# IMPACT OF THE COMMUNICATED INFORMATION CONTENT ON EMPLOYEE RESISTANCE TO CHANGE[*]

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**Abstract.** Communicating information to employees is identified as one of the most important and effective measures. However, there is a lack of research publications that specifically examine what specific information is relevant to employees, what specific content of information can encourage employees to resist change or reduce their negative reactions towards change. In this context, the problem of the study is what specific content of information can reduce or increase employee resistance to change. The subject is the impact of the content of information on employee resistance to change. The aim is to examine the impact of the content of information on employee resistance to change. Objectives: 1) To define the concept of employee resistance to change; 2. To analyse the impact of communicating information to employees on employee resistance to changes; 3) To determine the impact of the content of specific information on employee resistance to change in specific organizations. An empirical survey– an anonymous paper questionnaire of employees of public passenger transportation companies - was carried out. The results may be instrumental for devising efficient economic policies.

**Keywords:** change; employee resistance; information

## 1. Introduction

The everyday life of modern organizations is a continuous process of implementing change in order to adapt to changing external forces, to remain competitive and to stay in the market. The process of implementing change faces various challenges and does not always achieve its goals in every organization. Scientific research identifies various obstacles to the successful implementation of change (Videikienė & Šimanskienė, 2014; Das et al. 2018; Moussa et al., 2018, Antony et al., 2019; Horváthová, Hrnčiar & Rievajová, 2022), such as, inflexibility of

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managers, poor or weak leadership, lack of initiative and resources, hasty and inconsistent implementation of change, unfavorable organizational structure, lack of research, training, budget planning problems, lack of dialogue, and employee resistance to change. The characterization of the impact of the human factor and resistance to change as critically important factors determining the success of the implementation of change initiative is based on several studies (Waddell & Sohal, 1998; Bovey, 2001; Erwin, 2010; Mansor et al., 2013; Dumas et al., 2018; Čižo et al., 2022).

The use of different methods to reduce employee resistance or to incite positive employee reactions in the context of change is the subject of several scientific research publications (Aladwani, 2001; Berna-Martinez & Macia-Perez, 2012; Battilana & Casciaro, 2013; Georgalis, 2015; Lines et al., 2015; Buick et al., 2018). Communicating information to employees is identified as one of the most important and effective tools (Wanberg & Banas 2000; Allen et al. 2007;  Matos Marques Simoes & Esposito, 2014;  Georgalis et al., 2015;  Akan et al., 2016;  Ballaro et al., 2020).

However, there is a lack of research that specifically considers what type of information is relevant to employees, and what content of information can either encourage employees to resist change or reduce their negative reactions to change. It is therefore appropriate to study the scientific problem – insufficient analyses have been performed on what specific content of information can reduce or increase employee resistance to change.  The subject is the impact of the content of information on employee resistance to changes.

The aim is to study the impact of the content of information on employee resistance to change. Objectives: 1) to define the concept of employee resistance to change; 2. to analyse the impact communicating information has on employee resistance to change.  Research methods: for the research justification of the problem, a systematic review and comparative analysis of the content of literature was applied. Empirical research was carried out by conducting an anonymous paper survey among employees of public passenger transportation companies. Version 19.0 of the statistical analysis and data processing program SPSS was used to process the data obtained during the research study. Statistical significance was assessed at $p<\alpha$ level. In this paper, statistical significance was assessed at $p<0.05$ level, and $0.05<p0.1$ is considered a trend.

## 2. Research justification

The concept of employee resistance to change was first developed in research on the force field theory by Lewin (1945), and in further research conducted by Powell and Posner (1978), and Kotter and Sclesinger (1979). Initial research categorized resistance to change as a form of conflict, which signified divisions in otherwise ordinary interactions between individuals and groups (Kotter & Schlesinger, 1979;  Waddell & Sohal, 1998; Weber & Weber, 2001), later research characterized it as a complex phenomenon defined as an individual negative response to change caused by various psychological reactions (Piderit, 2000; Oreg, 2003; Ford et al., 2009; Foster, 2010).

Research analysis conducted demonstrates that employee resistance to change is a natural, subjective, multi-dimensional process of negative attitudes or hostile behavior expressed by employees, the purpose of which is to maintain the current situation or interfere with the process of accomplishing the change.  Table 1 presents definitions of employee resistance to change proposed by different authors.

