

## FACTORS INFLUENCING PROFESSIONAL SATISFACTION IN SCHOOL

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**ABSTRACT:** PEOPLE ARE THE ONES WHO GENERATE THE VALUE OF AN ORGANIZATION, ALL OTHER FACTORS HAVING ONLY LATENT POTENTIAL.

FROM THIS PERSPECTIVE, MANAGERS MUST DIRECT THEIR EFFORTS TOWARDS FINDING WAYS TO INCREASE JOB SATISFACTION, BUT ALSO TO MOTIVATE EMPLOYEES ACCORDINGLY. FOR A MANAGEMENT TO BE EFFECTIVE IT IS NECESSARY TO FIND A BALANCE REGARDING THE SATISFACTION OF THE EMPLOYEES, A BALANCE THAT ON THE ONE HAND DOES NOT ALLOW TO AFFECT THE INDIVIDUAL OR COLLECTIVE PERFORMANCE DUE TO AN ACUTE DISSATISFACTION, AND ON THE OTHER HAND, TO STIMULATE PERFORMANCE BY FINDING AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO INCREASE SATISFACTION.

AN EDUCATOR MAY BE CONSIDERED GOOD BY SOMEONE AND LESS GOOD BY SOMEONE ELSE. SOME EDUCATORS CAN EASILY PASS ON THEIR KNOWLEDGE, OTHERS ARE UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO DO SO. THIS ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS THE MAIN FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO PROFESSIONAL SATISFACTION IN THE SCHOOL.

**KEY WORDS:** SATISFACTION, SCHOOL, MANAGER, WORK, PROFESSION, FACTORS.

### Introduction

Work is seen by man not only as a simple means of obtaining the necessary ones, but also as an opportunity for satisfaction.

Work satisfaction is perceived as a feeling about work and is a concept divided into two distinct and close categories: job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction is a subjective assessment, but it is a factor that plays an important role in workplace motivation. In fact, satisfaction is perceived as a fundamental variable in the life and functioning of any organization.

One of the aims of the dissertation paper was to analyze job satisfaction among educators, without establishing a general working hypothesis between satisfaction and performance.

Job satisfaction is defined as a pleasant, positive emotion, resulting from the evaluation of the work submitted, from the personal opinion of an employee on his work or the work climate.

From a psychological perspective, job satisfaction can also be seen as a factor or personality trait, being known that certain people are more or less satisfied, compared to others, in the conditions in which they carry out their activity in a similar way.<sup>2</sup> While some find their vocation in the profession they exercise, declaring themselves professionally satisfied, others never have the feeling that they do what they like, often change their jobs or complain daily, always declaring themselves dissatisfied<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Ticu Constantin, *Psychological evaluation of personnel*, Polirom Publishing House, Iași. 2004

<sup>3</sup> Ibidem, p. 34

During the last decade, there have been several research studies of the phenomenon of job satisfaction, for different professional categories, including for teachers. In the General Social Survey project supported by Smith (2011)<sup>4</sup>, in which 27,000 people were interviewed, it was found that the profession of teacher is the sixth place in the hierarchy of the professions with the highest job satisfaction.

### **1. The main factors that determine professional satisfaction**

#### **a. The traditional factors of age and seniority**

Professional satisfaction was linked to two factors: age and seniority. Satisfaction was found to be higher in older subjects with longer experience. This is most certainly due to the fact that older people are much more comfortable with authority, so less reluctant. In addition, older, more experienced teaching staff have lower expectations than their younger colleagues. It seems that over time, those who have managed to adapt their expectations to reality are more easily satisfied with their situation.

