



# The Impact of Intrinsic Rewards on Employee Engagement in The Food Industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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**Abstract:** Rewards ensure that employees can form strong, meaningful bonds with the organization they are working in. It plays an important role when it comes to motivation and creating engagement. Intrinsic rewards are intangible rewards that employees achieve at their workplace, also called internal rewards. These rewards are achieved when completing tasks and responsibilities efficiently and successfully. Employee engagement is a concept related to human resources and generally represents employees' dedication to their job. Lately, researchers came up with the findings that employee engagement also represents employees' enthusiasm for their job. This research aims to investigate how important intrinsic rewards are and how it affects employee engagement in the food industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Quantitative data were collected using questionnaires and survey methods. It was analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Research reached 210 employees using the convenience sampling method. Positive and significant relationship exists between intrinsic rewards and employee engagement, which proves that autonomy is an essential ingredient in the engagement of employees. Universal application in each business field, with the focus on Human Resource Management, applicable to creating reward packages and enhancing employee engagement. The findings of this research will be beneficial for future related research and organizational managers when formulating a quality reward package based on employees' preferences. This research creates new directions for further research in the relationship between intrinsic rewards and employee engagement because the concept of engagement is still relatively young, and there are no previously done researches on a similar topic in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Keywords:** *Intrinsic rewards, employee engagement, food industry, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

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## INTRODUCTION

Organizations have been looking for over a decade for an answer to the question of which asset is the most important one for the sustainability of an organization and its long-term success. After numerous researches and testing, they discovered those are human assets. Human resources are the most important asset for each organization because they are the basis for overall performance and achieving a competitive advantage in the market. In today's dynamic and competitive business, organizations demand qualified employees with high skills, abilities, and knowledge (Hadziahmetovic & Dinc, 2020). Knowing that fact, organizations must provide a satisfactory path for employees and engage them with the business. Employee engagement refers to understanding and having a clear vision of the organizational goal and its overall purpose. That could be achieved by allowing employees to participate in the managerial decision-making process and allowing them to create their workspace. Employee engagement also

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means being included in a team, being reliable and empowered, recognized for completed tasks, being provided with constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement, and supporting the development and improvement of new and existing skills and abilities. Previous research concluded that employees are much more effective and efficient when engaged in their jobs. Employee engagement has recently received much interest from analysts as a fundamental component of work effectiveness (Saks & Gruman, 2011). The theory has already gone mainstream across organizations, and it has always been proven to have a significant positive influence on the effectiveness, profitability, turnover, cash flows, and even earnings per share (e.g., (Baumruk, 2006; Bhattacharya, 2015; Jam, Khan, Zaidi, & Muzaffar, 2011; Khan, Jam, Akbar, Khan, & Hijazi, 2011; Robertson-Smith & Markwick, 2009; Saks & Gruman, 2011; Welbourne, 2007). Due to the importance of employee engagement to organizations, one of the most vital aspects is encouraging somehow greater engagement (Farooq, Khan, Farooq, Rauf, & Sharan, 2012; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004; Waheed, 2011).

A Reward system, in this respect, is considered to be vital for employee engagement. The Reward system is divided into intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. While extrinsic rewards are based on tangible assets such as salary, compensation, bonuses, etc., usually provided by the supervisor, intrinsic rewards are intangible and considered to be the internal reward that employees get when achieving a goal successfully. Those are primarily dependent on one's efforts. Employees must perform at their best for organizations to realize their full potential.

By adopting professional managing approaches to reach their employees' thoughts, prospective managers must understand that intrinsic variables play a huge part in organizational effectiveness and foster a culture of appreciation, responsibility, integrity, and flexibility (A. Singh, Bagadia, & Sandhu, 2016). According to his findings, intrinsic rewards are far more valuable to workers than extrinsic incentives such as salary. As a store assistant in Norway's monetary marketplace, Kuvaas (2006) analyzed employees' duties, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, and efficiency. According to his observations, employees are largely influenced by intrinsic rewards. According to recent qualitative research of scientific publications on engagement from 2006 to 2015, Broom and Sha (2013) has witnessed an improvement in curiosity about the idea of engagement; the largest portion of it has been centered on social networks and engagement online, community engagement, and human power Jelen-Sanchez (2017). Internal factors, according to Bakker and Albrecht (2018) and idealized influence (Breevaart, Bakker, & Demerouti, 2014) have been identified as drivers of employee engagement, as well as outcomes of employee engagement, such as greater organizational results (Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010) relatively low intentions to give up, and greater loyalty (Saks & Gruman, 2011). When considering this, we could create a link between the intrinsic reward system and employee engagement to test its impact and check if intrinsic rewards have a direct or indirect impact and can positively or negatively influence employee engagement.

