

Job Satisfaction of the Employees in the Sector of Trade

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Abstract

The article presents a comprehensive picture of the job satisfaction in the organisations in the sector of TRADE in Bulgaria. For a thorough and in-depth understanding of the researched picture, the obtained results are compared with the use of appropriate benchmarks (satisfaction of the entire studied population; and of particular groups within the sector of TRADE). Based on this solid empirical base, the authors aim to build a comprehensive and systematic picture of the *phenomenon of satisfaction* as a starting point and prerequisite for further meaningful interpretations of the behaviour of the organisations in this sector. The results can be used mainly by executives in the sector of TRADE as well as by researchers, academic faculty and students. The following results are drawn from 1353 respondents from the sector. The sector of TRADE reports a comparatively *high overall satisfaction rate* when considering the organisational structure. The highest rated is satisfaction with communication with the direct supervisor; work hours; the possibility of life and work at preferred locations. Lowest is the satisfaction with the possibility of growth and promotion in the workplace;

income; welfare and benefits. In the TRADE sector, salespeople by profession are more likely to be satisfied than workers in other positions; managers report higher satisfaction than workers with executive functions.

Keywords: organisational culture, job satisfaction, trade, merchant

JEL: M14, F16, J28, Z13

Introduction

In the research of organisational behaviour, job *satisfaction* is often the focus of attention. This is due to the fact that satisfaction is part of various descriptive, explanatory and predictive theoretical schemes and models. One of the most common reasons for the interest in job satisfaction (and in organisational life in general) is the belief that there are strong influences between the level and structure of satisfaction, and the nature of performance. Job satisfaction and organisational commitment are key attitudes of interest to managers and scholars (Nelson at al., p.175).

Job satisfaction affects employee physical and mental well-being, their mobility, absence from work and organisational loyalty (Briones at al., 2010). The greater employee job satisfaction, the stronger their organisational loyalty and hence the less likely they are to leave the organisation. Employees who do

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not find meaning in their work are usually not happy; for them, the motivation to work long or to work well is a real problem (Jenaibi, 2010).

Job satisfaction contributes to financial *sustainability* of jobs. It is an important component of the practices for *sustainable* human resources management and facilitates the achievement of the goals for development of long-standing *sustainable* organisations (Heimerl at al., 2020; Davidescu at al., 2020; Strenitzzerová at al., 2019). Employees satisfied with their work are more productive (Böckerman at al., 2012) and are rarely absent from work (Diestel at al., 2014); they are less likely to leave their jobs (Yang at al., 2019). In general, they are more strongly committed to the organisation. Usually, *job satisfaction* is considered a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from employee's evaluation of their own work or work experiences (Locke, 1976, cited in Nelson at al., 2017, p.174). It is interpreted as both a general attitude and satisfaction with five particular job dimensions: remuneration, the job itself, opportunities for promotion, managers and colleagues (Smith at al., 1969 cited in Nelson at al., 2017, p.174).

Work satisfaction ... reflects **the nature of the feelings that people have about their labour**. It can be defined as a derivative of the feelings of correspondence between deficits, motives, attitudes to work, the level of expectations, claims and requirements, and the possibility of their realization in the work process (Paunov, 2001, p. 58). The author emphasizes the fact that satisfaction is an *affective* attitude, i.e. "a feeling of liking (attraction) and vice versa" (Paunov, 2001, p. 59). In order to understand the manifestation of satisfaction in people's behaviour, one should

take into account the other two elements of the attitude to work – "intellectual attitude (belief) and behavioural intention". M. Paunov indicates five groups of factors influencing work satisfaction: intrinsically motivated; extrinsically motivated; related to the quality of operational management; related to the team; success and failure factors (Paunov, 2001, pp. 59-60). Other researchers substantiate the view that satisfaction depends on four groups of factors as follows: executive officer (leader), work design, established order in the workplace, remuneration (Brenninger, 2015, cited in Szymon at al., 2020)

Job satisfaction can be defined as the employee feeling of *achievements* and *success*.¹ Generally, it is considered to be directly related to *productivity* and the *job* itself as well as to personal *welfare*. Job satisfaction means doing the job one likes, doing it well and being *rewarded* for the efforts made (Aziri, 2011). Undoubtedly, job satisfaction affects employees' *feeling of security*. Satisfied employees feel much more *comfortably* and do their job; they feel *secure*. This is why job satisfaction is an important element of *occupational safety* (Wolniak at al., 2019; Nieciejewska, 2017).

