

THE WELL-BEING EQUATION: INVESTIGATING CRITICS, NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, AND DEMOTIVATION IN THE WORKPLACE

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Abstract

Criticism as a result of an evaluation process is a common topic of everyday communication within the working environment. The research starts from the assumption that criticism significantly affects the self-perception of employees and it evokes negative emotions that in the end influence job satisfaction and motivation to perform work tasks. The paper presents the frame of a new concept of impact that the criticism has on employee motivation and the first results of the study prove that concept in particular. The main aim was to define whether criticism expressed inappropriately evokes more negative emotions. Hypotheses that focus on its correlation with gender, age, level of education and work status are discussed in the continuation of the paper. The research was conducted on 520 participants in Croatia. The results show a significant impact of the quality of communication on the perception of criticism and its significance in correlation with gender, while hypotheses that correlated evoking negative emotions when expressing criticism within the working environment with age, level of education and work status were rejected. The hypothesis about the correlation between expressing criticism inappropriately and the occurrence of demotivation was rejected.

Implications for Central European audience: The working environment is recently focusing on the digital transformation of all processes and so communication as well. By this transformation, people become alienated and lose basic communication skills. This paper brings together the presentation of long-established communication starting points and the most modern thinking and research on the impact of communication on the motivation, satisfaction and productivity of employees. Based on this, but also with the presented results of the conducted research, it proposes a new communication concept of communicating negative messages that are an integral part of everyday business communication in the organization.

Keywords: job satisfaction; job motivation; critics; evaluation of employees

JEL Classification: J24, J28, J53

Introduction

This paper focuses on managerial communication, or very specifically, a message in which criticism is conveyed to the employee. The paper will present research on the impact of criticism on the creation of negative emotions. For this reason, the task of the theoretical review is to first define the term criticism and then to determine the reason why negative emotions are unwanted in the work environment. In this way, assumptions about the importance of developing managerial communication skills will be established. In this way, managers will gain the knowledge required for careful planning of the communication process in which employees are to be criticized. This is all to prevent negative emotions that would ultimately result in demotivating employees or reducing their work effectiveness or the quality of their work.

Communicating criticism means conveying the result of critical thinking to the employee. Buchberger (2012) believes that it is a process of searching for and properly examining the basis or evidence for a particular belief. This suggests that criticism as a concept is not coloured negatively or positively. It can be neutral, it can emphasize the negative aspects of the observed or, as a result of critical thinking, the positive elements stand out. The positive content of the critical message is not the subject of this paper, and neither is negative content as negative messages are difficult to be avoided. The necessity of conveying messages that would rather not be heard is an everyday task of a manager. The message could be about rejecting some ideas that are not in agreement with the organization's policy, or there is a possibility that they could cause certain damage to the organization. Also, in case an employee does not fulfil the requirements or abuses working procedures (consciously or unconsciously, purposefully or not), it needs to be communicated to the employee and such a message is expected to be perceived as negative content for the employee. What a manager can do about such a message consisting of negative content is to convey it properly and adapt it to eliminate or at least reduce negative influences, i.e. bypass the respective level of communication and avoid the occurrence of negative emotions. Objective communication that will be at the ego level of an adult (Bern, 2021) is a desirable form of managerial communication that will be non-offensive and acceptable to the employee. Bridgland et.al. (2019) claim that warnings allow people to prepare themselves and subsequently reduce negative reactions toward content, while critics insist warnings may increase negative interpretations.

Moon (2008) believes that emotions determine one's final decision as a result of the thinking process, and therefore it can be concluded that in this process the emotional dimension is of undeniable and significant importance. According to the same author, emotions influence the determination of the final decision on attitudes and actions, but also the decision to create an image of oneself. While some scientists talk about the influence of culture on emotions, Charles Darwin, in his study on the expression of emotions in humans and animals in 1872, lays the foundation for the conclusion that it is a universal term and that all people show uniform emotional expressions and non-verbal emotions signal express equally. Emotions affect the same behaviours (escape or defensive reaction when feeling fear, stimulated heart reaction when angry or afraid, etc.) They are also universal, but it is emotions that regulate and condition different sociological behaviours (Rosanda Žigo, 2015). Basic emotions are associated with achievements, so the emotion of happiness is associated with the achievement of a goal, professional or social, and sadness with the failure to achieve an

intention (Keltner et al., 2018). Rosanda Žigo (2015) believes that problematic situations can be significantly more complex, that is, they can concern different social interactions, and emotions provide a concise assessment of such situations and focus cognitive resources on what is important.

