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## Self-esteem and satisfaction in the workgroup. The post-pandemic perspective

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**Abstract.** The relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem has been analysed at length by professionals in different fields. Research on the relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem aims to improve worker productivity. Although research over time includes many different jobs, methods, and test groups, the conclusion is almost unanimous that regardless of job status, there is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem. The research aim is to identify the relationship between the self-esteem of employed people and their satisfaction in the work group. In this sense, we analysed some basic concepts, self-esteem and job satisfaction - the second of its components. The values obtained during the statistical tests carried out showed the existence of a correlation in the selected sample. Such a link is vital for employers to be aware of, as work failures could negatively impact employees with low self-esteem.

**Keywords.** self-esteem, work group, job satisfaction, remuneration, promotion, communication, personal relationships

### 1. Introduction

The link between self-esteem and job and work group satisfaction is the central theme of this research paper, through a personal desire to understand the mechanisms and interpersonal relationships that influence group performance in the organisational environment.

A group is a collection of individuals interacting with each other so that one person's actions impact others. In organisations, most work is done in groups. How groups function has important implications for organisational productivity (Sintion, 2007). Groups where people get along, feel the desire to contribute to the team, and can coordinate their efforts can have high levels of performance. In contrast, teams characterised by extreme conflict or hostility can demoralise workforce members.

Self-esteem refers to feelings about one's worth or how valuable one considers oneself. This type of feeling comes from all the thoughts, emotions, feelings and experiences in one's life.

On the other hand, satisfaction in and at work refers to the mental and spiritual pleasure one derives from work by satisfying one's needs, interests, and expectations. Hoppock (1935) defines job satisfaction as the psychological, physiological and social factors involved. The

definition indicates that an individual must be satisfied on three levels: physical, psychological and social to achieve job satisfaction. Since this definition links satisfaction with an individual's psychological and social satisfaction, we extract its link with self-esteem.

The concepts of self-esteem and job satisfaction have been extensively studied. There are specialised studies on the relationship between the two, and for the most part, they support this relationship.

We have not been able to identify recent studies on this topic in the local literature, which is why we focused attention in this direction, wanting to deepen it on a study group from the population of Romania, more precisely Constanța County, after the pandemic restriction were lifted.

## **2. Self-esteem and satisfaction in the workgroup. Theoretical foundations**

### **2.1. Self-esteem**

The global personality dimension that humanist frequently evaluates- by experiential psychologists is self-esteem. Self-esteem is closely related to the Self-concept and depends on it, but does not identify with it (Ciorbea et al., 2015).

First described by William James in 1890, self-esteem was defined as the "feeling of self-respect" developed when individuals consistently meet or exceed essential life goals. Furthermore, currently, the definition given by W. James continues to prove its relevance, self-esteem being considered as "the evaluative aspect of self-knowledge", reflecting "the extent to which people like themselves and consider themselves competent" (Zeigler, 2013).

The specialised literature offers many definitions regarding self-esteem, but we can perceive self-esteem as an "intrapersonal, subjective assessment that reflects a personal evaluation" (Zeigler, 2013). There are opinions according to which self-esteem is "the extent to which an individual likes himself and considers himself competent" (Zeigler, 2013).

According to Harter, global self-esteem comprises four dimensions: competence, power, moral worth, and acceptance. Self-concept refers to how these dimensions are manifested and what „value significance” the child/adolescent gives to each of these dimensions (Ciorbea et al., 2015).

Self-esteem is a complex psychological concept, and scientists make a clarification worthy of consideration, namely, the fact that self-esteem does not refer to the feeling of superiority, competition or comparison with others is not part of this concept. On the other hand, expectations of love, friendship, or happiness are parts of the conception under discussion (Branden, 2008).

One of the researchers with extensive concerns regarding self-esteem, Rosenberg M., stated that self-esteem is, in short, "the global assessment that the individual has of himself". He emphasises that high self-esteem refers to the aspect that an individual considers himself worthy and respects himself. The scientist defines self-esteem as a "complex cognitive and affective synthesis involved in dictating the individual's attitude towards his own person" (Lupu, 2019).

Some theories about self-esteem content support a unidimensional interpretation. Others support a multidimensional one. Taking into account the complexity of the studied concept, we bring into discussion the perspective that aims at all its sides, self-esteem being built from the assessment made on each of the following dimensions: the emotional self, the social self, the professional self, the physical self and the anticipatory self (Macarie et al., 2007).

