Young adults' job satisfaction in Poland and the Czech Republic: a comparative analysis

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Abstract

Motivation: Job satisfaction as an attitude that reflects an evaluation judgment of the various aspects of a job is an essential factor influencing employees as well as employers. The well-being of individuals, activity in the labor market, productivity, and turnover are examples of effects of job satisfaction. The inclusion of the circumstances of Poland and the Czech Republic countries and additionally young generations (GenY and GenZ) context enables the formulation of practical implications for increasing job satisfaction for both employers and employees in CEE countries.

Aim: The research aims to identify factors that shape job satisfaction patterns among young adults, including age as an indicator variable in Poland and the Czech Republic. The identification is based on the two separate ordered logit models estimated in the group of young adults ages 18–29. The models were built upon the data collected in 2021 in a survey using the CAWI technique on a sample of 304 respondents in Poland and 259 in the Czech Republic.

Result: The results of the logit models estimation indicate that job satisfaction in Poland and the Czech Republic is determined by various sets of factors considered in four dimensions, i.e., behavioral, economic, educational, and socio-demographic. Substantial differences between young adults in both countries were recognized. The greatest impact on job satisfaction in Poland has the willingness to control expenses and wage satisfaction. In the Czech Republic, job satisfaction is most strongly influenced by the imposition of rules that discipline expenditure and wage satisfaction.

Keywords: young adults; transformed economies; dimensions of the job; ordered logit model
JEL: J28; I31; J81

1. Introduction

Post-transition economies of Central and Eastern Europe are still at the stage of catching up with the most developed European economies. That fact makes them an interesting basis for observation and comparison of essential economic phenomena in the changing surroundings. Currently, two external phenomena influence the world economy, i.e. COVID-19 pandemic and Russian aggression on Ukraine. The consequence of the first one is growing inflation and the threat of recession, while the second one results in a traditional energy sector crisis and reshaping the future energy sources. The consequences of both events are often considered together as they are hard to be decoupled. It is partially because increasing inflation is driven by the prices of energy sources. They are particularly painful for Central and Eastern European countries, which despite over 30 years of transformation period are still dependent on the natural gas supply from Russia.

In such circumstances, social changes are also observed. One of the crucial is generation change, particularly generation Y (GenY: born before the end of 1995) and generation Z (GenZ: born between 1996 and 2010) are present in the labor market (Dimock, 2019). GenY is the first generation that grew up in the Internet age. The consequences of their familiarity with digital platforms and devices are seen in social and working life (Behrstock-Sherratt & Cogg-

shall, 2010). They expect dynamic progress in their careers and do not hesitate to change jobs to acquire new skills (Ilhan, 2020). It is emphasized, that because of early participation in decision-making at home, they expect decision-making responsibilities at work. GenY value a balanced life and contribution to society. In turn, making a lot of money recedes into the background (Eisner, 2005). On the other hand, GenZ is the youngest generation commencing professional careers. However, many of them are still in the starting blocks because of the ongoing education process (Chomątowska et al., 2022). Young adults belonging to GenZ are interested in starting a career but are willing to make fewer sacrifices than GenY (Böhlich & Axmann, 2020). As it is emphasized in the literature GenZ worries about the economy and ecology in opposition to GenY mainly worried about their status on social media (Veluchamy et al., 2016). GenZ likewise GenY is open to changing employers but at the same time critical for them is the safety of stable employment (Chomątowska et al., 2022; Deloitte, 2022). In comparison to older generations, who are also familiar with the technology, particularly GenY, they are socialized virtually and have fewer real-life contacts. Different experiences in respect of life and career stages but also the distinct background of socio-economic changes and technological development may suggest different job satisfaction achievements between generations (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Matveichuk et al., 2019).

Additionally, there is a lack of job satisfaction analysis from the perspective of young adults in the post-transition economies of Central and Eastern Europe (Poland, Czech Republic). The relatively worse economic (material) situation of youth in Poland and the Czech Republic may result in paying a lot of attention to material aspects in achieving job satisfaction when starting their professional carrier. On that basis, we aim to identify the factors that shape job satisfaction patterns among young adults including age as an indicator variable.

Two research questions were posed. RQ1: To what extent is young adults' job satisfaction influenced by the same factors in Poland and the Czech Republic as the post-socialist countries? RQ2: Does the variable age differentiate the results and in what direction?

The data used in the study were collected as a random sample from the population in 2021 in a survey using the CAWI technique on a sample of 402 respondents in Poland and 403 in the Czech Republic. On that basis ordered logit models were estimated and analyzed.

The paper is organized as follows: a comparative analysis of young adults in Poland and the Czech Republic is presented in section two. Then a review of the literature with special consideration of individual factors influencing job satisfaction is conducted. The methods and results are described in sections three and four, respectively. The article ends with conclusions formulated based on identified answers to research questions.

2. Economic situation of young adults in Poland and the Czech Republic

Young adults in the present study are the generation that was born after the beginning of the systemic transformation process both in Poland and the Czech Republic, ranging from the late GenY (25–29 years old) to the early GenZ (18–24). They have experienced radical changes in their living conditions including the labor market opportunities in comparison to their parent's generation. However, young Poles and Czechs are characterized by worse material conditions (wages, consumption) than in the EU-27 on average, with a smaller distance between the Czech Republic and the EU-27 than in the case of Poland. The median equivalized disposable income of young adults (ages 18–24) in the Czech Republic was 10,721 EUR in 2021 (63% of the median equivalized disposable income of young adults in EU-27) and 7,820 EUR in Poland (46% of EU-27 respectively). Interestingly, young adults' material situation in comparison to the whole population is better in the Czech Republic (107% of the median equivalized disposable income of the total population) than in Poland (94% of the median equivalized disposable income of the total population respectively).

