

## HOW THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE CAN DIFFER? A COMPARISON OF CZECH AND SLOVAK LABOUR MARKET SURVEYS

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**Abstract.** A positive employee experience is important for overall satisfaction and productivity. However, many employees do not always feel good at work. The article compares the employee experience in the Czech and Slovak Republics to determine which factors cause employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction and which factors employers should concentrate on to enhance employee satisfaction. The article analyses data from Gi Group Holding 2023 Czech and Slovak representative labour market surveys on employees from the Czech Republic (N = 1119) and the Slovak Republic (N = 1492). The analysis includes the verification of hypotheses concerning the current feelings of employees at work and their experience with workplace bullying. The findings uncovered those employees were satisfied with col-laborative colleagues, interesting work, and work-life balance. On the other hand, they were dissatisfied with low earnings, stress and overwork, and unfavourable working conditions. To enhance employee satisfaction at work, it was suggested to concentrate on factors concerning work content (such as tasks, duties, and responsibilities), work context (such as earnings), work demands (such as workload and overwork), and work results (such as objectives, standards, and deadlines).

**Keywords:** labour market, job satisfaction, work experience, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic.

**JEL Classification:** M10, M12, M14.

### 1. Introduction

Employee satisfaction is associated with positive feelings of employees about the work they perform for their employer (Magnier-Watanabe et al., 2019). Positive employee feelings tend to be influenced by various factors (Kim & Keane, 2021) such as work content (tasks, duties, and responsibilities), work context (work environment, working hours, work relationships, earnings for work done, benefits related to employment), work demands (knowledge, skills, and abilities), and work results (quantity, quality, and time delivery). Different of these factors are important for each employee, which is related to personal attitude and motivation (Do & Hong, 2022). Some employees are motivated by the work itself. Other employees need more positive stimuli to be motivated to do their best at work (Khanh, 2021). The more favourable the work-related factors, the more positive the feelings

of employees, and the higher employee satisfaction (Kumari et al., 2021). On the other hand, negative employee feelings arising from unfavourable work-related factors lead to employee dissatisfaction (Jarupathirun & Genaro, 2018).

Increasing employee satisfaction and preventing employee dissatisfaction is the primary challenge of every employer who wants to attract and retain quality people (Kwon & Remoy, 2020). Satisfied employees are usually highly motivated and engaged in their work. They put in more effort and strive for high performance (Ruhadi et al., 2018). On the other hand, dissatisfied employees usually do only what they have to do, need to be extra stimulated to put in more effort, and do not strive to do their best (Pandey et al., 2021). Employers must therefore carefully consider what kind of employees they want and what conditions they need to create for them to have them (Shakoor et al., 2023).

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The article deals with the employee experience in the Czech and Slovak Republics, which belong to the Central European developed economies. These economies have long been struggling with a lack of skilled labour across industries from agriculture through production to services (Koisova et al., 2018). One of the fundamental issues of the unsatisfied labour demand are significant differences between the expectations of employees and the conditions of employers (Mohelska et al., 2020). Employers are not able or do not want to create sufficiently attractive conditions for potential employees, mainly in terms of earnings, working hours, or career (Zofcinova & Hrabovska, 2019). As a result, many employers are caught in a vicious circle when they are confronted with a persisting lack of applicant interest or with high employee turnover, which costs them a lot (Haindorfer, 2020). The key seems to be the effort of employers to create more attractive employment opportunities reflecting the expectations of employees. Therefore, the article compares the employee experience in the Czech and Slovak Republics to answer two research questions:

- RQ1: Which factors cause employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction?
- RQ2: Which factors employers should concentrate on to enhance employee satisfaction?

The issue of employee satisfaction is discussed internationally in theory and practice. Responses to these research questions from the Czech and Slovak perspectives can contribute to the efforts of other researchers and practitioners in the search for suitable ways of enhancing employee satisfaction.

