

How to Strengthen Employee Engagement Among Slovenian Criminal Investigators?

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Purpose:

In terms of providing security, employee engagement may be defined as an important contribution by individual criminal investigators or their physical, cognitive and emotional dedication to their work. Employee engagement positively correlates with one's work, as reflected in the dedication, absorption, and psychological state accompanied by personal energy invested in the work. A fundamental question for the criminal investigation police thus arises of how to achieve maximum engagement and commitment in police work, which in turn will contribute to greater security in Slovenia.

Design/Methods/Approach:

The article is based on empirical research conducted among 160 Slovenian criminal investigators. We used Gallup's Q12 Employee Engagement Survey to measure employee engagement.

Findings:

The research encompassing 160 Slovenian criminal investigators shows that most criminal investigators are disengaged. The research also reveals that employee engagement is statistically significantly correlated with self-efficacy, social undermining by one's supervisor, social support by one's supervisor and colleagues, as well as cynicism. To raise employee engagement among the Slovenian criminal investigators, we propose several measures affecting the conduct of the police, labour legal matters, operational issues and the leadership.

Research Limitations/Implications:

The first limitation is social desirability bias. The second limitation is a labour strike that was underway while we were collecting the data from the police officers.

Practical Implication

The proposed actions should raise the level of employee engagement of Slovenian criminal investigators, while also enhancing the police service's reliability.

Originality/Value

This is the first paper to research employee engagement among Slovenian criminal investigators.

UDC: 351.741+331.101.3

Keywords: employee engagement, criminal investigators, cynicism, self-efficacy, social undermining, social support.

Kako okrepati delovno zavzetost slovenskih kriminalistov?

Namen:

Za zagotavljanje varnosti v skupnosti je pomembno tudi delo kriminalistične policije oziroma kriminalistov. Pomembna je njihova čustvena, kognitivna in intelektualna predanost policiji, kar definira delovno zavzetost. Delovna zavzetost predstavlja pozitivno povezanost z delom, ki se odraža v predanosti in vlaganju energije v delo. Glavni cilj prispevka je ugotoviti, kako krepati delovno zavzetost kriminalistov, ki posledično zagotavlja boljšo varnostno situacijo v skupnosti.

Metode:

Prispevek je nastal z empirično raziskavo med 160 slovenskimi kriminalisti. Za merjenje delovne zavzetosti smo uporabili Gallupov vprašalnik Q12.

Ugotovitve:

Ugotovili smo, da je večina kriminalistov za delo nezavzetih. Prav tako je bilo ugotovljeno, da na delovno zavzetost slovenskih kriminalistov statistično značilno in pozitivno vpliva samoučinkovitost ter socialna opora. Statistično značilen in negativen vpliv pa ima na delovno zavzetost kriminalistov socialno spodkopavanje in cinizem. Za višanje delovne zavzetosti je predlaganih več ukrepov na področju vodenja, delovnopравnih zadev in operativnega dela.

Omejitve/uporabnost raziskave:

Omejitev predstavlja socialna zaželenost odgovorov, ki je značilna v družboslovju. Omejitev predstavlja tudi stavka, ki je v policiji potekala v času izvajanja anketiranja.

Praktična uporabnost:

Prispevek je praktično uporaben, saj bi se lahko ob izvedenih predlaganih ukrepih dvignila delovna zavzetost slovenskih kriminalistov.

Izvirnost/pomembnost prispevka:

Prispevek je prvi tovrstne narave, ki obravnava delovno zavzetost slovenskih kriminalistov.

UDK: 351.741+331.101.3

Ključne besede: delovna zavzetost, kriminalistična policija, cinizem, samoučinkovitost, socialno spodkopavanje, socialna opora.

1 INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement is a new concept in human resources management, considered from different organisational aspects. Employee engagement is analysed from the point of view of an employee's satisfaction, organisational

behaviour and motivation, as well as their emotional, intellectual and cognitive dedication to the organisation (Sharma & Kaur, 2014). It is sensible to measure employee engagement in an organisation in order to predict profits and future performance. While the Police are not exactly a profit-oriented organisation, the employee engagement of its workers is nonetheless vital since it maintains and provides the country's home security. The employee engagement of Slovenian criminal investigators is increasingly relevant due to the country's membership of the Schengen area and its role in providing security for the entire European Union (Smolej, 2016).

