

# **Satisfied Employees, Successful Companies: Examining of Employee Satisfaction and Motivation in Southern Slovakia**

PÉTER KARÁCSONY<sup>1</sup>, VIVIEN VALKÓ<sup>2,\*</sup>, ĽUBOŠ CHMELA<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Keleti Károly Faculty of Business and Management,  
Department of Marketing, Management and Methodology,  
Obuda University,  
Tavaszmező s. 15-17, 1086, Budapest,  
HUNGARY

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Economics, Health Sciences and Social Studies,  
Institute of Economics and Management,  
Department of Business Sciences, Management and Organization,  
Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary,  
Reitter Ferenc s. 132. 1113, Budapest,  
HUNGARY

<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Economics and Informatics,  
Department of Economics,  
J. Selye University,  
Bratislavská cesta 3322, SK-94501, Komárno  
SLOVAKIA

*\*Corresponding Author*

**Abstract:** - In the constantly changing economic and social life, the examination of employee satisfaction and motivation is inexhaustible both from a scientific and practical point of view. The main goal of the research was to explore and understand the workplace factors that most affect the satisfaction and motivation of employees working in southern Slovakia. Our goal was to identify the extent to which the factors we identified, i.e. wages and benefits, professional development and learning opportunities, working environment and conditions, and leadership style, affect employee satisfaction and motivation. The study was based on the primary and secondary research. A quantitative research method, a questionnaire survey, was used during the primary research. The snowball method was chosen as the sampling method. The data collection took place in the spring of 2024, among employees working in SME. The research followed the logic of deductive research, according to which the hypotheses were formulated on the basis of similar research. A total of 172 evaluable responses were collected, of which 156 were used to test the hypotheses. For the statistical analysis of the data, linear regression analysis and the Durbin-Watson test were performed. Satisfaction and motivation are closely related phenomena, the development of which in an employee can still be mostly linked to wages and the existence of benefits. Adequate working conditions and an exemplary leadership style also have a significant impact on employee satisfaction, thus their commitment and staying with the company.

**Key-Words:** - employee, motivation, satisfaction, South Slovakia, working environment, working conditions.

Received: July 22, 2024. Revised: February 9, 2025. Accepted: March 7, 2025. Published: April 4, 2025.

## **1 Introduction**

Nowadays, people spend more than a third of their lives at work. The nature of work is constantly changing due to economic and social changes,

technology, innovation, and globalization. The workplace environment and working conditions play a fundamental role in employee satisfaction and motivation. Competitive wages, the quality of working conditions, respect from the management,

and the possibility of professional development are factors that increase employee satisfaction. The performance, commitment, and trust of a satisfied employee increases, thereby reducing turnover, which means cost savings for the organization. A motivated employee is ready for action, creative and innovative, and enthusiastically participates in work processes. The satisfaction and motivation of employees guarantee the long-term stability, success, and development potential of an organization.

The main goal of the research was to explore and understand the workplace factors that most affect the satisfaction and motivation of employees working in southern Slovakia. Our goal was to identify the extent to which the factors we identified, i.e. wages and benefits, professional development and learning opportunities, working environment and conditions, and leadership style, affect employee satisfaction and motivation.

## 2 Literature Review

The human factor is the key to the success of companies and the achievement of their goals, and it plays an important role from planning to evaluation, [1]. [2] state that group motivation assessment is becoming more important at the societal, organizational, and individual levels. Group motivation is affected by economic, social, cultural, and technological changes. Developing an effective employee motivation program should be a critical task for every organization, [3]. Employee satisfaction surveys are a crucial tool for organizations to measure employee satisfaction. The main purpose of such surveys is to identify areas where employee conditions can be improved and employee commitment and productivity can be increased. In professional terms, we would speak of this as a process of systematically collecting employees' opinions, attitudes, and evaluations regarding working conditions, work environment, work relationships, development opportunities, compensation, and other aspects of employment, [4]. Employees' motivation and satisfaction influence their commitment to their organization and their performance. Based on Herzberg's two-factor theory of 1959, job satisfaction can be related to motivational factors such as the nature and outcome of the job and the recognition that job performance can be enhanced. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs of 1943 emphasizes the importance of satisfying higher needs, such as self-actualization and esteem, through which engagement can be increased. According to social exchange theory,

satisfied employees are more inclined to put more effort towards their organization and are more committed, [5]. The goal of employee satisfaction research was to determine which factors caused satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Motivational factors related to the need for growth and self-actualization included achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and opportunity for growth. Related to the hygiene factors became known: relationships with management, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, and pay, [6]. According to Lock and Latham's goal-setting theory states that goal-setting affects an individual's motivation and performance. Individuals can better understand what is expected of them which allow them to focus their efforts more effectively with the help of specific goals. Individuals should be rewarded for achieving their goals. Rewards can be financial bonuses, promotions, recognition, or other forms of performance recognition, [7]. Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model (JCM) identified five main factors related to the job that affect employee satisfaction and motivation: skill variety, task type, task importance, autonomy, and feedback about the job, [8].

