The Impact of Change Management on the Quality of the Work Environment: A Study of the Employer-Employee Relationship of Senior Customs Supervisors

Vladislavs Sardiko
Faculty of Education and Management
Daugavpils University
Daugavpils, Latvia
vl.sardiko@gmail.com

Dzintra Ilishko
Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences
Daugavpils University
Daugavpils, Latvia
dzintra.ilisko@du.lv

Abstract- **This study examines the impact of change management on the quality of the work environment by analysing the employer-employee relationship among senior customs supervisors working at Latgale customs checkpoints. The necessity to adapt personnel management approaches within the Customs Board is highlighted, taking into account the sustainable development goals of the institution. A quantitative survey was conducted involving 113 respondents, representing different socio-demographic groups. The analysis of the results revealed significant differences in the perception of work environment dimensions, with educational level showing the strongest influence. However, gender, marital status, family responsibilities, and management experience also showed variations that should not be overlooked when shaping change management strategies. The findings demonstrate that socio-demographic and professional profiles have a complex effect on employees' satisfaction and perception of the working environment. Based on the results, recommendations are proposed to incorporate these factors systematically into personnel management practices, aiming to strengthen institutional efficiency and improve the well-being of customs employees.**

Keywords — Change management, Customs Board, senior customs supervisors, work environment

I. INTRODUCTION

The process of managing organizational change is essential for ensuring the sustainability and performance of institutions, particularly in the context of public administration [1], [2]. For organizations like the Customs Board, change management is not only about adjusting operations but also about fostering an environment where employees can contribute effectively to organizational development [3]. Senior customs supervisors, who play a crucial role at customs checkpoints, directly experience the effects of organizational changes, making their relationship with the employer critical for shaping a supportive work environment [4].

Understanding the impact of change management on the work environment is particularly important for the Customs Board [5]. This study focuses on the employer-employee relationship, with particular emphasis on senior customs supervisors working at Latgale customs checkpoints. By analyzing factors such as socio-demographic characteristics, education levels, and income sources, the research aims to formulate recommendations that will contribute to improving the quality of the work environment and enhancing overall institutional performance.

Change management in public administration is a complex process that affects both organizational structures and employee behavior. According to Kotter [1], successful organizational change requires effective leadership and communication strategies that align employee interests with organizational goals. In the customs sector, where regulations and operational procedures are constantly evolving, it is vital to support employees with clear leadership and the provision of necessary resources [6].

Further perspectives highlight that successful change processes also depend on organizational readiness and structured transition management. Lewin [7] introduced a three-phase model emphasizing the importance of preparing for change, guiding the transition, and reinforcing new behaviors. Armenakis and Harris [5] stressed that employee belief in the necessity and feasibility

of change initiatives is crucial for success. Hayes [8] similarly notes that both system-level interventions and the individual motivation of employees must be balanced during organizational changes.

Modern approaches also emphasize the importance of good governance principles and strategic human resource management within public institutions. The European Commission [9] and Hughes [10] argue that sustainable change in public organizations, including customs administrations, requires active employee involvement, transparent leadership, and structured adaptation processes.

These theoretical approaches collectively offer valuable insights for improving change management practices, particularly in environments such as the Customs Board, where both external regulations and internal employee dynamics must be effectively balanced.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study uses a structured survey tool designed to capture the employer-employee relationship. A total of 38 questions, adapted specifically for senior customs supervisors, were administered using a Likert scale (ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly Agree"). The survey aimed to assess various dimensions of the work environment, including work processes, job satisfaction, health, conflict resolution, and the impact of digitalization.

The survey data were analyzed to identify statistically significant differences between various socio-demographic groups. These groups included gender, family status, education level, and competency levels. The analysis utilized t-tests to determine whether differences in perceptions of the work environment existed between these groups.

