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Grujo Vrkljan, Sanela; Beroš, Ivo; Bratić, Vjekoslav

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THE ANALYSIS OF CRUISE SHIPS EMPLOYEES SATISFACTION

Sanela Grujo Vrkljan
Institute for Tourism
Zagreb, Croatia

Ivo Beroš
Institute for Tourism
Zagreb, Croatia

and

Vjekoslav Bratić
Institute for Public Finance
Zagreb, Croatia

ABSTRACT

The subject of employee motivation and satisfaction becomes one of the main questions in recent time due to the lack of quantity and qualified employees in tourism. The objective of this paper is to find what is job satisfaction level of cruise ships employees' and significance of chosen satisfaction factors in order to provide inputs that could help the companies in motivation efforts to achieve higher level of job satisfaction. The quantitative research was conducted by the questionnaire on 269 cruise ship employees from 19 different countries in 2022. The analysis was done for all participants in general and additionally to gender and dividing participants to service staff and managerial staff. Two main tests were used: Student's two sample t-test of independent samples and Two sample z-test of proportions. It was found, in general, that cruise ships employees show the highest degree of satisfaction with factors such as paid expenses, destination, safety of job, independence in working, and flexibility and creativity. The lowest degree of satisfaction was showed by working hours, variable salary such as bonuses, commissions and incentives, and possibility of getting good tips. The managers have shown the highest level of satisfaction degree with paid expenses, destination, basic salary, safety of job and independence in work. The service staff have shown the similar satisfaction. The satisfaction with tips was the only factor for which was found statistically significant difference between managerial and service employees. There is statistically significant difference in non-satisfaction of male and female employees, for example, in safety of job, receiving feedback on work performance, ability of supervisor

to recognize good job and appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement. The female employees have shown the higher level of dissatisfaction with those factors. Looking at high levels of satisfaction there was no statistically significant difference between male and female employees, except for appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement by supervisor. The male employees were more satisfied with this factor. The results of this paper are significant to the theory and practice, as there are a very few researches on cruise employees', even in general.

Key Words: cruise tourism, hospitality industry, human resources, satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

The cruise industry, as transportation and a destination (Johnston *et al.*, 2002), as well as an experience (Moorthi, 2002), is interesting research area, especially in an examination of cruise service employees. Cruise ships are in nature floating hotels. The larger cruise liners are also seen as mobile floating resorts because of their diverse offer onboard (Kovačić and Silveira, 2020). Although the cruise guests are participating in the excursions or sightseeing's of port destinations, those destinations are considered as secondary destinations. The cruise ships are considered as a primarily destinations themselves. Traveling from port to port, cruise staff get chance to experience many places what can be considered as motivation factor and contribute to their satisfaction as well.

Stronger development of cruise tourism offer began in 60s and 70s years of last century. For many years, cruises were available only to guests of greater purchasing power and lately are affordable to broad population. As demand for cruise ships grows globally, so does the visitors' consumption and the number of jobs this industry provides (Kovačić *et al.*, 2020). With increasing globalization and international competition, the importance of recruiting, retaining and managing the resources that can help increase organizations' competitiveness has become a crucial factor in the success of the hotel industry (Nadiri and Tanova, 2010). Considering rapidly changing, competitive business environment; employees become the most significant and leading factor to achieve greater success, efficiency, and productivity (Güleç and Samancı, 2018; Nath and Agrawal, 2015).