Intangible rewards, and intrinsic motivational factors such as recognition, survival instinct, a sense of belonging, and a sense of achievement or power have a positive impact on employee performance and motivation. A motivated and satisfied employee is a valuable employee for the employer, is willing to invest extra time and energy. Intrinsic motivating factors reduce turnover and increase employee engagement. Extrinsic motivating factors enhance employee performance by providing good working conditions, a sense of security, an appropriate remuneration system, status, flexible working hours, responsibility, and guidance. Employee satisfaction is also influenced by support from management, clearly stated goals, work, community, working environment and conditions, and an appropriate remuneration system, [9]. Satisfaction is a feeling or attitude of the employee related to the job and the work environment, in fact, the fulfilment of expectations of the job. A satisfied employee feels a heightened sense of commitment to his organization and his tasks and is emotionally and cognitively attached to his job and organization, [10]. Motivation is a stimulus or driving force that fills the employee's enthusiasm and encourages him to work and integrate. Motivation can be used to motivate employees to take action and to increase the need to meet organizational goals. Motivation is a psychological process by which individuals act

with confidence and purpose. Employee motivation can take the form of coercion or punishment, but can also take the form of rewards and praise, [11]. Employee satisfaction is most closely related to the working conditions provided, [12]. [13] identify several main factors influencing job satisfaction, namely working conditions, personality, pay, and corporate social responsibility. Satisfied people talk positively about their organization, help others, and go beyond basic expectations of their job. Satisfied managers and employees increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. People who believe in themselves, their abilities and competencies, and their value to the organization tend to be more satisfied than those who do not, [14]. Constant negative feedback from management or a new workgroup in which an employee does not fit can have a significant impact on satisfaction in the long run, [15]. Organizational change, lack of recognition from management, or unprofessional behavior from colleagues is among the most common reasons why people end up dissatisfied with their jobs, [16]. The main purpose of employee satisfaction surveys is to help the organization better understand the needs and expectations of employees so that they can create a healthy and productive working environment. It is an important tool in human resource management that can contribute to increasing employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance, [17]. In a study by [18], employee performance and satisfaction are most influenced by a commitment to the organization, strong motivation, and adequate remuneration. In their research [19] investigated the impact of monetary and non-monetary rewards on the performance, motivation, and satisfaction of talented employees in the education sector. They found a positive relationship between rewards and employee performance, and between monetary rewards and employee satisfaction, and found that continuous improvement of the overall reward system is needed to motivate employees. [20] describe job satisfaction as a broad and multidimensional concept that is a relationship between what an organization receives and provides. Their results show that achieving the right work-life balance in both professional and private life has an impact on employee satisfaction and motivation. When this balance is achieved, employees report high levels of satisfaction and motivation, which positively influence their performance. [21] found that employee motivation depends on non-monetary rewards, whereby employees value professional development, strong team cohesion, and effective communication and interpersonal relationships

between management and employees. Good relationships result in a safe working environment and high-quality performance against organizational objectives. According to [22] in order for employees to work well and perform well, they need motivated behavior. Motivated employees are more satisfied with their jobs and less at risk of burnout and turnover. Satisfied employees are influenced by the pay they receive for their work, the opportunity for professional development, and the good relationship they have with their work community. The theory of fair pay states that employees feel motivated and satisfied if they perceive their pay to be fair in relation to their efforts and contributions and not unfair to others, [23]. [24] focusing on small and medium-sized enterprises, investigated the relationship between employee motivation, satisfaction, and commitment. Their results show that all three factors are equally important for employee retention, long-term performance and sustainability. [25] looked at the situation of workers in the banking sector. It found that employees are most dissatisfied with the compensation package, followed by rewards, lack of motivation, career development opportunities, management style, job title, and responsibilities. Research by [26] suggests that there is no significant relationship between motivation and performance and satisfaction and performance, but that motivation and satisfaction are complementary phenomena among the employees. [27] found that it is essential for management to identify the needs of employees, which leads to the possibility of developing a motivation plan. The key to the success of a motivation plan, in addition to managerial commitment, is to select between current, urgent, and potential needs. The results of [28] report that motivation, satisfaction, commitment, and appropriate compensation enhance employee performance. Research by [29] shows that a supportive work environment and innovative leadership style have a positive impact on employee satisfaction and engagement. Furthermore, organizational culture has a significant impact on motivation by encouraging employees to perform their tasks responsibly. Organizational culture and motivation are strongly correlated in terms of recognition and self-actualization. [30] believe in inclusive leadership, which values diversity and encourages employees to enhance their cognitive skills. Inclusive leadership increases employees' creativity, and willingness to innovate, and builds stronger trust between the leader and the subordinate. [31] measuring employee motivation is a difficult and challenging task. Monetary incentives

are important for employees, but they are not the only incentives. Organizations must continually modernize their HR strategies to maintain employee motivation to meet the expectations of today's employees. According to [32] the key to success is not only the leader's ability to organize and coordinate financial resources but also to recognize the diversity of the organization's needs and develop a motivation system that satisfies them. [33] concluded that satisfied employees are an irreplaceable asset to any employer, as they understand and identify with the organizations' goals, are loyal, and have a positive impact on the attitude of their colleagues. Employee satisfaction is closely linked to work efficiency, which leads to improved organizational performance.