As Brown (2010) showed, a person with increased self-esteem feels professional challenges as easily manageable situations that can bring benefits, while people with low self-

esteem can perceive the same situations as risky or failure-prone. Some studies mention that people with high self-esteem show an optimistic approach to facing failure (Brown, 2010).

## **2.2. The satisfaction in the workgroup**

Job satisfaction is one of the most complex areas facing managers today regarding managing their employees. Many studies have demonstrated an unusually high impact of job satisfaction on worker motivation. At the same time, the motivation level impacts productivity and, therefore, the performance of business organisations (Aziri, 2011).

Different authors have different approaches to defining job satisfaction.

As Maulidiyah pointed out, quoting Robbins (2003, p. 30), job satisfaction is an "attitude exhibited by an employee towards his workplace" (Maulidiyah, 2019).

Attitude results from the difference between the amount of remuneration an employee has received and the amount of remuneration he believes he should receive from completing his work. The same source, citing Handoko (2013, p. 193), identifies job satisfaction as "a pleasant or unpleasant emotional state with which employees view their work" (Maulidiyah, 2019, p. 14).

One of the most often cited definitions of job satisfaction is the one given by Spector: "depending on the job satisfaction has to do with how people feel about their job and its various aspects" (Spector, 1997).

In his definition of job satisfaction, Vroom focuses on the employee's role at work, defining job satisfaction as "the affective orientations of individuals toward the work roles they currently occupy" (Vroom, 1964).

Hoppock defined job satisfaction as any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that lead a person to honestly say that they are satisfied with their job (Hoppock, 1935). According to this approach, although many external factors influence job satisfaction, it remains internal that relate to how the employee feels. That is, job satisfaction presents a set of factors that cause a feeling of satisfaction.

As Maulidiyah (2019) pointed out, indicators of job satisfaction are, according to Celluci et. al. (1974): satisfaction with salary, satisfaction with promotion, satisfaction with co-workers, satisfaction with the attitude of supervisor/supervisor and satisfaction with the work itself.

The importance of job satisfaction comes to the surface, especially if we consider the many negative consequences of job dissatisfaction, such as lack of loyalty, increased absenteeism, and an increased number of injured people.

Spector (1997) lists three essential characteristics of job satisfaction:

- First, organisations should be guided by human values. Such organisations will be oriented towards treating workers fairly and with respect. In such cases, job satisfaction ratings can be a good indicator of employee effectiveness. High levels of job satisfaction can signify employees' good emotional and mental well-being.
- Second, the behaviour of workers according to their level of job satisfaction will affect the operation and business activities of the organisation. From this, it can be concluded that job satisfaction will result in positive behaviour; conversely, job dissatisfaction will result in negative employee behaviour.
- Third, job satisfaction can serve as an indicator of organisational activities. By assessing job satisfaction, different levels of satisfaction in different organisational units can be defined. However, they can indicate which organisational unit changes should be made that would enhance performance (Spector, 1997).

Job satisfaction is influenced by several factors, such as the nature of work, pay, opportunities for advancement, management, work groups and working conditions.

A somewhat different approach to job satisfaction factors is provided by Rue and Byars (2003, p. 259), who states that when it comes to job satisfaction factors, it must be taken into account that they can also cause job dissatisfaction. Such factors include (Rue, LW, Byars, L., 2003, p. 259): manager's concern for people, job design (scope, depth, interest, perceived value), compensation (external and internal consistency), working conditions, social relationships, perceived long-term opportunities, perceived opportunities elsewhere, levels of aspiration and need fulfilment. These factors can generate job satisfaction or dissatisfaction that affects both commitment to the organisation and organisational and organisational performance, embodied in turnover, absenteeism, delays, accidents, strikes, dissatisfaction, and sabotage.

Herzberg's two-factor theory is the most commonly cited view of job satisfaction, the main idea being that employees are influenced by factors in their work environment that cause job satisfaction and factors that cause job dissatisfaction. Therefore, the factors were divided into factors that cause job satisfaction (motivators) and factors that cause job dissatisfaction (hygiene factors). Hygiene factors include company policy, supervision, interpersonal relations, working conditions, pay, condition, and job security, and motivational factors include self-actualisation, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth (Herzberg, H.F. 1976, p. 20).