## 2. Literature review

Research on employee satisfaction is widespread. Researchers are concerned with the association between employee satisfaction and employee motivation (Mardanov, 2021) or employee performance (Davidescu et al., 2020). It is assumed that increased employee satisfaction leads to increased employee motivation and thus improved employee performance (Zubr & Sokolova, 2021). However, increased employee satisfaction and motivation do not necessarily improve employee performance (Ahmad & Raja, 2021). On the other hand, improved employee performance can increase employee satisfaction and motivation (Kosec et al., 2022). An even more challenging issue is to prove a positive relationship between employee satisfaction and motivation and organizational performance. This relationship is explained through employee performance. Increased employee satisfaction and motivation lead to improved employee performance and thus organizational performance (Beuren et al., 2022). However, opponents argue that employee satisfaction and motivation have a limited impact on employee performance and therefore on organizational performance (Kessler et al., 2020).

Internationally, for example, Goni-Legaz and Ollolopez (2017) investigated the impact of the opportunity

to participate in decision-making on employee satisfaction using a sample of 14,778 employees in twenty-three European countries. They found that the opportunity to participate in decision-making increased employee satisfaction. Islami et al. (2018) examined the application of Management by Objectives (MBO) practices to enhance employee motivation and performance using a sample of 172 employees from thirteen companies in Kosovo. They revealed a positive impact of MBO practices on employee motivation and performance through specific, measurable, and achievable objectives, standards, and deadlines, which enhance employee satisfaction and thus employee motivation and performance. Kvasic (2019) analysed the impact of employee satisfaction on the operational performance of hotels in Croatia using a sample of 226 hotel employees. He revealed a positive impact of employee satisfaction on operational performance through taking care of employee working conditions. Kessler et al. (2020) investigated the relationship between employee satisfaction and company performance using a sample of 404 employees from thirty-one companies in the United States. They revealed a positive impact of employee satisfaction on company performance, but they concluded that the impact of employee satisfaction on company performance is never immediate and that it takes time to prove it. Mardanov (2021) examined the relationship between employee satisfaction and the intention to stay using a sample of 272 employees of construction companies in Taiwan. He confirmed a positive impact of employee satisfaction on the intention to stay and achieve desired performance standards. Moreover, the intention to stay indicates employee satisfaction, which can be significantly reduced by many negative work-related factors such as workplace bullying. This was confirmed by Baek and Lee (2022) who investigated the effect of workplace bullying on the intention to leave using a sample of 153 nurses from two hospitals in South Korea having less than twelve months of experience. They revealed the occurrence of workplace bullying which enhanced the intention of nurses to leave. It resulted in a high turnover of nurses, economic losses of hospitals, and a decrease in the quality of patient care. Similar findings were confirmed by Moffat et al. (2023) who investigated the effect of workplace bullying on the intention to leave using a sample of 182 office employees in France. They revealed that most of the surveyed employees experienced workplace bullying, which caused their dissatisfaction and intention to leave.

Within the Czech and Slovak Republics, for example, Franek et al. (2014) surveyed the impact of work-related factors on employee satisfaction using a sample of 1,776 employees of different organizations in the Czech Republic. They confirmed similarities with Western labour markets. They revealed higher satisfaction among male than female employees. Satisfaction was also lower among young employees, but age did not have a significant impact on employee satisfaction. Cabelkova et al. (2015) analysed factors affecting employee satisfaction in post-transition economies, namely in the Czech Republic.