In 2018, the share of low-wage earners, defined as those employees earning two-thirds or less of the national median gross hourly earnings was 22% in Poland, seven percentage points higher than in Czechia and EU-27. From an age perspective, the share of low-wage earners in the group of those aged less than 30 in Poland (26%) was on a similar level as in EU-27 (26%), but much higher than in the Czech Republic (15%). Moreover, the group of employees aged less than 30 accounted for the largest share of low-wage earners on average in the EU (26%), compared with 13 % for the age group between 30 and 49 and with 14 % for the employees aged 50 and over (Eurostat, 2022). As measured in 2018, median gross hourly earnings, when expressed in purchasing power standards (PPS), ranged in EU-27 from 19 PPS in Denmark to 5 PPS in Bulgaria, ranking Poland and the Czech Republic at the bottom with 8 PPS.

Other characteristics of young adults' material living conditions also place Poland and the Czech Republic below the average EU-27 level. Lower wages result in lower mean consumption (in PPS, per household, less than 30), which in the Czech Republic is 60% of the EU-27 average level, and in Poland 80% respectively (Eurostat, 2022). Moreover, the share of disposable income spent on essential goods and services was, under relatively worse material conditions, higher by 4 percentage points both in Poland (15%) and the Czech Republic (15%) than on average in EU-27 (11%).

As members of the European Union since 2004, Poland and the Czech Republic aim to reach the European Union set (target level) to decrease the share of young people neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET), which should be less than 9% in 2030. In 2021 the average share of NEET was 10.9% in Czechia and 13.4% in Poland, similar to the European Union av-

erage with a share of 13.1% for young adults 15–29. A considerable increase in the share of NEETs is observed in the 25–29 group compared to the 15–24 in both countries (Chart 1).

Interestingly, there are crucial differences between the age groups 15–24 and 25–29 in both countries when other characteristics including professional and educational activity are considered. Firstly, there is a 4 times lower share of young adults (25–29) not employed but in education or training in Poland than in EU-27 and 2.5 times lower than in Czechia. It may suggest that young Poles, in opposition to young Czechs, shortly after graduation start working and not continuing their education after 25 years old. Another interesting feature is that both in Poland and in the Czech Republic there is a considerably lower share (almost halved) of young adults employed and in education and training than in EU-27 in both age groups. It suggests that in post-communist countries, it is more difficult for young adults to continue education or training when employed (Chart 1).

Regarding relatively higher professional than educational activity in Poland and the Czech Republic, the youth's situation in the labor market is better than in EU-27 when unemployment rates are considered (particularly in the 25–29 age group). However, the employment rates in the group of 15–24 are lower than in EU-27 because of the relatively higher share of youth in education and training in Poland and the Czech Republic (Table 1). It seems to be a tendency for young adults from post-socialist countries to follow a pattern to gain an education at first (till the age of 24) and enter the labor market after graduation (at the age of 25 or more), not to combine professional and educational activity.

Job satisfaction in Poland (7.3 points) and the Czech Republic (7.3 points) is slightly lower than in the EU–27 on average (7.4 points) among working adolescents (16–24). On the other hand, among young adults (25–29) job satisfaction increases slightly above the average EU-27 level (7.3) in Poland (7.4) and the Czech Republic (7.4). Moreover, inversely to the EU-27 job satisfaction increases with age among young people in Poland and the Czech Republic (Table 2).

3. Literature review

Job satisfaction is an attitude that manifests a subjective evaluation judgment of the job by a worker, and reflects the contentment and fulfillment derived from work (Spector, 2022; Weiss, 2002; Williamson, 1996). Job satisfaction is analyzed in the broader context of well-being (Clark, 1997; Gambacorta & Iannario, 2013). According to this approach, a job is a crucial part of people's lives, and that is why it is essential to employees' well-being (Clark, 2015). On the other hand, job satisfaction is seen as a determinant of activity in the labor market, productivity, turnover of workers, or competitive advantage of the companies

(Clark, 1998; Dijkhuizen et al., 2018; Hajduková & Klementová, 2015; Matvei-chuk et al., 2019).

Researchers analyzing job satisfaction focus on different perspectives. For instance, analyze the job satisfaction of workers from various sectors, like social services, banking, public health, transport, and higher education (George & Zakkariya, 2018; Goula et al., 2022; Jędrzejczak-Gas & Wyrwa, 2020; Sabhar-wal & Corley, 2009; Williamson, 1996) or private and public sector (Demoussis & Giannakopoulos, 2007; Ghinetti, 2007).

The perspective of the national level is used as well (Clark, 1996; Grolleau et al., 2022). However, only a sparse analysis of factors influencing job satisfaction in the post-transition economies of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) occurred (Franěk et al., 2014; Sokolova & Mohelska, 2019; Sokolova et al., 2016). Stritesky (2021) pointed out a lack of a comprehensive view of determinants of job satisfaction in the Czech Republic with an emphasis on sociodemographic variables and job characteristics. The same research gap was identified in Poland. In turn, Franěk et al. (2014) pointed out the importance of including the circumstances of CEE countries, which differ from Western countries.

Because of this, understanding factors influencing job satisfaction is paramount and topical, mainly in CEE countries. In the literature, individual characteristics as factors determining job satisfaction are analyzed (Acuña et al., 2009; Williamson, 1996). Other distinguished groups of determinants of job satisfaction are working environment and job variables (Grund & Sliwka, 2001; Izvercian et al., 2016; Jędrzejczak-Gas & Wyrwa, 2020; Sabharwal & Corley, 2009).

