

The Influence of Selected Factors on Overall Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Having satisfied employees is one of the key pillars of a successful organisation. Satisfied employees results in greater productivity and less staff turnover. There are several factors that influence overall employee satisfaction, these include the level of communication, the relationships with co-workers and the nature of the work. The aim of this study was to determine the degree to which certain factors influence overall employee satisfaction. The study was first carried out in 2013 and subsequently repeated in 2015. Both studies are mutually comparable. In total, 1,776 and 1,470 respondents were interviewed in 2013 and 2015 respectively (excluding incomplete questionnaires). There were some limitations to the study in 2015: the low proportion of respondents with lower levels of education and the large proportion of Czech-owned organisations. The surveys show that from 2013 to 2015 there was no significant change in the partial and total satisfaction of employees.

Keywords: job satisfaction, communication, co-workers, nature of work

Introduction

Employee satisfaction is very important to business owners. Satisfied employees tend to work with greater effort, are usually more productive and are more likely to stay with the organisation (Edwards et al. 2008; Baruch et al. 2016). Job satisfaction can serve to boost project success too (Rezvani et al. 2016). Conversely, if employees are not satisfied, their rate of absenteeism grows as does the staff turnover (Lotich 2015).

A survey conducted in 2014 by the Boston Consulting Group identified the TOP 26 factors that affect job satisfaction (The Boston Consulting Group 2014). These factors have only changed slightly over time, as is evident from earlier surveys, such as that conducted in 2012 by the Society for Human Resources Management (2012). Table 1 compares the results of both studies.

Table 1: Comparison of the TOP10 factors influencing job satisfaction (2012 and 2014)

| | 2012 | 2014 |
|----|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1 | Opportunity to use their skills and abilities | Recognition for their work |
| 2 | Job security | Good relationships with colleagues |
| 3 | Wages and remuneration | Good work-life balance |
| 4 | Communication between employees and managers | Good relations with superiors |
| 5 | Relationship with their direct superior | Financial stability of the company |
| 6 | Employee benefits | Education and professional development |
| 7 | Financial stability of the organisation | Job security |
| 8 | Nature of the work | Attractive steady wage |
| 9 | Recognition by company management | Interesting job description |
| 10 | Independence | Corporate values |

Source: Authors on the basis of SHRM (2012) and The Boston Consulting Group (2014)

In a study conducted in 2013 in Beijing, China, the relations between co-workers were statistically significant in the used model, which was developed on the basis of three categories of factors: job characteristics; organisational-environmental factors; personal attributes (Yang 2013). The importance of relationships was also proven in a study conducted in Slovenia (Tomažević 2013).

Employees often spend a lot of time at work, which is why the relationships between them are very important. According to a survey from 2006, 30% of employees consider their best friend to be at work. Of these employees, 75% planned to stay in the company they worked for at least another year, of which 51% subsequently stated that they worked with passion and felt a connection to the company because of the presence of their best friend (Rath and Harter 2010). Friendships among employees helps to reduce stress, improve communication and collaboration, reduce feelings of insecurity, etc. (Jung Hoon and Chihyung 2011). Relationships between co-workers are also important for good teamwork. As Allegre, Mas-Machuta and Berbegal-Mirabent (2016) state, teamwork plays a significant role in job satisfaction. In other words, co-worker satisfaction has a positive effect on job satisfaction (Simon 2010).

It is well documented in sub-studies that friendship between workers, and its impact on overall employee job satisfaction, is closely related to the development and the level of communication in the workplace (Carrière and Bourque 2009).

According to Jehn and Shah (1997), a friendly exchange of words between employees can serve to encourage, build confidence, and provide critical feedback, which can increase enthusiasm and instil a positive attitude to work.

Effective communication can also help to reduce problems with morale. Understanding how the quality of communications affects workers and their supervisors helps to generate greater job satisfaction (Ashe-Edmunds 2015).

Job satisfaction is also related to working conditions and the nature of the work to be performed. It was discovered that the importance of working conditions is higher for those people working in administration than for those working in difficult conditions. For those working in difficult conditions, operating conditions were considered more important for their overall job satisfaction (Bakotić and Babić 2013).

