

FACTORS SHAPING JOB SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES

Lech NIEŻURAWSKI¹, Joanna NIEŻURAWSKA-ZAJĄC^{2*}

¹ WSB University in Toruń, Poland; joanna.niezurawska@torun.wsb.pl, ORCID: 0000-0001-6396-3363

² WSB University in Toruń, Poland; lech.niezurawski@torun.wsb.pl, ORCID: 0000-0001-6353-1085

* Correspondence author

Purpose: The present paper aims at determining the hierarchy of factors influencing job satisfaction.

Design/methodology/approach: The empirical section of the paper presents the results of the authors' own research in Henkell & Co and FoodCare companies.

Findings: In the research section we are trying to answer the question of what determines job satisfaction of the group of selected respondents and thus what factors and to what extent shape it in the organisations under study.

Practical implications: A high level of job satisfaction of employees allows to achieve business objectives.

Originality/value: The value of the article is the confirmation that keeping the job satisfaction in organization is important in order to keep work engagement. Originality of the article arises from that job satisfaction is shaped by factors not only including salary, professional development, relations with the supervisor and colleagues, cooperation between departments, but also business ethics.

Keywords: job satisfaction, stakeholder, employee

Category of the paper: Research paper

1. Introduction

The organization cares for the preservation of a positive image, which is largely created by the internal client. In this connection, a continuous investment in the improvement of competences and in the areas related to the development and satisfaction of the most precious company resource – the employee – is not without significance for the firm's growth and its position held on the market. The process of human resources management is basically a never-ending complex of mutually related operations. The implementation of the mission, vision, strategy of the enterprise and the processes offered to the client requires a proper engagement of the employed. It is therefore essential to examine this group of company stakeholders.

The lack of adequate solutions in human capital management may lead to the loss of image, brand, clients, profits and, finally, to the bankruptcy of the enterprise. In such a situation the principles of quality management contained in the ISO norms, such as client-directed orientation, leadership, stakeholders' engagement, decisions based on facts, process approach, cooperation with suppliers and continuous improvement, are becoming growingly important (Armstrong, Taylor, 2020, pp. 168-180). The group of internal stakeholders should include the employee engaged in relations with the employer (stakeholder engagement). The set of related and performed by the employee activities in the pursuit of the intended result is the implementation of the principle of a process approach. The goals that the employee wants to achieve are set by the leadership (leadership principle). The leaders should aim at such a shaping of the organisation's strategies that it becomes at the same time a way of meeting its employees' needs. The knowledge of the factors important for the employees, of their expectations and desires, seems therefore indispensable. Therefore, one of the actions addressed to the employee should be, among others, research on its satisfaction and management decisions on the basis of the results of the conducted research (factual decisions). The studies of satisfaction may also serve as a way of creating a broader policy of the firm. Determining the actions correcting and improving the human resources management process after the research allows for the implementation of the principle of continuous improvement. In this way, application for the majority of the above mentioned seven principles of quality management can be found. In literature the authors indicate different factors influencing job satisfaction, however they should be still actualized because of the social and economic changes that is why they constitute the **research gap**.

The main aim of the present paper is diagnose the employee job satisfaction in the firms under study. The presented results are based on the analysis of the factors shaping employee' job satisfaction and they indicate the directions of improvements in the studied companies and some possible directions of research in this area. The presented factors influencing job satisfaction include salary, professional development, relations with the supervisor and colleagues, cooperation between departments, as well as business ethics (Armstrong, 2020).

