

The Effect of Digital Tools of Communication on Employee Engagement.

AROIAN, NEENAR

GARABEDIAN, MEERO

School of Business, Society & Engineering

Course: Bachelor Thesis in Business Administration

Course code: FOA230

15 cr

Supervisor: Edward Gillmore

Date: 1st of June 2020, 8th of
June 2020

ABSTRACT

Date: 1st of June 2020, 8th of June

Level: Bachelor thesis in Business
Administration, 15 cr

Institution: School of Business, Society and
Engineering, Erikslund University

Authors: Neenar Aroian Meero Garabedian
(98/01/02) (93/02/10)

Title: The Effect of Digital Tools of
Communication on Employee Engagement.

Tutor: Edward Gillmore

Keywords: Digitalization, Employee
Engagement, Human Resource Management,
Communication, Social Capital

Research questions: How does digital communication
affect employee engagement in an organization?

Purpose: To investigate the phenomenon of
digitalization and how it impacts employees' engagement in
an organization

Method: The study is of qualitative
nature. The authors conducted 8 semi-structured
interviews with managers and employees in ICA Maxi
Erikslund.

Conclusion: The use of digital communication
tools increases the safety feeling of the employee and affects
positively on the productivity and motivation of the
employees, which results in increasing the employee
engagement.

Acknowledgement

The authors of the paper would like to express their appreciation to everyone who helped to achieve the purpose of this research. We express our thanks of gratitude to our supervisor Edward Gillmore, the opposition group in the seminars and ICA Maxi Erikslund. We would like to sincerely thank our supervisor Edward Gillmore. The completion of this thesis could not have been possible without his support and help. The opposing group's feedback helped us perceive the weaker parts of the thesis and improve them. We express thanks to ICA Maxi Erikslund's managers and employees for allowing us to conduct face to face interviews with them.

Table of Contents

1 Introductory Chapter	6
1.1 Introduction	6
1.2 Problem Background	8
1.3 Purpose and Aim	9
1.4 Research Question	9
2 Literature Review	10
2.1 Human Resource Management	10
2.2 Employee Engagement	14
2.3 Social Capital	16
3 Methodology	19
3.1 Epistemological approach:	19
3.2 Research Approach	20
3.3 Context of the study	20
3.4 Data Collection	21
3.4.1 primary data	22
3.4.2 secondary data	22
3.5 Description of Interviews	22
3.6 Reliability of data	26
3.7 Ethical Consideration	26
3.8 Limitations	27
4 Empirical Findings	28
4.1 The digital tools of communication	28
4.2 Employees Interviews	29
4.2.1 Human Resource Management Findings of Employees	29
4.2.2 Employee Engagement Findings of Employees	32
4.2.3 Social Capital Findings of Employees	34
4.3 Managers Interviews	34
4.3.1 Human Resource Management Findings of Managers	34

4.3.2 Employee Engagement Findings of Managers	37
4.3.3 Social Capital Findings of Managers	38
5 Discussion	40
5.1 Human resource management	40
5.2 Employee Engagement	42
5.3 Social Capital	43
6 Conclusion	45
6.1 Future Research	45
7. References	47
7.1 Printed Sources	47
7.2 Electronic Sources:	50

1 Introductory Chapter

The following chapter provides an introduction to the topic. It investigates the problem and ends with the purpose and the research question of the study.

1.1 Introduction

Digital transformation's popularity is increasing rapidly that for many businesses it has become a necessity. However, several organizations still fail to succeed in the transformation. Digital transformation can be defined as using digital technology to find solutions to problems. The main reason for an organization to fail in the transformation is the organization's way of communicating with its environment (Kitani, 2020). Nevertheless, digitalization is essential today and many organizations demand flexibility and speed to be able to keep up with the fast changing environment (Söderholm et al., 2018). In the book *Digital Transformation Now!*, digitalization is defined as "Fundamental changes made to business operations and business models based on newly acquired knowledge gained via value-added digitization initiatives" (Schallmo & Williams, 2018). Digitalization has encouraged employees to become more mobile and depend less on physical attendance in organizations. Also, in order to cope with digitalization, Gilan and Hammarberg find transformation and adaptation a requirement (2016). However, Gilan and Hammarberg mention that employees find physical meetings more effective. Nonetheless, they state that

organizations need to adapt because of the importance of digitalization for the future (Gilan & Hammarberg, 2016).

Although many examples of organizations show the importance of digitalization in today's world, many others do not deny the misuse of digitalization and its negative outcomes. One of the popular examples is Amazon and its treatment of its employees. "We are humans not robots!" is what employees are saying while protesting against Amazon's treatment according to Time. One of the employees says that every task he did was monitored by his scan gun, which he used at work. For a shift around 12 hours, he was only expected to take time off for 18 minutes. In case he took more, a manager was informed by the scan gun. The employee adds "I felt an incredible amount of pressure to repress the human "failings" that made me less efficient than a machine" (Guendelsberger, 2019). Another employee says: "You're being tracked by a computer the entire time you're there." "You get written up by an algorithm" (Sainato, 2020). The previous examples show the misuse of digitalization and technology. The damage caused by the unfair treatment is not only physical but also mental. The amount of stress felt by employees is making them feel as if they were robots (Guendelsberger, 2019).

Employee engagement can be defined as employees using their full resources to perform what is demanded from them. When employees are engaged in their work, they find it more enjoyable (Gems, 2015). According to the book *New Perspective in Employee Engagement in Human Resources*, "Greater engagement is associated with decreased costs ... and fewer quality errors" (Gems, 2015). Therefore, human resource departments are trying to find the best way to motivate their employees to become more productive and engaged (Peters, 2019). Employee engagement and positive relationships with managers have a direct correlation. Meaning, the more positive a relationship is between an employee and a manager, the higher is the employee's engagement ("JOSSO 2 - Processing ...", 2020). How is a disengaged employee defined then? A disengaged employee can be a positive,

social person with bright ideas outside work but the opposite while working. This person refuses to come up with suggestions or participate in social events such as after-work ("JOSSO 2 - Processing ...", 2020).

1.2 Problem Background

While digitalization can be a useful tool for companies to improve employee engagement, it also has many drawbacks. Relying mostly on electronic equipment has been proven to cause some distraction. For example, reading from electronic devices may cause shallowness and to not fully concentrate on the content (Gabriela Petrașuc & Popescu, 2019). According to Vinit Parida in the book *Addressing Societal Challenges*, "Much of the promised value of digitalization for business and society has not yet been fully realized" (Söderholm et al., 2018). However, this is not always the case for all businesses. Although digitalization can be of great use for organizations, it can also cause several problems. Many organizations agree that digitalization increases innovation and creativity of employees because it increases their freedom to access information. This, however, does not mean that digitalization may not have negative consequences on employees. Employees say that digitalization causes information overload and thus high levels of stress (Nöhammer & Stichberger, 2019). Also, employees feel addicted to their digital devices. They tend to use social media platforms such as Facebook more during their working time. Some even play games like Candy Crush (Tarafdar et al., 2015). Furthermore, the use of information technology causes employees to become less committed to their work and some even want to quit because of the constantly changing applications. This is because employees are struggling to cope with it and therefore feel less efficient at work. All these negative

consequences of digitalization and the use of information technology at work causes the level of employee satisfaction to decrease (Tarafdar et al., 2015). The question here remains: Are organizations able to implement digitalization in a way that would benefit employees and increase their engagement without causing negative effects?