Gender, age, race, level of education, marital status, number of children, household size, income class, income, and savings are examples of demographic variables, as well as socioeconomic characteristics included in individual characteristic groups (Campbell, 2011; Clark, 1997; Sabharwal & Corley, 2009; Urošević & Milijić 2012; Williamson, 1996). Besides the popularity of job satisfaction, there is no agreement about the significance of specific, individual factors influencing job satisfaction (Jędrzejczak-Gas & Wyrwa, 2020).

For instance, age is often analyzed. However, even in the context of such a popular factor, there is no consensus about influencing job satisfaction. Different job expectations, values, and experiences, among other factors contribute to the differences between people of different ages in job satisfaction. Clark (1996) and Clark et al. (1996) identified significant and additionally non-linear, U-shape positive relations. A U-shaped relationship between job satisfaction and age means that younger and older employees are more satisfied than middle-aged employees. Job satisfaction is U-shaped regarding age was proven in the literature (Gazioglu & Tansel, 2006; Pan et al., 2015). In turn, the U-shape was not confirmed by Fargher et al. (2008). On the contrary, researchers highlight a linear relationship between job satisfaction and age (Bernal et al., 1998; Bos et al., 2011). Ng & Feldman (2010) conducted meta-analyses from more than 800 articles, revealing the positive relationship between age and job satis-

faction. That relationship also was confirmed by Stritesky (2021) in the Czech Republic and Soja (2015) in Poland. In turn, Franěk et al. (2014) and Mysíková & Večerník (2016) indicated no significant effect of age on the level of job satisfaction in the Czech Republic. The weakness of age within of group of individual determinants of job satisfaction is worth noting. In means that alternative variables may be more significantly associated with job satisfaction (Ellickson & Logsdon, 2002).

Different results also sustain when the links between job satisfaction and gender are considered. Some researchers highlight that there are no significant gender differences in job satisfaction (Andrade et al., 2019; Campbell, 2011; Eskildsen et al., 2004; Ward & Sloane, 2000), also in the Czech Republic (Mysíková & Večerník, 2016). Others reported that males are more satisfied than females (Sabharwal & Corley, 2009; Streu et al., 2011). That relation was also pointed out in the Czech Republic (Franěk et al., 2014). In turn, confirmation that women are more satisfied was highlighted among others by Redmon & McGuinness (2019), Zou (2015), and Clark (1997). Moreover, that link was also identified in Poland, but the research involved only older workers (Soja, 2015).

Numerous studies investigated education differences in job satisfaction. On one hand, it is confirmed that job satisfaction levels are strongly declining in the level of education (Clark & Oswald, 1996; Redmond & McGuinness, 2020; Ward & Sloane, 2000). On the contrary, Mysíková & Večerník (2013) pointed out the negative effect of education on job satisfaction in the western region of Europe, while in the part of Eastern Europe there was no significant effect. Also, Franěk et al. (2014) did not indicate a significant impact of education on job satisfaction in the Czech Republic and Zientara & Kuczyński (2009) in Poland. However, in other research, Mysíková & Večerník (2016) confirmed that education retains a significant influence: people with a university degree have a greater chance of higher job satisfaction compared to people with primary education or with an apprenticeship or lower vocational school in Czech working-age population. The positive relationship between education and job satisfaction in the Czech Republic was confirmed by Stritesky (2021).

Stritesky (2021) also highlighted that significant differences between particular economic sectors and job satisfaction in the Czech Republic exist. Moreover, in the Czech Republic, Franěk et al. (2014) identified lower job satisfaction in the public sector; however, other types were nearly equal. An example of a different conclusion may be the publication of the IZA Discussion Paper (Redmond & McGuinness, 2020), highlighting that working in the private sector causes lower job satisfaction.

Household size is an additional factor causing the differences in the level of job satisfaction. Pohlig et al. (2022) indicated that "household context is an important factor for job satisfaction that has scarcely been considered in research on job satisfaction". According to Mysíková & Večerník (2016) in the Czech Republic people living in a couple, no matter if they have a child or not had, a chance for higher job satisfaction.

In the context of households, Navarro & Salverda (2019) indicated that a person's contribution to household income affects job satisfaction. According to Gambacorta & Iannario's (2013) findings perception of the general family's economic condition affects the same direction of job satisfaction.

Income is a characteristic that is often thought to influence job satisfaction. It is generally believed that higher pay leads to higher job satisfaction (Redmond & McGuinness, 2020). Springer (2011) identified that remuneration is one of the two most important factors in achieving job satisfaction in Poland. Stritesky (2021) analyzed determinants of job satisfaction in the Czech Republic and confirmed that job satisfaction grows with higher payment. However, Clark (1996) found that pay has a relatively weak effect on job satisfaction. Additionally, pointed out that a possible explanation is the idea of relative income — that income is not an absolute characteristic but is evaluated relative to some comparison level. That point is also highlighted by Clark & Oswald (1996), who indicated that satisfaction depends on a reference or comparison level of income more than absolute income. Comparisons can be taken to others or oneself in the past (Clark et al., 2008). In turn, Grund & Sliwka (2001) state that job satisfaction "strongly depends on the relative wage increase as well as the absolute wage level". Additionally, Kalinowska & Marcinowicz (2020) analyzing job satisfaction among family nurses in Poland, identified that chance to afford to buy everything that is wanted and having savings increases the chances of achieving the highest level of job satisfaction.