### ***Objectives of the Study***

This research investigates the impact of intrinsic rewards on employee engagement in companies operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The research aims to fulfill the following gaps in the literature:

- In the food industry, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the impact of intrinsic rewards on employee engagement has not been adequately investigated. This research will assist in filling a gap in the literature about this territory and the food industry sector.
- Its goal is to determine which types of intrinsic rewards may be applied as a determinant of employee engagement and expand the list of existing and upcoming scientific studies.
- This research aims to contribute to the existing literature by bringing and evaluating how different types of intrinsic rewards affect employee engagement.
- Most studies concentrate on one or a few reward types. This research adds to the literature by investigating six different types of intrinsic rewards: role clarity, skill variety, autonomy, feedback, training, and participation.

### ***Research Problem/Novel Contribution***

Employee engagement is a global problem. Only 13% of employees throughout the world are fully engaged at work, according to a Gallup study released in late 2013, and more than double that percentage is fully disengaged, destructive, and at the fear of spreading dissatisfaction to everyone else. The analysis of the research findings revealed a significant relationship between the Intrinsic rewards types and employee engagement (A. Singh et al., 2016) which can be explored even more in upcoming research and evidence. Even though the hypotheses testing indicated a moderate to

strong relationship strength, it should be noted that earlier research indicated that different reward types necessarily increase their implication on specific employee behavior (Jam, Donia, Raja, & Ling, 2017; Manzoor, Wei, & Asif, 2021; Saeed, Nayyab, & Lodhi, 2013; Smith, Joubert, & Karodia, 2015) and that there has been a lack of investigation aimed to examine the relationship between intrinsic rewards types and employee engagement types, so this research can be considered to be an extension for upcoming ones.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Rewards*

Reward refers to anything that an employee considers valuable as an outcome of the work engagement, and it covers all forms of rewards, direct and indirect, along with intrinsic and extrinsic. Salary, bonuses, education and training, and organizational climate are common reward components that organizations may use to encourage, involve, and retain employees (Armstrong, 2006). The reward is formed as a technique to assist businesses in meeting their most critical goals, which are to engage, retain, inspire, and empower employees, not exclusively through pay raises, annual bonuses, and such, but in a more meaningful and long-lasting approach. The purpose of reward is to optimize the strong effect that a variety of rewards may have on motivation, employee engagement, organizational commitments, and work satisfaction. According to Cascio and Boudreau (2010), there seem to be three significant changes in organization principles regarding salaries and benefits, such as increased willingness to start reducing workforce size; privatizing employment, and limiting the pay to keep costs down salaries and benefits; less concern with salary situation relative to its competitors but moreover with what the organization can fund; and execution of initiatives to promote and reward employees, while also seeking to make pay more variable. Employees must be encouraged to "go above and beyond" basic job requirements by expressing appreciation, delivering fair and equal bonuses that contribute to adjusting employee needs, and making sure that they realize how the reward system can benefit them if they participate in voluntary employee assistance (Jam, Akhtar, Haq, Ahmad-U-Rehman, & Hijazi, 2010; Payne & Webber, 2006; Waheed, Khan, & Ain, 2013).

