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Impact of Selected Factors on Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

The current concept of employee management includes increasing employee satisfaction and involvement. Many studies have been realised on this topic, but the results are inconsistent. However, satisfaction is understood as one of the aspects of employee involvement. The article is based on the assumption that an important part of involvement is work enjoyment. The aim was to create a model that described work enjoyment. In order to find the independent variables influencing work enjoyment, a research study was conducted, followed by the use of regression analysis. It was found that of the 11 observed independent variables, the only two that had a significant influence was recognition of the employee's opinion and their sense of importance to the company, and partly also opportunities for growth. Interdependence between the factors influencing satisfaction was also confirmed.

Keywords

Employee engagement, job satisfaction, quantitative research, satisfaction questionnaires, work enjoyment.

JEL Classification: J28, M54

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1. Introduction

According to Bednaříková et al. (2010), organisations ought to pay more attention to their employees, esp. on their satisfaction. Work satisfaction is among the most researched phenomena in the psychology of human resource management (Wnuk, 2017). Locke (1969) defined it as a pleasant emotional state resulting from the employee's evaluation of his or her own work. Brief and Weiss (2002) and Weiss (2002) defined it in the same way. Brooke et al. (1988) stated that job satisfaction reflects one's work attitude, whereas Weiss (2002) emphasised the meaning of the feelings from work. Pavelka et al. (2014) described job satisfaction as a positive emotional response and experience resulting from the evaluation of one's work.

Many methods are used to determine job satisfaction. The Minnesota questionnaire (MSQ) is among them, and it includes 100 items and measures in 20 areas. The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) are others; another example is the Czech Dotazník Pracovní Spokojenosti (Questionnaire of Job Satisfaction), created by Teodor Kollárik and Milan Kubalák. Additionally, there exist many ad hoc questionnaires of satisfaction with a questionable level of reliability and validity.

Many factors are based on job satisfaction or dissatisfaction, such as planning and realising working conditions and job descriptions, in order to increase employees' satisfaction and to influence their intrinsic work motivation.

However, many of the conclusions of published studies are unclear. Often it is because satisfaction is not exactly and uniformly defined and it is not a concept that can be standardised or objectively tested. Modern conceptions, rather than solve the problem, add new work factors to satisfaction and create new approaches, e.g. engagement.

The novelty of this paper is that it focuses on search of a model of satisfaction. The satisfaction survey is very important given the current very low level of unemployment in the Czech Republic. Companies are seeking to hold onto their employees.

The aim of the paper is to find a model that describes work enjoyment. The research is realised in one medium-sized Czech data-analysing company.

The paper proceeds as follows. The first part provides the theoretical framework in the field of satisfaction and engagement. The second section

describes the research methodology and in the third part the results are presented and discussed followed by the Conclusion.

2. Theoretical framework

Many studies have focused on the antecedents of work satisfaction. They have sought to determine how satisfaction is created. It is possible to divide these antecedents into individual and organisational, among which are mainly organisational culture (Ahluwalia and Singh, 2015; Ouyang et al., 2015; Rawashdeh, 2015), the acknowledgement of superiors and work content (Benrazavi and Silong, 2013). Sengupta (2011) defined 15 organisational factors as significant determinants assigned to interpersonal relationships, career progression, salary, gender, accountability and authority. Individual factors are gender, age, education, and current and previous work experiences (Moyes et al., 2006; Sokolová et al., 2016).

Many researchers focused on the relationship of satisfaction with other factors, such as the nature of the work (Campion et al., 2005; Morrison et al., 2005; Inman, 2006), employer brand (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016), organisational commitment (Rusbult et al., 1988; Buitendach & De Witte, 2005), part-time work (Montero & Rau, 2015), psychological empowerment (Ouyang et al., 2015), and, of course, work performance.

However, many of the conclusions of these published studies are unclear. The formerly assumed increase in job satisfaction with the age of the respondents (Ang et al., 1993; Decker & Borgen, 1993; Savery, 1996) was not confirmed in more recent studies (Pook et al., 2003; Sarker et al., 2003; Magee, 2015). Also, the influence of gender on job satisfaction is questionable. It was found that the satisfaction of men and women was influenced by various factors, and this depended on what areas were used in evaluating the total satisfaction (Bellou, 2010; Magee, 2015).