4. Methods

The logit model has been widely described in numerous pieces of literature (Amemiya, 1985; Chow, 1995; Gruszczyński, 2010). In this paper, we use the ordered logit model which allows modeling the dependent variable, which is expressed in terms of the ordinal variable. Particularly job satisfaction was measured on the 5 points Likert scale. Therefore, the ordinal logit model combines the endogenous variable measured in the ordinal scale and explanatory variables, which are expressed in different scales like nominal, ordinal, or metric.

The basic model construction assumes the following expression:

$$job_{sat}^{PL,CZ} = f\begin{pmatrix} behavioral, economic, educational, sociodemographic\ factors, \\ \alpha, \beta, \varepsilon \end{pmatrix}, \quad (1)$$

where PL and CZ denote the country considered in the study, α is a vector of thresholds, β is a vector of the model parameters and ε denotes the error term.

The model describes the probability of the fixed level of job satisfaction (measured on from 1 to 5 Likert scale) conditionally on four groups of factors. Since the factors were measured on nominal or ordinal scales, the explanatory

variables were recoded into binary variables. In a such way, we obtain the ordered logit model, which corresponds to:

$$P(y_i = j) = \frac{exp\left(\alpha_j - \sum_{k=1}^{K}\beta_k x_{ki}\right)}{1+exp\left(\alpha_j - \sum_{k=1}^{K}\beta_k x_{ki}\right)} - \frac{exp\left(\alpha_{j-1} - \sum_{k=1}^{K}\beta_k x_{ki}\right)}{1+exp\left(\alpha_{j-1} - \sum_{k=1}^{K}\beta_k x_{ki}\right)},$$ (2)

where:

y_i — dependent variable describing job satisfaction of the i-th individual;

$i=1, 2, ..., n$ — number of observations;

$\beta_1,...,\beta_k$ — coefficients of the model;

α_{j-1}, α_j — threshold points;

$j=1, 2, ..., J$ — number of categories;

x_{ki} — values of individual explanatory variables for the i-th observation.

The odds ratios $exp(\beta_k)$ in the model (3) are constant, which means that the parameters β_k are estimated at the same level across all variants of y_i (Gruszczyński, 2010). The model is estimated using the maximum likelihood method. The task is to maximize the likelihood function (3) concerning the parameters β, α_1, α_2, α_{j-1} (Chow, 1995):

$$L\left(y \mid x; \beta, \alpha_1, \alpha_2, ..., \alpha_{J-1}\right) = \prod_{i=1}^{n}\prod_{j=1}^{J}\left[\frac{exp(\alpha_j - x_i'\beta)}{1+exp(\alpha_j - x_i'\beta)} - \frac{exp(\alpha_{j-1} - x_i'\beta)}{1+exp(\alpha_{j-1} - x_i'\beta)}\right]^{d_{ij}},$$ (3)

where:

$$d_{ij} = \begin{cases} 1 & when \ y_i = j \\ 0 & when \ y_i \neq j \end{cases}.$$ (4)

The overall significance of the explanatory variables of the model can be tested with the likelihood ratio test. The null hypothesis in this test states that the model with only the α_1, α_2, ..., α_{J-1} thresholds is as good as the estimated model. The test statistic LR has the $\chi^2(k)$ distribution and takes the form:

$$LR = 2\left(ln L_p - ln L_{ww}\right),$$ (5)

where:

L_p — is the value of the likelihood function for the estimated model;

L_{ww} — is the value of the likelihood function for the model with α_1, α_2, ..., α_{J-1} only.

The quality of the ordered logit model can be assessed based on the so-called $count-R^2$, which informs what percentage of observations have been correctly classified by the model.

5. Results

The data used in the study were collected in 2021 in a survey using the CAWI technique on a sample of 402 (202 at the age 18–24 and 200 at the age 25–29) respondents in Poland and 403 (200 at the age 18–24 and 203 at the age 25–29) in the Czech Republic. To estimate the models, the answers of 304 respondents in Poland and 259 in the Czech Republic were used, due to the status of an employee in the labor market. The age variable was used as the indicator variable in both models, i.e. AGE18–24=1. The distribution of the answers to the question about job satisfaction is presented in Chart 2.

The comparison of job satisfaction in generations Y and Z in Poland and the Czech Republic observed in-sample revealed that on average it was valued lower in Poland (3.4 points) than in the Czech Republic (3.6 points). While in Poland there are no differences between generations Y and Z, in the Czech Republic job satisfaction increases with age from 3.4 for GenZ to 3.8 for GenY. It is very likely that the difference results from the average wage which is higher in the Czech Republic.

On the base of the collected data and identified differences between job satisfaction in Poland and the Czech Republic, two separate ordered logit models were estimated. Table 3 presents description of the variables. The model for the Czech Republic correctly predicts 53.3% of cases and the model for Poland is 54.9%. LR statistics equal 211.15 (0.000) and 262.38 (0.000).