**Table 1.** The Definition of Employee Resistance to Change in First Author Publications

| Definition | Author |
|---|---|
| Resistance to change - any behavior that helps maintain the current situation in the face of pressure to change the current situation. | Zaltman & Duncan, 1977 |
| Resistance is a multi-dimensional negative outlook or hostile behavior displayed by employees that incorporates unintended delays, costs, and instability into the process of strategic change. | Waddel & Sohal, 1998. |
| Resistance is a consequence of cognitive, cultural structures of and approaches to transformation. | Schein, 1987; Senge, 1990 |
| Resistance is a form of disapproval of the process (a series of activities) of change that a person considers unpleasant, uncomfortable, or burdensome due to personal or group reasons. In all cases, the intention of resistance to change is in the interests of the participant or group to which it belongs. | Giangreco & Pccei, 2005 |
| Resistance to change is a natural and human element of organizational activity, the natural primary reaction of an individual, more often defined as a process, rather than an event. | Van Dijk & Van Dick, 2009 |
| Resistance is a concept that managers use to explain what they consider disliked and undesirable behaviors and interactions. What managers call resistance does not depend on the observed behavior but depends on the interpretation and decisions of observers. | Barely & Rupert, 2018 |
| Resistance is a covert or overt expression of negative reactions, or a defense mechanism against planned change or restrictive influences which is used to oppose the management of change and the accommodation of new practices. | Berna–Martinez & Macia–Perez, 2012. |

*Source*: Prepared by the authors, based on definitions of indicated scientists

In change resistance studies, the analysis of the manifestation of different dimensions of resistance to changes is crucial (Piderit, 2000; Giangreco & Peccei, 2005; Oreg, 2006). Piderit (2000) classified three different dimensions of resistance to change and proposed a three-dimensional concept of resistance. Resistance to change is therefore defined as a three-dimensional (negative) approach that includes affective, behavioral, and cognitive components. These components reflect three different manifestations of objective assessment.

   - *The affective component* asserts how a person feels about change (e.g., angry, anxious)

   - *The cognitive component* indicates what a person thinks about the change (for example, is it necessary? Will it be useful?)

   - *The behavioral component* includes actions or intentions to act in response to the change (e.g., complaining about the change to convince others that the change is negative).

Oreg (2006) argues that these dimensions are interdependent on each other. Most commonly, what people feel about change corresponds to what they think about it and how they behave. Nevertheless, these dimensions differ from each other, and each individually outlines different aspects of the phenomenon of resistance. Fiedler (2010), Lines, et al. (2015) emphasized that cognitive and affective components are often considered sources or causes of resistance, the behavioral component is the true manifestation of resistance, demonstrated in the form of noticeable behavior, work performance and experiences. Research focuses on behavioral resistance, as it is the only directly observed dimension.

Giangreco and Peccei (2005) recognized that behavior exhibited while resisting change was often expressed in passive rather than active ways, such as disregarding initiatives for change or in behavior that covertly hinders the effectiveness or the pace of change. The behavior of individuals resisting change may be active or passive, overt or covert and expressed by specific conduct. Cinite and Duxbury (2018), based on Conner (1998) and Petrini and Hulman (1995), presented the following classification of opposing behavior in Figure 1.

|  | **Overt** | **Covert** |
|---|---|---|
| **Passive** | Coming late to work<br>Abusing sick leave benefits | Not participating in discussions<br>Withholding information<br>Pseudo agreement |
| **Active** | Vocal opposition<br>Sabotage<br>Filing grievances | Requesting transfer<br>Asking for more data |

**Figure 1**. Conner (1998), Petrini and Hultman (1995) Matrix of Resistance Behavior Classifications

*Source:* Cinite & Duxbury (2018)

Given that resistance to change is one of the key factors determining the success of the change, research is constantly looking for the most appropriate means of reducing this resistance: employee engagement (Battilana & Casciaro, 2013; Georgalis, 2015), promoting affective commitment (Battilana & Casciaro, 2013), building a sense of justice (Georgalis, 2015), appointment of a change agent (Lines et al., 2015; Buick et al., 2018), and various other models of overcoming employee resistance are being developed (Lewin, 1945; Aladwani, 2001; Berna-Martinez & Macia-Perez, 2012).