Materials and Methods

A questionnaire survey into the degree of job satisfaction was conducted in January and February of 2013 and 2015. In 2013, a total of 1,950 respondents participated in the survey, of which 174 questionnaires were excluded due to missing values or errors. In 2015, a total of 1,547 respondents participated in the survey, of which 77 questionnaires were excluded from the sample. The distribution of respondents by gender and age is given in the chapter "Results and Discussion". The respondents were from the Hradec Králové, Pardubice and Vysočina regions, however this was not specified in the questionnaire. The questionnaires for both surveys were distributed among the respondents with the help of students attending distance bachelor programmes at the Faculty of Informatics and Management at the University of Hradec Králové. Students were asked to each get 15 work colleagues to complete the questionnaire survey. Due to the different types of organisations the students worked for, the sample therefore included responses from both the profit and non-profit sectors, as well as a wide range of disciplines. The final data therefore represented a cross-section of all economic sectors (e.g. healthcare, tourism, education, automotive, management, engineering and advertising).

The questionnaire was divided into several parts. The first part was devoted to demographic issues relating to gender, age and education level. The second part included questions on the character of the organisation which employed the respondent. These questions mainly focused on the ownership of the organisation, its size, line of business, and the position the respondent held within the organisation. The third part of the questionnaire consisted of a Czech translation of the Wallach questionnaire (1983) survey on organisational culture, which describes organisational culture in three dimensions: bureaucratic, innovative and supportive. The fourth part of the questionnaire was the job satisfaction survey. This part consisted of 36 items by which to determine the level of job satisfaction (Spector 1985). This part of the questionnaire focused on nine categories of factors: pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, recognition, operating conditions, co-workers, nature of the work and communication.

The respondents determined the extent of their agreement with a statement on a six-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to completely agree (6). Based on the ranking of the most common factors influencing job satisfaction, three factors were selected for further evaluation (co-workers, nature of the work, communication). These factors have not yet been studied in-depth within the context of job satisfaction. For an accurate assessment of overall satisfaction this value was calculated for all the nine factors examined. (SHRM 2012), (The Boston Consulting Group 2014)

The statistical analysis of the data obtained through the questionnaire survey was performed using Statistica 8 software and Microsoft Excel 2013. To identify the differences between the research conducted in 2013 and 2015, the unpaired two-sample t-test was used.

The aim of this study is to evaluate the time horizon of the development of overall job satisfaction and the state of partial indicators of job satisfaction, which includes co-workers, the nature of the work and communication in the workplace.

Results and discussion

In 2013, 1,776 respondents participated in the survey, of which 762 were men and 1,014 were women). In 2015, 1,470 respondents participated in the survey, of which 619 were men and 851 were women. The respondents were aged 17-74 years (average age 36.3 years, SD = 10.80) and 16-77 years (average age 36.19 years, SD = 10.70) respectively. Both surveys are comparable.

There were some limitations to the 2015 study, such as the small number of respondents with a lower level of education and the predominance of Czech owned companies.

Job satisfaction may also be influenced by the average salary in a region. The study is therefore also limited by the fact that respondents were not divided and compared accordingly on that basis.

Table 2: Average scores for factors affecting job satisfaction – personal factors (2013, 2015).

