IMPACT OF MARITAL STATUS "SINGLE" ON BEHAVIOR AND WELL-BEING OF AN EMPLOYEE OR A STUDENT

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Abstract: The behavior of employees, their attitudes and interest in work are the subject of countless studies and investigations. Many look at the issue of employee motivation and stimulation from the point of view of position, education, age or gender. However, within the available findings, there is no knowledge regarding the status of employees, although the very fact of whether an employee lives alone or with someone else presupposes different behavior. The aim of this paper was to find out whether the status "single" has an impact on behavior, performance, and job satisfaction of an employee. As part of the search for information on this issue, we came across interesting findings of many authors who devoted themselves not only to this issue, but also investigated the issues of multicultural values, leadership, management in practice, education and other topics related to the influence of various factors on the performance and work of individuals. We tried to apply his survey, previously carried out in the USA and Canada to the territory of Europe/European Union, while taking into account multiculturalism and gender differences, since students participating in the Erasmus program took part in the survey too. We based our research on the fact that the shares and development of individual categories are the same in both regions.

Keywords: single employee, marital status, well-being

JEL Classification: D91, J28

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1 Introduction

Marriage has become an increasingly less popular institution in recent years. In many countries, it is being replaced by an increasingly popular form of cohabitation. The reality is that the type of nuclear (marital) family is increasingly being replaced by other types of family, or partnership cohabitation. It is obvious that other types of households are also gaining more legitimacy and importance, from various types of non-marital cohabitation to programmed life outside of family ties or marriage to cohabitation of homosexuals and lesbian families with an adopted child. As Možný (2006, p. 191) states, the cultural pressure on one, a certain universally binding family model has weakened. Children of one or both partners can also live in such a union (Mládek & Širočková, 2004). According to Lehotská (2012), the presence of children who are born into cohabitation or come from another relationship or marriage of the biological parent is increasingly assumed.

As stated by Čobejová and Hanus (2006), big cities are a paradise for singles – they already offer them special housing estates, special packaged foods, special laundries, special vacations. In Western Europe, their way of life has long been emancipated as an alternative lifestyle - in cities such as Paris, Berlin or Munich, approximately half of the population lives in so-called single-person households.

How many couples live together without a marriage certificate is difficult to ascertain. Giddens (1999, p. 179) cites Sweden as an example, where in 1900 it was only 1% of couples, while today it is about 40%. In any case, this is a trend and their number is clearly growing. But what we can ascertain for sure is the growing tolerance of society towards them. What was unthinkable a few decades ago is commonplace today. Acceptance clearly prevails in the opinions of the Slovak public about informal cohabitation of partners not legalized by marriage. According to Bútorová and Filadelfiová (In Bútorová et al., 2008, p. 66), in 2006 only a small part of people (15%) condemned such behavior as unjustifiable, while up to 59% approved of it.

The share of children born out of wedlock also tells us about the extent of the spread of unmarried cohabitation. After 1989, it has been rising continuously and without interruption. While in the period immediately after the revolution this indicator showed a value of less than 10%, in 1991 it was 19.7%, in 2009 the value already exceeded 31%. The highest values of this indicator

are achieved by the countries of Northern Europe (Denmark 44.6%, Norway 49.3%, Sweden 55.3%) (Tydlitátová, 2011).

Marital status "single" is a phenomenon that could be seen positively (a modern concept of flexible and comfortable way of living) and negatively (a break of tradition in family definitions and its role) in society but it is very little we know about its impact on performance and behaviour from enterprise perspective. The objective of this paper was to evaluate impact of the "single" status on behavior, performance and job satisfaction of an employee.

2 Theoretical background

In the literature on the outcome of employee behavior, most studies show the benefit of such a behavior of individual employees (Janssen, 2003; Janssen, Van de Vliert & West, 2004; Aryee et al., 2012; Harari, Reaves & Viswesvaran, 2016; Kim and Koo, 2017; Hammond et al., 2019; Ng and Wang, 2019; Nguyen and Le, 2016) and prove the existence of a positive correlation between employee behavior and job performance.

Workplace wellbeing is connected with employees' positive psychological state and experience in the process of reaching their self-realisation goals and is an important indicator of their mental health, which includes these perspectives: subjective wellbeing, psychological wellbeing and integrated wellbeing (Duan et al., 2020; Lee & Duffy, 2019).

Studies confirmed the positive impact of total income (financial and nonfinancial) on happiness. Kollamparambil (2019) examined four dynamic data and found out that income determined the level of happiness. Rijnks, Koster & McCann (2019) observed that an absolute income and relative income can determine personal satisfaction, too. The permanent realisation of inner goals can help individuals reach and maintain a stable sense of wellbeing (Sarfraz et al., 2019). Elsetouhi, Elbaz and Soliman (2022) reported that psychological meaning and perceived social value are correlated positively with workplace wellbeing.