It has been repeatedly emphasized that job satisfaction depends on the manager's behaviour (described in various categories). Different styles of motivation and leadership can influence individual employees differently; what is common is the increased work ability and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a major element in motivating employees to improve their performance (Raziq at al., 2015).

Even though individuals (can) have different criteria to measure their own job satisfaction, the influencing factors are: management style,

¹ Italics in the paragraph – ours – the authors.

pay, working hours, work schedule, material incentives, stress level and flexibility. It is emphasized once again that job satisfaction is related to productivity, motivation, work and life satisfaction. (Abuhashesh, 2019).

According to Brenninger (2011), in order to have satisfied employees and good results, supervisors need to adapt their leadership style – employees should be more involved in decision making processes so that they are more committed to the enterprise objectives. Managers should involve as many employees as possible in the decision making process. They (managers) should support individual and team efforts, including by sharing more information. A similar view with a focus on the work satisfaction and motivation of merchants and sales teams is shared by Y. Yankulov (2012). Based on a study of the organisational culture of the merchants in Bulgaria, the author substantiates a recommendation to the management to strengthen the involvement of salespeople in the decision making process (Yankulov, 2012, p. 79).

The relation between job satisfaction and job performance is stronger for the activities (and corresponding jobs) that are more difficult to perform compared to activities (jobs) that are performed more easily (Saari, 2004; Aziri, 2011). This is an important clarification – it is in line with the results from surveys conducted in Bulgaria. The tradesman's profession can definitely be defined as *difficult* in terms of the nature of the activities performed. A merchant's overall satisfaction is influenced by the achievement of goals as well as by the effect of their personal efforts and contribution to the success of the sales team, as measured by the achievement of the

desired result and the recognition received (Yankulov, 2012a, pp. 91-92).

Job satisfaction (see above) is related to human needs and motives; expectations – claims – requirements (Paunov, 2001, p. 58). Given the system of concepts by which human behaviour is described and explained, it is necessary to indicate the relation between satisfaction and goals, values, norms (rules), organisational roles, etc. (Davidkov, 2021).

As mentioned above, researchers' interest is often focused on the relation satisfaction – job performance. This relation is multi-faceted and depends on a number of organisational and personal factors (Nelson at al., 2017, p. 175). It is noteworthy that job satisfaction is related to other personal and organisational phenomena, for instance organisational *citizenship behaviour*, i.e. a voluntary behaviour that transcends formal job duties. Satisfied employees are more likely to make positive comments about their company, to refrain from complaining when things are not going well, and to help their colleagues (Nelson at al., 2017, p. 176). The relation between job satisfaction and absence from work, the decisions to leave the organisation, etc. are discussed. Satisfaction and its real functioning are culturally determined (Nelson at al., 2017, p. 177).

Based on this review, Table 1 lists the key categories (key terms) used for the clarification of the nature of job satisfaction and its various relations.

This *mini vocabulary* can be considered a list of benchmarks based on which job satisfaction can be built in different models for observations/studies of organisations.

Table 1. Categories used for the building of theoretical schemes and models involving satisfaction²

Nature, cause, key features; factors	What personal and organisational phenomena/ characteristics is it associated with?		Possible effects
1. Emotional state – pleasant, positive (likes / dislikes)	1. Goals / motives	2. Loyalty – to the organisation	1. Job performance (good)
2. Assessment of employee's own work; of work experiences	3. Well-being (physi-cal, psychological, etc.)	4. Organisational welfare	2. Efficiency (higher)
3. Pay /remuneration / incentives for (to)	5. Happiness	6. Organisational commitment	3. Productivity (higher)
4. Work (nature, specifics, design, etc.)	7. Deficits	8. Engagement	4. Absence from work (less often)
5. Opportunities for promotion	9. Attitudes to work (incl. beliefs; intentions)	10. Meaningfulness of work efforts	5. Stability, (job) security
6. Governance (leadership), management	11. Expectations	12. Human resource management HRM (sustainable)	6. Sustainable organisations
7. Colleagues (work team)	13. Claims	14. Occupational safety	
8. Success / failure; achievements	15. Requirements	16. Employee participation in decision making	
9. Established order in the workplace; incl. organisational culture	17. Opportunities for realisation in the labour process	18. Contribution to the success of the team and the company	
10. Working hours; work schedule	19. A feeling of security and safety	20. Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)	
11. Flexibility; Stress	21. Values / norms	22. Empathy, mutual help,	
	23. Organisational roles		

