

A FIT BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES' JOB SATISFACTION AND PERFORMANCE

Danuta Diskienė, Vytautas Goštautas *

Vilnius University, Lithuania

Abstract. *The importance of studies on work-related values and attitudes is obvious as values are ascribed a central role in determining the fit between individuals and the employment organization. Responding to the importance of the issue, the paper emphasizes the meaning of the individual and organizational values' fit for the organization, its possibility to become part of strategic planning and a goal for every manager in charge. The aim of the article is to explore the theoretical concepts on values' fit and to compare it with the empirical research findings. The research question is how the individual and organizational values' fit is related with the job satisfaction and performance of the employees. Adapted methods of the survey of job satisfaction measuring nine different facet scales, were used, performance results were obtained from the organization, and two different variables related to quality and sales were measured. The research was conducted in the Lithuanian Telecommunication company. The findings of the research emphasize that job satisfaction has significant correlations with individual and organizational values' fit. Employees whose job satisfaction was higher had higher fit scores. The performance of employees had no significant correlation with job satisfaction scales.*

Key words: *individual values, organizational values, values fit, job satisfaction, performance*

Preface

It is popular to maintain that values are the key subject in social sciences. However, various scientific paradigms define and explore human values differently. The science of management usually studies values in an organizational, human resource management (HRM) context trying to link values with business performance and the company's success factors such as job satisfaction, employees' performance and productivity, loyalty, a lower turnover, etc. We know that in principle values do have an impact on a company's success factors, but usually correlations are rather weak and vary from organization to organization. Researching the notion of values, we can rise to the notion of values' fit. Values' fit means that there is some kind of match, congruence among the values of the employee and the organization. It is generally believed that the values' list generated

* *Corresponding author.*

Faculty of Economics, Department of Management, Vilnius University Saulėtekio ave. 9, II, room 706, LT-10222 Vilnius, Lithuania; e-mail: vytautas.gostautas@gmail.com;

by different authors can vary in length, but the most important individual values clearly score the top places, and others are lagging behind. The organizational values are simply the projection of the group survival needs, and differ mostly in its purpose: not only guiding an individual, but also serving as the standards of conduct for a group of people. A strong fit between these kinds of values can be called a strong culture and the opposite a weak culture.

However, it is tricky to measure the fit. To grasp a link among the research variables is not an easy task. Some researchers will argue that the values may be measured only by qualitative methods rather than a quantitative analysis. In this research, we have used the quantitative research methods to evaluate the importance of values. There is a clear distinction between cultural organization values, defined as the core values of the organizational culture, and espoused values, the values that are implemented by managers and communicated to the employees in order to achieve organizational strategic goals. The difference between these types of organizational values is that cultural values are formed naturally depending on a lot of different factors and the sector in which the organization is operating, and the others are implemented by the management hoping for a positive change in employees' thinking.

The goal of this research was to disclose the values fit in the company and its implications for employees' performance and job satisfaction. The hypothetical model of the impact of individual and organizational values' fit on the employee's performance and job satisfaction is presented in Fig. 1. The measurement of the job satisfaction of the employees and the perceived values' fit were acquired by the internet questionnaire-survey. For the job satisfaction, the adapted method of Paul Spector (JSS) was used. The evaluation of the performance was done independently by the institution. Data analysis was done by using quantitative statistical methods.

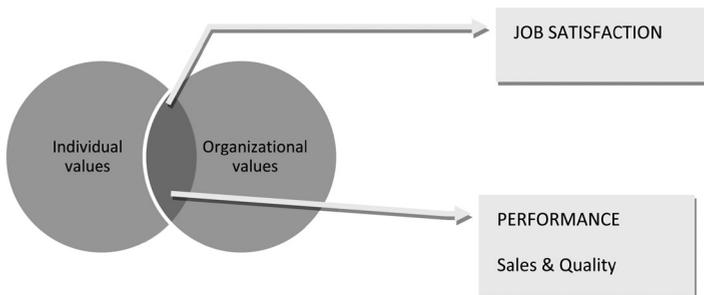


FIG. 1. Hypothetical model of the impact of individual and organizational values' fit on employees performance and job satisfaction

1. Theoretical background of the research

Performance

The performance could be defined as the ability of an employee to reach the measurable goals, and standards effectively and efficiently. The performance objective means that the agreed results should be fulfilled. The performance is often related to the pay and other benefits received by the employee, but in rear cases it can also be related to job satisfaction, while performance management is to be motivating, rewarding, and leading to ensure that the objectives of the company are met. The values are often associated with the performance. The manager's task is "converting espoused values into values in use: that the rhetoric becomes reality" (Armstrong, 2006).