The extent of the spread of non-marital cohabitation is also indicated by the share of children born out of wedlock. After 1989, it rises continuously and without interruption. While in the period immediately after the revolution this indicator indicated a value below 10%, in 1991 it was 19.7%, in 2009 the value

already exceeded 31%. The highest values of this indicator are achieved by the countries of Northern Europe (Denmark 44.6%, Norway 49.3%, Sweden 55.3%) (Tydlitátová, 2011). During his lifetime, Baldwin's research and work were primarily focused on the USA or Canada, so it was a challenge for us to find out if it is possible to find common features for Europe (the European Union). In his work (Austrom, Baldwin & Macy, 1988) he presents data from the statistical office in the USA and Canada, in which 33% of American men and 40% of American women are single. From this point of view, the number of singles in the individual countries of Europe (European Union) is approximately the same, as can be seen in the table below.

| Country | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | Country | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|----------|------|------|------|-----------------------|------|------|------|
| Austria | 37.5 | 37.8 | 38.7 | Italy | 33.6 | 34.0 | 33.5 |
| Belgium | 30.4 | 32.0 | 35.4 | Latvia | 38.8 | 38.6 | 41.0 |
| Bulgaria | 29.7 | 29.9 | 32.2 | Lithuania | 38.1 | 40.9 | 44.7 |
| Croatia | 23.3 | 22.4 | 24.0 | Luxembourg | 34.7 | 34.8 | 34.8 |
| Cyprus | 24.9 | 24.3 | 25.1 | Malta | 27.1 | 25.8 | 25.7 |
| Czechia | 32.6 | 33.0 | 33.9 | Netherlands | 37.8 | 37.7 | 43.4 |
| Denmark | 40.0 | 40.6 | 46.1 | Poland | 24.7 | 24.0 | 26.1 |
| Estonia | 41.9 | 40.9 | 48.5 | Portugal | 22.5 | 21.0 | 17.3 |
| Finland | 43.0 | 44.7 | 46.7 | Romania | 29.8 | 30.2 | 30.6 |
| France | 36.2 | 37.4 | 40.9 | Slovakia | 21.6 | 21.9 | 17.4 |
| Germany | 41.8 | 39.6 | 41.4 | Slovenia | 36.1 | 34.6 | 32.4 |
| Greece | 32.2 | 31.2 | 25.7 | Spain | 25.7 | 26.0 | 26.6 |
| Hungary | 31.8 | 31.7 | 32.0 | Sweden | 54.0 | 58.7 | 50.1 |
| Ireland | 26.6 | 27.1 | 28.4 | European Union | 34.5 | 34.5 | 35.8 |
| | | | | - 27 countries | | | |
| | | | | (from 2020) | | | |

Table 1: Number of single households in individual years and countries (in %)

Source: Eurostat, 2023 (own processing)

The number of unmarried households increases year-on-year in almost all countries, while their share is on average 35 %. In this context, there is also a similar proportion of women and men within individual countries and Europe (the European Union) as a whole compared to America (USA and Canada. In some research, e.g. Baldwin (1988) distinguishes other subcategories in the

category of singles (according to whether singles are single all their lives or live separately, are divorced or widowed. Hertel and Schűtz, et al. (2005) also draw attention to the inconsistency in the definition of singles. According to them, it is possible to divide the definitions of singles into several categories. Most often in the research, a broad understanding by status is used, which includes people with the status of single, divorced and widowed. Other definitions do not rely on legal family status, but distinguish the contrast between people living alone (without a partner) and people in any partner relationship. The concept of singles is not easy to define, and its definition is crucial before the exact analysis of the entities falling within our defined (or adopted) definition.

The first definition based on marital status is offered by the literal translation itself, which refers to a person with a single marital status, i.e. a man who has never been married or a woman who has never been married. However, within the framework of the laws that establish the age at which a person can enter into marriage, it is necessary to limit the lower limit of this group to the age of majority. For example in the Slovak Republic, marriage is dealt with by Act No. 36/2005 Coll. (Family Act), which establishes the conditions under which a person can enter into marriage. Unmarried mothers or fathers, or persons living in a declared cohabitation, also fall into this defined group. It is obvious that they are different groups from different points of view. Therefore, we do not consider the definition based on official family status to be sufficient and we will also point out other possible definitions.

