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A CROSS-GENERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF WORKERS' EXPECTATIONS IN THE CANADIAN PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR

Abstract:

The public service sector is faced with sharp demographic shifts which have an effect on employees' perspectives on job satisfaction. Relationships between workers belonging to different age groups are perceived as uneasy, especially since the "mentoring" approach, aimed at bridging the gap between younger and older staff, yielded mixed results. This problem is compounded by gender related differential expectations regarding work. The aim of this research was to study the individual and combined effects of gender and age on work-related expectations and overall job satisfaction. The sample included 182 165 public service employees from various government agencies representing approximately 70% of the entire canadian federal work force. Data was collected using the PSES (Public Service Employee Survey), a questionnaire measuring a variety of constructs such as job satisfaction, social support, stress, harassment, fairness, social climate, demands, control and so forth. The sample took part in the study in 2009 and 2014. Participants were included in a 3 X 2 factorial design (age groups X gender) with various indicators of work perception used as dependent variables. MANOVAs and ANOVAs were computed and significant effects were decomposed using Scheffé post hoc tests. A significant multivariate effect of the factors was found [F(multi) = 16.56;p. <.0001]. Subsequent univariate and post hoc tests indicated that expectancies gradually shift from being centered on task related variables to more social and interactive variables from the younger age group to the older. No significant interaction effects with gender were observed. Implications of these results on the career outlook of public service employees are discussed.

Keywords:

generations - work - expectations - satisfaction - public sector - gender

JEL Classification: J00, L29

1. Introduction

For many years, the *role reversal model* has been one of the most influential theories of career development. Considering both age and gender, it stipulated that traditional sex roles interacted with age and generated differential career pathways for men and women. Based on nuclear family configurations, women would enter into adulthood by having children and entering in a stage laden with intimacy, relationships and search for meaning, while men would invest massively in their career with the purpose of making their place in the world. Later on, a role reversal would occur, with men searching for intimacy and meaning in their life while women being more focused on career or occupational perspectives. This model had a certain goodness of fit for the post second world war generation, but major changes in the workplace and in the work force have appeared since 1975.

It is estimated that young adults will hold an average of seven different jobs before holding a somewhat permanent or stable position. The age at which women choose to give birth is increasing, going from 21 in the 60's to 27 in 2017; furthermore, stay at home mothers are now a demographic minority (Calk & Patrick, 2017). This evolution was reflected in new models of career development, such as the spiral model and the contingent approach, which are much less deterministic and all but linear. The notion of discontinued trajectories leading nonetheless to a stable insertion in the work force is now recognized. Even schooling is subjected to interruptions and discontinuity which are seen as beneficial – hence the concept of gap year.

Another perspective through which career development can be examined is Herzberg's two factor model of job satisfaction. This author developed a two-prong approach to job satisfaction in which satisfaction with work is not the polar opposite of insatisfaction. Instead, insatisfaction with work is related to basic work conditions which are called hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1987; Herzberg, Mausner, & Synderman, 1959; Paul, Robertson, & Herzberg, 1969).

These factors are to a certain extent similar to the very basic motivations described in Maslow's pyramid. The presence of these hygiene factors is not related to job satisfaction, but to the absence of insatisfaction. Satisfaction and motivational factors are different in nature: they correspond to a higher level of needs in Maslow's pyramid, such as being recognized, appreciated and consulted. Since career development is contingent on age and experience, the latter must also have an effect on how work satisfaction is perceived across time and with maturation.

To that effect, one way of conceptualizing age groups is through the generational approach, which assumes that workers of different age groups share common characteristics linked to the prevailing cultural, social and economic conditions present in and around their birth year. We have thus seen the emergence of comparative studies of baby-boomers, genX, generation Y, echo or rebound generation and millenials. Most of these studies seem to indicate that the cross- generational differences in terms of job satisfaction and motivation are less important than within generation differences, (Calk & Patrick, 2017) even when

controlling for individual differences.