Indeed, for every manager, it is a challenge to link employees' performance with personal gains of the employees through the competitive company's ideology. A lot of companies are trying to increase the level of job satisfaction among their employees, hoping that this will increase their productivity (performance). According to Robbins (2007), the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity shows a rather weak (+ 0.14) correlation. Therefore, we can see that productivity and job satisfaction are two different dimensions of the company success measurement and should be analyzed separately.

Job satisfaction

It is generally agreed that job satisfaction expresses the employees' attitude: job satisfaction shows how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs (Spector, 1997). Job satisfaction is a general attitude that the employees have towards their job and is directly related to individual needs including challenging work, equitable rewards, and a supportive work environment and colleagues (Ostroff, 1992). The attitude of the employees towards their job can be measured as high and low. If the employee is unsatisfied with his work, his attitude is negative. If the employee is satisfied with his work, his attitude is positive (Robbins, 2006). Decreasing dissatisfaction will increase the job satisfaction (Crow, 1995). Herzberg's theory states that job satisfaction can be increased in the company by the use of motivators (Chmiel, 2005). We think that individual and organizational values could provide a source of motivation and catalyse an increase in job satisfaction. The misfit between organizational and individual values of the employees can be a source of cognitive dissonance for the employee and is related to stress and a lower job satisfaction. Demographic characteristics also have an impact on job satisfaction of the employees: age (Jucevičienė, 1996), educational background (Verhofstadt, 2007; Šunokaitė 2008), the length of work (Oshagbemi, 2003), gender (Van Praag, 2008).

Job satisfaction is a psychological concept linked to employees' performance, lower turnover, loyalty, productivity and other factors of the organizational success. It is also

related to demographic factors such as age, gender, and education of the employees. Job satisfaction is related to individual and organizational values (Diskienė, Goštautas, 2010).

Values and their fit

M. Rokeach defined values as an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. A value system is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning the preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance (Rokeach, 1973). Values serve as the guiding principles of what people consider important in life (Cheng, 2010). Espoused values are a small set of guiding principles generally introduced to the company's strategy to help to achieve organizational goals (Diskiene, Goštautas, 2010). If individual values are socially shared cognitive representations of personal needs and the means for satisfying them, the institutional values are socially share cognitive representations of institutional goals and demands. Thus, institutional and individual values are really the opposite sides of the same coin (Rokeach, 1979).

“Espoused values” are those that are expressed, either verbally or in writing, but are not consistently embodied or realized in action (Dolan, 2011). Daly (2004) provided a clarification of the espoused values' definition: espoused values are the values that are expressed on behalf of the organization or attributed to an organization by its senior managers in public statements such as the firms' annual reports. Therefore, espoused values are different from what some have termed organizational values, i.e. the values that are shared by all or a large proportion of an organization's members. Espoused values can, in some cases at least, reflect differences in organizational practices and strategies. In many cases, they may reflect what senior managers actually believe their organizations to be like, what they would like or prefer their organizations to be like, or how they would like their organizations to be perceived by significant stakeholders, partners, and clients. Simply, espoused values are the values which top managers aspire to, or the values they simply project (Daly, 2004).

There is a variety of methods and definitions for the values' fit, but generally people speak about some kind of compatibility between a person and an organization. Also, the misfit or the conflict between what is done in theory and what is observed in practice generates a confusion, the lack of commitment and the “psychological absenteeism” among employees (Dolan, 2006). Values' fit is often related to HRM functions such as selection, adaptation (socialization), development and compensation of the employees and also to success factors of the organizations, such as employee's job satisfaction, performance, commitment to the organization, less turnover, etc. (Diskienė, Goštautas,

2012). Kouzes (2003) discovered an association between individual and organizational values' clarification and the commitment of the employees. He has found that employees to whom individual and organizational values were more clear were more committed to the organization, and vice versa; the ones to whom individual and organizational values were less clear, were completely not interested in their work. Therefore, we see a parallel between values' clarification and values' fit, although the terms are not completely the same.