### *Intrinsic Rewards*

The term "intrinsic rewards" applies to the rewards provided to an organization's workforce. Intrinsic rewards are invisible, emotional achievements that result from satisfactorily completing the job. It could also include, along with other things, a sense of confidence, self-development from finishing the project, improving possessed as well as developing additional knowledge and considering yourself a significant part of the company. Those rewards can be classified as incentives given to employees for successfully fulfilling their tasks or projects. The incentives are generally psychological and focus on an individual's work and achievements. Employees will be encouraged to respond to long-term cultural improvements when intrinsic rewards produce a favorable emotional response (Manzoor et al., 2021). Once someone successfully finalizes an assignment, they will feel satisfaction and self-esteem. The above internal drive then pushes the employee to do the assigned task efficiently to continue the experience of such positive thoughts. Feelings of respect from top management and/or numerous different employees, self-development, garnering more faith and confidence from supervisors, doing enjoyable work, a sense of accomplishment, constantly learning or continuing to expand capabilities in a given area, providing employees the freedom to select between jobs they conduct and then becoming a team player are all forms of intrinsic workplace benefits (Stumpf, Tymon, Favorito, & Smith, 2013). According to their research, employee satisfaction and loyalty were found to be positively connected to intrinsic rewards throughout both, with programs supporting employee creativity and promoting employee satisfaction and motivation even more strongly during the innovation process. Castro, Perrián, and Bueno (2008) emphasized that, instead of salary and promotions, intrinsic motivation and recognition play an essential factor in employee satisfaction.

Types of intrinsic rewards that are going to be covered in this study are role clarity (level to which employees understand their obligations and tasks at work), skill variety (a particular job that requires a variety of skills, talents, and abilities that employee needs to use to complete it), autonomy (providing employees with the freedom to work in a way that suits them the best), feedback (a constructive suggestion that can be given from supervisors and peers used to improve the performance and boosting employees motivation and dedication to doing their job) training (programs that help employees to improve and develop certain skills as well as the knowledge needed to perform the job effectively) and participation (letting employees to be involved in managerial decisions and allowing them to take control of their work) (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Ziauddin, Khan, Jam, & Hijazi, 2010).

Lucey, Bateman, and Hines (2005) perceived engagements as "how each worker engages with your business and how each worker interacts with your consumers" They consider the opposite of this emotionally unemployed.

### **Engagement**

Engagement is defined by Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004) as an employee's favorable attitude toward the business and its principles. Employees' workplace engagement causes them to devote themselves fully intellectually, psychologically, and personally to the task (Selvi & Aiswarya, 2022). An engaged employee is aware of the organizational environment and collaborates with coworkers to identify opportunities for improvement for the organization's interest. Employee engagement is a broad concept that encompasses more than just work pleasure, individual dedication, and ethical business practices (Douglas & Roberts, 2020). The business must promote and support employee engagement, which is a two-way interaction between employees and employers. Companies frequently analyze and track employee engagement and are interested in increasing employee engagement in their organizations (Eisenberger, Rhoades Shanock, & Wen, 2020). Engagement, they believe, corresponds with organizational commitment and employee moral behavior, but it's a two-way path. It's "one step up" from commitment, they claim.

The following are the three key components of employee engagement:

1. The knowledge required to implement one's task efficiently and the willingness to use that knowledge are two sides of the same coin.
2. Increasing employee contribution to implementing company goals.
3. Employee engagement is an interpersonal process through which individuals get emotionally engaged in vision and transformation at the workplace (Vance, 2006).

Two major variables impact employee engagement. These variables are validated by business analysis and are based on statistical assessment.

Employee engagement with the business itself, and by default, how employees feel about senior management, is measured by engagement with the organization. This element has much to do with organizational leadership, justice, ethics, and tolerance - in other words, how employees want to be addressed at the organizational and individual levels.

Employee engagement with the manager is a far more accurate reflection of how employees perceive their respective employers. Experiencing acceptance, getting treated equitably, getting support and suggestions, and, in total, maintaining a positive business relationship mutually respectful among supervisor and subordinate are all addressed. According to studies, workers' internal thoughts may produce positive or organizational citizenship behaviors to enhance the interpersonal, team, or organizational results. This, in addition, can increase engagement (Ahmad-Ur-Rehman, Haq, Jam, Ali, & Hijazi, 2010; Kochan, Riordan, Kowalski, Khan, & Yang, 2019; Organ, 2018). According to Yan, Yang, Su, Luo, and Wen (2018), engagement is one of the indicators of employee well-being at a workplace. In the public sector, Van den Broeck, Lens, De Witte, and Van Coillie (2013) studied the relationships between different types of management control, intrinsic and extrinsic incentives, and performance. Employee performance can be improved by intrinsic motivation, according to the research. According to Ahmedova (2015), intrinsic incentives have a favorable and significant impact on an employee's performance in a company. According to the research, intrinsic rewards, such as professional growth, accountability, appreciation, and educational experiences, have a stronger influence on an employee's job engagement than extrinsic rewards, such as wages, extras, raises, and privileges. Sharma, Goel, and Sengupta (2017) stated that individuals with a greater education degree could forecast job engagement. Employees would rather receive instant monetary rewards than have their work appreciated. Flexible benefits have a favorable relationship with employee performance and happiness, according to Bagozzi and Yi (1988). Sahi, Roy, and Singh (2022) suggest that psychological empowerment significantly influences employee engagement.