The reliability of the police service cannot be taken for granted. It depends on the effort of every individual criminal investigator, their cognitive, physical and emotional commitment to their profession, which according to Kahn (1990) falls within the definition of employee engagement. Accordingly, this paper will examine the employee engagement of Slovenian criminal investigators or how to maximise their commitment and employee engagement so as to contribute to greater security and a safer environment, namely, one of the key tasks of the Slovenian police.

1.1 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement denotes exploitation of oneself in a workplace to which one is emotionally and cognitively connected (Kahn, 1990). Rothbard (2001) connects employee engagement to an employee's attention, which signifies the cognitive spending of time in the company. Haudan and MacLean (2002) claim that people who are engaged do not notice the passing of time – their hearts and minds are immersed so time seems unimportant. Employee engagement, according to Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma and Bakker (2002) means a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption. Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) define employee engagement as an individual's content and enthusiasm for work. Employee engagement can also be defined as emotional and intellectual commitment to the company (Baumruk, 2004; Richman, 2006) or the discretionary effort of an employee (Frank, Finnegan, & Taylor, 2004). Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2004) link the positive attitude held by employees to the organisation and its value. An engaged employee is aware of the business context and works with colleagues to improve their performance of the job for the organisation's benefit. The organisation must work to develop and nurture engagement which requires a two-way relationship between the employer and employee. Some authors (Gonzalez-Roma, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Lloret, 2006; Maslach, Schaufelli, & Leiter, 2001) claim that employee engagement is the opposite of burnout in the workplace. The negative interrelationship of employee engagement and workplace burnout is pointed to by Maslach and Leiter (1997), who also claim that employee engagement displays liveliness, integration at the workplace, and efficiency. Schiemann (2005, p. 19) contends that employee engagement means »that the hands, hearts and minds of employees are deployed at full tilt to meet the objectives of the business, serve customers, create a caring culture, and produce

quality products and services». Another definition of employee engagement is by Wollard and Shuck (2011), namely it is an individual employee's cognitive, emotional and behavioural state directed at desired organisational outcomes. Hewitt Aon (2012) states that engagement means when they say, stay and strive, consistently speak positively about the organisation to fellow workers, potential employers and customers, an intense desire to be part of the organisation and exert extra effort and engage in behaviours that contribute to business success.

1.2 Negative Consequences of Low Employee Engagement

Engagement has an impact on the actual business results of the company, customer, productivity, customer loyalty and staff turnover. Many believe that employee engagement is a dominant source of competitive advantage and have thus been drawn to its reported ability to solve challenging organisational problems such as increasing workplace performance and productivity amid widespread economic decline (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Macey, Schneider, Barbera, & Young, 2009). According to Kowalski (2003), low employee engagement is also a threat to business growth and productivity. Research conducted by Gallup (2013) shows that active disengagement in the USA costs between USD 450 to USD 550 billion a year. In Germany and the UK, these numbers hover between USD 151 to USD 186 billion and USD 83 to USD 112 billion, respectively. Low employee engagement not only adds to the employee's misery, but can also hold serious consequences of greater proportions. One of the first indicators of low employee engagement is a high employee turnover rate (Harter et al., 2002). Similarly, when establishing the contrast with enthusiastic employees, Watson and Tellegen (1985) point to employees who are burnt out, exhausted, cynical and inefficient. These factors also apply to employees with low employee engagement. Employee engagement is an emotional and intellectual commitment to the company. On the other hand, burnout in the workplace results in cynicism, exhaustion and inefficiency. Employee engagement is meant to express liveliness, integration at the workplace, which is the opposite of workplace burnout represented by exhaustion, cynicism and inefficiency.

1.3 Three Levels of Employee Engagement

Employees may be engaged at one of three levels – engaged, disengaged, or actively disengaged. The first level is **actively disengaged employees**, who harm the organisation. In their work, they have more accidents, take deficiencies into account, contribute to the company's contraction, are more absent due to illness and try to discredit the accomplishments of the employees who are engaged (Gallup, 2013). Most are unhappy and disappointed and seek to share their misery with anyone who will listen. Every day they try to recruit new members into their "club of active disengagement" (Harter, Schmidt, Killham, & Asplund, 2006). **Disengaged employees** are hard to recognise as they are not disturbing or hostile. They waste their time on unimportant issues and are passive with their clients. They are always thinking of lunch or their next break. It is a fact that