They confirmed significant positive associations between employee satisfaction and satisfactory work relationships and earnings. Vlacsekova and Mura (2017) investigated what factors affect employee motivation in small and medium-sized companies in the Slovak Republic. They concluded that employee motivation is affected by the work itself rather than money. Gonos et al. (2018) examined differences in employee satisfaction depending on the company size, industry, and employment length using a sample of 278 employees of various companies in the Slovak Republic. They proved significant differences in employee satisfaction depending on the industry. Cakirpaloglu et al. (2019) investigated the effect of workplace bullying on employee mental health using a sample of 7,103 employees from different industries in the Czech Republic. They confirmed a significant negative association between employee mental health and workplace bullying which caused employee depression and tensions. Strenitzerova and Achimsky (2019) surveyed factors affecting employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction in Slovak Post using a sample of 1,775 employees. They revealed average employee satisfaction, while the greatest employee dissatisfaction was associated with low earnings and lack of interest of the employer in employee views. Jankelova et al. (2020) analysed the impact of employee motivation on the performance of agricultural companies in the Slovak Republic using a sample of 757 employees. They confirmed that the factors that most affected employee satisfaction and thus employee motivation were financial rewards. Zubr and Sokolova (2021) surveyed the relationship between the level of employee satisfaction and the type of company culture (bureaucratic, supportive, innovative) using a sample of 1,271 employees from different industries and companies. The highest levels of employee satisfaction were revealed in companies with a supportive company culture promoting employee well-being and growth.

Examples of research studies on employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance demonstrate that relationships between these variables are not simple and definite. The article contributes to existing knowledge by focusing on the comparison of factors of employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction in different labour markets. The specific issues analysed following the findings of the literature review are the current feelings of employees at work and the experience of employees with workplace bullying. The feelings of employees determine their satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Idris et al., 2020). These feelings are most affected by work relationships (Cabelkova et al., 2015), which can be negatively affected by workplace bullying from superiors, colleagues, and subordinates (De Clercq et al., 2022). The significance of these issues from the Czech and Slovak perspectives is verified by established hypotheses:

H1: The current feelings of employees at work differ in the Czech and Slovak Republics.

H2: The experience of workplace bullying differs in the Czech and Slovak Republics.

### 3. Methods

The comparison of the employee experience in the Czech and Slovak Republics is founded on data from Gi Group Holding 2023 Czech and Slovak labour market surveys conducted by the staffing agency through an online platform at the end of January 2023. Randomly carried out public online surveys brought responses from representative samples of employees in terms of gender, age, and education working in the Czech Republic (N = 1119) and the Slovak Republic (N = 1492).

The identical online questionnaires used contained several sections of questions regarding job search, job satisfaction, work arrangement, workplace bullying, changes in the workplace, or life and work style. This article uses responses to questions about employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction: (1) what are the current feelings of employees at work; (2) what is important to employees at work; (3) what is currently the cause of employee satisfaction at work; (4) what is currently the cause of employee dissatisfaction at work; (5) what motivates employees to do their best at work; (6) what currently reduces the employee motivation to do their best at work; (7) what is the current employee work arrangement; (8) how employees take home office; (9) whether employees have ever experienced workplace bullying; (10) whether employees have recently experienced a pay cut. Questions were multiple choice with single (questions 1, 7, 8, 9, and 10) and multiple (questions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) options. The current feelings of employees at work (question 1) were evaluated on a 5-point scale of 5 = love, 4 = smile, 3 = neutral, 2 = boring, and 1 = anger, allowing respondents to express their feelings properly. Other questions provided respondents with single and multiple options. Table 1 contains characteristics of respondents by gender, age, and education. In the Czech Republic, there were almost equal numbers of male and female respondents. Respondents were most often aged 45–54, however, the mean age was 42. There were significantly more respondents with secondary education than university education. In the Slovak Republic, there were slightly more female respondents than male respondents. Respondents were most often aged 35–44, however, the mean age was 42. There were slightly more respondents with secondary education than university education.