Talent management, or how to recruit, retain, and develop an engaged workforce has played a critical role in tourism industry (Barron *et al.*, 2014). The cruise experience is not about product only. It is also result of each employee, their interaction with other employees, and employees with guests, as well guests to other guests. Managing all these interactions through planning of human resources and planning of processes leads to smooth and successful business performance. Because of that, managing the employee satisfaction in the cruise industry, and in hospitality industry in general, compared to some other industries, becomes the most critical point in managing. Such human interaction and the intangible nature of services, highlights the relationship between job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, as the quality of service depends on the employee's performance (Nadiri and Tanova, 2010). Carlzon (1987) invented the 'inverted pyramid' for the service industry where on top is service staff, in difference to the classic pyramid where on the top is management. Heskett *et al.* (1994) proposed their service profit chain, which explains that profit and growth are stimulated primarily by customer loyalty as a result of customer satisfaction. If the service staff is satisfied, the guests will be satisfied and loyal, and consequently, the company will also perform successfully. The service employees often serve as ambassadors of their companies and they are even equalized with the service firm itself (Babić-Hodović and Arslanagić-Kalajdžić, 2019). The investment in the employees become key for delivering unique service and quality in order to increase their satisfaction and the satisfaction of guests. A marketing approach to human resources management proposes selecting employees with right personality, continuously training them to skills and service culture, encouraging teamwork, initiative, and responsibility, monitoring their work performance and awarding them for a good job. High job satisfaction leads to increased productivity and lower absenteeism and turnover rates (Yang, 2010; Yucel, 2012). Companies which desire to enhance competitiveness, need highly motivated, committed, satisfied and innovative human capital (Abou Elnaga and Imran, 2014). Qasim and Sayeed (2012) asserted that satisfaction perception makes employees more loyal, committed, productive and creative.

Human activity does not appear by itself, to be provoked activity requires internal motivation and certain external incentives, directing the activity and determines its intensity and duration, what is per Nakić and Lindov (2020) collectively called motivation. The question of motivation refers to the reasons for human behavior. Bahtijarević Šiber (1999) states that motivation is a common term for all internal factors that

consolidate intellectual and physical energy, initiate and organize individual activities, they guide behavior and determine its direction, intensity and duration. She believes that it is a very complex and dynamic conception based on diverse human needs, aspirations, values and to preferences that are not only different in different people but develop and direct with growth and by the development of a person, i.e. they are different for the same people in different situations and periods of their life and development. Theoretically, if we control motivation factors, assuming the employees have right personality and capabilities, we can control their behavior. Motivated employees can become not motivated if they are not satisfied on their job. Nakić and Londov (2020) think that is important that employees and human resources managers, firstly know what motivates them so they could manage the factors that could contribute to their motivation to work and make motivation level higher, therefor higher business performance and higher job satisfaction level.

According to Locke (1976) job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. It reflects pleasurable emotions stemming from judgment toward one's job experience based on how well his/her needs and expectations are met with what got from the job (Locke, 1969). We could say that the job satisfaction is a set of positive or negative perceptions and feelings that employees experience while work. Shortly, job satisfaction refers to the degree to which employees like their job.

Some theories of motivation and attitudes at work can be used as basis for the understanding of job satisfaction such as Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Herzberg's (1968) Theory of Two Factors. Motivation implies a desire for a result, while the satisfaction of the consequences of that result (Wehrich and Koontz, 1998). Though motivation and satisfaction are not the same categories and could have different result on employee behavior due to the time passage and circumstances changes, both could have similar variables. The job satisfaction is a positive or negative emotional state or feeling about past realized work and motivation is the result of expectations in the future work. Following this point, it could be expected that higher satisfaction with some factors leads to the conclusion that the company is good motivation in those fields. The low satisfaction could lead to rethinking and different approach in motivating in future. Tourism studies have shown that employee motivation is strongly connected with a feeling of satisfaction resulting from the quality of work performed (Wildes and Parks, 2005). In addition, some researches show a significant positive relationship between employee satisfaction and financial performance (Chi and Gursay, 2009; Koys, 2003) so each company should strive to have satisfied employees.