One of the most commonly discussed and referred to as the most effective means of overcoming employee resistance is *communication* (Hay & Hartel, 2001; Weber & Weber, 2001; Proctor & Doukakis, 2003; Washington & Hacker, 2005; Lewis, 2006; Jimmieson et al., 2008; Battilana & Casciaro, 2013; Matos Marques Simoes & Esposito, 2014; Georgalis, 2015; Barrett, 2017; Schulz-Knappe, 2019).

According to Hay and Hartel (2001), HR professionals can reduce excessive stress caused by learning of change initiatives by delivering news in a timely and reliable manner. Employees should learn about change from managers, not from other sources, such as the media or rumors circulating in the organization. Information on the motivation, timing, and scope of change, as well as decision-making procedures and transitional support mechanisms, should be sufficiently detailed. Employee opinions will be influenced by the adequacy, consistency and accuracy of information provided, as well as reliability of and confidence in the source of information. Organizations that offer employees the ability to provide information and control its importance, structure, and decision-making criteria are also more likely to avoid the emotional stress that occurs in their employees.

Proctor and Doukakis (2003) stressed the importance of internal communication within organizations, arguing that communication is a vital part of the process of employee development, and one of the key elements of successful implementation of expansion. Therefore, it is essential to design a formal, coordinated internal communications system within the entire organization, which will facilitate the implementation and practice of employee development.

Research conducted by Washington and Hacker (2005) found that managers who understand the intentions of change are less likely to resist change. The better the manager understood the change, the more eagerly he anticipated the change, the less likely he was to think that the efforts of change will fail, and the less likely he was to desire for the change to not take place within the organization.

Lewis (2006) examined the impact of communicating information on change initiatives on employee resistance and found that the higher the quality of information received about the change initiative, the less resistance to change was palpable.

The findings of the Kulkarni (2016) study revealed that misinterpreted information can cause a negative reaction to change, even if employees do not have an issue with the proposed change in the first instance. Employees may not see their actions as resistance and justify their behavior by claiming it is for ideological reasons or that they are acting in the best long-term interests of the organization.

Schulz-Knappe (2019) also argued that transparency in communication and dialogue with employees is a key factor in employee acceptance of change. Ballaro et al. (2020) also confirmed that information and communication increase the likelihood of successfully implementing the intended change.

Not much research has been done on the content of the information communicated and the impact it has on employee resistance to change. Meier et al. (2013), Barret (2017) recognized the significance of the quality of information communicated and argued that positive information about change reduces employee resistance to change.

## 3. Research methodology

Transport organizations providing regular public passenger transportation services in the city of Klaipeda were selected for the study. The research method was a paper questionnaire. Research was carried out in August 2020. The questionnaire surveyed 316 respondents working at 7 companies.

Respondents were asked to use the seven-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" (score 1) to "strongly agree" (score 7) to rate the specific emotions most often triggered by change and developments taking place in the companies they work for and the actions that are most taken upon learning about changes within the companies.

For the scale of this research, the Oreg (2006) scale which distinguishes three dimensions of resistance - affective, cognitive, behavioral – was adapted. Using the seven-point Likert scale from "Not Important" (score 1) to "Very Important" (score 7) respondents were also asked to rate individual factors regarding information communication that are personally relevant to them, or that are utilized by the companies they work for. Crombach's alpha coefficient, which is equal to, was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

## 4. Results

The socio-demographic distribution of the survey respondents is presented in the Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Socio-demographic distribution of respondents

| Characteristics | | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Occupation | Drivers | 254 | 81,9% |
| | Administrative staff | 24 | 7,7% |
| | Heads | 4 | 1,3% |
| | Service staff | 28 | 9,0% |
| Gender | Male | 275 | 90,2% |
| | Female | 30 | 9,8% |
| Age | Under 25 | 2 | 0,6% |
| | 25-34 | 26 | 8,3% |
| | 35-44 | 63 | 20,2% |
| | 45-54 | 90 | 28,8% |
| | 55-64 | 101 | 32,4% |
| | 65 and above | 30 | 9,6% |
| Education | General | 33 | 10,9% |
| | Secondary | 112 | 37,1% |
| | General upper secondary | 41 | 13,6% |
| | Vocational qualification | 54 | 17,9% |
| | Higher education | 44 | 14,6% |
| | Doctorate (PhD) | 18 | 6,0% |
| | Other | 0 | 0,0% |
| Company Type | Private | 190 | 60,1% |
| | National | 126 | 39,9% |

Based on occupation, most respondents (82%) were drivers, while the fewest were managers (1%). By gender, most respondents (90%) were male, while by age the majority were respondents aged 45-54 (29%) and 55-64 (32%), and the minority – respondents under 25 (0.6%). By education, most respondents (37%) had secondary education, another 11% had general education, while only 21% of employees had higher education or above. Based on company type, 60% of respondents were employed by a private company, while 40% worked for a national company.