Damasio (2005) connects emotions with changes that occur due to the control of external stimuli by the brain, so he concludes that emotions are a combination of evaluative mental processes and dispositive responses to these processes. Emotions are an inescapable part of the human experience. They motivate actions and reactions, guide our interpersonal and business relationships, inspire political and societal trends, and influence our sense of self and well-being.

Judgment and decision-making are mental processes closely related to positive and negative evaluations of different situations (Finucane et al., 2003), which the individual associates with positive or negative mental images, that is, positive or negative emotions are realized that cause specific ways of behaving.

Goleman (2022) is one of the important experts on emotional intelligence who discusses the impact of emotions, including negative criticism, which can affect individuals' emotional well-being and performance. Weeks et. al. (2008) state that fear of negative evaluation is a key feature of social anxiety disorder. In addition, they believe that there is also fear of positive evaluation. Their research has shown that a positive evaluation is related positively to discomfort (associated with receiving positive feedback) and negatively to the perception of the accuracy of the feedback. This was confirmed by a recent study by Lipton et al. (2016) who proved the existence of individual differences in the experience of fear of positive as well as negative evaluation.

Critical thinking is an activity that has a reflection on the behaviour of the individual, both the one who thinks critically and the one who is a potential object of critical thinking, directly or indirectly through the assessment of work results or achievements. Brookfield (1987) believes that looking at a situation from another position is extremely complex, especially if it is done with one's beliefs, and Moon (2008) says that such situations are emotionally coloured and lead to an explicit influence on the individual's behaviour. A situation in which an individual is faced with a questioning of beliefs and behaviour (whether their own or others') can lead to the emergence of various negative emotions (Brookfield, 1987; Moon, 2008).

Kenny (2010) connects negative emotions with anxiety and, based on the study of earlier theories of anxiety, talks about a cognitive process in which there is a great danger of exaggerating and being wrongly perceived or interpreted. Theories of anxiety (Beck & Clark 1997, Mandler 1984, Spielberger 1985, according to Kenny 2010) suggest that anxiety is the result of distorted information processing that occurs due to motor, physiological or affective reactions and as a result distorted cognition. Although these early theories talk about affective processes, more recent theories focus even more on emotions and connect them with stimuli related to possible future threats and attempts to reduce damage. Izard's definition of anxiety (1977, according to Kenny 2010) refers to a complex of learned emotions in which fear comes with other negative emotions such as anger, shame, guilt and excitement. If this definition is connected with the earlier one, which talks about the distorted processing of information as

part of the communication process, it can be established that there is a strong connection between communication, in this case, communication criticism, with negative content and negative affective experiences that have an impact on personal performance and, at the same time, work efficiency of an individual.

Work performance evaluation is one of the most important tasks for a manager as the result of this procedure is the starting point for planning organizational strategies, business activities, recruitments, and infrastructural investments. Also, it is the base of the motivational system. Tweedie et. al. (2019) start from the theories of recognition that were developed by Honneth and Dejours, who believed that recognizing the contribution of workers to production is a key factor in developing workers' ability through maintaining their autonomous and healthy self-perception (Honneth, 2010, Dejours, 2014). In this way, the performance management process can have a positive impact on employee well-being. Tweedie et. al. (2019) believe that in this sense there is significant room for process improvement, i.e. recognition theories offer a framework for articulation and empirical research on how the management of outcomes affects the basic mental health of workers and their functioning. Highhouse and Brooks (2023) talk about the structure of the employee performance evaluation process, but emphasize the importance of the occurrence of 'noise' in that process, that is, the importance of properly decoding the feedback the employee receives. With this in mind, the occurrence of negative emotions can trigger "noises" at the respective level, which will prevent the evaluator, or manager, from properly conveying the message of criticism.

Appropriately established communication is correlated with job satisfaction and it has a positive outcome on wishful work performance. Reisel et al. (2010) start from the idea that job attitude, such as job satisfaction, is a short-term consequence but it has a long-term effect. The same authors build the concept that job satisfaction mediates the effect of job insecurity on organizational citizenship behaviour. They correlated the indirect negative effects of job insecurity with a decrease in performance behaviours valued by the organization and an increase in behaviours that are counterproductive to the organization. The model tests largely supported the hypotheses in the study and they found that job insecurity is negatively correlated with job satisfaction.