Although there is significant amount of researches on employees' satisfaction with different variables over years, there is a lack of researches specifically on cruise employees. Based on many theories of motivation and researches on job satisfaction, this paper identifies satisfaction factors applicable to cruise industry. The **objective** of this paper is to find what is satisfaction level of cruise ships employees and significance of chosen satisfaction factors. In addition, determining of low satisfaction with some factors could lead to the gap that needs to be filled by adopting and improving motivation human resources politics.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON JOB SATISFACTION FACTORS

Tourism industry has been known for low wages, weekend and night work, seasonal work, emotional labor and other challenging conditions. The seafarers have been subject to plenty of researches (e.g. Ayap and Macalalad, 2016; Hult and Snöberg, 2014; Yorulmaz, 2018; Yuen *et al.*, 2018) due to challenging and isolated working conditions, but there is a lack of researches exploring behaviors of employees working on cruise ships. The necessity of providing fast and high-quality service in an intense competitive environment results in time pressure and job stress on agency employees (Yorulmaz *et al.*, 2020) as well as on cruise ship employees. Many different factors are affecting their behavior and work performance. Many authors have proposed many different factors that influence the job satisfaction level of employees.

Building a strong brand identity also concerns internal marketing, i.e., to communicate and deploy the core values of the company in the service employees' minds as a means to impact their role taking behavior (Skaalsvik, 2017). Determining employees' perceptions about their organization is critical to understand and control mechanisms that influence employees' attitudes, and behaviors toward their jobs (Tüzün, 2009). Organizational identification which reflects oneness perception of members with organization, is known to increase job satisfaction (Feather and Rauter, 2004; Alegre *et al.*, 2016) and organizational commitment (Meyer *et al.*, 2004; Marique and Stinglhamber, 2011; DeConinck, 2011). A company with a good image creates feelings of trust and belonging of employees. The service companies, especially in the hospitality and cruise industry should hire the employees because of their personality and train them with skills. This way merging of

beliefs of employees and company beliefs is more possible to happen, and employees are more likely to reflect the company values. The more merged, it is expected that employees will be more dedicated to company, engaged in their work, absenteeism will be lower, and the satisfaction level will be higher. Dissatisfaction of employees causes lower commitment that may also result in withdraw from the organization (Sarwar and Abugre, 2013). The same as for the guests, the employees who have emotional attachment to the company they work for will be loyal and unwilling to leave the company easily.

Alegre *et al.* (2016) emphasized the higher level of identification with organizational values and goals and pleasant relations with workmates are indicated as driving force behind perception of satisfaction. On the other hand, having lower identification causes feeling of demotivation, alienation and dissatisfaction that increases job stress, grievances, turnover and absenteeism (Edwards, 2005; De Roeck *et al.*, 2013). Through identification with the organization, multiple needs of employees such as belonging, self enhancement and safety can be satisfied (Ashforth *et al.*, 2008). A sense of identification helps employees to display greater levels of altruism, cooperation, supportive actions, and devote more effort in favor of the organization (Demir, 2015). Feeling of attachment and loyalty to the organization stimulates employees' motivation to support organizational processes, take more responsibility and improve job performance (Edwards, 2005; De Roeck *et al.*, 2014). Lee *et al.* (2015), found that identification of individuals with their organizations will more likely be followed by satisfaction and commitment.

Organizational factors of job satisfaction arise from the characteristics of the company itself and the individual workplace, such as nature of work, possibility for promotion, relationship with co-workers, relationship with superiors, salary, awards and recognition, working conditions and job security. Personal factors of job satisfaction are factors that the company cannot influence. These factors include personal dispositions, mood and emotions, compatibility of personal interests and work, age, length of service of the employee and status (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, 2006). Motivation strategies such as material stimulation, redesigning and enriching work, management style, employee participation, management by objectives, flexible working hours, organizational culture, recognition and awards, training and career development, aim to increase motivational potential (Nakić and Lindov, 2020). Novaes Southgate and Savi Mondo (2017) have found that infrastructure played an important role in the perceptions of satisfaction, especially with the regard to kitchen employees, as well as workload and stress management. Social gatherings, integration programs and non-monetary benefits were thought to be important in improving the satisfaction of the company's employees. Ineson and Berechet (2011) obtained results in which job satisfaction also focused on opportunities for the development of personal skills, use of the workers' strengths and goal achievement, stating that the dissatisfaction is manifest in lack of career development and opportunities for promotion what is associated with a high turnover of staff.