| Item | 2013 | | | | 2015 | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| | Co-workers | Nature of the work | Communication | Overall satisfaction | Co-workers | Nature of the work | Communication | Overall satisfaction |
| Gender | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 4.42 | 4.33 | 4.14 | 3.79 | 4.36 | 4.29 | 4.07 | 3.78 |
| Female | 4.48 | 4.31 | 4.25 | 3.69 | 4.34 | 4.24 | 4.07 | 3.70 |
| Age | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 30 years | 4.49 | 4.24 | 4.24 | 3.77 | 4.39 | 4.18 | 4.10 | 3.77 |
| 30-40 years | 4.44 | 4.33 | 4.18 | 3.74 | 4.28 | 4.26 | 4.02 | 3.71 |
| 41 years and above | 4.43 | 4.38 | 4.19 | 3.68 | 4.38 | 4.34 | 4.08 | 3.71 |
| Education | | | | | | | | |
| Elementary education | 4.11 | 4.26 | 4.14 | 3.75 | 4.02 | 4.02 | 3.41 | 3.51 |
| Skilled worker | 4.32 | 4.14 | 4.09 | 3.64 | 4.07 | 4.20 | 3.89 | 3.59 |
| Secondary school | 4.40 | 4.29 | 4.16 | 3.70 | 4.33 | 4.25 | 4.04 | 3.69 |
| Higher professional school | 4.47 | 4.48 | 4.18 | 3.78 | 4.30 | 4.28 | 4.06 | 3.74 |
| Undergraduate (distance learning) | 4.50 | 4.21 | 4.30 | 3.70 | 4.36 | 4.29 | 4.13 | 3.79 |
| University degree education | 4.56 | 4.40 | 4.28 | 3.80 | 4.45 | 4.29 | 4.16 | 3.81 |

Source: Authors

From the results, it is evident that a low level of overall job satisfaction prevails. This directly corresponds to the results in other published studies (Franěk et al. 2014). In terms of gender, age, size of the company or work experience, no significant differences in overall satisfaction were recorded.

In 2015, the monitored characteristics (co-workers, communication and the nature of the work) experienced a slight deterioration in most cases compared to 2013. However, when comparing the various determinants according to the given criteria (size of the organisation, type of organisation, length of work experience, education, etc.) the results in both years are, in the majority of cases, very similar.

In order to detect statistically significant differences in the research results for 2013 and 2015, the t-test method was applied. As a result, statistically significant differences in satisfaction ($p < 0.05$) were identified for co-workers and communication in relation to the ownership of an organisation. A statistically significant difference in satisfaction, with a significance level of $p < 0.1$, was also observed in co-workers in relation to years of experience and job level.

Communication and co-operation were practically the same for men and women. According to the age range, both determinants were better among employees younger than 30 years old than for older employees. This can be explained by the need of younger employees to communicate and cooperate with their older colleagues in order to gain valuable experience. The degree of communication between younger workers can also be explained by the increased use of information technologies by them compared to that of their older colleagues. Both determinants also improved in relation to the educational attainment of the employees.

Table 3: Average scores for factors affecting job satisfaction – company factors (2013, 2015).

| Item | 2013 | | | | 2015 | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| | Co-workers | Nature of the work | Communication | Overall satisfaction | Co-workers | Nature of the work | Communication | Overall satisfaction |
| Years of experience (tenure) | | | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 4.51 | 4.28 | 4.26 | 3.79 | 4.42 | 4.22 | 4.13 | 3.80 |
| 5-10 years | 4.41 | 4.28 | 4.19 | 3.71 | 4.27 | 4.26 | 4.01 | 3.68 |
| 11-15 years | 4.35 | 4.34 | 4.07 | 3.61 | 4.28 | 4.24 | 3.95 | 3.64 |
| More than 15 years | 4.48 | 4.48 | 4.17 | 3.70 | 4.36 | 4.40 | 4.13 | 3.73 |
| Organisation ownership | | | | | | | | |
| Czech owner | 4.45 | 4.35 | 4.18 | 3.74 | 4.40 | 4.34 | 4.14 | 3.79 |
| Foreign owner | 4.44 | 4.21 | 4.24 | 3.82 | 4.30 | 4.22 | 4.10 | 3.80 |
| International corporation | 4.41 | 4.27 | 4.15 | 3.87 | 4.38 | 4.22 | 3.95 | 3.77 |
| Public/governmental organisation | 4.49 | 4.37 | 4.25 | 3.56 | 4.28 | 4.15 | 3.96 | 3.49 |
| Organisation size | | | | | | | | |
| up to 50 employees | 4.55 | 4.47 | 4.34 | 3.79 | 4.48 | 4.40 | 4.29 | 3.87 |
| up to 250 employees | 4.42 | 4.28 | 4.16 | 3.68 | 4.24 | 4.21 | 3.94 | 3.63 |
| up to 500 employees | 4.39 | 4.21 | 4.22 | 3.73 | 4.24 | 4.23 | 3.96 | 3.68 |
| more than 500 employees | 4.39 | 4.18 | 4.05 | 3.70 | 4.33 | 4.17 | 3.97 | 3.69 |
| Job level | | | | | | | | |
| Manager/supervisor | 4.47 | 4.57 | 4.35 | 3.91 | 4.37 | 4.17 | 4.02 | 3.68 |
| Non-supervisory employee | 4.45 | 4.23 | 4.15 | 3.68 | 4.29 | 4.48 | 4.17 | 3.85 |

