

THE MANAGERIAL LOYALTY AND ITS ASSESSMENT

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Abstract. The goal of the article is to analyse the managerial loyalty, its indicators, components, and influence on subordinate loyalty. For this purpose the scientific works of foreign and Lithuanian authors were studied and the content analysis of Lithuanian academic journals and relevant scientific literature published in Lithuania in the period of 2006-2010 was performed. A research in Lithuanian organisations was conducted by way of a survey of 72 different level managers. A managerial loyalty was assessed by comparing public and business sectors, management levels of the executives as well as their age. The authors hope that this article provides initial insights into issue of managerial loyalty in Lithuanian organizations.

Keywords: managerial loyalty, subordinate loyalty, loyalty components, indicators.

Jel classification: M12, H83

1. Introduction

Since the early 20th century the issues of effective management of organizations became especially topical in their practical sense, meanwhile, questions on the nature of managerial work arose on the level of theory. The works of different authors emphasized various aspects of managerial work: management functions, roles, skills (Fayol 2005; Mount, Bartlett 1999; Mintzberg 1994; Whitley 1989). Over the recent years special attention of the researchers was drawn to managerial competences (Thom, Ritz 2004; Diskiene, Marčinskas 2007). However, managerial loyalty and commitment as important aspects of a manager's activities have not been widely analysed as yet and have not been given as much attention as the above mentioned ones. Thought employees loyalty issues in general were widely analysed in Lithuanian academic literature (Girdauskiene 2011; Kavaliauskiene 2010; Arlauskiene, Endriulaitiene 2010; Ivanauskiene, Auruškiene 2008; Kinderis 2009; Vveinhardt, Kotovskiene 2008; Valickiene–Pilkauskaite *et al.* 2007; Veršinskiene, Večkiene 2007; Pakalkaite 2006; Gendron 2006; Petkeviciute, Kalinina 2004), however, there has been a lack of attention to and discussion of managerial loyalty. Thus, the article will analyse one of the basic obligations of a manager, i.e. being loyal.

2. Loyalty as one of the managerial obligations and its components

Formally defining loyalty in a constructive way is not an easy task. According to Grunholdt (2000), loyalty means a person's commitment or attachment to a certain object which can be represented by another person or group of persons and in the best case by duties or motives. Eskildsen *et al.* (2004) argued that the construct “loyalty” is a behavioural outcome, which is driven by “motivation and satisfaction” a psychological response and how to obtain this is typically the focus of the human resource management system of the organisation. Loyalty cannot be expected without reciprocity. To expect a high level of loyalty from company's employees, its managers are expected to show a similar, or even higher, level of loyalty to them.

A company can function only due to its representatives, and the managers of the company and its units are among the key ones. This is also stipulated in the legislation - article 2.87 of the Lithuanian Civil Code indicates that a manager must comply with fiduciary duties. Fiduciary duties are understood as legislation-based imperatives which can not be avoided via a contract. There are three main fiduciary duties of a manager of any organization: the duty of care, the duty of acting bona fides and the duty of loyalty.

Duty of care means that while fulfilling their duties the company managers must perform management action not just formally, but act to truly ensure legitimate interest of the companies and take all the possible and available measures. In case of failure to take all the measures which would have a maximum conformity with the standard of the company's management professional performance, they breach the duty of care and by the same are responsible for risk of possible damages.

The manager's duty of acting *bona fides* is based on the fact that honesty is a value-based behaviour standard, so the estimation of a person's honesty should include both subjective and objective criteria. In the objective respect honesty means a moral requirement. The subjective criterion is determined by analysis of whether a person could or could not do something due to his or her age, education, qualification, experience and other important circumstances.

The duty of loyalty means that the manager must be confidential and avoid situations in which his or her personal interests would or could conflict with the company's interests. Loyalty to the company requires that the managers act in accordance with the instruments of constitution, care for company's welfare and pursue the company's goals.

The analysis of the scientific articles (Aityan 2011; Alejandro *et al.* 2011; Ineson, Berechet 2011; Yee *et al.* 2010; Keiningham, Aksoy 2009, Si *et al.* 2008; Hunter, Thatcher 2007, Matzler, Renzl 2006; Meyer *et al.* 2004) of the recent years shows a number of managerial behaviour models which among other criteria can also reflect their loyalty during the recession. Some of them faced economic challenges of the organization and tried to solve all the problems by, first of all, lowering the remuneration at the expense of the employees, by abandoning other additional incentive measures or even by dismissing the employees. First and foremost that affected the loyalty of such employees. There were other managers who despite the complicated situation really cared for the future of the organization and were looking for ways to continue the successful operation of the company, to save the organization image, performance indicators and to preserve or even increase their loyalty by own personal example. There were also those who took advantage of the bigger salaries and better opportunities offered by other companies and went to work for more successful organizations demonstrating their absence of loyalty. Such diverse managerial behaviour will also affect the behaviour of the ordinary employees: it causes them to have a lack of confidence in organization, distrust in its future and motivates them to leave the organization or get ready for that.

