

CASE STUDY: IMPACTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DOMAIN OF EMPLOYEES IN THE AREA OF CZECH AND SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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Abstract: "Globalization" widely used for increasing internationalization comes along with shifting power from national governments towards multinational corporations. The international division of labour is changing due to shifts of labour-intensive production to countries with lower labour cost with corporate governance, technology-intensive production and research kept in wealthy countries significantly increasing the development differences among countries including employment opportunities. This article focuses on sociological, economic and social aspects of globalization and emphasizes the development of human potential and changes in working conditions and employment character in Czech and Slovak Republics based on survey of the socio-economic trends of today's employees towards their future and level of satisfaction.

Keywords: globalization, internalization, employment, employee's satisfaction, employment opportunities, socio-economic domain, multicultural environment, employee benefits

1 Introduction

The ways of life has significantly changed over the past century (Dávidková et al., 2015) through the emergence of information and communication technology (ICT). The Internet that allowed the most accessible "transport" media for informational exchange enabled the globalization to evolve (Bauman, 2000). *Globalization* brings together people from various countries into one place building one team committed to a common goal and purpose creating an international and multicultural environment (Dávidková & Greguš, 2016). To further drivers of globalization besides ICT belongs the so called economic migration (Bartram, 2011) enabled by liberal trade where individual companies can allocate resources independently on place of origin on their own (Coslovsky, 2016) that has been exploited within Schengen Area and represents a never-ending ongoing process (Papastergiadis, 2013). Cultural diversity enriches interactions with new insights to work problems and tasks (Han & Beyerlein, 2016) despite its negative effect due to language barrier (Downes-Martin et al., 1992). Experiences of global virtual work lead to positive work's complexity and learning potential that in turn improves innovation, satisfaction and engagement (Nurmi & Hinds, 2016).

However, the higher the cultural diversity at workplace is, the more demanding is the leadership and management of such a multicultural group or team. The diversity of cultures denotes a significant factor that influences mutual collaboration, often leading to destructive conflicts due to clashes of mentalities with impacts team's coherency (Dávidková & Greguš, 2017). A collaboration in such an environment requires more intensive motivation of its team members and an extensive support by its team leader to maintain the same level of performance effectivity (Carter et al., 2015). This adds extra load to skills of the team leader. Insufficient and ad-hoc motivation of workers and insufficient support of their collaboration can cause stagnation similar to a strategy loss (Dávidková & Hvorecký, 2017).

Managing employee performance is currently becoming an important topic in human resource management recently and involves individual participation in setting performance goals, feedback on the way to achieve the goal, opportunities to improve based on performance assessment, training and human resource development, connections between results and rewards (Fenwick, 2005).

According to Urban (Urban, 2007), the basis for evaluating the performance of international staff denotes individual goals. Suggestions for personal goals of an employee working in an international environment implements milestones he/she wants to achieve in the future, often set by himself on the basis of his/her personal ambitions and performance indicators of the business or organizational unit he/she is a member of. To enhance employee motivation, their personal goals can be divided into two parts: basic and advanced goals (so-called ambitious goals, stretch targets, aggressive goals, etc.), which are the most challenging variant of goals. While meeting basic goals is expected from employees, meeting the more demanding goals requires a high employee commitment that will be appreciated by the business.

Due to international competition and current ease of travel, job mobility and employee benefits became one of significant factors impacting employment and job satisfaction (Fasang et al., 2012). External upward mobility is decisive to enhance satisfaction with objective working conditions and work-life balance, while internal mobility is pivotal for satisfaction with future career prospects (Fasang et al., 2012). Lower job qualities are highly associated with flexible employment contracts and several benefits (Dekker and van der Veen, 2017). Whereas better paid jobs are usually connected with longer commuting and less employee benefits. However, cultures differ in value hierarchies and thus the preferences in job selection may vary from culture to culture. Furthermore, people are individual beings and therefore, their satisfaction varies depending on their individual preferences.