Table 4 shows the estimated odds ratios and the respective p-values for the significance test. Job satisfaction was considered from various dimensions perspective, i.e., behavioral, economic, educational, and socio-demographic. The first dimension including behavioral factors is composed of five significant factors. The first of them is expense control. This factor refers mainly to young adults in Poland. Odds ratios in the case of Poland take the minimum value for EXPENSES_CTRL_3 (response: hard to say in the question about expense control). This value equals 14.325. The highest impact on job satisfaction is for EXPENSES_CTRL_5 (response: I strongly agree with the question about expense control). The odds ratio equals 50.2 which means that existing this level of a factor increases the chances of achieving a higher level of job satisfaction more than 50-times. It is essential to underline that the odds ratio for levels of this factor has the shape of a U letter. Imposing disciplinary rules (DISC_RULES) is statistically significant only for the Czech Republic. For all variables relating to the disciplining rules, the odds ratio is greater than 1, which means that they increase the chances of achieving greater job satisfaction. These factors have an irregular impact with the highest odds ratio for DISC_RULES_3 and equal 5.284. The highest level of inclination to unplanned expenses during the holidays compared to the planned current expenses (UNPLANNED_EXP_5) increases the chances of higher job satisfaction by 187.3%, but only in the case of the Czech Republic. A preference for spending over saving is the next factor in the group of behavioral factors. In this case, the difficulty of answering

the question about the preferences of spending over saving (PREF_EXP_3) is related to the reduction of the chances of higher job satisfaction by 36.1%. This factor is statistically significant only in the model for the Czech Republic. Difficulties with refraining from current consumption (DIFFICULT STOP) significantly affect job satisfaction only in the case of Poland. The odds ratio for DIFFICULT_STOP_4 is equal to 1.996 which means that the chance for greater job satisfaction increases by 99.6%. In the case of DIFFICULT_STOP_5 this chance increases by 134.7%.

The economic dimension is composed of satisfaction with consumption, assessment of personal wealth, level of income in total and per person, assessment of the level of income allowing for saving, and wage satisfaction. The only statistically significant variable referring to satisfaction with consumption is CONS_SAT_3 (response: hard to say in the question about satisfaction with consumption). This variable occurs only in the model for Poland. The estimated odds ratio equal to 1.751 means that the chance for greater job satisfaction increases by 75.1%. The assessment of the fortune between 50,000–100,000 PLN (WEALTH_4) is statistically significant in the model for Poland. It increases chances for greater job satisfaction by 84.0%. Parental incomes (INC_PARENTS) turned out statistically significant in the model for the Czech Republic. It reduces the chance for higher job satisfaction by 41.4%. The level of net income in general refers to the model for Poland. In the case of the Czech Republic, only NET_INC_2 is statistically significant. The odds ratio for this variable in the case of the Czech Republic means that incomes between 8,000 and 16,000 CZK increase the chance for greater job satisfaction by 132.7%. In the case of Poland, it can be indicated that the higher the total income level, the higher the chance of greater job satisfaction. Net income on the level 1,000–2,000 PLN (NET_INC_2) increases chances for greater job satisfaction over 3-times, but when the level of income is higher than 4,000 PLN increases the chances of greater job satisfaction almost 12-times. The per-person income level, in turn, reduces the chances of greater job satisfaction in the case of Poland. The higher the level of income per person, the higher the decrease in the chances of higher job satisfaction. The level of income sufficiently high to save (INC_SAVINGS) occurs in both models. In the case of the Czech Republic, the higher the income rating in terms of saving opportunities, the higher the chances of increasing job satisfaction. In the case of Poland, only two variables relating to the assessment of income in terms of saving possibilities remained statistically significant. INC_SAVINGS_2 (response: I disagree with the question about the assessment of income in terms of saving possibilities) increases the chances for greater job satisfaction by 114.2%. INC_SAVINGS_5 (response: I strongly agree with the question about the assessment of income in terms of saving possibilities) increases the chances for greater job satisfaction by 196.5%. The last economic factor is wage satisfaction. The effects of this factor are positive for both countries but stronger for the Czech Republic than for Poland.

The educational dimension refers to the level of education and type of education. In the model for the Czech Republic, the only statistically significant variable is EDU_P_2 (parent's junior high school education). The odds ratio equals 2.031, which means that having junior high school education by parents increases the chances of higher job satisfaction by 103.1%. Variables relating to the level and type of education remained statistically significant only in the model for Poland. The overall conclusion is that as the level of education increases, the chances of higher satisfaction decrease, but this factor still has a positive effect. Having an economic education increases the chances of higher job satisfaction by 209.2%, in the case of medical education, the chances are more than 3 times higher. Other education courses increase the chances only by 94.5%.

The last dimension refers to socio-demographic characteristics. Actual full-time employment in the private sector (ACT_FTE_PRIV) in the Czech Republic decreases chances for greater job satisfaction by 50.6%. In Poland, actual full-time employment in the public sector (ACT_FTE_PUBL) increases the chances for higher job satisfaction by 314.2%. For Czechs aged 18–24, the chances of higher satisfaction are 64.4% lower. In Poland, the Age18_24 was not significant. Plans for future work in the public sector in the Czech Republic increase chances for greater job satisfaction by 104.8%. In the case of Poland, this factor decreases the chances for greater job satisfaction by 43.3%. In the Czech Republic living with a partner, wife, or husband (HOUSEHOLD_5) decreases the chance for greater job satisfaction by 49.9%. Polish women have a 46.7% lower chance of greater job satisfaction.