Source: authors' summary based on secondary analysis

Study description

As noted above, the purpose of the paper is, based on a solid body of empirical data, to build a comprehensive and systematic picture of *the phenomenon of satisfaction* as a starting

point and a prerequisite for subsequent meaningful interpretations of the behaviour in the organisations in the sector of TRADE. The presented results are part of a larger project³ for the study of the organisations in

² Grouping (see the names of the groups - header of the columns - above) is conditional - the displayed main units can be contextually viewed in any of the defined groups. The table presents three separate lists (Nature, cause, key features; factors // What personal and organisational phenomena/characteristics is it associated with? // Possible effects.) The table does not draw correlations between the three lists.

³ In 2021, the project was implemented jointly by the Department of Business Administration of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and the Department of Economics of Trade (UNWE). Field data were collected in the period January - July 2021 through a direct anonymous survey (in paper and online).

Bulgaria which was carried out in 2021. The main areas of the problems and topics within the project are: a) labour values; b) overall job satisfaction within the organisation and satisfaction with basic factors in the work situation; c) management behaviour; d) other phenomena within the organisations.

The **object** of this particular study is the collective of organisations in Bulgaria; the **subject** of the study is employee satisfaction – overall and with particular factors of the work situation. The paper seeks the answer to the following basic question: **what is the level of employee satisfaction in the sector of TRADE – overall and with the state of particular factors of the work situation?** Based on the problematisation and discussion of the obtained results, the authors draw conclusions and formulate the possibilities for researchers to use these results as well as in the business practice of managers and organisations.

Within the framework of the study in 2021, a set of respondents with the following characteristics was covered: total number of respondents – 2651; distribution by economic sectors: production – 12%; trade – 51%; services – 29%; public administration – 8%.

The respondents from the sector of TRADE are 1353 with basic socio-demographic characteristics as follows: distribution by sex: 38% males; 62% females; age: up to 30 years old – 30%; 31 – 40 years old – 30%; 41 – 50 years old – 26%; over 50 years old – 14%. Education: elementary and basic – less than 0,5%; secondary – 45%; semi-higher – 7%; higher and with further academic qualifications – 47%. Marital status: married – 60%; single – 40%. Job position in the organisation: worker, employee – 72%; executive (manager) – 24%;

other – 4%. Overall work experience: up to 5 years – 26%; 6 – 10 years – 17%; 11 – 20 years – 35%; over 20 years – 22%. Size of organisation: up to 10 people – 14%; 11 – 50 people – 12%; 51 – 500 people – 18%; over 500 people – 56%. Type of settlement: Sofia (capital city) – 54%; regional city – 37%; small town + village – 9%.

Methodology and tools

Table 2 below presents the conceptual and empirical indicators used for field data collection.

The empirical indicators of satisfaction with particular factors of the work situation are twenty-one. The first fourteen of them were taken from a questionnaire developed by H. Hofstede (Hofstede, 1980, 2001, cited by Davidkov, 2019). Later on and in order to study “the important things at work” more comprehensively, another seven indicators were added to these initial fourteen ones. They were defined based on the analysis of different research tools.⁴

The one-dimensional distribution of the responses for the indicator of overall satisfaction is given in Table № 6 (appendix). Table № 7 (appendix) shows in detail the one-dimensional distribution for the indicators of satisfaction with particular factors of the work situation in the sector of TRADE. Table № 8 (appendix) presents the distribution by indicators with respect to the satisfaction with different factors of the work situation in a comparative plan; the entire studied population; the sector of TRADE in general; the *tradesman by profession* group; the *other personnel* group; the *worker (employee)* group; group of *executives (managers)*.

⁴ More on this issue – see (Farnham, 2013).