Source: Authors

On the basis of descriptive analysis and a comparison of the average values, the following can be concluded. Cooperation was the best between those people with less than 5 years' work experience, and also in 2015 in smaller organisations (less than 50 employees) and businesses with a Czech owner. The degree of cooperation can be

explained by the need to gain work experience, whilst in smaller companies the quality of cooperation can be explained by the small number of employees who know each other better.

In 2015, communication was better between those people with less than 5 years' work experience, as well between those with more than 15 years' work experience. There was also a significant change with regards to communication and the size of an organisation. In 2013, this relationship was the strongest in public or government organisations, whereas in 2015 it was found to be the strongest in businesses with a Czech owner and in smaller organisations (less than 50 employees).

With regards to the nature of the work, there was, with a few minor exceptions, a slight deterioration between the two surveys.

When comparing managers and ordinary workers, there was a slight deterioration in all the monitored factors between the two surveys.

There were some limitations to this study. The first was the selection of the respondents. The data was only collected in three regions of the Czech Republic, namely Hradec Králové, Pardubice and Vysočina. However, the Czech Republic has a relatively homogenous socio-economic composition, so this restriction was not deemed to be too significant.

The second potential limitation was the source of the data. The part-time students who distributed the questionnaires worked in different parts of the private and public sectors. This limitation was not considered to have any significant influence either.

The last identified potential limitation may be the high level of respondents with higher education. However, there could be additional factors that have an influence on job satisfaction that were not taken into consideration in the analysis conducted for this study (incomes, etc.). The questionnaire used is included as an Appendix to this paper.

Conclusion

Promoting those factors that improve job satisfaction, as well as the achievement of the overall job satisfaction of employees would enable companies to improve their performance and profits. According to surveys conducted in the Czech Republic in 2013 and 2015, there were imperceptible changes in the assessment of overall job satisfaction. Statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in job satisfaction were found for co-workers and communication in relation to organisation ownership. The evaluation of the level of partial determinants (communication, co-workers and the nature of the work) was valued with a higher average score (for 2013 - 4.32 and for 2015 - 4.23) than overall job satisfaction (3.73 in both studies). However, when evaluating the overall job satisfaction score, it is also necessary to take into account other factors, like those mentioned in the introduction to this paper, that affect job satisfaction.