2. Importance of human capital in organisation's growth

Human capital is certainly one of the most important factors determining the competitive advantage of an enterprise. It is the basic driving force of the firm and has an important influence on its competitive position. According to A. Lis and A. Sudolska (2014), the basic resource is human capital coupled with the possibility of developing and maintaining intangible assets in the enterprise, thanks to which its competitive position on the market can be adequately modified (Lis, Sudolska, 2014). Even the most technologically advanced machines require at

least a sparkle of human creation in order to be useful. Machines and computers duplicate their work and perform it in a much more perfect manner than humans, and yet they do not possess any capability allowing for creation and self-improvement of knowledge (Żmigala, 2008, pp. 17). And therefore, possession of modern technologies – high investment capital – is important, but without a qualified personnel it will not bring optimal profits. The consequence of the actions of human capital is the achievement of competitive advantage of a given organisation or a decrease of its value on the market. And therefore the quality of human capital becomes an exceptionally important element of growth of any enterprise because it constitutes an element of intellectual capital, understood as non-material resources or their transformations, which are under the control of the organisation and which increase its value (Ross et al., 1997). Man's intellectual capital is a combination of his experiences, life attitudes, education, upbringing, psychical capabilities, and his talent. It is, among others, the quality of knowledge, the practical skills, the experiences of the employees and the intangible assets (the owners of which are the employees, not the firm) which allow the firm to achieve a competitive advantage (Edvinsson, 2000). In order to illustrate the essence of the human capital, G. Roos and J. Roos (1997, pp. 413-414) considered a hypothetical case of departure of the 50 most important programmers of Microsoft corporation, which would result in a dramatic decline in the value shares of this company as a result of „intellectual bankruptcy”. Orientation on quality means, among others, the organization's striving to achieve customer satisfaction through an integrated system of methods, techniques and tools that enables improvement in the area of cooperation of an individual with their co-workers, company departments, of client location and treatment as well as of the process of communication and its impact on the environment (Armstrong, Taylor, 2020, pp. 168-180). And therefore, there is an employee in the center of values who is responsible for co-creating and implementing goals, values, beliefs, a culture of quality, attitudes and building a system of inter-penetrating technical, social and management systems (Arciniega, et al., 2005). It becomes important for the employee to experience satisfaction, a pleasant and positive emotional state resulting from the self-assessment of their work and the experiences connected with it (Locke, 1976). Niezurawska-Zajac (2020) emphasises that the necessary condition in human resources management is the positive attitude of the employee towards their organisational unit and supervisors as well as their satisfaction with the performed work. On the other hand, according to Armstrong (2009, p. 123) the engagement of the employed persons manifests itself in their honest interest and absorption with their work and their treatment of it as a hobby or research has suggested that small talk may have important consequences for employees (Methot et al., 2020). Yet, The notion and meaning of job satisfaction.

In order to know what to improve and which processes are not sufficiently effective, a diagnosis of the organisation is indispensable. The examination of its employees' satisfaction may be its good source of information.

In the literature of the subject there exist many definitions of job satisfaction. It is the estimated difference between what an individual expects and what they get at work (Drenth et al., 1998). Satisfaction is undoubtedly a positive feeling, but it is also subjective. It may occur in one person and not – in another since it is composed of and shaped by many elements and many factors alternatively assessed by various persons. Therefore, it may be added to the above definition that satisfaction is a positive attitude of the employed persons towards the duties they have been entrusted with, their job environment and their co-operators (Vroom, 1964). According to Makin, Cooper and Cox job satisfaction should be understood as „a pleasant or positive emotional state resulting from the assessment of one's own work or work experiences” (Makin, Cooper, Cox, 2000, p. 82) or simply a positive attitude of the employed to the duties entrusted to them, their work environment and co-workers” (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction is also defined as positive and negative feelings and attitudes connected with the professional duties realised by the employees (Schulz, Schulz, 2002), (Schulz, Schulz, 2002, p. 296). B. Bajcar perceives job satisfaction as emotional reflection of the joy and sorrow which appear in connection with the execution of the established tasks (Bajcar et al., 2011). Also Bańka defines it as „emotional reaction of pleasure and displeasure experienced in connection with the execution of the particular tasks, functions and roles (Bańka, 2002, p. 329). And therefore, job satisfaction is a higher level of being happy with work, which must create intellectual challenges, opportunities to employ one's skills, sense of success, the joy connected with professional development and self-realisation that is a full identification with the performed work and with the organisation. Summing up, job satisfaction can be defined as set of feelings and attitudes of the employed with respect to work (Wexlej, Youkl, 1984).