Bentler and Bonett (1980) executed their research in the Spanish healthcare industry, looking at the relationship between rewards and employee internal motivation. Interviews were used to get the information. According to the research, doctors were intrinsically driven because of two dimensions: medical practice and the pro-social component. Intrinsic rewards are vital in a workplace engagement strategy because they inspire people to work harder.

Most individuals will react intensely to financial incentives or other physically demanding benefits. But, once the reward has been consumed, engagement may decline; hence, a successful strategy should incorporate both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to keep people engaged during their job (Farooq et al., 2011; Tymon Jr, Stumpf, & Doh, 2010). His results explain that intrinsic rewards are important for encouraging accomplishment since they produce long-term, intangible advantages that are typically inexpensive to obtain and can be successfully reproduced over and over again.

According to Kahn (1990), there is an interactive relationship between the individual who controls individual efforts (tangible, mental, sentimental, and moral) and the professional roles that permit this individual to assert themselves (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014).

According to Herzberg (2008), advancement is an intrinsic motivator that leads to employee engagement. According to this study, employees in the organization tend to be more engaged by intrinsic rewards.

Growth and advancement, expertise, and perception of meaningful response and success were all highly motivating factors. Employees are motivated by accountability, self-motivation, self-direction, self-control, and a desire to work towards goals, according to Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y (Gannon, Boguszak, et al., 2013). The findings of this study are summarized by Mahaney and Lederer (2006), who states that "organizations will receive the most gains by offering flexibility and autonomy to pursue an intrinsically satisfying career." Research results in the South African retail industry provide useful information about the influence of intrinsic rewards on work engagement and show a positive link between the two variables (Jacobs, Renard, & Snelgar, 2014).

Many kinds of research available are related to the study of rewarding employees. Most of them investigate how different types of rewards cause different outcomes. Koskey and Sakataka (2015) investigated the impact of intrinsic rewards on employee engagement and commitment at Rift Valley Bottlers Company in Eldoret Town. His findings showed that intrinsic rewards have the strongest and most significant contribution to employee engagement and commitment. Obicci (2015) investigated the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in the public sector of Uganda, Gulu district. With the conclusion that there is a significant positive relationship between employee engagement and intrinsic rewards.

The research of Waqas and Saleem (2014) investigated the concept of employee engagement and how it can grow stronger by offering non-financial and financial rewards to employees, which showed that non-financial rewards are a more powerful source of motivation since they have an intrinsic motivating effect on employees. Workers who are intrinsically motivated, on the other hand, automatically like their work or employment. Ram et al. (2011) investigated the potential mediating relationship between monetary (extrinsic) and non-monetary (intrinsic) rewards and employee engagement within an organization. His findings stated a strong positive relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic rewards and employee engagement. Grover, Singh, Sahoo, and Mehra (2020) did research that grew out of LIS management class conversations about engagement and investigated the necessity for dramatic modifications in managerial aspects of employee/staff motivation in information businesses. According to the findings, future IT leaders and managers should acknowledge that intrinsic rewards play a significant role in employee engagement and put as much effort into fostering a culture of respect, appreciation, integrity, and independence when customizing their management practices to plug into their employees' emotional experiences. Employees value intrinsic rewards above external ones such as money. Intrinsic rewards seem to be one of the most important ones when it comes to the engagement of the employees. It claims that intrinsic rewards have a strong positive and significant impact on employee engagement, and having engaged employees is vital for the well-being of any organization.

### ***Hypotheses***

In this research, types of intrinsic rewards: role clarity, skill variety, autonomy, feedback, training, and participation in decision making will be studied, as well as their impact on types of employee engagement: vigor, dedication, and absorption. The study's conclusion will show how each of the types affects each other and whether there exists a positive or negative relationship between two specific variables as well as its strength: weak, moderate, or strong.