6. Conclusion

The analysis, based on survey data collected from Poland and the Czech Republic shows substantial differences between young adults living in both countries. Among four dimensions, i.e., behavioral, economic, educational, and socio-demographic, which occurred in both countries only a few variables are significant in both countries. The essential similarity is due to wage satisfaction, which determines the increase in job satisfaction. In the Czech Republic, the impact of wage satisfaction is greater taking the odds ratio than in Poland. It seems that in the Czech Republic young people rely on their wages more than in Poland. One of the explanations is related to solutions supporting young adults in Poland like zero income tax until 26 years old to more extent than in the Czech Republic, when working students (below 26 years old) may benefit from tax relief of 4,020 CZK (about 165 EUR). Furthermore, young adults in Poland rely on their parent's income and run the household with their parents for much longer than in the Czech Republic. According to Eurostat (2022), the share of living with their parents until the age of 34 is 64% in Poland, 18 percentage points higher than in the Czech Republic (46%). The comparison of the share of young adults running the common household with their parents between

the young generations in Poland and the Czech Republic observed in the sample revealed that young Czechs aged 18–24 more often live with their parents (59%) than Polish representants of Z generation (43%). However, at the age of 25–29, the respective share of young Czechs is twice as low (11%) as in Poland (22%). It may suggest that for Czechs representing GenY wage satisfaction is particularly important because of the earlier start to financially independent living. Another, but the less similar result comes from expenses control (EXPENSES_CTRL_2=I disagree that I regularly control my current expenses), incomes allowing savings (INC_SAVINGS_5 = I strongly agree that my net incomes allow saving), and net income between 8 and 16 thousand CZK (NET_INC_2).

The above list ends the similarities about the factors creating job satisfaction in Poland and the Czech Republic. The list of differences is much longer. Firstly one can say that educational factors are significant and increase job satisfaction in Poland only apart from the impact of parents' junior education occurring in the Czech Republic. Partially, Consumption satisfaction, Wealth, Net income, and Income level sufficient to save stimulate job satisfaction in Poland. On the other hand, the level of income per person decreases the chance of higher job satisfaction. The level of income sufficiently high to save was particularly essential in the Czech Republic and increased job satisfaction of young adults. Behavioral factors generally increase job satisfaction when they allow expense control and discipline in expenses. The consciousness that unplanned expenses can be covered also stimulates job satisfaction.

To sum up, the pattern of job satisfaction increase in the Czech Republic can be defined as follows:

$$
CZ\ job\ satisfaction_{(+)} \leftarrow \begin{cases} economic\ (wage\ satisfaction, income\ allowing\ to\ save) \\ behavioral\ (expenses\ control\ and\ discipline) \end{cases}. \qquad (6)
$$

In turn, a pattern of decrease in job satisfaction in the Czech Republic takes the form:

$$
CZ\ job\ satisfaction_{(-)} \leftarrow \begin{cases} behavioral\ (preference\ to\ spend) \\ economic\ (income\ from\ parents) \\ sociodemographic\ (job\ in\ private\ sector,\ age\ 18\text{-}24, \\ living\ with\ a\ friend/wife/husband) \end{cases}. \qquad (7)
$$

In Poland, a similar positive pattern is as follows:

$$
PL\ job\ satisfaction_{(+)} \leftarrow \begin{cases} economic\ (wage\ satisfaction,\ income\ allowing\ to\ save, \\ consumption\ satisfaction,\ wealth,\ net\ income) \\ educational\ and\ sociodemographic\ (job\ in\ public\ sector, \\ level\ and\ profile\ of\ education) \\ behavioral\ (expenses\ control\ and\ discipline) \end{cases}. \qquad (8)
$$

And negative:

$$PL\ job\ satisfaction\ \underset{(-)}{\leftarrow} \begin{cases} economic\ (income\ per\ person) \\ sociodemographic\ (future\ work\ in\ public\ sector,. \\ being\ a\ woman) \end{cases} \quad (9)$$

To answer the second research, question the dummy variable denoting Age18−24 was introduced. It was significant in the Czech Republic only, and it demonstrates that perceived job satisfaction is lower in the group GenZ (18−24) than in the group GenY (25−29). This result indicates that job satisfaction grows with age in CEE which does not support the U-shaped relation between job satisfaction and age (Clark et al., 1996). Therefore, our results about a positive relationship between age and job satisfaction are similar to Ng & Feldman (2010), indicating however the links only among two generations of young adults.

The presented results allowed the formulation of practical implications for increasing job satisfaction for both employers and employees. On the one hand, due to the confrontation of initial expectations with the reality of the young employees' first jobs, it is recommended that employers create a system of monitoring and evaluation of job satisfaction. Regarding our results which revealed a greater role of wage satisfaction in job satisfaction for young Czechs and because they start their independent life earlier, it is recommended to use wage motivators. Considering the relatively worse material situation of young adults in Poland than in the Czech Republic it is also recommended to reduce the tax burden for youth on the labor market to increase satisfaction from their first job. Given the preference for job security and stability achieved at present in the public sector employment in Poland and as the employment aspiration in the Czech Republic it is also proposed to increase job security in the employment of young adults also in the private sector. Taking into account the behavioral dimension present in both models, the role of formal and informal education, training, coaching, and related activity is crucial in the medium term.

On the other hand, because job satisfaction is one of the overall life satisfaction domains, being the important determinant of quality of life (Sirgy, 2021), it is recommended to assess the place job satisfaction takes in overall life satisfaction in future research, particularly considering the intergenerational differences of young employees. Moreover, examining the determinants of young adults' job satisfaction may improve overall life satisfaction from a microeconomic perspective and contribute to society's development at large and more sustainably. Contemporarily it is essential to meet the challenges and expectations of young generations (Y and Z) in the labor market, increasing their job satisfaction, which is not without the impact on overall life satisfaction, social cohesion, and sustainable development in Poland and the Czech Republic.

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Acknowledgements

Appendix

Table 1.

