



## **Employee satisfaction in the hospitality industry after the Covid-19 pandemic**

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## Abstract

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In early 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic caused lockdowns and restrictions in Finland nationwide. The hospitality industry suffered due to domestic and international travel as restrictions were placed by the government to diminish the spread of the virus. Finland had to implement restrictions that caused extensive damage to the hospitality industry employers and employees.

The aim of this thesis was to determine the state of employee satisfaction in the hospitality industry after three years of working in constant uncertainty. The research questions of the thesis were formed to approach the topic from different viewpoints by first establishing has employee satisfaction changed during the pandemic, second undertaking factors affecting employee satisfaction, and third exploring the response of employers and was it sufficient enough.

The framework breaks down the employee satisfaction concept through three different prominent employee satisfaction theories. Each of the theories was chosen specifically for the research as they have contrasting approaches toward the concept of employee satisfaction.

Quantitative research was done via an online questionnaire, and responses were collected from the 25<sup>th</sup> of April to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May in 2023. The questionnaire collected 29 responses. The questionnaire was formulated to measure specific factors, employee expectations, and the basic needs of the responders.

The results demonstrated dissatisfaction throughout the responders and illustrated the factors causing the most dissatisfaction as well as differences between responder groups. The research confirms the poor satisfaction levels in the hospitality industry, and it was able to point out a satisfaction factor, neutral factors, and dissatisfaction factors. In conclusion, employees, employers, and stakeholders in the industry are able to contemplate how to move forward viably to make the hospitality industry succeed again.

The thesis uses Harvard referencing style.

**Keywords**

Employee satisfaction, hospitality industry, the Covid-19 pandemic

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## 1 Introduction

In 2020 as the Covid-19 pandemic expanded to a worldwide challenge our daily lives changed the economic and social systems world had in place. Food systems and public health crises together with changes to work-life the effects were extreme after Covid-19 responses varied from government shutdowns to vaccination plans (World Health Organization, 2020). Only within the first months of the pandemic and the government responses to the health crisis millions of individuals had become unemployed or laid off forcing them to rethink and restructure their ways of life as the restrictions shut down multiple industries (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2022).

The whole circumstance globally and regionally was unprecedented as the hospitality industry, restaurants, events, and accommodation had to adapt to the new situation at hand. As for hospitality all regions, Europe, Asia, the Americas, and other regions, everyone was and is experiencing an influx of cancellations which is causing unemployment and financial losses to industry players (Dogra, 2020). As the new situation was set in place, to carry on through these tough times some new protocols had to be invented and implemented to keep up with changing circumstances and customer expectations. These include social distancing, new hygiene measures, and building trust back up with the customers after times of uncertainty and fear (Singh & Wang, 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unspeakable effect on the hospitality and travel industry. The whole impact will be revealed years later, but now, we have a rare opportunity to study its effects on the workforce and their employee experience under these circumstances. Restrictions, uncertainty, and unexpected changes to routines, rosters, responsibilities, customer segments, and demands have put an unexpected amount of weight on the shoulders of the employees working face-to-face with guests (Dogra, 2020).

The hospitality industry in Finland took a huge loss during the first two years of the pandemic. In Finland, turnover for the accommodation industry decreased in 2020 and 2021 by over 40%. Food and beverage services such as restaurants and bars decreased from 15,2% to 50,7% with student and staff canteens taking the biggest losses. Congress business suffered the biggest decrease of 60,7 % (Karikallio & Arovuori, Koronapandemian ja rajoitusten vaikutukset matkailu- ja ravintola-alaan, 2023, pp. 4-7).

The decreases in turnover caused financial losses for companies and employers in the hospitality industry. Relieve was layoffs, which allowed them to cut labor costs and save financially (Karikallio & Arovuori, Koronapandemian ja rajoitusten vaikutukset matkailu- ja ravintola-alaan, 2023, pp. 7-8). This was a solution for companies and employers, but for

employees, this caused financial losses and suffering, which eventually lead the layoffs to turn into resignations. Labor shortages were already an issue before the pandemic and this trend worsened the phenomena in the industry (Lappi, 2023).

### **1.1 Objective**

The last three years have been extremely unstable for the hospitality industry all around the world. Uncertainty has cast new pressure on the people working in the hospitality industry, especially with lay-offs, firings, and resignations happening across the board. The objective of the thesis is to research employee satisfaction in the hospitality industry, and what is the state of employee satisfaction in the field after the pandemic. The intention is to hear from employees regardless of their background and to find out what is causing possible dissatisfaction at their work.

The hospitality industry is a high-contact field with customers as it is part of the daily tasks to interact with them. This means that employee satisfaction is a key factor when reaching for better results in customer satisfaction. Satisfied employees are more motivated, and flexible and deliver the desired outcome from their tasks, in the hospitality field this is outstanding customer experiences and service.

### **1.2 Research questions**

The thesis will explore employee satisfaction and what kind of affect did the pandemic time have on it. The theoretical framework will approach the subject from three different viewpoints with the following research questions.

Has employee satisfaction changed during the last three years during and after the Covid-19 pandemic?

What were the biggest factors affecting your employee satisfaction during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Were employers tentative enough to their employee's needs and expectations during the last three years?

The target segment for the thesis is the hospitality industry professionals' hotels located in Uusimaa. The industry represents itself differently within the country and due to this the restrictions and the pandemic affected differently throughout the country. Due to this the geographic segmentation was needed for the thesis.

### **1.3 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis contains seven parts and appendixes. The first chapter is in place to introduce the thesis and the topic with research questions and objectives. The second chapter opens employee satisfaction and theories in the framework. The theories lay the base for the questionnaire and research. The third chapter explores the hospitality industry, Covid-19, and employee satisfaction together.

The fourth chapter explains the research tools and methods with the questionnaire structure. The fifth chapter opens the data behind responses and the questionnaire with a reflection on the framework. The sixth chapter analyses deeper causes and factors for dissatisfaction and satisfaction in hospitality during the last three years. The seventh chapter closes the thesis with conclusions, suggestions, reliability, and validity. Personal learning has also been noted in the last chapter. The thesis is finalized with a complete reference list and appendix list.

## 2 Employee satisfaction

Employee or job satisfaction aims to understand and explain how individuals find fulfillment, happiness, and satisfaction from their places of employment. Factors affecting employee satisfaction are such as job security, financial compensation, work, and life balance, feeling valued, work environment, team members and safety. Employee satisfaction varies between individuals, and therefore only one approach is not enough to determine the overall satisfaction of a workplace (Mallick, 2021).

The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health conducted research from 2019 to 2022 regarding employee well-being with the focus on the year 2021. With their findings they theorized that employee satisfaction has been in a slight decline in the population. The research will continue until June 2023 (The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, 2023).

### 2.1 Definition of employee satisfaction

Employee satisfaction can be determined in multiple different ways depending on the approach. The Hawthorne studies are regarded as one of the first steps in employee satisfaction studies and it takes the route through motivational psychology and investigates job productivity, motivation, and employee satisfaction (OpenStax, 2022). The study took place during 1920s and 1930s in the Hawthorne Western Electric plant and it tested employees' productivity and how it was impacted when for example break times, working hours and conditions were changed (CFI Team, 2022). Although the results of the Hawthorne study's methods and results are disproven and disregarded by present researchers it was an important step in understanding employee performance and satisfaction (Perera, 2022).

Concept and understanding of employee satisfaction has developed through years and today employers use it as a tool to improve productivity, motivation, and profitability. Engaged and satisfied employees lower turnover rate and increase productivity and it contributes to companies' success as well as profitability (Steben, 2022). Satisfied employees work as brand ambassadors for their employer as they are representing the brand, products company and providing services. With industries like hospitality being high customer contact field the relation between employee and customer satisfaction has been studied with theories like theory of emotional contagion (Yee, Yeung, & Cheng, 2008). Emotional contagion examines how people tend to be affected and usually copy emotions and behaviors from surrounding them (Gained, 2021). This phenomenon is utilized highly in service industry with happy smiles from employees making customers with happy smiles, but

it does rely on the emotion and intention being authentic rather than surface level and fabricated (Psyno, 2017).

Employee satisfaction has been established as important part of company's success but measuring and improving it can be difficult and finding correct approach is important. As employee satisfaction is affected by many different variables on general and individual level. Due to these multiple approaches will give a better understanding of state of employee satisfaction. General level is important companywide but individual level will give more detailed information and data. Both are important to consider when trying to understand the needs and satisfaction of employees (Azic, 2017).