It was also established that the average time of employment in the companies surveyed amounted to 9.2 (± 8.4) years, the shortest time amounted to 0.2 years, the longest – 40 years. The average total length of employment amounted to 27.2 (± 10.5) years, the shortest length of employment amounted to 5 years, the longest – 56 years.

Data presented if the Figure 2 below demonstrates that employees rarely indicated that the changes that were being implemented caused them negative emotions. The responses of all respondents added up to less than 4 points. Most commonly change implementation resulted in feelings such as stress (3.19 points) and unpleasant, negative emotions (2.58 points). Upon learning about anticipated change, actions taken were most frequently complaining to colleagues (3.25 points) or opposing management (2.98 points).

Analysis of employee opinions regarding change implemented by the company leads to the conclusion that once implementation of change is in progress, most respondents believe that the change is beneficial for the company and its employees (- 3.75 and 4.45 points, respectively).

Analysis of employee actions during implementation of change demonstrates that most respondents indicated that they are more likely to not actively take any action to resist change rather than the opposite. None of the identified actions reached the limit of 4 points.
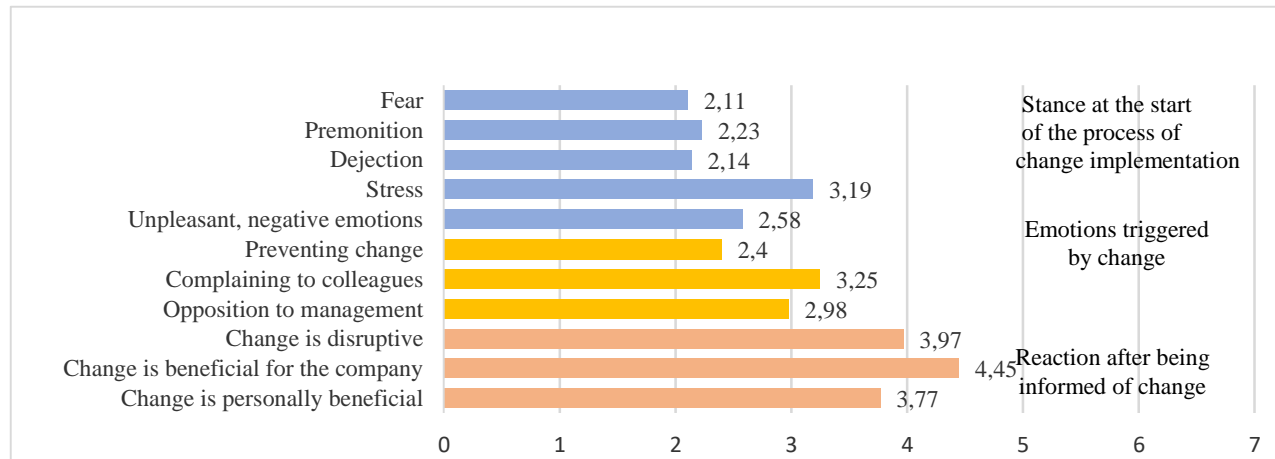


**Figure 2.** The mean of scores of emotions triggered by change

The correlation coefficient between individual emotions, opinions and actions that are triggered by change occurring in the company are calculated in Table 3 below. In most cases correlations were statistically significant ($p<0.05$), for instance, when expression of one emotion is elevated, another emotion is also significantly more pronounced. However, it should be noted that the opinion that change is beneficial for the company is significantly correlated only with the desire to prevent change and unpleasant negative emotions (negative correlation), which indicates that the more common the opinion that change is beneficial for the company is, the less likely unpleasant emotions are felt and the less likely a desire to prevent the change. Also, the opinion that change is personally beneficial has no significant impact on employee stress levels, unpleasant negative emotions, or the desire to prevent change and complain to colleagues.