Table 2. Conceptual and empirical indicators used in the study

Conceptual indicator	Empirical indicators
Overall satisfaction	HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR OVERALL JOB SATISFACTION AT THIS ORGANISATION? (1 – completely satisfied; 2 – very satisfied; 3 – neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied; 4 – very dissatisfied; 5 – not satisfied at all)
Satisfaction with particular factors of the work situation	<p>HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT JOB IN TERMS OF: (1 – completely satisfied; 2 – very satisfied; 3 – neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied; 4 – very dissatisfied; 5 – not satisfied at all)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing challenges and a feeling of personal achievement when doing one's job • Opportunity to live in a place liked by you and your family • Opportunity for a high income • Opportunity to work with people who cooperate well • Opportunities for training: for the improvement of your skills as well as for the acquisition of new skills • Social security • Recognition received for a job well done • Physical conditions for work – enough space, adequate furniture, lighting, etc.? • Opportunities for autonomy • Security that one can work for an organisation as long as they want • Career opportunities an organisation provides • A working relationship with one's immediate supervisor • An opportunity to make the most of one's skills and abilities • Free time • <i>Working hours and possibility to be absent if necessary</i> • <i>Possibilities for a good balance between work and personal life</i> • <i>Possibilities for an employee to influence the things that are important to them</i> • <i>Respondent's job position</i> • <i>Organisation's regulations</i> • <i>Work planning and organisation</i> • <i>Work tasks</i>

Main results

The obtained results (Table 6 - appendix) show that there is a relatively *high overall satisfaction* with the organisational situation in the sector of TRADE. To indicate the level of their satisfaction, almost 2/3 of the respondents use the categories *completely satisfied* (23%) or *very satisfied* (50%). The responses of over 1/4 of the respondents reveal a degree of dissatisfaction. In order

to evaluate the overall level of satisfaction in the sector, the positioning of the average value of this indicator in relation to the rating scale can be used as a reference.⁵ The average rating (2.10) is positioned near the middle of the positive part of the rating scale.⁶ As can be seen from Table 6, the overall satisfaction in the sector of TRADE is higher than that of the entire studied population. It is also higher compared to the overall satisfaction for the other economic

⁵ In accordance with the logic of the scale, if all respondents chose the rating completely satisfied, the mean value of the indicator would be 1.00. If all respondents chose the rating not at all satisfied, the average value of the indicator would be 5.00.

⁶ The rating scale is formally divided into a *positive* and a *negative* half, as follows: [1,00 – 3,00] ; [3,01 – 5,00].

sectors – production, services, public administration.⁷

Satisfaction rating for each of the particular factors of the work situation (Table 7 – appendix) are in the positive part of the rating scale – the mean value of the indicators is in the interval [1,73 – 2,87]. The meaningful grouping of the indicators depending on their average value makes it possible to outline several groups that - in a comparative plan - show different specific levels of satisfaction.

- Seven factors fall into the quartile of the rating scale that indicates the highest satisfaction [1.00 – 2.00] as follows: relationship with the immediate supervisor (1,73), working hours (1,78), place (1,79), skills (1,98), balance (1,98), job position (1,98), autonomy (1,99). All other factors fall into the quartile determined by the interval [2,01 – 3,00]. The value of the indicators and satisfaction hierarchy are benchmarks on the basis of which *generalised assessments* can be made of the actual state of the organisations in the sector of TRADE and the feeling of (the perception of) the situation described in the categories used.
- The interval in which all ratings are placed [1.73 – 2.87] occupies about 28% of the length of the rating scale. It can be assumed that this is a relatively wide interval, which is why well-defined groups of factors can be outlined within its framework – see Table 3.

The outlined picture can be considered as a *basic matrix of the perception and evaluation* of the actual situation in organisations through

the prism of satisfaction. Insofar as the perception and interpretation of organisational phenomena are of key importance for the attitude to work and the organisation, the existence of such a picture is definitely necessary and important.

- As a first approximation, the hierarchy of satisfaction with particular factors of the work situation can serve as a guide for potential and actual *deficits* and their scale. It can be assumed that the lower levels of satisfaction (for instance, the opportunities for *career development*; the level of *income* and *social security*; the system of giving *recognition* for a job well done; *training* opportunities, etc.) are a signal for more serious deficits and stress. When trying to balance the system of motivators, the specified (and other) factors should be given priority.
- Satisfaction data can be used by building in the *conceptual indicator of satisfaction* in various models with a descriptive, explanatory and predictive potential. An example of such building-in is the attempts to develop a *motivational profile* as a tool for expressing the motivational charge of the various factors of the work environment.⁸ There are reasons to claim that comparing the significance (“importance”) of a specific factor of the work environment and the level of satisfaction with its actual state can be interpreted as a source of knowledge about the motivational potential of this factor.
- Following the view that no factor acts on its own and in isolation (out of a given context as well) and in order to get in-

⁷ In comparison, overall satisfaction for the entire survey population and by sectors is as follows: overall for the entire studied population (2,19); production (2,21); trade (2,10); services (2,29); public administration (2,36).