The process of emotion management for motivation was discussed by Kalokerinos et al. (2017). Specifically, these authors talk about the results of their studies that proved instrumental motives for initiating the process of spontaneous emotion regulation in everyday life and they proved that this is associated with contextual predictors and personality predictors. They believe that instrumental motives are important for understanding the process of managing emotions and how emotions are regulated in a certain context because it is undeniable that people facilitate the achievement of instrumental benefits in this way. Instrumental motives according to Tamir's taxonomy (2016) are those that achieve potential welfare through emotions and can be as follows: performative, epistemic, social and eudaimonic motives. Performance motives are related to motivation for successfully performing some activities; epistemic are related to access to certain information; social motives influence the realization and maintenance of social relationships; and, eudaimonic motives reflect the motivation to find meaning and foster personal growth. In addition to instrumental motives, this taxonomy also distinguishes hedonic motives that aim at the immediate phenomenology of emotions and often relate to the desire for immediate pleasure instead of pain.

Debreuil et al. (2021) state that strengths are frequently associated with work performance; however, they claim that the psychological processes involved in this relation remain unclear. The objective of their study was to examine the mediator role of positive and negative emotions in the relation between the use of strengths and work performance. Results confirmed previous findings regarding positive emotions and revealed that negative emotions have a significant role as well. The same authors think that a decrease in the occurrence of negative emotions promotes work performance. Positive emotions as important factors of influence the outcome of task performance and organizational citizenship behaviours are discussed by many authors (Lavy & Littman-Ovadia, 2017; Littman-Ovadia et al., 2017; Van Woerkom & Meyers, 2015) who conducted different surveys and proved the connection. The concept of positive organizational scholarship (POS) emphasizes the importance of fostering positive aspects in the workplace where negative criticism may be seen as counterproductive to building a positive organizational culture (Cameron et al., 2003).

Rispens and Demerouti (2016) examine the impact of daily conflicts on work performance. They discuss employees' active and passive negative emotions, where active ones are about feeling anger or contempt, while passive ones are about feeling sadness or guilt. Multilevel analyses of the research based on 62 respondents/employees in the Netherlands showed that daily relationship and process conflict experiences at work were positively related to daily negative emotions. In addition, the results demonstrated a lagged effect of passive negative emotions: feelings of guilt and sadness predicted lower in-role and extra-role performance the following day.

1 Development of the concept of impact of the criticism on employee motivation

Ryan and Deci (2017) explore the self-determination theory (SDT), which deals with basic psychological needs concerning the motivation, development and well-being of an individual. SDT provides insight into how communication can foster motivation through the satisfaction of basic needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Communication can strongly influence the satisfaction of these needs. For example, having open and inclusive conversations contributes to a sense of autonomy, quality interpersonal communication supports a sense of connectedness, and constructive feedback contributes to the development of competencies. In addition to the above, communication can encourage intrinsic motivation by encouraging understanding of goals, clear expectations, and a sense of belonging to a team or an organization. Workers who feel free to communicate, express their ideas and receive constructive feedback usually have a higher level of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

One of the starting points for developing the concept of the influence that the way criticism is communicated has on employee motivation is in Gottman's concept of the four horsemen. Gottman (2019) is working on improving the communication of couples and deals with family therapy, but his criticism concept can be applied to workplace interactions. His concept is known as the four horsemen and includes criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling. Criticizing a person is different than offering a criticism or voicing a complaint. The latter two are about specific issues, whereas the former is an ad hominem attack. It is an