When the age-job satisfaction relationship is studied through a non-generational approach but simply in terms of chronological age, a logical assumption would be that it bears a U shape where sources of satisfaction are high yet quite different both at the beginning and at the closure of a career. However, it seems that job satisfaction does not relate to age in a linear fashion or through a simple algorithm (Djordjević, Ivanović-Djukić, & Lepojević, 2017) and many moderating and situational variables appear to trump age as the main factor.

For instance, recent works have indicated that job satisfaction and motivation rely heavily on how employees perceive the Performance Management System (PMS) they are subjected to (Baskar, 2016), with hygiene and satisfaction factors having positive relationships with the PMS. Differential effects were also found: some hygiene factors (relationship with supervisors, company policy, salary, social status and working conditions) are strongly related to job satisfaction while Herzberg's motivators are not (Fareed & Jan, 2016). Finally, cross-cultural studies have shown that many of these results are essentially culturally and nation-dependent (Drabe, Hauff, & Richter, 2015).

Still, some studies have reported that workplace motivation and/or satisfaction varies across age groups (Srivastava & Banerjee, 2016), whether it is measured through Herzberg's two factor model or through Deci and Ryan's self-determination model. Older employees' job satisfaction is based on good relationships with colleagues, while hygiene factors such as income, advancement opportunities and job security are less important (Drabe, Hauff, & Richter, 2015).

Gender based studies regarding differences in job satisfaction are numerous. They generally are characterized by smaller mean spreads when job characteristics and individual differences are well controlled for (Djordjević, Ivanović-Djukić, & Lepojević, 2017; Madhuri, 2017). Still, one of the influential factors here is the salary gap between men and women, which explains much of the variance of job satisfaction. (Issa Eid, 2016).

To that effect, merging the concept of job satisfaction with career development and gender could be a fruitful endeavor, especially since linear models of career development appear to be gradually phased out. They are replaced by very general models in which communalities are few and contingencies numerous. Furthermore, many studies have stated that a host of individual, social and cultural characteristics have an important effect on job satisfaction which could supercede the simple effect of age. Studying a more homogeneous cultural group, such as public servants with the same employer and collective agreement could help shed more light on the age/satisfaction relationship, while controlling for gender.

2. Aim and research questions

The aim of this threefold research was to study the individual and combined effects of gender and age on work-related expectations and overall job satisfaction. A secondary

objective is to test the factorial structure of the PSES (Public Service Employee Survey) in order to generate factorial scores. Finally, Herzberg's hygiene and satisfaction factors will be studied across gender and age groups.

2.1 <u>Research questions</u>

What is the factor structure of the PSES?

Do gender and age have an effect on the PSES factorial scores?

Do gender and age have an effect on Herzberg's hygiene and satisfaction factors?

3. Methods

3.1 Participants

The sample included 182 165 public service employees working in various government agencies representing approximately 70% of the entire canadian federal public sector work force (President of the Treasury board, 2015). This survey has been conducted every three years since 1999. The 2014 cohort was similar in terms of demographics and response rate to the previous cohorts (Sullivan, 2009): 43% of respondents were men and 57% were women. Two thirds of respondents were between 40 and 65 years of age. Most of them worked in agencies located in and around the Capital city of Ottawa. The most recent public data set released for research purposes has been used for this research.

3.2 Instruments

As stated by the President of the Treasury Board (2015), the PSES is a survey of federal public servants that measures aspects of employee engagement, job satisfaction, leadership, among the workforce and within the workplace (Special Surveys Division, 2002). The PSES consisted of 106 questions: 82 covered various aspects related to work and the remaining 24 were demographic questions. Questions were answered with a Likert scale indicating the degree of agreement with each item. Positive and negative scales and items were harmonized in order to ensure that all Likert scales generated increasing values for each variable. Demographics were aggregated in categories, for instance, the age variable included three nominal groups: 39 and younger, between 40 and 49, and 50 and over. These cut-off points were chosen by the Special Surveys Division (2002).