#### **b. Factors related to gender differences**

For the differences between men and women in terms of job satisfaction, it should be noted that the research conducted so far has been inconclusive. "When the data collected from multiple searches covering thousands of subjects are combined in a meta-analysis, the average correlation tends to zero"<sup>5</sup> professional satisfaction. This means that women have a job satisfaction level similar to that of men, despite working conditions and the difference in pay: women generally have fewer jobs, less prestigious and less paid than their counterparts. their male. One explanation for this is that women may have lower career expectations than men, so that they can be more easily fulfilled in their profession<sup>6</sup>. The same explanation is also to indicate the differences between younger educators and their older colleagues. Also, women may have a different perception of the concept of fairness.<sup>7</sup> This means that women have a job satisfaction level similar to that of men, despite working conditions and the difference in pay: women generally have fewer jobs, less prestigious and less paid than their counterparts. their male. One explanation for this is that women may have lower career expectations than men, so that they can be more easily fulfilled in their profession. The same explanation is also to indicate the differences between younger educators and their older colleagues. Also, women may have a different perception of the concept of fairness. This would mean that women would be content with a lower reward and compensation system than men. Which would lead to lower demands and, consequently, higher job satisfaction. In the case of the teaching staff, studies have shown that women are much more satisfied than men.

#### **c. The influence of cognitive development and ethnic factor**

In addition, teaching staff with a higher degree of cognitive development have been shown to have better performances because they have more tools at their disposal, a wider range of teaching methods and more varied techniques for problem solving. The inherent complexity of the feeling of job satisfaction increases even more when the ethnic parameter is added.

#### **d. Organizational factors**

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<sup>4</sup> Smith, T. W. (2007). Job satisfaction in the United States. Extras de la <http://www.news.uchicago.edu/releases/107/pdf/07417.jobs.pdf> accesat la date de 20.03.2019

<sup>5</sup> J. M., Burger *Personality*, Thomson Wadsworth, SUA, 2008, p. 28

<sup>6</sup> J. M., Burger *Personality*, Thomson Wadsworth, SUA, 2008, p. 28

Regarding the organizational and contextual factors that affect the satisfaction of the educators in their work, studies have shown that the level of organization plays an important role, especially in the field of the collaboration of the educational institutions of the perception of relations with their colleagues (Gonzales, 1995) and of their relation. with management The relationship with management can indeed be an important element of dissatisfaction. In a larger study of educators<sup>8</sup> it was shown that subjects are more satisfied when their working conditions are more favorable. These conditions include data such as administrative support for them, leadership, good children's behavior and sufficient autonomy.

e. The influence of work perception

How educators perceive their work is a rarely studied factor in terms of job satisfaction.

These are the intrinsic and extrinsic conditions of the educator's position. The intrinsic elements are aspects related to their profession, such as work autonomy, professional prestige and self-esteem. The external conditions are the physical working environment and the benefits that the subject gets through his position.

f. The influence of the leadership style of the school principal

The leadership style of the school principal seems to be an important factor in assessing the satisfaction of the child. Educators who have demonstrated a higher degree of professional satisfaction are those who perceived the headmaster of the school as someone whose leadership style can be described as transformative, ie he / she tends to favor the participation of teachers in the decision-making process<sup>9</sup>. Transformational leadership is a system in which leaders and collaborators strive to achieve "higher levels of morality and motivation" (BURNS, 1978: 20). If we are interested (as opposed to the transactional leadership style, which is based on a system of relationships between leaders and their collaborators), both parties are involved in this relationship to serve their personal interests, namely the leader has the role to maintains the status quo by meeting the needs of employees.

## 2. Satisfaction factors of the teaching staff in the preschool environment

Several studies have been conducted to measure the satisfaction of the teaching staff in the preschool environment, and the results show that the level of satisfaction of the educators is similar to that measured for the average population of this profession.

However, some results are interesting:

a. In a study, Kremer-Hayoun and Goldstein (1990) found that women reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction compared to men. This seems to come from the status of the profession, which has a blurred image; indeed, according to the results of the research so far, it seems that men attach greater importance to their career. As a result, their level of satisfaction is lower than that of their female counterparts<sup>10</sup>.

b. The size of the school is also defined as one of the criteria that influence satisfaction<sup>11</sup>. For Tamir and Amir (1987) and Aloni (1991), teachers whose working environments are a kindergarten of small or large size indicated a higher degree of satisfaction with their colleagues