1.3 Purpose and Aim

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the phenomenon of digitalization and how it impacts employees' engagement in an organization. To be able to reach the purpose, a qualitative approach will be used while collecting data by conducting interviews with the employees and managers of the company ICA Maxi Erikslund. Also, by comparing these interviews to theoretical frameworks to be able to find how employees' engagement is affected by digitalization.

1.4 Research Question

How does digital communication affect employee engagement in an organization?

2 Literature Review

This chapter contains theories about human resource management, the impact of digitalization on human resource management and social capital.

2.1 Human Resource Management

One of the most important resources that a company can have is human resources (Shivarudrappa et al., 2010). According to P. Subba Rao, “human resource management means employing people, developing their resources, utilizing, maintaining and compensating their services in tune with the job and organisational requirements with a view to contribute to the goals of the organization, individual and the society” (Rao, 2009). Human resources can be the reason for an organization to fail to succeed or maintain the success. This means, the quality of the employees existing in an organization, determines the success or the failure of the organization. This is because all non-human resources are assisting employees to accomplish tasks, which means, the overall success of a company is determined by its employees. Although it was different several decades ago, today, employers and employees have shared interest in responsibility as well as the growth of a company (Shivarudrappa et al., 2010).

One of the first theories of human resource management was found by the Harvard School of Beer. Beer believed that employees need to be viewed as assets rather than costs. He suggested that a long term perspective should be considered when managing

human resources in an organization (Laryea et al., 2010). The Harvard theory is considered a “soft” human resource model. Other theories view employees as costs and therefore are considered hard theories of human resource management. The Harvard model stresses on the importance of the relationship between employees (Budhwar & Khatri, 2001). The model begins by taking into account the stakeholders and their interests whether they are shareholders, employees or the government. The stakeholders’ interests are directly related to the management goals. These interests are simultaneously affected by other factors called situational. These situational factors include the labour market, societal values, workforce characteristics and several others. The model continues to explain that both stakeholders’ interests and situational factors affect the human resource management policy choices. These include, employee influence, human resource flow, reward systems and work systems. If used correctly, these policies later lead to positive outcomes. These outcomes are employee commitment and competence, the extent of congruence between an organization and its employees and cost effectiveness of the human resource management in general (Beer et al., 1984). In the long-run, these policies have a greater effect on an individual, organizational and societal level (Budhwar & Khatri, 2001). The authors in the book ‘Managing Human Assets: The Groundbreaking Harvard Business School Program’, state that “human resource management has much broader consequences than simply last quarter’s profits or last year’s return on equity.” “Thus, HRM policy formulation must incorporate this long-term perspective” (Beer et al., 1984). In addition, long term consequences could also have an impact on situational factors as well as stakeholders’ interests, showing how the model could also work the other way around. An example could be employees striking, which could lead to changing labour legislation (Beer et al., 1984).

Some parts of the model are explained further. Starting with the stakeholders interests, managers must understand that not all employees, who are one of the groups of the stakeholders, have the same interests. For example, interests differ according to age.

The younger generation might not necessarily have the same interests as the older generations. Regarding the situational factors, it is important to realize that not all situational factors are outside an organization. For example, workforce characteristics and management philosophy are internal situational factors that could get affected by human resource management policies (Beer et al., 1984). In terms of human resource outcomes, the model shows the importance of having policies that take into account an organization's success in the long run and not only in the short run. Nonetheless, still taking into account the employees' health and well-being. If an organization is doing great financially but employees are burnt out then the policies need change (Bondarouk & Brewster, 2016).

The advantages of the Harvard model include, recognizing the importance of many stakeholders' interests and understanding that trade-offs between employees' interests and owners' interests as well as other stakeholders' interests are essential. Also, add employee influence in the human resource management context. Moreover, it recognizes the influences that impact the choice of strategy of managers. Finally, it supports strategic choice (Armstrong & Baron, 2003).

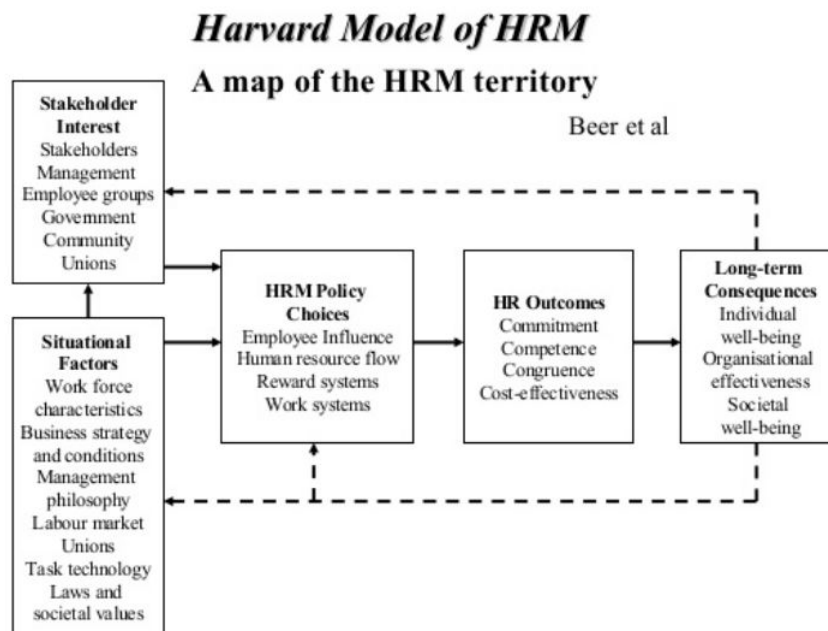


Figure 1. The Harvard Framework (Beer et al., 1984)

In addition to the Harvard model, there are other models of human resource management. For example, the Michigan model and the Warwick model. These could be counted as complementary models because these models look into different areas in more detail such as internal contexts.

The Michigan model was first mentioned in the book Strategic Human Resource Management and focuses on the performance of the employees and the organization. The Michigan model treats employees as costs. They are resources like any other resources in an organization and therefore the model is counted as hard human resource management (Kandula, 2003). The Michigan model developed by Fombrun in 1984, shows how an organization's structure, strategy and mission and human resource management is influenced by economic, cultural and political forces (Agyepong, Fugar & Tuuli, 2010). Moreover, the model describes the importance of selecting suitable employees for roles,

rewarding employees when performing well, monitoring performance and developing knowledge and skills that are essential for reaching organization's goals (Kandula, 2003).

All the theories and models of human resource management developed up to the Warwick model were developed in the American context. The Warwick model by Hendry and Pettigrew, on the other hand, took European context into account. The model shows how external factors affect the internal factors of an organization (Agyepong, Fugar & Tuuli, 2010). The Warwick model focuses on strategy unlike the Harvard model. The model consists of five factors according to the book. These factors are: outer context, inner context, business strategy content, HRM context and HRM content. The outer context includes socio-economic, technical, political and competitive forces. The inner context includes culture, structure, politics, task-technology and output. The business strategy content includes objectives, product market, strategy and tactics. The HRM context includes role, definition, organization and human resource output. The HRM content includes human resource flows, work systems, reward systems and employee relations (Aswathappa, 2013).

2.2 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is directly related to employee productivity and devotion to work. When employees are fully engaged, customers' overall satisfaction increases and the organization's reputation is improved (Kompaso & Sridevi, 2010). According to Kahn, personal engagement can be defined as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (Kahn, 1990). Disengaged employees, on the other hand, are not fully committed. They also waste time on tasks that are not prioritized

(Kompaso & Sridevi, 2010). It is important to mention that studies show that although organizations are interested in increasing employee engagement, the percentage of employees highly engaged in their work is still low worldwide. This shows that organizations are not doing enough to increase their employees' engagement (Whittington et al., 2017).