The unclear outputs may be due to the fact that satisfaction is not a concept that can be standardised or objectively tested. It depends on the subjective response of the respondent, regardless of whether he or she is responding directly to job satisfaction and its parts, or the level of satisfaction is deduced from the answer to different statements, which should be in correlation with job satisfaction according to the

authors. Also national culture has a moderating role to job satisfaction (Hauff et al., 2015).

The theory of job satisfaction may be deduced from Herzberg's views on motivation. In this case, three dimensions can be distinguished – success, acknowledgement and the nature of work (Herzberg, 2003; article reprint from 1986). Newer studies have considered more satisfaction factors. García-Bernal et al. (2005) defined economic aspects, interpersonal relationships, work conditions and self-fulfilment. Kara et al. (2012) also distinguished management conditions, using ability in the job, job conditions and personal fulfilment. Nevertheless, neither this division nor those used in the previously mentioned satisfaction questionnaires bring new quality. They only provide more detailed divisions or supplement Herzberg's original concept. The factor of self-fulfilment is also unclear; it can be understood as achieving the desired goals, the satisfaction of needs, or the joy of working, which is considered very important. According to Happell et al. (2014), work enjoyment is in a close relationship with intrinsic motivation.

Additional development of the job satisfaction concept mostly deepens insight into the problem. Apart from the term job satisfaction, other terms, such as satisfaction with work, which is its subset, and employee satisfaction, which is superior, are used. Sengupta (2011) used these components of employee satisfaction:

- total work satisfaction (considering both work conditions and the image of the company),
- employee relationships,
- rewards, benefits and organisational culture,
- employee loyalty.

Apart from employee loyalty, these are the regular components of job satisfaction.

Further development was based on the conception of the personal engagement of the employees, which incorporates job satisfaction, employee dedication and the acceptance of the organisational culture (Kompaso & Sridevi, 2010). According to Lockwood (2007), engagement can be considered as more beneficial for the management of performance of the organisation, because it includes the two-sided relationship between the employee and the employer. However, Kara et al. (2012) argued that managers wish to see high satisfaction among their employees, because it creates positive work conditions and positively correlates with customer satisfaction.

Personal engagement does not have a generally accepted definition, but authors agree on the component of work enthusiasm and the effort to help the organisation to succeed (Robinson et al., 2004; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Heriyati & Ramadhan,

2012; Dernovsek, 2008, as cited in Mutsuddi, 2015) and on the two-sided relationship between the employee and the employer (Endres & Mancheno-Smoak, 2008).

There are many occasions in which employees can become engaged and the level of engagement can also be observed. This is why research only focused on the important component of engagement, work enjoyment, which can be considered to be the basis of job satisfaction. Independent values represent different dimensions of the Herzberg theory of job satisfaction.

3. Methodology

Based on research opinion (Saunders et al., 2009), the following decisions were made. The philosophy chosen was Pragmatism. A Deductive approach was selected. The next layer is Strategy, and a Survey was chosen. The Choice used is the Mono method and the Time horizon is cross-sectional. The Web of Science, Proquest, and Ebsco databases were used to find relevant articles for the Literature review.

For the greater convenience of respondents, it was decided to use the Employee Survey Template available on the website SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com, 2015). Selection and modification of questions were made and subsequently translated into Czech, which is the main language spoken in the company. The use of the standardised Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) created in 1967 (Weiss et al., 1969), was rejected for its scope (100 items). Also, the Manual for measuring and evaluating the level of employee satisfaction (Manual ..., 2007) issued by the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs is too complex.

The research study was carried out in a data-analysing company. A pilot study was conducted in March 2015. Since all the questions were understood correctly in the pilot, the data were collected using the same questionnaire in the period between April and May 2015. Thirteen questions from the Template were used plus demographic questions. From a total number of 887 employees in one branch, 278 employees were approached. One hundred and twenty five questionnaires were completed. The respondents answered on a 1–5 Likert scale from completely agree to completely disagree (excluding the demographic questions and question 1 *What are your feelings every morning on the way to work?* where the respondents chose from five possible answers).

Two questions that were directly related to work enjoyment (questions 1 and 2 *There are more days when I'm looking forward to work than those when I'm not*) were selected for the purposes of this article. These were used as dependent variables. The independent

variables were levels to which respondents agreed with the following statements:

- *My best friends are from the organisation I work for.* [A]
- *I have the tools that help me do my job effectively (i.e. get the job done in a reasonable time).* [B]
- *I have the opportunity to participate in decisions that concern me.* [C]
- *I understand how my role contributes to the company's results.* [D]
- *I feel that I am important because of what I do.* [E]
- *I know what is expected of me at work.* [F]
- *At work I have an opportunity every day to do what I do best.* [G]
- *During the last week I received recognition or praise for a job well done.* [H]
- *I feel that my supervisor cares about my job.* [I]
- *At my work, my opinions are recognised.* [J]
- *Over the past year, I have had opportunities for growth and learning.* [K]

Even though demographic data were collected, the gender and age of the respondents were not used as independent variables because of the ambivalence of these factors described in the literature.

