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**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND PROFESSIONAL SATISFACTION
OF EMPLOYEES OF CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING
TRADITIONAL GREEK DANCING ACTIVITIES**

Key words: professional satisfaction, cultural associations, Greek dancing.

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate demographic characteristics as differentiation factors of professional satisfaction of employees of cultural associations in Greece. The Professional Satisfaction Scale questionnaire by Koustelios and Bagiatis [12] was used for the measurement of professional satisfaction. 112 employees from 19 cultural associations from seven prefectures of Greece took part in the study. The statistical analysis revealed that the employees' sex, age, educational level, position in the association as well as its location constitute differentiation factors of professional satisfaction. It can be concluded that employees' demographic characteristics partially influence their professional satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important issues for both employers and employees is professional satisfaction which, on the one hand, results from the fact that employment significantly influences the psychological, emotional and social life of people [29], and on the other hand, from the arguable impact of employees' satisfaction on business development and efficiency. Theorists of business management [8] claim that efficiency and productivity of workers are independent of their satisfaction. The opposing argument has it that the aim of keeping the workers professionally satisfied is not a luxury for the businesses; on the contrary, it is necessary since it is concurrent with labor behavior [2, 17].

The dispute over the effectiveness of the workers' professional satisfaction has been going on for a long time. This situation has driven researchers to investigate the issue in more detail, which has resulted in a substantial number of studies aimed at defining the subject, dimensions and effects of the phenomenon in several working places [3, 25, 28]. A common ruling is that professional satisfaction is a notion of polysemous and multi-dimensional character [18, 21, 26].

Locke [16] defines professional satisfaction as a positive emotional condition, which stems from work or evaluation of labor experience. Dawis and Lofquist [5] define it as the positive outcome of evaluation of whether the worker's status fulfills his or her expectations, values and needs. Lease [15] believes that professional satisfaction represents the

inclination and degree of the worker's influence by means of the working status he or she possesses in a business or an organization.

There are many factors influencing employees' professional satisfaction. Interpersonal relationships, working environment, working and demographic characteristics are factors which sometimes bring professional satisfaction, but at other times can cause dissatisfaction. Koustelios [11] divides factors of professional satisfaction into three categories. The first one pertains to the working place, the second to workers themselves, and the third to specific dimensions of working. For Koustelios, Theodorakis and Goulimaris [14] the obscurity of the worker's role and the conflict of roles in the working place constitute two factors which significantly influence professional satisfaction in a negative way [1, 19].

According to Kahn [9] opportunities, stress, leadership, working models, fair rewards and adequate authority are the most significant factors influencing employees' satisfaction. Shikdar and Das [24] found in their research that provision of motives to workers through repeated actions increased their satisfaction and productivity.

A factor related to professional satisfaction is also that of demographic characteristics. Numerous studies have been conducted to investigate this correlation. Sex is one of demographic characteristics that has been investigated by many authors as a factor influencing professional satisfaction. Studies by Watson, Hatton, Squires & Soliman [27] and Koustelios [10] revealed that women educators experienced greater professional satisfaction than men. Opposite results were obtained by Seifert and Umbach [23], who sampled employees of university departments, and found that female employees were less satisfied than their male colleagues.

Moreover, Plihal [20], investigating the professional satisfaction of educators, found that the years of work (work experience) were positively correlated with internal rewards. This positive correlation stemmed from the importance educators themselves attached to their "communication with their students".

Similar research studies have shown that the geographical location of the school is also a factor affecting educators' professional satisfaction: educators working in rural areas were found to be less satisfied [6] than their urban counterparts [22].

Sport is also an area where professional satisfaction has been investigated, especially, in relation to demographic characteristics. In their investigation of relations between professional satisfaction and demographic characteristics in football coaching, Herrera and Lim [7] concluded that male football coaches displayed greater professional satisfaction than their female colleagues. Moreover, age and professional experience were also shown to be positively correlated as older coaches represented higher levels of professional satisfaction than younger ones, and professional satisfaction was shown to increase along with the length of coaching experience in years.

Chelladurai, Ogasawara and Fink [4] examined differences in professional satisfaction of academic coaches in six different sports in terms of sex. Their results indicate that women were statistically less satisfied than men with their superiors, work and the way their male counterparts treated them. However, they also found that, practically, these differences were not so significant and concluded that both men and women coaches were satisfied by the nature of their work, but were dissatisfied by their rewards, the media and their treatment by the academic community.