Table 1. The characteristics of respondents (source: authors' calculations on Gi Group Holding 2023 Czech and Slovak labour market surveys, January 2024)

		Czech Republic	Slovak Republic
Gender	Male	49%	47%
	Female	51%	53%
Age	18–24	8%	2%
	25–34	20%	26%
	35–44	26%	31%
	45–54	31%	27%
	55–64	15%	14%
Education	Secondary	78%	53%
	University	22%	47%

The data processing through Microsoft Excel involved the calculation of relative frequencies on gender, age, and education of respondents. A chi-square goodness of fit test with a significance level of 0.05 was used to verify established hypotheses concerning the current feelings of employees at work and the experience of employees with workplace bullying. Within the chi-square goodness of fit test null and alternative hypotheses were established, chi-square statistics ( $\chi^2$ ) were calculated, and critical chi-square values for the significance level of 0.05 ( $\chi^2_{0.05}$ ) were determined. If the calculated chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) was higher than the determined critical chi-square value ( $\chi^2_{0.05}$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis, and vice versa.

#### 4. Results

The employee experience in the Czech and Slovak Republics is compared to find out which factors cause employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction (RQ1) and which factors employers should concentrate on to enhance employee satisfaction (RQ2).

Question (1) surveyed the current feelings of employees at work. For the Czech Republic, employees stated love (23%), smile (52%), neutral (20%), boring (4%), and anger (1%). Employees chose the options of boring and angry, there were more female than male employees, employees aged 25–34, and more employees with secondary than with university education. For the Slovak Republic, employees stated love (21%), smile (47%), neutral (24%), boring (6%), and anger (2%). Among employees who chose the options boring and angry, there were equal numbers of male and female employees, equal numbers of employees aged 25–34, 35–44, and 45–54, and more employees with university than with secondary education. The majority of employees stated feelings of love and smile at work, although the percentage of employees who stated feelings of boredom and anger is also relatively high. This confirms that it makes sense to survey why employees are satisfied and dissatisfied at work.

Within question (1), hypothesis H1 was verified that the current feelings of employees at work differ in the Czech and Slovak Republics (see Table 2). The null hypothesis was established that the current feelings of employees at work do not differ in the Czech and Slovak Republics ( $H_01$ ). Following that a chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) was calculated and a critical chi-square value for the significance level of 0.05 ( $\chi^2_{0.05}$ ) was determined. Since the chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) was higher than the critical chi-square value ( $\chi^2_{0.05}$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_A1$ ). The difference in the current feelings of employees at work in the Czech and Slovak Republics was proved.

Question (2) surveyed what is important to employees at work. For the Czech Republic, employees stated friendly colleagues (74%), diverse work (63%), work-life balance support (56%), and an employer with a great product (50%). These factors were equally important for

Table 2. The difference in the current feelings of employees at work in the Czech (CZE) and Slovak (SVK) Republics (source: authors' calculations on Gi Group Holding 2023 Czech and Slovak labour market surveys, January 2024)

The current feelings of employees at work 5 = love, 4 = smile, 3 = neutral, 2 = boring, 1 = anger						
	5	4	3	2	1	$\Sigma$
CZE	254	580	220	50	15	1119
SVK	314	704	352	94	28	1492
$\Sigma$	568	1284	572	144	43	2611
Chi square statistic $\chi^2 = 13.132$ Critical chi-square value $\chi^2_{0.05}(4) = 9.488$ $H_01$ was rejected. The current feelings of employees at work differ in the Czech and Slovak Republics.						

all employees. For the Slovak Republic, employees stated friendly colleagues (79%), diverse work (62%), work-life balance support (56%), and an employer with a great product (49%). These factors were equally important for all employees.

Question (3) surveyed what is currently the cause of employee satisfaction at work. For the Czech Republic, employees stated collaborative colleagues (65%), interesting work (58%), work-life balance (56%), trust and responsibility (53%), and cool boss (51%). Collaborative colleagues were highly important for all employees. Trust and responsibility were very important to male employees, while work-life balance was very important to female employees. Cool boss was very important for younger employees (18–34), while interesting work was very important for older employees (35–64). Work-life balance was very important for all employees regardless of age. Interesting work and work-life balance were very important for all employees regardless of education. For the Slovak Republic, employees stated collaborative colleagues (67%), interesting work (62%), work-life balance (57%), trust and responsibility (55%), and ability use (54%). Collaborative colleagues and interesting work were highly important for all employees. Trust and responsibility were very important to male employees, while work-life balance was very important to female employees. Work-life balance was very important for younger employees (18–34), while ability use was very important for older employees (35–64). Interesting work, work-life balance, and trust and responsibility were very important for all employees regardless of education.