disengaged employees are not only part of the company’s workforce, but often fill the executive seats of a company (Gallup, 2013). As claimed by Harter et al. (2006), disengaged employees do the necessities, but do not invest any energy or passion. **Engaged employees** are the key employees in the organisation who are strongly involved in and committed to their work, which they do with great enthusiasm. They are familiar with the scope of tasks they need to do and search for newer and better ways to achieve good results. These employees are 100% psychologically connected with their work and attract new clients (Gallup, 2013). Engaged employees are a source of innovation, help develop the company and are those employees who become ambassadors and promoters of their organisation through their commitment and development skills (Chong, 2007; Gronstedt, 2000).

Research has shown that the majority of employees in organisations are disengaged when it comes to work. Table 1 summarises data on employee engagement levels by country.

Table 1:
Employee engagement, country by country (source: Gallup, 2013)

Country	Engaged (in %)	Disengaged (in %)	Actively disengaged (in %)
Denmark	21	69	10
Malta	19	61	20
Portugal	19	65	16
Spain	18	62	20
United Kingdom	17	57	26
Iceland	16	75	9
Ireland	16	64	20
Norway	16	77	7
Sweden	16	73	12
Switzerland	16	76	8
Germany	15	61	24
Slovenia	15	70	15
Austria	14	74	12
Italy	14	68	18
Luxembourg	14	72	14
Belgium	12	66	22
Finland	11	76	13
France	9	65	26
Netherlands	9	80	11

1.4 Some Research on Police Officers' Employee Engagement

Some research has been conducted on the employee engagement of police officers. Schaufeli, Bakker and Salanova (2006) tried to establish a correlation between employee engagement and burnout in the workplace based on the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). Storm and Rothmann (2003) also used the UWES for a sample of 2,396 African police officers from nine South African regions. They concluded there were no

statistically significant values between the factors included on the scale based on the ethnic groups in South Africa. Moreover, there were no statistically significant differences between uniformed officers and police investigators from different ethnic groups. Richardsen, Burke and Martinussen (2006) tried to establish the employee engagement of 150 Norwegian police officers based on the UWES. They concluded that employee engagement is a good presenter of self-efficacy and organisational affiliation. However, employee engagement depends on leadership responsibility and social support to employees. Research conducted in Latin America by Crabtree, Rios and Revelo (2014) showed that a high level of police officer employee engagement is imperative for ensuring personal security and protecting human lives. Research encompassing 739 Slovenian police officers showed that most police officers are disengaged. Some officers are actively disengaged. The share of engaged employees is the smallest. The research also showed that employee engagement affects self-efficacy, the social undermining of supervisors and colleagues, social support of supervisors, and cynicism (Smolej & Lobnikar, 2016).

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD, INSTRUMENTS AND SAMPLE USED

The goal of this paper is examine the employee engagement of Slovenian criminal investigators. We would like to find out which factors statistically significantly correlate with the employee engagement of Slovenian criminal investigators.

We applied factor analysis. The goal of factor analysis is to reduce “the dimensionality of the original space and to give an interpretation to the new space, spanned by a reduced number of new dimensions which are supposed to underlie the old ones” (Field, 2009; Rietveld & Van Hout, 1993). The scales were also tested with a factor analysis (the principal components method). Factors with sufficiently high coefficients were retained for further analysis (Cronbach’s alpha factor analysis > 0.60), but where alpha < 0.6 an omega coefficient was calculated $\Omega = 1 - (N - \sum_{i=1}^N h_i^2) / (N + 2R)$, since Carmines and Zeller (1979, p. 62) claim that “the evaluated coefficient Ω provides the same data for the highest and the nearest actual reliability of the measurement”. Finally, we used Pearson’s correlation which represents the correlation between the independent and dependent factors.

We used Gallup’s Q12 Employee Engagement Survey to measure employee engagement. It consists of 12 variables that measure a sense of affiliation, growth, contribution and also includes an emotional aspect (Harter et al., 2006). We found poor internal consistency and a low weighting factor for 2 of the 12 variables and so we used only 10 of the 12 variables. To measure the independent variable of self-efficacy, we applied a scale for measuring sources of and influences on self-efficacy developed by Frlec (2005). To measure the cynicism of police officers (an independent variable), we used a survey containing 16 claims developed by Regoli, Crank and Rivera (1990). To measure social support and social undermining (independent variables), we relied on the survey developed by Duffy, Ganster and Pagon (2002).