Following the logic of deductive research, two hypotheses and their corresponding null hypotheses were formulated based on the readings in current research:

*H1: Employee satisfaction is influenced by wages and benefits, working environment and conditions, opportunities for professional development and learning, and leadership style.*

*H0: Employee satisfaction is not affected by all of the following workplace factors.*

*H2: Employee motivation is influenced by wages and benefits, working environment and conditions, opportunities for professional development and learning, and leadership style.*

*H0: Not all of these workplace factors have an impact on employee motivation.*

### 3 Material and Methods

The study is based on secondary and primary research. The secondary research provides an overview of the current international literature on employee satisfaction and motivation, which helps to introduce and facilitate the empirical part and to explore the relationship between satisfaction and motivation. Following the logic of deductive research, the research focused on the statistical evaluation of two hypotheses formulated on the basis of literature, which was carried out on the basis of the analysis of the collected data. The primary research was conducted using a quantitative research method, including a questionnaire survey. Both paper and electronic QR-coded versions of the questionnaire were distributed to potential

respondents in Hungarian and Slovak. The data was collected confidentially and the identity of the potential respondent was not compromised. The sampling method was snowball sampling, whereby the potential respondent could share the questionnaire with others. The target group was the employees in small and medium enterprises in Southern Slovakia, without any other specific characteristics. The structured questionnaire contained a total of 15 questions. The first section of the questionnaire asked for demographic information, including the respondent's gender, age, education level, and employment-related information, including the respondent's work experience and current position. In the substantive section of the questionnaire, respondents' motivation and satisfaction were assessed in the context of a number of job-related factors, such as remuneration system (wages and benefits), working environment and conditions, opportunities for professional development and learning, and leadership style. Questions were designed to elicit the preferences of potential respondents, for which a 5-point Likert scale was used. On the scale, 1 usually indicated the option of being completely dissatisfied, while 5 indicated the option of being completely satisfied. In relation to scale-type questions, the Cronbach alpha value was quantified, which is a measure of internal consistency and reliability and provides information about the appropriate measurement of scale items. Cronbach alpha can take a value between  $<0;1>$ , with a reference value of 0.7. Furthermore, in relation to scale-type questions, Hotelling's T-squared multivariate statistical test was also run, which shows, at a significance level ( $p<0.05$ ), whether the means of two or more groups are significantly different from each other. The relevance of the questions was verified by a preliminary pilot study. The pilot study was conducted on a small sample, which determined that the questions were understandable and suitable for conducting empirical research. Data collection took place in spring 2024. The rate of completed questionnaires was 76%. 75% of the questionnaires (129) were completed on paper, and 25% (43) were completed using QR codes. 172 valuable responses were received from the split questionnaires. When testing the hypotheses, a total of 156 responses were available, covering employees, shift managers, and middle managers. The response of shift managers and middle managers proved to be valuable, as they also have a supervisor and their satisfaction and motivation regarding the given factors can be measured. The data were presented in summary tables and statistically analyzed in IBM SPSS

Statistic 23. A normality test was performed for one interval scale variable. The statistical parameters of the variable and the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were not significant, as the ( $p > 0.05$ ) condition was not met. The level of significance was 0.000 for both tests, thus it can be concluded that the data were derived from a normal distribution, i.e. the data were analyzed using a parametric statistical test. The hypotheses were tested using linear regression analysis, a statistical test that examines the effect of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable. The conditions for performing linear regression are that the dependent and independent variables must be measured on a ratio scale, there must be a linear relationship between the two variables, there must be no significant outliers, it must be independent of the observations, the data must show homoscedasticity and must come from a normal distribution. In addition, a Durbin-Watson statistical test was also performed, which in the context of regression analysis is used to detect correlations between prediction errors (autocorrelation).

### 3.1 Data Collection

In Table 1, the demographic and employment data are analyzed using simple descriptive statistics and frequency calculations. The mode frequency value (Md.), mean (Mn.) and standard deviation (Std. Deviation) values were quantified for the variables: age, education, position, and years of work experience. The data was cleaned and coded. The total sample size was  $N=172$ . 50% of the respondents were female and 50% were male. There was no gender over- or under-representation, as the proportion of women and men was equal among the respondents. For age as a continuous variable, respondents were divided into four groups. 24.4% of respondents were in the 25-35 age group, 32.0% in the 35-45 age group, 28.5% in the 45-55 age group and 15.1% in the 55+ age group. The average age was in the 35-45 age group (Md.=2; Mn. =2.34; Std. Deviation=1.011). For the ordinal measurement level variable of education, respondents can be divided into three groups. 8.2% of respondents have primary education, 84.8% have secondary education and 7.0% have tertiary education. The most frequently indicated was the secondary school (Md.=2; Mn. =2.00; Std. Deviation=0.392). In the case of position in the workplace, respondents are divided into three groups. 83.2% of respondents hold an employee position, 5.8% a managerial position (shift manager), and 11.0% a middle (3 response) or senior management position. The

largest group of survey participants holds employee positions (Md.=1; Mn. =1.28; Std. Deviation=0.652). In terms of years of work experience, respondents can be divided into four groups. 3.5% of respondents have less than 1 year of work experience, i.e. they are still in their early career. 4.7% of the respondents had between 1 and 5 years of work experience, 48.8% between 5 and 10 years and 43% had more than 10 years of work experience. The largest group of employees has between 5 and 10 years of work experience (Md.=3; Mn. =3.31; Std. Deviation=0.722).