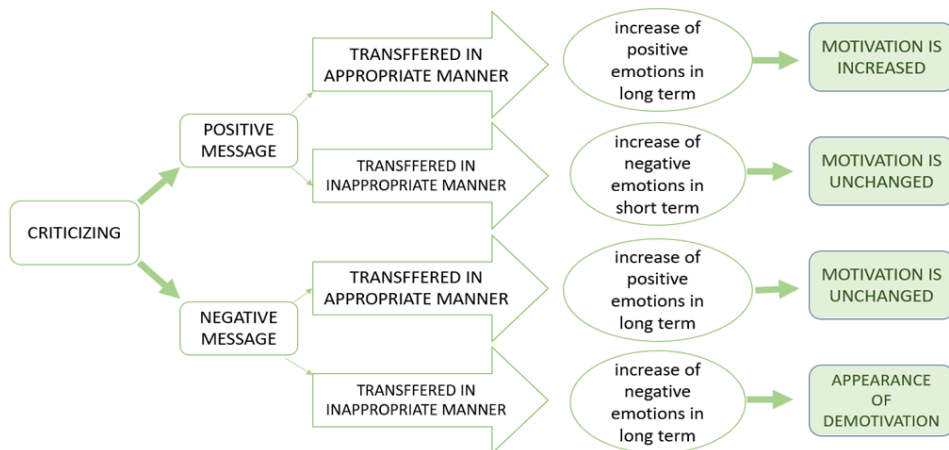
attack on a person at the core of their character. The problem with criticism is that, when it becomes pervasive, it paves the way for the other, far deadlier horsemen to follow. It makes the victim feel assaulted, rejected and hurt, and it often causes the perpetrator and victim to fall into an escalating pattern where the first horseman reappears with greater and greater frequency and intensity, which eventually leads to contempt (Gottman, 2019).

Based on the presented theory, the concept of the correlation between how criticism is communicated to the employee and the employee's motivation is set, but it still has to be checked and scientifically proven (see Figure 1) and this paper is the first one in line with this aim. The concept has two main directions and four branches in total that need to be tested.

From Figure 1 it can be seen that in the process of conveying criticism, one can talk about disclosing messages of positive or negative content. Every message can be conveyed in an acceptable/appropriate manner, which in this case implies assertive communication, non-offensive communication, communication from the ego state of an adult, impersonal but factual and planned (possible effects on the interlocutors and their possible reactions are assessed and the message is organized according to the result of this assessment). On the other hand, any message can also be conveyed in an unacceptable/inappropriate manner, which in this case implies insulting communication, aggressive, arrogant and rude, belittling, communication on a personal level that targets the affective receptors of the interlocutor, which mainly comes from the ego state of a parent or a rebellious child (according to Eric Bern, 2021). The set concept establishes the idea that a positive message conveyed in an acceptable/appropriate manner encourages an increase in positive emotions and affects the long-term increase in employee motivation. If a message with positive content is conveyed in an unacceptable/inappropriate way, it is assumed that there will be an increase in negative emotions, but that they will be short-term ones and will ultimately have no impact on employee motivation. When it comes to messages with negative content, that is negative criticisms of employees, they will never be accepted absolutely positively by the employee who has been criticized. However, messages conveyed in an unacceptable/inappropriate manner will lead to a significant increase in negative emotions and ultimately to demotivation, while if negative content (unwanted by employees) is disclosed in an acceptable/appropriate manner and adjusted (carefully planned), it will lead to an increase in negative emotions that will be short-term and will not lead to a decrease in motivation, but it will remain unchanged in the long run.

Ramadanty and Martinus (2016) conducted research that had to establish the relationship between employees' motivation and factors of communication, such as nonverbal communication, interpersonal communication leadership and communication climate. The method these authors used was a descriptive qualitative method and their results proved that observed elements of communication had a significant role in forming employee motivation, where nonverbal communication is slightly more positively correlated to the motivation of employees. The same authors observed nonverbal communication through the elements of body communication, facial communication, and eye communication. Their findings are a starting point for determining the presented concept of the influence that how criticism is communicated has on employee motivation, where it could be concluded that criticizing in a manner where the communication process is adjusted (specifically the nonverbal dimension of the conveyed message) is positively correlated with motivation.

Figure 1 | Concept of the influence that the manner in which criticism is communicated has on employee motivation



Source: Author

Furlich (2016) explores the motivation of employees through their expectations of their job performance rewards as communicated to them by their manager. He directly connects criticism with motivation. In his previous research, he has predominantly addressed only expectations, communication interactions, and motivation as a one-time event. This time, he observes the problem through the Expectancy-valence theory. According to Furlich (ibid.), this theory is focused on motivation based upon the choices an individual makes when striving for a goal and it discusses the expectations of an individual when trying to understand their anticipated motivation. Furlich states that people's expectations change according to the change of other environmental changes, such as communication interactions. Furlich believes that employees who are more motivated through clear, realistic, and personally valuable reward (criticism) expectations, will work harder for the organization, thus increasing productivity. These findings prove that a positive criticism disclosed appropriately would have a positive correlation with an increase in employees' motivation and could be taken as the starting point for developing the hypothesis that puts elements in the reverse direction, where negative criticism conveyed inappropriately would lead to a decrease of motivation or demotivation of employees.

