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THE SATISFACTION OF THE PROFESSIONAL AND COMMISSIONED MILITARY PERSONNEL WITH THEIR CURRENT OCCUPATIONAL DESIGNATION

As part of the “Performance evaluation 2007” research the author analyses the satisfaction of the professional and commissioned military personnel with their current occupational designation. He states that the majority of the responders — 78% — are satisfied, which is almost 20% more than what TÁRKI Social Research Institute measured among civilian employees. Satisfaction shows a positive correlation with rank, served time and age variables. The satisfaction of male and female personnel is different in both degree and cause. The difference in the factors causing satisfaction and dissatisfaction seems to confirm Herzberg’s theory.

INTRODUCTION

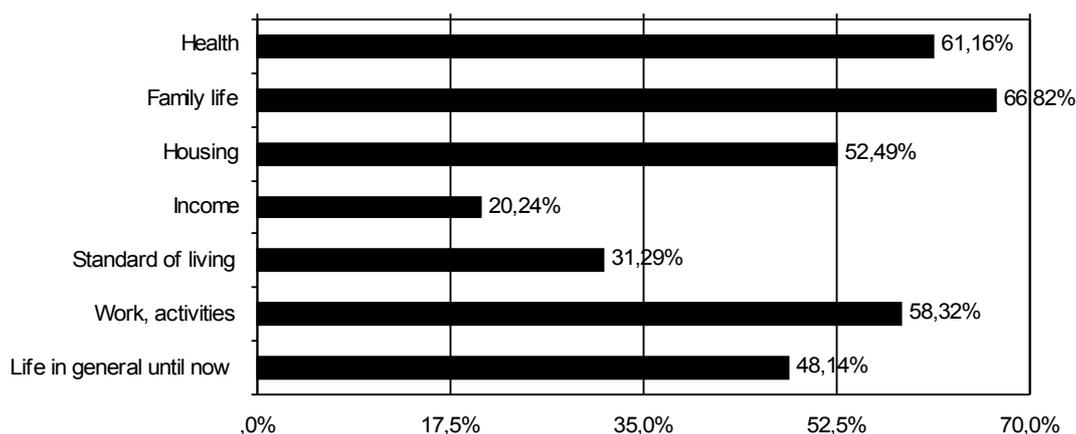
The modernization of the military as well as the perpetually changing external and internal environmental factors demands a rational realization of human resources management. This is exceptionally crucial in the case of a military force in which during the past fifteen years several waves of reform and a significant reduction of personnel took place. The transition to voluntary professional military brought along a major paradigm shift concerning the management of human resources.

Members of an organization are able to reach their performance optimum if they receive the right motivation, if they are propelled by the appropriate drives. Moreover the leaders of the organization need to succeed in making the organization and its goals an inseparable part of the identity and self-realization of its members. In other words the employees should seek the effectuation of their own opportunities and potentials through the success and growth of the organization itself.

In order to promote a desire to excel two salient components are to be attained: firstly a satisfaction with one’s job as well as the internal conditions of the organization; and secondly the development of a strong ambition that results in an unparalleled will to perform well even through making extreme sacrifices. The “Performance evaluation 2007”¹ research contained a question regarding the satisfaction of the professional and commissioned military personnel with their current occupational designation in the Hungarian Armed Forces. My contribution to the research is the analysis² of the answers to this particular question.

SATISFACTION

The responders were first asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale of five, which resulted in the following distribution: completely satisfied 24%, somewhat satisfied 42%, so-so 24%, somewhat dissatisfied 7%, and completely dissatisfied 4%. The second time the responders were forced to clarify their position by selecting one of two answer choices. The majority — 78% — chose yes, which is a much better outcome than the results of the TÁRKI research among civilian employees regarding their satisfaction with their jobs and activities. (cf. Graph No.1 - TÁRKI monitor report 2006).