An employee is engaged when he or she is physically and emotionally available at work. When employees are engaged, they put more energy and effort and thus become more productive (Wahyu Ariani, 2013). Moreover, engaged employees do not only do something more at work but also something different. This means they are not only productive but also creative. They do not only focus on quantity but also quality (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

Kahn's model is the first and oldest model of personal engagement. After conducting interviews, Kahn found that the three psychological conditions; safety, meaningfulness and availability are what causes an employee to be engaged (Saks, 2006). The psychological condition, safety, refers to feeling fearless while being at work. This could be while talking to people, trying a new task or simply doing what is being asked. If employees feel safe, then they will not fear failing and trying again and will therefore be their true selves and honest while at work. On the other hand, if employees feel disconnected and not supported by their managers or colleagues, they will not feel safe and therefore will become disengaged at work (Gruman & Saks, 2011). Safety is impacted by interpersonal relationships, group and intergroup dynamics, management style and norms (Kahn, 1990). The second psychological condition, meaningfulness, according to Kahn "can be seen as a feeling that one is receiving a return on investments of one's self" (1990). Feeling meaningful means feeling useful and able to benefit organizations as a whole. If employees feel that they are doing little compared to what they are capable of, they will feel discouraged and unable to benefit others and the organization. Meaningfulness is affected by task characteristics, role characteristics and work interactions (Kahn, 1990). The third psychological condition, availability, means if

employees feel available emotionally, physically as well as cognitively to get engaged (Kahn, 1990). According to Kahn, availability could be influenced by individual insecurity, physical energy, depletion of emotional energy and outside lives (1990).

Organizations are realizing the importance of internal communication and its positive effect on employee engagement. The better the communication is between managers and employees the more engaged employees are at work (Mishra et al., 2014). Internal communication is linked to meaningfulness, safety and commitment, which are also linked to personal engagement. Effective communication is what many organizations strive for. This is because if managers are not communicative with their employees, employees feel uncomfortable asking questions and communicating. This, as a result, would lead to employees becoming disengaged (Kalani & Hayase, 2009).

2.3 Social Capital

Social capital theory suggests that human interactions can build up to develop the human capital (Machalek, Richard & Martin, Michael, 2015). It is based on creating mutually beneficial relationships between people that know each other and deal with each other on a daily basis by acting collaboratively (Claridge, n.d.). The results of social capital can be either physical or non-physical and it can be the foundation stone that builds profitable relationships within an organization such as trust and respect, which puts up in the success of the organization (Kenton, 2019).

The term social capital is very wide and uncertain which makes it hard to define in one definition. It can be used on many levels such as organizational levels, national levels, etc. (Claridge, n.d.). The social capital theory can be implied in networks level, describing the relationships into three basic forms:

- Bonding social capital: Describing relationships on homogeneous levels.

- Bridging social capital: Describing relationships on heterogeneous levels.
- Linking social capital: Describing relationships on different hierarchical levels (Schuller, T. & Theisens, H. 2010).

In his article, (Szreter, 2004) explains the difference between bonding, bridging and linking by describing bonding as the interactions between individuals who have similar specifications. Bridging refers to social capital interactions between groups that belong to different groups where each group has its own ethnic background and specifications. Linking social capital relationships are the interactions of trust and commitment that is created between higher levels of power and authority grade groups.

Moreover, bonding refers to the social capital relationships existing between individuals on micro level while bridging refers to the social capital relationships existing between groups on meso levels (Kenton, 2019).

Lorenzo Bizzi (2015) suggests that social relationships and interactions between individuals in an organization such as exchanging favors, can be considered as assets that may help getting a desired value in the future.

Claridge, T., 2004 identifies five different dimensions of social capital, which cannot fully work without them: 1) Trust, 2) Rules and norms controlling social actions, 3) Types of social interactions, 4) Network resources, 5) Other network characteristics.

Social capital can exist on many levels: 1) Micro (individual), 2) Meso (group) 3) Macro (societal) (Claridge, 2018). On micro levels, social capital can exist between single individuals, the norms and values that an individual has such as trust, honesty or even anxiety affect the relationships between individuals and the social capital each individual has (Claridge, 2018). On macro levels, social capital focuses on larger communities and societies (Claridge, 2018).

In this paper, the social capital theory will be used on its meso levels where it focuses on organizations and groups as well as micro levels where it focuses on interactions

between individuals (Claridge, 2018). Social capital relationships exist among members of the organization internally. A group of members in an organization can create value by interacting amongst each other by norms and values such as transparency, honesty/dishonesty and they can create positive or negative effects on the organization (Claridge, 2018). Other negative effects of social capital can be for example gang members using social capital relationships to facilitate selling drugs and other undesirable products (Kenton, 2019). The authors applied this theory on meso and micro levels to understand the employee engagement and how it is affected by digitalization. Social capital has no general measurement tool to use and cannot be calculated and reviewed by standard tools (Claridge, n.d.).

3 Methodology

The following chapter explains the method used in collecting the data needed for this study. It also includes information about the investigated company and the limitations faced the authors while writing it.

3.1 Epistemological approach:

Epistemology is the measure or the set of the standards that researchers use to determine what forms their study (Dudovskiy, n.d.). According to Alan Bryman and Emma Bell, “An epistemological issue concerns the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline” (2015). The epistemological issue discusses whether the same natural science principles could be used for studying social sciences. There are four different epistemological approaches which are 1) pragmatism, 2) positivism, 3) realism, 4) interpretivism (Dudovskiy, n.d.).

Interpretivism is an epistemological position that supports the idea that the same principles and procedures of natural sciences could not be used for social sciences. This position looks at the understanding of human behavior. On the contrary, positivism supports explaining human behavior. Positivism is the opposite of Interpretivism, because it states that social sciences could be studied by applying the same principles and procedures as natural sciences (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In this thesis, the epistemological position used is Interpretivism. This is because this thesis is following an inductive research approach.

3.2 Research Approach

In order to conduct this study, the authors chose between two different approaches:

- The inductive approach: Where it aims to study a phenomenon using mostly qualitative approach to come out with a theory (Gabriel, 2013).
- The deductive approach: Where it aims to examine theories and uses the quantitative approach in order to do so (Gabriel, 2013).

The authors have followed an inductive research method while investigating the phenomenon of digitalization. Inductive research proposes having a research question, and investigating an already existing phenomenon from another point of view in order to have a better understanding of the phenomenon and its effects on employee engagement (Gabriel, 2013). The authors used a qualitative approach while collecting the data needed for this investigation, which is linked to the inductive approach (Gabriel, 2013). The authors used both existing theories as well as the data collected from the interviews to get valuable findings. The authors were neutral while collecting the data in order to get unbiased results without previously perceived ideas (Gabriel, 2013). Furthermore, all the information gathered from books, articles and journals were referenced using the APA referencing system.

3.3 Context of the study

The authors have chosen ICA Maxi Erikslund as a study case for this paper for several reasons. Both authors have worked there in different departments. One of the authors is still employed. They experienced first hand the digital communication tools used

by the company to smoothen both internal and external communication. Also, because of the convenience of interviewing as many employees and managers as possible. Since the employees of ICA Maxi Erikslund are familiar with the authors, they will be more cooperative and open to be interviewed. The fact that both the authors have been employees for the study case organization did not affect the credibility of the work because the authors did not add their personal reflections in the data received.