Table 1. Demographic and employment data

N=172; Total 100%		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	86	50%
	Female	86	50%
Age group	25-35 age group	42	24.4%
	35-45 age group	55	32.0%
	45-55 age group	49	28.5%
	over 55 years of age	26	15.1%
	Primary school	14	8.2%
Education	Secondary school	144	84.8%
	University degree	12	7.0%
	Employee	142	83.2%
Position	Shift managers	11	5.8%
	Middle and Senior manager	19	11.0%
	less than 1 year	6	3.5%
Years of work experience	1-5 years	8	4.7%
	5-10 years	84	48.8%
	more than 10 years	74	43.0%

Source: Based on questionnaire survey, own editing, 2024

## 4 Results

Table 2 contains the reliability, scale statistics, and the results of Hotelling's T-test. The number of scale items examined is 6, and the Cronbach alpha value is 0.827, which means that the scale measures satisfactorily and is reliable. The Hotelling's  $T^2=161.367$ ;  $F=31.472$ ;  $df1=5$ ;  $df2=157$  ( $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ) significance level is significant, meaning there is a significant difference between the means of the variables examined. This means that respondents rated a variable to different degrees.

Table 3 presents summary statistics based on the variables examined. It shows the mean of the correlation between the variables, variance, and range.

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistical analysis of the variables included in the hypothesis tests. The mode, mean, std. deviation and percentage distribution of the variables were quantified. 51.2% of respondents rated their overall

satisfaction as strong (Md.=4; Mn. =4.13). Creating a suitable working environment, 47.7% of respondents consider leadership style to be completely important (Md.=5; Mn. =4.19), while 37.8% (Md.=4; Mn. =3.37) of respondents consider wages and benefits, as well as providing the right atmosphere and working conditions, to be equally important. Providing professional development and learning at a workplace is moderately important to 34.3% (Md.=3; Mn. =3.48) of respondents. 30.8% (Md.=5; Mn. =3.62) of respondents rated their overall motivation as medium.

Table 2. Reliability and scale statistics

Table 2: Reliability and Scale Statistics				
Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's alpha		Cronbach's alpha based on standardized items		N of items
.827		.832		6
Scale Statistics				
Mean (Mn.)	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of items	
22.18	24.545	4.954	6	
Hotelling's Test				
Hotelling's T <sup>2</sup>	F	df1	df2	Sig.
161.367	31.472	5	157	.000

Source: Based on questionnaire survey, own editing, 2024

Table 3. Summary items statistics

	Mn.	Min.	Max.	Range	Var.
Item Means	3.697	3.315	4.179	.864	.141
Inter-Item Correlations	.452	.353	.666	.313	.007

Source: Based on questionnaire survey, own editing, 2024

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of variables included in the hypothesis tests

	Mode (Md.)	Mean (Mn.)	Std. Deviation	Percent (%)
Satisfaction	4	4.13	0.851	51.2%
Motivation	5	3.62	1.288	30.8%
Wages and benefits	4	3.37	1.318	37.8%
Work environment and conditions	4	3.30	1.249	37.8%
Professional Development and Learning	3	3.48	1.116	34.3%
Leadership style	5	4.19	0.979	47.7%

Source: Based on questionnaire survey, own editing, 2024

Hypothesis H1 assumes, that there will be a significant relationship between all independent variables and the dependent variable. Hypothesis H0 assumes, that there will be no significant correlation between all independent variables and the dependent variable.

*H1: Employee satisfaction is influenced by wages and benefits, working environment and conditions, opportunities for professional development and learning, and leadership style.*

*H0: Employee satisfaction is not affected by all of the following workplace factors.*

The regression model under consideration is: employee satisfaction = intercept + b1\*wages and benefits + b2\*work environment and conditions + b3\*opportunities for professional development and learning + b4\*leadership style + e

Table 5 compares variables measured at a high measurement level on an interval scale. The dependent variable is employee satisfaction, the independent variables are wages and benefits, working environment and conditions, opportunities for professional development and learning, and management style. Linear regression analysis, which examines the effect of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable, was used to examine the relationship between the variables. The analysis assessed the significance and strength of the effect of the variables, as well as the model as a whole. The Durbin-Watson value is 1.971, i.e. it can be concluded that there is no autocorrelation (correlation between prediction errors) between respondents, as the value falls in the range <1.5-2.5>. In the table, the F-test shows whether the model as a whole gives a significantly better estimate than the mean, i.e. whether the variables can explain a sufficiently large proportion of the variance. The significance level for the F-test is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore the model has significant explanatory power. Therefore, the model constructed can be further analyzed. Next, the ability of the model to explain a proportion of the variance of the dependent variable can be examined, as indicated by the R<sup>2</sup> value. R<sup>2</sup>=0.468, i.e. the model is able to explain a significant part of the variance of the dependent variable, 46.8%. The analysis can also take into account the Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value, which is not based on the sample but on the population. Ideally, the two values should be close, as shown in the example, where R<sup>2</sup> is 0.468 and Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is 0.439.

Table 5. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.684 <sup>a</sup>	.468	.439	.615	1.971
ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1					
Regression	49.127	8	6.141	16.261	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	55.892	148	.378		
Total	105.019	156			

<sup>a</sup> Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

<sup>b</sup> Predictors (Constant): Wages and benefits  
Work environment and conditions  
Professional development and Learning  
Leadership style