The data for the study presented above were collected with convenience samples from 160 Slovenian criminal investigators based in eight district police headquarters (small, medium and large police stations) and the General Police Directorate. The Slovenian police has 1,688 criminal investigators (Ministry of the Interior, Police, n. d.). Regarding the official data, our sample represents approximately 10% of the population. The data were collected within a broader survey of Slovenian police officers. After presenting them with purpose of the study and the survey, the respondents voluntarily filled in the surveys and put them in cardboard boxes or handed the survey to the surveyor. The survey sheets were then entered into the database. The sample encompassed 16.3% of female criminal investigators and 83.1% of male criminal investigators, with the youngest respondent being 23 years old, and the oldest 52. The respondents' average length of service is 19.11 years, and 7.70 years in the current workplace. Half the respondents (50%) have a high school education, 10.5% a higher college education, 18.8% a higher school education, 16.3% a university or MA Bologna education, while 2.5% have a master's degree education or higher. Finally, 1.9% did not answer the question.

3 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH RESULT

Table 1 presents employee engagement data. Based on reference levels considered by certain other authors (Gallup, 2013; Harter et al., 2006; Lobnikar & Grom, 2011), actively disengaged employees score less than 30 points or an average grade of below 2.5. Disengaged employees score 31 to 44 points, or an average grade from 2.5 to 3.7. Engaged employees score 45 points or higher, or an average grade of above 3.7.

Table 1:
Employee engagement*

Types of Employees	Engagement level – average value	Share of Employees (in %)	Number
Actively disengaged	Below 2.5	33.13	53
Not engaged	3.7 to 2.5	55	88
Engaged	Exceeding 3.7	11.87	19

**Employee engagement of Slovenian criminal investigators*

Table 1 shows that most Slovenian criminal investigators are disengaged (55%), followed by those who are actively disengaged (33.13%), and those who are engaged (11.87%). The majority of Slovenian criminal investigators are disengaged in their work, and there are many factors that impact employee engagement.

Care for employee development of the criminal investigators was measured by seven statements: 1) My progress has been discussed in the last 6 months. 2) The mission of the police reflects the importance of my work. 3) My opinion is appreciated and acknowledged. 4) I have been commended in the last 7 days and my accomplishments have been recognised. 5) In the last year I have had the opportunity to learn and develop. 6) My development and well-being is being taken care of systematically. 7) My leader acknowledges me as a person. The level of agreement with these statements was measured with a 5-point Likert scale from 1 – “I strongly disagree” to 5 – “I strongly agree.” A factor “*Care for employee development*” was calculated from these claims ($\alpha = 0.824$; mean value $[M] = 2.94$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.73$).

The relevant conditions for efficient police work were measured with three statements: 1) I am aware of my responsibilities. 2) I have everything available to do my job efficiently. 3) In my workplace I have the opportunity to do what I am best at. The level of agreement with these statements was measured with a Likert scale from 1 – “I strongly disagree” to 5 – “I strongly agree.” A factor “*Relevant conditions for efficient criminal investigation*” was calculated from these claims ($\alpha = 0.624$; mean value $[M] = 2.57$; standard deviation $[SD] = 1.15$).

Vicarious experience in criminal investigators was measured with four statements: 1) I observe co-workers with have similar working tasks. 2) I pay attention to the mistakes of others. 3) In my workplace I have a role model. 4) My supervisors inform me of my work. The level of agreement with these statements was measured with a Likert scale from 1 – “I strongly disagree” to 5 – “I strongly agree.” A factor “*Vicarious experience*” was calculated from these claims ($\alpha = 0.611$; mean value $[M] = 3.12$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.69$).

The emotional state of criminal investigators was measured with three statements: 1) I feel relaxed at my workplace. 2) I like to do my job and it makes me feel good. 3) I get a lot of quality feedback. The claims were measured with a Likert scale from 1 – “I strongly disagree” to 5 – “I strongly agree.” A factor “*Emotional state*” was calculated from these claims ($\alpha = 0.647$; mean value $[M] = 3.15$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.76$).