The company investigated in this paper is ICA Maxi Erikslund, which is located in Västerås. The company has been active since 2006 in Västerås and is owned by individuals. In addition to the wide range of food, ICA Maxi Erikslund also offers laundry and cleaning equipment, clothing, makeup, medicine, toiletries, kitchen, home accessories and many more ("Butiken | Maxi ICA Stormarknad Erikslund", 2020). The company is a franchise and is one of about 81 ICA Maxi supermarkets spread all over Sweden ("ICAs fyra profiler", 2020). ICA Maxi Erikslund is one of the largest existing ICA Maxi chain supermarkets. It contains more than 175 employees ("Butiken | Maxi ICA Stormarknad Erikslund", 2020).

3.4 Data Collection

To conduct this study, the authors used a qualitative approach to collect the data needed. Since the interviews are based on words rather than numbers, the interviewees express themselves better and give clearer explanations (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

3.4.1 primary data

Primary data is the data collected by the researchers or the authors themselves using surveys or interviews etc (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The authors relied on primary data to conduct this study, all the data needed for this paper were collected by the authors themselves by interviewing employees in ICA Maxi Erikslund.

The authors decided to rely on primary data because it was most convenient for this study for two reasons. Firstly, the study is mostly relying on the opinions and personal reflections of the interviewees. Secondly, the authors could not obtain the statistics and the numbers asked from the organization.

3.4.2 secondary data

Secondary data are all the data collected by others and not the authors themselves (Bryman & Bell, 2015). For this study, the authors did not rely on any secondary data.

3.5 Description of Interviews

8 in-person interviews have been held. Interviews provide a more personal approach since according to Esposito, Bratanic and Keller, in-person interviews are important for a better mutual understanding (2007). The authors followed a semi-structured approach while conducting the interviews and they were prepared to ask follow-up questions whenever needed (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The interviewees were not handed the questions beforehand according to their own request. The interviewees were kept anonymous based on the wish of

the interviewees and were given nicknames in order to make the data presented relatable and easy to follow by the reader.

The interviewees were selected by a specific criterion. All the interviewees have been employees in ICA Maxi Erikslund for more than 3 years by the time of the interviews and are full-time workers. All the interviews were conducted in ICA Maxi Erikslund's offices in Västerås, Sweden. The interviews were held by both authors. Interviews took approximately 15-20 minutes. 4 of the interviews were conducted in one day and the other 4 the next day. The authors decided to conduct all the interviews in Swedish since it is the native speaking language of the interviewees. This was done to give them the ability to express themselves more openly but also to feel more comfortable speaking. The interviewees were 3 managers and 5 front-line employees at ICA Maxi Erikslund.

The tables below show the interview questions asked to employees and managers.

Table 1: Questions asked to both employees and managers

Human Resource Management	Employee Engagement	Social Capital
---------------------------	---------------------	----------------

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your position in the company? 2. What is your highest level of education? 3. How long have you been employed in ICA Maxi Erikslund? 4. What tasks do you usually have within the company? What do you usually do? 5. What are the digital tools that you usually use (on a daily or weekly basis) to communicate with other employees in ICA Maxi Erikslund? 6. Do you feel comfortable using these tools? 7. What changes have you noticed in communication since you started working for ICA Maxi Erikslund? 8. Do you prefer having digital forms of communication or traditional and less digital forms of communication? 9. What are the positive effects of digital communication? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much has digitalization affected your motivation to work? 2. How much has digitalization affected your engagement at work? Do you feel more engaged or less engaged while working? 3. Do you feel more committed to work because of the new digital forms of communication? 4. How much has the frequency of interaction increased or decreased with your colleagues after the implementation of the digital communication methods? 5. How much has the frequency of interaction increased or decreased with your managers after the implementation of the digital communication methods? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has the level of trust between you and your colleagues been affected by the use of digital communication tools? 2. How much has the frequency of interaction increased or decreased with your managers after the implementation of the digital communication methods?
---	--	---

10. What are the negative effects of digital communication?		
---	--	--

Table 2: Questions asked to managers only

Human Resource Management	Employee Engagement	Social Capital
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you think the employees feel comfortable using the digital communication tools? 2. How has the increased use of digitalization affected employees turnover each year? 3. How has the increased use of digitalization affected the number of employees working on the floor during the peak hours? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has the increased use of digitalization affected the employees productivity and motivation? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has the trust and interaction between your employees got affected by using digital communication tools?

3.6 Reliability of data

The authors have tried to keep the data collected as unbiased as possible by recording the interviews to analyze them and re-use them whenever needed. The interviewees were asked to speak in their own language despite the fact that the study is conducted in English to give them the freedom to express themselves the best way they can. The authors transmitted the answers and the data they received without any changes or modifications in order to get unbiased results.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

All the interviews were recorded after asking for the permission of the interviewees. It was made clear to the interviewees that the recording will only be used to not miss details that would help reach valuable findings. Especially since the interviews were conducted in Swedish and were later translated into English. The recordings will not be used for any purposes other than this thesis and will all be deleted after the thesis is completed. They were also given the right to not answer any questions they find unnecessary. The authors have explained to the interviewees the purpose of the study but also explained their right to withdraw from the interviews whenever they want.

3.8 Limitations

Despite all the efforts conducted by the authors to collect unbiased and objective data, the authors are aware of many limitations that could affect the accuracy of this paper. The first and the most important limitation faced by the authors is the epidemic COVID-19 that was spread throughout the world and specifically the country the research was conducted in, Sweden. The authors were unable to meet and discuss the ideas in person but instead they had to discuss by texting or online meetings. Similarly, the meetings with the supervisor were conducted via Skype. Another limitation was time, although the authors were given a good amount of time for preparation, time limits the number of interviews conducted since each interviewee needed to be contacted and booked to interview in person. Moreover, the number of interviews conducted was another limitation, although the authors tried to conduct as many interviews as possible, some of the managers as well as employees in ICA Maxi Erikslund apologized of taking part of the interviews. This was because they could not afford time to participate in the study. Furthermore, the language was also a limitation. Both authors are not native English nor Swedish speakers. The interviews were conducted in Swedish and then later were translated to English. There could have been some inaccuracy during the translation process that can affect the credibility of the paper. The authors are also aware that the study was based on a single company and therefore all data was taken from employees working in one company. If interviews were conducted with several companies, more data would have been collected and therefore the findings credibility would have increased. The interviewees were not handed the questions beforehand which can also be seen as a limitation. Handing out the interview questions beforehand would give the interviewees enough time to prepare for the interviews and get more valuable data.

4 Empirical Findings

The following chapter starts with a short description of the digital tools of communication used by employees and managers. It then provides the answers of all the interviewees categorized according to the theories.

4.1 The digital tools of communication

When interviewing the 5 employees; John, Anna, Paul, Simon and Ross as well as the 3 managers; Alexandra, William and Nick, they all agreed that there are two digital tools that are used for the purpose of communication in ICA Maxi Erikslund. These two tools are the telephones used in the departments and the application called Ipool. The telephones are used during working hours and each department has a telephone. They help employees to communicate with each other and ask questions and then find solutions and help customers. The application Ipool, allows every single person working in ICA Maxi Erikslund to see their schedule and add when they are available to work. It is also a communication tool because any two employees can contact each other by sending a message. Moreover, managers send important information on Ipool where all employees can see. They can also see who has seen the message and who has not.

4.2 Employees Interviews

This chapter will provide the answers of employees working on the floor. The answers are categorized according to theories.