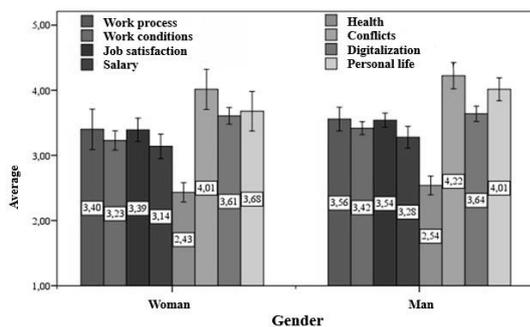## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Fig. 1. Dimensions of the work environment by gender

There are statistically significant differences in the perception of working conditions between women (3.23) and men (3.42) (Fig. 1). Men seem to rate working conditions higher than domēna. This difference could indicate that working conditions are perceived differently between the sexes, possibly due to different job demands. Work process, job satisfaction, payment, health, conflict,

and digitalization do not show significant differences between the sexes, indicating similar perceptions between women and men (Table I).

TABLE I DIMENSIONS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT BY GENDER

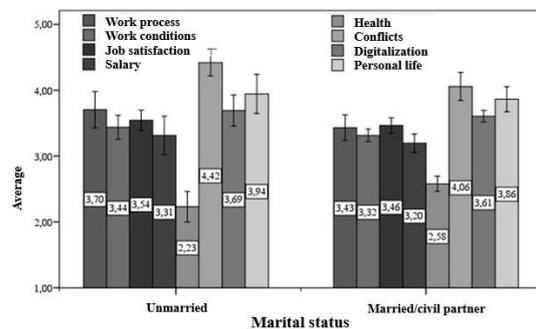|	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	*df*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*
Work process	-,937	113	,351
Work conditions	-2,203	113	,030
Job satisfaction	-1,507	113	,135
Salary	-1,083	113	,281
Health	-,979	113	,330
Conflicts	-1,186	113	,238
Digitalization	-,344	113	,732
Personal life	-2,067	113	,041

Fig. 2. Dimensions of the work environment by marital status.

Health is the only category where there are statistically significant differences in health perceptions between singles (2.23) and married and being in a civil partnership (2.58) (Fig. 2). Married or in a civil partnership seem to value their health more than singles.

Work process, working conditions, job satisfaction, pay, conflicts, digitalization and personal life - these categories have no significant differences in marital status groups, indicating similar perceptions between singles and married or the one's in a civil partnership (Table II).

TABLE II DIMENSIONS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT BY MARITAL STATUS

	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	*df*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*
Work process	1,415	113	,160
Work conditions	1,232	113	,221
Job satisfaction	,695	113	,488
Salary	,798	113	,427
Health	-2,882	113	,005
Conflicts	1,803	113	,074
Digitalization	,832	113	,407
Personal life	,423	113	,673

Figure 3, reflects how participation in the educational process is an important factor, as there are statistically significant differences in several positions. The first one could be the work process, where the perception of employees who have received education is 3.57, and those who are currently studying is 3.00. Employees with education rate the work process higher than those who are

currently studying. Employees with education probably feel more comfortable with the existing work processes, while those who are currently studying might experience additional challenges in performing work tasks. The second factor could be working conditions, where the perception of employees who have received education is 3.30, and those currently studying 3.62. Employees who are currently studying rate working conditions higher than those who have received education. Employees who are currently studying might feel more satisfied with the working conditions, perhaps they feel support from the employer in the learning process. The third factor could be digitalization, where the perception of employees with education is Mean=3.57, and those currently studying Mean=4.00. Employees who are currently studying rate digitalization higher than those with an education. Employees who are currently are studying are likely to be more updated with the latest technologies and digitalization processes, while those with an education may be less involved. The fourth factor could be personal life, where the perception of employees with an education is 3.96, and those currently studying 3.40. Employees with an education rate personal life higher than those currently studying. Employees with an education may experience a better balance between work and private life, while those currently studying may experience more stress and challenges in trying to balance work and studies.
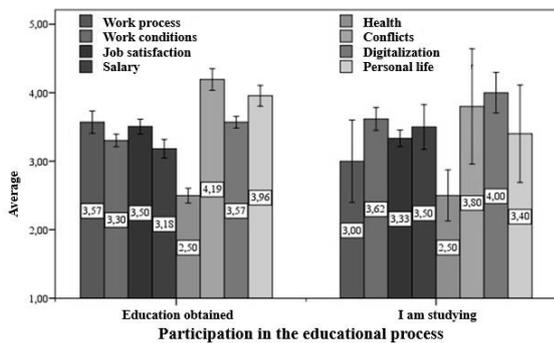