## **2.2 Range of affect theory**

One of the most widely known and utilized theories is Edwin A. Locke's range of affect theory (1976) which is based on two simple factors and how they affect each other. The factors are the expectations of employees and how the expectations are met by employers (Morris, 2021). The theory has its basis in organizational psychology and is one of the most recognized theories in the field for employee satisfaction. The reason why this theory is still relevant to this day is because it recognizes differences between individuals. By perceiving individuals and remarking the fact that individuals are dissatisfied and satisfied by different aspects of the workplace (Page, 2022).

The employee satisfaction levels are calculated by the differentiation of these two. The aspect measured with this theory can be anything work-related like equipment, employee has the expectation to have a well-working computer supplied by employee. If the computer does not meet the expectations of the employee's, the satisfaction lowers (Morris, 2021).

The range of affect theory understands that the aspects valued by the employees are not the same across the board and individuals have different expectations and this gives the theory relevancy to this day. The more certain aspect is valued by an employee the more satisfied or dissatisfied the individual will be with the result of the expectation being met or not. Due to these aspects like autonomy of an employee can be a huge factor to one and to another it can be a passive aspect if they don't value autonomy (Morris, 2021).

## **2.3 Maslow's hierarchy of needs**

Employee satisfaction leans a lot towards motivation theories and one of the basic building blocks is Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943). Abraham Maslow proposed a set of five

goals or levels, which people need to fulfil to be satisfied. It took two decades for the theory to be implemented in organizational settings, but eventually, it gave influence and structure for future theories like McGregor's (1957) Theory X and Theory Y (Latham, 2012).

The first need is physiological needs which guarantee our survival like food, fluids, and air. The second need is regarding safety and the need to be safe physically as well as mentally. Third need concerns around love and sense of belonging for example in a work community one might feel outcasted or separated from the rest. The fourth need is esteem needs regarding self-esteem and desire to be highly evaluated by yourself as well as by others. In employee satisfaction, this means feeling your value and being valued by colleagues and the employer. The fifth and last need is self-actualization relating to self-fulfilment and the actualization of potential for example at work or in parenting. In employee satisfaction this comes down to reaching your best potential and growth (Latham 2012, 32-34).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs on its own has erupted a lot of criticism and mostly due to the unempirical research method of observation and biographical analysis rather than credible empirical research. The model has been critiqued as lacking scientific backing and research findings as well as having an emphasis on the author's view of point as a white, educated male from individualistic culture. For its fair share of critique, a study published in 2011 examined the need between fulfilment and subjective well-being across 123 countries. Findings did show many of Maslow's needs occurred to be universal with the distinction, that there did not seem to be any importance for the order of fulfilment for the needs (Winter, 2016).

To make use of the theory in workplace the approach for all five steps can be modified. For the physiological so-called survival needs, at the workplace these needs can be thought of as salary and benefits. Safety needs at work correspond as safe working conditions and job security. The third social step is regarding work relations with the fourth esteem needs relating to job title, prestige, and status. Last step in the pyramid is concerning challenges, achievement, and advancement (Sodexo, 2017). See figure 1.



Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Sodexo, 2017)

By applying Maslow's hierarchy of needs to employee satisfaction the goal is the employee's self-actualization and covering all the basic needs to have satisfaction at a workplace. It is important that employees' needs are met in the lower levels so the other levels such as esteem and self-actualization can be met (Strick, 2022).

#### 2.4 Job characteristics model

The job characteristics model approaches employee satisfaction from the viewpoint of the task in hand. The hypothesis is that a job with simple tasks and repetitive tasks negatively affect employee satisfaction and other factors like motivation and performance. When a job has challenging, and versatile tasks and duties it should be affecting positively to these factors (Janse, 2018).

The theory has its base in job redesigning which is an important tool for human resource management. Job redesigning has the goal to satisfy both parties, employer, the organization, and the employee holding the job (Luenendonk, 2019). The job characteristics model was created by Hackman and Oldham in 1976 and updated in 1980 with the aim to enrich and redesign work (Towler, 2020).

The theory identifies five core job characteristics, which are considered to affect employee outcomes through psychological states. The core job characteristics are skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. By recalibrating these core characteristics, the task or job can be made more engaging and employees more satisfied (Lucas,

2020). As employee satisfaction is a phenomenon on individual level, the job characteristics model takes this into account with moderators. The moderators' task is to consider the differences between individuals and fill in the gaps between characteristics and psychological states and outcomes and psychological states (Janse, 2018). See figure 2.

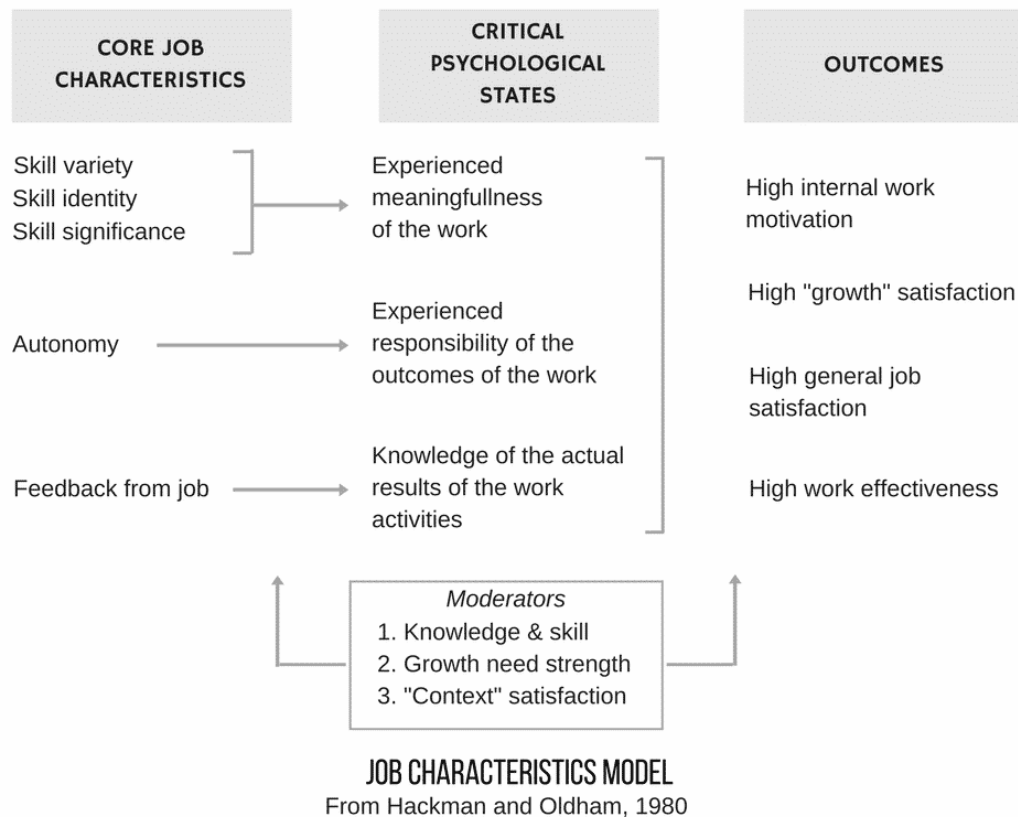


Figure 2. Job Characteristics Model (Luenendonk, 2019)

Skill variety describes to which degree one's job requires variety of activities to carry the work out. The more varying and the more skills are being utilized the more likely the worker is to experience the psychological states. Monotonous and repetitive jobs will hinder the possibility to reach the psychological states and positive outcomes (Luenendonk, 2019).

Task or skill identity means that when an individual completes the whole task at hand from start to finish (Janse, 2018). Employee can also clearly identify the beginning, middle and end to a task and if this process happens it creates the opportunity for an employee to feel that their tasks are meaningful and that they have control over the process and tasks at hand (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021).

Task or skill significance ensues when the task in hand has meaning and an impact. Individual's motivation spikes as the job have a meaningful end to the workplace, stakeholders, or society (Janse, 2018).

A core job characteristic is autonomy. Sense of independence and freedom at work can lead to higher quality of work as people tend to feel more responsible over their tasks. Autonomy also indicated trust for the employee which hand in hand with responsibility lead towards more satisfied and motivated employees via helping them reach the psychological states (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021).

The five core characteristics end with feedback as the key to development and a building tool for an employee. The theory acknowledges the importance of feedback as a key element for employee satisfaction. Via feedback employees can gain confidence, insights, acknowledgment, and motivation even when given as constructive feedback (Luenendonk, 2019).

Together the three first characteristics of skill variety, identity and significance should lead the employee the psychological state of experiencing meaning fullness at work. Autonomy should be leading the employee towards experiencing responsibility of the work out comes as feedback should be leading to the psychological state of knowledge the actual results of work activities. The job characteristic theory has the hypothesis that if all these psychological states are reached the outcomes will be the result. Outcomes include high internal work motivation, high growth satisfaction, high general satisfaction and high work effectiveness as seen in figure 2.