Graph No.1: Ratio of satisfaction with each factor (TÁRKI Omnibusz 2006/8 MTA PTI Életminőség, N=1033)

Ascending the scale of rank the ratio of affirmative responders increases; 73% of the unranked and tier one (privates and corporals), 79% of tiers two and three (the sergeant - warrant officer ranks), and as much as 87% of the tiers four and five (lieutenants, captains, majors and colonels) are satisfied. 74-77% of the responders with less than ten years served are satisfied, which increases to 83-86% for responders with more than ten years served. As expected the ratio of satisfaction increases with the responders' age. Positive responses came from 73% of the responders aged 18-30, 83% among the 31-45 years old were satisfied, and 91% chose yes from the 46-57 age group. The ratio of satisfied employees is highest among the attendant-support and administrative-support corps (81-84%), followed by the combat-support and combat troops (77-78%), and finally the workers in the educational facilities with 70%. Among men 79% are satisfied whereas only 75% of the women responded affirmatively.

During the second set of questions we inquired as to what the reason of the dissatisfaction or satisfaction is. The replies are summarized by the following chart: /B. In case you are satisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?		
Replies:	Responders'	
	number (persons):	ratio (%)
Good atmosphere	65	18,0
Your job matches your qualifications	56	15,3
Good relations with your superiors	56	15,3
Accepted by co-workers, managed to fit in	52	14,5
Your work is valued	51	14,0
Challenging professional environment	43	11,8
Good relations with your inferiors	23	6,3
Optimal work conditions	16	4,3
Other:	2	0,4
No reply	-	-
Total	362	100,0

Considering the average the most important factors that positively affected satisfaction were as follows:

- Good atmosphere;
- Responder's job matches his/her qualifications;
- Good relations with superiors;
- Accepted by co-workers, managed to fit in;
- His/her work is valued.

Regarding the different tiers of ranks the factors affecting satisfaction show a significant disparity. Among the unranked and tier one responders (privates and corporals) the most important factor was the acceptance by co-workers (28%) followed by the good atmosphere at the workplace (25%) and thirdly the good relations with their superiors (17%). Responders ranked between tiers two and three (the sergeant - warrant officer ranks) rated good atmosphere equally with having their work valued (17-17%) as well as matching qualifications and good relations with superiors (15-15%). Finally among the tiers four and five (lieutenants, captains, majors and colonels) the most valued factor was work matching their qualifications (25%) with a much greater emphasis on professional challenges (18%) and a need for having their work valued (14%).

In case you are satisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	rank group			Total
	unranked, tier 1	tiers 2 and 3	tiers 4 and 5	
Challenging professional environment	9,5%	10,1%	17,5%	11,9%
Optimal work conditions	,9%	6,7%	5,2%	4,4%
Your job matches your qualifications	6,9%	15,4%	24,7%	15,2%
Good atmosphere	25,0%	17,4%	10,3%	18,0%
Accepted by co-workers, managed to fit in	28,4%	8,1%	8,2%	14,6%
Good relations with inferiors	3,4%	8,7%	6,2%	6,4%
Good relations with superiors	17,2%	15,4%	13,4%	15,5%
Your work is valued	7,8%	17,4%	14,4%	13,5%
Other:	,9%	,7%	,0%	,6%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

The number of years served proved to be a significant differentiating factor as well, a difference in years served resulted in a changing view of reasons of satisfaction. The most important factors for the responders serving for less than 5 years were as follows: acceptance by co-workers, managing to fit in (27%), good atmosphere (21%), and good relations with superiors (22%). Responders serving for between 6 and 10 years valued good atmosphere the most (22%), followed by a job matching their qualifications (18%) and acceptance by co-workers only ranked third for them with 13%. From 11 to 20 years served having their work valued takes the lead with 23% followed by good relations with superiors and matching qualifications (17-17%), with atmosphere on the third place with 14%. This once again changes for responders served for 21-25 years who seek a challenging professional environment the most (26%) and want to have their work valued (20%) and also has a job matching their qualifications (13%). Responders served for 26 or more years are heavily concerned about having a job that matches their qualifications (47%), seek good relations with their superiors (20%) and still look for some professional challenges (13%).