Even the best of the business ideas will not see implementation without loyal employees in the organization. The authors (Grunberg *et al.* 2000) state that customer loyalty which brings success to business is directly influenced by simple employee loyalty and that is in turn affected by managerial loyalty. Loyal employees form long-term relationships with their clients, which is a very important move for a successful business (Fig. 1).

In summary, it can be stated that loyalty of managers as well as ordinary employees to their organization guarantees its successful expansion, good performance results and brings bilateral benefit. This is an advantage both to the organization and to the employees who should get stable and adequate reward, evaluation and acknowledgement for their loyalty as well as opportunities for improvement and self-realisation.

The analysis of the managerial loyalty components showed the variety of their classifications. Table 1 shows the managers' loyalty components described by different authors.

The table 1 shows that the components of Pečiulienė (2007) are universal and can be applied to the identification of the loyalty of even ordinary employees. Meanwhile, Pollock (1999) analyses the groups of components the aggregate of which can determine only managerial loyalty. Reichheld (1998) indicates components which make the three above mentioned managerial duties interwoven: care, honesty and loyalty. Fratermann (2009) used studies conducted in such reputable companies as Harley-Davidson, Intuit, Cisco and Dell to determine 6 components which constitute loyalty and form a foundation for company managers to experience long-term duty towards an organization. Fratermann states that loyalty can be expected from managers when they are ready to sacrifice their personal interests for the sake of the welfare of clients and partners and when they do not swap their principles and attitudes for a momentary financial benefit.

According to Fratermann managers' loyalty is not self-sacrifice, but in fact the opposite – a way of reaching long-term goals. A crucial step in developing loyalty is a strategy of reaching personal goals in which such goals are formed in the context of long-term success.

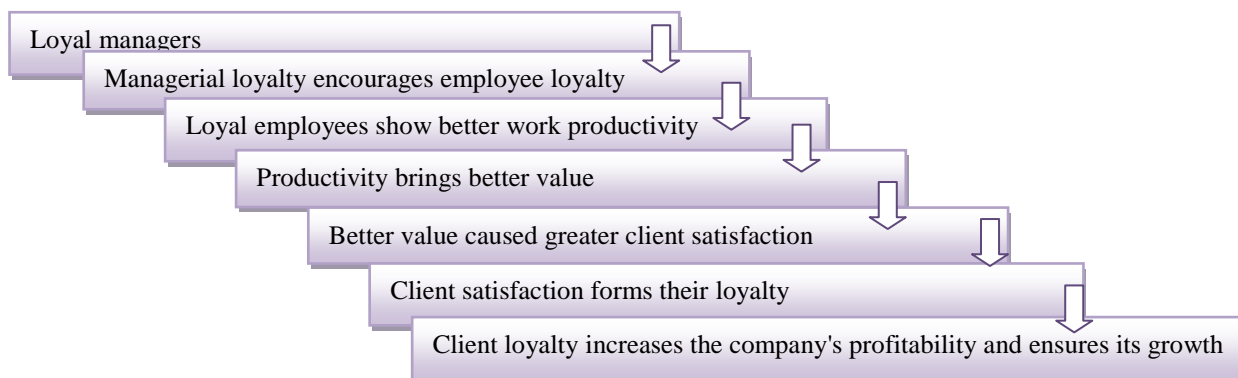


Fig. 1. Correlation between managerial loyalty and company profit (compiled by the authors based on Grunberg *et al.*2000).

Table 1. Managerial loyalty components (compiled by the authors)

Authors	Components
Pečiulienė (2007)	Goodwill Identification with the organization and its employees Sacrificing one's own interests
Pollock (1999)	Being an example to the members of organization Increasing the effectiveness of the activities of the organization (unit) Improvement of work morals Controlling emotions Decision-making ability
Reichheld (2001)	Sacrificing personal goals for the sake of reaching the company's goals Complementing the organization before the clients and the community Confidentiality with respect to organization's business matters Declining job offers from other organizations Refusal to disseminate rumours and lies about the organization Safe-keeping of the assets of the organization, avoiding dissipation of funds Improvement of the organization performance
Fratermann (2009)	Bilateral intention to have a winning relationship with partners Particularity and carefulness in the choice of partners Simplicity and clarity in decision-making processes Rewarding for good results Honest communication with feedback Propagating own principles, adhering to them and ambition to let the partners and employees know about them