Moderators for job characteristics model were created to bridge the gap between the mass and individuals because the same characteristics are not expected to bring satisfaction and motivation blindly to all individuals. (Luenendonk, 2019) The knowledge and skill moderator states that when employees have the required competences to perform at their work, they are more likely to experience positive emotion at work. (Janse, 2018).

The growth need moderator is there to find out the extent on how much people have need for personal growth and development. Employees with high growth needs are seeing work and the tasks as a satisfying way to improve and develop themselves and are actively looking for these opportunities (Luenendonk, 2019). Employees with these desires are hypothetically more likely to experience all three psychological stages as employees diverting from the moderator should have more difficult time reaching them and via this having more challenging time to reach the stages and satisfaction at work (Janse, 2018).

Context satisfaction considers the context and moving pieces around an employee. These are the working conditions such as management, wage, benefits, and job security. When

an employee is satisfied with the context, they will be more likely to reach the psychological states (Janse, 2018). As the other moderators and pieces of job characteristic model has more internal look with motivation and satisfaction, context satisfaction approaches the external ones which ones are mostly controlled by the environment or employer (Luenendonk, 2019).

The job characteristics model has the aim to make work more desirable and understand factors behind employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance. By utilizing the characteristics, psychological stages, and moderators it is a tool to reach the positive outcomes by modifying and understanding the workplace, employees, and employers. It does not examine only one aspect of a bigger ensemble.

### 3 Hospitality industry

The hospitality industry has currently up to 142 100 employees all around Finland which comes up to 5,4 percentages of the Finnish labour market. As the industry has been growing rapidly since the early 2000s in Finland, the hiring trend in the industry has been up as well. The need for more work force grew from 2006 to 2019 by 21% as in hospitality automation cannot replace the work done by humans. With significant cut on the labour market and growing tourist numbers, the hospitality industry represents 2,7 percentages of the Finnish gross domestic product (MaRa, 2022).

Hospitality industry contains subcategories such as food and beverage, accommodation and housekeeping being the one of the most traditional and simple separation between the fields. The industry is highly affected by external forces such as customer behaviours and needs, trends as well as competition. This means there is always constant change and development within the industry (EHL insights, n.d.). The industry can be defined via its purpose to create and manage experiences, providing enjoyment and luxury. Hospitality offers easiness and straight forward services and products which are meant to be straight line experience, visits, and everyday life (Revfine, n.d.).

#### 3.1 Workforce

In the hospitality industry the turnover rate known to be high, and Finland is no exception to this. Confederation of Finnish Industries estimates the turnover rate between 2016 and 2017 in hospitality to have been around 20% making it drawn with construction employees and slightly less than health service employees. Also, half of the employment relationships in hospitality industry last under five years and relationships over 25 years are only 7%. Comparing to industrial fields, third of the employment relationships were under five years and over 25-year relationships were up to 16%. Some turnover is organic in the hospitality industry due to retirement and the fact that many young professionals use the hospitality field as a pit stop. Other reason listed for the turnover rate is that the hospitality industry has a lot of smaller companies and businesses practicing and smaller companies, according to statistics, have higher turnover rate when compared bigger companies (Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto, 2018).

Employee retention has been difficult in the hospitality field, and as turnover is getting higher the customer satisfaction and profitability lowers. The hospitality industry is filled with young professionals and part-time positions, which contributes to the high turnover, but also low wages, poor working conditions and work-related stress are driving employees to other career paths (Blair, 2019). The industry has high demands and in Finland it

has led to high disability pensions among employees. Tasks range from physical to difficult working settings and on top of this the odd working hours are forcing hospitality professionals to early pension (Varma, 2022).

There is plethora of reasons for the high turnover rate in the hospitality industry and some of them part of it can be explained by the hectic nature and demands of the job. Unclear job expectations and detached relationships with managers can make the job extremely disappointing and result in unsatisfied stressed employees. The field attracts a lot of young professionals due to the flexibility and part-time positions. The flexibility is attractive and gives possibilities to arrange school and hobbies around work, but on the turn side, it is a stress factor. The reason for this is that usually there is no fixed schedule and employees won't be able to plan long term and there is a lot of overtime hours. Young professionals also lead easier to so-called bad fits, it is when a person is not an organizational or industry fit, and they don't fit the company culture. The bad fits don't count for the unhealthy work environment the hospitality industry is fostering as excessive stress, bullying and sexual harassment in a high-pressure position are making turnover rates go up. After the poor working conditions and horrible culture, it is recognized that there is a lack of recognition for the demanding tasks and hours. And subsequently, there are minimal growth opportunities as many employees are seen as part-time and seasonal help. This means employees are seen as replicable and no real investment is made for their future (Johnson, 2022).

### **3.2 Importance of employee satisfaction in hospitality**

In customer facing job the employees are the face and brand for the companies. How the employees interact, solve issues, and present the company contributes hugely to customer satisfaction. This leads to the formula that if the employees are not happy or satisfied, neither will the customers. Not dealing with employee satisfaction in customer centric and service-based industry can have significant consequences for a company (Prossack, 2019).

Glassdoor conducted a study in 2019 where the research question was 'Can companies help to achieve high customer satisfaction by investing in employees and ensuring that those who deliver goods and services are themselves satisfied with their jobs?'. Results were across the board monotonous with variations between industries as the link between employee and customer satisfaction was clear. Predictions showed that the more employees were satisfied and happy at their work, so would the customers be as well. The most affected industries were those once which routinely interact with customers (Chamberlain & Zhao, 2019). The correlation between employee and customer satisfaction has been

proven time after time with demonstrations of increases in growth when investing in employee experience and satisfaction (Holloway & Armstrong, 2020).

The hospitality industry and hotels are high contact and pressure job where tasks include interaction with customers and stakeholders daily. Employee satisfaction is one key element in hospitality as it is high contact industry, and your employees are key players when it comes to customer experience and satisfaction. Customer satisfaction has high value in hospitality, and it is a big factor and tool how one can stand out from competitors. Developing and understanding employee satisfaction will help employers keep employees from leaving keep the service level up (Azic, 2017).

### **3.3 Covid-19 pandemic in hospitality**

The Covid-19 pandemic took away customers foreign and domestic from hospitality industry. In 2020 outlook was grim as reservations were cancelled and new ones were not coming in as previous years causing a lot of worry on the financial side (Hirvonen, 2020). Uncertainty was taking a toll in February of 2020 as customers were not confident in the new situation and the restrictions started to shut down businesses. Shutdowns and restrictions left employees struggling which led to resignations and previous hospitality professionals directed themselves to new careers. The severe labour shortages left businesses struggling with finances and employees (Nykänen, 2022).

The hospitality industry in Finland before the pandemic had targets of rising the demand in tourism and develop tourists' spending which would raise the profile of travel and hospitality industry. After lockdowns and travel bans, domestic travel should be kickstarting the business and international travel will eventually return when restrictions and flights allow it (Työ- ja elinkeinöministeriö, 2021).

Layoffs and reduced hours for employees was seen as unequal treatment towards hospitality employees as restrictions and layoffs came down more than once. For layoffs resulting from governments restrictions was difficult or even impossible to get compensation (Veirto, 2022). Income for employees in hospitality dropped and they have had to result in extreme action such as loans and cutting costs from food and hobbies to survive. Many feared of unemployment and uncertainty has left employees alone to survive amid the pandemic (Koho, 2020).

In 2020 the students, future of hospitality industry, were struggling to even finish their studies. Internships were not available and employment in the industry looked the worst it ever had before (Matilainen, 2020). Attraction of hospitality industry has crashed. Labour

shortages in hospitality industry were visible already before the pandemic, but the phenomena accelerated the issues. Industry schools and academies saw a huge decline only in applicants in 2022 (Peltola, 2022).

## 4 Research methods

In this chapter the research methods will be introduced alongside with the research process and target segmentation. The chapter will go into quantitative research method and justify the methods and explain questionnaire structure.

When measuring employee satisfaction companies can utilize different indexes like employee satisfaction index, interviews as well as surveys and questionnaires (Nevogt, 2020). For the benefit of this thesis anonymous questionnaire will be used to gain trust of the target segment as well as to gain more answers.

The thesis objective is to research has Covid-19 affected employee satisfaction and what is the state of employee satisfaction as well as to figure out the factors causing possible dissatisfaction after the phenomena. Aim is to figure out if there is a gap between employees and employers as well as to see how employers respond to employee expectations via Maslow's hierarchy of needs, range of affect theory and job characteristic model to gain different perspectives.

