

Gender, Education and Marital Status as Determinants of Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

The issue of job satisfaction has been discussed by the researchers and managers of organizations for several decades. There are many different approaches to the issue. Currently, it is possible to find the research dealing with psychological aspects determining the level of job satisfaction, the research analysing the role of satisfaction and work motivation and the research focused on the consequences of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This paper describes how the job satisfaction of employees differs (if so) depending on their gender, level of education and marital status. It was found that people with university education rate their job satisfaction better, than people without university education. Similarly, people in a relationship evaluate their job satisfaction better than people without a relationship. No significant differences in general job satisfaction were found between men and women. The data for the research are based on a questionnaire survey, attended by 4,728 respondents from the Czech Republic working in various industries and in the enterprises of various sizes.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Employee, Gender, Education Level, Marital Status

JEL Classification: L2, J28

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1 Introduction

The issue of job satisfaction has been discussed by the researchers and managers of organizations for several decades. There are many different approaches to the issue. In relation to job satisfaction, the areas such as employee motivation, turnover, personal characteristics of employees, identification of the most important factors influencing job satisfaction, etc. are analysed. It is also important to define the term correctly. Locke (1976) found a generally accepted definition, describing job satisfaction as a pleasant and positive emotional state of a person resulting from the evaluation of work and working experience.

At first glance, however, interchangeable terms may in fact describe different phenomena. As an example, Kollárik (1986) distinguishes the terms “job satisfaction” and “satisfaction with a job”. The satisfaction with a job is related to specific work activities performed, its requirements and requirements for the employee; on the other hand the job satisfaction is satisfaction in a broader sense and it includes the factors such as the work environment and personality characteristics of the employee.

Milan Nakonečný (2005) distinguishes the concepts of job satisfaction and satisfaction at work. The job satisfaction indicates satisfaction with work activities and performance, the satisfaction at work does not require any performance, as even person who has done nothing can be satisfied at work. Satisfaction at the workplace can be also defined as the overall response of the employee to the organization and company, in terms of the individual's emotional status and behavior. Job satisfaction also measures to which extent there is a good individual-organization fit (Chou et al., 2019)

The issue of job satisfaction in relation to the formation of employee motivation is included in classical motivational theories. As an example, Maslow (1943) describes a person's motivation to act as an unsatisfied need, the needs being different and their type arrangement representing a well-known hierarchy of needs. If the needs of a person are not met at a given level, dissatisfaction occurs. Herzberg (1959) then identified two types of factors - hygienic factors and motivators. If the hygienic factors are not sufficiently fulfilled, the employee is dissatisfied. On the contrary, the presence of the second group of factors, the known as the motivators, leads to employee satisfaction with a positive effect on motivation.

Possible consequences of job dissatisfaction are summarized by Clegg and Bailey (2008) in such a way that the dissatisfied employees are more prone to absences, turnover, late arrivals, long breaks, theft, aggression, using work for their personal use, intent to look for new jobs and drug use at the workplace. By Možný (1999), a low level of job satisfaction results in poor performance. With a generally low level of job satisfaction in the economy, there is a weak performance of the whole economy.

There are external and internal factors influencing job satisfaction. The external factors are independent of the individual, connected with the overall work environment. These include, for example, salary, working conditions, co-workers. The internal factors are linked to the personality of the employee and their relationship to the work activity itself (Štikar et al., 2003). Other research also shows a significant relation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Factors from personal life are thus reflected in job satisfaction, and based on these research, it is reported that the factors influencing personal satisfaction also positively affect job satisfaction (such as Schmitt and Pulakos, 1985; Drobnič, Beham & Präg, 2010).

Another type of research deals with the relation between job satisfaction and marital status – the differences between people with and without children, and in a relationship and living

alone. As an example, Pleck, Staines, and Lang (1980) report that people raising children under the age of six are less satisfied with their jobs. However, Barbano and da Cruz (2019) report different conclusion, as by their research the women with children achieve higher levels of job satisfaction than childless women.