Managers' loyalty influences the loyalty of their subordinates. However, this dependence is not always directly proportional. Moreover, a question may arise of whether the loyalty of ordinary employees can form overnight or whether it needs a so-called "incubation period". In answer to this question one should define the degree to which the dimension of time can influence employee loyalty. The traditional concepts emphasise a long-term development of loyalty and formation of confidence. However, the organizations of the 21st century function in such an indefinite and chaotic environment that according to modern concepts they have no sufficient time for the formation of loyalty of the ordinary employees. Aityan (2011) states that modern labour relations remind of a rendezvous where both parties meet each

other for a short time without any long-term obligations. According to other authors such labour relations do not disturb the fast formation of loyalty. While considering loyalty to be a result coming from the probability of receiving an adequate reward for invested efforts the employees can quickly assess the situation, determine, the probability of such reward and decide if their input shall be short-term (e.g. demonstration enthusiasm, oral consent with the organization values, etc.) or long-term. Therefore, the loyalty of ordinary employees is expressed in by their different input into the success of the organization.

The knowledge of this allows managers to form employee loyalty by applying different financial incentives. But such incentives can satisfy the short-term needs of the employees; however,

they do not help form and maintain long-term employee loyalty, i.e. commitment and devotion to company's values and goals. The problem is that the things that should be merited are usually being "bought". Research determined that to reinforce employee loyalty several factors are in place which are directly related to managers' behaviour and their loyalty: managers' respect, confidence and attention-based behaviour towards the employees; managers' care for employees; opportunities for employees' personal and professional improvement; honest managerial behaviour (especially in relation to adequate remuneration); satisfaction with the job and its results, etc.

Failure to practise the declared values doubles standards for managers and ordinary employees as well as dishonesty create the atmosphere of distrust and exert negative influence on employee loyalty.

3. Managerial loyalty research and assessment in Lithuanian companies

Decreasing loyalty destroys the reputation of a company, increases staff turnover, instability, financial loss, and it weakens motivation and job satisfaction of the managers as well as creates tense inner environment of the organization. Most of the scientific sources analyse only employee loyalty in general or ways of stimulating it and methods of reaching this goal. However, there is no research dedicated to the assessment of managers' loyalty in Lithuanian organisations. The performance of this research was impeded by apprehensions of company managers— especially in the public sector— that demonstrate passiveness and reluctance in expressing their position as well as by the sensitivity of the issue under research. Therefore it was expedient to rely on the non-probability sampling and "snowball" technique, when researches first of all select the enterprises where co-workers, former co-workers, etc. are employed. Then, these persons indicate other enterprises. Thus, 250 electronic anonymous questionnaires were sent and 72 completed questionnaires were received (28.8 %). Such type of survey was convenient for both parties: for company managers who had an assurance that this research will not "harm" the image of the company, as well as for researchers who were allowed to use the collected primary information for interpretation and conclusions.

The distribution of managers who were research respondents according to sectors: 28 % of company managers from public sector and 72 % from business sector; age distribution: from 18 to 25 (11 %), from 26 to 35 (39 %), from 36 to 45

(31 %), from 46 and up (19 %); management level: top (36 %), average (39 %) and lowest (25 %) level managers. The distribution of companies according their activity was: trade companies (19 %); production companies (8 %); services companies (48 %); companies with multiple activities (e.g. production and trade, 11 %); other activities (14 %).

The following hypotheses were postulated while conducting this research:

H1 – managerial loyalty in the public sector is stronger than its equivalent in the business sector;

H2 – the loyalty of the highest level managers is greater than that of the managers of the lowest level;

H3 – the loyalty of the older managers is greater than that of the managers of a younger age.

General model for employee satisfaction and loyalty (Eskildsen *et al.* 2002) was used as the foundation of the research in its modified form. The authors singled out six loyalty components, while each of them was represented as 5-8 statements (35 overall) which had to be graded by the respondents on a Likert scale. Loyalty components presented on Figure 2.