In case you are satisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	years served					Total
	less than 5	6 - 10	11 -20	21 - 25	26 or more	
Challenging professional environment	11,9%	8,1%	10,2%	25,6%	13,3%	11,9%
Optimal work conditions	2,0%	6,3%	4,5%	5,1%	,0%	4,2%
Your job matches your qualifications	7,9%	18,0%	17,0%	12,8%	46,7%	15,5%
Good atmosphere	20,8%	22,5%	13,6%	10,3%	6,7%	17,8%

Accepted by co-workers, managed to fit in	26,7%	13,5%	8,0%	7,7%	,0%	14,7%
Good relations with inferiors	5,0%	7,2%	6,8%	5,1%	6,7%	6,2%
Good relations with superiors	18,8%	10,8%	17,0%	12,8%	20,0%	15,3%
Your work is valued	5,9%	12,6%	22,7%	20,5%	6,7%	13,8%
Other:	1,0%	,9%	,0%	,0%	,0%	,6%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Age once again matters significantly considering what a responder values the most as a determining factor of satisfaction. Responders ages 18-30 are satisfied when the workplace atmosphere is good (24%), when they are accepted by their peers and manage to fit in well (19%), and when their relations with their superiors are good (15%). 31-45 years old responders seek a job that matches their qualifications (20%), want to have their work valued (17%) and strive for a good workplace atmosphere (15%). In contrast responders aged between 46 and 57 years value their relations with superiors most (33%) followed by a job that matches their qualifications (24%) and look for appreciation (19%).

In case you are satisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	age group			Total
	18-30 years old	31-45 years old	46-57 years old	
Challenging professional environment	11,3%	11,5%	14,3%	11,6%
Optimal work conditions	6,0%	3,7%	,0%	4,4%
Your job matches your qualifications	8,0%	19,9%	23,8%	15,2%
Good atmosphere	24,0%	14,7%	4,8%	18,0%
Accepted by co-workers, managed to fit in	18,7%	12,6%	,0%	14,4%
Good relations with inferiors	7,3%	5,8%	4,8%	6,4%
Good relations with superiors	14,7%	14,1%	33,3%	15,5%
Your work is valued	9,3%	17,3%	19,0%	14,1%
Other:	,7%	,5%	,0%	,6%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Being a member of different corps affected the responders' reasons for satisfaction as well. Members of combat corps ranked acceptance by co-workers and fitting in highest (24%) followed by good atmosphere (21%) and good relations with superiors (19%). Combat-support responders valued a job matching their qualifications the most (24%), followed by good atmosphere (19%) and professional challenges (16%). Whereas administrative-support corps is satisfied when their job is appreciated (19%) and when the workplace atmosphere is good and they have good relations with their superiors (14-14%). Attendant-support corps: their work is valued (18%), challenging professional environment and a job matching their qualifications (17-17%). Workers at the educational facilities are heavily concerned about having a job that matches their qualifications (41%) and equally important for them are to have a challenging professional environment with a good atmosphere (12-12%).

In case you are satisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	corps					Total
	combat	combat-support	administrative-support	attendant-support	educational facilities	
Challenging professional environment	7,9%	15,9%	11,1%	16,7%	11,8%	11,7%
Optimal work conditions	3,0%	8,0%	5,6%	1,7%	5,9%	4,4%
Your job matches your qualifications	8,5%	23,9%	11,1%	16,7%	41,2%	15,3%
Good atmosphere	20,6%	19,3%	13,9%	13,3%	11,8%	18,0%

Accepted by co-workers, managed to fit in	24,2%	4,5%	5,6%	11,7%	,0%	14,5%
Good relations with inferiors	6,7%	4,5%	5,6%	8,3%	5,9%	6,3%
Good relations with superiors	18,8%	12,5%	13,9%	13,3%	5,9%	15,3%
Your work is valued	9,7%	11,4%	33,3%	18,3%	11,8%	13,9%
Other:	,6%	,0%	,0%	,0%	5,9%	,5%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Members of the two sexes have a very different set of preferences as to why they are satisfied with their occupational designation. Women want a job that matches their qualifications (24%) and would like their work to be appreciated (22%) and seek a challenging professional environment (13%). Men on the other hand are satisfied when the atmosphere at the workplace is good (19%) and they have good relations with their superiors (17%) along with acceptance by co-workers and managing to fit in (15%).