Research focused on differences in job satisfaction between women and men brings interesting results. There is no unity in the results and it is possible to meet all possible results. In this context, the so-called gender paradox can be encountered. This means a situation where women have higher job satisfaction despite lower job positions and wages. The reason for women's higher job satisfaction, according to Clark (1997), is because women have lower expectations from work which result from the poorer position they hold in the labour market. Another possible explanation for findings that women have higher job satisfaction than men is that married women may have more flexibility in job choice than men and also than unmarried women. It allows them to leave unsatisfactory employment (Carleton & Clain, 2012). Higher job satisfaction of women is also by Zou (2015), Miao, Li and Bian (2017) or Carvajal, Popovici & Hardigan (2019). Higher level of job satisfaction by women confirmed also Redmond & McGuinness (2020), who examined job satisfaction on data from 28 EU countries.

On the contrary, higher satisfaction in men is reported by the findings of research by Hulin & Smith (1964), Forgionne and Peeters (1982), Mora and Ferrer-i-Carbonell (2009) or Franěk, Mohelská, Zubr, Bachman & Sokolová (2014). However, these studies are not very common and are rather older. Other group of studies, such as Weaver (1978), Smith and Plant (1982), Eskildsen, Kristensen and Westlund (2003), Franěk and Večeřa (2008) or Kifle & Desta (2012) conclude that there is no significant difference in the job satisfaction between women and men. To this conclusion came also Andrade, Westover & Peterson (2019), who compared job satisfaction by gender in 37 countries. According to them, there is no significant difference between women and men. They also state that these differences were significant in the past, but now the differences are still diminishing.

Another subject of interest is the relation between education and job satisfaction. For example, Clark (1997), Wharton, Rotolo and Bird (2000) and Eskildsen et al (2003) state that the higher the level of education attained by employees, the lower is the level of job satisfaction on average. In the environment of the Czech Republic, these conclusions are partially confirmed by Franěk and Večeřa (2008), who recorded an increasing level of job satisfaction together with an increasing level of education, but only up to the level of successfully completed university studies. Job satisfaction of university students is already declining. Čadová-Horáková (2006) reports the opposite conclusion, recording a higher level of job satisfaction among university-educated people. A positive correlation between job satisfaction and educational level was found also by Sokolová and Mohelská (2016). Employees with the lowest education were the least satisfied, and with each level of education job satisfaction grew. Based on data from their four-year study, Ilies, Yao, Curseu and Liang (2019) describe a significant link between educational attainment and satisfaction. Among other things, they noted a positive correlation between education and job satisfaction. The benefits of a good education are also summarized by Oreopoulos and Salvanes (2011), who also report higher job satisfaction among people with higher education. However, studies can also be found where no significant relation between job satisfaction and education is proved, such as Brush, Moch and Pooyan (1987) Lange (2009) and Franěk et al (2014).

Job satisfaction was also analysed in the Czech Republic in the past, but there are only a few studies focused on this topic. The first empirical data on job satisfaction in the Czech Republic are available, since 1997 from the International Social Survey Programme (Franěk et al., 2014). Franěk and Večeřa (2008), Čábelková, Abrhám & Strielkowski (2015) or Sokolová, Mohelská & Zubr (2016) focused their research on description of differences in job satisfaction between

different groups of employees, determined by gender, education level or age. In terms of international comparison, mention may be made, for example, of the research by Eskildsen, Kristensen and Antvor (2010). The study compared data on job satisfaction from 22 European countries, with job satisfaction in the Czech Republic being the second lowest. The conclusions of this research thus confirmed the traditionally low value of job satisfaction in the Czech Republic, which results from previous research. E.g. Medgyesi & Róbert (2003) concluded that the Czech Republic belongs to the group of eight countries with the lowest level of job satisfaction in Europe. Similar results are reported by Večerník (2003). Borooah (2009) also recorded significantly lower job satisfaction in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Hauret & Williams (2017) in their cross-national study found out that in the Czech Republic have employees the lowest level of job satisfaction in their sample of countries. These results are consistent with one of the latest research made by Sokolová and Mohelská (2019) who concluded that overall job satisfaction in Czech Republic is relatively low.

2 Methods

The data were obtained by a questionnaire survey, carried out in the first half of 2019. The questionnaire was created in the Google Forms interface and respondents were addressed through geographically local groups on social network Facebook. These local groups are usually made up of people who live, work or study in the place. The groups for inserting the questionnaire were selected so that each district of the Czech Republic was represented. In total, up to 500,000 potential respondents in 120 groups were addressed; 4,728 questionnaires were completely completed, so the return rate is approximately 1%.