Satisfaction of socio-emotional needs (payment, recognition, support etc.) of the employees encourage employees' to be more committed (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Peterson *et al.* (2003) and Luthans (2010) for example mentioned management, relations of co-workers, pay levels, nature of the work, and promotion and carrier development. Likewise, Baran and Arabelen (2018) stated that job satisfaction is of relatively higher prominence in service sectors and that co-worker relations and job security are the most satisfying components for ship agents' employees, while compensation and advancements are the least ones. Furthermore, they stated that increase in age, seniority and work experience brings higher satisfaction. Laškarin Ažić (2017) stated that good relations in an organization (often displayed by organizational culture) are the main incentive for stimulating positive behavior among employees and showed a direct relationship between employee satisfaction with co-worker relationships and job satisfaction, as well as the employee satisfaction with management relations has a direct impact on job satisfaction.

Kukanja (2013) research results show that in times of economic crisis money is the most important motivational factor to work in foodservice, followed by flexible working hours and social security. Motivational factor money was far more important to women than men. Younger employees are mostly motivated by fun and flexible working hours, while elderly employees highly value social security. To more educated and experienced employees career development and training are more important than to less educated and less experienced employees. Young people are understandably more interested in fun and flexible working hours.

Furthermore, salary was considered one of the main determinants for satisfaction. Its importance lies in the fact that salary is related to the satisfaction of the individual needs, from the most basic needs (at the subsistence level), to the highest, such as social recognition (Novaes Southgate and Savi Mondo, 2017). However, Milman (2002) stated that the retention of employees in the workplace is primarily associated with personal fulfilment

and working conditions, rather than the financial compensation, although money is considered to be the oldest and the most usual way for motivating people.

Yang (2010) indicated that there are influencing factors on job satisfaction in the hospitality industry such as role conflict, burnout, socialization, and work autonomy stating that job satisfaction is a powerful contributor to the affective commitment of individuals to their current organizations. Slatten and Mehmetoglu (2011) have found a positive relationship between autonomy, strategic attention, role benefit, and employee engagement. Managers who show high levels of supervisory support behavior make employees feel understood, valued, and cared about (Kang., *et al.*, 2014). Nakić and Lindov (2020) write that education and training affect the performance of the organization if they are aligned with the strategic organizational goals and integrated into the human resources management function and have a positive influence on the motivation of employees as well as on job satisfaction. The education and training are investment, and not a cost, if aligned with the organizational goals and needs of employees.

Although a significant number of studies have been published on job satisfaction with various variables over the years, to the best of our knowledge, there are few or no studies specifically addressing job satisfaction among cruise ship employees. The literature review given here identifies many motivation and job satisfaction factors. However, some factors are not found in the literature and play an important role in job satisfaction of cruise ship employees, such as possibility of experiencing many destinations through work mobility, possibility of getting good tips, free and easy Internet access etc. Therefore, this paper will also identify and provide the job satisfaction factors of cruise ship employees. Service culture based on employees' behavior and satisfaction is still the hardest element to copy for the competition so companies should pay special attention to what motivates and satisfies their employees.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH RESULTS

Prior to the research an open interview was held with seven cruise employees and two employment agencies specialized for recruiting of cruise ships employees in order to confirm which of the motivation and satisfaction factors they consider relevant. Following the theoretical background and opinions collected through interviews the following factors were identified: **basic salary; variable salary** (including commissions, bonuses, and incentives such as company car, laptop, mobile phone, etc.); the possibility of getting **tips**; defined **working hours; flexible working hours; paid expenses** (accommodation, travel, health insurance, etc.); **safe and stable job**; an organizational structure with a **defined job description and responsibilities** and measuring of work performance; good **interpersonal relations** encouraging teamwork; receiving feedback on work performance (**performance feedback**); the ability of the superior to recognize good job of employee (**good job recognition**); respect for employee opinion and suggestion for business improvement (**employee opinion respect**); independence in work (**work independence**); flexibility and **work creativity**; possibility of further **education** through seminars and trainings organized by the employer; possibility of **professional development**, career planning and job promotion; public perception of the company (**company's public image**); possibility of identifying the values promoted by the company with employees own values and beliefs (**company values**); free and unlimited **internet access**; the employer location and possibility of experiencing other **destinations** through work mobility. All these factors were tested on current job positions of cruise ship employees participated in the research.