In case you are satisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	responder's sex		Total
	male	female	
Challenging professional environment	11,2%	13,0%	11,5%
Optimal work conditions	4,6%	3,7%	4,5%
Your job matches your qualifications	13,8%	24,1%	15,4%
Good atmosphere	19,1%	9,3%	17,6%
Accepted by co-workers, managed to fit in	15,1%	13,0%	14,8%
Good relations with inferiors	6,9%	1,9%	6,1%
Good relations with superiors	16,8%	9,3%	15,6%
Your work is valued	12,5%	22,2%	14,0%
Other:	,0%	3,7%	,6%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

DISSATISFACTION

Our inquiry "In case you are dissatisfied with your current occupational designation, what's the reason?" resulted in the following replies.

Two fifth of the responders are most bothered by the issue when they think they have a job that doesn't match their qualifications. One third of the responders cite being unappreciated as their reason for dissatisfaction.

C. In case you are dissatisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?		
Replies:	Responders'	
	number (persons):	ratio (%)
Your job does not match your qualifications	43	40,6
Your work is not valued	31	29,8
Work conditions are far from optimal	11	10,2
Professional environment not challenging enough	6	5,6
Other	4	4,2
Bad atmosphere	4	3,9
Bad relations with superiors	4	3,4
Not accepted by co-workers, can't manage to fit in	2	1,7
Professional environment too challenging	1	0,7
Bad relations with inferiors	-	-
No reply	-	-
Total	105	100,0

Differently ranked responders have similar reasons for dissatisfaction albeit the weight of these reasons seems to differ. Among the unranked and tier one responders (privates and corporals) the chief reasons of dissatisfaction are unappreciation (34%) and when their job doesn't match their qualifications (26%) followed by an environment that's not challenging enough and bad work conditions (8-8%). Tiers two and three (the sergeant - warrant officer ranks) rated having a job they are not qualified or overqualified for as their main reason to be dissatisfied (54%) followed by a general feeling of unappreciation (27%) and bad work conditions (8%). Responders ranked among the tiers four and five (lieutenants, captains, majors and colonels) are similarly dissatisfied when their qualifications do not match their jobs (44%) or when their work is not valued (25%) and conditions at the workplace are far from optimal (12%).

In case you are dissatisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	rank group			Total
	unranked, tier 1	tiers 2 and 3	tiers 4 and 5	
Professional environment too challenging	,0%	,0%	6,3%	1,0%
Professional environment not challenging enough	10,0%	2,7%	6,3%	6,8%
Work conditions are far from optimal	10,0%	8,1%	12,5%	9,7%
Your job does not match your qualifications	26,0%	54,1%	43,8%	38,8%
Bad atmosphere	4,0%	5,4%	,0%	3,9%
Not accepted by co-workers, can't manage to fit in	4,0%	,0%	,0%	1,9%
Bad relations with superiors	8,0%	,0%	,0%	3,9%
Your work is not valued	34,0%	27,0%	25,0%	30,1%
Other	4,0%	2,7%	6,3%	3,9%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Years served also proved to be a differentiating factor with regard to the magnitude of the effects of the reasons of dissatisfaction. 48% of the responders with less than five years served selected having a job that is disproportionate to their qualifications as the main reason for dissatisfaction, 19% consider their work unappreciated and 13% of them have bad relations with their superiors. Among responders between 6 to 10 years served the chief dissatisfying factor was also a job they are not qualified or overqualified for (41%) and a work that is not valued enough (32%). 11 to 20 years served the number one reason becomes unappreciation (39%) and qualification problems fall to the second place with 22% followed by bad working conditions (17%). With 21-25 years served not feeling valued is still a major issue (43%) with their qualifications' misalignment vis-à-vis their job (29%) and a professional environment that is excessively challenging (14%). Responders who have been serving for 26 years or more cited — once again — a disparity in their qualifications and job as the major cause of their dissatisfaction (67%) and also complained about bad conditions at their workplace (33%).