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<sup>8</sup> Hean și Garrett, *Op. cit.* 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Koh, Steers și Terborg, 1995, Shechtman et al., 1994

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem, p. 295

<sup>11</sup> A. Groun, *Teoria procesului de învățământ (Didactica)* – Manual, Editura Universitaria, Craiova, 2019

employed in medium-sized institutions. The U-shaped curve clearly reflects this result. Small institutions promote greater interaction between kindergarten members and children. Large organizations provide educators with greater mobility between positions and roles.

c. The level of education, qualifications, family status and length of seniority of the teaching staff do not seem to be factors that significantly influence the degree of satisfaction.

d. Regarding the ethnic factor, it should be emphasized that the school system is dominated and governed by tradition; it is also largely rural.

It should be noted that in recent years there has been a massive process of feminization of the profession (statistics of the Ministry of Education).

It has been shown that there is no difference between ethnic educators and those in the majority population in the field of job satisfaction measurements. In fact, both groups placed the relationship with the director at the peak of their criteria.

Apart from the leadership style applied by the director, which is considered a factor in determining influence to assess satisfaction, the way educators view their profession (Yaniv, 1982), the ethnicity of the subject are variables that have also been taken into account.

### **3. Other determinants of job satisfaction**

A classification of the factors that determine the job satisfaction was proposed by Zamfir (2000), who considers that it can be analyzed on three dimensions<sup>12</sup>:

1) economic satisfaction - it is produced by financial incentives; it confers the feeling of security and the satisfaction of the need for esteem, power, prestige and social position;

2) job satisfaction - it represents the satisfaction related to the content of the work, its particularities of development. The work itself has a number of characteristics, such as working conditions, technical endowment and actual content, these elements being relevant or decisive in obtaining professional satisfaction. Other important features would be the variety of work, innovation, the high professional skills required by it, the relationship between work and the individual's skills. Otherwise, a mismatch between the skills and the demands placed at the workplace, the monotony of the work, the routine can turn into sources of professional dissatisfaction;

3) psychosocial satisfaction - refers to reporting the employee not only to his activity, but also to his colleagues, to the group of which he is part. Positive relationships, a favorable group atmosphere are the determining factors of job satisfaction. Another category of factors that influence job satisfaction was proposed by Cortese (2007)<sup>13</sup>, of which:

- the content of the work,
- responsibility,
- autonomy and professional growth<sup>14</sup>,
- professional relations<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> C. Zamfir, *Un sociolog despre munca și satisfacție*, Bucuresti, Editura Politica, 2000, p. 238

<sup>13</sup> C. Cortese, *Job satisfaction of Italian nurses: An exploratory study*. Journal of Nursing Management, 2007, p.15

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem, p. 221.

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem, p 223

Landy lists the following determinants of job satisfaction:

- a) payment structure, fair rewards that provide performance feedback;
- b) physical working conditions;
- c) personal interest<sup>16</sup>;
- d) mental provocative work, which the employee can successfully perform; e) the work itself.

Smith, Kendall, and Hullin (2009)<sup>17</sup> highlight the following determining conditions for job satisfaction:

- 1) the salary - the amount at which the payment received is ascended, the method of making the payment and its perceived equity;
- 2) promotion - the availability of real opportunities for promotion;
- 3) colleagues - their degree of competence, friendly relationships;
- 4) supervision - the technical and managerial skills of the supervisors, the degree to which the superiors demonstrate consideration and interest for the employees;
- 5) the work itself - the degree to which the tasks performed by the employee are interesting and provide opportunities for learning and taking responsibility.

Locke (2006) comes with a complement proposing factors such as: recognition, working conditions, organizational policy, reporting salary, promotion and recognition to extrinsic factors of job satisfaction, and colleagues, supervision, work itself - intrinsic factors.

Herzberg (2009)<sup>18</sup> argues that the satisfaction factors are not the same as the satisfaction factors, noting that the former would refer more to the extrinsic factors, and the true source of satisfaction would be due to the intrinsic factors.