### 4.1 Quantitative research and tools

Quantitative research method was chosen for this thesis due to the easiness of distribution and common use of questionnaires for employee satisfaction. Data collected from larger group/target segment gives the possibility to implement the results and data in wider use and future research because quantitative research aims to understand and generate general understanding of a phenomena with a larger sample size (Williams, 2021).

Quantitative questionnaire gives the answerer easy access to the form and anonymity. Answering the questionnaire is not tied to a place or time which gives more opportunity for answers. With anonymity and easy access, the questionnaire has the goal of being effortless to answer and via this to gain more answers and data (Taylor, 2010).

The questionnaire will be using Likert scale to create flow through out answering. Likert scale in this questionnaire will be from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. The method is created to investigate opinions and attitudes (Trustmary team, 2022). Answers from 1 to 2 will be affecting negatively and mark dissatisfaction factors. Answers from 4 to 5 will be affecting positively and mark satisfaction factors. Number 3 will be neutral, and it is passive, with no effect to the average (Vainikainen, 2020). When a statement has the average or score over 4,0 this marks a satisfaction factor. Statements under 3,0 will be dissatisfaction factors and neutral scores on 3,0 are not necessarily affecting positively or

negatively to employee satisfaction as the responders do not have remarkable attitudes or opinions towards the statements (Trustmary team, 2022).

As a tool to reach larger sample size and to make the answering straightforward the questionnaire is done via Webropol. Webropol allows the questionnaire to be created as anonymous and effortless online questionnaire that will be accessed via link. This tool has been chosen because of the ease of reading for the answerer, accessibility with mobile, tablet and computers as well as easier data-analysis.

## **4.2 Questionnaire structure**

The questionnaire is structured with the base in theory and the research questions of the thesis. The aim is that the questionnaire is easy and fast to answer to maximise the number of answers. Each section of the thesis approaches the topic from a different theory viewpoint.

The questionnaire is divided to four sections. First two sections are meant to build a base and gather the basic information. First section includes questions to cover the baseline for the target segment with questions including age, sex, location, and work history to get to know the answerer. Second section is based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and it explores the answerer's satisfaction within last three years to their basic needs including salary, tasks, workload, resources as well as work environment.

Continuing the third section includes claims and statements relating to the job characteristic model. Claims and statements utilize Likert scale for ease of reading with the structure being from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Claims and statements include the five main job characteristics skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. The aim is to define possible issues to see if there is correlation between same dissatisfaction factors.

Fourth and last section is based on the range of affect theory, and it is also utilizing the Likert scale with the goal being understanding how employees have answered the employee expectations during and after Covid-19 pandemic. The Likert scale in the last section is measuring how expectations were met and the scale goes from very poorly to very well.

When using Likert scale, it is important to combine similar questions and claims to see how the variables score (University of Saint Andrews). By using Likert in sections, the aim is to see how responders score on the basic needs, job characteristics and expectations.

This gives a lay out on how the satisfaction has changed and which components have been affecting it.

The questionnaire will measure 18 different factors which can cause either satisfaction, dissatisfaction or be neutral factors for overall employee satisfaction. Factors measured are psychological safety, security, health safety, compensation, workload increases, skill variety, task identity, control, autonomy, feedback and support, meaningfulness, development, sufficiency of resources, pleasantness of duties, atmosphere at work, challenges, and task distribution.

### **4.3 Target segment and distribution**

Target segment for the research and questionnaire is hospitality professionals, who currently hold a position in the field. The objective of the thesis is to find out changes that Covid-19 might have inflicted on employee satisfaction, this means it is important to reach the target segment of people who have been working at least three years in the field. As the restrictions started in February of 2020 which closed the hospitality industry with a shutdown. During the last three years restrictions and have been going back and forth causing total shutdowns in a year later in February of 2021 (Eduskunta, 2022). Professionals who have been working during the shutdowns and restrictions can evaluate on their experience, how much the pandemic has influenced their overall employee satisfaction.

The distribution of the questionnaire was made via larger hotels, independent and chains. Seven hotels were contacted via email to distribute the questionnaire among the employees and departments. Hotels were chosen with the criteria of their size, departments, and if they have been open longer than 3 years. With these criteria hotels and restaurants which have been opened during the pandemic were counted out.

## 5 Results

This chapter of the thesis presents and analyses the answers from the questionnaire. For clearer presentation and understanding the data will be presented with figures and charts. The questionnaire was open for answers from 25<sup>th</sup> of April to 3<sup>rd</sup> of May in 2023. Through 8 days the link was opened 112 times which lead to 29 finalized answers.

Answering time ranged between 2 minutes and 33 seconds all the way to 15 minutes and 58 seconds. Answering time for the questionnaire varies due to open questions in the questionnaire as these are not compulsory.

The questionnaire included background questions and three sections of statements which were scored from 'strongly disagree' 1 to 'strongly agree' 5. The more responders agreed with the given statements the more satisfied they would be. Questionnaire was finalized with four open questions for the responders.

General responder demographic for the questionnaire was female with 79,3% between the ages 30 to 39 with the combined answer rate of 41,4%. Professional background for the responder would be over 5 years to over 10 years of experience and they are currently employed with full-time contract in a front office team. In the past 3 years they have made some change either between employers or fields.

In the analysis of the results correlation analysis was used as different variables are compared and their relationships are discussed.

### 5.1 Responder demographics

The questionnaire started with the background and demographic questions for the responders. These details included their age, sex, and background questions about their employment history in the hospitality industry. Out of 29 responders 79,3% were female and 20,7% were men. This question was compulsory with the answer options of "other" and "I do not want to answer" but these did not have any traction in the answers.

Out of 29 answerers the age range was from 18 to 60+ years old as seen in Figure 3 below. Largest age group to answer was 30 to 34 years old with 8 responds covering 27,6% of the respondents. Age groups from 18 to 24 years old and 25 to 29 years old both counted for 17,2 % on their own for the responders. From 35 to 39 years old covered 13,8% of the responders and are coming as the fourth biggest group. Fifth place for responders is from 45 to 49 years old, who cover 10,4%. From 55 to 60+ years old and 40

to 44 years old both received two responses and with that they cover 6,9 % of the answers. No one in the range from 50 to 54 answer and no one utilized the possibility to answer, "I do not want to answer".

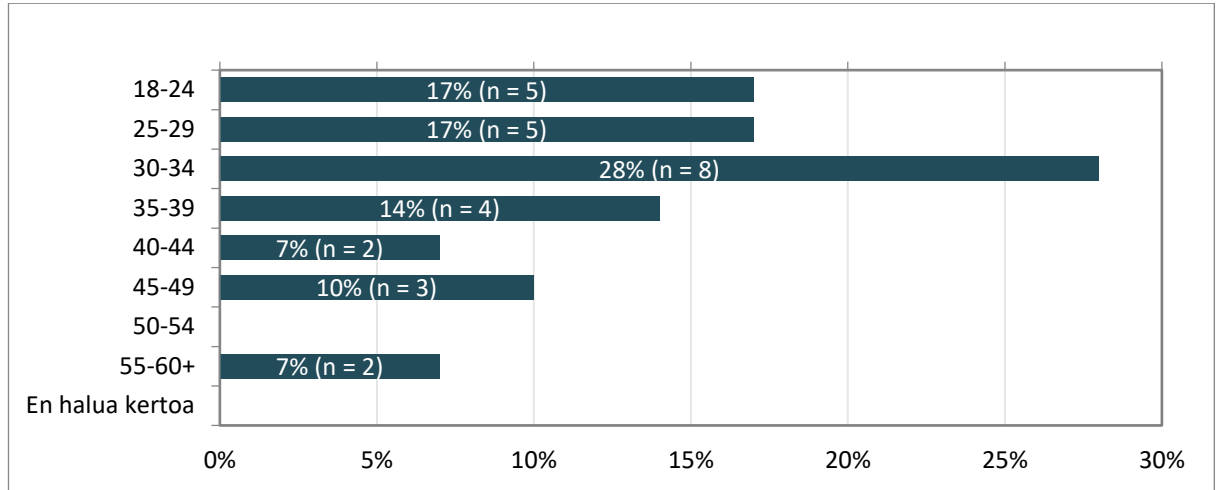


Figure 3. Responder age.

Third question started to explore the responders via their background. The question acquired their employment years in hospitality field. With 27,6% of the answers came from people working over 5 years in the industry. As seen in figure 4 below, majority of the responders had been working in the industry longer than 5 years. Smallest group was responders with the experience of 0 to 2 years in the field. They counted only for 6,9% with two responses. In total the categories over 2, 5, 10 and 15 years of experience covered 93,1% of the responders supporting the distribution channel reaching the intended target segment.