There are a total of 48 questions in the questionnaire, of which 31 questions are focused on the issue of job satisfaction. These are the closed questions; with the respondents assessing their satisfaction with selected aspects of their working lives on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means absolute dissatisfaction and 10 means absolute satisfaction with the factor. The remaining 17 questions are of an identifying nature and made it possible to create several segments of the respondents, such as the income, branch and size of the enterprise, size of municipality, marital status, etc. For the purposes of the paper, four questions of the questionnaire are used – assessing general job satisfaction and three identifying questions - gender, education and marital status.

The data are analysed in two ways. The contingency tables in MS Excel are used to describe the sample, and determine the absolute and relative frequencies of the answers. Statistical testing of hypotheses is performed in the programme of R. The characteristics of the sample in terms of classification into the monitored groups of the respondents for the purposes of the paper are reported in Table 1.

Table 1 - The Sample

Category		Frequency in the sample	Percentage
Gender	Male	1221	26 %
	Female	3507	74 %
Age	Under 30 years	1514	32 %
	30 – 44 years	2190	46 %
	45 – 59 years	938	20 %
	60 years and older	86	2 %
Education	Primary	115	2 %
	Secondary technical school	772	16 %
	Secondary with a leaving examination	2008	42 %
	Higher professional school	317	7 %
	Bachelor	511	11 %
	Master	930	20 %
Employer size (number of employees)	PhD.	75	2 %
	Under 10	742	16 %
	10 - 49	1148	24 %
	50 - 249	1186	25 %
Marital status	250 and more	1652	35 %
	No partnership and dependent child	792	17 %
	No partnership with a dependent child	245	5 %
	In a partnership without a dependent child	1776	38 %
	In a partnership with a dependent child	1870	40 %
	Marital status not determined	45	1%

Source: authors

The hypotheses were tested using the Welch's T-test of the agreement of the means for unequal variances. This method of hypothesis testing is a modification of the Student's t-test, which is suitable for use in comparing two sets of different sizes with unequal variances. The value of the test criterion is based on the following formula (Welch, 1947):

$$t = \frac{\mu_1 - \mu_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{N_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{N_2}}} \quad (I)$$

Objectives, research questions, hypotheses

The article aims to find out whether there are any differences in job satisfaction between selected segments of people. To do so, the following research questions are identified:

1. Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction in general between men and women?
2. Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction of the people with different education?
3. Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction of the people with different marital status?

In relation to the research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1: In average, men rate their job satisfaction better, compared to women.

H2: People with university education (at least the bachelor degree) rate their job satisfaction better, compared to people without university education.

H3: People in a relationship rate their job satisfaction better, compared to people without a relationship.

3 Results

3.1 Gender and job satisfaction

The part discusses the first research question: Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction in general between men and women?

Table 2 briefly provides an overview of the results of the questionnaire survey.

Table 1 - Job satisfaction by gender

Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	N
Male	6.796	2.6383	1221
Female	6.763	2.5338	3507

Source: authors

As revealed by the questionnaire survey, men rated their job satisfaction on average better than women, by approximately 33 hundredths of a point. It is also noticeable that men had a higher standard deviation than women. It can therefore be assumed that there is a higher variability in the assessment of job satisfaction for men.

The relation of job satisfaction and tender is related to hypothesis 1:

H1: In average, men rate their job satisfaction better, compared to women.

In accordance with the above H_1 , the following null and alternative hypotheses are formulated:

$$H_0: \mu_A = \mu_B$$

$$H_A: \mu_A > \mu_B$$

In the hypotheses, "A" means the men in selection and "B" represents the women in selection. The test results are shown in Table 3.

Table 2 – H1 testing

Mean A	Mean B	t	p-value
6.79607	6.76333	0.37723	0.353

Source: authors

Conclusion: Based on the data reported in Table 3, at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, it is not possible to reject the null hypothesis about the agreement of the mean values. Thus, statistical testing does not show that men rate their job satisfaction better than women.

3.2 Level of education and job satisfaction

The part discusses the second research question: Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction of the people with different education?