However, a job dissatisfaction due to various reasons leads to fluctuation of employees that may lead to knowledge loss and thus has a long-term effect on the profit ability of given company. Therefore, this paper analyses the satisfaction of employees in global companies with focus on their preferences in selection of jobs to outline the directions of employee benefits that have the most significant impact on employee staying.

Benefits are specific to the remuneration of workers with a contradictory position. It is the incentive effect of benefits to employees in an effort to increase their satisfaction and keep them at work (Branham, 2009). Benefits are seen as corporate social responsibility that denote organizations' responsibility to provide dietary, continuing education, health care, and maintenance of the physical fitness of employees (Staňková, 2007).

Other experts state that employees are very different and, above all, are dissatisfied with the flat benefits allocation (Katcher & Snyder, 2009). A solution to this issue is represented by individual programs (Walker, 2003) that makes it possible to deduce the need to distinguish employees in an effort to achieve greater satisfaction. It is also necessary to distinguish the employees in relation to their position and "talent" to ensure "supposed justice" and future satisfaction (Nohria et al., 2003).

This paper is organized as follows: next section describes used methodology and sample. Section 3 describes achieved research findings followed by discussion. The conclusion summarizes the outcomes.

2 Methodology and Sample

Surveying was made via electronic questionnaire. The questionnaire was available on Facebook and sent by e-mail to target groups working in selected companies in Czech Republic and Slovakia with more than 3000 employees and self-employed professionals such as Dell or Czech Aeroholding. Questionnaires were filled out online within the duration of one month. The final processing and evaluation of the survey was focusing on having equal coverage of male and female individuals in the

sample (thus, 50% each). Respondents were selected from the administrative staff and IT departments.

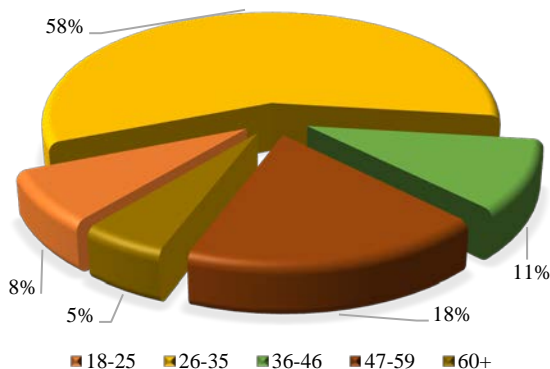


Figure 1: Age coverage of surveyed sample
Source: Survey

As more than a half of our respondents are in the active working age of 26-35 years. This can be influenced by high relevance of this topic to young people graduating from university, college of finishing secondary education. Further indicating factor is the utilization of information and communication technology that is more spread in younger generation as the invitation to this survey was in particular, by electronic form.

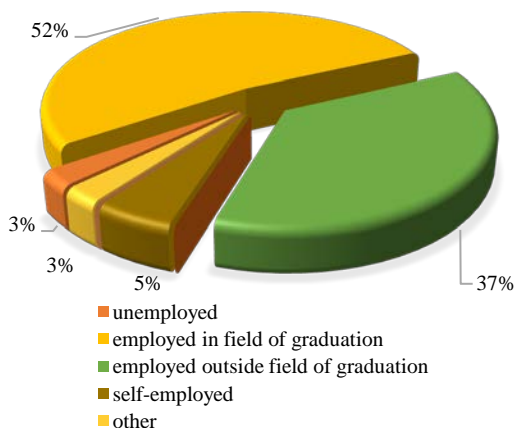


Figure 2: Sample by employment status
Source: Survey

The pleasantly surprising fact is that category of 47-59 years is represented by almost 20% of all respondents, from which it can be concluded that even the older generation is not afraid to communicate via the Internet about their attitude to jobs and their attitude towards more globalization-friendly companies and the possibilities offered by such companies.

An interesting result of 52.6% of employees that are working in their field of study leads us to the idea that a large number of people are working outside their field of study especially because companies are starting to specialize in specific sectors in given regions such as IT or automotive industry. In those regions, people have a problem of applying and finding employment in other fields. Additionally, IT is often a hobby at first and people learn it within their spare time. Thus, globalization now has socio-economic impact even on job choices by focusing on specific sectors in individual regions.