Characteristics of young people in the labor market in Poland, the Czech Republic, and in the EU-27

Characteristic	EU-27 average	Czech Republic	Poland
median hourly earnings (total population, PPS)	12.6	8.4	8.4
low wage earners (% of the reference age group) less than 30, 2018	26.7	14.6	25.6
low wage earners (% of the total population), 2018	14.8	15.1	21.9
employment 15–24 (% of the reference age group), 2021	32.7	24.8	27.3
employment 15–29 (% of the reference age group), 2021	47.4	44.8	48.1
unemployment 15–24 (% of the population in the labor force) 2021	16.6	8.2	11.9
unemployment 15–29 (% of the population in the labor force) 2021	13.0	5.2	7.2

Source: Own preparation based on the Eurostat (2022).

Table 2.

Average rating of job satisfaction and overall life satisfaction in the Czech Republic, Poland, and the EU-27 in 2018

Variable of satisfaction	Age groups	EU-27	Czech Republic	Poland
job satisfaction	16 or over	7.2	7.4	7.3
	16–24	7.4	7.3	7.3
	25–29	7.3	7.4	7.4
overall life satisfaction	16 or over	7.3	7.4	7.8
	16–24	7.8	8.2	8.2
	25–29	7.6	7.9	8.1

Source: Own preparation based on the Eurostat (2022).

Table 3.
Description of the variables

Dimension	Variable name	Question	Scale
behavioral	EXPENSES_CTRL	I regularly control my current expenses (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)	ordinal
	DISC_RULES	I impose on myself disciplinary "rules" (eg spending limits) in order not to be tempted when shopping (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)	ordinal
	UNPLANNED_EXP	I am more inclined to decide on unplanned expenses during the holidays than on unexpected current expenses (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)	ordinal
	PREF_EXP	I prefer to spend than save as consuming improves my life satisfaction (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)	ordinal
	DIFFICULT_STOP	Refraining from current consumption is difficult for me and requires a lot of willpower (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)	ordinal
economic	CONS_SAT	Consuming gives me satisfaction (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)	ordinal

Dimension	Variable name	Question	Scale
economic	WEALTH	How do you rate your wealth (material resources, e.g. computer, car, apartment) (1 — less than 10,000 PLN (80 thousand CZK); 2 — between 10,000 PLN (CZK 80 thousand) and PLN 20 thousand. PLN (160 thousand CZK); 3 — between 20,000 PLN (160 thousand. CZK) and 50 thousand. PLN (400 thousand CZK); 4 — between 50,000 PLN (400 thousand. CZK) and 100 thousand. PLN (800 thousand CZK); 5 — between 100,000 PLN (800 thousand. CZK) and 200 thousand. PLN (1.6 million CZK); 6 — over 200,000 PLN (1.6 million CZK))	ordinal
	INC_PARENTS	What are your sources of income? (from parents)	nominal
	NET_INC	What is your approximate monthly net income (from all sources combined)? (1 — below PLN 1,000 (CZK 8,000); 2 — between 1 thousand PLN (CZK 8 thousand and PLN 2 thousand (CZK 16 thousand)); 3 — between 2,000 PLN (16 thousand. CZK) and 3 thousand. PLN (24 thousand CZK); 4 — between 3,000 PLN (24 thousand. CZK) and 4 thousand. PLN (32 thousand CZK); 5 — over 4,000 PLN (32 thousand CZK))	ordinal
	NET_INC_PERS	What is the approximate monthly disposable net income (from all sources combined) per person in a household? (1 — less than PLN 1,000 (CZK 8,000) per person; 2 — between 1 thousand PLN (CZK 8 thousand and PLN 2 thousand (CZK 16 thousand) per person; 3 — between 2,000 PLN (16 thousand. CZK) and 3 thousand. PLN (24 thousand CZK) per person; 4 — between 3,000 PLN (24 thousand. CZK) and 4 thousand. PLN (32 thousand CZK) per person; 5 — over 4,000 PLN (32 thousand CZK) per person)	ordinal
	INC_SAVINGS	I believe that my incomes (from all sources together) are high enough to save (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)	ordinal
	WAGE_SAT	I am satisfied with the wage I received, taking into account my qualifications, experience, and commitment (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)	ordinal
educational	EDU	What's your education? (1 — primary; 2 — junior high school; 3 — vocational; 4 — secondary; 5 — high)	ordinal
	EDU_ECON	What is your education profile? (economical)	nominal
	EDU_MED	What is your education profile? (medical)	nominal
	EDU_OTHER	What is your education profile? (other)	nominal
	EDU_P	Parent's education (indicate the highest education among mother and father) (1 — primary; 2 — junior high school; 3 — vocational; 4 — secondary; 5 — high)	ordinal
socio-demographic	ACT_FTE_PRIV	The form of your current professional activity: (full-time employment in a private company)	nominal
	ACT_FTE_PUBL	The form of your current professional activity: (full-time employment in a public institution)	nominal
	AGE18_24	Age: 18–24 years	nominal
	FUT_PUBLIC	As far as the form of employment is concerned, in the future, I would most like to work in a public institution	nominal
	HOUSEHOLD	I run a household: (what?) (1 — on my own; 2 — with parents; 3 — with children; 4 — with a friend; 5 — with a partner/partner/husband/wife)	nominal
	WOMAN	Gender: woman	nominal

Source: Own preparation.