Values are strategic lessons learned and maintained (Dolan, 2011). The different values also call for different strategies: the market cultures' strategic priorities are market dominance, big goals, competition, while clan cultures' top priorities are employee development and focus on commitment (Cameron, Quinn, 2004). Gordon (1992) found that a specific type of value or belief has been claimed to have a particular effect. Contrasts in shared beliefs about the importance of people versus the importance of performance led companies to adopt different strategies. The espoused values, which are the artificial variables created to support the strategy of the organization, serve as the guiding principles and standards of conduct for a company's employees. By implementing espoused values in the organization, managers are trying to establish what Mintzberg calls the standardization of norms (Matheson, 2009) so that everybody in the organization would be performing their tasks according to the same set of beliefs. Of course, this process will not work if managers try to implement the values that mismatch with the ones that employees already have. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the values' fit would become part of strategic planning and a logical goal of every manager in charge.

2. The research of values' fit and its impact on the job satisfaction and performance of the employees

Purpose of the research

In this research, we focus on the fit of individual and organizational values supporting the notion that the same value definition could be used to evaluate its importance to the employees and to the organization. The correlations between them, and later the sum of these values, could be checked to see the relationship with the employees' performance evaluation and subjective job satisfaction. The relationship between performance and job satisfaction was also evaluated.

Research problems

To reveal how the perceived values' fit is linked with job satisfaction and performance of the employee. The challenge of the research on the values' fit is to choose appropriate statistical methods and clearly define the variables, and also the statistical instruments

and methods that can influence our results. The clearly defined fit between the espoused values could lead to positive outcomes such as job satisfaction, which is an intrinsic factor included in the survey, and also the performance indicator, which was used for employees' performance evaluation.

Method

The employees surveyed were from a Lithuanian business company. For data gathering, the internet survey method was used. The survey was sent to employees of the company. The questionnaire was answered by 316 respondents. The valid answers to the questionnaire differed per questions. There was a different number of respondents for the different research areas, as the employees had not filled some parts of the questionnaire for their own reasons. While constructing a survey, the list of espoused values was taken from the company's website, and the adapted methodology of Paul Spector (JSS) measuring, overall job satisfaction built of nine different facets about how employees feel towards different aspects of their job was used. Performance evaluation variables were used, which were related to the sales and quality of employees' job functions. Statistical methods such as analysis of means and Pearson's correlation were used. Espoused values' fit measuring the relationship with job satisfaction and employees' performance was evaluated using the Pearson correlation statistical method.

Limitations

The internet survey proved to be an effective, quick and efficient way of gathering responses; however, there is no direct control of the procedure which is available when you conduct an onsite research with a pen and pencil. The possibility of error in gathering responses is not excluded. The fit between values could also be measured by combining the other variables.

Research results

From Table 1 one can see the espoused values; the extended definitions of these values are stated below:

- **openness** – we openly communicate and are open to new technologies and change; **responsibility** – relations with clients, co-workers and society are based on responsibility, and we keep our promises;
- **activity** – we understand the business environment, and we create value for clients and our shareholders;
- **collaboration** – relationships with clients and colleagues are based on respect and good will.

TABLE 1. Employees' (N = 250) mean espoused values preference check by the importance to the organization and the employee (mean)

Values	Openness	Responsibility	Activity	Collaboration
Preference by the importance to the employee	3	2	4	1
Mean (N = 250)	6	6.33	5.94	6.36
Std. deviation	0.996	0.836	1.057	0.836
Std. error, mean	0.063	0.053	0.067	0.0053
Correlation between value preference (Pearson's correlation, significance, N)	.457**, 0.00, 250	.519**, 0.00, 249	.474**, 0.00, 249	.496** 0.00, 2.47
Preference by the importance to the organization	4	1	3	2
Mean (N = 250)	6.06	6.32	6.23	6.28
Std. deviation	1.104	0.88	0.977	0.962
Std. error, mean	0.07	0.056	0.062	0.061

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

Source: compiled by authors.

Organizational espoused values are implemented by management as part of their long-term strategy and posted on their website. However, rating these values by the employees according to their importance to the employees and to the company is one of the possible evaluations of the values' fit. The values are rated according to the mean difference among the research variables.

As one can see in Table 1, the rating of the values according to the importance for the employees and for the organization differ. The most important hierarchy of espoused values for the employees is as follows:

1. Collaboration.
2. Activity.
3. Responsibility.
4. Openness.

The most important hierarchy of the espoused values according to the importance for the organization are:

1. Responsibility.
2. Collaboration.
3. Activity.
4. Openness.

The other possible indicator of the fit between the espoused values is inter-correlation (Pearson) between the individual and organizational values. From this research method,

according to the gathered results, we can see that the best correlation among the values as a possible source of the fit is ranked as follows:

1. Responsibility.
2. Collaboration.
3. Activity.
4. Openness.

As we see, the correlation rating among these variables is the same as in the values' hierarchy by the importance for the organization. In conclusion, although the differences in values' rating are significant as compared by statistical methods, the differences are small and might not be of a big practical use for the company.