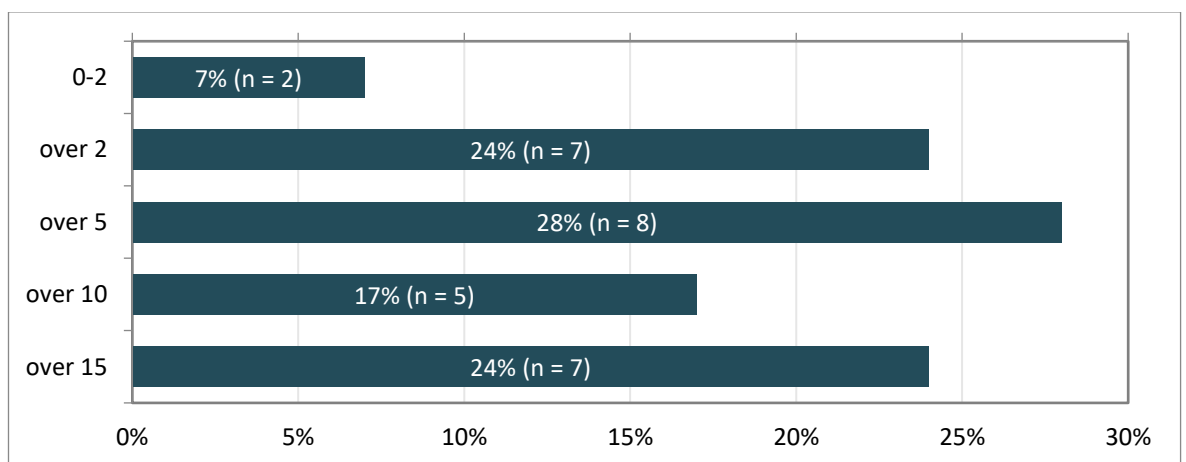


Figure 4. Responders work experience in hospitality industry.

For the background information and possible factors affecting answering the employment status, department and if responders had changed workplace during last three years were

inquired. Distribution between departments was not equal as 6 out of 7 hotels were contacted via front office. This resulted in 69,0% with 20 responses coming from front office employees and only the second largest segment coming from restaurant employees with 24,1% and 7 responses. Overall responses were gathered from sales and marketing for 20,7%, conference 6,9%, kitchen 3,4% and other 3,4%. Departments without answers were administrative, spa, housekeeping, and maintenance.

Employment status was split between responders to two. 79,3% of the responders were full-time employees and 20,7% part-time. Contract or option 'other' were not utilized by the responders.

Responders were given the possibility to answer about their employment history during the last three years and if they have changed workplaces, or employees. The industry in Finland has struggled with worker shortage after the shutdowns and new hires as well as summer employees do not have the same qualifications as before. This is due to estimation of 10 000 to 20 000 professionals leaving the field or changing employers (Collin, et al., 2022). The questionnaire supports this claim of movement in the workforce as seen in figure 5 below. 38% of responders had changed their employer during the past three years and supporting the movement with 17% of responders had changed fields. Difference to responders who did not change fields or employers during last three years was not huge as responder chose this option 13 times with 45%.

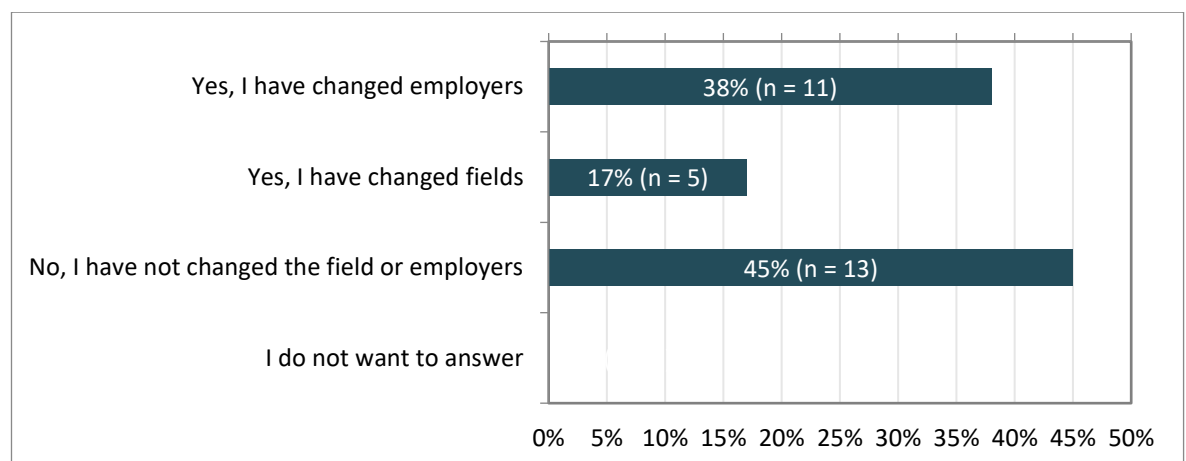


Figure 5. Changes in employment during last three years

## 5.2 Basic needs in workplace

Second section explored the basic needs employees have and how they have been met during last three years. All the statements were compulsory and needed to be answered

in a Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Including seven statements regarding layoffs, safety, health safety, compensation and salary, workload, and employee resources. The more satisfied the responders were with these aspects the higher they would score from 0 to 5. If the responders would have been completely satisfied with the basics, the average would have been 5,0. The more the responders agreed the more satisfied they would be and, in this section, most answered option was 'disagree' with 62 responses. Responds to 'neutral' were not weight in on the average.

Average reached all together from this section 2,3. Safety and health safety were overall good scoring as the responders agreed with the claim of safety with 3,5 and employee resources with the average of 2,6. The averages are low as the best would be 5, this indicates that even the basics like safety and employee resources were not held up during the pandemic.

Lowest scores pulling the average down was thread of layoff and reduced hours with 1,9 and 2,0 score for increased workload. Averages of 2,1 was to claims regarding compensation and health safety. Most responders felt their workload had increased significantly and they still had the thread of reduced hours or layoffs. Other big factor bringing down satisfaction was fear for their own health at work.

Overall, only two statements went over the average with safety there was barely employee resources with the average of 2,6 out of 5. In general, it is theorized that the basic needs are a foundation for employee satisfaction and questionnaire responders scored them very low on their own workplaces.

### **5.3 Job Characteristics model**

Third section for the questionnaire establishes how has different aspects of the work and workplace affected the employee satisfaction. Approach is via the job characteristics model and the statements are stated in a way where, the more responders agree with the statement the more satisfied employees should be. The scale is from 0 to 5 with 5 being the target. All the 11 statements were compulsory with the answer option of neutral. Altogether in this section 130 answers were for the agree, indicating more satisfaction compared to the earlier section.

Average measures at 3,0 out of 5. Highest satisfaction was measured with 4,2 average on autonomy. Responders felt that they had the necessary information and skill sets to complete their tasks and duties independently. Second highest average came from development and skill utilization with average of 3,8. Generally responders felt that overall, they

had the opportunities to use their skill sets and had the possibility to develop them. Third most positive the task variety, as most responders did feel that they had enough variety to keep them satisfied.

Lowest average came from increased workload with average of 2,0 and 2,3 from task identity and the possibility to execute tasks from start to finish. These factors have been weighting down overall satisfaction among responders.

Close to the average with 2.7 score came support from workplace, 2,6 feedback, and 2,5 influence on their own tasks. Responders did not feel that these aspects influenced negatively or positively on their satisfaction. To the same category goes the meaningfulness of their job, the control they have in their work and that they have enough challenges at their work.

#### **5.4 Employee expectations**

The fourth statement section is measuring employee expectations and the more employees' expectations are met the more satisfied they are. The statements measured employee expectations towards salary, career development opportunities, work atmosphere, resources including staffing and equipment, pleasantness of duties, sharing of the workload, support, and safety. Overall responders felt that employers and workplaces met their expectations well as 95 times agree was chosen as a response to the statements. The average for the section was 3,1 out of 5. The option of 'I am not sure' was not calculated in the average as they do not have any weight in the answers.

Responders felt that safety at their work met their expectations the best with a score 3,7. With safety over the average also went the expectations for work atmosphere with 3,5 and challenges of their duties with 3,4 and engagement to their duties with the score of 3,1.

Expectations were not met according to the responders in salary and compensation with the lowest score of 2,6. Average was brought down also with resources by the average of 2,8. Scores of 2,9 was shared with support received and sharing of the workload.

Altogether expectations were not met by employers and workplaces sufficiently enough on these responder's part as the results yield in different sections very low.

## 6 Analyses of the results

The research was set to figure out if employee satisfaction has changed, what were the biggest factors and had workplaces and employers acknowledged these changes during the last three years. It was emphasized to compare their experience before the Covid-19 pandemic and to consider their experiences during the pandemic time when answering the questionnaire.