The second definition is based on the very essence of the term "Single". According to Jandourek (2003), the term "singles" refers to individuals who do not want to enter into marriage, because they are generally comfortable living alone. The motivation is primarily a greater opportunity to pursue a career, personal hobbies, the opportunity to enter into several sexual relationships. This definition is based primarily on the motives of living independently. But can people with children be included here? For example, single mothers have a lower career opportunity than childless single women or married women with children, and we can assume that most of them (although certainly not the overwhelming majority) would welcome another partner. Proving this hypothesis is more or less impossible, sample survey could bring a satisfactory but not absolute answer. Certainly, to a considerable extent, the solitude of single (and divorced) parents living with children is not motivated by a career. Therefore, if we understand the concept of singles as living alone and without a permanent partner (as defined by Jandourek, 2003, who speaks of singles

as a certain type of lifestyle), we should also exclude single parents from this group. Since there are only two options (either to exclude them or not), we consider the first one to be more correct with regard to approaching the essence of singles. We also have to exclude celibate persons, such as Catholic priests, as they do not fall under the term singles in the true sense of the word.

3 Methods

3.1 Samples and Processes

The present empirical research was carried out on a sample of 132 respondents. It was a questionnaire survey on a sample of students of the University of Economics in Bratislava, while the survey was carried out on a sample of domestic and foreign students studying at the university as part of the Erasmus+ programs and bilateral programs (from European/European Union countries). We aimed to ensure a representative sample within both sexes. Therefore, the results were obtained from the answers of 66 men and 66 women (14 were excluded from the originally distributed 146 questionnaires due to incomplete data, late submission, or failure to meet the single status criterion. Since the survey was focused on findings regarding the motivation and stimulation of freelance employees (students), the responses of students who were married (2% of students) were excluded from the survey. The average age of the respondents was 22 years.

3.2 Tools

As part of the tools we used a total of 12 factors (Akgunduz, Alkan & Gök, 2018; Abbas, Mahmood & Hussain, 2015; Chang & Edwards, 2015; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Lent et al., 2016): 7 factors of well-being (overall life satisfaction, psychological well-being, physical well-being, number of non-routine visits to a doctor, family satisfaction, housing satisfaction and How many of these problems the respondent suffers: insomnia, excessive worry, inability to accomplish regular task, feeling depressed, inability to concentrate.) and 5 factors of workplace attitudes and behaviors (job satisfaction/university satisfaction, involuntary absenteeism, voluntary absenteeism, number of hours spent on work and whether one's job was the major source of life satisfaction). The method of obtaining and measuring these factors is presented below and is based on the findings of Timothy T. Baldwin.

Life satisfaction was measured on a Likert scale from 1 to 11, and the respondents had to comment on the question of how satisfied they were with their life overall, with 11 meaning completely satisfied and 1 completely dissatisfied (6 meant a neutral attitude). Psychological well-being was divided into two questions. In the first one, the respondents commented on the feeling of psychological well-being itself, while we again used the Likert scale for evaluation. In the next question, we directly asked them the question "how many of these problems do they suffer from: insomnia, excessive worry, inability to accomplish regular task, feeling depressed, inability to concentrate, or other." In this part, we also determined the number of non-routine visits to a doctor. Here, the respondents expressed the number of visits to a doctor as an absolute number. In addition, we supplemented this section with questions regarding family satisfaction and household satisfaction. For the purposes of this work, we therefore added leisure satisfaction and family satisfaction, since university satisfaction is in the second group of factors, and we consider housing satisfaction for singles to be synonymous with leisure satisfaction, since they are living independently within households. We measured both factors, as in several previous factors, using a Likert scale of 1 to 11.

As part of another group of factors focused on workplace attitudes and behaviors, we examined job satisfaction versus university satisfaction. This finding was based on the fact that most students study and work at the same time and the assumption that they perform both of these activities (or one of them) voluntarily. Again, we used a Likert scale from 1 to 11 for the evaluation. Two other questions related to voluntary absenteeism and involuntary absenteeism were connected with this question. Voluntary absenteeism was measured as the number of days missed from work/study during the past year due to disinterest. Involuntary absenteeism was measured as the number of days missed form work during the past year due to illness or extraordinary reasons (not influenced by respondent). The last part of these factors was the question determining job as the major source of life satisfaction, which focused not only on current but also opinions regarding the perspective of employment and its importance in the respondent's life.