On the other hand, Mafini, C. and Nobukhosi, D. (2014) observed statistically significant relationships between job satisfaction and four factors of extrinsic motivation: remuneration, quality of work life, supervision and teamwork.

### **3. Research methodology**

#### **3.1. Objectives and assumptions**

The research aim is to identify the relationship between the self-esteem of employed people and their satisfaction in the work group. In this sense, we analysed some basic concepts, self-esteem and job satisfaction - the second on its components, seeking to determine if there are relationships between them and, if so, what they are. We started from the assumption that between self-esteem and job satisfaction, there are mutual influences given by the influences of the factors that make up job satisfaction.

We formulated a first research hypothesis as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>. It is assumed that there is a correlation between the self-esteem and job satisfaction of the respondents.

The secondary hypotheses tested with hypothesis 1 are as follows:

Hs<sub>1</sub>: It is hypothesised that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the "remuneration and promotion" dimension.

Hs<sub>2</sub>: It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the dimension "leadership and interpersonal relations".

Hs<sub>3</sub>: It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the "organisation and communication" dimension.

The second research hypothesis was formulated as follows: H<sub>2</sub>. It is assumed that there are significant differences between men and women regarding work group satisfaction.

### **3.2. Presentation of the sample**

The sample of the present research was convenient, with the respondents being invited through a Google Forms application to complete the instruments used in the research voluntarily. Then the data was introduced and processed using Excel 2019 and SPSS Statistics 26.

The ethical norms in scientific research were respected, and the confidentiality of the data provided by the respondents was ensured.

Sixty-nine people completed the online questionnaire, but only the complete answers of 60 participants were selected, which were statistically processed and based on which the established hypotheses were followed. The people finally included in the study group were characterised from a demographic point of view as follows:

\*The gender breakdown of the sample members reveals that 50.00% of the respondents were male and the difference of 50.00% female.

\*80.00% of respondents live in urban, while 20.00% live in the rural environment.

\* According the age category in which the sample's respondents fall, 66.67% of the respondents are aged between 26 and 45 years old, 23.33% are between 18 and 25 years and only 10.00% fall under 45 years.

\*According to marital status, 36.67% of the people included in the sample are married, 56.67% are unmarried, 3.33% are divorced, and 3.33% are widowed.

\*46.67% of the participants in the study have at least one child, and 53.33% have not yet become parents.

\*From the point of view of the last completed studies, a share of 70.00% have university studies, 16.67% post-graduate studies and 16.67% completed high school studies as their last form of study.

\*Concerning the type of institution employed, it is found that 50.00% are employed in a public institution and 50.00% in a private institution, the division of the sample being balanced.

\*From the activity's specifics perspective, 75.00% is allocated to people who carry out the activity in the service sector. In comparison, in the mixed regime, 15.00% of the respondents were in trade, 6.67%, and in production, only 3.33%.

\*From the type of position held in the workplace, we find 68.33% of participants hold an executive position, while the difference of 31.67% is a management position.

### **3.3. Presentation of the tools used**

The instruments applied in the present study are Rosenberg's "Self-Esteem" Questionnaire and Ticu Constantin's "Work Satisfaction" Questionnaire, both validated on the Romanian population. We applied it on the study population three months after pandemic restriction were lifted. In the following, we offer a description of them.

#### *3.3.1. "Self-esteem" - Rosenberg Questionnaire*

The Rosenberg scale was initially developed to measure the overall sense of personal worth and self-acceptance. The scale includes ten items with four possible answers between total disagreement (1 point) and total agreement (4 points). Scores can be between 10 and 40; high scores indicate low self-esteem. When rating the results, the values between 10-16 points - low self-esteem, 17-33 points - average self-esteem, and 34-40 points - high self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965) will be taken as a benchmark.