Question (4) surveyed what is currently the cause of employee dissatisfaction at work. For the Czech Republic, employees stated low earnings (64%), stress and overwork (44%), unfavourable working conditions (32%), and limited career development (32%). Low earnings were the cause of dissatisfaction for all employees. Stress and overwork were the cause of dissatisfaction for female employees rather than for male employees. Stress and overwork were the cause of dissatisfaction for all employees regardless of age. Uninteresting work, uncollaborative colleagues, and limited career development

were the causes of dissatisfaction for younger employees (18–34), while unfavourable working conditions were the cause of dissatisfaction for older employees (35–64). Stress and overwork were the cause of dissatisfaction for all employees regardless of education. Unfavourable working conditions were the cause of dissatisfaction for employees with secondary education, while limited career development was the cause of dissatisfaction for employees with university education. For the Slovak Republic, employees stated low earnings (72%), stress and overwork (53%), limited career development (45%), and too high work demands (35%). Low earnings were the cause of dissatisfaction for all employees. Stress and overwork as well as limited career development were equally the cause of dissatisfaction for male and female employees. Uninteresting work and limited career development were the causes of dissatisfaction for younger employees (18–34), while stress and overwork were the causes of dissatisfaction for older employees (35–64). Stress, overwork, and limited career development were the cause of dissatisfaction for all employees regardless of education.

Question (5) surveyed what motivates employees to do their best at work. For the Czech Republic, employees stated good feeling (62%), interest (52%), earnings (52%), responsibility (36%), and recognition (34%). For the Slovak Republic, employees stated good feeling (62%), earnings (55%), interest (51%), recognition (32%), and responsibility (29%). These factors were equally motivating for all employees.

Question (6) surveyed what currently reduces the employee motivation to do their best at work. For the Czech Republic, employees stated overall tiredness (31%), low earnings (31%), lack of recognition (20%), lack of feedback (15%), and lack of personal or career development (15%). Overall tiredness and low earnings equally reduced the motivation of all employees. For the Slovak Republic, employees stated low earnings (34%), overall tiredness (30%), lack of recognition (23%), lack of personal or career development (19%), and lack of feedback (17%). Low earnings and overall tiredness equally reduced the motivation of all employees.

The question (7) surveyed what is the current employee work arrangement. For the Czech Republic, employees stated they work fully in the workplace (57%), partly in the workplace / from home (22%), exceptionally from home (13%), and fully from home (8%). Work from home, whether full-time or part-time, was stated by more female employees and employees with university education than male employees and employees with secondary education. For the Slovak Republic, employees stated they work fully in the workplace (67%), partly in the workplace / from home (18%), exceptionally from home (8%), and fully from home (6%). Work from home, whether full-time or part-time, was stated by more male employees and employees with university education than female employees and employees with secondary education.

Question (8) surveyed how employees take home office. For the Czech Republic, employees stated a standard

work arrangement (53%), an employee benefit (48%), a natural part of work (17%), an extra time off (11%), a necessity required by the employer (4%). These responses were equal for all employees. For the Slovak Republic, employees stated a standard work arrangement (51%), an employee benefit (35%), a natural part of work (13%), an extra time off (11%), a necessity required by the employer (7%). These responses were equal for all employees.

The question (9) surveyed whether employees have ever experienced workplace bullying. For the Czech Republic, employees stated no (67%), yes (22%), and not sure (11%). For the Slovak Republic, employees stated no (53%), yes (31%), and not sure (16%). The experience of workplace bullying was stated by more female employees than male employees.