The analysis of variance with the gradual withdrawal of the most insignificant independent variables was selected as the tool.

4. Results and Discussion

The following question was selected as the dependent variable in the first round: *What are your feelings every morning on the way to work?* The possible answers were (ranked from the most negative):

- not looking forward
- don't care
- no particular feelings
- I'm curious
- looking forward.

The overview of regression coefficients is shown in Table 1. The model is significant, p -value = .001, R^2 = .244, R^2_{adj} = .170.

Through the use of gradual elimination the final model was reached. The overview of regression coefficients is shown in Table 2. The model is significant, p -value < .001, R^2 = .217, R^2_{adj} = .198.

It is obvious from the results in the model that for 11 factors, which could logically be the cause of

positive or negative feelings about work, no significant relations existed.

Table 1 Parameter estimates for Model 1

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	.575	.774		.743	.459
[A]	-.022	.093	-.021	-.233	.816
[B]	.211	.093	.213	2.273	.025
[C]	.092	.133	.083	.692	.490
[D]	.045	.137	.032	.325	.746
[E]	.262	.153	.191	1.712	.090
[F]	-.143	.182	-.079	-.782	.436
[G]	-.030	.127	-.024	-.237	.813
[H]	.044	.095	.049	.468	.641
[I]	.127	.108	.115	1.168	.245
[J]	.239	.144	.185	1.663	.099
[K]	-.075	.101	-.072	-.742	.460

Table 2 Parameter estimates for Model 2

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	.252	.512		.491	.624
I have the tools that help me do my job effectively (i.e. get the job done in a reasonable time). [B]	.239	.080	.241	2.970	.004
I feel that I am important because of what I do. [E]	.278	.123	.203	2.260	.026
At my work, my opinions are recognised. [J]	.306	.117	.236	2.609	.010

These factors represent all three dimensions of the Herzberg satisfaction theory (Herzberg, 2003; article reprint from 1986). The success dimension represents statements [A, D, F, G and K], the acknowledgement dimension is fulfilled by statements [E, H, I and J] and the nature of work is represented by statements [B and C]. After the elimination of independent variables to the level of three independent and one dependent variable, these stated factors could be considered influential in the creation of work enjoyment. In terms of Herzberger’s motivation theory, these are both hygiene factors (*I have the tools [B]*) and motivators (*the importance of work [E] and opinion recognition [J]*). They belong to the acknowledgement [E and J] and nature of work [B] dimensions.

It can be interesting to compare these findings with the Maslow motivational pyramid (Maslow, 1970 in Madsen 1979). The statements belong to all five levels of the Maslow pyramid. The basic needs represent [B] – physiological needs, and [D and F] – the safety needs. Psychological needs represent [A] – belongingness needs, and [E, H, I and J] – esteem needs. The highest level – self-actualisation is represented by [C, G and K]. The eliminated independent values belong to basic needs ([B]) and esteem needs ([E and J]).

In order to strengthen the conclusions, another investigation was performed, during which the following statement was used as a dependent variable: *There are more days when I’m looking forward to work than those when I’m not.* The possible answers were:

- completely disagree
- disagree
- neutral
- agree
- completely agree.

Pearson’s chi-squared test (χ^2) with the previously used dependent value (*What are your feelings every morning on the way to work*) is 49.12 ($\chi^2_{(crit.)} = 32.0$; $\alpha = .01$). The hypothesis of their mutual independence is rejected.

The following model includes all possible independent variables. The overview of regression coefficients is shown in Table 3. The model is significant, p-value = .019, $R^2 = .187$, $R^2_{adj} = .100$.

With the use of gradual elimination, two models with similar reliability were acquired (Table 4 and Table 5):

The model from Table 4 is significant, p-value < .001, $R^2 = .124$, $R^2_{adj} = .110$.

The model from Table 5 is significant, p-value < .001, $R^2 = .129$, $R^2_{adj} = .115$.