Almost 60% of our respondents live in the capital cities (Slovakia and Czech Republic). As we have already learned from other questions, one of the most important factors for job satisfaction is the availability of work in terms of commuting. It can therefore be assumed that most of the multinational companies are predominantly based in the capital cities. However, it should also be mentioned that our research included mainly mental workers, such as administration, IT, and similar.

Thus, no plants producing products of a physical nature. It is also possible to conclude that finding employees for mental work is easier in capital cities, as schools or travel options are concentrated here as well: airport, train station or other accessible transport network. As a matter of fact, the main cities become the victims of companies that target workers who work primarily conduct mental work. This makes this place more lucrative but also more costly to live.

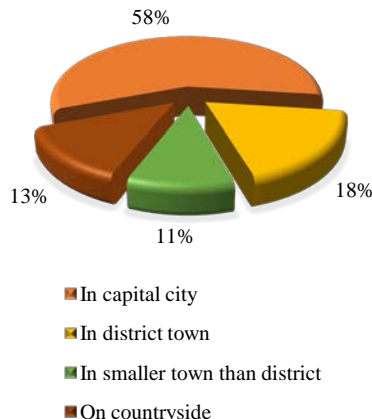


Figure 3: Sample split by place of living
Source: Survey

At the same time, these impacts are already a long-term trend because young people are moving away from regions with weaker employment possibilities to cities and to other parts of Europe, where they may benefit from employment within or outside their field of study and enjoy more advantageous socio-economic benefits. Such trend has a negative impact on the intelligence distribution of society in given country and its regions creating a larger discrepancy between wealthy and poor regions. At the same time, it has a positive influence on the opportunities that bring new jobs to open and adaptable countries in the form of moving their branches or factories.

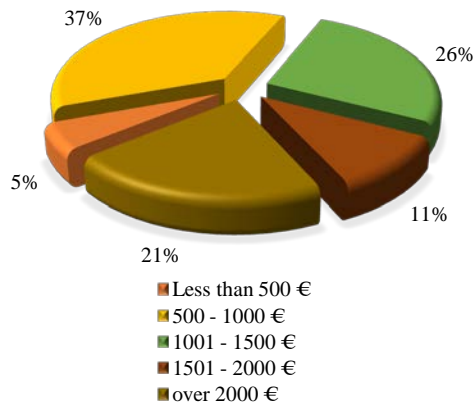


Figure 4: Sample coverage by income
Source: Survey

As for the budget for the month of the given household, we found out that for the 500-1000e per month category, one of the younger families, where only the person who filled out the questionnaire was in earnest. One could say, though, that the family has a lower budget employee who is happy with their work to decide to change it only for a short-term increase in the family budget. They prefer to temporarily quit and end the job they are happy with as if they were looking for a new job. The category above 2000e includes mainly entrepreneurs or employees who have income other than employment. Based on our respondents' replies, we could say that the companies employing them give them a standard income as their average

country inhabitant. However, it has to be remarked that often such employees are temporarily transferred to the motherland of their employer. As long as they gain strong knowledge of language, and the view of work issues reduces the risk of unemployment. Since they are often young people without a family, such a lucrative income, which is multiplied by the certainty of work and knowing its character and with a lot of past experiences, goes abroad.

Findings from other research endeavors point out that the higher the income of the household, the less women work and their expectations for the ideal amount of working hours are lower (Fedáková et al., 2008).

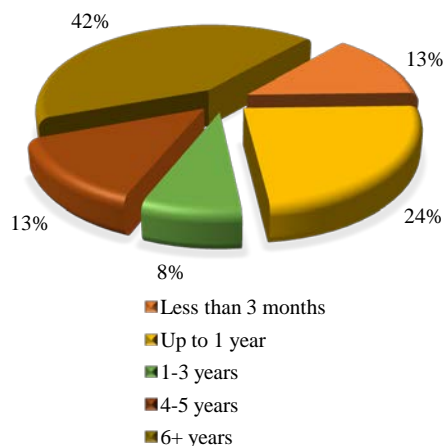


Figure 5: Sample by length of current employment
Source: Survey

Through our questionnaire, we tried to find dissatisfaction with employment and possible resistance to work that they spend overnight every day by going to work they do not enjoy. However, the results of research clearly show employment stability, as more than 55% of employees said they were more than 4 years old in the workplace, which could be a sufficient indicator of stability and thus also of satisfaction with the working environment. Of course, there are always exceptions, and there are always possibilities that we can improve. However, it seems that the current situation is not alarming.