**Table 3.** Spearman's Rank Correlation between Individual Statements of Dimensions of Resistance Caused by Changes Occurring in the Company

| | | Fear | Premonition | Dejection | Stress | Unpleasant. negative emotions | Preventing change | Complaining to colleagues | Opposition to management | Change is disruptive | Change is beneficial for the company | Change is personally beneficial |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fear | r | 1,000 | **0,762** | **0,649** | **0,541** | **0,552** | **0,363** | **0,302** | **0,246** | **0,322** | 0,014 | **0,121** |
| | p | | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | 0,808 | **0,040** |
| Premonition | r | | 1,000 | **0,741** | **0,624** | **0,622** | **0,389** | **0,315** | **0,332** | **0,347** | 0,000 | **0,137** |
| | p | | | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | 0,996 | **0,020** |
| Dejection | r | | | 1,000 | **0,630** | **0,695** | **0,428** | **0,326** | **0,351** | **0,348** | -0,079 | **0,125** |
| | p | | | | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | 0,184 | **0,036** |
| Stress | r | | | | 1,000 | **0,746** | **0,345** | **0,432** | **0,377** | **0,320** | -0,011 | 0,080 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | p |  |  |  |  |  | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | 0,848 | 0,175 |
| Unpleasant, negative emotions | r |  |  |  |  | 1,000 | **0,377** | **0,366** | **0,367** | **0,317** | **-0,118** | 0,032 |
|  | p |  |  |  |  |  | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,043** | 0,583 |
| Preventing change | r |  |  |  |  |  | 1,000 | **0,525** | **0,443** | **0,502** | **-0,130** | -0,037 |
|  | p |  |  |  |  |  |  | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,027** | 0,529 |
| Complaining to colleagues | r |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1,000 | **0,477** | **0,427** | -0,082 | -0,095 |
|  | p |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **0,000** | **0,000** | 0,161 | 0,104 |
| Opposition to management | r |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1,000 | **0,483** | 0,015 | **0,185** |
|  | p |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **0,000** | 0,792 | **0,002** |
| Change is disruptive | r |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1,000 | 0,012 | **0,134** |
|  | p |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0,833 | **0,024** |
| Change is beneficial for the company | r |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1,000 | **0,675** |
|  | p |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **0,000** |
| Change is personally beneficial | r |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1,000 |
|  | p |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*Statistically significant (when p<0,05) correlations are highlighted*

Data presented in the figure below shows that in the case of each action the level of contemplation for personal benefits exceeds the level of execution by the company, which indicates that employee expectations are much higher than company execution. Factors such as information about salary changes (6.15 points) and information about changes in job specifications (5.97 points) are both most important for employees, and most frequently executed (5.60 points).
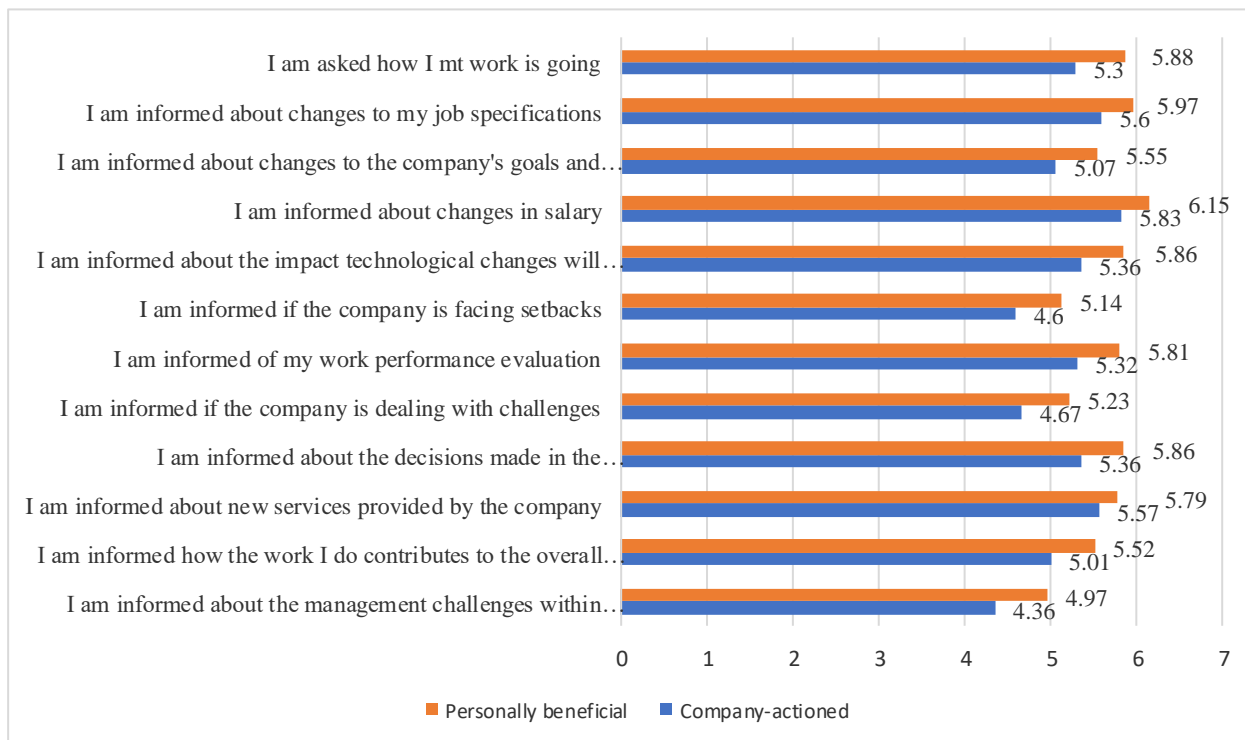