The data was collected from 269 employees from 19 different countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and North America working on cruise ships through the questionnaire using Google form between June and November 2022. The majority of the participants were male (N=178; 66.2%). There were the 91 female participants (33.8%). The most of participants, regardless the gender, belong to the age group 36-45 (42.4%), and 26-35 (39.4%). There were almost the same percentage of service employees (food and beverage employees, front desk, and housekeeping employees) and employees on managerial positions (department managers and manager assistants), 45.3% and 43.9%, respectively. The rest of the participants were administrative employees (accounting, human resources, etc.).

The measurement tools used in this study were developed with widely used 5-point Likert scale (1 = I totally disagree, 5 = I totally agree). The responses 1 and 2 were gathered together as "low satisfaction", and 4 and 5 were considered as "high satisfaction". The analysis was done for all participants in general and additionally by gender and dividing participants to service staff and managerial staff. Two main tests were used: Student's two sample t-test of independent samples and Two sample z-test of proportions.

According to arithmetic mean the highest satisfaction level is obtained on paid expenses, destination, work independence, job safety, and interpersonal relations. The lowest satisfaction level is achieved on tips, variable salary, and working hours.

Table 1
Arithmetic mean, low satisfaction level (proportion of responses 1 and 2), and high satisfaction level (proportion of responses 4 and 5) for chosen job satisfaction factors

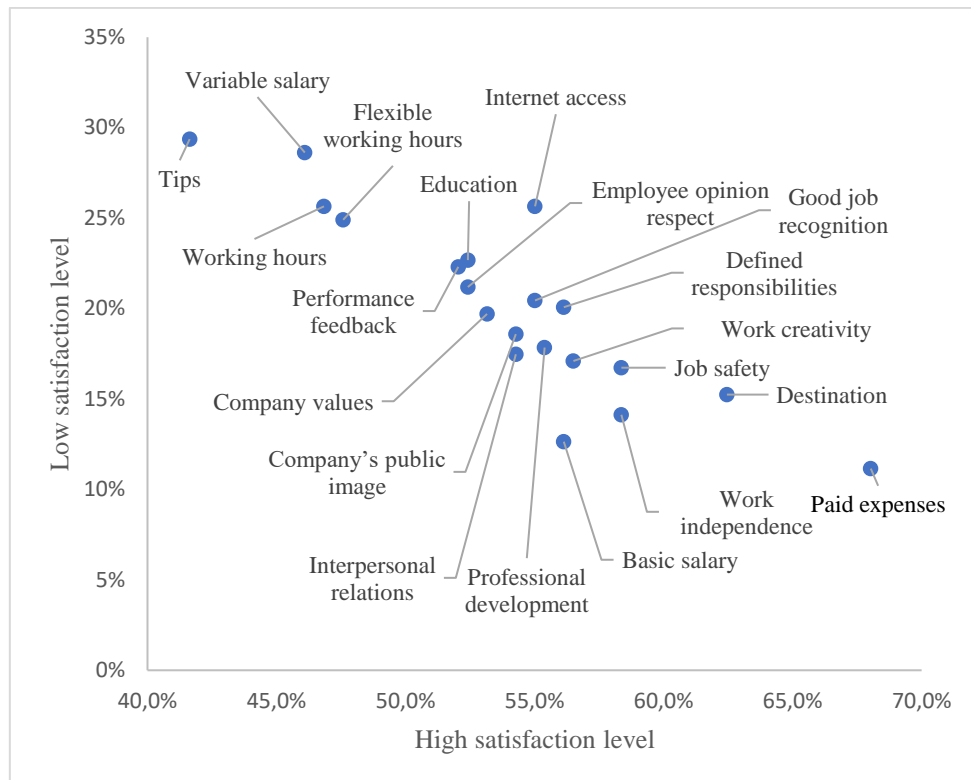
Job satisfaction factors	Arithmetic mean	Low satisfaction level	High satisfaction level
Paid expenses	3,99	11,2%	68,0%
Destination	3,80	15,2%	62,5%
Work independence	3,74	14,1%	58,4%
Job safety	3,73	16,7%	58,4%
Interpersonal relations	3,70	17,5%	54,3%
Basic salary	3,69	12,6%	56,1%
Work creativity	3,69	17,1%	56,5%
Professional development	3,66	17,8%	55,4%
Defined responsibilities	3,65	20,1%	56,1%
Good job recognition	3,61	20,4%	55,0%
Performance feedback	3,57	22,3%	52,0%
Company's public image	3,57	18,6%	54,3%
Company values	3,57	19,7%	53,2%
Employee opinion respect	3,56	21,2%	52,4%
Education	3,56	22,7%	52,4%
Internet access	3,52	25,7%	55,0%
Flexible working hours	3,36	24,9%	47,6%
Working hours	3,33	25,7%	46,8%
Variable salary	3,27	28,6%	46,1%
Tips	3,21	29,4%	41,6%