The research findings are presented and discussed in subsequent section.

3 Research Findings and Discussion

As first aspect of satisfaction with current employment, we analyzed the financial question: the height of salary income. Almost 80% of respondents are satisfied with their income earned by work in a multinational company. Interestingly, more than half of the underprivileged people have this income as passive: retirement, university scholarship, dividends.

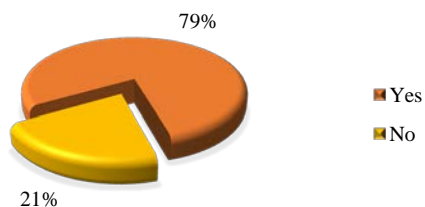


Figure 6: satisfaction with income
Source: Survey

When analyzing the length of employment as well as amount of previous employment experiences, we analyzed the age of respondents at their initial joining of job market. Interestingly,

more than two-thirds of the respondents started to work between 15 and 18 years of life. It could therefore be said that they are ambitious individuals. They understood their role in the society and the value of money earlier as it was understood by their peers. To work in a multinational society requires a degree of ambition. It is relatively easy to obtain a higher status there. However, in almost every hierarchy of such a company, it is possible to occupy only a certain level. For example, according to the results of surveyed companies participated on this research, senior managers are used to employ mainly people of the parent's nationality. This situation can cause frustration in very ambitious people, and if they have the ability to work on a given position, their frustration with failure from discrimination could lead to termination of employment. What internal staff also confirmed.

In addition to 3 respondents, everyone started working at the age of about 20 years of life, as up to 1/2 of the respondents have university education 1st, 2nd and 3rd level, it means that the full time employment was already during the attendance of the university. Therefore, they are not only very ambitious but also tenacious individuals. By their capabilities, they are able to enroll at university and full time job at the same time. Thus, it is possible to conclude that multinational companies place high demands on the quality of their employees, their education and their expertise. At the same time, it is possible to motivate such employees, for example, language or other courses; learning makes them happy and aware of how they improve their lives. This gives the companies a wider choice of possible employee benefits that their employees are interested in. At the same time, it improves not only the relationship with employees but also their educational level. This strategy is beneficial for both sides.

When directly investigating the employment satisfaction of respondents, we found out that the dissatisfaction with current employment exceeded 25% of all respondents for the cases of dissatisfaction with superiors and inadequate or null career progression possibilities. As the majority of survey respondents were employed by global companies, we might deduce that the dissatisfaction with superiors may often stem from significant divergences in the nature, mentality and culture of distinguish nationalities. This is often caused by pursuing overwhelmingly the nature, mentality and culture of the founders or the higher-ranking company. At the same time, it is necessary to take the human relationships into consideration that became significantly complicated for agitations and interactions in multicultural environments and lead often to complex situations in terms of leadership and management.

Next reason can be found in the nature of staffing of projects where outsourced companies frequently use leasing of workforce for only one purpose and for only a temporary period of time and thus, to achieve the project goals. On the other hand, employees, usually people coming from previous east block that conclude middle and eastern Europe where the workforce is awarded with significantly less amount of money, are commuting to work or even leaving their region for employment in countries with higher hourly rate. In such cases, it is important to emphasize that such places do not offer almost any career potential growth perspective that may cause burnout or a decrease in the interest in continuing working in given job. From this, it can be assumed that the globalization of companies and their behavior towards employees has both social and economic impacts on society. We think it would be better to explore the capabilities of multinational companies that would adapt corporate culture to their respective countries.