⁸ More on this – see (Davidkov, Gurbalova, 2018). Also, see: (Iliev, 1993); (Dzhonev, Dimitrov, 2015); (Kuzmanova, Alexandrova, 2013).

Table 3. Grouping of the factors of the work situation (sector of TRADE) according to satisfaction level

Group	Satisfaction rating (interval)	Factors
1	1,73 – 1,79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate supervisor • Working hours • Place
2	1,98 – 1,99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Balance • Position • Autonomy
3	2,03 – 2,10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Free time • Cooperation • Physical conditions • Work tasks
4	2,11 – 2,17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges • Influence • Planning
5	2,21 – 2,26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations • Training • Recognition
6	2,38 – 2,87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion • Incomes • Social security

depth insights, in the future it would be useful to process and analyse at the level of one-dimensional, two-dimensional and multidimensional statistics.⁹

Within the study for the sector of TRADE, a comparison was made of the indicators of satisfaction between the categories *tradesman by profession* and *other personnel*. A detailed presentation of the comparison is shown in Table 8 (appendix).¹⁰

The need to differentiate and specify the indicators of satisfaction is related to the following reasons:

- The results for the entire population are averaged and therefore rough; for the different subsets they deviate differently from their true value.
- The entire population of the respondents is heterogeneous in terms of essential constitutive features (for example, the performed functions, on the basis of which respondents can be divided into

⁹ What we mean is – e.g. – calculating quantities (indices) for evaluation of work efficiency of the aggregate of indicators of satisfaction and of each individual indicator (see Table 2). Correlation matrix for expressing two-dimensional distributions and dependencies. Regression models for assessment of the complex and partial influence of satisfaction with specific environmental factors on overall satisfaction. Factor analysis (inverted matrix) to delineate the groups of factors affecting overall satisfaction, etc.

¹⁰ The average value of the indicator was used as a general measure of comparison.

tradesmen by profession and other personnel).

- Internal structuring and the corresponding specification of the results enable general and functional managers (as well as experts in human resource management) to build a more accurate and detailed picture of the actual situation and, based on this, to make more precise and effective managerial decisions.
- Internal structuring makes it possible to compare different staff groups. The interdependence of staff groups in value creation processes often gives rise to intra-organisational tensions and contradictions. The possibility of seeing the whole (the organisation) as a dynamic equilibrium of interacting groups increases the chance to penetrate the essence of the problems and hence to look for more efficient solutions.
- Taking into consideration the responsibilities of the experts in human resource management, this differentiation is of special interest. The care of building a system of organisational well-being (physical, psychological, financial, social, etc.) would be more effective and efficient if organisational programmes have a clear and justified focus and satisfy real and specific needs of the target groups.

Table 4 presents the positions for which the most significant differences between the groups *tradesman by profession* and *other personnel* are observed.

For each of the presented positions, the level of satisfaction for the category *tradesman by profession* is higher compared to the employees from the group *other personnel*.¹¹ In the context of this result, the representatives of the group *tradesman by profession* emerge as *privileged*. The privileged status of the tradesmen by profession (TP) can be attributed to various factors: a) the belief that their work is more important for the organisation than the work of “the other personnel”¹²; b) from a cultural point of view, “organisational heroes” are most often TP representatives; c) the fact that TP have a leading role in the making of business and managerial decisions, etc.¹³ As a result, the representatives of the TP group have a privileged access to resources (salaries; access to training, etc.). They have a greater possibility to influence the major organisational decisions. They work under more favourable organisational rules, enjoy better opportunities for career development and promotion, etc.

Table 5 shows the positions with the most significant differences in the level of satisfaction between the groups *worker (employee)* and *executive (manager)*.¹⁴ Respondents with managerial functions

¹¹ The right-hand column „Difference (other personnel - tradesman by profession)“ presents, in descending hierarchical order, the differences in satisfaction levels between the compared categories. The biggest differences are found in the positions of *opportunities for training* and *an opportunity to make the most of one's skills and abilities*.

¹² With organisational practices resulting from this belief.

¹³ Despite the existence of objective prerequisites for the outlined division, the analysis of organisational practices gives reasons to assert the following: favouring specific groups of organisational personnel at the expense of others does not contribute to the maintenance of good organisational health.

¹⁴ The data in Table 5 are taken from Table 8 (appendix).