**H1:** *There is a significant positive relationship between intrinsic rewards and vigor.*

**H1a:** *There is a significant positive relationship between role clarity and vigor.*

**H1b:** *There is a significant positive relationship between skill variety and vigor.*

**H1c:** *There is a significant positive relationship between autonomy and vigor*

**H1d:** *There is a significant positive relationship between feedback and vigor.*

**H1e:** *There is a significant positive relationship between training and vigor.*

**H1f:** *There is a significant positive relationship between participation and vigor.*

**H2:** *There is a significant positive relationship between intrinsic rewards and dedication.*

- H2a:** *There is a significant positive relationship between role clarity and dedication.*
- H2b:** *There is a significant positive relationship between skill variety and dedication.*
- H2c:** *There is a significant positive relationship between autonomy and dedication.*
- H2d:** *There is a significant positive relationship between feedback and dedication.*
- H2e:** *There is a significant positive relationship between training and dedication.*
- H2f:** *There is a significant positive relationship between participation and dedication.*
- H3:** *There is a significant positive relationship between intrinsic rewards and absorption.*
- H3a:** *There is a significant positive relationship between role clarity and absorption.*
- H3b:** *There is a significant positive relationship between skill variety and absorption.*
- H3c:** *There is a significant positive relationship between autonomy and absorption.*
- H3d:** *There is a significant positive relationship between feedback and absorption.*
- H3e:** *There is a significant positive relationship between training and absorption.*
- H3f:** *There is a significant positive relationship between participation and absorption.*

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research aims to investigate how important intrinsic rewards are and how it affects employee engagement in the food industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on existing research, results are expected to prove that all types of intrinsic rewards will significantly and positively affect employee engagement in the food industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### ***Samples and Procedures***

The target population for this research includes employees and managers of companies in the food industry located in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The companies will be selected from the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina's official registry. For this study, a questionnaire will be used to collect the data to measure variables. Intrinsic rewards, which have 6 types (role clarity, skill variety, feedback, training, autonomy, and participation in decision-making), are measured using 17-item scales. The second measure used in this research is based on three-dimensional employee engagement consisting of vigor, dedication, and absorption. The scale is a 9-item measure developed by [Ferreira and de Oliveira \(2014\)](#); [Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova \(2006\)](#). After the workers have provided 200 valid replies, the results will be analyzed using SPSS to perform applicable validity, reliability, regression, and ANOVA tests.

The survey used to collect the data to test the hypotheses has been created using available online survey tools. Those surveys have been printed when finalized and ready to be filled. After an agreement was made with the managers of the companies to share a survey with the employees, 200 surveys were printed and distributed to the companies, for each as many as they had employees. Collecting the data in this way rather than online has the advantage of having the needed answers faster and filled with more honesty.

The survey included 34 items, among which 8 items were about demographic information of the participants. To evaluate survey items, 5 points Likert scale was used in which label 7 was used for "Strongly Disagree," and 1 was used for "Strongly Agree."

Table 1 *SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS*

Variable	Demographics	Number	Percentage
Age	20-25	63	30.0%
	26-29	39	18.6%
	30-35	46	21.9%
	36-40	38	18.1%
	Above 40	24	11.4%
Gender	Male	132	62.9%
	Female	78	37.1%
Level of Education	Doctorate Degree	5	2.4%
	Master's Degree	67	31.9%
	Bachelor's Degree	121	57.6%
	High School	17	8.1%
Total Work Experience	Less than 5 years	87	41.4%
	5-10 years	55	26.2%
	10-15 years	41	19.5%
	More than 15 years	27	12.9%

### **Measures**

Survey items were derived from the literature. This research measured employee engagement using a short version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli et al., 2006). The UWES is widely applied as a credible work engagement construct. This construct is used in a lot of research where researchers verify the authenticity and accuracy of the selected items in different studies (Bakker et al., 2014; Ouweneel, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, & van Wijhe, 2012; Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012; Schaufeli et al., 2006). However, the survey items for this study were slightly adjusted, as in Ferreira and de Oliveira (2014). Intrinsic rewards were measured using 17 item scale as in the research of Hadžiahmetović and Dinç (2017) developed by Malhotra, Budhwar, and Prowse (2007). This scale was previously used in research (Newman & Sheikh, 2012; R. Singh, 2016). The items were formed in English and have been translated, for this research, into the Bosnian language. The survey consists of seven items. Items in the first section investigate the demographic background of the participants. Items in the second section are related to the role clarity, the third section of items are related to the skill variety, the fourth section is related to the autonomy, the fifth section is related to the feedback, the sixth section is related to the training, and the last one, seventh, is related to the participation in decision making.