Satisfaction is definitely related to the difference between the expectations and perception of the situation (Locke, 1976, p. 1319) A lack of difference means satisfaction, a better evaluation of the situation with respect to the surroundings means enthusiasm and loyalty, whereas the expectations higher than the evaluation of the situation signal discontentment. E.A. Locke (1976, p. 1319) defines job satisfaction as the result of perceiving one's own work as such that enables achievement of some important values, provided that these values are compatible with human needs or help in their realisation (Locke, 1976, p. 1319). Job satisfaction is also precisely characterised by the definitions related to its sources, where satisfaction is termed as the difference between this what an individual expects (what he thinks he should have) and this what he experiences at work (from his subjective perspective) (Drenth et al., 1998).

The actions aimed at perfection in business, including the employee satisfaction, is popularised in the model of the European Foundation of Quality Management. The ninth pillar of the model is the index of adjustment to the customers' expectations. According to its underlying philosophy, only satisfied employees can render services of high quality. Hence, in order to get to know the current situation, its perfection, the testing of the employees' job satisfaction, regularly conducted by the enterprise, are indispensable. Besides, the results of

such an examination constitute realisation of one of the principles of quality management i.e. decision-making based on facts. They illustrate the feelings of the employees concerning the manner of operation of the organisation and become an important element of the complex quality management (Doeleman, Have, Ahaus, 2014, pp. 439-460).

The knowledge of the factors meaningful to the employees is important. The studies of satisfaction can therefore serve as a method of creating the assumptions of a wider policy of the organisation, starting with the improvement of the human resources management process and ending with the specification of the strategical objectives and creation of the organisational culture. Such research allows to obtain unique information on the reception of the organization's activities, consistency and reality of its plans (Armstrong, Taylor, 2020, pp. 168-180). It should be noted that the view of employees from various levels of the organization can play an important role in making decisions by the Management Board, which, absorbed in the implementation of strategic plans, the far-reaching actions, can completely overlook the details visible only at the operational level. Besides, job satisfaction is perceived as an element supporting the effectiveness of the system of motivation and allows for its strengthening (Armstrong, Taylor, 2020, pp. 168-180). Increasing the level of the employee professional satisfaction also makes way for change of behaviours. It results from the fact that the employees who are happier with their work identify more with the objectives of the enterprise, resist less to changes, are more ready to cooperate with others, are more loyal and involved in the job; they take greater care of the quality of work (Niezurawska-Zajac, 2020).

Lack of job satisfaction may result in a whole bunch of actions undertaken by the employees, which have a negative impact on the functioning of the enterprise. These actions are called counterproductive behaviours (Spector, Fox, 2005). The following forms of behaviour can be regarded as counterproductive: wasting materials and raw materials belonging to the firm, destruction of the equipment, prolonging breaks, leaving work earlier, refusal to fulfil orders or complete tasks, blackening of the firm, withholding information (Robinson, Greenberg, 1998). On the other hand, the studies on satisfaction may indicate the assets of the organisation which are not noticed or are undervalued by the decision-makers. Sometimes these are areas to which the management board may not pay any particular attention, and yet for some workers they are important factors strengthening their further professional correlation with the employer e.g. flexible working hours. The research facilitates therefore carrying out the diagnosis of strong and weak points of the organisation, which is invaluable when making strategical plans. The information about the level of the satisfaction, attitudes and opinions of the staff is an indispensable source of managerial decisions.