### 3.3.2. "Satisfaction in Work" - Ticu Constantin Questionnaire

The "Job Satisfaction" (SP) questionnaire was created by Ticu Constantin and tested on the Romanian population. It addresses a series of factors of job satisfaction, grouped on three levels (dimensions), as follows: remuneration and promotion, management and interpersonal relations, organisation and communication and includes 32 questions that ask for the evaluation of statements (rated from never true to always true) with grades from 1 to 6. A coefficient of "General Satisfaction" is obtained at the end by weighting the three factors. Nine questions are added to the 32 questions that group the respondents according to demographic elements. Regarding "Remuneration and promotion", low scores show the employee's dissatisfaction, and high scores show his satisfaction with the reward for the work he performs (salary, other financial rewards, recognition or promotion opportunities). In "Leadership and interpersonal relations", low scores signify the employee's dissatisfaction, and high scores indicate his satisfaction with the social climate and work relations, both in terms of relations with colleagues or the boss and in terms of the relaxed, non-conflictual atmosphere. Regarding the "Organization and communication" factors, low scores show the employee's dissatisfaction and high scores his satisfaction with how work is organised and carried out: task definition, effort, communication, and feedback (Constantin, T. 2004, p. 285). Regarding Job Satisfaction - the general coefficient shows the extent to which the employee is satisfied/satisfied with the work he does, both in terms of its organisation and in terms of the rewards he receives for the activity performed (material rewards or morals) and of the interpersonal climate in which they work. It should also be noted that the questionnaire on the Romania population was validated by applying it to 566 subjects (general population). It obtained the internal consistency coefficient Alpha Cronbach for "Remuneration and promotion" equal to the value 0.820, for "Leadership and interpersonal relations" equal to 0.760, for "organisation and communication" with 0.738, and on the entire questionnaire for the job satisfaction coefficient, being equal to 0.872 (Constantin, T. 2004, p. 285).

## 3.4. Results and discussions

### 3.4.1. Result

H<sub>1</sub>. It is assumed that there is a correlation between the self-esteem and job satisfaction of the respondents.

In hypothesis 1, we started by testing the normality of the distribution of the two sets of values, obtaining values according to table 1.

Table 1. Testing the normality of values for general satisfaction and self-esteem

|                       | Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup> |    |        | Shapiro-Wilk |    |      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|----|--------|--------------|----|------|
|                       | Statistical                     | df | Sig.   | Statistical  | df | Sig. |
| Satisfaction generous | .097                            | 60 | .200 * | .953         | 60 | .020 |
| Self- esteem          | .164                            | 60 | .000   | .917         | 60 | .001 |

\*. This one is a limit lower of true meanings.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The application of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test reveals a non-normal distribution of the results obtained for self-esteem, embodied in the value of the Sig coefficient. 0.000 less than 0.05, and normal for the general satisfaction coefficient, embodied by the Sig value. 0.200, greater than 0.05. We will calculate the Spearman correlation coefficient to test the correlation hypothesis in this context (table 2).

Table 2. Correlation table for self-esteem and overall job satisfaction

|                |                                   |                         | Score self-esteem | Satisfaction generous in the work |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Spearman's rho | Score self-esteem                 | Correlation Coefficient | 1,000             | .295 *                            |
|                |                                   | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .                 | .022                              |
|                |                                   | N                       | 60                | 60                                |
|                | Satisfaction generous in the work | Correlation Coefficient | .295 *            | 1,000                             |
|                |                                   | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .022              | .                                 |
|                |                                   | N                       | 60                | 60                                |

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

Spearman test, the value obtained highlights the aspect that there is a positive correlation between the two variables analysed on the chosen sample (the correlation coefficient is equal to 0.295, and the value is significant at the 0.05 level). It, therefore, follows that when the self-esteem score increases, general job satisfaction increases and vice versa, which confirms the formulated hypothesis on the analysed sample.

The testing of secondary hypotheses will be done after testing the normality of their distributions, included in table 3.

Table 3. Testing for normality in the distribution of values for "Self-esteem", "Remuneration and promotion", "Communication and personal relationships", and "Organization and communication" dimensions

|                                   | Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup> |    |      | Shapiro-Wilk |    |      |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----|------|--------------|----|------|
|                                   | Statistical                     | df | Sig. | Statistical  | df | Sig. |
| Self- esteem                      | .164                            | 60 | .000 | .917         | 60 | .001 |
| pay and promotion                 | .103                            | 60 | .183 | .963         | 60 | .064 |
| Communication and relations staff | .123                            | 60 | .024 | .954         | 60 | .023 |
| Organisation and communication    | .193                            | 60 | .000 | .917         | 60 | .001 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

We find a normal distribution only at the level of the "Remuneration and promotion" dimension, where Sig. has a value higher than the threshold of 0.05.

