

# APPROPRIATE WORKING CONDITIONS AS A KEY FACTOR FOR EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION IN SELECTED HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

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**Abstract:** *Employees satisfaction is currently a research theme for many institutions. Satisfied employees are doing better jobs, are loyal to their employer. The basic thing is to provide suitable working conditions that meet the basic needs of workers not only in healthcare organizations. Failure to meet these basic needs can cause high dissatisfaction. The aim of the article is to find out the strength of the dependence of the individual basic factors of the working environment and the overall satisfaction of the employees. These factors are noise, lighting, temperature at the workplace, air conditioning, rest room, soothing equipment, cloakroom, sufficient technical equipment of the workplace, visually pleasant environment and drinks at the workplace. The partial aim of the article is therefore to present the results of a research study in selected healthcare facilities in the Czech Republic. In total, 1281 questionnaires were evaluated. The research was conducted in the months of January 2017 to January 2018. One research question and one general hypothesis, which was part of the quantitative research, was established. This was verified using the Spearman's statistical method of correlation coefficient.*

**Keywords:** *Czech Republic, employees, healthcare organizations, job satisfaction, working conditions.*

**JEL Classification:** *I29, M10, M12.*

## 1. Introduction

The vast majority of healthcare organizations and workers want to provide safe and quality health care and services. Likewise, a large majority of healthcare organizations want to provide their employees with a safe, caring and quality work environment. Each healthcare organization must therefore decide what type of culture it wants to develop and insert. It is essential to become a safe, compassionate and caregiving place to work.

The working environment affects not only the physical but also the mental well-being of all employees, especially in the health professions. It is assumed that an inappropriate working environment can have negative health effects if workers do not have sufficient control over their work in terms of how challenging they are.

The culture of healthcare provider organizations should be regularly evaluated on the basis of ongoing work on the development and standardization of a cultural barometer that will help authorities to provide feedback. The development of organizational culture and its associated work environment (McSherry, McSherry and Pearce, 2013) unifies and implements the main components of organizational culture, based on the goals of not only healthcare organizations. Clinical management is defined as a form in which organizations are responsible for continually improving the quality of their services and ensuring high standards of care by creating an environment in which excellence in clinical care will develop.

## 2. Literature Review

Organizational culture has been defined as the norms, values and basic assumption shared by members of an organization. Organizational climate refers to members' perception of organizational features such as decision-making, leadership and norms about the work (Stone and coll., 2005). Creating a compassionate health care organisation culture requires effective leadership and management (Pinakiewicz et al., 2007).

Work climate can be seen as the shared perception of the way things is around here related to the underlying principles, values and norms of an organisation (Gershon et al. 2007), it is indicative of the organisation's goals and appropriate means of goal attainment (Kuenzi and Schminke 2009).

Often aspects of an organisation culture that health care workers feel are outside of their sphere of influence, whereas the workplace culture is one which they arguably influence directly. Workplace culture among operating room nurses. They indicate workplace culture includes structures, routines, rules and norms, which can ultimately impact on attitude, beliefs and subsequent behaviours. They further argue that the elements of workplace culture centre on job stress, job satisfaction and the practice environment (Escola et al., 2016).

Workplace health promotion (WHP) has emerged as an independent field in research and practice alongside the already established areas of job stress and occupational health service (OHS) (Ulmer and Groeben, 2005). More recently, the concept of integrated health and productivity management was launched, as integration between the disciplines WHP and occupational safety and health (Goetzel et al., 2008). Employee health can be a product of individual behavior (Ljungblad, 2014) and product environment. Managers can thus promote employee health by enhancing personal health practices and resources by offering a variety of health-related programs, activities and actions, and by creating a well-functioning work organization in general, beneficial to productivity, well-being and health (Goldgruber and Ahrens, 2010).

Regarding indoor environmental conditions, McCaughey et al. (2014) find that employee perceptions of workplace environmental conditions are related to individual-level outcomes, such as well-being and job performance. Meta-analytic studies confirm that generalized beliefs about an organization's environmental influence guide subsequent behaviour and specific attitudes such as satisfaction (Parker et al., 2003).

Organizations should support leaders in promoting their employees' health in every possible way to achieve a sustainable workplace. A good way to support leaders could include getting feedback about their health-promoting behaviour from their employees (Jiménez, Winkler and Bregenzer, 2017). A healthy workplace that is sustainable can be best achieved by changing organizational factors, such as critical working conditions (Swerissen and Crisp, 2004).