Fig. 3. Dimensions of the work environment by educational process

Job satisfaction, pay, health, and conflict are categories in which there are no significant differences between educational status groups, indicating similar perceptions between employees with completed education and those currently studying (Table III).

TABLE III DIMENSIONS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT BY EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

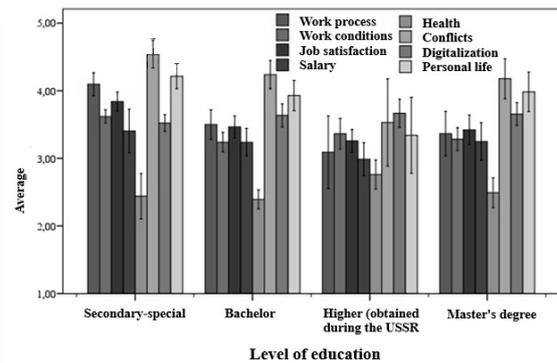|	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	*df*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*
Work process	2,395	113	,018
Work conditions	-2,548	113	,012
Job satisfaction	1,203	113	,232
Salary	-1,711	113	,090
Health	-,016	113	,987
Conflicts	1,547	113	,125
Digitalization	-3,497	113	,001
Personal life	2,365	113	,020

Fig. 4. Dimensions of the work environment by level of education

Education level is an important factor, as it is one of the two questions with the largest number of items where there are statistically significant differences. Work process, working conditions, job satisfaction, conflicts and personal life are categories where there are significant differences between education level groups. The scores of many are lower for employees with higher education, these employees have obtained their education a long time ago, therefore they are also older employees with the most life experience, which could be a factor in different perspectives (Fig. 4).

Remuneration, health and digitalization turned out to be the aspects where there are no significant differences between education levels, indicating similar perceptions among employees with different education levels (Table IV).

TABLE IV DIMENSIONS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

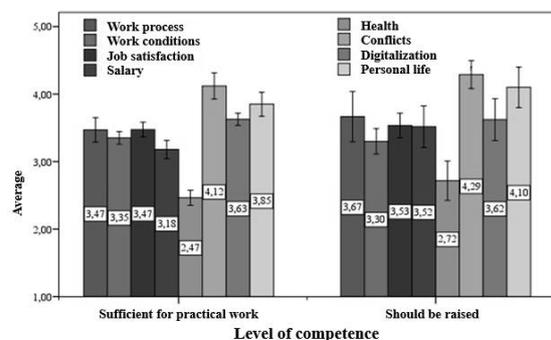|	*F*	*Sig.*
Work process	5,666	,001
Work conditions	3,736	,013
Job satisfaction	5,506	,001
Salary	1,428	,239
Health	2,210	,091
Conflicts	5,192	,002
Digitalization	,432	,730
Personal life	4,459	,005

Fig. 5. Dimensions of the work environment taking into account employee's level of competence

There are statistically significant differences in the perception of pay between employees with sufficient competence to perform practical work (3.18) and those needing to increase their competence (3.52) (Fig. 5). Employees with sufficient competence rate their pay lower than those who need to increase their competence. This difference could indicate that employees with a higher level of competence feel less satisfied with their payment, probably because they believe that their skills and abilities should correspond to higher pay.