Personal experience of criminal investigators was measured with three claims: 1) The results of my work confirm my qualifications. 2) The work I do is appropriate. 3) I experience success at my workplace. The level of agreement with these statements was measured with a Likert scale from 1 – “I strongly disagree” to 5 – “I strongly agree.” A factor “*Personal experience*” was calculated ($\alpha = 0.449$; $\Omega = 0.69$; mean value $[M] = 3.82$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.74$).

Normative cynicism of criminal investigators was measured with five statements: 1) The rules police officers should respect are not entirely clear. 2) The instructions given are sometimes ambiguous or even contradictory. 3) Many laws and regulations which should be enforced by the police are nonsensical. 4) The rules and regulations are not clear enough to know what is allowed and what is not allowed at the workplace. 5) Change and reforms weaken the police’s reputation. A factor “*Normative cynicism*” was calculated ($\alpha = 0.851$; mean value $[M] = 3.27$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.84$).

Cynicism towards one’s supervisor among criminal investigators was measured with four statements: 1) As it seems, the people in charge have no respect for police officers who, in the end, perform fundamental police tasks. 2) The main problem of the police is that the people in charge do not understand the tasks ordinary police officers have to undertake. 3) The people in charge only look after themselves and are not interested in others’ situations. 4) Promotion in the police depends more on your connections than your qualifications. A factor “*Cynicism towards one’s supervisor*” was calculated ($\alpha = 0.851$; mean value $[M] = 3.93$ standard deviation $[SD] = 0.95$).

Cynicism towards the community among criminal investigators was measured with three statements: 1) Many people in the municipality have a bad opinion of police officers. 2) The attitude to the police is more unfavourable

than ever before. 3) The police's reputation has dropped in recent years. A factor "*Cynicism towards the community*" was calculated ($\alpha = 0.825$; mean value $[M] = 3.92$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.81$).

Cynicism towards the rule of law among criminal investigators was measured with four statements: 1) Perpetrators should often be apprehended for a longer period until the case is brought to court if the police assess it as necessary. 2) Courts and laws grant so many rights that it is hard to maintain public law and order. 3) The police should be given greater authorisation for the use of particular investigative measures when the police assess it as necessary. 4) When police officers testify in court, they are often considered as criminals. A factor "*Cynicism towards the rule of law*" was calculated ($\alpha = 0.749$; mean value $[M] = 3.84$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.78$).

Social support by one's supervisor among criminal investigators was measured with 19 statements: 1) The supervisor has supported you in front of your colleagues. 2) The supervisor listened to you when you talked about your intimate feelings. 3) The supervisor kept your feelings to him/herself. 4) The supervisor helped you when work needed to be done. 5) The supervisor complimented your work during a meeting. 6) The supervisor listened to you when you talked about work-related matters. 7) The supervisor expressed his/her concern for your well-being. 8) The supervisor helped you get appropriate equipment or means. 9) When you experienced difficulties with your colleagues, the supervisor helped you. 10) The supervisor provided you with useful information. 11) The supervisor said you were good at what you do. 12) The supervisor took risks to your advantage. 13) He admitted you can do your job well. 14) The supervisor values you as an expert. 15) The supervisor was willing to listen to you. 16) The supervisor helped you set your goals. 17) The supervisor helped you go through an exhausting day at work. 18) The supervisor gave you advice on a certain matter. 19) The supervisor enabled you to take leave when you needed it. A factor "*Social support by one's supervisor*" was calculated ($\alpha = 0.968$; mean value $[M] = 2.64$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.94$).

Social support by one's colleagues among criminal investigators was measured with 13 statements: 1) A colleague told you that you did nice work. 2) A colleague was there for you when you were in a stressful situation. 3) A colleague helped you handle a case. 4) A colleague listened to you when you talked about intimate feelings. 5) A colleague expressed his/her respect for your character or quality. 6) A colleague supported you in front of your supervisor. 7) A colleague listened to you when you talked about work-related issues. 8) A colleague told you that he/she understands you. 9) A colleague gave you advice on a situation similar to his/her experience. 10) A colleague gave you good advice on a work-related matter. 11) A colleague was interested in your feelings. 12) A colleague helped you go through an exhausting day at work. 13) A colleague asked you how your family was doing. A factor "*Social support by one's colleagues*" was calculated ($\alpha = 0.954$; mean value $[M] = 2.92$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.89$).