Table 4. The most significant differences in the level of satisfaction with particular factors of the work situation between the respondents (r) from the categories *tradesman by profession* and *other personnel* (rank scale according to the difference between the mean values)

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT JOB IN TERMS OF: (please indicate your score next to <u>each</u> <u>question</u> by circling one of the numbers)	Sector of TRADE (1351 R)	Sector of TRADE – tradesman by profession (884 R)	Sector of TRADE – other personnel (289 R)	Difference (other personnel – tradesman by profession)
• Opportunities for training: for the improvement of your skills as well as for the acquisition of new skills	2,23	2,11	2,36	0,25
• An opportunity to make the most of one's skills and abilities	1,98	1,86	2,10	0,24
• Possibilities for an employee to influence the things that are important to them	2,14	2,05	2,23	0,18
• Opportunities for career development and promotion	2,38	2,29	2,47	0,18
• Organisation's regulations	2,21	2,16	2,34	0,18
• Work planning and organising	2,17	2,10	2,27	0,17
• Job position	1,98	1,91	2,07	0,16
• Existing challenges and a feeling of personal achievement when doing one's job	2,11	2,01	2,16	0,15
• Opportunities for autonomy	1,99	1,91	2,05	0,14
• Work tasks	2,10	2,03	2,15	0,12
• Opportunity for a high income	2,46	2,41	2,52	0,11

(executive, manager) are definitely more satisfied than workers (employees).

The analysis of the differences indicated in table 5 should be based on the *basic characteristics of managerial and executive work*. These can be: profitability; attractiveness; prestige; requirements of the specific job positions to the candidates; nature of the work tasks performed; opportunities for independent decision-making, etc.¹⁵ The sample in Table 5 makes it possible to outline the essential differences in the satisfaction of employees' needs in an organisational environment. Grouping the differences in the level of satisfaction allows to distinguish three well-defined levels as follows:

The most essential difference is related to the satisfaction with the *level of pay*. Along

with the traditional starting points in explaining this difference (task complexity; productivity; value creation; responsibility; empowerment, etc.), attention can be directed to dimensions of culture, based on which we find deeper and more fundamental explanatory arguments. A number of studies on work culture in Bulgaria (Davidkov, 2019; Yankulov, 2012b; Hofstede, etc., 2020) give reasons to claim that it is characterized by a great power distance.¹⁶ As a rule, in cases of great power distance is observed the following: "Hierarchy means existential inequality"; "Subordinates see superiors as people of another breed"; "People with greater power are entitled to privileges" (Davidkov, 2019, p.485); "Managers' privileges and status symbols are both popular and expected"; There are "big differences in

¹⁵ More on the differences between workers' and managers' labour – see (Ivanova, 2000).

¹⁶ The power distance measure (Hofstede, 2001) shows how people with more and less power perceive each other; based on this - how they build relationships with each other.

Table 5. The most significant differences in the level of satisfaction with particular factors of the work environment between the respondents from the categories *worker (employee)* and *executive (manager)* (rank scale according to the difference between the mean values)

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT JOB IN TERMS OF: (please indicate your score next to <u>each</u> <u>question</u> by circling one of the numbers)	Sector of TRADE (1351 R)	Sector of TRADE – worker / employee (977 R)	Sector of TRADE – executive / manager (321 R)	Difference (worker employee) – executive (manager)
• Opportunities for a high income	2,46	2,61	2,00	0,61
• Job position	1,98	2,08	1,65	0,43
• Opportunities for career development and promotion	2,38	2,47	2,08	0,39
• Existing challenges and a feeling of personal achievement when doing one's job	2,11	2,22	1,77	0,35
• Opportunities for autonomy	1,99	2,07	1,74	0,33
• Possibilities for an employee to influence the things that are important to them	2,14	2,20	1,91	0,29
• Work planning and organising	2,17	2,22	1,98	0,24
• An opportunity to make the most of one's skills and abilities	1,98	2,03	1,80	0,23
• Opportunities for training: for the improvement of your skills as well as for the acquisition of new skills	2,23	2,29	2,07	0,22
• Recognition received for a job well done	2,26	2,31	2,09	0,22
• Physical conditions for work – enough space, adequate furniture, lighting, etc.?	2,09	2,14	1,93	0,21
• Work tasks	2,10	2,14	1,94	0,20

the pay of the employees at the top and at the bottom of the organisational pyramid”; “White collar labour is more valuable than blue collar labour” (Davidkov, 2019, p.488). Awareness and understanding of the real cultural context provide managers and HRM specialists with a working toolkit for the effective solution of internal organisational problems.