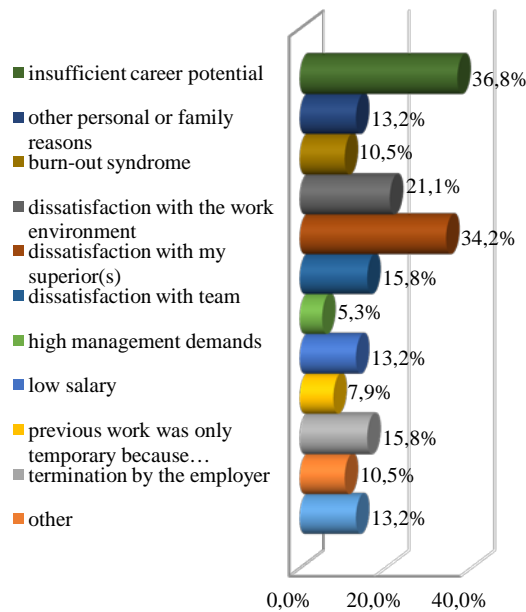


Figure 7: Reasons for leaving previous job(s)
Source: Survey

The surveying included also the vision of respondents of staying in current employment; we found out that more than 70% of respondents would stay longer than 3 years in the job, indicating that employees are satisfied with their job, position, or rank. It seems that multinationals are choosing hard choices, and the individuals they gain are worth their place. As we have found, they are also satisfied with their ratings and have the opportunity to receive various benefits.

Employees who feel that they are reasonably valued are not looking for side job opportunities and use their spare time to regenerate strengths and rest. They are then healthier (physically and mentally) and relaxed. They are not often sick and are more profitable for the company than those who have to divide their energy for multiple jobs (Brožová, 2001).

As for the reasons why people stay in current employment despite their dissatisfaction with given conditions, the lack in education, practice and sufficient vacancies were together 43% (fig. 4). However, the majority of the respondents gave other reasons: they reported fearing social concerns about the economic instability caused by a change of employment. This in first place caused by all the liabilities and responsibilities the respondents are bound to, whether economical aspects like mortgage loans without which today's young people have almost no chance of securing independent housing; or social concerns like the well-being of small children or good collectives. This all despite their incomplete satisfaction with current job, wage or other conditions. These fears are not to be attributed directly to globalization, but global banking trends in turbulently expanding credit products could be a frequent cause of the budgets of working families. In the past, it was more adventurous to save money on a given house or service. Nowadays, by speeding up the processes and the possibilities of most multinational banks, a new credit to cover existing credit can be borrowed. Reckless pursuit of profit can harm the environment and conflict with other social values (Soros, 2002).

Almost 60% of the respondents expressed their reluctance to commute to work longer than 60 minutes for one direction. Nowadays, people are already aware that they have little free time remaining besides their working time that may be even

disproportionately distant from their place of residence. The willingness to commute to work and to travel is only when: "it will have a significant contribution to my further development" (source: survey) or "depending on the conditions and the current situation" (source: survey). Today, when working from home (home office) and remote working via the omnipresent internet network, the willingness to commute to work and to travel is decreasing significantly.

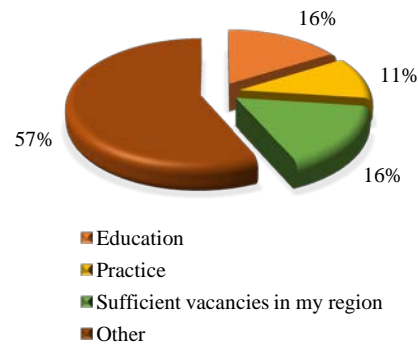


Figure 8: Perceived missing aspects in applying for another employment
Source: Survey