Social undermining by one's supervisor among criminal investigators was measured with 15 statements: 1) The supervisor nullified your successful efforts at work. 2) The supervisor interfered in your personal matters. 3) The supervisor

broke his/her promise. 4) The supervisor disapproved of you expressing your feelings at work. 5) The supervisor talked to you arrogantly. 6) The supervisor did not want to discuss an important issue. 7) The supervisor made you feel stupid. 8) When you felt bad about work, the supervisor only exacerbated the situation. 9) The supervisor did not take seriously the issues which seemed important to you. 10) The supervisor made you feel incompetent. 11) The supervisor did not take your work-related problems seriously. 12) The supervisor criticised your work in a bad way. 13) The supervisor failed to recognise your achievements at work. 14) The supervisor discredited the validity and meaning of your ideas. 15) When you questioned the regularity of working procedures, the supervisor behaved condescendingly. A factor "*Social undermining by one's supervisor*" was calculated ($\alpha = 0.970$; mean value $[M] = 1.62$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.79$).

Social undermining by one's supervisor in public among criminal investigators was measured with four statements: 1) The supervisor gave you bad advice. 2) The supervisor criticised you in front of other people. 3) The supervisor shared private matters about you. 4) The supervisor did not support you when individuals belittled you. A factor "*Social undermining by one's supervisor in public*" was measured ($\alpha = 0.897$; mean value $[M] = 1.70$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.73$).

Social undermining by one's colleagues was measured with 13 statements: 1) A colleague lied to you. 2) A colleague refused to discuss important matters. 3) A colleague did not listen to you. 4) When you felt bad about work, a colleague only exacerbated the situation. 5) A colleague misinformed you about work. 6) A colleague criticised your work in an ineffective way. 7) A colleague criticised your work in a bad way. 8) A colleague interfered in your personal matters. 9) A colleague mimicked you in a condescending or humiliating way. 10) A colleague broke his/her promise. 11) A colleague shared private matters about you. 12) A colleague talked to you with contempt. 13) A colleague deliberately helped you less than promised. A factor "*Social undermining by one's colleagues*" was calculated ($\alpha = 0.958$; mean value $[M] = 1.41$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.59$).

Social undermining by one's colleagues in public among criminal investigators was measured with six statements: 1) A colleague did not support you when individuals belittled you. 2) A colleague failed to recognise your achievements at work. 3) A colleague made it clear he/she did not like you because of something. 4) A colleague discredited the validity and meaning of your ideas. 5) A colleague competed with you for reputation and recognition. 6) A colleague nullified your successful efforts at work. A factor "*Social undermining by one's colleagues in public*" was calculated ($\alpha = 0.94$; mean value $[M] = 1.57$; standard deviation $[SD] = 0.61$).

Finally, we also considered whether these factors were related to each other. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 2 below.

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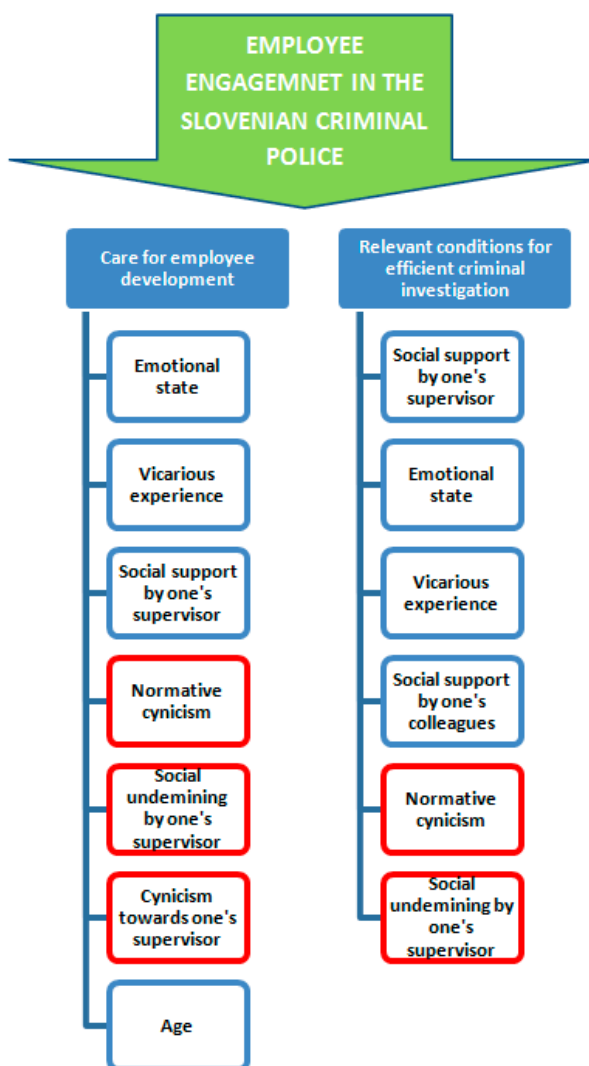
Table 2:
Relationship between the dependent and independent factors