A group of five positions (position; opportunities for career development and promotion; challenges; autonomy; possibility to influence important things) outlines the next level of essential differences in satisfaction. The difference in the satisfaction of the compared groups with regard to these indicators are related to a great extent to their relation to (conditionality of) basic characteristics of workers' and managers' labour. The third level of differences includes

the following factors: planning and organising work; skills; training opportunities; recognition; physical conditions for work; work tasks.

The differences discussed above can serve as benchmarks in the analysis of specific organisational policies aimed at personnel. Their specific application is the field of outlining career development paths in commercial organisations. If a particular career path implies a transition from an executive activity to an executive activity involving managerial functions and/or a fully managerial position, differences in satisfaction are one of the keys to understanding career development choices.

Conclusion

Researchers and practitioners show significant and constant *interest* in job

satisfaction. The main reason for this is the fact that this type of research contains significant cognitive potential – job satisfaction has a number of meanings and fits into various descriptive, explanatory and predictive schemes and models (see Table 1). Another important reason is one of the fundamental paradigms of organisational behaviour: the behaviour of the people in an organisation is determined by their perception (including evaluation) of the phenomena and situation in the organisation. The study of satisfaction helps us understand how people perceive and evaluate the organisational situation.

Overall satisfaction in the sector of TRADE is higher than in other economic sectors – production, services, public administration (see Table 6). The substantive grouping of *satisfaction with particular factors* of the work situation (see Table 3) makes it possible to outline different levels of satisfaction (by groups of factors). This is a generalized basic knowledge that functions as a set of guidelines in solving a wide range of organisational issues - related to the design of units and positions; hiring and pay policies; motivational systems; staff training and development, etc.

Refining the big picture based on content cuts (*tradesman by profession* vs *other staff*; *worker (employee)* vs *executive (manager)*) and comparisons provides results that have their own meaning and value. The satisfaction of respondents from the *tradesman by profession* category for all indicators is higher than the satisfaction of respondents from the *other personnel* category (Tables 8, 4). The picture is identical when comparing the satisfaction between respondents from the category of *executive (manager)* and *worker*

(*employee*) – see Tables 8, 5.¹⁷ The results contribute to the understanding for a wide range of problems in the organisations in the sector of TRADE. Based on these results, the status of different professional groups and the relationships between them are problematized; the choice and motivations towards a certain type of professional development are better understood. The results mentioned can be incorporated into tools for understanding the current state of motivation and evaluation of the motivational potential of particular factors of the work environment.

In accordance with the logic of making sense of the research results, the authors plan to expand the analysis based on a variety of tools for assessing the performance of the toolkit, using two-dimensional and multidimensional statistics. Part of the research continuations will focus the interest on the satisfaction with particular factors of the work situation and their influence to understand overall satisfaction (as an integral indicator of the perception and evaluation of the organisational environment). In another line of research continuation, the substantiation of motivational profiles will be sought and, based on these profiles an assessment of the motivational potential of individual factors (and groups of factors) will be sought. A third perspective is to examine satisfaction in relation to actual and desired styles of leadership behaviour. This list of possibilities for new research developments could be extended.

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¹⁷ The only formal exception when comparing the last two categories is observed in the free time indicator (Table 8) – the satisfaction of executives (managers) is not higher than that of workers (employees).

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Appendix

Table 6. Distribution of the respondents according to their overall satisfaction (comparison table)

HAVING IN MIND YOUR ANSWERS TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTIONS, HOW DO YOU RATE YOUR OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH YOUR WORK AT THAT ORGANISATION ?	Total for the entire studied population (2651 R)	Sector of TRADE – as a whole (1353 R)	Sector of TRADE worker/ employee vs executive		Sector of TRADE tradesman by profession vs other personnel	
			worker / employee (977 R)	executive (321 R)	tradesman by profession (884 R)	other personnel (289 R)
	% of responses					
• Completely satisfied	21	23	20	35	26	20
• Very satisfied	48	50	51	48	50	55
• Neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied	23	21	23	14	20	17
• Very dissatisfied	6	4	4	3	3	6
• Not satisfied at all	2	2	2	-	1	2
• Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
• Average value of the indicator	2,19	2,10	2,17	1,86	2,03	2,15