2 Research methodology

The purpose of the conducted research was to answer the question of to what extent an unmodified or inappropriate way of communicating causes negative emotions, that is, to determine the influence of the quality of communication on the perception of criticism. In this paper, the focus is on establishing correlations between different demographic variables such as gender, age, level of education, and work status of employed respondents with the occurrence of negative emotions in situations where negative criticism is directed at them in

an inappropriate communication manner. In this regard, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- *H1: Directing criticism in an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner has a significant impact on evoking negative emotions of employees.*
 - *H1.1: There is a statistically significant difference in evoking negative emotions by directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner with regard to gender.*
 - *H1.2: There is a statistically significant difference in evoking negative emotions by directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner with regard to age.*
 - *H1.3: There is a statistically significant difference in evoking negative emotions by directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner with regard to the level of education.*
 - *H1.4: There is a statistically significant difference in evoking negative emotions by directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner with regard to work status.*
- *H2: Criticism transferred inappropriately would lead to the occurrence of demotivation.*

A questionnaire was constructed for a broader survey and only part of the survey is presented in this paper. The instrument consists of two parts: five demographic questions and a total of 40 statements with a five-degree Likert scale (from 'completely agree' to 'completely disagree'). In this paper, only four statements were included and the related results are discussed.

The survey was conducted in January 2022 on a random sample of 520 adult employees in Croatia. Data collection was performed through social networks (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp) and e-mail networks (business mailing lists). The total sample consists of 74.2% of female respondents and 25.8% of male respondents. The largest percentage of respondents, 64.2% of them, are in the age group of 20 to 40 years old. Regarding the level of education, the highest percentage of 35.8% completed a secondary level of education, 30.6% completed a three-year undergraduate study, and 24.1% of respondents completed a five-year graduate study. A smaller percentage of respondents are self-employed (entrepreneurs) and the rest is evenly divided between employees in the private sector and employees in the relevant public administration. The whole area of Croatia is represented, that is all the counties, but the largest percentage of respondents comes from the counties the City of Zagreb (25.8%), Koprivnica-Križevci County (20.2%) and Varaždin County (19.5%). Respondents were also selected according to the field in which they work: the largest percentage of 47% is represented by respondents working in the field of social sciences and 22.7% from the field of technical sciences. Smaller percentages include respondents from the fields belonging to humanities, biomedical sciences and arts. Pearson Chi-square test was used to determine the correlation of responses with regard to age and gender. The test was conducted for each statement.

3 Results

The questionnaire consisted of four statements about evoking negative emotions when experiencing negative criticism in an inappropriate communication manner. Table 1 presents

the summary of statistics for all statements. Four figures that follow Table 1 present the frequencies of the respondents' agreement for each statement. For the observed four statements in which respondents expressed their agreement with a five-point Likert scale, 520 credible answers were obtained, whereby for the first statement the mean was 4.37, the median was 5, the mode was 5, and the standard deviation of 1.082 was recorded. In the second statement, the mean is 4.13, the median as well as the mode is 5, and the standard deviation is 1.099. For the third and fourth statements, the mean is 2.12 and 3.14, the median is 2 and 3 (modes 1 and 3), and the standard deviation for the third statement is 1.295, and for the last one is 1.244.

Figure 2 shows there is a statistically significant frequency of respondents who feel unhappy when faced with criticism that is communicated inappropriately. The greatest frequency shown in Figure 3 points to negative feelings when the other person in the communication process shows a lack of respect. For the last two statements 'Criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) will not cause any reactions by me' and 'I will not take seriously the criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) and I will not consider changing anything' that are presented in Figures 4 and 5, the frequencies are slightly different. Respondents mostly do not agree with statement 3, which means that they feel a reaction after receiving negative criticism. The results do not show statistically significant frequencies for the fourth statement.