Work process, working conditions, job satisfaction, health, conflicts, digitalization and personal life - there are no significant differences between the competence level groups in these categories, indicating similar perceptions between employees with sufficient competence and those who need to increase their competence (Table V).

TABLE V DIMENSIONS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT BY LEVEL OF COMPETENCE

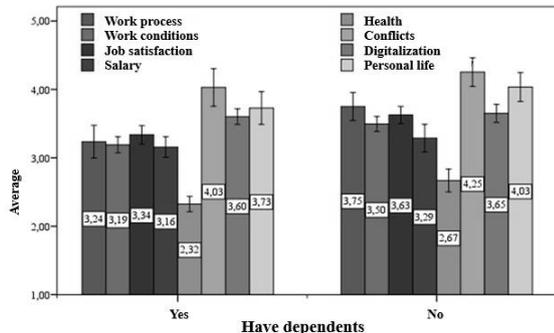|	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Work process	-,808	113	,421
Work conditions	,402	113	,688
Job satisfaction	-,406	113	,685
Salary	-1,818	113	,047
Health	-1,616	113	,109
Conflicts	-,658	113	,512
Digitalization	,034	113	,973
Personal life	-1,045	113	,298

Fig. 6. Dimensions of the work environment for respondents having dependents in the family

The third factor with the largest number of statistically significant differences. In categories where employees have dependent family members on their earnings, ratings are lower compared to those who are single. The t-test results confirm that these differences are statistically significant (Table 6).

The work process is rated significantly higher for employees without dependents (3.75) compared to those with the family members whom they support (3.24). The statistical significance of this difference indicates that additional responsibilities may negatively affect concentration on work. The perception of working conditions is also higher for employees without dependents (3.50) compared to those who undertake responsibility for other family members (3.19). The t-test demonstrate that these differences are statistically significant. This could be

due to the possibility for employees without dependents to focus more on improving and adapting the work environment. Job satisfaction also differs statistically significantly. Employees without dependents (3.63) rate their job satisfaction higher than those with dependents (3.34). These differences could be related to less external pressure and responsibilities, which allows them to focus more on work and enjoy its benefits (Fig. 6).

Significant differences are also observed in health perceptions. Employees without dependents (2.67) rate their health status higher than those with dependents (2.32). This could indicate that employees with dependents experience more stress and difficulties that affect their health (Fig. 6)

The perception of personal life between employees with dependents and those without dependents is not statistically significantly different, as the Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.050, which is right at the accepted limit (0.05). Although the difference between the mean ratings of the two groups (3.73 vs. 4.03) is noticeable (Fig. 6), the t-test indicates that it is not strong enough to be considered significant with high confidence. This result suggests that work-life balance is similar for both groups and although employees without dependents may feel less stressed, this difference is not significant enough to be interpreted as a general trend (Table VI).

TABLE VI DIMENSIONS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT BASED ON HAVING DEPENDENTS

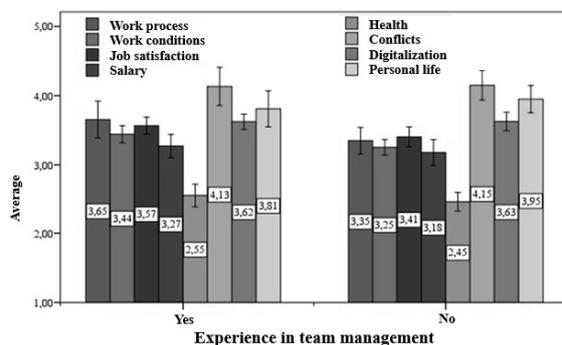|	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Work process	-3,266	113	,001
Work conditions	-3,812	113	,000
Job satisfaction	-3,126	113	,002
Salary	-1,039	113	,301
Health	-3,400	113	,001
Conflicts	-1,302	113	,196
Digitalization	-,541	113	,590
Personal life	-1,923	113	,050

Fig. 7. Dimensions of the work environment by experience in team management

Working conditions is the only category where there are statistically significant differences between employees with experience in team management (3.44) and those without such experience (3.25). Employees with management experience rate working conditions higher (Fig. 7).