Within question (9), hypothesis H2 was verified that the experience of workplace bullying differs in the Czech and Slovak Republics (see Table 3). The null hypothesis was established that the experience of workplace bullying does not differ in the Czech and Slovak Republics ( $H_0$ ). Following that a chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) was calculated and a critical chi-square value for the significance level of 0.05 ( $\chi^2_{0.05}$ ) was determined. Since the chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) was higher than the critical chi-square value ( $\chi^2_{0.05}$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_A$ ). The difference in the experience of workplace bullying in the Czech and Slovak Republics was proved.

Table 3. The difference in the experience of workplace bullying in the Czech (CZE) and Slovak (SVK) Republics (source: authors' calculations on Gi Group Holding 2023 Czech and Slovak labour market surveys, January 2024)

The experience of workplace bullying				
	Yes	Not sure	No	$\Sigma$
CZE	248	121	750	1119
SVK	460	239	793	1492
$\Sigma$	708	360	1543	2611
Chi square statistic $\chi^2 = 51.114$ Critical chi-square value $\chi^2_{0.05}(2) = 5.991$ $H_0$ was rejected. The experience of workplace bullying differs in the Czech and Slovak Republics.				

The question (10) surveyed whether employees have recently experienced a pay cut. For the Czech Republic, employees stated yes (5%) and no (95%). Female employees have experienced a pay cut more than male employees. Older employees (35–64) have experienced a pay cut more than younger employees (18–34). Employees with secondary education have experienced a pay cut more than employees with a university education. For the Slovak Republic, employees stated yes (10%) and no (90%). Male employees have experienced a pay cut more than female employees. Older employees (35–64) have experienced a pay cut more than younger employees (18–34). Employees with secondary education have experienced a pay cut more than employees with a university education.

## 5. Discussion

The comparison of the employee experience in the Czech and Slovak Republics discovered that factors causing employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction (RQ1) in both countries included collaborative colleagues, interesting work, work-life balance, or trust and responsibility, on the one hand, and low earnings, stress and overwork, unfavourable working conditions, and limited career development, on the other hand. Table 4 sums up factors affecting positive and negative employee experience (employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction as well as employee motivation and demotivation). These factors correspond to those employees generally consider important at work, which has been confirmed by many other research studies. To be satisfied, motivated, and productive, employees generally need collaborative colleagues (Cabelkova et al., 2015), diverse work challenges (Islami et al., 2018), work-life balance arrangements (Zubr & Sokolova, 2021), opportunities to participate (Goni-Legaz & Ollo-Lopez, 2017), and other work-related factors individually perceived as important (Szulc-Obloza et al., 2023).

Table 4. Factors affecting positive and negative employee experience (source: authors' findings, January 2024)

Satisfaction	Dissatisfaction	Motivation	Demotivation
Collaborative colleagues. Interesting work. Work-life balance. Trust and responsibility. Cool boss. Ability use.	Low earnings. Stress and overwork. Unfavourable working conditions. Limited career development. Too high work demands.	Good feeling. Interest. Earnings. Responsibility. Recognition.	Overall tiredness. Low earnings. Lack of recognition. Lack of feedback. Lack of personal or career development.

Hypothesis (H1) that the current feelings of employees at work differ in the Czech and Slovak Republics was confirmed. The majority of employees stated feelings of love and smile at work, although the percentage of employees who stated feelings of boredom and anger was also relatively high and slightly higher among employees from the Slovak Republic. In other words, negative feelings associated with work were more common among employees from the Slovak Republic (8%) than from the Czech Republic (5%). The reason could be that employees from the Slovak Republic, vs. employees from the Czech Republic, expressed higher dissatisfaction with low earnings (72% vs. 64%), stress and overwork (53% vs. 44%), limited career development (45% vs. 32%), and too high work demands (35% vs. 24%). These are the critical work-related factors of employee satisfaction (Cabelkova et al., 2015) whose negative levels negatively affect the associations between employee satisfaction and motivation (Mardanov, 2021) and performance (Davidescu et al., 2020). This negative effect was confirmed by the fact that employees from the Slovak Republic more often expressed

reduced motivation to do their best at work, precisely as a result of low earnings, overall tiredness, lack of recognition, and lack of personal or career development. These findings confirm the need to care about factors affecting employee satisfaction (Indrayani et al., 2024).