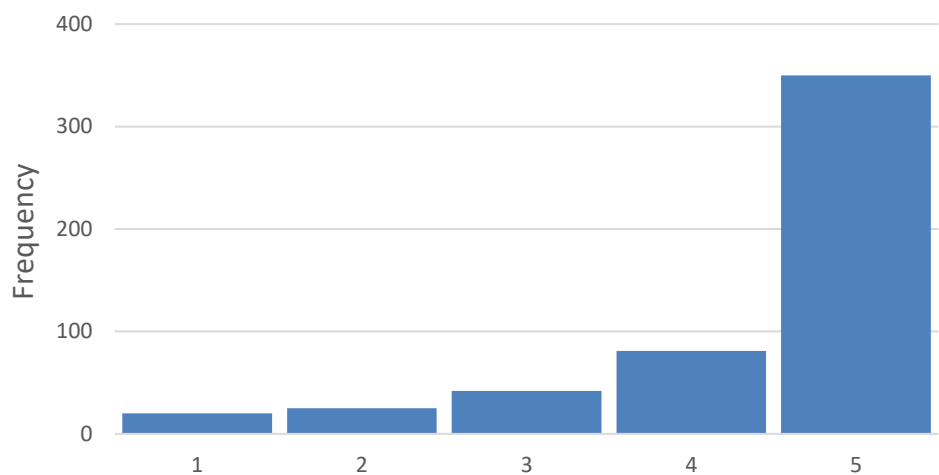
Table 1 | Summary of the statistics for all four statements

	Gender	S1	S2	S3	S4
N Valid	520	520	520	520	520
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	1.74	4.37	4.13	2.12	3.14
Median	2.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	3.00
Mode	2	5	5	1	3
Std. Dev.	.439	1.082	1.099	1.295	1.244
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	2	5	5	5	5
Sum	905	2274	2145	1104	1631

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	135	26.0	26.0	
	Female	385	74.0	74.0	26.0
		520	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total					

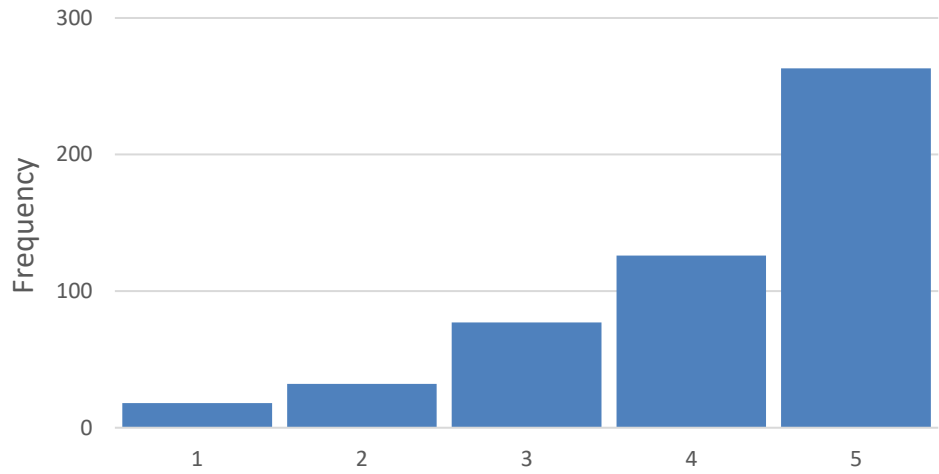
Source: Author

Figure 2 | Frequency of the agreement with the statement: ‘I am not happy when I receive criticism in a way that humiliates me.’



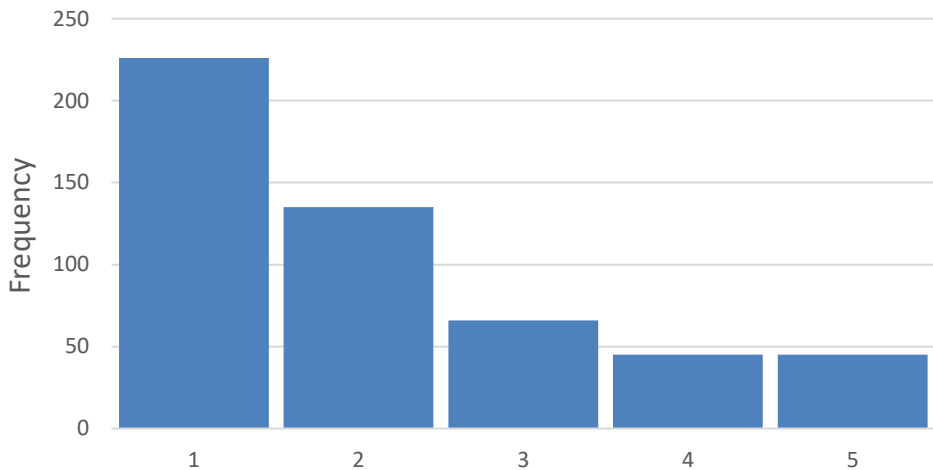
Source: Author

Figure 3 | Frequency of the agreement with the statement: ‘I feel bad after receiving criticism in the manner in which the interlocutor shows that s/he does not value me.’