Employees with management experience probably feel more satisfied with working conditions because they are more likely to be able to adapt the environment to their needs. Work process, job satisfaction, pay, health, conflict, digitalization, and personal life are categories where there are no significant differences between the management experience groups, indicating similar perceptions between employees with experience in team management and those without such experience (Table VII).

TABLE VII DIMENSIONS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT BY EXPERIENCE IN TEAM MANAGEMENT

	t-test for Equality of Means		
	t	*df*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*
Work process	1,880	113	,063
Work conditions	2,258	113	,026
Job satisfaction	1,684	113	,095
Salary	,740	113	,461
Health	,863	113	,390
Conflicts	-,096	113	,924
Digitalization	-,041	113	,968
Personal life	-,872	113	,385

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The conducted research confirms that change management significantly affects the perception of the work environment among senior customs supervisors working at Latgale customs checkpoints. The results showed that socio-demographic factors, such as education level, gender, marital status, the presence of dependents, and experience in managing teams, play a substantial role in shaping employees' views on working conditions, job satisfaction, and overall workplace well-being.

Supervisors with higher education levels demonstrated a more critical attitude towards organizational support and development opportunities. Differences based on gender highlighted varied perceptions of advice, guidance, and work processes, while employees with family responsibilities and team management experience assessed stress levels and career growth differently. These findings emphasize the necessity to consider employees' socio-demographic characteristics systematically when planning and implementing changes in the Customs Board.

The study shows that a uniform approach to personnel management does not fully meet the needs of diverse employee groups. Tailoring management strategies to different employee profiles can improve staff satisfaction, strengthen workplace resilience, and support sustainable change processes in the Customs Board.

Based on the research results, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the work environment and support the personnel management strategy:

Develop flexible workplace policies that consider family responsibilities and promote a healthy work-life balance.

Create targeted training and professional development programs adapted to different educational backgrounds and career stages.

Implement gender-sensitive measures to ensure fairness and equal opportunities in the work environment.

Foster transparency and increase employee participation in decision-making processes to enhance trust and commitment.

Strengthen support programs for employees in managerial positions to reduce work-related stress and improve leadership skills.

The implementation of these recommendations will contribute to improving the efficiency, motivation, and professional well-being of employees, supporting the overall modernization efforts of the Customs Board.

REFERENCES

[1] J. P. Kotter, Leading Change. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996.

[2] S. Fernandez and H. G. Rainey, "Managing successful organizational change in the public sector," Public Administration Review, vol. 66, no. 2, pp. 168–176, 2006. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00570.x

[3] B. Burnes, *Managing Change*: A Strategic Approach to Organisational Dynamics, 4th ed. Essex, UK: Pearson Education, 2004.

[4] T. G. Cummings and C. G. Worley, Organization Development and Change, 10th ed. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2014.

[5] A. A. Armenakis and S. G. Harris, "Reflections: Our journey in organizational change research and practice," Journal of Change Management, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 127–142, 2009. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697010902879079

[6] W. Bridges, *Managing Transitions:* Making the Most of Change, 3rd ed. Philadelphia, PA: Da Capo Press, 2009.

[7] K. Lewin, "Frontiers in group dynamics," *Human Relations*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 5–41, 1947. https://doi.org/10.1177/001872674700100103

[8] J. Hayes, The Theory and Practice of Change Management, 3rd ed. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

[9] European Commission, Quality of Public Administration: A Toolbox for Practitioners. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2017. [Online]. Available: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1e68deed-1c20-11e7-aeb3-01aa75ed71a1[Accessed: Feb. 12, 2025].

[10] A. Hughes, Managing Change in the Public Sector. London: Routledge, 2018.