4.2.1 Human Resource Management Findings of Employees

The first employee the authors interviewed was John. John's main task is to receive the delivered products and make sure the shelves in his department are full of products. He has a high school diploma and has been working in ICA Maxi Erikslund for 3 years. His tasks include distributing the delivered products in stock on shelves in his department, making sure the shelves are clean and full of correct products and customers are happy and their questions are answered. One of the main digital tools that John uses to communicate with other employees and managers is the application Ipool. He states that this application is useful because he can see his schedule and add when he can work overtime. He can also contact any manager or colleague by sending them a message using the application or even view their phone number and email address if needed. These are available for every employee. John also says "managers send employees important information on Ipool and employees press the "I have read" button so that managers confirm that everyone has read the information". John mentions another digital tool used, which is telephones. He says that there is a telephone in each department to contact other departments for questions or concerns. He feels comfortable using these digital tools. John thinks that not many changes have occurred since he started working in ICA Maxi Erikslund. All these digital tools mentioned existed when he started working in the supermarket 3 years ago. John says he prefers using digital tools at work. He appreciates having Ipool because he does not need everyone's number to contact them or wait for his working shift to speak to them. He can

send them a message on Ipool and it will only take him a minute. Having a telephone also makes it a lot easier to contact other departments during working hours instead of having to walk in the big supermarket, according to John. He recalls one negative effect of these digital tools and that is when the system breaks down especially during peak times of the year like Christmas or Midsummer. This increases stress according to him.

Anna's main task consists of confirming that all shelves are full of products and all the stock is being distributed on shelves. She has been working in ICA Maxi Erikslund for almost 5 years and has a bachelor in business. Her daily routine consists of distributing stock products on shelves in the supermarket and answering customers' questions. The digital communication tools that Anna uses on a daily basis are: "A telephone, to call other departments when I need an answer to a question or if I need help", as she states. Another digital tool she uses is an application, called Ipool. Anna states that this is where she checks her schedule, adds when she is available to work and sends messages to any person working in ICA Maxi Erikslund. She feels comfortable using these tools. The use of digital communication has not increased since Anna started working in ICA Maxi Erikslund. "We had Ipool and the telephones 5 years ago" she says. She also states that face to face meetings with managers and other employees occur often, which according to her are sometimes necessary, however, she prefers the digital forms of communication more because they are faster and smoother. Anna finds one negative effect caused by using telephones and Ipool and that is the overuse. She thinks that sometimes unnecessary information is sent and everyone has to read it.

Paul has been working for ICA Maxi Erikslund for 4 years and has graduated high school. His main tasks are to make sure that his department is running as it should, shelves are full and the delivery is well distributed on the shelves. The main digital communication tools that he uses on a daily basis is the Ipool application. Ipool allows him to contact all the other employees and managers in the store and add or remove time slots where he can

work. He accesses Ipool using his own mobile phone. Paul also uses department telephones, which allow him to contact other department employees during work. He has no problem using these tools. He stated that no changes have happened in digital communication since he started working there. Paul also stated that he prefers working with digital tools because they are more efficient and time-saving. He thinks that contacting other employees is easier using digital tools and also beneficial for the customers because he can contact any other department during work using his department telephone. When asked about the negative effects of digital communication tools, Paul says: "I don't recall any negative effects!".

Simon is the fourth employee the authors interviewed. He has a bachelor degree in business administration and has been working for ICA Maxi Erikslund for 4 years. Simon's tasks consist of receiving the daily delivery for his department and making sure that all the stock is well distributed on the shelves and also to help customers with their needs. The digital tools that he uses to communicate with his colleagues are departments' telephones and his mobile phone. Telephones are used to contact other employees when needed. He uses his mobile phone to access an application called Ipool, which allows him to send and receive messages from other employees and managers and also add what time slots he is available for work in addition to his scheduled hours. He feels comfortable using these tools. Simon adds that there have not been any changes in the digital communication tools since he started working for ICA Maxi Erikslund. He prefers working with digital communication tools. This is because these tools make the work both time and effort saving according to him. However, he mentions one negative side of using these tools, which is when the system breaks down. "Although that occurs rarely, it causes some stress during work", says Simon.

Ross has been working for ICA Maxi Erikslund for 5 years. He has a bachelor degree in Business and Economics. His tasks are to receive the daily delivery for his department and make sure that all the shelves are clean and well-stocked during his daily shift.

Moreover, he is responsible for the store when he has a closing shift, he helps the different departments whenever needed and confirms that the store is running as it should. Ross uses different types of digital communication tools such as the telephones located in each department and his own mobile phone. He uses his mobile phone to access the different applications such as Ipool and other social media communicating applications to send and receive messages from other employees and managers. The telephones are used to communicate with other employees in other departments, according to Ross. Moreover he feels comfortable using these tools. Digital communication tools have not changed since Ross started working there except for the use of social media, which has increased as he says “We have group chats for departments that we can share information quickly and more effectively”. Ross states that he prefers using digital communication tools. These tools according to him facilitates his work and makes it time-saving. Ross does not recall any negative effects for using digital tools. He says: “The more the digital communication, the better”.

4.2.2 Employee Engagement Findings of Employees

John does not feel an increase in motivation nor engagement for having digital tools of communication. He explains this by saying “My job as an employee working on the floor requires physical strength mostly rather than using technology”. He thinks that the digital communication tools have increased his interaction with other employees and using telephones make it easier to get closer to other employees working in the supermarket. “One day you ask about a product, the next day you have lunch and chat during the break.” says John. He also adds that managers use Ipool very often to contact employees, which definitely increases interaction between managers and employees working on the floor. Furthermore, John thinks his commitment to work has not been affected by digitalization either.

In regards to motivation, Anna feels more motivated to work because of the digital tools used in general. She also feels more engaged because of the application. "I feel that my questions are answered and my manager supports my opinions. Using telephones also makes me feel more helpful." says Anna. In addition to helping customers, she helps other employees in other departments as well. She adds that the interaction has increased with both employees and managers because it feels easier to simply send a message to others rather than having to look for them. Furthermore, Anna states that her commitment to work has also increased because of the digital tools that make communication smoother.

Paul feels that his motivation and engagement for work have increased with the use of digital communication tools because it makes his job easier. The interaction with other employees has increased according to him because "it is easier to contact other employees via Ipool and department telephones", says Paul. He feels more committed to work because of the digital tools that make the work more efficient.

Simon says that he feels more motivated and engaged because digital tools make the work more efficient. He also feels that he is not only working in his department, but also helping other employees of different departments by contacting employees quickly with his department telephone. In his opinion, this makes him feel more engaged. According to Simon, the communication with other employees has also increased. He does not think his commitment is affected by the use of digital communication tools.

Ross says that he feels more committed and motivated at work because these tools make the work more fun and effective as well as less frustrating. The communication with other employees according to him has increased because of these tools, because it is easier to contact other employees and managers and "break the ice" between himself and others, as he states. His engagement level to work has increased because of these tools according to him.

4.2.3 Social Capital Findings of Employees

The interviewed employees were asked a question about trust. The authors want to have a better understanding of how trust is affected by the digital tool used for communication.

John, Anna, Paul and Simon think that their trust level towards other employees increased using digital tools. They all have agreed that using digital communication tools make interactions easier and more efficient. Therefore, “the uncertainty levels decrease amongst the employees” says Anna. However, Ross has a different opinion. He states that trust towards new employees decreases because according to him, it takes time to adjust and become proficient in using these tools and applications. Ross also says, “I often need to double-check if the new employees have done the job right”.

As mentioned by the authors earlier, all front-line employees also agreed that the frequency of interaction has increased between the employees after the use of digital tools.

4.3 Managers Interviews

This chapter will provide the answers of the managers. The answers are categorized according to theories.