**Figure 3.** The mean of personally beneficial and company-actioned information communication factors

**Table 4.** Spearman's rank correlation between the means of communication used in an organization and the dimensions of resistance to change

| | | Fear | Premonition | Dejection | Stress | Unpleasant, negative emotions | Preventing change | Complaining to colleagues | Opposition to management | Change is disruptive | Change is beneficial for the company | Change is personally beneficial |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I am asked how I my work is going | r | -0,014 | -0,020 | -0,005 | -0,079 | -0,040 | -0,018 | -0,005 | 0,022 | 0,097 | -0,031 | 0,101 |
| | p | 0,814 | 0,738 | 0,930 | 0,185 | 0,509 | 0,769 | 0,939 | 0,718 | 0,109 | 0,600 | 0,095 |
| I am informed about changes to my job specifications | r | -0,038 | -0,093 | -0,094 | -0,043 | -0,053 | -0,061 | 0,016 | -0,027 | 0,115 | 0,040 | **0,118** |
| | p | 0,523 | 0,117 | 0,119 | 0,476 | 0,374 | 0,309 | 0,782 | 0,651 | 0,056 | 0,506 | **0,050** |
| I am informed about changes to the company's goals and activities | r | -0,001 | -0,008 | -0,009 | -0,070 | -0,058 | -0,043 | -0,117 | -0,026 | 0,071 | 0,054 | **0,218** |
| | p | 0,981 | 0,889 | 0,885 | 0,242 | 0,330 | 0,474 | 0,050 | 0,667 | 0,241 | 0,362 | **0,000** |
| I am informed about changes in salary | r | **-0,253** | **-0,234** | **-0,296** | **-0,147** | **-0,229** | **-0,142** | 0,066 | 0,015 | 0,051 | **0,144** | 0,041 |
| | p | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,000** | **0,013** | **0,000** | **0,018** | 0,264 | 0,805 | 0,396 | **0,015** | 0,498 |
| I am informed about the impact technological changes will have on my job specification | r | -0,039 | -0,043 | -0,043 | -0,040 | -0,035 | -0,053 | 0,013 | 0,002 | **0,129** | 0,021 | 0,107 |
| | p | 0,509 | 0,469 | 0,477 | 0,507 | 0,555 | 0,374 | 0,821 | 0,974 | **0,031** | 0,728 | 0,074 |
| I am informed if the company is facing setbacks | r | 0,096 | **0,135** | **0,178** | -0,015 | 0,036 | 0,041 | -0,109 | **0,161** | **0,180** | -0,026 | **0,235** |
| | p | 0,109 | **0,023** | **0,003** | 0,802 | 0,543 | 0,501 | 0,067 | **0,007** | **0,003** | 0,666 | **0,000** |
| I am informed of my work performance evaluation | r | -0,101 | -0,106 | -0,111 | -0,078 | **-0,182** | 0,005 | 0,026 | 0,054 | **0,136** | 0,069 | 0,115 |
| | p | 0,089 | 0,075 | 0,066 | 0,194 | **0,002** | 0,931 | 0,664 | 0,365 | **0,023** | 0,244 | 0,056 |
| I am informed if the company is dealing with challenges | r | 0,079 | 0,101 | 0,135 | -0,028 | 0,048 | 0,056 | **-0,158** | **0,152** | **0,147** | 0,011 | **0,225** |
| | p | 0,188 | 0,093 | 0,026 | 0,637 | 0,419 | 0,351 | **0,008** | **0,010** | **0,015** | 0,847 | **0,000** |
| I am informed about the decisions made in the organization that directly affect the work I do | r | -0,053 | -0,047 | **-0,140** | -0,090 | -0,054 | -0,087 | -0,028 | -0,028 | 0,053 | 0,018 | 0,112 |
| | p | 0,373 | 0,428 | **0,020** | 0,131 | 0,366 | 0,146 | 0,632 | 0,642 | 0,381 | 0,763 | 0,061 |
| I am informed about new services provided by the company | r | **-0,135** | **-0,140** | **-0,201** | **-0,180** | **-0,183** | -0,072 | -0,023 | 0,032 | 0,115 | 0,115 | 0,085 |
| | p | **0,023** | **0,018** | **0,001** | **0,002** | **0,002** | 0,232 | 0,695 | 0,590 | 0,057 | 0,051 | 0,156 |
| I am informed how the work I do contributes to the overall performance of the company | r | 0,017 | **0,122** | 0,098 | -0,048 | 0,011 | 0,026 | -0,075 | 0,101 | **0,180** | -0,032 | **0,167** |
| | p | 0,775 | **0,041** | 0,105 | 0,425 | 0,860 | 0,662 | 0,206 | 0,090 | **0,003** | 0,594 | **0,005** |
| I am informed about the management challenges within the company | r | **0,130** | **0,195** | **0,210** | -0,007 | 0,068 | **0,122** | -0,109 | **0,162** | **0,197** | -0,018 | **0,248** |
| | p | **0,030** | **0,001** | **0,000** | 0,903 | 0,253 | **0,044** | 0,067 | **0,007** | **0,001** | 0,767 | **0,000** |