Source: Based on questionnaire survey, own editing, 2024

In Table 6, the impact of the individual components of the model, i.e. the predictors, is examined. The significance level (p) for the t-test is quantified for the four independent variables. Under the same condition, i.e.  $p < 0.5$ , it is possible to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. For the variable working environment and conditions, the significance level for the t-test is 0.535, which is not much higher than 0.05, but the significance condition does not hold, i.e. there is no statistical relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Therefore, the satisfaction of the employees is not influenced by the working environment and conditions. For the variable leadership style, the significance level for the t-test is 0.668, which is greater than 0.05, meaning that the significance condition is not valid, i.e. there is no statistical correlation between the independent and dependent variables. This means that the satisfaction of the employees is not influenced by the leadership style. For the variable wages and benefits, the significance level for the t-test is 0.001, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variable is significantly related to the dependent variable, i.e. employee satisfaction. The t-test significance level for the variable opportunity for professional development and learning is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variable is significantly related to the dependent variable, employee satisfaction. The strength and direction of the effects can be estimated from the B value, which is the average change of 1 unit in the value of the variable that results in a change in the value of the dependent variable. For the variable wages and benefits, the value of B has a positive sign, i.e.  $B = 0.164$ , which means that if the amount of wages and benefits

increases by 1 unit, the employee satisfaction increases by 0.164 points. For the variable opportunities for professional development and learning, B has a negative sign, i.e.  $B = (-0.269)$ , which means that if the number of opportunities for professional development and learning increases by one unit, the employee satisfaction decreases by 0.269 points. Furthermore, to compare effects, we need to interpret the Beta coefficient, which works in the same way as the Pearson correlation coefficient. The statistical test shows that the presence of wages and benefits ( $Beta = 0.258$ ) has an impact on employee satisfaction. Surprisingly, although the opportunity for professional development and learning  $Beta = (-0.392)$  has an impact on employee satisfaction, it is rated negatively by employees compared to wages and benefits. This implies that employees' satisfaction is affected by professional development and learning opportunities, but they do not increase them. The employees are much more satisfied with wages and benefits. After testing the first hypothesis, the results can be partially identified with the findings of, [9] that an appropriate remuneration system is highly important in shaping employee satisfaction, while leadership style and support, and, [12] that work environment and working conditions, for the employees in the present study, do not play a role in shaping their satisfaction. Similarly, [18] mentions the importance of an appropriate remuneration system in enhancing employee satisfaction, but their results emphasize the existence of commitment and strong motivation towards the organization, which was not demonstrated in the present research. [19] showed a positive relationship between monetary rewards and employee satisfaction, which was also found in the present research. Parallels between the results of, [22] and the results from the first hypothesis test can only be partially drawn, as the authors similarly consider pay for work as a salient aspect, but their findings reflect the importance of the opportunity for professional development and the existence of good relationships with the work community, which is not shown by the results of the present research. [25] identifies employee dissatisfaction mainly in terms of the inadequacy of the compensation package and remuneration system, but also the lack of motivation and career development opportunities, the quality of the management style and the quality of the jobs created. The research results contradict, [29] findings that organizational culture and leadership style have a positive impact on employee satisfaction. This is not the case for the employees in the present study. Therefore, hypothesis H1 is

rejected, and therefore hypothesis H0 is proved, that not all of the listed workplace factors have an impact on employee satisfaction. In this research, employee satisfaction is affected by wages and benefits, and professional development opportunities. Wages and benefits ensure the financial stability and well-being of employees, which is presumably why they contribute to their satisfaction. It can be stated, that the satisfaction of employees depends on wages and benefits, and opportunities to develop and learn.

Table 6. Testing the effect between the components of the model

Model 1	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.153	.423		7.458	.000
Wages and benefits	.164	.049	.258	3.380	.001
Working environment and conditions	.033	.053	.050	.621	.535
Professional Development and Learning	-.269	.048	-.392	-5.609	.000
Leadership style	.026	.060	.039	.429	.668

<sup>a</sup> Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

<sup>b</sup> Predictors (Constant): Wages and benefits

Work environment and conditions

Professional Development and Learning

Leadership style

Source: Based on questionnaire survey, own editing, 2024

Hypothesis H2 assumes that there will be a significant relationship between all independent variables and the dependent variable. Hypothesis H0 assumes that there will be no significant correlation between all independent variables and the dependent variable.

*H2: Employee motivation is influenced by wages and benefits, working environment and conditions, opportunities for professional development and learning, and leadership style.*

*H0: Not all of these workplace factors have an impact on employee motivation.*

The regression model examined: employee motivation = intercept + b1\*wages and benefits + b2\*work environment and conditions + b3\*opportunity for professional development and learning+ b4\*leadership style+ e

Table 7 compares variables measured at high measurement levels on an interval scale. The

dependent variable is employee motivation, the independent variables are wages and benefits, working environment and conditions, opportunities for professional development and learning, and management style. Linear regression analysis, which examines the effect of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable, was used to examine the relationship between the variables. The analysis assessed the significance and strength of the effect of the variables, as well as the model as a whole. The Durbin-Watson value is 2.132 i.e. it can be concluded that there is no autocorrelation between the respondents as the value falls in the range <1.5-2.5>. In the table, the F-test shows whether the model as a whole gives a significantly better estimate than the mean, i.e. whether the variables can explain a sufficiently large proportion of the variance. The significance level for the F-test is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and therefore the model has significant explanatory power. Therefore, the model constructed can be further analyzed. Next, the ability of the model to explain a proportion of the variance of the dependent variable can be examined, as indicated by the R<sup>2</sup> value. R<sup>2</sup>=0.788, i.e. the model is able to explain a robust 78.8% of the variance of the dependent variable.