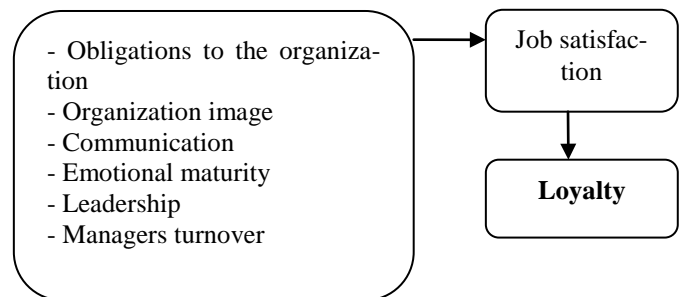


Fig.2. The model of correlation between managerial loyalty components and job satisfaction (Source: compiled by the authors by modifying employee loyalty model (Eskildsen *et al* 2004))

Upon completion of the research each of the components was analysed individually, however, due to the limited volume of the article only the analysis of statements given in the first component "Obligations to the company" will be presented.

Figure 3 shows the average values of each of the statements comprising this component; they are calculated according to the 5-grade Likert scale from all the feedback of the respondents.

The figure 3 shows that the average (3.25) of the statement "You are interested in the attractive job offers of other companies" is the lowest in this component, however, it does not build a sufficient foundation to make a conclusion about the high loyalty of the managers to their company".

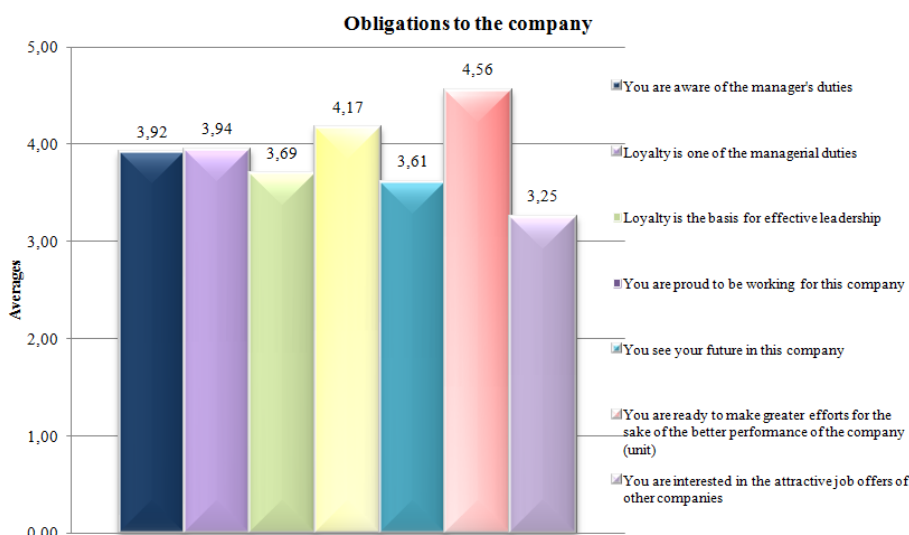


Fig.3. The average values of the statements comprising the component “Obligations to the company” (Source: Compiled by the authors based on research results)

Table 2. Mann-Whitney U test results (Source: Compiled by authors based on SPSS software results)

	You are aware of the manager's duties	Loyalty is one of the managerial duties	Loyalty is the basis for effective leadership	You are proud to be working for this company	You see your future in this company	You are ready to make greater efforts for the better performance of the company	You are interested in the attractive job offers of other companies
Mann-Whitney U	276.000	296.000	344.000	258.000	366.000	392.000	388.000
Z	-3.323	-3.160	-2.548	-3.667	-2.193	-1.877	-1.109
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.002	.011	.000	.028	.060	.056

While trying to prove the postulated hypotheses statistically significant (insignificant) differences between the different respondent groups according to sectors, management level and age were being identified.

Due to the fact that the assessment in the questionnaire was expressed both by scores and ranking variables (from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”) the Mann-Whitney U test was used to check the reliability of the survey results. If the resultant p value (in table 2 “Asymp.Sig”) is lower than 0.05, then the differences between the opinions of participants and non-participants are statistically reliable; if p higher than 0.05, they are not reliable. Having analysed the data of the table the possible conclusion of these test results shows that only three out of 7 statements have statistically reliable differences between the responses of the participants and non-participants, however, according to applicable theory they can not be interpreted.

Spearman’s correlation coefficient was calculated in order to prove the hypotheses (Table 3): H1 – managerial loyalty in the public sector is

stronger than in the business sector, H2 – the loyalty of the highest level managers is greater than for those of the lowest level, H3 – the loyalty of the older managers is greater than that of the managers of a younger age. If $p < 0.05$, it shows a statistically significant relation between the variables, if $p > 0.05$, that shows the absence of relation. In case the relation is significant, it is important to trace the sign of the correlation coefficient: if it is a minus, there is a reverse relation between the variables, if it is a plus, it is a direct relation. For instance, in case of “Communication” and the sector where the correlation coefficient equals -0.201 (reverse relation) it shows that the managers of the public sector organizations have less communication with the interest groups; the subordinates lack information, etc. Meanwhile, for “Emotional maturity” and the age of the managers the correlation coefficient is equal to 0.052 (direct relation) which means that the higher level managers are more capable of controlling the emotions of other people as well as their own ones, they can avoid impulsive actions and hasty decisions, etc.