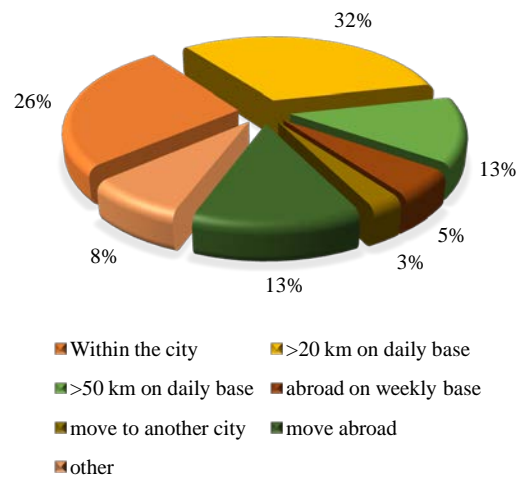


Figure 9: Willingness to commute to work
Source: Survey

A next survey outcome connected to this topic is also the assessment of benefits of employment that the respondents appreciate at their work the most. It was an open answer question where up to 70% of respondents expressed their feeling of being weakly financially awarded and would prefer 13th and 14th salaries. Besides that, the overwhelming majority of respondents (90%) would appreciate an increase of the number of annual holiday pool or at least to have the possibility of working remotely from home (so called home office). At the same time, almost all respondents expressed their desire to have flexible working hours in terms of work beginning and end according to their needs. Thus, employees are willing to commute to work and to travel for better economic conditions. However, in the case of lower economic remuneration, they require benefits of a short distance between home and workplace and better leisure time arrangements. Basically, the well-known statement "time is money" (Connors et al, 2016), (Wrenn and Irwin, 2015) is valid also for selection of employment possibilities. The time spent on