Source: Authors

We can see that cruise ships employees are not satisfied nor unsatisfied with basic salary and are not satisfied with variable salary and tips which leads to conclusion that there is space for rethinking of the salary as motivation factor. As salary still is one of the basic requirement in motivation factors package, nonsatisfaction with salary could lead to higher absent from the work and turnover of employees. Higher salaries could lead to higher satisfaction level and consequently better business performance. Another gap that requires rethinking and changing of human resources politics is in the field of working hours.

Figure 1 shows percentage of high satisfaction responses (on the abscissa) and low satisfaction responses (on the ordinate). According to it, the highest ratio of low satisfaction is with tips, variable salary and working hours, as already shown in Table 1. The lowest ratio of low satisfaction is with paid expenses and basic salary. The highest ratio of high satisfaction is with paid expenses, destination, job safety and work independence.

Figure 1
Percentage of satisfaction responses on current job of cruise ship's employees



Source: Authors

Table 2
Arithmetic mean of job satisfaction factors according to gender and p-value for Student's two sample t-test of two independent samples

Job satisfaction factors	Arithmetic mean (male only)	Arithmetic mean (female only)	p-value
Basic salary	3,74	3,60	0,340
Variable salary	3,38	3,04	0,045*
Tips	3,20	3,23	0,868
Working hours	3,44	3,10	0,035*
Flexible working hours	3,46	3,18	0,080
Paid expenses	4,03	3,89	0,329
Internet access	3,66	3,25	0,030*
Job safety	3,89	3,42	0,003**
Defined responsibilities	3,76	3,44	0,043*
Interpersonal relations	3,82	3,45	0,017*
Performance feedback	3,75	3,21	0,001**
Good job recognition	3,79	3,27	0,002**
Employee opinion respect	3,75	3,19	0,000**
Work independence	3,86	3,51	0,017*
Work creativity	3,85	3,37	0,002**
Education	3,66	3,35	0,067
Professional development	3,79	3,42	0,021*
Company's public image	3,66	3,38	0,073
Company values	3,69	3,34	0,028*

Destination	3,83	3,76	0,661
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* difference significant on the level 0,05 ** difference significant on the level 0,01
Source: Authors

Student's two sample t-test of two independent samples (men and women) was applied on each satisfaction factor and main results were shown in Table 2. In general, arithmetic mean of male employees who responded to the questionnaire is higher than mean of female gender participants, except for possibility of getting good tips as a factor. Statistically significant difference on the significance level 1% (p-value less than 0.01) is found on job safety, performance feedback, good job recognition, respect of employee opinions, and creativity and flexibility at work.

Statistically significant difference on the significance level 5% (p-value between 0.01 and 0.05) is found on factors identification with company values, professional development, work independence, interpersonal relations and defined responsibilities, variable salary and fixed working hours.

