminanty i wszystkie wymiary osiowe pracy, dając nie tylko bardziej realistyczny od poprzedniego obraz pozytywnych doświadczeń i przeżyć pracowników, ale też pokazując możliwości wpływania na nie.

Wartość/Oryginalność: Modeli EX nie porównywano jak dotąd z perspektywy podejścia modułowego stosowanego w CX oraz z perspektywy modelu właściwości pracy. Kombinacja zastosowanego w analizie użycia metod jakościowych i ilościowych cechuje się oryginalnością. Jego aplikacja powinna pomóc w zidentyfikowaniu luki w rodzajach subdeterminant uwzględnionych w modelach EX.

Słowa kluczowe: modele doświadczeń i przeżyć pracowników, moduły doświadczeń, wskaźnik doświadczeń i przeżyć pracowników

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