4.3.1 Human Resource Management Findings of Managers

Alexandra manages a few departments in ICA Maxi Erikslund. She has graduated high school and has taken several courses at a university level. She has been working in ICA Maxi Erikslund for 3 years. Her daily routine consists of supporting and leading several departments' managers. Alexandra mentions that although many digital tools are used in the

company, the digital tools used to communicate with other employees are mainly telephones and an application. She feels comfortable using these tools. "I do not have any problems with them except, sometimes, the system does not function properly", says Alexandra. She also mentions that changes in digital communication must have occurred years before she was employed, such as Ipool. Recently, she does not recall any changes in communication. She also thinks that all employees feel comfortable using the digital communication tools. Alexandra prefers the digital tools of communication whether it is with other employees or customers. "The use of digitalization makes it a lot easier to reach every employee rather than using paper and hang it on a wall" as she states. According to her, by simply sending a message on Ipool, all employees are able to read any information within a few hours depending on when they read it. However, Alexandra recalls a few negative effects of digital communication tools. She thinks that because of digitalization, communication becomes easy and therefore sometimes unnecessary messages are being sent on Ipool. Moreover, "I am unsure if a message I send is delivered because you never know with technology" says Alexandra. In her opinion, digitalization has not affected employee turnover each year nor has it affected the number of employees working on the floor during peak hours. "Many other aspects could affect these numbers and not necessarily the increase in the use of digital communication" says Alexandra.

William is the manager of two departments in the supermarket. He has a bachelor in Business and Economics and has been working in ICA Maxi Erikslund for 7 years. Although he sometimes helps employees working on the floor, however, his daily routine consists mainly of placing orders, making sure the departments get the correct products and optimizing sales. The main digital communication tool used is the application Ipool, according to William. He says that the application is used by managers as well as employees working on the floor. "The application is not only used to see schedules and mark what day and time an employee can work but everyone could get in touch with each other as

well” says William. According to him, the application is easy to use and therefore he feels comfortable using it. The communication tools have not changed since William started working in ICA Maxi Erikslund. He says that Ipool existed for more than 10 years. He also adds that none of the employees in his department has had any problems using the application or other digital tools in general. Furthermore, William prefers the more digital tools over the non-digital ones. It makes the communication simpler and smoother according to him. However, he finds the old school methods also useful. “Sometimes, you need to do face to face meetings and use pen and paper.” says William. He also states that one of the negative sides of the more digital tools used for communication is the fact that employees and managers can become very dependent on it. He says, “sometimes when we have technical problems we no more know what we have to do”. William thinks it is hard to determine if digitalization affects employee turnover. Several other aspects such as employees working part-time and students who start new jobs after graduation could affect employee turnover, he says. However, digitalization may help some of the employees get more engaged and therefore make them want to work for ICA Maxi Erikslund for a longer period of time, according to William. He adds, “It is also hard to say if digitalization affects the number of employees working during peak hours”. However, he thinks that digitalization has made it easier to find new employees who are willing to work in ICA Maxi Erikslund.

Nick is a department manager in the store. He has a bachelor degree in Economics. He has been working in the supermarket for more than 10 years. His daily tasks are making sure that the department is running as it should and all the shelves are filled and clean. He is also responsible for the delivery in his department and he manages the shifts of the employees. Nick also helps the employees on the floor whenever help is needed. He uses two digital tools to communicate with his colleagues and employees. These are department telephones and his mobile phone. He says that he communicates with the employees mostly through the application Ipool, where he can send them important messages. Moreover, Nick

communicates with other departments during working hours using the departments' telephones. He has no problem using these tools. According to Nick, no changes have occurred in digital communication since he started working in ICA Maxi Erikslund. He also states that, in his opinion, employees feel comfortable using the digital tools of communication. Nick adds that he prefers working with digital communication tools. When describing the positive sides of these tools, he states: "They are more convenient, efficient and facilitates my job". He also says that he can contact as many of his employees at once using the Ipool application and check who has seen the information he sent. He can also contact any employee in any department using the telephone. Nick did not state any negative effects caused by the department telephone or the application. He also thinks that digital communication has not affected the employee turnover. However, according to him, the number of employees working at the same time on the floor during peak hours is reduced due to the use of digital communication tools.

4.3.2 Employee Engagement Findings of Managers

Alexandra states that the use of technology and digital communication tools have increased her motivation and engagement at work because the work becomes smoother and more fun according to her. Also, she feels more efficient since communication with employees becomes faster. However, Alexandra does not think that the use of digital tools has affected her commitment to work. According to her, the interaction between employees has definitely increased using the application Ipool. "It feels a lot easier to communicate with each other than having to call or meet face to face to interact", says Alexandra. However, she also says "We allow our employees working on the floor to use their mobile phones because we think it makes it easier for them to answer customers' questions. They do not

have to ask other employees in different departments every single question and therefore they become less dependent on others.” In this case, Alexandra thinks interaction decreases adding that it depends on from which point of view one looks at it. Furthermore, using digital tools make employees more responsible and therefore more productive and motivated according to Alexandra.

William finds it motivating having digital communication tools that make communication fast and easy. He also feels more committed to work because he feels that employees working with him in the same department feel better using digital tools. Moreover, William thinks interaction between employees increases because it becomes easier to contact and communicate with each other using the application. “If someone is sick, I can see who is available on the schedule, send them a message and let them know they start a shift within an hour for example”, says William. In his opinion the use of digital communication has increased the motivation as well as the productivity of employees.

Nick finds it motivating to work with digital communication tools because they allow him to act quickly and efficiently to solve problems and reduce the stress. “For example, if an employee is absent, I can quickly find another employee available on Ipool”, says Nick. Moreover, he mentions that he feels more committed and engaged because of these tools. Nick adds that using digital communication tools allow employees to interact more because of the ease and convenience that they offer. According to him, the motivation of employees has also increased because of the digital tools since “they make communication easier for front-line employees” as he states.

4.3.3 Social Capital Findings of Managers

All 3 managers have agreed that the trust level for their employees has slightly increased because these tools enable them to keep work under control. The managers can see and check what tasks were done by which employee and therefore it makes employees

pay better attention to their work and do the job more carefully according to both Alexandra and Nick. In addition, William says that he can contact the employees quickly in case of a mistake or a problem and react efficiently.

Also as mentioned before, Alexandra, William and Nick stated that the frequency of interaction has increased between employees in general due to the use of digital communication tools.

5 Discussion

This chapter compares the literature review consisting of human resource management, employee and social capital and the data collected from interviews.

5.1 Human resource management

There are different types of managers in ICA Maxi Erikslund. Some have more responsibilities than others and some are more office-based than others according to the interviews conducted with the 3 managers, Alexandra, William and Nick. Some only manage one department of the supermarket while others manage several departments, prepare employees' monthly schedules and order department products.

As mentioned under the findings, the manager, William, sometimes helps his employees working in the department. This corresponds to Budhwar & Khatri's (2001) opinion, which is that the relationship between employees is important and must not be ignored. A manager, in this case, William, working with other front-line employees not only shows that he cares about his employees comfort but also strengthens the relationship between them. The manager Nick makes sure everything is running as it should during working hours in the department. This corresponds to Beer's Harvard model, which states that the stakeholders' interests are directly related to the management's goals (1984). All interviewed employees mentioned similar daily tasks that have to be accomplished. These include, making sure shelves are full and clean, customers are happy and orders are delivered. Making sure everything is running as it should as well as helping employees

during working hours, which is what managers are doing, show that employees' interests are related to the management's goals.