Table 3
Ratio of low satisfaction on chosen factors according to gender and p-value for two sample z-test of differences proportions

Job satisfaction factors	Low satisfaction (Male only)	Low satisfaction (Female only)	p-value
Basic salary	11,2%	15,4%	0,333
Variable salary	26,4%	33,0%	0,260
Tips	30,9%	26,4%	0,441
Working hours	24,2%	28,6%	0,433
Flexible working hours	22,5%	29,7%	0,196
Paid expenses	10,1%	13,2%	0,449
Internet access	21,9%	33,0%	0,049*
Job safety	11,8%	26,4%	0,002**
Defined responsibilities	18,0%	24,2%	0,230
Interpersonal relations	14,0%	24,2%	0,038*
Performance feedback	16,3%	34,1%	0,001**
Good job recognition	14,6%	31,9%	0,001**
Employee opinion respect	16,3%	30,8%	0,006**
Work independence	11,2%	19,8%	0,057
Work creativity	13,5%	24,2%	0,028*
Education	19,1%	29,7%	0,050
Professional development	14,0%	25,3%	0,023*
Company's public image	15,2%	25,3%	0,044*
Company values	16,3%	26,4%	0,049*
Destination	14,0%	17,6%	0,445

* difference significant on the level 0,05 ** difference significant on the level 0,01
Source: Authors

Generally, the female employees show the higher level of un-satisfaction, measured by share of low satisfaction marks, than their male co-workers. Statistically significant difference is found on some same factors as in the case of arithmetic mean (Table 2). Statistically significant difference on the significance level 1% (p-value less than 0.01) is found on job safety, performance feedback, good job recognition, and respect of employee opinions. Statistically significant difference on the significance level 5% (p-value between 0.01 and 0.05) is found on factors Internet access, identification with company values, professional development, creativity and flexibility at work, and interpersonal relations.

Table 4

Ratio of high satisfaction on job satisfaction factors according to gender and p-value for two sample z-test of differences proportions

Job satisfaction factors	High satisfaction (Male only)	High satisfaction (Female only)	p-value
Basic salary	56,2%	56,0%	0,983
Variable salary	49,4%	39,6%	0,124
Tips	41,6%	41,8%	0,977
Working hours	50,6%	39,6%	0,087
Flexible working hours	50,6%	41,8%	0,171
Paid expenses	69,1%	65,9%	0,598
Internet access	57,3%	50,5%	0,292
Job safety	61,2%	52,7%	0,181
Defined responsibilities	57,9%	52,7%	0,424
Interpersonal relations	56,7%	49,5%	0,256
Performance feedback	55,6%	45,1%	0,101
Good job recognition	57,9%	49,5%	0,189
Employee opinion respect	56,7%	44,0%	0,047*
Work independence	62,4%	50,5%	0,063
Work creativity	60,7%	48,4%	0,054
Education	53,9%	49,5%	0,486
Professional development	57,3%	51,6%	0,377
Company's public image	57,3%	48,4%	0,163
Company values	55,6%	48,4%	0,258
Destination	62,9%	61,5%	0,825

* difference significant on the level 0,05

Source: Authors

On the other hand, the male employees show the higher level of satisfaction, measured by share of high satisfaction marks, than their female co-workers for all factors except for tips. The statistically significant difference is found only for appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement by supervisor as a satisfaction factor. The male employees were more satisfied with this factor.

As female employees are more satisfied with tips that could mean that their service excellence and going extra mile in serving guests is better recognized and awarded by the guests than of their male co-workers. Quality of service should be base for setting the human resources motivation politics in service industries. Therefore, we could conclude that there is gap in factors from guests' point of view such is getting good tips and employers' (supervisor) point of view such as appreciation of female worker's opinions and suggestions for business improvement by supervisor and recognition of their good job. Previously presented results may imply the need of different approach to female and male employees to achieve gender equality and need of better training of middle management to leader skills.