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Appendices

Table 4: Characteristics of the research sample

| <i>Item</i> | 2013 | | 2015 | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | <i>Percentage</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percentage</i> | <i>Frequency</i> |
| <i>Gender</i> | | | | |
| Male | 42.9 | 762 | 42.1 | 619 |
| Female | 57.1 | 1014 | 57.9 | 851 |
| <i>Age</i> | | | | |
| Less than 30 years | 32.4 | 576 | 32.4 | 476 |
| 30-40 years | 35.2 | 625 | 34.7 | 510 |
| 41 years and above | 32.4 | 575 | 32.9 | 484 |
| <i>Education</i> | | | | |
| Elementary education | 1.2 | 22 | 0.7 | 11 |
| Skilled worker | 9.7 | 172 | 6.4 | 94 |
| Secondary school | 42.3 | 752 | 48.8 | 717 |
| Higher professional school | 6.4 | 113 | 6.5 | 96 |
| Undergraduate (distance learning) | 8.2 | 145 | 8.9 | 131 |
| University degree education | 32.2 | 572 | 28.6 | 421 |
| <i>Years of experience (tenure)</i> | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 44.0 | 781 | 42.2 | 621 |
| 5-10 years | 29.5 | 524 | 29.9 | 440 |
| 11-15 years | 11.9 | 211 | 12.9 | 190 |
| More than 15 years | 14.6 | 260 | 14.9 | 219 |
| <i>Organisation ownership</i> | | | | |
| Czech owner | 42.0 | 746 | 44.5 | 654 |
| Foreign owner | 21.1 | 375 | 21.5 | 316 |
| International corporation | 13.4 | 238 | 14.3 | 210 |
| Public/governmental organisation | 23.5 | 417 | 19.7 | 290 |
| <i>Organisation size</i> | | | | |
| up to 50 employees | 35.9 | 637 | 33.3 | 490 |
| up to 250 employees | 30.1 | 535 | 27.9 | 410 |
| up to 500 employees | 9.1 | 161 | 8.2 | 120 |
| more than 500 employees | 24.9 | 443 | 30.6 | 450 |
| <i>Job level</i> | | | | |
| Manager/supervisor | 24.4 | 434 | 29.2 | 429 |
| Non-supervisory employee | 75.6 | 1342 | 70.8 | 1041 |

Source: Authors

Appendix: The Czech language questionnaire used for the study "Research into job satisfaction".

Facts about you and your organisation:

1.1. Gender:

- Male female

1.2. Age:

1.3. Education:

- Elementary educational
 Skilled worker
 Secondary school
 Higher professional school
 Undergraduate (distance learning)
 University degree education

1.4. Organisation size:

- up to 50 employees
 up to 250 employees
 up to 500 employees
 more than 500 employees

1.5. Organisation ownership:

- Czech owner
 Foreign owner
 International corporation
 Public/governmental organisation

1.6. Years of experience (tenure):

1.7. Job level:

- Non-supervisory employee
 Manager/supervisory

1.8. In which field does your organisation operate?

.....

Appendix: The Czech language questionnaire used for the study "Research into job satisfaction".

| Job Satisfaction Survey Please select the option that best describes your opinion. | | Disagree completely | Disagree moderately | Disagree slightly | Agree slightly | Agree moderately | Agree completely |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4.1. | I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.2. | There is really too little chance for promotion on my job. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.3. | My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.4. | I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.5. | When I do a good job, I receive the recognition I should. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.6. | Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.7. | I like the people I work with. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.8. | I sometimes feel my job is meaningless. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.9. | Communication within this organisation seem good. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.10. | Raises are too few and far between. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.11. | Those who do well in their job stand a fair chance of being promoted. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.12. | My supervisor is unfair to me. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.13. | The benefits we receive are as good as most other organisations offer. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.14. | I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.15. | My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.16 . | I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of the people I work with. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.17 . | I like doing the things I do at work. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.18 . | The goals of this organisation are not clear to me. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |

Appendix: The Czech language questionnaire used for the study "Research into job satisfaction".

| Please select the option that best describes your opinion. | | Disagree completely | Disagree moderately | Disagree slightly | Agree slightly | Agree moderately | Agree completely |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 4.19 . | I feel unappreciated by the organisation when I think about what they pay me. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.20 . | People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.21 . | My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.22 . | The benefit package we have is equitable. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.23 . | There are few rewards for those who work here. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.24 . | I have too much to do at work. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.25 . | I enjoy my co-workers. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.26 . | I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organisation. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.27 . | I feel a sense of pride in doing my job. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.28 . | I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.29 . | There are benefits we do not have which we should have. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.30 . | I like my supervisor. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.31 . | I have too much paperwork. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.32 . | I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.33 . | I am satisfied with my chances for promotion. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.34 . | There is too much bickering and fighting at work. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.35 . | My job is enjoyable. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4.36 . | Work assignments are not fully explained. | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> |

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