Table 7. Distribution of the respondents (sector of trade) according to the satisfaction with the particular factors of the work situation (ranking scale based on the average value of the indicator)

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT JOB IN TERMS OF: (please, next to each question mark your score by circling one of the numbers)	1 – completely satisfied	2 – very satisfied	3 – neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied	4 – very dissatisfied	5 – not satisfied at all	AVERAGE VALUE OF THE INDICATOR
	% of responses					
• A working relationship with one's immediate supervisor	51	34	9	3	3	1,73
• Working hours and possibility to be absent when necessary	45	39	11	3	2	1,78
• Opportunity to live in a place liked by you and your family	47	34	12	5	2	1,79
• An opportunity to make the most of one's skills and abilities	35	41	17	6	1	1,98
• Possibilities for a good balance between work and personal life	34	43	16	5	2	1,98
• Job position	35	42	16	5	2	1,98
• Opportunities for autonomy	32	45	16	5	2	1,99
• Security that one can work for an organisation as long as they want	32	44	16	5	3	2,03
• Free time	33	40	17	7	3	2,07
• Opportunity to work with people who cooperate well	31	40	20	7	2	2,09
• Physical conditions for work – enough space, adequate furniture, lighting, etc.?	34	39	15	8	4	2,09
• Work tasks	27	45	20	6	2	2,10
• Existing challenges and a feeling of personal achievement when doing one's job	26	46	20	6	2	2,11
• Possibilities for an employee to influence the things that are important to them	27	45	19	7	2	2,14
• Work planning and organising	29	38	22	8	3	2,17
• Organisation's regulations	29	37	22	8	4	2,21
• Opportunities for training: improvement of skills and acquisition of new skills	28	38	21	9	4	2,23
• Recognition for a job well done	28	38	19	11	4	2,26
• Opportunities for career development and promotion	23	37	23	11	6	2,38
• Opportunity for a high income	20	37	24	14	5	2,46
• Social security	40	41	12	5	2	2,87

Table 8. Distribution of the respondents according to the satisfaction with particular factors of the work situation (comparison table)

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT JOB WITH RESPECT TO: (please, next to each question mark your score by circling one of the numbers)	Total for the entire studied population (2651)	Sector of TRADE (1351)	Sector of TRADE worker / employee (977)	Sector of TRADE executive / manager (321)	Sector of TRADE tradesman by profession (884)	Sector of TRADE other personnel (289)
	average value of the indicator					
Existing challenges and a feeling of personal achievement when doing one's job	2,16	2,11	2,22	1,77	2,01	2,16
Opportunity to live in a place liked by you and your family	1,86	1,79	1,82	1,65	1,71	1,80
Opportunity for a high income	2,48	2,46	2,61	2,00	2,41	2,52
Opportunity to work with people who cooperate well	2,19	2,09	2,11	2,01	2,04	2,04
Opportunities for training: for the improvement of your skills as well as for the acquisition of new skills	2,35	2,23	2,29	2,07	2,11	2,36
Social security	1,99	2,87	1,87	1,83	1,82	1,89
Recognition received for a job well done	2,35	2,26	2,31	2,09	2,19	2,29
Physical conditions for work – enough space, adequate furniture, lighting, etc.?	2,08	2,09	2,14	1,93	2,08	2,15
Opportunities for autonomy	2,06	1,99	2,07	1,74	1,91	2,05
Security that one can work for their organisation as long as they want	2,13	2,03	2,06	1,94	1,96	2,06
Opportunities for career development and promotion	2,49	2,38	2,47	2,08	2,29	2,47
A working relationship with one's immediate supervisor	1,86	1,73	1,74	1,67	1,65	1,74
An opportunity to make the most of one's skills and abilities	2,10	1,98	2,03	1,80	1,86	2,10
Free time	2,17	2,07	2,06	2,07	2,06	2,10
Working hours and possibility to be absent if necessary	1,85	1,78	1,78	1,75	1,74	1,73
Possibilities for a good balance between work and personal life	2,06	1,98	1,97	1,94	1,96	1,94
Possibilities for an employee to influence the things that are important for them	2,27	2,14	2,20	1,91	2,05	2,23
Job position	2,06	1,98	2,08	1,65	1,91	2,07
Organisation's regulations	2,32	2,21	2,24	2,10	2,16	2,34
Work planning and organising	2,31	2,17	2,22	1,98	2,10	2,27
Work tasks	2,20	2,10	2,14	1,94	2,03	2,15