Another method to investigate the possible source of the fit is trying to combine the values' hierarchy with the possible positive outcomes for the company and the employees. Such variables could be measured by the job satisfaction and also by some performance indicators, called Performance 1 and Performance 2.

As one can see in Table 2, the relationship between the espoused values perceived by the employees by the importance for the employee and the employer has no significant correlation. It rather demonstrates a tendency with a varying positive to negative relationship with performance evaluation, in contrast with the employees' job satisfaction which has a positive correlation with every organizational espoused value.

From Table 3 we can see how values fit scales correlated with job satisfaction facets. The nine different facets show how employees are satisfied with different aspects of their job. We can see that the majority of values' fit scales have a significant correlation with job satisfaction facets. The strongest correlation was found among all four scales (openness FIT, responsibility FIT, activity FIT, and collaboration FIT) and two job satisfaction scales (promotion and nature of work), whereas job satisfaction facets like contingent rewards and operating conditions showed a weaker correlation or even a negative tendency.

From Table 4 one can see the inter-correlations among nine facets of job satisfaction and the overall job satisfaction of the employees. The biggest benefit to the overall job satisfaction is contributed by supervision, co-workers, and communication scales, while the least contribution to overall job satisfaction is made by promotion and fringe benefits scales.

Figure 2 shows nine facets of job satisfaction, which are summed up to the overall satisfaction with the variable correlation between job satisfaction, and other research variables are calculated. We can see that employees' opinion varies (measured by mean scores) depending on the scale (the employees are least satisfied with fringe benefits and promotion possibilities, and most satisfied with supervision and co-workers' scales).

TABLE 2. Correlations between espoused values in connection with importance of values to the employees and the organization

Espoused values sorted by the importance for the employee (individual) and the importance for the organization	Correlation, significance, N	Performance 1 (related to sales)	Performance 2 (related to quality)	Total job satisfaction
Openness (we openly communicate and are open to new technologies and change). For the employee	Pearson's correlation	-0.05	0.032	.243**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.595	0.673	0
Responsibility (relations with clients, co-workers and society are based on responsibility and we keep what are promised). For the employee	Pearson's correlation	0.094	0.08	.197**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.32	0.29	0.002
	N	114	176	246
Activity (we understand business environment and we create value for clients and our shareholders). For the employee	Pearson's correlation	-0.036	-0.003	.202**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.703	0.97	0.001
	N	114	176	246
Collaboration (relationship with clients and colleagues is based on respect and good will). For the employee	Pearson's correlation	0.074	0.039	.232**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.432	0.606	0
	N	114	176	246
Openness (we openly communicate and are open to new technologies and change). For the employee	Pearson's correlation	-0.002	-0.001	.223**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.983	0.991	0
	N	115	177	247
Responsibility (relations with clients, co-workers and society is based on responsibility and we keep what is promised). For the organization	Pearson's correlation	-0.024	0.058	.216**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.8	0.443	0.001
	N	114	176	246
Activity (we understand business environment and we create value for clients and our shareholders). For the organization	Pearson's correlation	0.004	-0.031	.146*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.967	0.679	0.022
	N	114	176	246
Collaboration (relationship with clients and colleagues is based on respect and good will). For the organization	Pearson's correlation	0.114	-0.014	.179**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.226	0.851	0.005
	N	114	174	244

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

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

Source: compiled by authors.

TABLE 3. Values' fit scale correlations with job satisfaction facets

Job satisfaction scale	Correlation, significance	Openness FIT (N = 247)	Responsibility FIT (N = 246)	Activity FIT (N = 246)	Collaboration FIT (N = 24)
Pay	Pearson's correlation	.153*	.212**	.225**	.157*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	.001	.000	.014
Promotion	Pearson's correlation	.259**	.237**	.230**	.245**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
Supervision	Pearson's correlation	.166**	.150*	.116	.105
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.018	.069	.102
Fringe benefits	Pearson's correlation	.200**	.171**	.125*	.215**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.007	.050	.001
Contingent rewards	Pearson's correlation	.093	.156*	.078	.120
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.146	.014	.223	.060
Operating conditions	Pearson's correlation	-.012	-.031	-.016	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.848	.629	.805	.997
Co-workers	Pearson's correlation	.189**	.143*	.124	.131*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.025	.052	.041
Nature of work	Pearson's correlation	.273**	.277**	.299**	.283**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
Communication	Pearson's correlation	.208**	.102	.055	.130*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.110	.389	.042
Total job satisfaction	Pearson's correlation	.273**	.239**	.202**	.233**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001	.000