Both the distribution of self-esteem values and the distribution of the other dimensions, except for remuneration and promotion, is non-normal, so the test that will be applied to determine the existence of a correlation between the tested variables is the Spearman test.

The secondary hypotheses tested with hypothesis 1 are as follows:

The first secondary hypothesis  $H_{s1}$ : It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the "remuneration and promotion" dimension. Because, as we have already determined, the distribution is, as a whole, one that deviates from the normality curve, they were tested by applying the Spearman correlation test, as table 4 shows.

Table 4. Correlation table for self-esteem with components of general satisfaction

|                                   |                         | Score self-esteem | Pay and promotion | Communication and relations staff | Organisation and communication |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Spearman's rho                    | Correlation Coefficient | 1,000             | .312 *            | .128                              | .162                           |
|                                   | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .                 | .015              | .328                              | .216                           |
|                                   | N                       | 60                | 60                | 60                                | 60                             |
| Pay and promotion                 | Correlation Coefficient | .312 *            | 1,000             | .395 **                           | .461 **                        |
|                                   | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .015              | .                 | .002                              | .000                           |
|                                   | N                       | 60                | 60                | 60                                | 60                             |
| Communication and relations staff | Correlation Coefficient | .128              | .395 **           | 1,000                             | .824 **                        |
|                                   | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .328              | .002              | .                                 | .000                           |
|                                   | N                       | 60                | 60                | 60                                | 60                             |
| Organisation and communication    | Correlation Coefficient | .162              | .461 **           | .824 **                           | 1,000                          |
|                                   | Sig. (2-tailed)         | .216              | .000              | .000                              | .                              |
|                                   | N                       | 60                | 60                | 60                                | 60                             |

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

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

Spearman correlation coefficient equal to 0.312 (the value is significant at the 0.05 level) between the two variables analysed on the tested sample. The value obtained highlights the aspect that there is a positive correlation, and the hypothesis it confirms on the group study. So, when the self-esteem score increases, the remuneration and promotion at work increase and vice versa.

The second secondary hypothesis H<sub>s2</sub>: It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the dimension "leadership and interpersonal relations" it is not confirmed in the analysed sample, so we suspend the decision (Spearman coefficient equal to 0.128).

The third secondary hypothesis H<sub>s3</sub>: It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the dimension "organisation and communication" it is not confirmed in the analysed sample, so we suspend the decision (Spearman coefficient equal to 0.162).

However, the study of the values obtained for the correlations between dimensions reveals a series of at least surprising findings. Although there is a correlation between self-

esteem and the general job satisfaction of the surveyed employees, but also between self-esteem and remuneration and promotion, the testing also led to the identification of correlations between the three dimensions of job satisfaction that were not predicted, but they are normal: remuneration and promotion correlate not only with job satisfaction but also with organisation and communication and with communication and personal relationships;

H<sub>2</sub>. It is assumed that there are significant differences between males and females regarding work group satisfaction.

In demonstrating this hypothesis, we started from the comparative approach through the descriptive elements of the sample: mean, median, mode, and standard deviation (table 5).

Table 5. Descriptive statistics on overall job satisfaction by gender

|                                | Gender | N  | Mean  | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|--------------------------------|--------|----|-------|----------------|-----------------|
| Satisfaction generous the work | male   | 30 | 3,983 | .4811          | .0878           |
|                                | female | 30 | 3,900 | .5745          | .1049           |

A first sight, we observed the following elements: the average of general job satisfaction among male persons is equal to 3.983, the median is 3.938, and the standard deviation is 0.4811, with a minimum of 3.1 and a maximum of 4.8, a series of visible differences are recorded for women as follows: the average of general job satisfaction is 3.900, the median is 3.734, the standard deviation of 0.5745, also with a minimum of 3.1 and a maximum of 4.8.

Testing the normality of the distribution of overall job satisfaction by gender (table 6) reveals the normality of the distribution (Sig. values are greater than 0.05).