3.3 <u>Procedure</u>

The invitation to complete the 2014 PSES was sent to over 250,000 employees in 93 participating organizations in the federal public service, with three possible options for participants: one could answer online, by e-mail, or request a paper/pencil survey. The 2014 PSES was administered and managed by the Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer, a section within the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. It was conducted from August 25 to October 3, 2014 (President of the Treasury Board, 2015).

Data was collected and input into files with the collaboration of Statistics Canada. These files were made available to researchers through the Statistics Canada Data Liberation Initiative (DLI).

3.4 Analytic strategy

A principal components analysis with Varimax rotation was applied to selected variables in the data set in order to identify relevant factors. Factorial scores were computed and overall hygiene vs job satisfaction factors were created and normalized with Z scores. Participants were included in a 3 X 2 factorial design (age groups X gender) with 6 factors used as dependent variables. MANOVAs and ANOVAs were computed and significant effects were identified using Scheffé post hoc tests. T-tests were computed to test for gender differences on each of the seven factors.

4. Results

4.1 <u>What is the factor structure of the PSES?</u>

The factor structure of selected items of the PSES is presented in table 1.

Table 1 : Results of the principal components analysis with Varimax rotation applied to selected PSES items.

| Items | Loadings | Factor name |
|----------------------------------------|----------|----------------------|
| Constantly changing priorities | ,760 | Structural problems |
| Lack of stability in organization | ,749 | |
| Too many approval stages | ,751 | |
| Unreasonable deadlines | ,722 | |
| More work with fewer resources | ,676 | |
| Can complete my assigned workload | -,708 | Time management |
| I feel pressured by others | -,627 | |
| Balance family/work needs | -,785 | |
| Useful feedback from supervisor | ,822 | Supervisor support |
| Can count on my immediate supervisor | ,768 | |
| Get recognition from supervisor. | ,818 | |
| Supervisor keeps me informed | ,784 | |
| Supervisor and I discuss results | ,808 | |
| Can disagree with my supervisor | ,708 | |
| Supervisor assesses my work | ,783 | |
| Suggestions taken seriously | ,756 | |
| Supervisor distributes work fairly | ,673 | |
| Supervisor helps with learning needs | ,730 | |
| Proud of work carried out in my unit | ,692 | Team support |
| Work unit, we work as a team | ,805 | |
| Learn from our mistakes | ,797 | |
| Work unit takes time out to rethink | ,632 | |
| Opportunities for promotion Dept. | ,784 | Career opportunities |
| Opportunities for promotion Publ.Serv. | ,784 | |

| Satisfied with my career progress | ,575 | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| Lack of access to learning opport. | -,757 | Opportunities lacking |
| Lack of access-dev. assignments | -,784 | |
| Lack of info about job opportunities | -,723 | |
| Strongly committed to org. success | ,722 | Overall satisfaction |
| Organization treats me with respect | ,613 | |
| Organization good place to work | ,618 | |
| Satisfied with my career | ,512 | |

Items which were too specific to the Canadian context or dealt exclusively with administrative matters were deleted, and an exploratory factorial analysis was performed. Using eigen values >1 as a selection criteria, seven factors emerged after seven iterations. The first factor was named <u>structural problems</u>. It includes five items describing organizational or structural characteristics which impact negatively the quality of the work environment.

The second factor was called <u>time management</u>, with three items dealing with time constraints and pressures. The third factor is <u>supervisor support</u>, which includes ten items describing the type of support and relations offered by the supervisor. Factor number four, <u>team support</u>, has four items centered on team spirit, support and processes. A <u>career opportunies</u> factor including three items emerged from the analysis, as did a distinct three item negative factor: <u>opportunities lacking</u>. The fact that these items did not load positively and negatively on a single opportunities factor must be noted.