Table 4 briefly provides an overview of the results in relation to education and job satisfaction:

Table 3 – Education and job satisfaction

Degree of education	Mean	Standard deviation	N
Primary	6.461	2.882	115
Secondary technical school	5.924	2.845	772
Secondary with a leaving examination	6.790	2.513	2008
Higher professional school	6.940	2.536	317
Bachelor	7.145	2.343	511
Master	7.155	2.342	930
PhD.	7.493	2.304	75

Source: authors

In the questionnaire survey, the level of education is classified into seven categories - from primary to PhD. A look at Table 4 indicates two trends.

First of all, it is a fact that the higher the level of education attained, the higher job satisfaction is reported. This applies to almost all types of education. The only exceptions are the first two levels of education, as the people with a basic education rated their job satisfaction better than people with a secondary technical school. For all other groups, the average reported job satisfaction also increases with each further level of education.

The second trend, as revealed by Table 4, is related the declining variability of job satisfaction with increasing education. There is also an exception - people with a secondary education with a school-leaving examination achieved a lower standard deviation in terms of job satisfaction than respondents with a higher professional education. Nevertheless, it seems that the higher the level of education, the less the level of perceived job satisfaction differs between people at the same level of education.

Hypothesis 2 is focused on the topic of the level of education and job satisfaction:

H2: People with university education (at least the bachelor degree) rate their job satisfaction better, compared to people without university education.

To test this hypothesis, two groups of respondents were created from the data. Group C contains all the respondents who stated a bachelor's, master's and PhD. education as the highest level of their education. The respondents reporting remaining levels of education are included in group D. There are 1516 respondents in group C; and 3212 in group D.

In accordance with the above H₂, the following null and alternative hypotheses are formulated:

$$H_0: \mu_C = \mu_D$$

$$H_A: \mu_C > \mu_D$$

Table 4 - H2 testing

MeanC	Mean D	t	p-value
7.16821	6.58468	7.6759	1.073e ⁻¹⁴

Source: authors

Conclusion: Based on the data as reported by Table 5, at the level of significance of $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. The data of the research group show that people who graduated from any type of university education (at least a bachelor's degree) rate their job satisfaction significantly better than people without university education.

3.3 Job satisfaction and partnerships

The part discusses the third research question: Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction of the people with different marital status?

Regarding the marital status, there are four groups of the respondents in the questionnaire survey on the basis of two dimensions. On the one hand, it was ascertained whether or not the respondent is in a relationship, and on the other hand, whether they have a dependent child in their care. The marital status of 45 respondents was not found and therefore they were not included in the evaluation of this question. Table 6 provides an overview of the average evaluation of job satisfaction, standard deviation and the number of the respondents in the category depending on their marital status.

Table 5– Job satisfaction and marital status

Marital status	Mean	Standard deviation	N
No partnership and dependent child	6.515	2.621	792
No partnership with a dependent child	6.653	2.673	245
In a partnership without a dependent child	6.703	2.547	1776
In a partnership with a dependent child	6.963	2.511	1870

Source: authors

As revealed above, the people who are in a relationship and at the same time they take care of a dependent child, evaluate their job satisfaction best of all four categories in the analysis (= 6.963).

To the contrary, the least satisfaction is shown by people without a permanent relationship and without a dependent child (= 6.515). As in the question dealing with the relation between job satisfaction and education, the category of the highest satisfaction has the smallest value of the standard deviation, so it is assumed that in the group of people in a relationship and with the child there are the smallest differences in job satisfaction on average.

Hypothesis 3 is focused on the marital status:

H3: People in a relationship rate their job satisfaction better, compared to people without a relationship.

To perform the analysis, two groups are created - Group E with respondents in a relationship, and group F with the respondents without a partnership. Such division does not take into

account whether the respondents take care of a dependent child or not. The number of respondents in the groups is as follows: E = 3646, F = 1037.

In accordance with the above H_3 , the following null and alternative hypotheses are formulated:

$$H_0: \mu_E = \mu_F$$

$$H_A: \mu_E > \mu_F$$

Table 6 - H_3 testing

Mean E	Mean F	t	p-value
6.83653	6.54773	3.1432	0.0008507

Source: authors

Conclusion: Based on the data, as reported in Table 7 at the level of significance of $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis of the agreement of the mean values is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. Thus, it is shown that the respondents who are in a relationship report significantly higher job satisfaction than people without a partner.