4 Results

The results of the two-factor ANOVA analysis (Table 2-5) show the findings of testing whether there are statistically significant differences within the sexes for each of the 12 factors divided into two groups (see above).

| SUMMARY | overal llife satisfaction | psychological well-being | number of non-routine visit to a doctor | How many of theseproblems you suffer: insomnia, excessive worry, inability to acomplish regular task, feeling depressed, inability to concentrate | job satisfaction/university satisfaction | voluntary absenteeism (in hours/ month) | involuntary absenteeism (in hours/ month) | number of hours spend on work | whether one's job was the major souce of life satisfaction | family satisfaction | housing satisfaction | physical well-being | Total |
|----------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------|
| men | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Count | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 792 |
| Sum | 368 | 370 | 353 | 159 | 363 | 333 | 383 | 2983 | 416 | 354 | 378 | 379 | 6839 |
| Average | 5.58 | 5.61 | 5.35 | 2.41 | 5.50 | 5.05 | 5.80 | 45.20 | 6.30 | 5.36 | 5.73 | 5.74 | 8.64 |
| Variance | 6.40 | 8.12 | 8.17 | 2.15 | 6.65 | 17.83 | 29.73 | 281.05 | 8.71 | 6.48 | 7.03 | 7.39 | 154.56 |

Source: author

| SUMMARY | overal llife satisfaction | psychological well-being | number of non-routine visit to a doctor | How many of theseproblems you suffer: insomnia, excessive worry, inability to acomplish regular task, feeling depressed, inability to concentrate | job satisfaction/university satisfaction | voluntary absenteeism (in hours/ month) | involuntary absenteeism (in hours/ month) | number of hours spend on work | whether one's job was the major souce of life satisfaction | family satisfaction | housing satisfaction | physical well-being | Total |
|----------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------|
| women | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Count | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 792 |
| Sum | 415 | 368 | 416 | 142 | 400 | 515 | 406 | 2335 | 378 | 382 | 359 | 392 | 6508 |
| Average | 6.29 | 5.58 | 6.30 | 2.15 | 6.06 | 7.80 | 6.15 | 35.38 | 5.73 | 5.79 | 5.44 | 5.94 | 8.22 |
| Variance | 6.76 | 7.54 | 7.35 | 4.87 | 6.00 | 77.88 | 72.35 | 300.27 | 6.82 | 7.74 | 7.57 | 7.50 | 110.80 |

Table 3: Anova - Two-Factor with Replication (analysis of women)

Source: author

 Table 4: Anova - Two-Factor with Replication (analysis of both)

| SUMMARY | overal llife satisfaction | psychological well-being | number of non-routine visit to a doctor | How many of theseproblems you suffer: insomnia, excessive worry, inability to acomplish regular task, feeling depressed, inability to concentrate | job satisfaction/university satisfaction | voluntary absenteeism (in hours/ month) | involuntary absenteeism (in hours/ month) | number of hours spend on work | whether one's job was the major souce of life satisfaction | family satisfaction | housing satisfaction | physical well-being |
|----------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Total | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Count | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 |
| Sum | 783 | 738 | 769 | 301 | 763 | 848 | 789 | 5318 | 794 | 736 | 737 | 771 |
| Average | 5.93 | 5.59 | 5.83 | 2.28 | 5.78 | 6.42 | 5.98 | 40.29 | 6.02 | 5.58 | 5.58 | 5.84 |
| Variance | 6.66 | 7.77 | 7.93 | 3.50 | 6.36 | 49.41 | 50.68 | 312.73 | 7.79 | 7.10 | 7.27 | 7.40 |

Source: author

| ANOVA | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|----------|--------|---------|--------|
| Source of Variation | SS | df | MS | F | P-value | F crit |
| Sample | 69.17 | 1.00 | 69.17 | 1.84 | 0.18 | 3.85 |
| Columns | 147796.62 | 11.00 | 13436.06 | 357.35 | 0.00 | 1.79 |
| Interaction | 3447.16 | 11.00 | 313.38 | 8.33 | 0.00 | 1.79 |
| Within | 58654.41 | 1560.00 | 37.60 | | | |
| Total | 209967.36 | 1583.00 | | | | |

| Table 5: Anova - Two-Factor with | Replication | (three null analysis) | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--|
|----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--|

Source: author

Within the framework of the three hypotheses we set, it can be concluded from Table 5:

H1: That the means of observations grouped by one factor (men) are the same – was approved

H2: That the means of observations grouped by one factor (women) are the same – was rejected

H3: That there is no interaction between the two factors – was rejected.

Based on the obtained data (F and F crit.) and especially the P-value, which was tested at the significance level of 0.05, it can be concluded that the individual factors have an impact primarily in the group of women, which means that women are more sensitive to the change of individual factors than men. Based on this, the third hypothesis, that there is no difference between the sexes and the factors that affect their life and work performance, was also rejected.