Finally, an <u>overall satisfaction</u> factor including career satisfaction, a positive perception of the organization and commitment to success, was identified. All factor loadings were above ,600 with a single item loading at the ,512 level, which is satisfactory. All seven factors were then included in a Pearson intercorrelation matrix presented in table 2.

| | Time management | Supervisor | Team | Career | Lack | ofOverall |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------|---------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | 0 | support | support | opportunities | opportunities | satisfaction |
| Structural problems | -,331** | ,246** | ,196** | ,193** | -,243** | ,082** |
| Time management | | -,125** | -,076** | -,070** | ,087** | ,011 [*] |
| Supervisor support | | | ,373** | ,320** | -,306** | ,166** |
| Team support | | | | ,267** | -,259** | ,212** |
| Career opportunities | | | | | -,445** | ,167** |
| Lack of opportunities | | | | | | -,132** |

Table 2 : Factor intercorrelation matrix

*p<0,05; **p<0,01

Results indicated that <u>overall satisfaction</u> was weakly yet significantly related to all other 6 factors. <u>Lack of opportunities</u> was negatively related to five of the six factors, the exception being a very slim yet significant positive correlation with <u>time management</u>. However, it must be noted that the items included in this factor all have negative

loadings. <u>Supervisor</u> and <u>team support</u>, along with <u>career opportunities</u>, are all positively related to overall satisfaction.

4.2 Do gender and age have an effect on the PSES factorial scores?

A significant multivariate effect of the two main independent variables was found [F(multi) = 16.56; p. <.0001]. Main effects of both the gender ($F_{Hotelling} = 12,024; p <.0001$) and age group ($F_{Hotelling} = 77,624; p <.0001$) variables were also observed. A weak but significant interaction effect was present ($F_{Hotelling} = 3,084$) but since it only was relevant for one of the factors on two cells of the factorial design, it was not considered here.

Mean factorial scores according to gender are presented in table 3. For all seven factors, women tend to score higher than men, with significant differences appearing only for the <u>supervisor support</u> and <u>career opportunities</u> factors. Appropriate significance levels were also reached for the <u>team support</u> (p=0,03) and <u>overall satisfaction</u> (p=0,01) factors, but the application of the Bonferroni correction for multiple T-tests generated a lower treshold of significance (0,007). The latter results must then be considered as non significant.

| Gende | r | Supervisor support | Structural problems | Team support | i 0, | Career opprtunities | Time management | Overall satisfaction |
|----------|------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| | Mean | | -,0780 | -,0039 | ,0197 | -,0270 | -,0925 | ,0024 |
| М | S.D. | ,96 | ,98 | 1,00 | ,96 | ,98 | ,99 | 1,02 |
| | Mean | ,0564 | -,0673 | ,0245 | ,0250 | ,0849 | -,0727 | ,0359 |
| F | S.D. | 1,02 | 1,00 | ,99 | ,98 | ,96 | ,99 | ,97 |
| | t | -3,954 | -,824 | -2,172 | -,413 | -8,741 | -1,514 | -2,561 |
| Sig. | р. | ,000 | N.S. | ,030 | N.S. | ,000 | N.S. | ,010 |
| Directio | on | F>M | | F>M | | F>M | | F>M |

Table 3: Significance test results, means and standard deviations of the factorial scores by gender

The effect of the age groups was studied through univariate F tests applied to all seven factors (see table 4). Post-hoc Scheffé tests were performed to classify each age group in terms of significant differences on the factor scores. Results indicated that there are no linear sequential trends through which factorial scores would systematically increase or decrease according to age groups.

The first factor, <u>supervisor support</u>, had significantly higher scores for the younger group of workers (group 1, 39 years old and less), the two other groups having lower and similar scores. The perception that <u>structural problems</u> are present decreases significantly as age groups grow older, while the perception of <u>team support</u> and that <u>opportunities are lacking</u> increases with age. Conversely, perceptions of <u>career</u> <u>opportunities</u> decrease. As far as <u>time management</u> is concerned, the negative loadings of items indicates that the younger workers are the most affected, followed by the oldest workers and the intermediate group. Finally, <u>overall satisfaction</u> at work increases steadily from the younger workers to the oldest.