There has been a shortage of studies about professional satisfaction of employees of cultural organizations, while some contributions of demographic characteristics to these employees' professional satisfaction can be observed. The aim of the study was to investigate demographic characteristics as differentiation factors of professional satisfaction of employees of cultural associations.

METHODS

Sample

The study sample comprised 112 employees from 19 cultural associations from the Greek counties of Attiki, Achaia, Rodopi, Samos, Trikala, Florina and Chios. The choice of the counties and cultural associations was made by means of random sampling. The selected cultural associations are private legal entities of non-profit character involved in organization of cultural performances. Greek traditional dancing is one of their most important activities. The demographic characteristics of the sample such as sex, age, educational

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the sample

Sex %		Age		Education	Position		Location %	
Male	Female	Group %		%	%		City	Village
46.4	53.6	> 20	1.4	Primary	1.9	Scientific	85.5	53.5
		21-30	2.3	Secondary	22.2	Technical	9.0	46.5
		31-40	13.5	University	70.4	Administrative	5.5	
		< 50	34.9	Ph.D.	5.5			

level, position in the association and its geographical location are listed in Table 1.

required for the filling in of the questionnaire was 20 minutes.

Measurement tools

The Professional Satisfaction Scale by Koustelios and Bagiatis [12] was used for the measurement of professional satisfaction of employees of cultural associations. The questionnaire investigates professional satisfaction as a multidimensional notion, and its validity and reliability have been checked for the Greek population [10, 12, 13].

The questionnaire includes 24 items categorized into six factors: “Working conditions” – 5 items concerning the work place and working conditions; “Salary” – 4 items examining whether the salary of the workers is satisfactory and relative to their work performance; “Promotion” – 3 items examining opportunities and prospects of job promotion; “Nature of work” – 4 items examining whether work itself is pleasant or boring and tedious; “Superior” – 4 items examining the superior’s role in the creation of positive or negative climate in the working place; and “Cultural association in its entirety” – 4 items examining the employees’ overall views about their cultural association. The answers were given on a five-point Likert scale from “Absolutely disagree” (1) to “Absolutely agree” (5).

Procedure

The method of self-completed questionnaire was chosen for the investigation of the professional satisfaction of the sample. The participation in the study was voluntary and the filling in the questionnaire was anonymous and carried out on the association’s premises. First, the researchers explained the aim of the study and that there were no right or wrong answers. Thereafter, they assured the participants that their answers would be used exclusively for the research purposes. The time

RESULTS

A reliability analysis was performed in order to check the coherence of the questions and therefore the reliability of the factors. The reliability test was based on the calculation of Cronbach’s alpha (Tab. 2). The analysis showed that the factors possessed satisfactory reliability coherence ($\alpha > 0.60$). All the items contributed positively to the improvement of the reliability of the factors.

Table 2. Factors’ means, standard deviations and Cronbach’s alpha

Factors	Means	SD	Cronbach’s alpha
Working conditions	3.84	0.98	0.87
Salary	2.39	0.95	0.84
Promotion	3.11	0.86	0.64
Nature of work	4.17	0.80	0.73
Superior	4.22	0.69	0.82
Cultural association	3.69	0.92	0.84

T-tests for independent samples were carried out to examine whether there were any statistically significant differences as to the professional satisfaction factors owing to the participants’ sex. From the results it seems that sex constituted a differentiation factor only for the factor “Nature of work” ($t_{(98)}$). From the comparison of the means it can be concluded that men ($M = 4.48$) are to a greater extent content by the nature of their work than women ($M = 3.90$).

The one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine differences related to the professional satisfaction factors owing to the participants’ age,

showed statistically significant differences in the factor “Nature of work” ($F_{(4,95)} = 6.84$; $p < 0.05$). Scheffe’s multiple comparisons test revealed statistically significant differences among the employees who were at the age of > 20 ($M = 2.75$) and $21-30$ ($M = 4.08$), $31-40$ ($M = 4.70$) and < 50 ($M = 4.19$).

The one-way ANOVA conducted to examine differences related to professional satisfaction factors owing to the participants’ educational level, revealed statistically significant differences in the factors “Salary” ($F_{(3,96)} = 6.72$; $p < 0.05$), “Nature of work” ($F_{(3,90)} = 5.07$; $p < 0.05$), and “Superior” ($F_{(3,90)} = 5.21$; $p < 0.05$). The results of Scheffe’s multiple comparisons test pointed to statistically significant differences between the employees with a secondary ($M = 3.00$) and university education ($M = 2.41$) and those who held a master’s or doctoral degree ($M = 1.25$) related to the factor “Salary.” As for the factor “Nature of work”, significant differences were found between the employees with a secondary ($M = 3.56$) and higher education ($M = 4.29$). Finally, as far as the factor “Superior” is concerned the employees with a secondary education ($M = 4.75$) represented a higher level of job satisfaction than their co-workers with a higher education ($M = 4.15$).