Laschinger (2012) stated poor job satisfaction is one of the principal reasons leading nurses to leave their positions. Accordingly, health-care managers are becoming more and more aware of the link between staff retention and job satisfaction (Hayes et al., 2010). Thus, job satisfaction in staff nurses is of great concern to health care organisations, and there is a pressing need to study the factors that can maintain and/or enhance the satisfaction of health care professionals (Caricati and coll., 2017).

Life satisfaction is defined as a cognitive assessment of satisfaction with one's life circumstances (Erdogan et al., 2012). Psychological literature consists mainly of small studies that focus on the use of psychometrically valid measures for life satisfaction and other key variables that are of interest to psychologists, such as job satisfaction, work stress, personality, physical disabilities, psychopathology and physiological illness. Psychological literature has also shown that work satisfaction is related to a range of work characteristics, including autonomy, coping strategies, work-related stress, occupational status, routinization and workload (Li and Lambert, 2008). Satisfaction measures an individual and overall assessment of the employment of employees (Erdogan et al., 2012). It provides a subjective assessment of human happiness and is considered one of the main indicators of satisfaction. Workplace factors act as precursors to satisfaction, providing support to employees at the workplace of organizations and their immediate superior leads

to a higher level of job satisfaction in the relationship between workplace support and satisfaction (Newman, Nielsen, Smyth and Hooke, 2014).

While many studies have focused on the effect of outdoor environmental conditions, there is relatively little research on how well-being is related to environmental conditions indoors, i.e. at home or at the workplace (García-Mainar and coll, 2015). This line of research appears to have been restricted, so far, to studies of the relationship between individual characteristics, and health and safety, without considering the broader determinants of well-being. Particularly in developed countries, individuals spend a large part of their time indoors, so that conditions at home and at the workplace are of significance in determining general well-being and life satisfaction. In their survey of buildings and the environment, Frontzak and Wargocki (2011) conclude that, when indoor environmental conditions can be controlled by employees, satisfaction improves. Conditions of thermal, visual, and acoustic comfort, as well as of air ventilation, are shown to be important factors in shaping satisfaction at the workplace, and life satisfaction in general.

The workplace is one of the primary settings of adult life, and there is increasing interest in whether conditions at work are associated with personality trait development in adulthood (Hudson, Roberts and Lodi-Smith, 2012).

This attention dovetails with research suggesting that personality traits are associated with job performance and achievement in similar contexts, such as educational settings (Nofle & Robins, 2007). Total job satisfaction, personality traits and workplace conditions are combined (Le, Donnellan and Conger, 2014). Work conditions might influence the development of personality traits, in part, because the workplace provides clear contingencies that reward and punish particular kinds of behaviors (Hudson et al., 2012). Thus, the workplace might be an important context for human development in adulthood.

### 3. Methodology and Data

This article deals with the analysis and statistical evaluation of the employee satisfaction dependence on the provision and satisfaction of the basic factors of the working environment and the overall satisfaction of the employees of the selected health organizations. These factors are noise, lighting, workplace temperature, air conditioning, relaxation room, sanitary facilities, cloakroom, sufficient technical equipment of the workplace, visually pleasant environment and drinks at the workplace. The aim of the article is to find out the strength of mutual correlation between individual factors and the overall satisfaction of employees. Research concentrated on healthcare organizations in two regions of the Czech Republic, namely in Zlín and Olomouc. These two regions were selected on the basis of similarity and consistency in selected macroeconomic indicators.

**Table no. 1. Macroeconomic Indicators**

	Olomouc region	Zlin region
Population (total)	633 157	583 093
Unemployment rate	4,35 %	3,43 %
Gross domestic product (CZK million)	215 650	222 918
Average gross monthly wage (CZK)	25 599	25 273

Source: Czech Statistical Office, own source

Two basic researches, both qualitative and quantitative, have been carried out. Qualitative research was focused on semi-structured interviews with selected healthcare representatives who are working on the organization's staffing levels. Qualitative research was conducted in January 2017 and its partial objective was to identify the key factors of the work environment that can generally be perceived as deficient.

Based on the results of qualitative research, a questionnaire was formulated, distributed to employees of selected healthcare organizations in person and by e-mail. The questionnaire was divided into ten parts, the first nine parts focused on the level of satisfaction of the respondent and the last part was used to identify the respondents. The pretest of the questionnaire was conducted in February 2017 on a sample of 20 respondents. On the basis of the results, the questionnaire was distributed and the main research ran from March 2017 to January 2018. The total number of questionnaires was 1281. The results of the questionnaires were used to test the hypothesis and research questions. Verification of the research hypothesis was performed using the statistical method of the Spearman correlation coefficient.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The main objective of the present article is to find out the current state of satisfaction of employees of selected healthcare organizations in connection with the provision and satisfaction of basic working conditions at the selected workplace. Thus, one hypothesis was established.