Table 4 : Univariate results, means and standard deviations of the factorial scores by age group

| Age gr | oups | Supervisor support | Structural problems | Team support | T 0. | Career opportunities | Time management | Overall satisfaction |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------|---------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 39- | Mean | ,0711 | ,0181 | -,0505 | -,0627 | ,2116 | ,0326 | -,0463 |
| | S.D. | ,98 | ,97 | 1,00 | ,96 | ,95 | ,99 | 1,00 |
| 40-49 | Mean | ,0069 | -,0902 | ,0083 | -,0140 | ,0026 | -,1687 | ,0333 |
| | S.D. | 1,00 | ,99 | 1,02 | ,97 | ,98 | ,99 | ,99 |
| 50+ | Mean | ,0231 | -,1470 | ,0822 | ,1538 | -,1267 | -,1037 | ,0780 |
| | S.D. | 1,00 | 1,00 | ,97 | ,97 | ,97 | ,99 | ,99 |
| | F | 8,989 | 54,990 | 33,583 | 102,627 | 236,795 | 85,678 | 30,448 |
| Sig. | р. | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 | ,000 |
| Post-h | OC ¹ | 1>2;3 | 1>2>3 | 3>2>1 | 3>2>1 | 1>2>3 | 1>3>2 | 3>2>1 |

¹Scheffé post-hoc test with alpha set at 0,05

1 : 39 and less; 2 : 40-49; 3 : 50 and up

4.3 <u>Do gender and age have an effect on Herzberg's hygiene and satisfaction</u> <u>factors?</u>

Herzberg's hygiene and satisfaction factors were not directly measured here: they were conceptually inferred through item/factor correspondence. Normalized Z scores were computed. Both factors were significantly affected by age groups and gender (see figure 1). Insofar as gender differences were concerned, men and women had similar scores for the satisfaction factor but women were more concerned with hygiene factor than men (t =-5,132; p<.0001). The age groups had a significant effect on both the hygiene (F =218,598; p<.0001) and satisfaction (F =52,98; p<.0001) factors.

Scores for both factors were ranked according to increasing or decreasing age groups. In all of the subgroups considered here, satisfaction scores were clearly higher than hygiene scores.

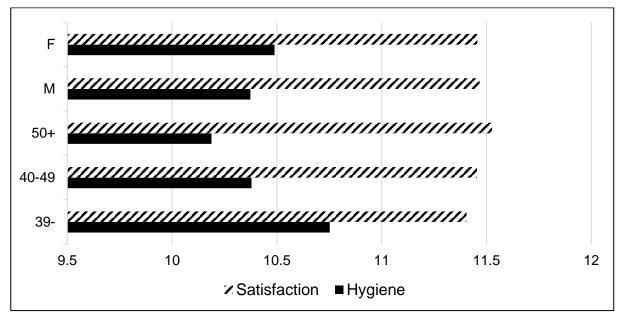


Figure 1: Mean differences on hygiene and satisfaction factors according to gender and age groups

5. Discussion

5.1 What is the factor structure of the PSES?

A clear seven factor structure emerged from the EFA (exploratory factor analysis) performed on selected items of the PSES. The presence of strong loadings and the absence of cross-loadings indicated that this instrument yielded a coherent expression of the different dimensions of public service work. The PSES guide (President of the Treasury Board, 2015) indicated that there were four dimensions to the questionnaire: employee engagement, leadership, work force and work place. These categories appear to have been generated through a face validity approach and no mention of EFA or CFA analyses were found in the governmental publications. However, the factor structure generated here is somewhat similar to the one reported by Sullivan (2009).