Job satisfaction may turn out an important indicator of the measure of effectiveness of the management of the company. The persistent state of dissatisfaction or dissatisfaction may mean that according to its employees the enterprise has no success. The reason may be, of course, the real situation and the unfavourable conditions in the environment. Very often, however, it is that the official results of the enterprise make the top management happy, but it does not

go hand in hand with the satisfaction of the lower level employees. It may mean ineffective management, wrong or unjust system of motivation (Armstrong, Taylor, 2020, pp. 168-180). The perception of the system as fair by the staff is the key element, without which any satisfaction cannot appear. Persistence of the state of dissatisfaction a long time may lead to a revolutionary outburst. Employee satisfaction surveys allow for the implementation of corrective and preventive actions at an appropriate time. It constitutes therefore an exquisite warning measure allowing you to prevent such an uncontrolled outbreak.

Job satisfaction enables to get to know the employees' motivation and to decide which actions undertaken by the management of the organisation have impact on the staff's conduct (Kopertyńska, 2008). While analysing attitudes, the results of this sort of research also contribute to a better understanding of the organisation's culture, just being formed, changing or already existing. The leader of the organisation has, of course, the greatest influence on the formation of culture; nevertheless, it does not arise in separation from the behaviours and attitudes of the other employees (Schein, 1987).

Taking into consideration the principle of orientation on a customer, mentioned at the beginning of this article, the research on job satisfaction also indicates a positive correlation between the employees' job satisfaction and the customer satisfaction of a given firm (Hellriegel, Slocum, 2007). Hence the frequent situations when an employee leaving the organization "entails" behind him a group of clients with whom he has been cooperating so far. Then a firm, serving them so far, becomes less important for a client than the relations created between them and a worker on the leave.

Organisations of 21st century should be aware of the present job situation. Every generation is characterised by separate, specific features, which should be taken into consideration when creating the system of motivation and remuneration.

3. Description of the respondents and the research method

The research results were based on the primary data obtained during the survey process, which was conducted in two enterprises of prestige on the Polish and international food industry market. The choice of the subject of research was dependent on obtaining the consent of the enterprises to transfer the questionnaires to their employees. The employees of both enterprises, regardless their gender or age, were accepted for the study population.

In order to obtain data, a survey based on a questionnaire specially constructed for this purpose was used. The factors qualified to the survey were selected on the basis of the Armstrong's research (Armstrong, Taylor, 2020, pp. 168-180). The questionnaire consisted of 28 statements grouped into the following areas:

- interesting work (components of job satisfaction),
- focus on business,
- employee involvement and impact on the implementation of their work,
- motivating system,
- professional career development,
- relations with the supervisor,
- business ethics,
- relationships with colleagues,
- cooperation between departments.

Within each of the above-mentioned areas, three out to four statements were specified. The respondents assigned weight to each of these areas. The person giving the answer could admit from 1 to 4 points depending on the degree of satisfaction in the area. The questionnaire submitted to the employee made it possible to verify the level of satisfaction with the above-mentioned areas where 1 means lack of job satisfaction, 2 means low job satisfaction, 3 means medium job satisfaction and 4 means high level of satisfaction.

4. The degree of employee satisfaction

The research results discussed in this paper make it possible to obtain the information on the employee satisfaction in the two enterprises: **Henkel** and **FoodCare** under study with regard to the incentive system, professional growth, relationships with the supervisor and colleagues, inter-departmental cooperation and also business ethics in these companies.

Henkel was established in Mainz in 1832. Twenty – five years later, they commissioned the construction of a “champagne factory” on Walpodenstrasse in Mainz, making themselves one of the first enterprises in Germany to master the technology of producing sparkling wine Vinpol Sp. z o.o. (Poland), where the research was conducted, belongs to the Henkell & Co group of consolidated companies.

FoodCare is a company that started as a family confectionary enterprise and later developed the production of ready-made cake additives, etc., building a production plant in Zabierzów in 1997. In 2003, the plant launched the production of Tiger Energy Drink, the sale of which multiplied the company’s revenue. Tiger has become the most recognizable brand of the company. In 2009 the company opened a new plant in Niepołomice near Cracow, focusing mainly on the development of the production of the Black drink, and a new product – dietary muesli – Fitelli (Henkel, 2021)

The research was carried out in 2019 at Henkel and Food Care. All administrative and office employees were invited to the research, as a result, 52 correctly filled in questionnaires were obtained.