Factors		ES	VC	SSS	SSC	NC	SUS	CS	AGE
Care for employee development	<i>r</i>	.672**	.500**	.554**	/	-.463**	-.391**	-.341**	.162*
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000	/	.000	.000	.000	.045
Relevant conditions for efficient criminal investigation	<i>r</i>	.333**	.333**	.443**	.253**	-.260**	-.259**	/	/
	<i>p</i>	.000**	.000**	.000**	.002**	.001**	.001**	/	/

Legend: ES – Emotional state; VC – Vicarious experience; SSS – Social support by one’s supervisor; SSC – Social support by one’s colleagues, NC – Normative cynicism; SUS – Social undermining by one’s supervisor; CS – Cynicism towards one’s supervisor; **p* = 0.005; ***p* = 0.01

Based on the results shown in Table 2, in the image below we present a model for strengthening employee engagement within the Slovenian criminal investigation police.

Figure 1:
Model for strengthening employee engagement within the Slovenian criminal investigation police



4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It has been determined that most Slovenian criminal investigators are disengaged (55%), followed by actively disengaged criminal investigators (33.13%), and engaged criminal investigators (11.78%). A similar ratio of employee engagement among police officers (not just criminal investigators) was established by other researchers (Smolej & Lobnikar, 2014, 2016). They found that most employees in the Slovenian police are disengaged (56.97%), followed by actively disengaged police officers (32.20%), and engaged police officers (10.83%). Improving employee engagement in a non-profit organisation (police) means fewer criminal offences. Crabtree et al. (2014) found that raising employee engagement in the Latin American Police means fewer homicides, robberies, kidnappings and more arrests of wanted fugitives. It is necessary to move beyond military management in the police and to apply humanistic management. Crabtree et al. (2014) suggest that a police manager should recognise a police officer's achievement and give them an opportunity for self-realisation in the workplace, along with emotional awards, which are more than simply monetary awards. This is why the Slovenian criminal investigation police should pay greater attention to the management of its human resources. We suggest establishing a centralised criminal investigation police in Slovenia where the responsibility and duties of specific criminal investigators would be clearly defined.

To improve employee engagement and propose ways to improve it, the factors affecting employee engagement need to be determined. Employee engagement was measured using the Q12 questionnaire and then subsequently explained with two factors: *Care for employee development* and *Relevant conditions for efficient criminal investigation*. We may conclude that employee engagement is statistically significantly correlated with several factors, namely: self-efficacy, social support by one's supervisor and one's colleagues, social undermining by one's supervisor and one's colleagues, and cynicism. We found that both factors of employee engagement have a statistically significant and positive correlation with the *Emotional state* factor. The conclusions arising from this paper correspond to those of other research (Psakash Pati & Kumar, 2010) that with the help of a regression model showed that self-efficacy influences employee engagement. Some authors (Bandura, 1977; Pajares, 2000, 2002) claim that strong emotions, stress and agitation also influence self-efficacy and employee engagement. Based on the conclusions, the Slovenian criminal investigators should dedicate greater effort to stabilising the emotional state of criminal investigators, namely because their work is completed in stressful working conditions (serious criminal offences, family violence, suicide ...), where emotional involvement is inevitable. Good partner relationships should be built between colleagues who together face stressful situations in the field. Namely, some authors contend that (Bandura, 1977; Pajares, 2000, 2002) stress and agitation contribute to the inappropriate solution to an assignment given to an individual. Therefore, criminal investigators should build partner relationships in non-stressful situations in order to ensure appropriate reactions in stressful situations, to sufficiently concentrate to cope with negative emotions (anxiety, restlessness ...) and successfully complete one's

assignment. *Vicarious experience* also have a statistically significant and positive correlation with the two factors of employee engagement. If an individual has no personal experience, *Vicarious experience* can be a substitute source of self-efficacy, which takes shape by observing the behavioural patterns of other colleagues and the consequences of those patterns (Bandura, 1969). This assertion points once more to the importance of mentorship among the criminal investigators. A young criminal investigators can improve their self-efficacy through observing an older colleague. It has to be kept in mind that mentors must be suitable people to be observed. As some authors (Schunk, 1987; Schunk, Hanson, & Cox, 1987) claim, observers believe in their success when they carry out an activity in a similar way as the person observed and when the latter is similar in terms of their age, years of experience and gender.