## **RESULTS/FINDINGS**

### **Data Analysis**

The Cronbach's alpha method was used to assess a scale's reliability or internal consistency and test the items. Results are presented in Table 2. which shows that scale and items are highly consistent.

Table 2 *CRONBACH'S ALPHA*

Variable	Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha
Intrinsic Rewards	Role Clarity	0.986
	Skill Variety	0.956
	Autonomy	0.985
	Feedback	0.967
	Training	0.951
	Participation in Decision Making	0.984
Employee Engagement	Vigour	0.982
	Dedication	0.975
	Absorption	0.941

To investigate if there is a sufficient amount of data for a linear relationship, Pearson's  $r$  was conducted to test the hypotheses and sub-hypotheses to prove that there is a correlation among variables. The following step was to run a simple linear regression to determine the relationship between the hypotheses and sub-hypotheses shown in Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Table 3 *MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND CORRELATION BETWEEN DEPENDENT VARIABLE AND TYPES OF INTRINSIC REWARDS*

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Role Clarity	3.787	1.100	1								
2. Skill Variety	3.843	1.137	.982**	1							
3. Autonomy	3.494	1.255	.975**	.969**	1						
4. Feedback	3.329	1.293	.957**	.943**	.969**	1					
5. Training	3.388	1.269	.964**	.971**	.967**	.969**	1				
6. Participation in Decision Making	3.321	1.375	.965**	.956**	.982**	.978**	.977**	1			
7. Vigour	3.659	1.190	.989**	.973**	.983**	.969**	.965**	.972**	1		
8. Dedication	3.597	1.166	.981**	.973**	.984**	.962**	.977**	.979**	.978**	1	
9. Absorption	3.918	0.942	.971**	.980**	.979**	.958**	.979**	.969**	.975**	.973**	1

Note.  $N = 210$  \*\* $p < .01$

Table 4 *REGRESSION ANALYSIS WITH VIGOUR AS THE OUTCOME VARIABLE*

Predictors	$t$	$p$	$F$	df	$p$	$R^2$
Overall model			2426.83	6	< .001	0.986
Role Clarity	0.585	11.136	<.001			
Skill Variety	0.001	0.024	0.981			
Autonomy	0.303	5.547	<.001			
Feedback	0.203	4.599	<.001			
Training	-0.035	-0.691	0.491			
Participation in Decision Making	-0.055	-0.941	0.348			

Note.  $N = 210$



Table 5 REGRESSION ANALYSIS WITH DEDICATION AS THE OUTCOME VARIABLE

Predictors	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	df	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
Overall model			2030.31	6	< .001	0.984
Role Clarity	0.383	6.675	<.001			
Skill Variety	-0.102	-1.717	0.088			
Autonomy	0.399	6.679	<.001			
Feedback	-0.167	-3.459	<.001			
Training	0.327	5.872	<.001			
Participation in Decision Making	0.159	2.478	0.014			

Note. *N* = 210

Table 6 REGRESSION ANALYSIS WITH ABSORPTION AS THE OUTCOME VARIABLE

Predictors	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	df	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
Overall model			1614.66	6	<.001	0.979
Role Clarity	-0.084	-1.306	0.193			
Skill Variety	0.38	5.721	<.001			
Autonomy	0.421	6.311	<.001			
Feedback	0.001	0.019	0.985			
Training	0.363	5.83	<.001			
Participation in Decision Making	-0.083	-1.154	0.25			

Note. *N* = 210

Simple linear regression, as mentioned above, was conducted for each sub-hypothesis for three hypotheses, therefore: H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d, H1e, H1f, H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d, H2e, H2f, H3a, H3b, H3c, H3d, H3e, H3f were examined as follows:

Pearson product correlation is positively strong and statistically significant,  $\beta = .585$ ,  $p = <.001$ . As a result, H1a is supported.

Pearson product correlation is very weak and not statistically significant,  $\beta = .001$ ,  $p = .981$ . As a result, H1b is rejected.