In case you are dissatisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	years served					Total
	less than 5	6 - 10	11 -20	21 - 25	26 or more	
Professional environment too challenging	,0%	,0%	,0%	14,3%	,0%	1,0%
Professional environment not challenging enough	6,5%	4,9%	8,7%	,0%	,0%	5,7%
Work conditions are far from optimal	6,5%	7,3%	17,4%	14,3%	33,3%	10,5%
Your job does not match your qualifications	48,4%	41,5%	21,7%	28,6%	66,7%	39,0%
Bad atmosphere	6,5%	,0%	8,7%	,0%	,0%	3,8%

Not accepted by co-workers, can't manage to fit in	,0%	4,9%	,0%	,0%	,0%	1,9%
Bad relations with superiors	12,9%	,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	3,8%
Your work is not valued	19,4%	31,7%	39,1%	42,9%	,0%	29,5%
Other	,0%	9,8%	4,3%	,0%	,0%	4,8%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Based on age responders weighed reasons differently as to why they feel dissatisfied with their current occupation. Among 18-30 years old the most dissatisfying factor is a job that does not match their qualifications (48%) followed by a job they think is not valued enough (25%) and bad relations with superiors (7%). Responders of 31-45 years of age are dissatisfied due to general unappreciation (37%), disparities between their jobs and qualifications (30%) and bad conditions at the workplace (16%). The last age group of 46-57 years old ranked qualifications mismatch and bad working conditions equally (50-50%) as their number one reason for being dissatisfied.

In case you are dissatisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	age group			Total
	18-30 years old	31-45 years old	46-57 years old	
Professional environment too challenging	,0%	2,3%	,0%	1,0%
Professional environment not challenging enough	3,6%	7,0%	,0%	5,0%
Work conditions are far from optimal	3,6%	16,3%	50,0%	9,9%
Your job does not match your qualifications	48,2%	30,2%	50,0%	40,6%
Bad atmosphere	5,4%	2,3%	,0%	4,0%
Not accepted by co-workers, can't manage to fit in	3,6%	,0%	,0%	2,0%
Bad relations with superiors	7,1%	,0%	,0%	4,0%
Your work is not valued	25,0%	37,2%	,0%	29,7%
Other	3,6%	4,7%	,0%	4,0%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Responders' affiliation with different types of corps affected the magnitude of their dissatisfaction based on different reasons. For combat troops the main reason of dissatisfaction proved to be a job that does not match their qualifications (35%) and a job that is not valued (30%) lastly bad workplace conditions (15%). Among combat-support troops similarly qualifications problems are cited as the chief reason (48%) followed by not being valued (30%) and bad atmosphere at the workplace (12%). Responses from administrative-support troops contained not being appreciated (67%) and not qualified enough or overqualified (33%). Whereas attendant-support corps has an issue with qualifications mismatch (43%). Workers of educational facilities are likewise dissatisfied mainly because of a job that doesn't match their qualifications (57%) as well as a feeling of general unappreciation (29%) and an unchallenging professional environment (14%).