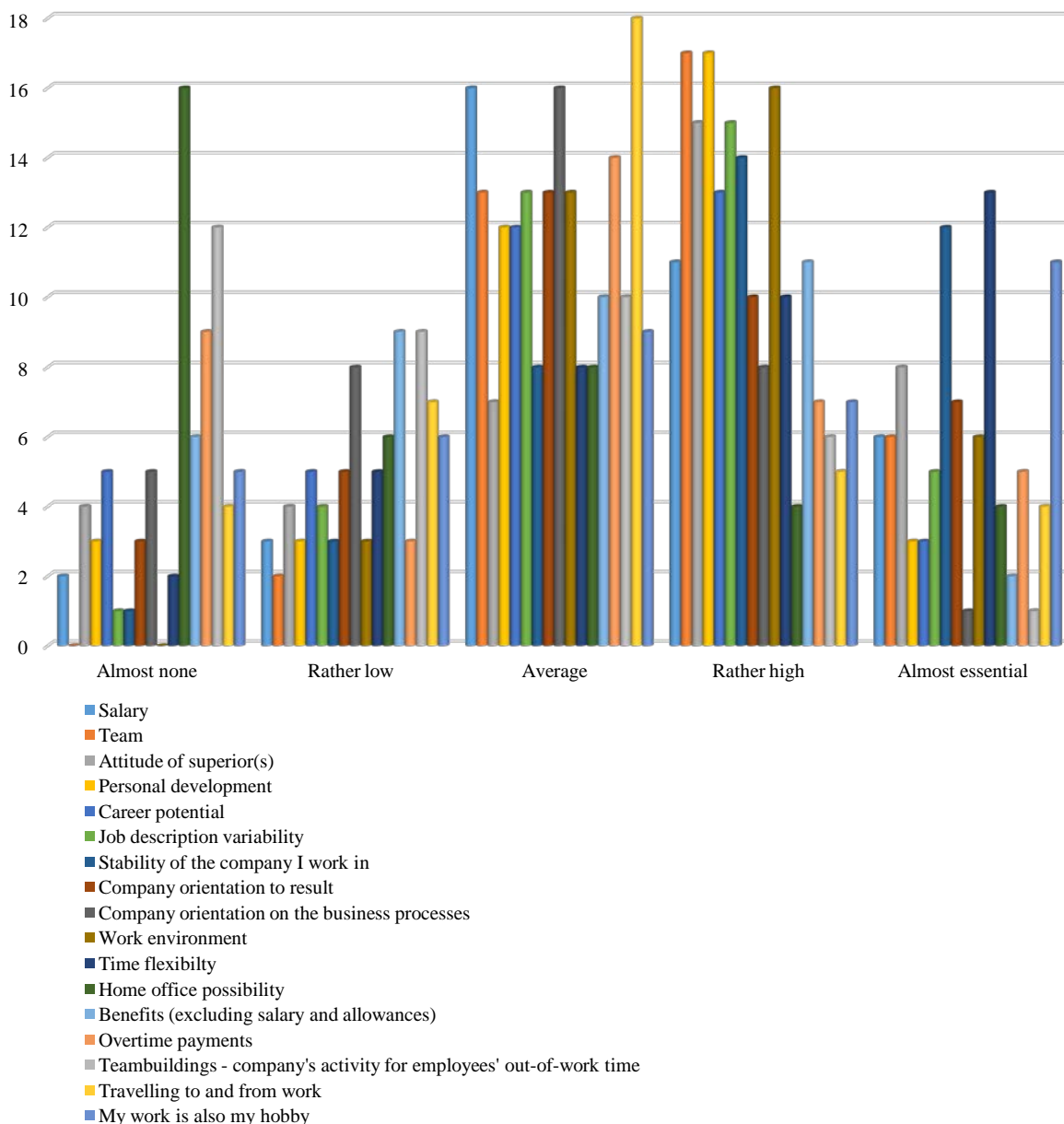


Figure 10: The influence of individual factors to remain in current employment
Source: Survey

traveling may be compensated by higher income, however, the time lost to commute to work with lower remuneration the employee rather devote to themselves.

Subsequently after overcoming the financial and economic crisis, globalization has a significant impact on the choice of the future employer. Up to 50% of respondents expressed their attitude to the factors influencing their job selection being impacted mostly by the stability of the company they would like to work for. This was followed by the possibility of time flexible working hours that 48% of all respondents stressed as one of the most important factors. Further, new factor of high importance to respondents (up to 47%) is also associated with the team in which they would like to work. Especially, as many as 38% of respondents were not interested in the Home office, despite the fact that they were preferring this option in the pre-eminent questions. Furthermore, 43% of participants expressed a strong emphasis on the working environment and the variability of work during job selection. Transnational globalization is governed by the principle of profit. It is recklessly contra-ecological, ignoring the needs, interests and cultural traditions (Bondy, 2005).

One of surprising outcomes of the survey was the disinterest of the majority of respondents (80%) in teambuilding and activities with colleagues outside working hours.

A well-designed incentive program is a tool for effective work-change behavior to increase employee performance and hence increase overall business efficiency (Hitka, 2004). Therefore, the benefits represent the program of incentives of the particular company to increase employees' performance.

Investigating directly which benefits would be valued by employees, the responses could be divided into 4 main categories:

1. Increased financial evaluation. This incentive would be very relative. Especially because during the aforementioned questions regarding their vision of the length for staying in given job, their expectation were approximately 3 years and more. This gives the impression of being satisfied with current job. However, when the respondents were asked whether they have any other income in addition to the salary of current employment, the findings showed that

respondents have only the job as source of income or only other passive income sources what means that they do not initiate an active effort to make any further income. We could conclude that the current salary could denote a satisfactory income. Even though, money can increase the short time employment satisfaction, however it does not denote a prerequisite for staying in the job for many years.

2. More free time, more holidays, sabbatical, home office, school dropouts, and job dropouts. Even though this sounds as future vision, not applicable in the present, this is not true as we can see in the Nordic countries, where the working time decreases in favor of the increase in work performance. In Slovakia and in the Czech Republic, we can still see, overloading of employees from time to time. However, the differences in culture and mentalities is necessary to be mentioned. Slovak and Czech nature is distinctly different from the Nordic, and often the sense of duty is at a lower level of importance than a morning talk with a colleague. That is why this condition is relative. Of course, the importance differentiates from individual to individual. It might be worthwhile to try to get the employer to get more quality work in less time and perhaps with higher efficiency in small experiments.
3. One time purchases or gifts to increase the qualification or relaxation of employees. Activities that people often drop out of the budget in the first place in a tight budget. This area is an opportunity to get a well-earned, educated, and more satisfied employee, without having to pay a fixed salary and thus significantly increase the cost. At the same time, it can help to establish better relationships at the workplace and put those items in the cost. It deals with the problems of the increase of qualification in their study focused on the personal development of employees and the design of their educational projects (Galajdová, 2004). Here also belong benefits such as holidays, retirement or sickness insurance, the possibility of personal development. The rapid development of knowledge resulting from new technologies leads to the need for lifelong learning that must be available to anyone, anytime, anywhere (Jakubíková & Kyselová, 2006).
4. Personal appraisal. Frequent problem in the work environment is represented by the relationship between the worker and his/her supervisor. Often their expectations and visions do not overlap. Especially from the point of view of performance vs. awards. Frequently the personal level is what the employee is missing from the employee relationship. It is often a lack of appreciation or better communication from superiors that is often the reason for burnout of the employee in the position. This area would be worth exploring in further research endeavor and experimenting.