The combined average for the questionnaire was 2,9, indicating poor levels of employee satisfaction during the last three years in the hospitality industry. Factors with the greatest negative impact on employee satisfaction among the responders are the statements with an average from 1,0 to 2,9. Statements scoring over 4.0 are calculated as positive and they are increasing employee satisfaction with responders. The neutral zone from 3,0 to 3,9 is for factors that do not have a significant effect on the responder's satisfaction.

Factors and statements which are negative are marked as dissatisfaction causing and positive are satisfaction-causing. In table 1, all factors are listed with their scores from the questionnaire. From 18 factors 1 averaged over 4,0 making, it the only satisfaction factor, 9 counted as dissatisfaction factors and 8 as neutral, which did not have a heavy weight on either side of the scale.

Factors	Scores	Satisfaction/Neutral/Dissatisfaction
Compensation and benefits	2,6 / 2,1 / 2,3	Dissatisfaction
Task distribution	2,8	Dissatisfaction
Support	2,6 / 2,9	Dissatisfaction
Resources	2,6 / 2,8	Dissatisfaction
Feedback	2,7	Dissatisfaction
Task identity	2,3	Dissatisfaction
Health safety	2,1	Dissatisfaction
Workload increase	2,0 / 2,0 / 2,9	Dissatisfaction
Psychological safety	1,9	Dissatisfaction
Skill variety	3,8 / 3,4 / 2,8	Neutral
Control	3,2	Neutral
Meaningfulness	3,1	Neutral
Development	3	Neutral
The pleasantness of duties	3,1	Neutral
Challenges	3,4	Neutral
Work atmosphere	3,5	Neutral
Security	3,5 / 3,7	Neutral
Autonomy	4,2	Satisfaction

Table 1. 18 factors measured in the questionnaire.

### 6.1 Dissatisfaction factors

Basic needs such as pay, benefits, safety and security, work relations, titles, and prestige should be met before employee satisfaction actualizes according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Findings from the questionnaire display that these needs were not met during the last three years to the present. Throughout the different sections dissatisfaction was felt over increased workload and insufficient compensation and benefits and safety.

The first statements were based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and it measured how workplaces have met basic needs of employees during the last three years. Table 2 is based on the first sections statements, and it demonstrates poor execution with these elements with the average coming to 2,3 out of 5,0. Maslow's hierarchy is considered a building block for good employee satisfaction as it covers the base of the basics from safety, pay to growth of employees. Based on the results hospitality industry is not laying down a foundation for employees to succeed and feel satisfied at work.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Average
I did not experience a thread of layoff or reduced hours at my workplace.	7 24,1%	8 27,6%	7 24,1%	4 13,8%	3 10,4%	1,9
Security was held up well at my workplace.	1 3,5%	4 13,8%	3 10,3%	12 41,4%	9 31,0%	3,5
My work load did not increase.	6 20,7%	10 34,5%	6 20,7%	4 13,8%	3 10,3%	2,0
I have felt my compensation to be good enough for my work	6 20,7%	13 44,8%	4 13,8%	2 6,9%	4 13,8%	2,1
My salary corresponds the demands of my duties.	7 24,1%	10 34,5%	3 10,4%	6 20,7%	3 10,3%	2,3
Our department has had enough employee resources to complete our tasks.	5 17,3%	9 31,0%	3 10,4%	7 24,1%	5 17,2%	2,6
I have not been worried for my health at work.	3 10,4%	8 27,6%	8 27,6%	7 24,1%	3 10,3%	2,1
Total	35	62	34	42	30	2,3

Table 2. "The statements explain how basic needs in workplaces, such as salary, work-load and safety, have been fulfilled in the last three years."

General safety among the responders was neutral as it was rated well with average of 3,5 and only 1 responder strongly disagreeing as seen in table 1. When answering statements about health and psychological safety the responders felt more dissatisfied. Lowest score of 1,9 was for statement regarding psychological safety and stability: "I did not experience a thread of layoff or reduced hours at my workplace."

Figure 6 demonstrates how responses were distributed between age groups for this statement. It can be noted that in general younger employees felt more instability when comparing to senior responders. Younger generations did not trust their employers or workplaces and were more doubtful of their contracts and hours. 'Strongly disagree' option was chosen 6 times and 'disagree' option 7 times by responders from 18 to 34 years old. It can be argued that professionals with more age did have more confidence in the situation and stable position due to experience and status. Comparing to age group of 18 to 24 years old, when most individuals are studying and starting careers without experience or limited experience.

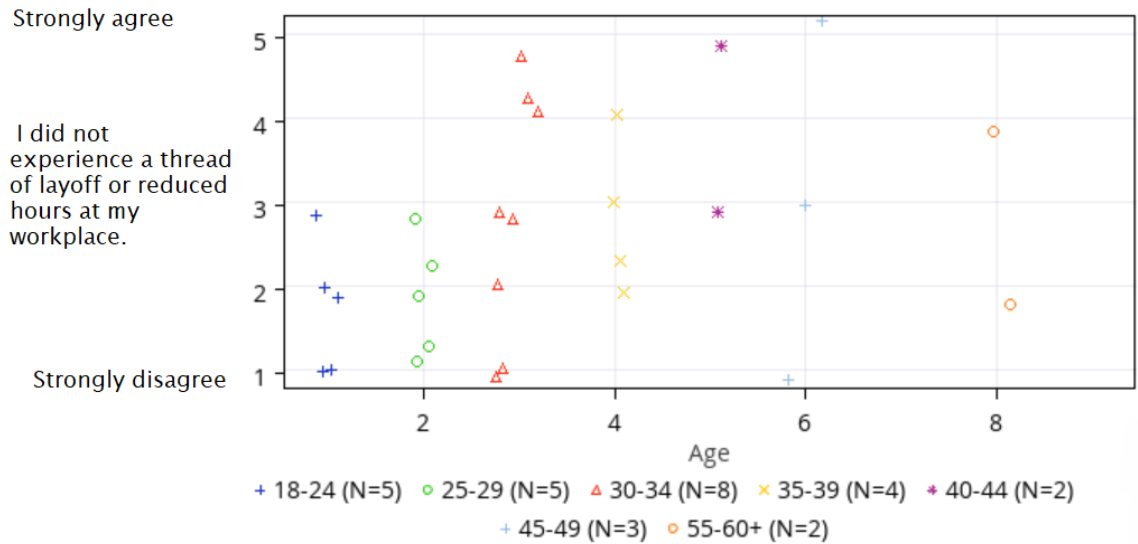


Figure 6. Questionnaire statement: "I did not experience a thread of layoff or reduced hours at my workplace." grouped by responder's age.

As age was differentiating factor in psychological safety so it was in compensation as demonstrated by figure 7. Younger responders can also be seen more dissatisfied with salary as well as their trust with their employer. With 51,72% (n=15) of the responders from ages 18 to 44 felt that their compensation is not enough, it can be said that the whole fields rate of salaries is not satisfying or attractive for employees. The average for the statement was 2,3 out of 5,0 which is creating it to be one of the largest causes for dissatisfaction with psychological safety. Only outliers and responders at the age group of 55 to 60+ years old felt that they are compensated well enough.

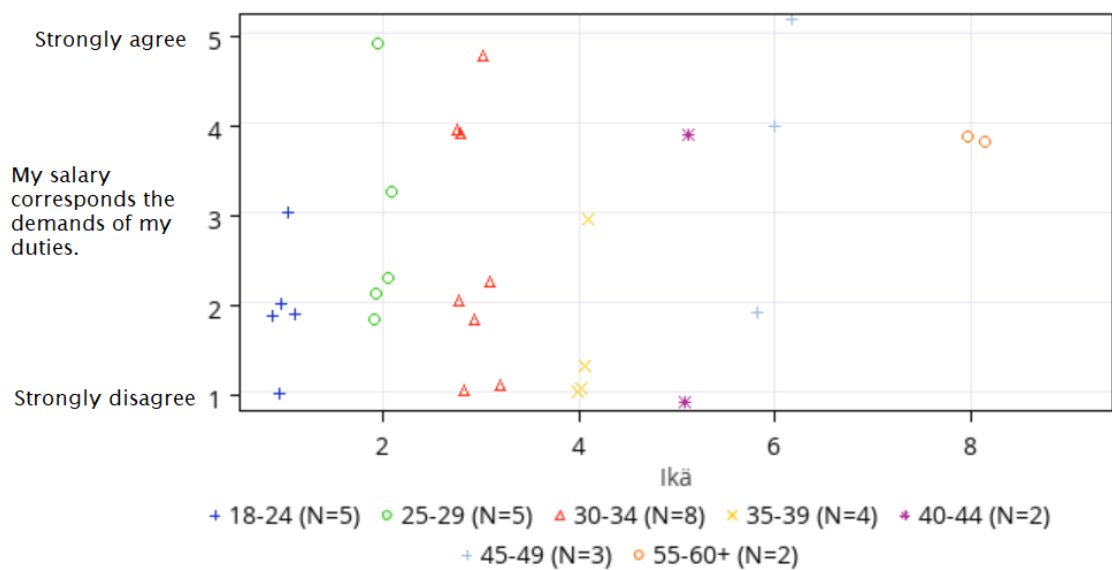


Figure 7. Questionnaire statement: "My salary corresponds with the demands of my duties." grouped by responders' age.