Table 3 Parameter estimates for Model 3

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
(Constant)	.947	.845			1.121 .265
[A]	.119	.101	.109		1.182 .240
[B]	-.020	.120	-.020		-1.167 .868
[C]	.008	.144	.007		.053 .958
[D]	.138	.150	.097		.915 .362
[E]	.225	.165	.159		1.362 .176
[F]	-.219	.196	-.117		-1.112 .268
[G]	.105	.139	.081		.757 .450
[H]	-.092	.103	-.098		-.896 .372
[I]	.054	.117	.047		.459 .647
[J]	.205	.155	.153		1.321 .189
[K]	.158	.112	.148		1.409 .162

Table 4 Parameter estimates for Model 4

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandard. Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
(Constant)	1.459	.506			2.882 .005
At my work, my opinions are recognised. [J]	.299	.127	.223		2.356 .020
I feel that I am important because of what I do. [E]	.270	.134	.191		2.017 .046

Table 5 Parameter estimates for Model 5

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandard. Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
(Constant)	1.378	.514			2.683 .008
I feel that I am important because of what I do. [E]	.336	.123	.237		2.726 .007
Over the past year, I have had opportunities for growth and learning. [K]	.234	.093	.218		2.504 .014

It is obvious that even in this case, not all of the 11 independent variables were significant. During the elimination, two two-factors were the most suitable,

where both included the *I feel that I am important because of what I do [E]* component. The other component was either *At my work, my opinions are recognised [J]* or *Over the past year, I have had opportunities for growth and learning [K]*. Therefore, a model with these three independent variables was created. The model presented in Table 6 was significant, $p\text{-value} < .001$, $R^2 = .148$, $R^2_{\text{adj}} = .127$ but $p\text{-values}$ of all independent variables jumped over .05. It can be inferred that the three statements are not completely independent).

Table 6 Parameter estimates for Model 6

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandard. Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
(Constant)	1.160	.527		2.201	.030
I feel that I am important because of what I do. [E]	.251	.133	.177	1.880	.062
At my work, my opinions are recognised. [J]	.218	.133	.163	1.638	.104
Over the past year, I have had opportunities for growth and learning. [K]	.181	.098	.169	1.839	.068

Mutual dependencies of independent values are present in Table 7. There are Pearson's correlations among all pairs of statements. The critical value for 123 degrees of freedom (because of 125 respondents) is equal to .176 at significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, and .229 at significance level $\alpha = 0.01$. Boldface represents the rejected hypothesis of independence. The normality of distribution was not verified so some of the rejections could be false. But the number of rejections indicates that mutual dependencies among independent values exist. For more significant results it would be necessary to use a much bigger number of respondents.

Table 7 Correlation matrix

	[A]	[B]	[C]	[D]	[E]	[F]	[G]	[H]	[I]	[J]	[K]
A	1										
B	.02	1									
C	.13	.28	1								
D	.08	.18	.40	1							
E	.07	.05	.41	.48	1						
F	.01	-	.37	.34	.51	1					
G	-	.29	.32	.22	.39	.22	1				
H	.17	.03	.48	.22	.26	.17	.31	1			
I	.07	.08	.45	.31	.36	.31	.29	.40	1		
J	.14	.12	.57	.35	.44	.30	.38	.48	.37	1	
K	0,2	0,0	0,4	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,3	0,2	0,3	1

5. Conclusion

There is currently a very low level of unemployment in the Czech Republic. Because it is very hard to obtain new employees, companies need to retain satisfied and loyal employees. This research focused on one of the aspects of satisfaction or employee engagement, which was work enjoyment. From the results acquired in a medium-sized data-analysing company, it can be inferred that the recognition of employees' opinions and their convictions that the company views them as important have an important influence on work enjoyment. These factors proved to be significant for both dependent variables *What are your feelings every morning on the way to work* and *There are more days when I'm looking forward to work than those when I'm not*. Another important factor was the possibility of growth and learning. These factors belong to both hygiene factors and motivators in terms of Herzberger's motivation theory (Herzberg, 2003). They particularly fulfilled Herzberg's dimension of acknowledgement. The importance of the success and nature of work dimensions is not so clear.

The research has also shown that many factors contributing to satisfaction are interdependent, and therefore the effort to construct detailed, extensive, and precisely defined questionnaires is not constructive. In general, Herzberger's motivation theory of 1959 can be used and then it is important to know employees and take care of their satisfaction ad hoc.

For future research it could be worthwhile to identify the respondents' position on Herzberg's satisfaction continuum, whether they are satisfied or only not dissatisfied. Satisfaction on these two situations can be fulfilled.

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