Table 7. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin- Watson
1	.788 <sup>a</sup>	.622	.601	.822	2.132
ANOVA					
Model 1	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	164.371	8	20.546	30.398	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	100.036	148			
Total	264.408	156			

Variable: Motivation

<sup>b</sup> Predictors (Constant): Wages and benefits

Work environment and conditions

Professional Development and Learning

Leadership style

Source: Based on questionnaire survey, own editing, 2024

Table 8 examines the impact of the individual components of the model, i.e. the predictors. The significance level (p) for the t-test is quantified for the four independent variables. Under the same condition, i.e. p<0.5, it is possible to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. For the variable working environment and conditions, the significance level for the t-test is 0.564, which is not



much higher than 0.05, but the significance condition does not hold, i.e. there is no statistical relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This means that the motivation of the employees is not influenced by the work environment and conditions. For the variable opportunity for professional development and learning, the significance level for the t-test is 0.770, which is greater than 0.05, meaning that the significance condition does not hold, i.e. there is no statistical correlation between the independent and dependent variables. Therefore, the motivation of the employees is not affected by the opportunities for professional development and learning. For the variable wages and benefits, the significance level for the t-test is 0.003, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variable is significantly related to the dependent variable, i.e. employee motivation. The significance level for the t-test for the variable leadership style is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the variable is significantly related to the dependent variable, employee motivation. The strength and direction of the effects can be estimated from the B value, which is the average change of 1 unit in the value of the variable that results in a change in the value of the dependent variable. For the variable wages and benefits, the value of B has a positive sign, i.e.  $B = 0.196$ , which means that if the amount of wages and benefits increases by 1 unit, the employee motivation increases by 0.196 points. For the variable leadership style,  $B = 0.550$ , which means that if the quality of leadership style increases by one unit, the employee motivation increases by 0.550 points. Furthermore, to compare the effects, it is necessary to interpret the Beta coefficient, which works in the same way as the Pearson correlation coefficient. The statistical test shows that the presence of wages and benefits ( $Beta = 0.195$ ) has a weaker effect, while the quality of leadership style ( $Beta = 0.522$ ) has a particularly strong effect on employee satisfaction. This suggests that the best way to motivate the employees is through a remuneration system that suits them and that their motivation is determined by their management style. The more human and quality work is done by management, the more motivation of employees can be increased. In the findings of [26], motivation and satisfaction are concepts that go hand in hand, which the results of the present research can identify with, as almost similar workplace factors influence their development. The findings of [27] can also be supported by the present research findings that leadership style and attitude have a significant impact on employee motivation. However, he

stresses the need to develop a motivation plan, the effectiveness of which he links to managerial commitment. The results of [28] can also be paralleled with the findings of the present research that motivated employees to perform better through an appropriate remuneration system. The findings of [21] cannot be identified with the findings of the second hypothesis test that in the present research, the quality of the remuneration system and leadership style is a determinant of employee motivation. In the authors' findings, motivation does not depend on monetary rewards, but more importantly on professional development, strong team cohesion, and effective communication between management and employees, as well as a safe working environment. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is rejected, and therefore hypothesis H0 is proved, that not all of the listed workplace factors have an impact on employee motivation. In this research, employee motivation is affected by wages and benefits and leadership style. Wages and benefits ensure the financial stability and well-being of employees, which is presumably why they contribute to their motivation. The importance of leadership style can even be reflected in the adequacy of the incentive package provided to employees. At the same time, leadership style can contribute to creating the right working environment and conditions, and to providing professional training programs that serve to develop employees' competencies. It can be stated, that the motivation of employees to perform better and increase their commitment depends on wages and benefits, and leadership style.

Table 8. Testing the effect between the components of the model

Model 1	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-.036	.564		-.064	.949
Wages and benefits	.196	.065	.195	3.036	.003
Working environment and conditions	.041	.071	.039	.587	.564
Professional Development and Learning	-.024	.083	-.020	-.293	.770
Leadership style	.550	.080	.522	6.830	.000

<sup>a</sup> Dependent Variable: Motivation

<sup>b</sup> Predictors (Constant): Wages and benefits

Work environment and conditions

Professional Development and Learning

Leadership style

Source: Based on questionnaire survey, own editing, 2024

## 5 Conclusion

Motivation and employee satisfaction are two key concepts in human resource management, which are closely related and influence each other. The main goal of the research was to explore and understand the workplace factors that most affect the satisfaction and motivation of employees working in southern Slovakia. The research can be considered a gap-filling study, as only a few researchers focus on the region's labor market situation and, therefore, on the examination of employee satisfaction. The results from the research are not representative, but they can still lead to valuable conclusions, identifying factors influencing the satisfaction and motivation of employees in this region. Based on the research, it was proven that many factors influence the satisfaction and motivation of employees of small and medium-sized enterprises in southern Slovakia. The hypothesis test revealed that the satisfaction of employees is influenced by the provision of professional development and learning opportunities, as well as the provision of wages and benefits within an organization. Although the opportunity for professional development determines employee satisfaction, increasing these opportunities is less important to them than increasing wages and benefits. Monetary incentives can be a short-term incentive, but in the long-term, providing opportunities for professional development is key. This is also beneficial for the employee, as the acquired knowledge and skills may have greater financial implications in the future. Furthermore, the motivation of employees depends mostly on the leadership style, and on wages and benefits. Monetary incentives can motivate employees in the short term, but in the long term, a supportive environment, providing development opportunities, a good workplace atmosphere, and establishing positive relationships within the hierarchy can be much more motivating. The correlation between motivation and leadership style ( $B=0.522$ ) also shows that leadership style strongly encourages employees to perform better and identify with the organization. Satisfaction and motivation are closely related phenomena, the development of which in an employee can still be mostly linked to wages and the existence of benefits. Adequate working conditions and an exemplary leadership style also have a significant impact on employee satisfaction, thus their commitment and staying with the company. Employees who are satisfied with their work and work environment are more easily motivated to achieve higher performance and goals, as they have a positive attitude towards their work and the organization. When employees are