4 Conclusions

The aim of the paper was to expand the state of knowledge about job satisfaction in the Czech Republic. Specifically, the aim was to figure out whether there are significant differences in job satisfaction between different groups of people, which differ based on personal characteristics. The results of the research and the answers to the research questions are summarized as follows:

Research question 1: Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction in general between men and women?

Based on the data and their statistical testing, it is possible to state that no significant difference is proved between the perceived job satisfaction in men and women. However, this conclusion does not mean that there are no differences between women and men. Both genders may react differently to different factors influencing job satisfaction, and the aspects of work may be different for them. However, in the paper the attention is focused only on general satisfaction, regardless of the more detailed distribution, and there is no significant difference found between women and men in this area. The paper therefore reports similar conclusion to Eskildsen et al (2003), Kifle & Desta (2012) or Andrade, Westover & Peterson (2019), as previously mentioned. Thus, the so-called gender paradox was not confirmed. We lean to the conclusion by Andrade et al (2019) that the differences in job satisfaction between women and men are gradually reduced.

Research question 2: Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction of the people with different education?

It is proved that people with a university degree rate their job satisfaction better than people without a university degree. The results of the questionnaire survey further indicate the possible existence of a correlation between perceived job satisfaction and the level of education. These results are therefore in line with the conclusions mentioned earlier (Sokolová & Mohelská, 2016; Ilies, Yao, Curseu & Liang, 2019; Oreopoulos & Salvanes 2011). These authors also mention possible explanations for this phenomenon. For example, more educated people are generally happier in everyday life, and this translates into job satisfaction. It is also possible that more educated people choose their jobs more carefully and also have higher wages.

Research question 3: Are there any significant differences in job satisfaction of the people with different marital status?

Statistical testing confirmed that there is a significant difference in the assessment of job satisfaction between people in a relationship and people who are single. In this respect, the people with a partner are happier at work. Table 6 suggests that a similar finding is assumed in the category of parent-childless, but the dimension is not tested in the analysis. Thus, it seems to be possible to speak of a certain interconnection of personal and work satisfaction, as also discussed by Schmitt and Pulakos (1985) or Drobnič et al (2010).

The answers to these research questions can be useful for organizational management. Knowing the groups of employees who tend to be dissatisfied with work allows superiors to focus more on these groups. Conversely, knowing that, for example, people with a university degree generally have higher job satisfaction, there is no need to devote as much energy to them in this regard. However, this is only a basic knowledge. For practical use it may be more beneficial to know more the differences between these groups of employees. For example, how they respond to various stimuli or which aspects of work have the greatest impact on their job satisfaction.

In terms of further research in this area, it may be interesting to focus similarly on other groups of employees – for example, by age, income, duration of employment or job position. As mentioned above, it would also be useful to know in more detail aspects of job satisfaction of different groups of employees. Finding out that some groups of employees respond to job dissatisfaction in different ways can be beneficial for management. And finally, data were collected before the Covid-19 pandemic. It would be therefore also interesting to find out whether this pandemic has in any way been reflected in the issue of job satisfaction. One of the first surveys of job satisfaction at the time of the Covid-19 pandemic concluded that while there was no significant difference in satisfaction between women and men before the pandemic, at the time of the pandemic women rated their job satisfaction significantly worse than men (Feng & Savani, 2020).

At this point, we would also like to mention the limits we see in this study. It is mainly the composition of the sample, which is described in more detail in Table 1. At first glance in the table, it is clear that it is not a representative sample and the general results (for example overall average job satisfaction of the whole sample) should not be generalized to the whole population. The problem is, for example, that over 70 % of respondents are women, the sample is relatively more educated than the population and it is mainly represented by the younger generation. The reason is the fact that the criterion for completion the questionnaire was only minimal age of 18 years and continuing gainful activity. Furthermore, it was only at the discretion of the social media group user whether to complete the questionnaire or not. The representation of more educated and young people probably stems from the fact that the completion of the questionnaire presupposes access to the internet and its use during leisure time. To increase representativeness, it would therefore be possible to supplement the data with and offline paper-pencil questionnaire survey. Nevertheless, we believe that partial conclusions can be formed from the data.

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