Statistically significant and positive correlations with employee engagement were also found for *Social support by one's supervisor* and *Social support by one's colleagues*. Social support means an interactive exchange including emotional support and care for well-being in the workplace (Cobb, 1976; House, 1981; Jahoda, 1981; Vaux, 1988). The conclusions of this research concur with those of previous research as (Lord, 1996; Mushtaq & Khan, 2013) discovered that social support influences the employee engagement of police officers. More attention to strengthening social support should be paid to operative criminal investigators because Kaufmann and Beehr (1989) found that police officers in management positions have obtained more social support than their operational colleagues. Research among employees in the Slovenian police has also shown a similar result (Smolej & Lobnikar, 2016). Social support creates a balance between work and private life (Batool & de Visser, 2014) which is very important for criminal investigators in stressful situations. Social support is also a way of soothing a stressful situation and post-traumatic stress disorder (Long & Stephens, 1997). This explains why criminal investigators should be offered not only ad hoc help, but that interaction between employers and employees should also be established through different forms of leadership to create a positive working atmosphere. This can be achieved in different ways, such as informal socialising, conversations and workshops.

We also found that cynicism (*Normative cynicism in Cynicism towards one's supervisor*) was statistically significantly and negatively correlated with employee engagement. These conclusions are in line with Watson and Tellegen (1985) who found a negative correlation between cynicism and employee engagement. Cynicism in the police negatively affects the assignments handled by the police (Osborne, 2014) because stress and burnout bring about lower productivity in the police together with worse physical and mental health (Lumb & Breazeale, 2003). The constant experiencing of anger and opposition is the most significant element of police cynicism (Niederhoffer, 1967), reflected as a fear of normative changes among criminal investigators. Criminal investigators should cooperate when regulations are being amended because they know which tools are needed for investigation. Criminal investigators would see such changes as something useful for ensuring efficient work. One of the main dimensions of police cynicism is cynicism towards one's supervisors (Regoli et al., 1990). We found that Cynicism

towards one's supervisor statistically significantly and negatively correlated with employee engagement. Cynicism cannot be eliminated by simply educating criminal investigators. The most important factor is the individuals to whom such cynicism is aimed at (e.g. the supervisor, legislator ...). Therefore, the responsible authorities within the Slovenian criminal investigation police should pay attention to quality since the selection of good leaders should come after a practical test of competence, not only on the basis of an interview or even clientelism.

Social undermining by one's supervisor in public has a statistically significant and negative correlation with employee engagement. Vinokur, Price and Caplan (1996) defined social undermining as behaviours directed toward the target person that display a negative effect and behaviours that make difficult or hinder the attainment of instrumental goals. Some authors (Tepper, 2007; Tepper, Moss, & Duffy, 2011) claim that *Social undermining by one's supervisor* is a form of leadership some people engage in. As a result, it is essential for the leadership of the Slovenian criminal investigation police that those responsible hold leadership competencies and use e.g. transformative leadership, which is, among other features, also recommended by Bass and Riggio (2006). It is necessary to find an area of work which brings leadership and the criminal investigator's goal together within the same vision.

In the last part, we consider some demographic data found to have a statistically significant relationship with employee engagement. The age of criminal investigators was statistically significantly and positively correlated with employee engagement (*Care for employee development*). These conclusions are in accordance with Trahan (2009) who claims that employee engagement is high when an employee comes into the organisation. Employee engagement drops after one year and increases again after five years. Therefore, criminal investigation police should focus on the young criminal investigators to improve their employee engagement. Mishra, Boynton and Mishra (2014) suggest that supervisors should take care to develop the skills of young employees and ask them for feedback. This is also important for the Slovenian criminal investigation police due to the high fluctuation of human resources. It is thus necessary to establish a good career system that enable careers to be built within the Slovenian criminal investigation police.

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