The one-way ANOVA conducted to examine differences related to professional satisfaction factors owing to the participants’ professional position in the association revealed statistically significant differences in the factors “Salary” ($F_{(2,101)} = 4.84$; $p < 0.05$), “Nature of work” ($F_{(2,95)} = 3.36$; $p < 0.05$), and “Cultural association” ($F_{(2,97)} = 3.33$; $p < 0.05$). The results of Scheffe’s multiple comparisons test indicated statistically significant differences between the administrative ($M = 3.75$) and scientific personnel ($M = 2.31$) as far as the factor “Salary” was concerned; between the scientific ($M = 4.23$) and technical personnel ($M = 3.55$) for the factor “Nature of work”; and between the scientific ($M = 4.63$) and technical personnel ($M = 3.25$) for the factor “Cultural association”.

T-tests for independent samples were also conducted to check for statistically significant differences as to professional satisfaction factors owing to the association’s location. From the results it seems that the association’s location constituted a differentiation factor only for the factor “Promotion” ($t_{(100)} = 2.116$). From the comparison of the means it is concluded that those

who work in cultural associations in cities ($M = 3.26$) are more satisfied with opportunities for promotion than their counterparts from cultural associations in rural areas ($M = 2.90$).

DISCUSSION

For many researchers the demographic characteristics constitute factors that differentiate professional satisfaction. Although numerous studies have been conducted almost in all work places concerning the relations between the demographic characteristics and professional satisfaction, cultural organizations have not drawn researchers’ interest until now. The present study is quite opportune in covering a part of this gap.

The study results show that sex and age differentiate employees’ professional satisfaction as far as the factor “Nature of work” is concerned. Women and younger employees are less satisfied than men and older workers with the content of their job. This fact may be connected with the employees’ positions in the associations. In Greece women and young people usually hold low positions in administrative chains, occupying less significant posts. The study results correspond to those of Chelladurai, Ogasawara & Fink [4] and Seifert & Umbach [23]. In all three studies women were shown to be less satisfied than their male co-workers as far as the nature of their work was concerned.

The employees with master’s or doctoral degrees and with a college education are less satisfied with their salary status as compared with their co-workers with a secondary education. We could say that their demand for higher salaries springs from the idea that the years and the type of university studies should be rewarded accordingly. However, this does not happen in the cultural associations where the rewards are rather low and they do not correspond with the employees’ level of education. The employees with a university education are more satisfied than their co-workers with a secondary education as far as the “Nature of work” is concerned. It should be mentioned that dance teachers are in majority university graduates. Therefore, it is absolutely natural for them to be professionally satisfied by the content of their work, relevant to the subject of their studies.

The position that employees occupy in their work place also constitutes a factor of

differentiation of professional satisfaction. As far as the factor "Salary" is concerned the employees in administrative positions are more satisfied with their earnings than the scientific personnel. The lack of satisfaction on behalf of the scientific personnel may be rooted in the previously mentioned view that the reward should concur with the position and the employee's level and type of education. As far as the "Nature of work" is concerned, the scientific personnel seem to be more satisfied with this aspect of their employment than the technical personnel. This is expected since the scientific personnel find their work more attractive because of the contents of their academic training. More specifically, for the technical employees who work in cultural organizations in rural areas, the opportunities for displaying their abilities are minimal to nonexistent since those associations provide very few chances for participation. For the same reason we could say that technicians are less satisfied with their cultural association as a whole than their academic colleagues.

Finally, the location of the association becomes a decisive factor of differentiation of employees' satisfaction in terms of promotion opportunities. The study results show that the employees of associations located in towns are more satisfied with this aspect of their employment than their colleagues who work in associations in rural areas. This is partly explained by the fact that the cultural associations in Greece represent a simple organizational structure and do not provide their employees with many promotion opportunities. This is particularly visible in associations in villages where their small size may be another obstacle in addition to the simple organizational structure of the work place. The study results are in agreement with the results of Haughey & Murphy [6] and Ruhl-Smith [22]. According to them the geographical location of the school constitutes a factor, which influences the employees' work satisfaction. It can be thus concluded that the employees who work in offices located in villages are less satisfied with their jobs as compared with their urban colleagues.

In conclusion, we could claim that the demographic characteristics only partially affect the professional satisfaction of employees of cultural associations.

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