Table 6. Testing for normality in the distribution of general satisfaction values by gender

|                                | Gender | Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup> |    |      | Shapiro-Wilk |    |      |
|--------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|----|------|--------------|----|------|
|                                |        | Statistical                     | df | Sig. | Statistical  | df | Sig. |
| Satisfaction generous the work | male   | .138                            | 30 | .150 | .960         | 30 | .313 |
|                                | female | .155                            | 30 | .064 | .913         | 30 | .018 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

We applied the Levene's Independent Samples Test to determine the homogeneity of variances and test hypothesis no. 2. The homogeneity is respected, and the hypothesis is confirmed in the study group (table 7).

Table 7. Application of the t-test for independent samples

| Levene's Test for Equality of Variances |                             |                 |                 |                       |   |       |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-------|
|   |                             |                 |                 | F                     | Sig.                                      |       |
| Satisfaction generous the work          | Equal variances assumed     |                 |                 |                       | 4,157                                     | .046  |
|   | Equal variances not assumed |                 |                 |                       |   |       |
| t-test for Equality of Means            |                             |                 |                 |                       |   |       |
| t                                       | df                          | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |       |
|   |                             |                 |                 |                       | Lower                                     | Upper |
| .609                                    | 58                          | .545            | .0833           | .1368                 | -.1905                                    | .3572 |

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|      |        |      |       |       |        |       |
|------|--------|------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| .609 | 56,264 | .545 | .0833 | .1368 | -.1907 | .3574 |
|------|--------|------|-------|-------|--------|-------|

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Sig value. equal to 0.046, lower than 0.05, shows the hypothesis of a significant difference between males and females in terms of job satisfaction is confirmed in our study group.

### 3.4.2. Discussions

Regarding the correlation between self-esteem and satisfaction in (group of) work, specialised literature supports the connection through studies undertaken by many researchers in this direction. Previous studies have also established the relationship between self-esteem and job satisfaction. Biabangard (1997) states that personal satisfaction is greatly influenced by the value people place on "themselves". It also claims that job dissatisfaction is one of the symptoms of people with low self-esteem and that people with high self-esteem are mainly interested in cooperation with others.

Cherabin et al. (2012) also found a significant relationship between self-esteem and job satisfaction.

The study undertaken by Alavi, HR, & Askaripur, MR (2003) indicates the existence of a significant relationship between self-esteem and the degree of job satisfaction: the degree of satisfaction arising from the type and nature of the work, the degree of satisfaction from the manager or supervisor, the degree of satisfaction derived from the relationship with work colleagues, self-esteem and the degree of satisfaction derived from promotion and remuneration. The same study showed no significant difference between the degree of job satisfaction and its five dimensions in the different levels of each modifying variable: gender, age, salary, marital status, number of family members and service record.

Research by Ferris et al. (2013) showed that the elements that make up "core self-evaluation" (an umbrella term that includes self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control and emotional stability) are predictors of job satisfaction. Otherwise, according to the authors, employees tend to be satisfied with their jobs when they have high self-esteem. Furthermore, researchers have found that employees who feel good about themselves and are successful at work are more satisfied with their jobs. Conversely, the situation is reversed if employees feel bad about themselves and have failed at work.

Studies on self-esteem undertaken by Simpson and Boyle (1975) and Pierce and Gardener (2004) showed that influence was observed at situational and task levels, indicating self-esteem as a predictor of employee attitude and its relationship with other variables.

One such variable is work engagement Maslach et al., (2001), which is influenced by job satisfaction.

In a study on the relationship between self-esteem and work engagement, Kim and Hyun (2017, p. 2) found that self-esteem positively impacted work engagement. Job characteristics such as compensation, reward, and recognition enhance social status, leading to higher self-esteem and affecting work engagement. Other authors found that self-esteem contributes to the development of work engagement. Individuals with low self-esteem negatively perceive themselves, and in the workgroup, they are strongly affected by what others think about them; they complement people who give them positive feedback while looking down on those who give them negative feedback. Evaluations of others influence self-esteem. At the opposite pole, very high self-esteem could be exaggerated. When people with high self-esteem find themselves in stressful situations, they may misuse praise. It attracts negative perceptions from group

members. Very high self-esteem can lead to too much self-confidence, leading to conflicts with other people.