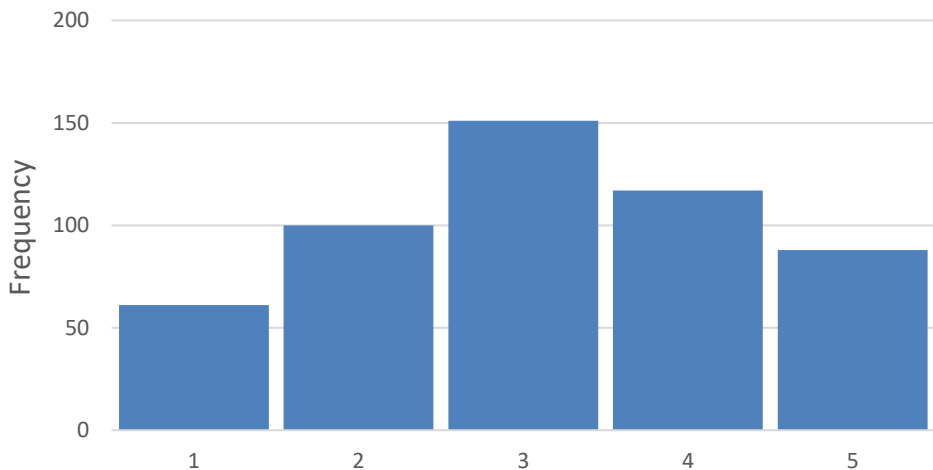
Source: Author

Figure 4 | Frequency of the agreement with the statement: 'Criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) will not cause any reactions at me.'



Source: Author

Figure 5 | Frequency of the agreement with the statement: 'I will not take seriously the criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) and I will not consider changing anything'



Source: Author

A chi-square test was performed to check the correlation between evoking negative emotions by being faced with criticism that is communicated in an inappropriate and unmodified manner and concerning gender, age, level of education and work status. As the results did not show any statistical significance for correlations regarding age, level of education and work status,

these data are not presented. The only statistical significance is found in the correlation between the negative emotions when receiving negative criticism in an inappropriate communication manner and gender. Table 2 shows the summary of the results between all the statements and the difference according to gender. In continuation, four tables present the Chi-test results separately for each statement. In Table 3 Chi-test for the correlation between gender and the statement 'I am not happy when I receive criticism in a way that humiliates me.' is $p < 0.05$ and therefore statistically significant.

Statistical significance is shown in tables 4 and 5 as the Chi-square results for the correlation of gender and the statements: 'I feel bad after receiving criticism in the manner in which the interlocutor shows that s/he does not value me.' and 'Criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) will not cause any reactions by me.' is $p < 0.05$.

In Table 6 the Chi-square result for the correlation between gender in the statement 'I will not take seriously the criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) and I will not consider changing anything.' is $p > 0.05$ and the statement does not show statistical significance.

Table 2 | Summary of results for correlation between gender and all statements
Case Processing Summary

	Valid		Cases Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
S1	520	100.0%	0	0.0%	520	100.0%
S2	520	100.0%	0	0.0%	520	100.0%
S3	520	100.0%	0	0.0%	520	100.0%
S4	520	100.0%	0	0.0%	520	100.0%

Source: Author

Table 3 | Chi-square results for the correlation between gender and the statement 'I am not happy when I receive criticism in a way that humiliates me.'

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2.sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.655 ^a	4	.020
Likelihood Ratio	10.466	4	.033
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.544	1	.060
N of Valid Cases	520		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5,19.

Source: Author

Table 4 | Chi-square results for the correlation between gender and the statement ‘I feel bad after receiving criticism in the manner in which the interlocutor shows that s/he does not value me.’