In order to determine the level of satisfaction with the *incentive system*, the authors accepted the respondents' feelings expressed in the answers to the three closed questions:

- “my effort and commitment are appreciated by the employer”,
- “my earnings are adequate to the scope of my tasks, my contribution and the effects of my work”,
- “I am satisfied with the additional benefits (e.g. social package, etc.)”.

The obtained results point out to a positive opinion of the employees of the surveyed enterprises concerning the satisfaction experienced by them with respect to the incentive system. In company “A” the average ratings in positive statements range from 3.15 to 2.26 on a four-level scale, while in enterprise “B” from 3.61 to 2.26. The results are therefore very similar. Most positive answers were assigned in both companies to the first statement: “my effort and commitment are appreciated by the employer”.

Another factor determining job satisfaction is the *professional growth* of the employees. In this field, the employees of both enterprises evaluated the highest the possibility of using their knowledge and skills (88.2% and 88.9%) and the opportunities and support necessary in the development of their own competencies (79.4% and 83.3%). Only half of the workers participate in the courses and trainings improving their skills and competences.

The relations with supervisors have a large impact on job satisfaction. The employees of both companies stress in particular good relations with their superiors (88.2% and 100%) as well as the right message of what their supervisor expects from them (82.4 and 100%).

In the surveyed enterprises, *the relationships with colleagues* were rated very positively as well. It can be presumed that this factor is one of the most important values affecting job satisfaction. Mutually awarded assistance (94.1% and 100%) and the open and direct atmosphere (91.2 100%) are rated the highest.

As a part of cooperation between departments, employees of both companies perceived good *cooperation between departments* in the first place (85.3% and 83.3%) and the ease of obtaining the necessary information from other departments in the second place (79.4% and 72.2%).

The last studied factor affecting satisfaction was *business ethics*. It is a positive thing that in the respondents' opinion, the company's activities towards the natural environment are correct (91.2% and 88.9%).

According to the research, there are six main factors that have an impact on administrative and office employees' job satisfaction in Henkel and Food Care companies. The most important factor for the respondents both in Henkel and Food Care is the relationship with their supervisor. Moreover, a sense of fair remuneration has a significant influence on their job satisfaction. In the respondents' understanding the fairness of their remuneration is dependent on the effort

they put in – the more effort they give to the company, the higher remuneration they expect (figure 1).

The lower impact on the job satisfaction have employment security and relationships with colleagues. In both Henkel and Food Care company work atmosphere is important but the importance of employment security is a bit lower in Food Care company, which may mean that the additional benefits provided by Henkel have more meaning to the employees in the area of employment security (figure 1).