TABLE 4. Inter-correlations between nine facets of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction of the employees (N = 248)

Job satisfaction scale	Correlation, significance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pay	Pearson's correlation	1									
Promotion	Pearson's correlation	.254**	1								
Supervision	Pearson's correlation	.196**	.243**	1							
Fringe benefits	Pearson's correlation	.272**	.283**	.172**	1						
Contingent rewards	Pearson's correlation	.285**	.312**	.353**	.289**	1					
Operating conditions	Pearson's correlation	.152*	.021	.299**	.083	.187**	1				
Co-workers	Pearson's correlation	.177**	.174**	.501**	.263**	.378**	.317**	1			
Nature of work	Pearson's correlation	.345**	.513**	.298**	.315**	.418**	.146*	.314**	1		
Communication	Pearson's correlation	.275**	.194**	.372**	.281**	.362**	.342**	.505**	.349**	1	
Total job satisfaction	Pearson's correlation	.465**	.493**	.745**	.448**	.612**	.498**	.707**	.634**	.705**	1

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

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

Source: compiled by authors.

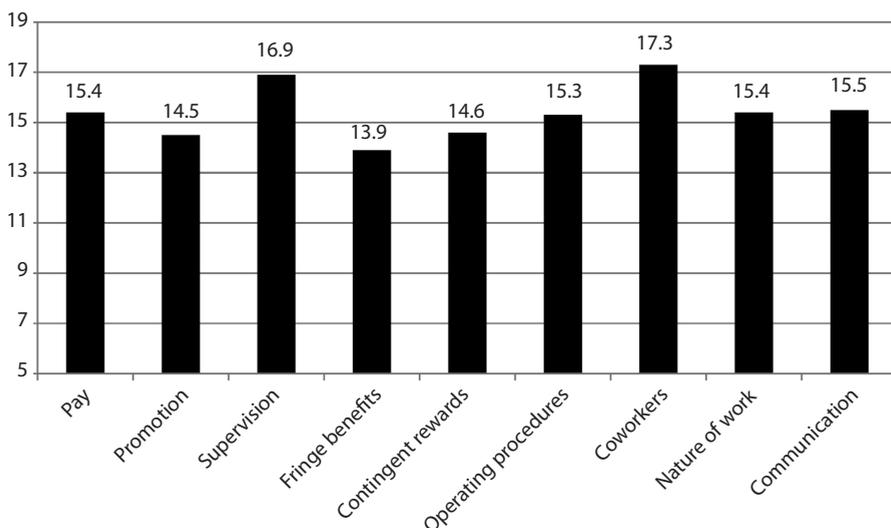


FIG. 2. The nine facets of job satisfaction

Methodology: Spector, Paul (1997), data of Lithuanian business company surveyed in 2013.

TABLE 5. The differences of espoused values' FIT scales by the importance to the employee and to the organization

Merged fit sum values by the importance for the employee and for the organization	TOTAL JOB_ SATISFACTION Evaluation	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error, mean	Cronbach's alpha of constructed scale
Openness	>= 137.00	121	12.5124	1.49508	.13592	.683
	< 137.00	126	11.6667	1.93080	.17201	
Responsibility	>= 137.00	121	12.9587	1.35645	.12331	.625
	< 137.00	125	12.3760	1.52751	.13662	
Activity	>= 137.00	121	12.3306	2.08722	.18975	.641
	< 137.00	125	11.4720	2.08131	.18616	
Collaboration	>= 137.00	120	12.9750	1.38699	.12661	.659
	< 137.00	124	12.2984	1.65760	.14886	

Source: compiled by authors.

From Table 3 one can see the espoused values FIT which are the sums of two variables: the value scored by the importance to the employees and the value scored by the importance to the employer. One can see that the employees who had a fit among the values were significantly more satisfied with their jobs. The Cronbach's alpha for all of the fit scales constructed was above 0.6.