Pearson product correlation is positively moderate and statistically significant,  $\beta = .303$ ,  $p = <.001$ . As a result, H1c is supported.

Pearson product correlation is positively weak and statistically significant,  $\beta = .203$ ,  $p = <.001$ . As a result, H1d is supported.

Pearson product correlation is negatively weak and not statistically significant,  $\beta = -.035$ ,  $p = .491$ . As a result, H1e is rejected.

Pearson product correlation is negatively very weak and not statistically significant,  $\beta = -.055$ ,  $p = .348$ . As a result, H1f is rejected.

Pearson product correlation is positively moderate and statistically significant,  $\beta = .383$ ,  $p = <.001$ . As a result, H2a is supported.

Pearson product correlation is negatively very weak and not statistically significant,  $\beta = -.102$ ,  $p = .088$ . As a result, H2b is rejected.

Pearson product correlation is positively moderate and statistically significant,  $\beta = .399$ ,  $p = <.001$ . As a result, H2c is supported.

Pearson product correlation is negatively very weak, and statistically significant,  $\beta = -.167$ ,  $p = <.001$ . As a result, H2d is supported.

Pearson product correlation is positively moderate and statistically significant,  $\beta = .327$ ,  $p = < .001$ . As a result, H2e is supported.

Pearson product correlation is positively weak and not statistically significant,  $\beta = .159$ ,  $p = .014$ . As a result, H2f is rejected.

Pearson product correlation is negatively very weak and not statistically significant,  $\beta = -.084$ ,  $p = .193$ . As a result, H3a is rejected.

Pearson product correlation is positively moderate and statistically significant,  $\beta = .380$ ,  $p = < .001$ . As a result, H3b is supported.

Pearson product correlation is positively moderate and statistically significant,  $\beta = .421$ ,  $p = < .001$ . As a result, H3c is supported.

Pearson product correlation is very weak and not statistically significant,  $\beta = .001$ ,  $p = .985$ . As a result, H3d is rejected.

Pearson product correlation is positively moderate and statistically significant,  $\beta = .363$ ,  $p = < .001$ . As a result, H3e is supported.

Pearson product correlation is negatively very weak and not statistically significant,  $\beta = -.083$ ,  $p = .250$ . As a result, H3f is rejected.

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The main objective of this research was to investigate the impact intrinsic rewards have on employee engagement using available research done on the same or similar topic and to compare results. Hypotheses and their sub-hypotheses are positively correlated and statistically significant ( $p < .005$ ) except H1b, H1e, H1f, H2b, H2e, H3a, H3d, H3f ( $p > .005$ ), which means that the null hypothesis was rejected for H1a, H1c, H1d, H2a, H2b, H2c, H2f, H3b, H3c, H3d. Cronbach's Alpha tested internal consistency and reliability of the analysis, showing it was excellent for each type: role clarity, skill variety, autonomy, feedback, participation in decision making, vigor, dedication, and absorption ( $\alpha \geq .9$ ).

Previously done researches that can support a positive and significant relationship between intrinsic rewards and employee engagement include Koskey and Sakataka (2015), who proved that intrinsic rewards have the strongest and most significant contribution to employee engagement and commitment. Lee and Ok (2016) found a positive relationship between employee engagement and intrinsic rewards; when employees are engaged, they are more likely to feel intrinsic rewards. Bhuvanaiah and Raya (2015) states that employees may be intrinsically motivated by work engagement since they promote employee improvement, training, and progress. Additionally, Tymon Jr et al. (2010) researched predictors of intrinsic rewards. The findings of this research stated that intrinsic rewards, when combined with employee engagement, lead to high retention and pride in the organization, which negatively correlated to turnover. Jacobs et al. (2014) investigated if there is a connection between intrinsic rewards and employee engagement in the South African retail business.