Table 3. Spearman's correlation coefficient

The loyalty components	Indicators	Sector	Age	Executive level
Obligations to the organization	correl.coeff.	-0.248*	0.294*	0.080
	p value	0.036	0.012	0.506
Organization image	correl.coeff.	-0.294*	0.102	0.004
	p value	0.012	0.394	0.975
Communication	correl.coeff.	-0.201*	0.045	0.353*
	p value	0.090	0.709	0.002
Emotional maturity	correl.coeff.	-0.287*	0.052	-0.265*
	p value	0.015	0.662	0.024
Leadership	correl.coeff.	-0.362	-0.265	0.137
	p value	0.002	0.024	0.251
Executive turnover	correl.coeff.	-0.366*	0.252*	-0.101
	p value	0.003	0.033	0.400

Source: Compiled by authors based on SPSS software results.

The data of the completed research did not show a statistically significant difference between the opinions of the company managers of the public and business sectors to all the loyalty components. Hypothesis H1 hypothesis was not confirmed. Managerial loyalty in the public sector is not stronger than its equivalent in the business sector. On the contrary, a deeper analysis of the statements comprising the loyalty component showed that the managers of business organisations are more frequently giving positive feedback about their company, its products, do not disseminate rumours to the subordinates or representatives of other interest groups, they also communicate with such groups. It can be explained by the personal interest of the owners-managers to expand their business, make their companies grow, care for the reputation and image of the company.

Hypothesis H2 was not confirmed either: the highest level managers do not show more loyalty than the lowest level managers who are more often presenting their company as perspective and believe in its success, etc. This partly explains the reason why during the crisis the managers of several large Lithuanian companies were replaced by others. Furthermore, there are a lot of examples in Lithuania where older executives or owners hire new executives, but after some time they make them redundant and come back to their previous position again.

Hypothesis H3 hypothesis was not confirmed as well. The loyalty of the older managers is not greater than that of the managers of a younger age, they care less about the loyalty of the subordinates, about their turnover and they are also more doubt-

ful about the future of the company. Such position can be partly explained by their retirement age or its proximity.

Depending on the managers' behaviour and the loyalty, the image of the organization is being formed as well as relations with interest groups (vendors, clients, competitors, employees, etc.), the psychological climate and loyalty of the subordinates. While developing loyalty attention should be paid to four conditions:

1. Formation and development of loyalty to the values and goals of the organization requires time and energy. The "overnight" loyalty is short-term and unstable.
2. In selection of managers for their positions one of the criteria could be commitment to the values and goals of their previous company.
3. Managers' loyalty should also be fostered instead of looking for reasons of company failure in its deficit.
4. Managers' loyalty is crucial for the development of the loyalty of subordinates, if they do not see loyal behaviour of their bosses; it would be illogical to expect loyalty from the employees.

4. Conclusions

The Civil Code of the Republic of Lithuania stipulates three main duties of managers: duty of care, duty of acting bona fides, and duty of loyalty, which mean that the managers must act in accordance with the instruments of constitution of the organization, care for company's welfare and pursue the goals set by the company.

While analysing the benefit of managerial loyalty to the organization its influence on the success should be noted: managerial loyalty affects employee loyalty, which in turn creates client loyalty and that brings profit to the organization.

The research was aimed at determining how loyalty components (managers' obligations to the organization, its image, communication, emotional maturity, leadership and executive turnover) are assessed by the managers working in the companies of public and business sector as well as executives from different levels of management and various ages. The results lead to a conclusion that the managers of the business sector companies are more loyal than the managers for the public sector; the lowest level managers show more loyalty in comparison with the highest level managers, while younger executives have greater loyalty than older leaders.

In developing managerial loyalty the main focus should be on four conditions: formation of

loyalty to the organization requires time and energy, in selection of managers one of the criteria could be commitment to their previous company, managerial loyalty does not appear from nothing – it should be formed and instilled, if ordinary employees do not see loyal behaviour of their executives – it would be difficult to expect loyalty from the employees.

The analysis of managerial loyalty in the Lithuanian companies faced a lack of needed information and detailed research. The authors admit the limitations of the completed research. However, the absence of any earlier managerial loyalty research in Lithuanian organizations and their results definitely increases the value of this research.

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