motivated, they are usually more satisfied with their work because they feel that, the work they do is important and satisfying. It is important for organizations to address the relationship between motivation and employee satisfaction and strive to create an environment that supports both key aspects. Employee satisfaction and motivation are subjective concepts, they can be interpreted differently for each individual, which is why their objective measurement is difficult. Since these are phenomena that change dynamically over time, it is not really possible to draw long-term conclusions. The limitation of the research is reflected in the composition of the respondents, but by filtering out irrelevant data, we came to valuable conclusions. The future research directions of the topic will depend on the changing workplace environment, technological development, and economic and social trends, among other things it may be worthwhile to focus on industry and generational differences, sustainability and corporate responsibility, and diversity.

### References:

- [1] Susanto, P. C., Syailendra, S., & Suryawan, R. F. (2023). Determination of motivation and performance: Analysis of job satisfaction, employee engagement and leadership. *International Journal of Business and Applied Economics*, 2(2), 59-68. <https://10.55927/ijbae.v2i2.2135>.
- [2] Chen, G., & Kanfer, R. (2024). The future of motivation in and of teams. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 11(1), 93-112. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-111821-031621>.
- [3] Hitka, M., Ližbetinová, L., & Ďurian, J. (2025). Raišienė AG (2025): Approach to the differentiated motivation of employees in agriculture. *Agric. Econ.-Czech*, 71, 46-57. <https://doi.org/10.17221/118/2024-AGRICECON>.
- [4] Suta, D. D. (2023). Exploring the Relationship among Employee Participation and Job Satisfaction, Employee Commitment and Employee Performance. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 12(10), 762-768. <https://doi.org/10.21275/sr231008004659>.
- [5] Laksana, M. A., Nurmasari, S. S., Kurniawan, H., & Raharja, E. (2024). Employee Satisfaction and Performance Influence on Green Work Behavior in Green HRM:

- Literature Review. *Research Horizon*, 4(3), 149-156, [Online]. <https://lifescifi.com/journal/index.php/RH/article/view/276> (Accessed Date: October 15, 2024).
- [6] Galanakis, M., & Peramatzis, G. (2022). Herzberg's motivation theory in the workplace. *Journal of Psychology Research*, 12(12), 971-978. doi: 10.17265/2159-5542/2022.12.009.
- [7] Fraccaroli, F., Zaniboni, S., & Truxillo, D. M. (2024). Challenges in the new economy: A new era for work design. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 11(1), 307-335. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-081722-053704>.
- [8] Miller, A. M. (2020). Investigating the Connection between Achievement Goal Theory and Goal-setting Theory: Does Goal Setting Have an Effect on Achievement in the Spanish Second Language Classroom? *Hispania*, 103(3), 387-402. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hpn.2020.0086>.
- [9] Al-Ansi, A. M., Jaboo, M., & Awain, A. M. S. B. (2023). Examining the mediating role of job satisfaction between motivation, organizational culture, and employee performance in higher education: A case study in the Arab region. *Education Science and Management*, 1(1), 30-42. <https://doi.org/10.56578/esm010104>.
- [10] Kazi, A. S., Ramish, M. S., Kazi, A. G., Shaikh, A. I., Kazi, S., & Junejo, I. (2024). Organizational Culture and Work Satisfaction on Employee Performance in Banking Sector of developing country: Mediating Role of Motivation. *Remittances Review*, 9(2), 1103-1117. <https://doi.org/10.56799/ekoma.v3i4.3699>.
- [11] Nurlina, N., Widayatsih, T., & Lestari, N. D. (2023). The effect of job satisfaction and motivation on the organizational commitment. *JMKSP (Jurnal Manajemen, Kepemimpinan, Dan Supervisi Pendidikan)*, 8(1), 26-39. <https://doi.org/10.31851/jmksp.v8i1.10029>.
- [12] Putra, R., Farnila, V., Tjahjana, D. J. S., & Renaldo, N. (2023). Determining Conceptual Model of Employee Satisfaction and Performance of PT Agung Automall in Soekarno Hatta Pekanbaru. *Luxury: Landscape of Business Administration*, 1(1), 44-52. <https://doi.org/10.61230/luxury.v1i1.20>.
- [13] Robbins, S., & Judge, T. *Organizational Behaviour*, Updated 18e, Global Edition, Pearson. 2021.
- [14] Wnuk, M. (2017). Organizational Conditioning of Job Satisfaction. A Model of Job Satisfaction. *Contemporary Economics*, 11(1), 31-44. <https://doi.org/10.5709/ce.1897-9254.227>.
- [15] Matzler, K., & Renzl, B. (2006). The Relationship between Interpersonal Trust, Employee Satisfaction, and Employee Loyalty. *Total Quality Management and Business Excellence*, 17(10), 1261-1271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14783360600753653>.
- [16] Andrade, M. S., & Westover, J. H. (2018). Generational differences in work quality characteristics and job satisfaction. *Evidence-Based HRM: A Global Forum for Empirical Scholarship*, 6(3), 287-304. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ebhrm-03-2018-0020>.
- [17] Chikhaoui, F. (2022). Employability and Human Resource Management Tools. *Journal of Business and Management Review*, 3(12), 841-856. <https://doi.org/10.47153/jbmr312.5402022>.
- [18] Mukhtar, A., Jenita, J., Munizu, M., Astuti, A. K., & Putra, A. S. B. (2024). The Influence of Organizational Commitment, Work Motivation, and Compensation on Employee Performance and Employee Satisfaction. *Jurnal Ilmiah Edunomika*, 8(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.29040/jie.v8i1.11808>.
- [19] Elrayah, M., & Semlali, Y. (2023). Sustainable total reward strategies for talented employees' sustainable performance, satisfaction, and motivation: Evidence from the educational sector. *Sustainability*, 15(2), 1605. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15021605>.
- [20] Bocean, C. G., Popescu, L., Varzaru, A. A., Avram, C. D., & Iancu, A. (2023). Work-life balance and employee satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic. *Sustainability*, 15(15), 11631. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151511631>.
- [21] Krishnawan, I., Yudianti, E., Saiyed, R., Manda, D., & Rukmana, A. Y. (2023). Motivation and Job Satisfaction in Employees. *Journal of Management*, 2(2), 109-113, [Online]. <https://myjournal.or.id/index.php/JOM/article/view/38> (Accessed Date: November 18, 2024).
- [22] Perkasa, D. H., Susiang, M. I. N., Herawaty, Y., Febrian, W. D., & Parashakti, R. D. (2023). Motivation, Work Discipline, and Satisfaction on Employee Performance of PT.