Frances (2000) elaborates a list of the intrinsic factors of job satisfaction in the decreasing order of saturation:

- 1) independence of thought and action;
- 2) the feeling of being informed;
- 3) the feeling of esteem in the position he holds;
- 4) self-development;
- 5) participation in setting goals and objectives;
- 6) the feeling of prestige;
- 7) the authority attached to the position it holds;
- 8) the opportunity to develop relationships;

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<sup>16</sup> P.C. Smith, L. Kendall, C.L. Hullin, *The measurement of satisfaction in work and retirement*, Chicago, IL Rand McNally, 2009

<sup>16</sup> E.A. Locke, *The supervisor as 'motivator: his influence on employee performance and satisfaction*, in Bass, B.M., Cooper, R. and Haas, J.A. (Eds), *Managing for Accomplishment*, Heath and Company, Washington, DC, 2006, pp. 57-67

<sup>16</sup> F. Herzberg, *One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?*. Harvard Business Review, Sept-Oct., Boston, disponibil la [http://www.facilitif.eu/user\\_files/file/herzburg\\_article.pdf](http://www.facilitif.eu/user_files/file/herzburg_article.pdf) accesat la 14.01.2019

9) the opportunity to help colleagues. Zlate (2007)<sup>19</sup> summarizes the results of previous research and proposes a new classification of job satisfaction factors into three categories:

- organizational factors (working conditions, self-employment, promotion);
  - group factors (cohesion, group morale, relationships with colleagues, relationships with bosses);
  - personal factors (sociodemographic characteristics of the employee:
    - age, gender, race, nationality, etc .;
    - socio-professional characteristics: seniority in work, level of professional training, experience, personality characteristics).
- Porter and Steers classified the sources of job satisfaction into four categories:

1) broad organizational factors, which include the promotion opportunities, the policies and procedures of the organization, the structure of the organization;

2) factors related to the immediate work environment, which refers to the style of supervision, participation in decision making, size of the group of individuals, relationships with colleagues, working conditions;

3) factors related to the content of the work or the activities performed in the workplace (their scope, role clarity);

4) personal factors - characteristics that differentiate one person from another (age, seniority, personality).

#### **4. Conclusions**

In order to improve the dissatisfaction and motivation factors, some recommendations can be made based on the factors that are visible for the dissatisfaction at work. Thus, for the remuneration factor which is at an average level, it is possible to analyze the remuneration level practiced at the country level. This is useful for eliminating the feeling of inequity, changing the remuneration policy and procedure so that the employees know its level correctly, the realization of the remuneration system based on the obtained results, as well as the hiring of personnel in certain departments in order to divide the tasks more concretely as well as for reducing the effort made by employees.

For the organizational and communication factor it is recommended to clearly define the tasks of each one, the volume of work, the creation of a communication binder with the employees both vertically and horizontally, organizing thematic meetings at a two-week interval, implementing the professional feedback system and morale from the superiors. For a manager it is less important to know in detail each operation performed by subordinates.

It is important to know how to organize them and determine them to achieve what the company has proposed.

For the motivational factor it is recommended to implement an employee counseling program to analyze on a personal level what is important for them in order to feel motivated at a professional level. It is known that a large part of the employees bring to their service also personal problems that are reflected in their attitude, in the way they interact with colleagues and children, as well as in work performance. In order to identify the needs of the employees, the HR department

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<sup>19</sup> M., Zlate, Op. cit. p. 127

must design an annual evaluation of them. It can be implemented as a system of understanding of the departments of the rotation of the positions and, last but not least, the creation by managers of an organizational climate of familiar working for the psychological comfort of the employees as well as for their retention.

Other recommendations refer to the training programs that can develop the skills and abilities necessary for the leadership process, thus mentioning those related to strategic thinking, team development, interpersonal communication, efficient delegation, efficient meetings. To make the current work more attractive, motivating, it is recommended to delegate responsibilities, enrich the positions, involve the employees in the decision-making process at the position or department level.

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<sup>20</sup> Porter și Steers, apud M. Zlate, 2007, p.138

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