Compensation was causing dissatisfaction and by comparing work experience in hospital-ity industry, the responders with longer experience tended to be more satisfied with their compensation as seen in figure 8. Responders with more experience do receive higher pay automatically from collective agreement. Most responders with experience from 0 to over 2 years of experience that they were not compensated fairly for their labour and efforts. With the statement the 'strongly agree' was chosen 13,8% and 'agree' option 20,7%. Largest percentage was gathered by 'disagree' with 44,8% of responses. The figure 8 highlights a bigger undelaying issue with pay in the hospitality field as in regardless of the years of experience, in all the respondent groups there was at least one responders who utilized 'strongly disagree' option. This speaks to the salary levels in the industry being poor and not corresponding the demands of the duties.

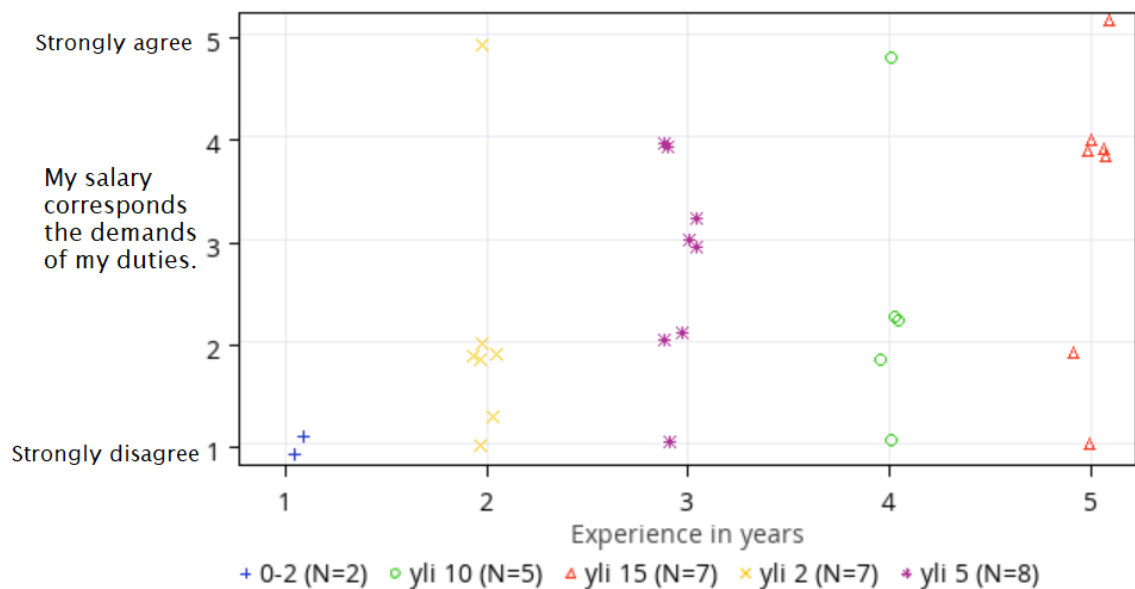


Figure 8. Questionnaire statement: "My salary corresponds with the demands of my duties." grouped by responders' experience in the field.

Statements regarding workload and task distribution was included in all the three sections. First statement regarding the subject received score of 2,0, second statement received 2,0 as well and last statement regarding task distribution received 2,9. Considering the industry is suffering from labour shortages it is more than obvious that increased workload would be causing dissatisfaction.

As a dissatisfaction factor, increased workload surfaced throughout the questionnaire. All age groups noted increases in their workload. When responders were asked if their employers had met their expectations on fair task distribution, younger responders answered negatively as seen in figure 9. Out of 29 responses 2 were that their expectations were met very poorly and 8 poorly. Younger professionals express displeasure on their workload

and distribution of tasks and this results in high dissatisfaction on top of their safety and compensation concerns.

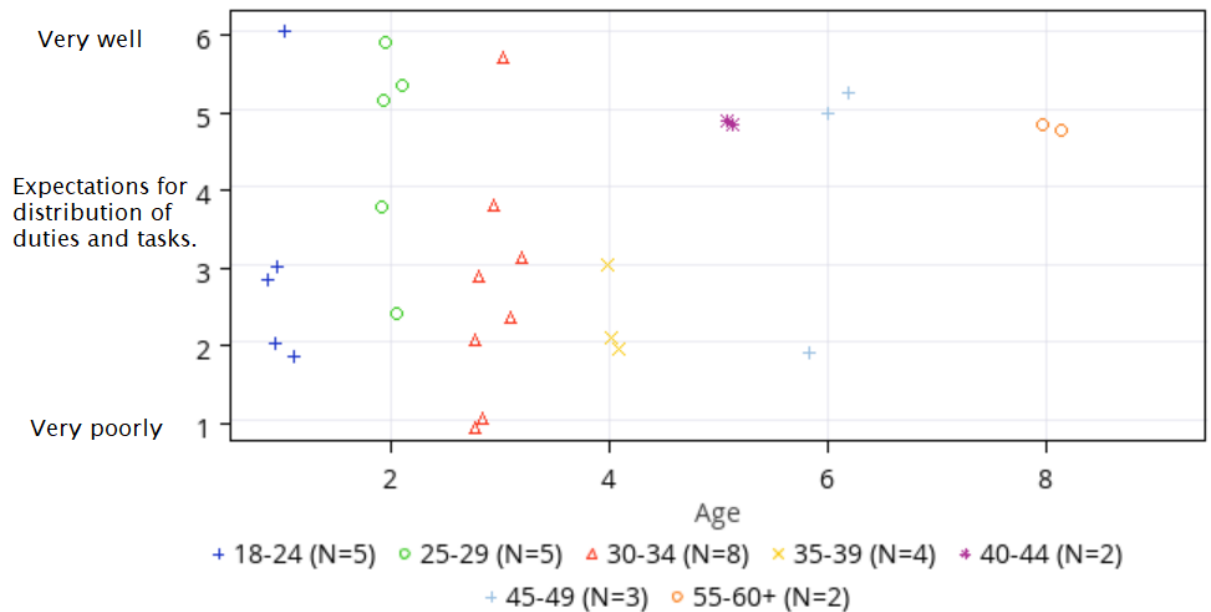


Figure 9. How expectations on task distribution were met according to responders grouped by age.

Support and feedback as factors were questioned three times and consistently older generations felt that they do receive sufficient amount of both. Younger responders from 18 to 24 years old chose more often neutral option for the question rather than negative or positive.

Feedback and support were questioned three times in total throughout the questionnaire and averages were from 2,6 to 2,9 as seen in table 1. More experienced professionals surprisingly were more dissatisfied with their feedback and support system. With the statement seen in figure 10. 2 responses to 'strongly disagree' coming from professionals with experience from 10 to over 15 years. 6 responses for 'disagree' also coming from the more experience side of the responder pool. It can be theorized that more experienced professionals also had a higher position during the last three years in the pandemic. A lot of new situations coming behalf of the staff, customers, and other stakeholders such as partners and outsourced departments.