Table 4.
Odds ratios estimates

Type of factor	Factor	CZ		PL	
		Odds ratio	p-value	Odds ratio	p-value
behavioral	EXPENSES_CTRL_2	9.844	0.000***	36.083	0.000***
	EXPENSES_CTRL_3			14.325	0.001***
	EXPENSES_CTRL_4			32.611	0.000***
	EXPENSES_CTRL_5			50.202	0.000***
	DISC_RULES_2	3.284	0.043**		
	DISC_RULES_3	5.284	0.002***		
	DISC_RULES_4	3.609	0.017**		
	DISC_RULES_5	4.852	0.004***		
	UNPLANNED_EXP_5	2.873	0.002***		
	PREF_EXP_3	0.639	0.086*		
	DIFFICULT_STOP_4			1.996	0.026**
	DIFFICULT_STOP_5			2.347	0.070*
economic	CONS_SAT_3			1.751	0.024**
	WEALTH_4			1.840	0.083*
	INC_PARENTS	0.586	0.091*		
	NET_INC_2	2.327	0.013**	3.088	0.014**
	NET_INC_3			4.979	0.001***
	NET_INC_4			6.748	0.000***
	NET_INC_5			11.983	0.000***
	NET_INC_PERS_2			0.275	0.007***
	NET_INC_PERS_3			0.238	0.006***
	NET_INC_PERS_4			0.115	0.000***
	NET_INC_PERS_5			0.075	0.000***
	INC_SAVINGS_2			2.142	0.013**
	INC_SAVINGS_3	2.106	0.020**		
	INC_SAVINGS_4	3.764	0.000***		
	INC_SAVINGS_5	5.326	0.001***	2.965	0.039**
	WAGE_SAT_2	6.042	0.000***		
	WAGE_SAT_3	4.033	0.001***	3.077	0.000***
	WAGE_SAT_4	15.777	0.000***	10.814	0.000***
	WAGE_SAT_5	34.987	0.000***	17.418	0.000***
educational	EDU_3			6.610	0.001***
	EDU_4			3.974	0.008***
	EDU_5			2.682	0.080*
	EDU_ECON			3.092	0.000***
	EDU_MED			4.036	0.003***
	EDU_OTHER			1.945	0.042**
	EDU_P_2	2.031	0.018**		
socio-demographic	ACT_FTE_PRIV	0.494	0.009***		
	ACT_FTE_PUBL			4.142	0.001***
	AGE18_24	0.356	0.001***		
	FUT_PUBLIC	2.048	0.026**	0.567	0.062*
	HOUSEHOLD_5	0.501	0.011**		
	WOMAN			0.543	0.013**

Note:

Significance level: *** 1%; ** 5%; * 10%. The odds ratio values lower than 1.00 mean a negative impact of a given variable on job satisfaction.
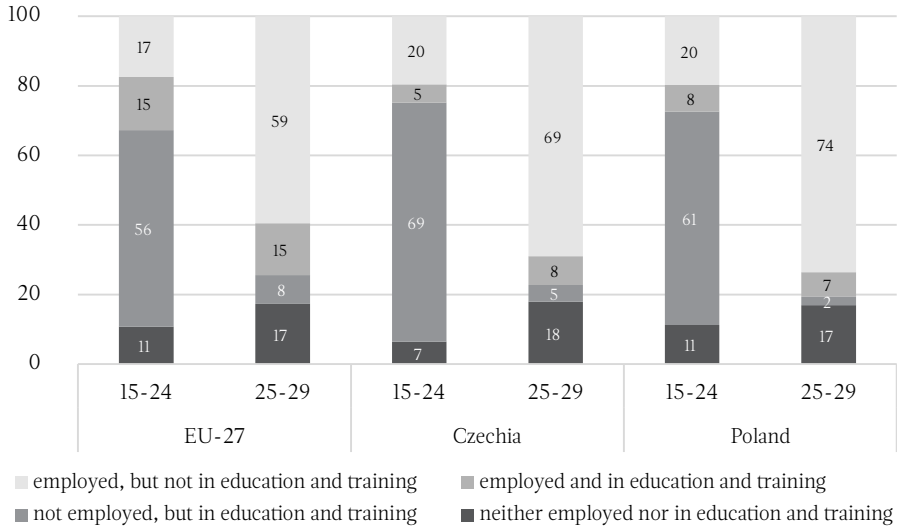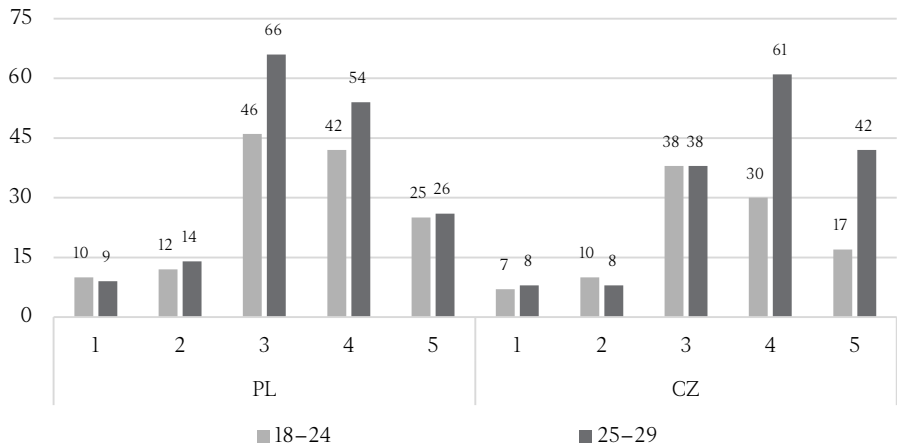
Source: Own preparation.

Chart 1.
The participation rate of young people (aged 15–24 and 25–29) in employment and education or training in Poland, the Czech Republic, and the EU-27 average, 2021 (%)

Source: Own preparation based on the Eurostat (2022).

Chart 2.
Distribution of answers to the question about job satisfaction (Likert scale 1–5, in-sample 2021)

Source: Own preparation.