Topics related to employee relations, staffing and management are considered to be the most important during relatively high employment. However, with the rise in unemployment, workplace-related motives go to the last places (Kuzmin & Svencicki, 1985).

However, the main goal outlines of global performance management include providing feedback to employees at all levels and alerting employees to unsatisfactory performance (Cascio, 2006). Among development goals belong also the willingness to help employees at all levels, to improve their work performance and to develop their professional skills and abilities, diagnose personal and organizational problems, develop action plans for education and career development, and motivate employees to improve work performance (Cascio, 2006).

In the last part of the survey, we focused on the way of searching new employment. The modern times that brought the internet reflected on the results: nearly 2/3 of them would choose to search for new jobs through job sites such as Profesia.sk or

Prace.cz or visiting specific employers' sites. It is therefore confirmed that ICT tools are an indispensable tool when looking for a job. The second preferred option denoted the possibility to get work through recommendations, which is the most advantageous way for the employee.

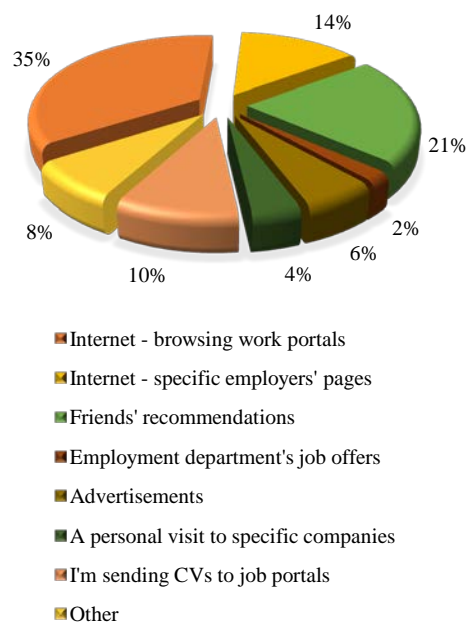


Figure 11: Channels to search for work

Source: Survey

Regarding the employment of specialists and experts in specific positions, the so-called referral program - a system of recommending new candidates, friends, or familiar internal staff - is essentially the largest and most effective source of quality reference people (Bondareva, 2009).

4 Conclusion

This paper analyzed the current satisfaction of people with their current employment and their attitude towards commuting to work by focusing on the impacts of globalization through preselection of respondents. The research was conducted through surveying employees of global companies.

As it can be concluded from the research findings, globalization as such has a social and economic impact on employment as well. We often see these effects only in the negative light, but each coin has two sides. As it negatively influences e.g. the brain drain and the movement of young people for work outside of Slovakia, it also brings jobs to less wealthy regions in the form of foreign investors.

The results of the research in the field of employee benefits in organizations and their acceptance by the employees shows on one hand little individualization of benefits according to the qualities of an individual employee and his/her preferences, on the other hand, that most benefits are provided according to the preferences of the majority. Providing benefits is therefore unjust - only uniformly. An individual minority of employees cannot choose benefits. Dissatisfaction with remuneration, including benefits, may lead to employee leaving the organization. Fluctuation of key talented employees is certainly not a desirable phenomenon. Individualization of rewards may solve the problem.

In this work, we also encountered an interesting phenomenon of corporate culture of multinational companies, which we might be able to address in future as part of another project. All of the theoretical currents conclude that globalization has not led to fundamental changes in international relations but has created a new framework for their further development (Eichler, 2009).

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