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2.sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.851 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	20.347	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	17.432	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	520		

a. 1 cells (10.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4,67.
Source: Author

Table 5 | Chi-square results for the correlation between gender and the statement ‘Criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) will not cause any reactions by me.’

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2.sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.418 ^a	4	.001
Likelihood Ratio	18.596	4	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	17.650	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	520		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 11,68.
Source: Author

Table 6 | Chi-square results for the correlation between gender and the statement ‘I will not take seriously the criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) and I will not consider changing anything.’

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2.sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.902 ^a	4	.574
Likelihood Ratio	3.044	4	.551
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.228	1	.135
N of Valid Cases	520		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15,84.

Source: Author

4 Discussion

Statistical data presented in the previous paragraphs show a statistically significant impact of inappropriate and unmodified communication on evoking negative emotions on the side of criticized employees for the first three statements. The fourth statement could not be considered statistically significant, but the results are in favour of confirming the first hypothesis, which was: 'Directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner has a significant impact on evoking negative emotions at employees.' After the Chi-test was performed the statistical significance was determined for the first three statements (S1: 'I am not happy when I receive criticism in a way that humiliates me.'; S2: 'I feel bad after receiving criticism in the manner in which the interlocutor shows that s/he does not value me.' and S3: 'Criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) will not cause any reactions by me.'). Therefore, it can be inferred that there is a difference in the correlation between the occurrence of negative emotions concerning the gender of the respondent. Again, the fourth statement is the one in which statistical significance is not observed but is insufficient to not accept hypothesis H1.1 stating 'There is a statistically significant difference in evoking negative emotions by directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner with regard to gender.' in its entirety.

For the other set of correlations that regarded the appearance of negative emotions after receiving criticism, taking into consideration age, level of education and work status, no statistical significance was observed and all hypotheses (H1.2 'There is a statistically significant difference in evoking negative emotions by directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner with regard to age.'; H1.3 'There is a statistically significant difference in evoking negative emotions by directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner with regard to the level of education.' and H1.4 'There is a statistically significant difference in evoking negative emotions by directing criticism with an inappropriate and unmodified communication manner with regard to work status.') are rejected.

The second hypothesis was to be tested by the statement: 'Criticism that was conveyed to me in an unacceptable manner (arrogant, rude, belittling) will not cause any reactions by me'.

The statistical results did not show any significance and the hypothesis is to be rejected. Since the results have shown dispersion and the most significant part of the respondents expressed indecision, it can be concluded that although this hypothesis was rejected and there are not enough indicators to determine part of the newly established concept, there are potential limitations that led to the indecision of the respondents. The set concept should still not be discarded, but requires deeper research precisely in terms of determining the correlation between negatively conveyed criticism and the occurrence of employee demotivation in the work environment. This is supported by the theory presented and the results of previous research.

The development of the presented concept has a scientific contribution to the study of managerial communication and the determination of one of the important managerial functions, that is, the process of managing employee motivation. With it, this concept gains a new dimension and observes the motivation system through the element of communication. In the near future, after the rest of the concept elements are tested, the whole concept will have important practical implications within the process of motivation. Motivating employees has become recently more difficult and within its focus, there is the need to develop a successful motivating tool based on communication that would be implemented in the educational system and that would have a direct impact on the improvement of managerial communication.

Conclusion

The concept of the impact of criticism on employee motivation, which was developed and presented for the first time in this paper, has four directions that need to be investigated; however, the research in this paper presents only one direction. In this view of the concept, the communication of criticism is observed from the aspect of inappropriate criticism, which is not acceptable and causes negative emotions, which finally leads to the occurrence of employees' demotivation. The research showed that criticism disclosed in such a way absolutely affected the occurrence of negative emotions, but it failed to connect these with the occurrence of demotivation. The reason for this may be that the statement and the expected outcome of the communication process were not completely clear to the respondents, that is, the entire hypothesis was proven only based on one statement. In this sense, the concept should not be rejected but should consider a deeper and wider observation of the outcome of inappropriate communication of criticism towards employees and the impact on their satisfaction and work performance. With the rapid development of artificial intelligence and digital communication in general, which distances people, the importance of developing interpersonal communication skills is even greater. In terms of business communication, this means creating prerequisites for carrying out a communication process that will ensure the protection of individual emotions and stimulate employee satisfaction and productivity.

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