The demographics of the respondents

TABLE 6. Frequencies and percentage of demographic data on employees-respondents

Demographics (N)	Frequency	%
Gender (N = 243)		
Male	61	25.1
Female	182	74.9
Age (N = 243)		
Under 22	50	20.6
22–25	86	35.4
26–30	56	23.1
31+	51	20.9
Years of service (N = 236)		
Under 2	93	39.4
2-4	83	35.2
5+	60	25.4
Education (N = 241)		
Secondary school	69	28.6
College	52	21.6
University bachelor	101	41.9
University master	19	7.9
Family status (N = 243)		
Single	180	74.1
Married	63	25.9

Source: compiled by authors.

The employees (N = 243) answered the demographic question about their age; the mean age of the respondents was 27.48 years. The average of the time employees (N = 236) stated had been working for the company was 3.31 years. The majority of respondents (N = 307) were female (74.9%), and males comprised 25.1%. The education of the employees distributed as follows: finished school – 28.6%, college – 21.6%, university bachelors – 41.9%, university masters – 7.9%.

Table 7 shows the mean differences by gender in values' fit scales. Females had higher ranking of fit than male respondents. The differences were statistically significant.

Employee demographics correlations with job satisfaction and performance.

The age of the respondents positively correlated with performance_1 (Pearson: .235; Sig. (2tailed: .013; N = 111), and Performance 2 (Pearson: .165; Sig. (2 – tailed: .030; N = 173). Job satisfaction negatively correlated with age (Pearson: –.194; Sig. (2 – tailed: .003; N=241). All of the respondents whose espoused values' fit was higher were more satisfied with their job. Females whose values' fit was higher were more satisfied with their jobs.

TABLE 7. Differences by gender in values fit scales (means)

Value scales	Gender	N	Mean	Std. deviation
Openness	Male	61	11.5410	2.22541
	Female	181	12.2376	1.58252
Responsibility	Male	61	11.9836	2.21729
	Female	180	12.8778	1.03382
Activity	Male	61	11.4098	2.83653
	Female	180	12.0444	1.81804
Collaboration	Male	61	12.0492	2.23924
	Female	178	12.8146	1.20938

Differences were significant at $p < 0.05$ level.

Source: compiled by authors.

Conclusions

The relationship between performance and job satisfaction is contradictory in business scientific literature. No correlation between these two variables (performance and job satisfaction) was found in our research, but it is also possible that this is because it depends on the methodology. In this research, job satisfaction was measured by the opinion of the employees (subjectively), and performance was measured by the opinion of the employer (objectively).

The espoused values of employees had no correlation with employees' performance. Job satisfaction was positively correlated with all of the espoused values and fit scales: activity, collaboration, openness, and responsibility. The fit of espoused values showed significant differences related to job satisfaction. The greater was the perceived fit calculated as a sum between espoused values rated by the importance to the individual and importance to organization, the more satisfied employees were with their job (overall job satisfaction).

The values' fit scales correlate with job satisfaction facets. The nine different facets show how employees are satisfied with different aspects of their job. High correlations were found for all four scales – openness, responsibility, activity, and collaboration, and for two job satisfaction scales – promotion and the nature of work, whereas job satisfaction facets such as contingent rewards and operating conditions showed a lower correlation or even a negative tendency. The nature of values and values' fit means that they have a different impact on the job satisfaction facets. Additional research is needed to reveal the possible benefits of such relations for the company.

Correlations among the nine facets of job satisfaction and the overall job satisfaction of the employees. The biggest benefit to the overall job satisfaction is contributed by supervision, co-workers, and communication scales, while the least contribution to overall

job satisfaction is done by promotion and fringe benefits scales. In conclusion, managers should pay attention to the impact every single scale has on the overall job satisfaction.

Managers of the companies should invest more in communicating the organizational values to the employees from the beginning of job relations; the opinion of the employees about the company values should be developed, and the awareness of it should be encouraged through training, coaching, and development initiatives.

From the demographical point of view, the gender of employees has an impact on values' fit. Female employees scored higher on values' fit than males. The difference was statistically significant. As the relationship between the gender of employees, described in scientific literature, is contradictory, our results show that gender has a significant impact on the employee's job satisfaction. The females whose values showed more fit were more satisfied with their jobs.

The employer should try to explore the values of the employees and to level them with the organization's values to attain the best possible match between person and organization. In a small company, this task can be easily done by managers, whereas in a large-scale organization these processes should be done by top management through leadership skills and by the HRM department by day-to-day operations.

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