A very negative phenomenon that disrupts interpersonal relationships in the workplace is workplace bullying (Cullinan et al., 2019). It causes dissatisfaction and demotivation for most of those involved, usually except for those who commit workplace bullying (Liang & Yeh, 2020). It must be prevented by regular communication across the workplace and any displays of workplace bullying must be eliminated and penalized (Sigursteinsdottir & Karlsdottir, 2022). In this context, hypothesis (H2) that the experience of workplace bullying differs in the Czech and Slovak Republics was confirmed. The findings revealed that employees from the Slovak Republic have experienced workplace bullying more often (31%) than employees from the Czech Republic (22%). This fact could be another reason why employees from the Slovak Republic expressed higher dissatisfaction than employees from the Czech Republic.

The factors revealed as factors affecting employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction as well as employee motivation and demotivation are also the factors employers should concentrate on to enhance employee satisfaction (RQ2). To prevent employee dissatisfaction and enhance employee satisfaction, employers should concentrate on factors related to employment opportunities and working conditions, particularly work content, work context, work demands, and work results (see Table 5).

Table 5. Ways of enhancing employee satisfaction at work (source: authors' suggestions, January 2024)

Work Content	Work Context	Work Demands	Work Results
Meaningful tasks and duties. Opportunity to participate and take responsibility.	Favourable work environment. Work-life balance. Satisfactory earnings. Open communication. Development opportunities.	Workload matching individual abilities. Prevention of stress and overwork.	Clear objectives, standards, and deadlines. Regular feedback and recognition.

The suggested ways of enhancing employee satisfaction at work resulting from the findings correspond to the suggestions of other research studies that highlight the importance of motivating tasks and duties (Islami et al., 2018), challenging responsibilities (Goni-Legaz & Ollo-Lopez, 2017), adverse working conditions (Kvasic, 2019), fair earnings (Zubr & Sokolova, 2021), or constructive work relationships (Cabelkova et al., 2015). The contribution of the authors' suggestions is the systematization of potential ways of enhancing employee satisfaction at work in terms of work content, work context, work demands, and work results to be better applicable in practice.

## 6. Conclusions

The comparison of the employee experience in the Czech and Slovak Republics using representative samples of employees from both countries headed to determine which factors cause employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction and which factors employers should concentrate on to enhance employee satisfaction and create more attractive employment opportunities.

The findings uncovered similar employee experiences in the Czech and Slovak Republics. The factors causing employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction included work relationships, earnings, work environment, working hours, workload, responsibility, recognition, work-life balance, and career development. These factors are important for a positive employee experience and they were found to be comparably important for all employees. The difference revealed was that employees from the Slovak Republic expressed more negative feelings associated with work than employees from the Czech Republic. The reason could be that employees from the Slovak Republic expressed higher dissatisfaction with low earnings, stress and overwork, limited career development, and too high work demands. Moreover, employees from the Slovak Republic expressed more often experience with workplace bullying. These findings confirmed that it makes sense to survey factors affecting employee satisfaction to enhance their motivation and performance. To enhance employee satisfaction at work, it was suggested that employers should concentrate on factors concerning work content (such as tasks, duties, and responsibilities), work context (such as earnings), work demands (such as workload and overwork), and work results (such as objectives, standards, and deadlines).

The findings and suggestions are potentially limited by a relatively small scope of the survey in terms of respondents and territories included. The used samples of employees for the Czech and Slovak Republics are also not quite the same size. However, the findings and suggestions complement present scientific findings on employee satisfaction with an empirically proven overview of factors affecting employee satisfaction and ways of enhancing employee satisfaction that could benefit both academics and practitioners. Further scientific efforts following the findings could be directed at employers and how they prevent employee dissatisfaction and enhance employee satisfaction.

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