All 3 managers and 5 employees who were interviewed, stated two digital tools that have been used for many years in ICA Maxi Erikslund. These are an application called Ipool and telephone departments. According to Beer (1984), the interests of stakeholders, such as customers, are affected by situational factors. These include workforce characteristics. In ICA Maxi Erikslund's case, digital communication tools are considered workforce characteristics that influence the interests of stakeholders. Although the employee Anna and the manager William acknowledged the importance of traditional methods of communication, all managers and employees interviewed stated that they prefer the digital forms of communication for different reasons. The employees think it is time and effort saving and it is also beneficial for customers since they are able to provide them with information quickly. The managers also agree that the tools make it easier and faster to reach all employees. This shows that this situational factor is affecting stakeholders' interests positively. Not only employees and managers benefit from it but also customers, which receive help quicker, according to the employee Anna. In addition, this also corresponds to Armstrong and Baron's explanation of the advantages of the Harvard model (2003). One of the advantages is recognizing the importance of stakeholders' interests. Moreover, according to Beer (1984) stakeholders' interests and situational factors affect human resource management policy choices. These, in return, will yield positive outcomes if implemented correctly. An outcome such as employee motivation will be evident in the next paragraph.

Moreover, all interviewed managers agreed that it is hard to determine whether the digital tools of communication affect employee turnover annually. Alexandra and William agreed that it is hard to determine if they affect the number of employees working on the floor during peak hours. This is because several other factors could affect these situations

such as employees working part-time and students who start new jobs after graduation. On the other hand, Nick said that the digital tools of communication decrease the number of employees working on the floor during the peak hours of the day.

5.2 Employee Engagement

All employees working on the floor mention two digital tools used for communication during the interviews. These are the telephones and Ipool. The employees Anna, Paul, Simon and Ross said that these digital tools of communication increase their motivation as well as engagement. Anna says that by using the application Ipool, she feels that her questions are answered and she is supported by her managers. This corresponds to Kahn's (1990) opinion about the psychological condition of safety. That is, if employees feel disconnected and not supported by their managers or colleagues, they will not feel safe and therefore will become disengaged at work. In this case, since Anna feels supported by her managers, she feels safe. This makes her more engaged at work. Therefore, this shows that the application helps to increase Anna's engagement. Also, both Anna and Simon mention that answering their colleagues' questions makes them feel helpful. This corresponds to Kahn's (1990) view on the psychological condition of meaningfulness. That is, feeling meaningful means employees feel useful and are able to benefit other employees and the organization as a whole. In regards to Anna and Simon, they both feel meaningful by helping other employees and therefore their engagement is increased. In regards to managers, Alexandra, William and Nick all agreed that employees' motivation has increased due to the digital tools used.

When it comes to interaction, all interviewed employees agreed that interaction is increased between them because of using both Ipool and the telephones. According to Kahn, (1990) the psychological condition, safety, refers to feeling fearless while being at work. This could be while talking to people or doing tasks. This concurs with what the

employee John said. That is, using telephones makes it easier to get closer to other employees, “One day you ask about a product, the next day you have lunch and chat during the break.” It also corresponds to what Ross said. That is, these tools help break the ice between employees. Both Ross and John feel safe because they are fearless in talking to others while using the digital tools provided by ICA Maxi Erikslund. This, as a result, increases their engagement at work. In general, all managers during interviews agreed that interaction between employees is increased because of the digital communication tools.

Furthermore, Alexandra, William and Nick also agreed that the use of digital tools of internal communication increased employees’ motivation and productivity. This corresponds to Ariani’s (2013) opinion and that is when employees are engaged, they put more energy and effort and thus become more productive.

5.3 Social Capital

All employees agreed that the frequency of interactions between them has increased. In other words, the employees find it easier to communicate and create relationships. This was mentioned by Ross who said the digital tools help “break the ice” amongst each other. According to Richard Machalek and Michael Martin, these communications and relationships can build up to create the social capital that the store has (2015). This social capital has beneficial effects on the productivity of the employees and the store overall (Claridge, n.d.). Furthermore, Kenton suggests in his article that these results can be either tangible or intangible, but it is one of the key factors that creates beneficial relationships between the employees and includes values such as respect and trust between them (2019). This was seen in ICA Maxi Erikslund’s example where John, Anna, Paul and Simon agreed that their trust towards their managers and colleagues had increased. They justified this statement by stating that the uncertainty is decreased when the communication between them and their colleagues is easier and smoother. According to Claridge, the increased trust is an important

asset for the store to use it as a foundation stone to build prospering and profitable social relationships and social capital (2004). On the other hand, Ross stated that his trust level towards new employees is somehow low, which corresponds to Kenton's opinion, who says that low trust levels can create some undesirable social capital effects (2019). Furthermore, the 3 managers Alexandra, William and Nick agreed that their trust towards their employees is slightly increased due to the use of digital communication tools. This is because of all the facilities that these tools offer for the managers to check and act quickly when needed. This also corresponds to the suggestion of Richard Machalek and Michael Martin, who suggest that it creates beneficial social interactions that the store can use to have more profitable social capital relationships between its employees (2015).

6 Conclusion

The following chapter will present the reached conclusion of the authors of the thesis. It will also give suggestions for future research

In this study, the authors had the ambition of investigating how digital tools of communication affect employee engagement in a retail industry. In order to investigate this, the authors asked the following question: *How does digital communication affect employee engagement in an organization?*

By investigating this research question, the authors reached the following conclusion. According to the findings, employees feel safe and meaningful by using the digital tools of communication. This shows that employees are both more motivated as well as engaged because of using the tools according to the literature studied by the authors of this paper. In addition, managers also agreed that the tools increased employees' motivation and productivity, which also results in increased engagement. To conclude the answer, the use of digital tools has affected employee engagement positively, meaning it has increased employee engagement.

6.1 Future Research

For the future, the authors of this paper suggest taking into account all the limitations of the paper and avoid as many as possible. To gain more data and increase the credibility of the thesis, more interviews could be conducted with more managers as well as employees in ICA Maxi Erikslund. This would make the results of the thesis more reliable. Also, another

approach could be by comparing the data gained from at least two companies instead of only one. For example, by choosing two different retailing supermarkets or other similar companies for the comparison to be possible.

7. References

7.1 Printed Sources

Agyepong, S., Fugar, F., & Tuuli, M. (2010). The applicability of the Harvard and Warwick models in the development of human resource management policies of large construction companies in Ghana. Loughborough University.

Armstrong, M., & Baron, A. (2003). *Strategic HRM*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Aswathappa, K. (2013). *Human resource management* (8th ed.). New Delhi: McGraw Hill Education.

Beer, M., Spector, B., Lawrence, P., Warton, R., & Mills, D. (1984). *Managing Human Assets: The Ground Breaking Harvard Business School Program*. Free Press.

Bizzi, Lorenzo. (2015). Social Capital in Organizations. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*.

Bondarouk, T., & Brewster, C. (2016). Conceptualising the future of HRM and technology research. *The International Journal Of Human Resource Management*, 27(21), 2652-2671. doi: 10.1080/09585192.2016.1232296

Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2015). *Business Research Methods*. 4th Edition. Oxford University Press: Oxford, England

Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2015). *Business Research Methods*. 4th Edition. Oxford University Press: Oxford, England.

Budhwar, P., & Khatri, N. (2001). HRM in Context. *International Journal Of Cross Cultural Management*, 1(3), 333-356. doi: 10.1177/147059580113005

Cakar, F., Bititci, U., & MacBryde, J. (2003). A business process approach to human resource management. *Business Process Management Journal*, 9(2), 190-207. doi: 10.1108/14637150310468

Claridge, T. (2018). Explanation of the different levels of social capital: individual or collective?.

Claridge, T., 2004. Social Capital and Natural Resource Management: An important role for social capital? Unpublished Thesis, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

Esposito, A., Bratanic, M. and Keller, E. (2007). Fundamentals of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication and the Biometric Issue.