The <u>structural problems</u> factor is an aggregate of negative work environment characteristics such as the lack of stability, pressures to respect deadlines, and resources restrictions. This factor is common to most work satisfaction questionnaires and most of its items could be linked to Herzberg's hygiene factor, i.e. minimal working conditions required to prevent employees from being dissatisfied, without fostering satisfaction. The <u>time management</u> factor included three items describing how employees react or manage time constraints on a more personal plane. Again, this type of factor is often found in stress or burnout inventories. Its presence in the PSES indicated that various time-related variables significantly affect employees.

The PSES summary report (President of the Treasury Board, 2015) indicated that

all items regarding supervisors and senior management were regrouped in a single leadership category. Results of the EFA performed here indicated that some items could be included in a <u>supervisor support</u> factor, which is conceptually quite different from leadership. Employees appear to be sensitive to the quality of their professional relationship with their direct supervisor, senior management excluded. None of the items of this factor really describe or deal with leadership, at least as it is described in the literature, i.e. a capacity to influence and motivate people which is distinct from formal power (Mintzberg, 2011).

Results presented here thus seem to indicate that employees are sensitive to the quality of the managerial support they receive without necessarily linking it to leadership. Still, Canadian federal government publications regularly equate management and leadership, indicating that leadership qualities are expected from public sector managers. Factor number four, *team support*, includes items centered on team spirit, support and processes. Social support is an important component of job satisfaction, and it also acts as a buffer in stressful situations and environments (Sullivan, 2009).

A career opportunies factor and a distinct opportunities lacking factor both emerged from the EFA. The fact that these items did not load positively and negatively on a single opportunities factor is puzzling. However, it could be explained by somewhat subtle differences: the *career opportunities* factor deals with promotions and career progress while the opportunities lacking factor describes more informal opportunities such as learning, professional development and horizontal mobility. The overall satisfaction factor isolated items such as career satisfaction, a positive perception of the organization and commitment to success. Many of the items which could be linked to satisfaction in Herzberg's model did not load on this factor. Between factors correlations further confirmed their relative independence. Furthermore, the overall satisfaction factor yielded the weakest set of correlations, indicating that the way employees assess their satisfaction at work may not be directly contingent on their immediate conditions, especially since horizontal and vertical mobility are quite frequent. For instance, weak but significant correlations between overall satisfaction, on the one hand, and the presence of structural problems and supervisor support, on the other hand, point to a complex network of causal relationships through which both supervisors and employees are subjected to similar pressures and constraints. In such cases, managers could serve as buffers and help their employees cope with work related problems and issues.

5.2 Do gender and age have an effect on the PSES factorial scores?

Significant main effects of both independent variables (gender and age group) were found, along with a marginal interaction affecting only one of the factors. With this sample size, small between group differences (as evidenced by the weak F value of the

interaction) among cells of the 2 X 3 factorial design may surface with little to no real impact on the overall results.

Women scored significantly higher than men on two factors : <u>supervisor support</u> and <u>career opportunities</u>. A significant gender X age group interaction was expected here, taking into account the role reversal theory, but gender differences were not linked to specific age groups, with women and men being respectively more and less sensitive to professional opportunies as time goes by. Such was not the case here; however, age groups covered a wide span, especially the younger workers (18 to 39 years of age). These cut-off points were chosen to prevent the identification of specific individuals, especially in small agencies. Thus, one can hypothesize that the 18-39 age group is far from being homogeneous with regard to the latter.

Univariate F tests applied to all seven factors indicated the presence of a significant effect of age groups; this effect appears to be differential considering that age groups are sequential, while the means generated for each group on each factor are not. This was confirmed Scheffé post-hoc tests. Younger workers had higher scores on the <u>supervisor support</u> factor, the two other groups having lower and similar scores. This could be linked to the fact that experienced workers generally have higher levels of autonomy. They may not require close supervision and could even react negatively to it, much in the same way as the perception that <u>structural problems</u> are present decreases with age groups. The nature of the data set does not allow to distinguish if this is linked to age per se or to the effect of experience.