*Statistically significant (p<0,05) correlations are highlighted*

The assessment of statistically significant correlation coefficients (p<0,05) (see Table 4) demonstrates that:

1) In organizations where employees are informed about changes to their job specifications or are informed about changes to the goals and activities of the company, employees are significantly more likely to agree that implementation of change is personally beneficial to them;

2) In companies where employees are informed about salary changes ahead of change implementation, employees are significantly less likely to feel fear, premonition, dejection, stress, and unpleasant. Negative emotions, and are significantly less likely to attempt to prevent change;

3) In companies where employees are informed of what impact technological changes will have on their job specifications, employees are significantly more likely to think about the disruptiveness of the change;

4) In companies where employees are significantly more likely to be informed about the setbacks the company is facing, employees are significantly more likely to feel premonition and dejection, are more likely to oppose management and believe that the change will be disruptive but are also significantly more likely to believe that the change will be personally beneficial to them;

5) In companies where employees are informed about their work performance evaluation, employees feel significantly less unpleasant negative emotions, but are significantly more likely think about how change will disrupt activities;

6) In companies where employees are informed if the company is dealing with challenges, employees feel significantly more dejected, but are less likely to complain to colleagues, are significantly more opposed to management, are more likely to believe that the change will be disruptive, and that the change will be personally beneficial to them;

7) In companies where employees are informed about the decisions taken in the organization that directly affect their job specifications, employees are significantly less likely to feel dejected;

8) In companies where employees are informed about the company's intention to provide new services, employees are significantly less likely to feel fear, premonition, dejection, stress, and unpleasant, negative emotions;

9) In companies where employees are informed about how the work they do contributes to the overall performance of the company, employees are significantly more likely to feel premonition, are significantly more likely to believe that the change will be disruptive but are also significantly more likely to believe that the change will be personally beneficial to them;

10) In companies where employees are informed about company management challenges, employees are significantly more likely to feel fear, premonition, dejection, are significantly more likely to try to prevent change, oppose management and believe that the change will be disruptive and that the change will be personally beneficial.