H1: There is a statistically significant dependence between total employee satisfaction and selected core labor factors.

H01: There is no correlation between total employee satisfaction and selected core labor factors. in the selected healthcare organization.

HA1: There is correlation between total employee satisfaction and selected core labor factors. in the selected healthcare organization.

**Table no. 2. Correlation between selected core labor factors and employee satisfaction**

	Satisfact ion (S)	Noise (N)	Lighti ng (L)	Tempe rature (T)	Air contiti oning (AC)	Relaxa tion room (RR)	Bathro om (B)	Cloakr oom (C)	Techni cal equip ment (TE)	Visual enviro nment (VE)	Drinks (D)
S	Corr. Sig.	-,097** ,001	,295** ,000	-,065* ,021	,211** ,000	,063* ,023	-,040 ,156	,109** ,000	,112** ,000	-,065* ,021	-,045 ,104
N	Corr. Sig.	-,097** ,001	,541** ,000	,152** ,000	,054 ,051	-,018 ,517	,167** ,000	,075** ,007	,057* ,043	,149** ,000	,290** ,000
L	Corr. Sig.	,295** ,000	,541** ,000	,304** ,000	,409** ,000	-,085** ,002	,150** ,000	,200** ,000	,192** ,000	,061* ,030	,362** ,000
T	Corr. Sig.	-,065* ,021	,152** ,000	,304** ,000	,209** ,000	-,072** ,010	-,001 ,961	-,100** ,000	,212** ,000	-,198** ,000	,027 ,331
AC	Corr. Sig.	,211** ,000	,054 ,051	,409** ,000	,209** ,000	,176** ,000	,234** ,000	,342** ,000	,363** ,000	,156** ,000	,546** ,000

RR	Corr.	,063*	-,018	-,085**	-,072**	,176**		,576**	,467**	,505**	,501**	,163**
	Sig.	,023	,517	,002	,010	,000		,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
B	Corr.	-,040	,167**	,150**	-,001	,234**	,576**		,630**	,579**	,570**	,380**
	Sig.	,156	,000	,000	,961	,000	,000		,000	,000	,000	,000
C	Corr.	,109**	,075**	,200**	-,100**	,342**	,467**	,630**		,357**	,467**	,594**
	Sig.	,000	,007	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000		,000	,000	,000
TE	Corr.	,112**	,057*	,192**	,212**	,363**	,505**	,579**	,357**		,675**	,238**
	Sig.	,000	,043	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000		,000	,000
VE	Corr.	-,065*	,149**	,061*	-,198**	,156**	,501**	,570**	,467**	,675**		,190**
	Sig.	,021	,000	,030	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000		,000
D	Corr.	-,045	,290**	,362**	,027	,546**	,163**	,380**	,594**	,238**	,190**	
	Sig.	,104	,000	,000	,331	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

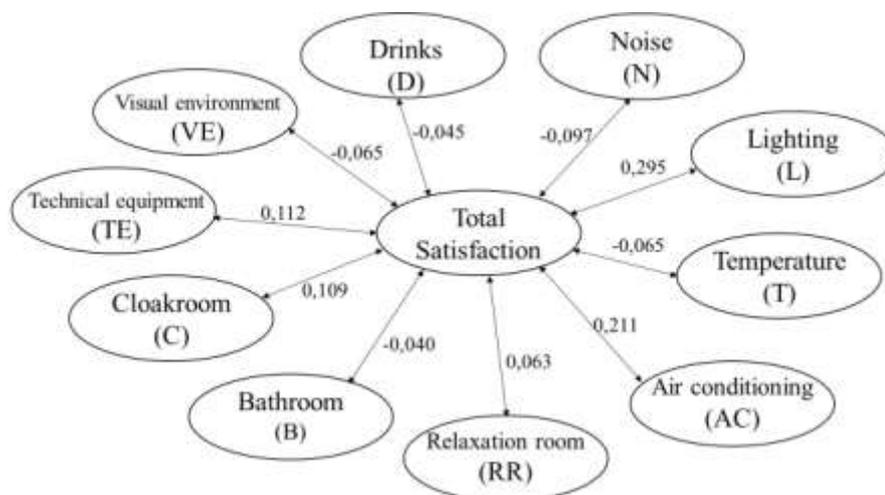
\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: own source

On the basis of statistical results for individual factors, and given that the p-value is less than the established value of 0.05 or 0.01 for more sensitive data, we can predominate most of the factors as those where there is a statistically significant dependence between the examined factors and overall satisfaction. All of these factors are all, except for social facilities and the provision of drinks at the workplace. Here, the strength of the bond, which is among the different factors, needs to be examined. For the purposes of this article, we will only deal with the dependence and correlation between the overall satisfaction and the factors that may affect overall satisfaction.