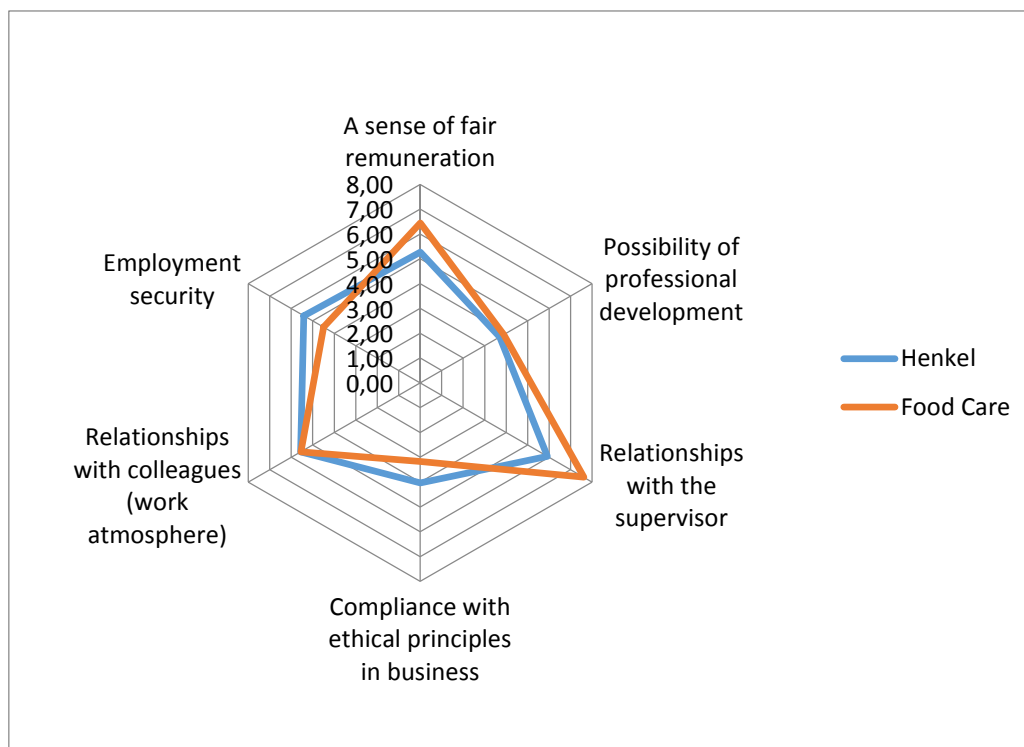


Figure 1. Job satisfaction in the area of incentive system among the employees of Food Care and Henkel companies. Source: The author's own study based on the conducted questionnaires.

The lowest impact on job satisfaction in both companies has the possibility of professional development. This result is quite unexpected but it could mean that administrative and office workers don't see the dependence between the level of their remuneration and their professional qualifications (figure 1).

5. Conclusion

In the theoretical part of the article, the importance of the job satisfaction plays a significant role in the development and competitiveness of an enterprise is presented. The employees' feelings about the way the company operates are an important element of the comprehensive quality management. Employee satisfaction surveys can be used as a way of creating assumptions for a broader company's policy, starting with the improvement of the human resources management process and ending with defining strategic objectives and creating

an organizational culture. It should be emphasized that job satisfaction affects the company's organizational culture, the formation of which takes many years. Besides, it is perceived as an element supporting the operation of the motivation system and it allows for its strengthening, which has also been confirmed by the research results.

The conducted research shows that the employee satisfaction of a selected group of respondents is determined, among others, by such factors as the motivational system used in the organization, professional development of the employee, relations with the supervisor and colleagues as well as relations with other departments, and also the business ethics.

The highest-rated factor stimulating employee satisfaction among the surveyed employees of companies Food Care and Henkel are relationships with colleagues. In particular, the respondents emphasize the importance of mutual help and open and direct atmosphere at work. The conducted analysis allows to emphasize that in the surveyed enterprises the employees assess positively also the professional development. In this area, the respondents rated the most the possibility to use their knowledge and skills as well as the opportunities and support necessary to develop their own competences. However, only half of the employees participate in courses and trainings thus raising their qualifications.

However, the respondents are not fully satisfied with the cooperation between departments. The obtained results should become the basis for undertaking improvement actions in the mentioned area.

It is worth to emphasise that employee satisfaction surveys are a valuable diagnostic tool in many situations occurring in modern business organizations. As has been found in this publication, in order to know the current situation and undertake efforts towards its improvement, regular enterprise-conducted employee satisfaction surveys are indispensable. Moreover, it is certainly important to know how such a research should proceed. In order to ensure objectivity and, at the same time, a comparative value, it should apply to the entire organization, all its employees. In large enterprises this is sometimes a significant problem because of the scope of such research. Only then is the sufficient detail and objectivity guaranteed. Unfortunately, sample selection is associated with additional errors, and besides, it does not allow for the analysis of satisfaction in the particular, often small, units of the enterprise.

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