Table 5

Arithmetic mean of job satisfaction factors according to dividing employees to managerial and service employees and p-value for Student's two sample t-test of two independent samples

Job satisfaction factors	Arithmetic mean (management)	Arithmetic mean (service stuff)	P-Values
Basic salary	3.75	3.73	0.856
Variable salary	3.16	3.35	0.263

Tips	2.96	3.46	0.004**
Working hours	3.23	3.43	0.218
Flexible working hours	3.36	3.34	0.901
Paid expenses	4.07	3.95	0.433
Internet access	3.60	3.50	0.590
Job safety	3.69	3.76	0.640
Defined responsibilities	3.62	3.69	0.663
Interpersonal relations	3.62	3.75	0.419
Performance feedback	3.47	3.67	0.210
Good job recognition	3.58	3.66	0.595
Employee opinion respect	3.56	3.53	0.871
Work independence	3.67	3.80	0.402
Work creativity	3.64	3.72	0.585
Education	3.49	3.60	0.532
Professional development	3.60	3.71	0.488
Company's public image	3.46	3.67	0.172
Company values	3.49	3.67	0.261
Destination	3.84	3.84	0.985

** difference significant on the level 0.01

Source: Authors

The managers have shown the highest level of satisfaction degree with paid expenses, destination, basic salary, safety of job and independence in work. The service staff have shown the similar satisfaction. The data presented in Table 5 do not show significant difference in satisfaction between managerial and service staff measured by arithmetic mean. The only statistically significant difference is found for possibility of getting good tips which leads to conclusion that tips are more important to service staff than to managerial staff, as expected due to the nature of job.

The same results were shown when analyze was done using arithmetic mean, ratio of low and high satisfaction on job satisfaction factors according to dividing the staff to managerial and service staff using p-value for two sample z-test of differences proportions showed that there was statistically significant difference only for tips as a satisfaction factor with difference significant on the level 0.05.

CONCLUSION

Although there is significant amount of researches on employees' satisfaction with different variables over years, there is a lack of researches specifically on cruise employees. Starting from many theories of motivation and researches on job satisfaction, this paper identifies job satisfaction factors applicable to cruise industry employees. Some of proposed factors in this paper were not found in the literature and play an important role in job satisfaction of cruise ships employees, such are possibility of experiencing many destinations through work mobility, possibility of getting good tips, free and easy Internet access etc.

The objective of this paper was to find what is satisfaction level of cruise ships employees and significance of chosen satisfaction factors. In addition, determining of low satisfaction with some factors could indicate the gap that requires rethinking and improving human resources motivation politics of cruise companies.

The data was collected from 269 employees from 19 different countries during 2022. The measurement tools used in this study were developed with widely used 5-point Likert scale. Furthermore, responses 1 and 2 are gathered together as "low satisfaction", and 4 and 5 are considered as "high satisfaction". The analysis was done for all participants in general and additionally by gender and dividing participants to service staff and managerial staff. Two main tests were used: Student's two sample t-test of independent samples and Two sample z-test of proportions.

It was found, in general, that cruise ships employees' show the highest degree of satisfaction with factors such as paid expenses, destination, safety of job, independence in working, and flexibility and creativity. The lowest degree of satisfaction was showed by working hours, variable salary such as bonuses, commissions and incentives, and possibility of getting tips. The managers have shown the highest level of satisfaction degree with paid expenses, destination, basic wage, safety of job and independence in work. The service staff have shown the similar satisfaction. The satisfaction with tips was the only factor for which was found statistically significant difference between managerial and service employees. There is statistically significant difference in non-satisfaction of male and female employees, for example, in safety of job, receiving feedback on work performance, ability of supervisor to recognize good job and appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement. The female employees have shown the higher level of dissatisfaction with those elements. Looking at high satisfaction levels there was no statistically significant difference between male and female employees, except for appreciation of their opinions and suggestions for business improvement by supervisor where the male employees were more satisfied.

The results of this paper are significant to the theory and practice, as there are a very few researches on cruise employees, even in general. The results could serve as an advice to the human resources managers of cruise companies to rethink their motivation policies, primarily in field of salary and gender equality, better training of middle management to leader skills and awarding employees based on quality of service provided to the guests in order to achieve higher level of employees' job satisfaction. Further studies may include larger sample of employees of cruise ships and analysis according to the size of cruise ship, demographic and some other variables.

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