Through correlation analysis, we subsequently evaluated the influence of individual factors on each other. The results can be seen in the table below.

| | overal llife satisfaction | psychological well-being | number of non-routine visit to a doctor | How many of theseproblems you suffer: insomnia, excessive worry, inability to acomplish regular task, feeling depressed, inability to concentrate | family satisfaction | Leisure satisfaction | physical well-being | job satisfaction/university satisfaction | voluntary absenteeism (in hours/month) | involuntary absenteeism (in hours/month) | number of hours spend on work | whether one's job was the major souce of life satisfaction |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Overall life satisfaction | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Psychological well-being | -0.22 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of non- routine visits to a doctor | 0.02 | -0.03 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| How many of these problems you suffer: insomnia, excessive worry, inability to accomplish regular task, feeling depressed, inability to concentrate | -0.03 | 0.06 | 0.08 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Family satisfaction | -0.05 | -0.06 | 0.07 | 0.00 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| Leisure satisfaction | -0.03 | -0.04 | -0.06 | 0.08 | 0.01 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Physical well- being | 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.09 | -0.16 | 0.01 | -0.11 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Job satisfaction/ university satisfaction | 0.05 | 0.07 | 0.30 | -0.14 | -0.05 | -0.12 | 0.02 | 1.00 | | | | |
| Voluntary absenteeism (in hours/month) | 0.08 | -0.03 | -0.03 | 0.04 | -0.02 | -0.08 | 0.03 | 0.07 | 1.00 | | | |

Table 6: Correlation analysis of individual factors

| Involuntary absenteeism (in hours/month) | 0.08 | 0.03 | -0.06 | 0.13 | -0.05 | -0.09 | -0.06 | 0.14 | -0.08 | 1.00 | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Number of hours spend on work | 0.03 | -0.09 | -0.07 | -0.05 | -0.06 | -0.06 | 0.04 | -0.02 | -0.24 | -0.02 | 1.00 | |
| Whether one's job was the major source of life satisfaction | -0.16 | 0.07 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.01 | -0.07 | 0.10 | 0.08 | -0.01 | -0.09 | 1.00 |

Source: author

From the point of view of dependencies within individual factors, we see only a small dependency, which means that none of the factors has a significant impact on overall life satisfaction and workplace attitudes and behavior. We find the most significant correlation between the factors job satisfaction/ university satisfaction and number of non-routine visits to a doctor. This fact probably also indicates an increased effort to preserve health, we assume that it is also affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. The dependence between involuntary absenteeism and problems which respondents suffer and job/ university satisfaction is somewhat lower.

On the contrary, we found a negative correlation between the factors number of hours spent at work and voluntary absenteeism, which is related to overtime work and, consequently, reluctance to continue working. Psychological well-being also has a negative correlation with overall life satisfaction. We perceive this fact in the way that in the category of students there is still a need for stress in the sense of a challenge, and overall satisfaction is perceived rather as a need for constant action and change. The last correlation worth mentioning is the mutual influence of physical well-being and suffering from problems like insomnia, feeling depressed, etc. This fact is connected with the increasing pressure on the population in general and the need to work with these problems.

5 Discussion

As we found out in our survey, it is possible to see differences in single respondents in terms of gender. These findings support traditional claims that women are generally more sensitive to stimuli and their life satisfaction and workplace attitude and behavior differ compared to single men. For our purposes and as part of the findings, we limited singles to singles for life, since university students, due to their age, have not yet had time to get married for the first time, let alone divorce or become widowed (although even here the exception could confirm the rule). Our initial idea was that a single person is the one who is primarily alone, takes care solely of himself/herself and their "household" does not consist of any other persons. We also assumed that these students live in dormitories and that their household members (although their parents also visit them) are not made up of anyone else.

In terms of limitations that restrict the results of our investigation there is the fact that we did not focus on other single groups, i.e. widowers and divorcees. However, it is highly likely that the lived experience or trauma caused by a divorce or the death of a spouse or partner can lead to a change in behavior and attitudes as well as overall life satisfaction. Therefore, this fact needs to be carefully considered and incorporated into future surveys.

At the same time, we did not carry out a comparison of the individual cultures from which the students come in the course of investigation. This was caused by the fact that the numbers of individual respondents differed in terms of nationality. For the purposes of our investigation, we did not take into account cultural differences and the associated behavior of students from European (European Union) countries. But there are differences in cultures. Therefore, this fact is a factor that should be addressed in further investigations.

Despite the findings we have reached, it is as if we are at the beginning again. The problem of the single is so complex that it is necessary to pay attention to other factors that influence their behavior and attitudes. The results showed us several times that individual factors can be influenced by the age of the respondents, therefore it would be appropriate to extend the findings to the single middle-aged and older generation.

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