Additionally, it intended to verify an instrument for measuring intrinsic rewards in the circumstances of South Africa. His results stated a statistically significant and positive relationship between employee engagement in the South African retail business and intrinsic rewards. The research of Fairlie (2011) investigated the issue of meaningful work under representation by highlighting the importance of meaningful work in the development of human resources (HRD) methods, including employee engagement, and found that there is a strong relationship between intrinsic rewards and employee engagement. Naidu (2016) researched employee engagement practices used by Nagpur's traditional retail industry to reduce staff turnover. The research seeks to determine whether employee engagement methods affect males and females equally. Findings are that intrinsic rewards significantly positively influence the retention of both men and women working in Nagpur's retail industry. Intrinsic rewards contribute to employee engagement and retention. Giancola (2014) investigated how many human resource professionals are unaware of how crucial intrinsic rewards are to workers, how delighted they are with everything they have, and which, if there are any, measures should be made as an outcome. Results showed a significant contribution of intrinsic rewards to job fulfillment, engagement, and motivation and are appreciated by many employees who are dissatisfied with their current situation and are not receiving adequate treatment from human resource specialists. Employee disengagement charges US companies \$350 billion per year. The primary goal of Osborne and Hammoud (2017) research was to investigate practices used by many communication chief executives to engage their personnel. Their findings show that autonomy, intrinsic rewards, and influence are crucial for employee engagement.

### ***Theoretical Implications***

This research has several theoretical implications. The analysis of the research findings revealed a significant relationship between the Intrinsic rewards types and employee engagement (A. Singh et al., 2016), which can be explored even more in upcoming research and evidence. Even though the hypotheses testing indicated a moderate to strong relationship strength, it should be noted that earlier research indicated that different reward types necessarily increase their implication on specific employee behavior (Manzoor et al., 2021; Saeed et al., 2013; Smith et al., 2015) and that there has been a lack of investigation aimed to examine the relationship between intrinsic rewards types and employee engagement types, so this research can be considered to be an extension for upcoming ones.

### ***Practical Implications***

The research findings reveal a more in-depth understanding of how different intrinsic rewards can impact employee engagement types and their importance for the organization. Role clarity, autonomy, and feedback showed a significant relationship with employee vigor's physical and mental strengths. It has a strong benefit for the organization in the sense that it helps in the improvement of organizational performance. Employees feel their ideas are valued when they receive feedback, and the organization obtains valuable information on issues such as staff engagement. Dedication showed a significant relationship with all three types mentioned above and training. Skill variety, autonomy, and training have a significant relationship with the absorption of employees. Autonomy appeared to be an intrinsic reward type with a positive moderate, and significant relationship with all three types of employee engagement. For the organization, it means greater productivity, satisfaction, engagement, team spirit, and a sense of organizational culture and ethics. That said, autonomy is an essential ingredient in the engagement of employees, also noted in a study (Gagné & Bhave, 2011; Lartey, 2021).

The main goal of this study was to find the result of how each intrinsic reward can impact employees' engagement to grab the attention of management specialists, specifically human resource managers. This research may help create a reward program and avoid employee disengagement. It additionally may benefit in creating employee loyalty with the organization, more quality outcomes, training programs, and satisfied suppliers. Because the reward is a core component in the employment contract, effective reward systems are critical for firms to maintain quality personnel (Abdin, Ismail, & Nor, 2019; Akgunduz, Adan Gök, & Alkan, 2020; Mosquera, Soares, & Oliveira, 2020). When managers focus on important parts of rewards and provide them to employees, it will, in turn, promote employee engagement.

## **CONCLUSION**

The main goal of this study was to examine if intrinsic rewards impact employee engagement or, more precisely, if different forms of intrinsic rewards impact employee engagement in the food industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was successfully established. Due to a shortage of data and information on food industry management in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the correlation has been positive and could serve as an exceptional study for further research and examination. Another fascinating aspect of the research is the country profile of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is in transition. This research also successfully confirmed findings that provide a positive link between intrinsic rewards and employee engagement. The research contributes to human resource management, reward, and employee engagement literature, have strong implications for managers and provides addition for upcoming research.

## **LIMITATIONS AND STUDY FORWARD**

This research, like all others, has limitations. The main focus of this research was companies operating in the food industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which covered several companies in the country, leading to a limited number of respondents. The larger sample size would be a good recommendation for future research to achieve more reliable and accurate results for better generalizability. Another limitation could be the respondents' sample since organizations were chosen by suitability, and participants were gathered from multiple businesses with different cultural backgrounds, potentially affecting the results. Despite its limitations, this research creates new directions for further research in the relationship between intrinsic rewards and employee engagement; because the definition of engagement is relatively new, there is a shortage of knowledge regarding the factors that contribute to employee engagement.

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