The strength of the link is illustrated in Figure 1: The power of individual factors to the overall satisfaction of employees.

**Figure no. 1. The power of individual factors to the overall satisfaction of employees**



Source: own source

The individual factors were identified by Herzberg's motivation theory as unsatisfied, thus causing discontent when working. Given the average values of the individual factors, the results of the research are expected, ie there is a dependence between individual factors and overall satisfaction, but the link is weak to medium. According to research results, working conditions in selected health care establishments are satisfied by employees.

Research question: Question 1: What is the level of benefits provided in terms of working conditions that affects the overall satisfaction and loyalty of employees of certain healthcare organizations? was verified by qualitative research conducted in January 2017.

The research results highlight the importance of benefits provided to employees beyond the employer's obligations. The aim of the research was, in the first phase, to identify the key benefits that may be important for employees of selected healthcare organizations. The second part of the research was aimed at finding a relationship between the working conditions provided and the overall satisfaction of the employees. The aim was to find out the relationship between the above provided appropriate working conditions beyond the employer's obligations and the overall satisfaction of the employees. In general, it may seem that the more benefits to employees, the better. According to the result of qualitative research, this claim has not been confirmed and accurate reporting is required according to managers' reports. This allows to increase employee satisfaction and save organization's finances.

According to semistructured interviews, the author also wondered how employees perceived the benefits and satisfaction of the offer. Here was an unambiguous answer, which concerned the provision of improved working conditions, particularly in the area of hygiene and social. According to the employer, these benefits are, in their point of view, the most important for employees.

The results of quantitative research confirmed these assumptions. Employees are really considered to be the most important and key to their work satisfaction. It is essential that employees have appropriate working conditions that meet the requirements of their specific work. It is also inevitable that, in such a specific sector, it would also be possible for at least a short regeneration, provided that it fulfills its job responsibilities. Meeting staff and employers' opinions is difficult, but in terms of providing suitable working conditions, this is unavoidable for job satisfaction, as these factors can be regarded as dissatisfactors, so their dissatisfaction also brings high job dissatisfaction. The goal of each employer, as mentioned above, is to have satisfied and motivated employees, and the first and fundamental step towards this satisfaction is precisely the creation of adequate and quality working conditions.

## **5. Conclusion**

The results of quantitative research show the correlation between the different factors of the working environment and the overall satisfaction with the work in selected health care facilities. Using the Spearman correlation test, these dependencies were demonstrated and the relationship between the factors was established. Employee satisfaction is currently a very topical topic and therefore the author is interested in this issue. In the discipline of organisation psychology, investigators are increasingly interested in job satisfaction as a central determinant of turnover, work performance, and outcome and general well-being of workers. Nowadays, managers are aware that workers' dissatisfaction could be very costly and harmful for organisational efficacy. Research has indeed proven that job satisfaction is strongly associated with motivation and performance (Zhang and Zheng, 2009), reduced absenteeism and turnover (Siu, 2002). A good work climate boosts employees' motivation, which, in turn, has a strong impact on people's ways of working and performance. A good work climate supplies social support, shared goals and an instrument for coping with

stress. This, in turn, leads to higher job satisfaction (Utriainen and Kyngäs, 2009). Accordingly, there is evidence that the better the work climate, the higher the job satisfaction. In the health care context, a bad work climate has been recognised as a potential source of stress among nurses and to predict intention to leave (Meeusen et al., 2011).

Available psychosocial resources taken together inside and outside work did not balance the experienced work stress in nurse managers and the clinical directors who were exposed to high work demands (Lindholm, 2006). High demands for work are currently in all sectors of work and these demands are steadily increasing. There is no profession that would not interfere with technological progress, interpersonal relationships and communication, or increased user requirements.

Effective leadership and management, resource provision and support, education and training along with the right management and human resources systems (Bejtkovsky, 2013) and processes play a crucial role in creating an optimal culture of healthcare organizations and the working environment (McSherry et al., 2018).

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