- Vindo Post-pandemic Covid-19: A Proposed Study. *KnE Social Sciences*, pp.242-248. DOI: 10.18502/kss.v8i12.13674
- [23] Hynek, O., & Bik, M. (2020). Determining fair remuneration based on human capital theory. *International Journal of Accounting and Economics Studies*, 8(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.14419/ijaes.v8i1.30441>.
- [24] Pratomo, A. B., Zulfikri, A., & Siagian, R. (2023). Exploring the Linkages between Engagement, Motivation, Satisfaction, and Employee Retention in Entrepreneurial Enterprises: Beverage MSME Industry in Bogor City. *West Science Business and Management*, 1(02), 71-80. DOI: 10.58812/wsbm.v1i02.39.
- [25] Quader, M. (2024). Exploring Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Satisfaction in Bangladesh's Private Banking Sector. *Journal of Policy Options*, 7(1), 36-45c. <https://resdojournals.com/index.php/jpo/article/view/352> (Accessed Date: December 8, 2024).
- [26] Agustiar, A., & Hazriyanto, H. (2024). Analysis of motivation, job satisfaction and employee performance. *Jurnal Cafetaria*, 5(1), 1-8. DOI: 10.51742/akuntansi.v5i1.
- [27] Canco, G. (2024). The motivation plan, a contemporary solution for increasing the effectiveness of motivation. *Review of Applied Socio-Economic Research*, 27(1), 118-131. <https://doi.org/10.54609/reaser.v27i1.522>.
- [28] Gunarti, A. W. T., Agustina, T., Jaya, F. P., & Jatmika, D. (2024). The Influence of Work Motivation, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Compensation on Employee Performance of J&T Express Banjarmasin. *International Journal of Social Science, Education, Communication and Economics (Sinomics Journal)*, 3(3), 631-642. <https://doi.org/10.54443/sj.v3i3.252>.
- [29] Budiono, A. (2024). Does Organizational Culture Influence Motivation, Performance, Satisfaction, and Employee Commitment Organisational?. *Asian Journal of Management, Entrepreneurship and Social Science*, 4(02), 83-98, [Online]. <https://www.ajmesc.com/index.php/ajmesc/article/view/731> (Accessed Date: December 8, 2024).
- [30] Zafar, S., Raziq, M. M., Igoe, J., Moazzam, M., & Ozturk, I. (2024). Inclusive leadership and innovative work behavior: Roles of autonomous motivation and horizontal and vertical trust. *Current psychology*, 43(14), 12680-12695. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-05386-3>.
- [31] Ahmad, S., Wong, W. K., Riaz, S., & Iqbal, A. (2024). The role of employee motivation and its impact on productivity in modern workplaces while applying human resource management policies. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review (Kuwait Chapter)*, 13(2), 7-12. <https://j.arabianjbmr.com/index.php/kcajbmr/article/view/1224> (Accessed Date: December 8, 2024).
- [32] Ihensekien, O. A., & Joel, A. C. (2023). Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Frederick Herzberg's two-factor motivation theories: Implications for organizational performance. *The Romanian Economic Journal*, 85, 32-49. DOI: 10.24818/REJ/2023/85/04.
- [33] Smolarek, M., Dzieńdziora, J., Rzepka, A., Czerwińska, M., & Boiko, J. (2024). Impact of Job Satisfaction on Competitive Advantage in SMEs. *European Research Studies Journal*, 27(Special B), 379-394. <http://dx.doi.org/10.35808/ersj/3495>.

#### Contribution of Individual Authors to the Creation of a Scientific Article (Ghostwriting Policy)

The authors equally contributed in the present research, at all stages from the formulation of the problem to the final findings and solution.

#### Sources of Funding for Research Presented in a Scientific Article or Scientific Article Itself

No funding was received for conducting this study.

#### Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

#### Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 (Attribution 4.0 International, CC BY 4.0)

This article is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 [https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.en\\_US](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.en_US)