In case you are dissatisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	corps					Total
	combat	combat-support	administrative-support	attendant-support	educational facilities	
Professional environment too challenging	1,9%	,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	,9%
Professional environment not challenging enough	5,6%	4,0%	,0%	14,3%	,0%	5,7%
Work conditions are far from optimal	14,8%	,0%	,0%	14,3%	14,3%	10,4%
Your job does not match your qualifications	35,2%	48,0%	33,3%	42,9%	57,1%	40,6%
Bad atmosphere	1,9%	12,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	3,8%
Not accepted by co-workers, can't manage to fit in	3,7%	,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	1,9%
Bad relations with superiors	3,7%	8,0%	,0%	,0%	,0%	3,8%

Your work is not valued	29,6%	28,0%	66,7%	14,3%	28,6%	29,2%
Other	3,7%	,0%	,0%	14,3%	,0%	3,8%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Based on the replies the two sexes basically marked the same reasons for dissatisfaction albeit with different ratios. In case of women: their job doesn't match their qualifications (50%), their work is not valued (38%). As for men: their job doesn't match their qualifications (38%), their work is not valued (28%) and workplace conditions are bad (12%).

In case you are dissatisfied with your occupational designation, what's the reason?

	responder's sex		Total
	male	female	
Professional environment too challenging	1,1%	,0%	1,0%
Professional environment not challenging enough	5,7%	6,3%	5,8%
Work conditions are far from optimal	11,5%	6,3%	10,7%
Your job does not match your qualifications	37,9%	50,0%	39,8%
Bad atmosphere	4,6%	,0%	3,9%
Not accepted by co-workers, can't manage to fit in	2,3%	,0%	1,9%
Bad relations with superiors	4,6%	,0%	3,9%
Your work is not valued	27,6%	37,5%	29,1%
Other	4,6%	,0%	3,9%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

CONCLUSION

By analysing the data it becomes quite clear that the professional and commissioned military personnel are currently mostly satisfied with their occupational designations. The ratio of the satisfied is almost 20% higher than among civilian employees.

Satisfaction shows a positive correlation with increasing rank, time served and age.

Based on being a member of different sexes — and contrary to original expectations — men proved to be somewhat more satisfied than women. Their reasons for being satisfied are completely different as well. In case of men atmosphere, good relations with superiors and acceptance by their peers — or fitting in — were the salient factors. Whereas among women a job that matches their qualifications, appropriate professional challenges and being valued ranked highest for reasons of satisfaction. These differing preferences indicate a contrast in values; men find “social elements” determining while women seem to prefer “career elements”. On the other hand the two sexes cited the same reasons for dissatisfaction with a slightly varying ratio.

Factors that determine satisfaction are as follows:

- Good atmosphere at the workplace; (most important for aged 18-30, serving for 6-10 years and unranked or ranked tier one).
- A job that matches their qualifications; (most important for workers at educational facilities, aged 46-57, serving for 26 years or more and ranked tier four).
- Good relations with superiors; (most important for aged 46-57, serving for 26 years or more unranked or ranked tier one).
- Factors that contribute most to dissatisfactions are as below:
- A job that doesn't match their qualifications; (most important for aged 18-30 and 46-57, serving for 26 years or more, ranked tier two and three).
- Their work is not valued; (most important for aged 31-45, serving for 21 to 25 years, unranked or ranked tier one).

- Workplace conditions are far from optimal; (most important for aged 46-57, serving for 26 years or more, ranked tier four).

The difference in the factors causing satisfaction and dissatisfaction confirm Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene or two-factor theory. The results also show well that good working conditions classified by Herzberg as a hygiene factors do not contribute significantly to satisfaction however their lack results in immediate dissatisfaction.

Keywords: satisfaction, motivation, human resources, organization

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¹ The research was concluded by the sociology subgroup of Zrínyi Miklós University of National Defense, Faculty of Military Science, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Sociology-Psychology and Pedagogy (ZMNE KLHTK TTI) among the professional and commissioned military personnel of the Hungarian Defense Forces by order of the Ministry of Defense Planning and Coordination Commission.

The questionnaire was concluded — according to the wishes of the commissioner — with survey-method, on a tiered sample, with a quota—system sample selection between 7 August 2007 and 10 September 2007 personally by professors of the sociology subgroup at 30 organisational units.

During the data entry 418 questionnaires were distributed to the professional and commissioned military personnel out of which 467 were qualified for computerised data analysis. The rest failed because of missing or incomplete data.

² Analysis of the responses was concluded using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)