## 5. Discussion

The research study established employees' high expectations of information communicated to them. This finding, similarly to other research studies conducted so far (Wanberg & Banas 2000; Allen et al. 2007; Matos Marques Simoes & Esposito, 2014; Georgalis et al., 2015; Akan et al., 2016; Ballaro et al., 2020), undoubtedly justifies the importance and significant impact of communicating information to employees in order to reduce employee resistance to change.

Research conducted found that when employees believes that change is beneficial for the company, they feel less unpleasant emotions and are less willing to prevent the change, but the opinion that the change is personally beneficial to the employees does not result is less resistance. These research findings validate the necessity for managers to inform employees about the benefits of change. Rogiest et al. (2015), Schulz-Knappe (2019) described change communication as comprehensive and honest information in the early stages which addresses the concerns of employees and ensures inclusiveness of employees. Weber and Weber (2001) argued that clarity of goals leads to a positive employee reaction to change. The must to inform employees about new projects and their objectives was also highlighted by Berna-Martinez and Macia-Perez (2012).

The research study also observed that the most important information for employees is information regarding changes in salary and changes in their job specifications. Similarly, a study by Allen et al. (2007) found that employees were more open to change if the information provided to employees reduced uncertainty regarding strategic and labor issues.

Our research, much like research conducted by Meier et al. (2013), found that both the action of communicating information and the quality of information communicated are significant. Lewis (2006) examined the impact of change initiative communication on employee resistance and found that the higher the quality of information received about the change initiative, the less resistance to change. In the meantime, our research demonstrates that the specific content of information can reduce or increase resistance. The findings of the research study clearly demonstrate that communicating information about salary changes, employee work performance evaluation, and the company's provision of new services reduces the affective, cognitive, and behavioral problems of resistance, and reduces negative emotions and the desire to prevent change. The significance of timely, efficient, accurate and detailed presentation of information is based on Barret (2017).

However, the research also identified the negative impact of providing certain information on the affective, cognitive, or behavioral dimensions of employee resistance. Communicating information regarding the impact technological changes have on job specifications, how work performed by employees contributes to the overall performance of the company, about the setbacks a company faces, management and other challenges leads to negative thoughts, emotions, or actions in response to change.

It was also noted that in the presence of negative emotions, the opinion about change itself can still be positive, for example, the affective dimension does not always determine the cognitive dimension. A research study by Meier et al. (2013) found that information communication influenced the affective and cognitive dimensions, but not the behavioral dimension. The fact that resistance to change is an ambivalent (Piderit, 2000) or sometimes even irrational (Heidenreich & Handrich, 2015) process is based on a number of studies.

Limitations of the study and directions for future research. When assessing the findings of the study, it should be noted that research was carried out in a very specific sector, where most employees are older, less educated, and male. Therefore, studies of companies of different socio-demographic characteristics and further research are appropriate.

**Conclusions**

Employee resistance to change is a significant factor that can lead to the collapse of an implementation of change initiative. Communicating information to employees is an effective tool for reducing employee resistance to change. However, the content of information provided is also important to the reduction of employee resistance to change.

When launching change initiatives, managers should inform employees in detail about the benefits of the change, changes in salary and changes in job specifications.

Since communicating information on salary changes, employee work performance evaluation, and the introduction of new services provided by the company may reduce employee resistance to change, greater attention should be paid to communicating this information to employees in a timely manner and ensuring the quality, clarity, and presentation of the information.

To mitigate negative reactions and employee resistance to change during implementation of change, managers should not emphasize information regarding setbacks and other challenges of the company, and limit unnecessary, excessive information, such as the impact technological changes will have on job specifications, how the work carried out by employees contributes to the overall performance of the company, etc.

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**Data Availability Statement:** More primary data can be obtained from the author on a resonable request.

**Author Contributions**: Conceptualization: *Julius Paulikas*; methodology: *Julius Paulikas*; data analysis: *Birutė Paulikienė*, writing—original draft preparation: *Julius Paulikas;* writing; review and editing: *Julius Paulikas*, *Birutė Paulikienė*; visualization: *Birutė Paulikienė*. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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