Self-esteem, job satisfaction and performance were also the focus of a 1980 study (Walsh, EJ & Taylor; M.C., 1980, p. 252). This study explored the differential impact of self-esteem on the relationships between job satisfaction scores (general, intrinsic, extrinsic, and pay) and job performance (Lopez, 1982). The authors hypothesised that self-esteem moderates job performance and satisfaction (Lopez, 1982, p. 335). The study found no significant correlations between the three measures of self-esteem and performance on the various satisfaction scales. It suggests that self-esteem's chronic, task-specific, and social components are unrelated to performance and satisfaction. Although chronic self-esteem was significantly related to task-specific and social components, specific and social self-esteem were not significantly correlated. These findings support the idea that self-esteem moderates the job performance-job satisfaction relationship.

The data also showed that social self-esteem was the most potent factor in women's six dimensions of satisfaction. In contrast, in men, task-specific self-esteem had the greatest moderating power.

As for whether there is a significant difference between males and females in workgroup satisfaction, previous studies on job satisfaction and gender have had mixed results. In comparison, some authors conclude that women enjoy higher satisfaction than men, while other studies found no difference once other factors were considered.

For example, a study by Andrade, M.S., Miller, D., & Westover, J.H. (2021) used data from the 2015 International Social Survey Program to investigate whether gender, country, and workplace-based factors exert an influence on the level of job satisfaction of employees. Extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards, work relationships, and work-life balance rewards were examined. Overall, no differences were identified between males and females job satisfaction. In only one country, women's job satisfaction was significantly higher, and extrinsic outcomes were significantly lower for women.

A study undertaken by Okpara, J.O., Squillace, M. and Erondu, E.A. (2005) showed the existence of noticeable gender differences in the levels of job satisfaction of university teachers surveyed. Females were more satisfied with their work and colleagues, while males were more satisfied with their pay, promotions, supervision, and overall job satisfaction. The results also indicated that hierarchical positions held were significant in explaining gender differences and the job satisfaction of respondents.

Another study by Miao, Y., Li, L., & Bian, Y. (2017) showed gender differences in job quality and job satisfaction among doctors in rural western China, proving that female participants have better work quality and higher job satisfaction. Indeed, the studies conducted did not address the general population, as is the study conducted by us. The targeted populations were specific from the point of view of the workplace or work environment.

### **3.5. Limits of research**

The study's limitations were related, in addition to the structure of the sample by age, gender and residence. To the errors in the answers produced as a result of its online application through the Google Forms survey platform, errors that consisted in the ticking by 9 of the 69 initial respondents repeatedly gave more than one answer to the job satisfaction questionnaire. This aspect led to invalidating these questionnaires and keeping only those 60 questionnaires filled in fully and correctly for the study so that the answers were not distorted. In addition to this limitation, we can also specify the structure of the convenience sample, which is different

from the structure of the national population, an aspect that influences its representativeness (see the structure by gender, the structure by background, and the structure by education level).

### **Conclusions**

The relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem has been analysed at length by professionals in different fields: psychologists, sociologists, academic professors, and people in the business community. Researching the relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem in a capitalist environment aims to improve worker productivity. Although research over time includes many jobs, methods, and test groups, the conclusion is almost unanimous. Regardless of job status, there is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem. In the present work, according to the Spearman test, the values obtained in the statistical tests carried out highlighted the aspect that there is a positive correlation between self-esteem and job satisfaction in the selected sample. It results that when the self-esteem score increases, the overall satisfaction at work increases and vice versa, confirming the first hypothesis formulated on the analysed sample. Such a link between employee self-esteem and workgroup and workplace satisfaction is vital for employers to be aware of, as workplace failures could hurt employees with low self-esteem. Furthermore, how the manager reacts to the failure can further exacerbate the problem or begin to turn things around. The right type of intervention can be a means of improving job satisfaction and, ultimately, job performance.

Spearman correlation coefficient is equal to 0.312, a value that highlights the positive correlation. So, when the self-esteem score increases, the remuneration and promotion at work increase and vice versa.

The second secondary hypothesis IS2: It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the dimension "leadership and interpersonal relations" it is not confirmed in the analysed sample, so we suspend the decision. Further tests are needed.

The third secondary hypothesis IS3: It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the dimension "organisation and communication" it is not confirmed in the analysed sample, so we suspend the decision, and in this case, further tests are needed.

Also, the second hypothesis formulated, the hypothesis of the existence of a significant difference between male and female persons in terms of job satisfaction, is confirmed by the study group.

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