A positive perception of the team also increases with age, a frequent observation in various professional fields, when the basic quality of the environment is controlled for. As for the perception that <u>opportunities are lacking</u> and that <u>career opportunities</u> decrease with age, a simple explanation can be offered: the highly unionized environment of the public service workforce combined with the large number of employees who are in the tail end of the babyboomers clearly diminishes job mobility for older employees, who have reached a certain level of expertise and are nearing the top salary brackets.

Younger workers, for their part, are strongly encouraged to move from one agency to the other in their first ten years of work, as part of a series of measured ensuring the replacement of retirees with a competent and flexible workforce. This in turn impacts <u>time management</u> especially for younger workers who are faced with the double pressure of combining work and family obligations. Finally, <u>overall satisfaction</u> increases steadily with age, echoing what developmental psychology has identified as the positive dimensions of psychosocial development in early, middle and late adulthood (Dunkel & Harbke, 2017; Erikson, 2000).

It has been suggested that there may also be a different set of work expectations associated with public service (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2006), where altruistic values could be more prevalent, at least at the beginning of a public servant's career. When the reality of day-to-day work in governmental agencies sinks in, a phenomenon

called the "end of history illusion" could appear (Van Ryzin, 2016). Employees then start to lose motivation for their daily tasks and are more people and relation oriented. Results presented here do not support this assertion which was based on a small scale experimental study with a limited sample of professionals.

5.3 <u>Do gender and age have an effect on Herzberg's hygiene and satisfaction</u> <u>factors?</u>

Herzberg's hygiene and satisfaction factors were significantly affected by age groups and gender, again through independent main effects. Scores on the satisfaction factor were relatively high both across age groups and gender. Significant differences were recorded but with a rather low effect-size caused by the large number of respondents. This again is an indicator of the quality of the work environment of Canadian public sector employees. Conversely, hygiene factors generated lower overall scores than satisfaction factors, albeit with more substantial between group differences.

The fact that women were more concerned with hygiene factor than men could be linked to gender proportions according to the position held. For instance, there is a huge disproportion of men and women within the support staff, with women being much more represented in administrative assistant and/or secretarial positions, which could increase their exposition to menial tasks and insatisfaction. Scores for the hygiene factor were ranked according to increasing age groups, with the older workers being the least dissatisfied.

Two sets of explanations can be proposed here. The first one is linked to the objective work conditions and the second one is supported by possible between generations differences. It is a fact that older workers are extremely well protected and cared for in the Canadian public sector, while younger workers must clear many hurdles before having a stable position and job security. As far as generations are considered, the outlook younger workers have on their job is much more utilitarian; work is seen as less important than achieving a certain quality of life which could diminish their engagement towards work and their perception of being in difficult work conditions (Srivastava & Banerjee, 2016).

6. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to test the factor structure of the PSES, to ascertain whether these factors were significantly affected by the age or gender of public service employees and, finally, to study the effect of the same independent variables on both components of Herzberg's two factor model of job satisfaction. Results indicated that a sturdy factorial structure could be extracted from the PSES. Factors identified through the EFA were more numerous and specific than the basic four category used by the PSES authors. Significant main effects for both gender and age groups were identified.

The overall conclusion stemming from these results is that age does indeed foster a more relational approach to work, and that gender based differences could be in a large part linked to differential access to quality positions for men and women. The absence of gender X age groups interactions furthers the notion that the role reversal model of career development does not fit the present situation of public sector employees in Canada. The main limits of this research are related to the demographic information in the data set. Extraordinary precautions were taken to ensure the anonymity of participants, through the use of generic codification. More detailed information regarding the age of participants and their family situation would generate fine grained results and lead the way to possible interventions aimed at fostering employee well-being.

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