Fombrun, C.J., Tichy, M.M. and Devanna M. A. (1984) Strategic Human Resource Management, New York: John Wiley

Gabriel, D. (2013). Inductive and deductive approaches to research.

Gabriela Petrașuc, A., & Popescul, D. (2019). The Dark Side of Digitalization: Information and Communication Technology Influence on Human Learning Processes.

Gems, E. (2015). *New perspectives in employee engagement in human resources*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Gilan, A. & Hammarberg, J. (2016). Get Digital: Or Die Trying, 1st Edition. Southside Stories: Stockholm.

Gruman, J., & Saks, A. (2011). Performance management and employee engagement. *Human Resource Management Review*, 21(2), 123-136. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2010.09.004>

Hendry, C. and Pettigrew, A. M. (1990) Human Resource Management: an agenda for the 1990s'. *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 1[1], 17-43.

Kahn, W. (1990). Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work. *Academy Of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692-724. <https://doi.org/10.5465/256287>

Kalani, L., & Hayase, T. (2009). Internal communication in organizations and employee engagement. University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Kandula, S. (2003). *Human Resource Management in Practice*. Delhi: PHI Learning Private Limited.

Kompasso, S., & Sridevi, M. (2010). Employee Engagement: The Key to Improving Performance. *International Journal Of Business And Management*, 5(12). <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v5n12p89>

Laryea, D., Leiringer, D., & Hughes, P. (2010). WEST AFRICA BUILT ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH (WABER) CONFERENCE. Retrieved 21 April 2020, from.

Macey, W., & Schneider, B. (2008). The Meaning of Employee Engagement. *Industrial And Organizational Psychology*, 1(1), 3-30. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-9434.2007.0002.x>

Machalek, Richard & Martin, Michael. (2015). Sociobiology and Sociology: A New Synthesis. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*.

Mishra, K., Boynton, L., & Mishra, A. (2014). Driving Employee Engagement. *International Journal Of Business Communication*, 51(2), 183-202.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488414525399>

Nöhammer, E., & Stichberger, S. (2019). Digitalization, innovative work behavior and extended availability. *Journal Of Business Economics*, 89(8-9), 1191-1214.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11573-019-00953-2>

Peters, J. (2019). *Employee Engagement*. Knowledge Resources.

Saks, A. (2006). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal Of Managerial Psychology*, 21(7), 600-619. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940610690169>

Schallmo, D., & Williams, C. (2018). *Digital transformation now!*. Springer.

Schuller, T. & Theisens, H.. (2010). Networks and Communities of Knowledge. *International Encyclopedia of Education*.

Shivarudrappa, D., Ramachandra, K., & Gopalakrishna, K. (2010). *Human resource management*. Himalaya Pub. House Pvt. Ltd.

Society for Human Resource Management. (2011). *Human resources in research and practice*.

Subba Rao, P. (2009). *Human resource management*. Himalaya Pub. House.

Szreter, S. (2004). Health by association? Social capital, social theory, and the political economy of public health. *International Journal Of Epidemiology*.

Söderholm, P., Parida, V., Johansson, J., Kokkola, L., Öqvist, A., & Kostenius, C. (2018). *Addressing Societal challenges*. Luleå University of Technology.

Tarafdar, M., Gupta, A., Turel, O., & Darcy, J. (2015). The dark side of information technology use. *Scholarly Journals*, 56(2), 61-70. <https://doi.org/10.1111/isj.12015>

Wahyu Ariani, D. (2013). The Relationship between Employee Engagement, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, and Counterproductive Work Behavior. *International Journal Of Business Administration*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijba.v4n2p46>

Whittington, J., Meskelis, S., Asare, E., & Beldona, S. (2017). *Enhancing employee engagement*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

7.2 Electronic Sources:

Butiken | Maxi ICA Stormarknad Erikslund. (2020). Retrieved 1 April 2020, from <https://www.ica.se/butiker/maxi/vasteras/maxi-ica-stormarknad-erikslund-12304/butiken/>

Dudovskiy, J. Epistemology - Research-Methodology. Retrieved 21 May 2020, from <https://research-methodology.net/research-philosophy/epistemology/>

Guendelsberger, E. (2019). *I Worked at an Amazon Fulfillment Center; They Treat Workers Like Robots*. Time. Retrieved 23 April 2020, from <https://time.com/5629233/amazon-warehouse-employee-treatment-robots/>.

ICAs fyra profiler. Icafastigheter.se. (2020). Retrieved 14 April 2020, from <https://www.icafastigheter.se/om-ica-fastigheter/icas-fyra-profiler/>.

JOSSO 2 - Processing Shrm.org. (2020). Retrieved 31 March 2020, from <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/toolkits/pages/sustainingemployeeengagement.aspx>

Kenton, W. (2019). Reading Into Social Capital. Retrieved 22 April 2020, from <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/socialcapital.asp>

Kitani, K. (2020). *The \$900 billion reason GE, Ford and P&G failed at digital transformation*. CNBC. Retrieved 29 March 2020, from <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/10/30/heres-why-ge-fords-digital-transformation-programs-failed-last-year.html>

Sainato, M. (2020). *'I'm not a robot': Amazon workers condemn unsafe, grueling conditions at warehouse*. the Guardian. Retrieved 23 April 2020, from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/feb/05/amazon-workers-protest-unsafe-grueling-conditions-warehouse>.

Appendix

- The interview questions as they were asked to the interviewees in Swedish:
 1. Vad är din position i företaget?
 2. Vad är dina högsta utbildningsnivå?
 3. Hur länge har du varit anställd på ICA Maxi Erikslund?
 4. Vilka uppgifter har du inom företaget? Vad gör du vanligtvis?
 5. Vilka är de digitaliserade verktygen du vanligtvis använder (dagligen eller veckovis) för att kommunicera med andra medarbetare på ICA Maxi Erikslund?
 6. Känner du dig bekväm med att använda dessa verktyg?
 7. Vilka förändringar har du märkt i kommunikationen sedan du började arbeta för ICA Maxi Erikslund? Har digitaliseringen ökat i din vardagliga kommunikation?
 8. Föredrar du att ha digitaliserade kommunikationsformerna eller traditionella och mindre digitaliserade kommunikationsformerna?
 9. Vilka är de positiva effekterna av digitaliserad kommunikation?
 10. Vilka är de negativa effekterna av digitaliserad kommunikation?
 11. Hur mycket har digitaliseringen påverkat din motivation att arbeta?

12. Hur mycket har digitaliseringen påverkat ditt engagemang på jobbet? Känner du dig mer engagerad eller mindre engagerad när du arbetar?
13. Känner du dig mer övertygad i arbetet på grund av de nya digitaliserade kommunikationsformerna?
14. Hur mycket har interaktions frekvensen ökat eller minskat med dina kollegor efter implementeringen av digitaliserade kommunikationsformerna?
15. Hur mycket har frekvensen av interaktion ökat eller minskat med dina chefer efter implementeringen av digitaliserade kommunikationsformerna?
16. Hur påverkades förtroendets nivå mellan dig och dina kollegor/anställda genom att använda digitaliserade kommunikationsverktyg?

Fler Frågor ställdes endast till chefer:

1. Har medarbetarna haft problem med att använda de digitaliserade kommunikationsverktygen?
2. Hur har den ökade användningen av digitalisering påverkat de anställdas produktivitet och motivation?
3. Hur har den ökade användningen av digitalisering påverkat anställdas omsättning varje år?
4. Hur har den ökade användningen av digitalisering påverkat antalet anställda som arbetar på golvet under rusningstid?