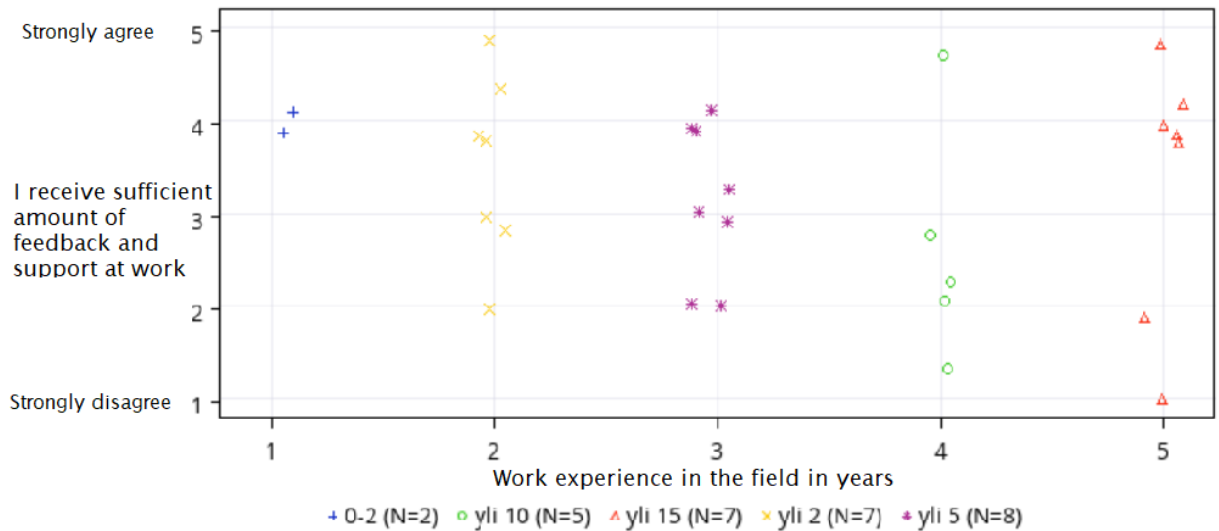


Figure 10. Statement: “I receive sufficient amount of feedback and support at work.” grouped by work experience in the field.

## 6.2 Satisfaction factors

For the factors to be counted as causing satisfaction, the average should be 4,0 or higher. Skill development 3,8, general safety 3,7 and 3,5, and atmosphere at work 3,5 neared the satisfaction, but did not have the sufficient averages.

Responders were pleased with their amount of autonomy all the way to make it the only satisfaction factor. Autonomy was questioned through the job characteristics model with statement ‘I feel that my knowledge and skills are sufficient to perform work tasks independently.’. Responders also had enough information and trust to work autonomously, even though responders did not recognize support or feedback as satisfaction factors, they did have the trust in their own skill set.

Although out the responders regardless of age, experience, or past changes in employment during the last three years, their autonomy was highly valued as only 10,3% (n=3) of responders disagreed and 0,0% (n=0) chose ‘neutral’ and 48,3% (n=14) chose ‘agree’ and rest 41,4% (n=12) chose ‘strongly agree’. It was the only statement where no one chose neutral or declined answer.

## 6.3 Open comments

Responders were asked three different open question regarding the topic with a fourth one for open commentary. The questions allowed the responders to answer the research questions with their own words and they were optional.

First question: "Have you yourself noticed changes in your job satisfaction during or after the pandemic? If yes, then what?" collected 12 answers out of the 29 responders. Many answers reflected issues with labour shortages and increases in workloads. Uncertainty of the situation was reflected, and one responder did note, that now it has gotten easier as the restrictions and work tasks are not altered all the time. Two responders indicated dissatisfaction towards their employers due to their needs and concerns being dismissed by their employers.

Second open question for the questionnaire was: "What do you feel were the biggest factors affecting your employee satisfaction during the Covid-19 pandemic?". 12 responders chose to utilize answering the question. Biggest dissatisfaction factors for responders were compensation, uncertainty of the situation, restrictions, and labour shortages. One responder noted that their trust toward their employer did falter and on the other hand two responders noted their employer as satisfaction factor. They had positive experience with support and communication. They had the experience of their workplaces looking out for their interest and doing the best to accommodate their needs in the pandemic.

Last question before free comments was: "Do you feel that employers and workplaces responded well enough to the changes caused by the pandemic?" and it collected 10 answers. Responders were understanding of the situation where their employer was put due to the pandemic, but actions two responders did not feel that treatment of employees was equal and two did not feel heard with their concerns and needs. In general employees were content with their employers, but it did not take away from the employee satisfaction lowering.

Final part of the questionnaire gave the responders a possibility to open about the topic or the questionnaire if needed without a prompt or a question. 6 out of 29 responders used the section. Optimism was shown from 3 out of 6 responders, who commented were able to see the future in a positive light. Rest 3 of the responders noted labour shortages, increases in workload and compensation as not sufficient and felt that there was no expectation or optimism for change.

## 7 Discussion and conclusion

Conclusion based on the survey, employee satisfaction is in a poor state in hospitality industry in Finland. Instability regarding work, increased workload and support are biggest dissatisfaction factors for the industry. A lot of factors were left in the neutral zone. This can be since other aspects are regarded as more important like pay and stability overshadowing feeling meaningfulness, task variety and development opportunities.

Employees generally were understanding of the responsibility they were given and how most of the situations and circumstances were out of their control. Regardless of this employee's satisfaction lowered and key factor to that was labour shortages, compensation, and increased workload. Responders indicated these in the statements and in the open questions.

In Maslow's hierarchy of needs the basics have to be working in order to move up in the hierarchy and feel satisfied. Basics are not being fulfilled according to the responders, which is showing in the other theories as well.

In job characteristics model core characteristics are visible at the industry with autonomy which should be leading to responsibility as a psychological state which leads to higher satisfaction levels. Unfortunately, as satisfaction is lacking in other characteristic and psychological states, it cannot be stated that employees feel satisfied at the moment in hospitality industry.

The range of affect theory had more personal approach as the responders could evaluate how had their employers met their expectations. Response was that expectations were not met, and satisfaction could not be reached.

The research was able to reach the objectives by indicating the low satisfaction throughout the responder pool. Specific factors were pointed out as dissatisfaction causing and workplaces were not able to meet the expectations and need of the responders.

Regardless of experience, age, and sex the dissatisfaction is reaching everyone and to hospitality industry to thrive again things do have to change. Labor shortages, disability pensions, safety concerns and employee satisfaction have to be faced as issues. As these aspects are dealt with there will be an easier way to profit and healthy business, as your employees are satisfied it will lead to positive outcomes on other fronts like customer satisfaction and financial.

## 7.1 Suggestion for improvements and future research

Young responders indicated low levels of satisfaction as low pay and distrust towards their employers peaked for reasons. When building a future for hospitality in Finland, younger generations will be the ones contributing towards rebuilt and this is why they should be the focus when moving forward. After the tumultuous three years the youth is already exhibiting uneasiness and discomfort as their wellbeing is on decline. The hospitality industry is a large employer among young generations due to part-time contracts with flexible hours and this gives them responsibility and possibility to affect the phenomena.

Focus on students and future makers will help the hospitality industry rise again. At the moment the reputation for hospitality industry is dreadful after the pandemic layoffs, poor salary, and union negotiations. The field is also known for poor management and over working employees.

Research and co-operation for young employees' well-being and satisfaction should be conducted further to understand which aspects need to change to keep them at work. With every generation there is different needs and priorities such as millennials differentiated from generation x.

As for the hospitality as a whole, much broader, and specified employee satisfaction should be conducted due to the changes past three years. Finnish Institute of Occupational Health conducted research to employee well-being and aimed to investigate changes in well-being during the coronavirus pandemic. Conclusions came overall that there was a slight decline in satisfaction among population. As demonstrated earlier the treatment of workplaces and industries was unequal during the pandemic due to restrictions. Other workplaces enjoyed the possibility of working from home and building work arounds as other were out of a workplaces and jobs without compensation.

The after math of the pandemic needs the industry to move forward and grow again. This should be done employees first and building new ways of working. It will be financially beneficial for companies to keep well trained professionals rather than keep changing and training their employees, due to this everyone should be concerned about employee satisfaction.

For future research, a suggestion is to have more accessibility to the questionnaire and distribution. The hospitality industry is international and broad, and due to the limitations of

this thesis, the whole response potential was not reached. Research conducted by an independent body in an accessible language selection will give broader response pool as well as a more accurate viewing of the industry as a whole.

## **7.2 Reliability and validity**

Reliability and validity are crucial aspects of any research study. In this section, we will delve into the reliability and validity of the research findings, ensuring the consistency and accuracy of the measurements and methods employed.

Reliability refers to the replicability of the results and if the research method is stable and produced consistent results. This thesis utilized test-retest reliability, where the reliability is tested by sampling the same target group more than once (Dudovskly, 2017).

The thesis questionnaire tested reliability through asking about the same factors multiple times and giving the open questions. Although the questionnaire the responses for example for compensation stayed similar and no differentiation was show. Same factors which were indicated as dissatisfaction in the statements were brought up by the responders in the open question section. This gives the research reliability, and it can be replicated.

The validity of a study depicts if the research conducted measures the right variables and answers the research questions. External validity for research means the degree to which the results and research can be generalized and applied (Reading Craze, 2015).

To align the research to the topic of employee satisfaction, the theories of the framework utilized. The chosen design of the questionnaire ensured that the variables measured accurately represented the intended constructs of employee satisfaction.

## **7.3 Personal learning**

From the topic and subject for the thesis has been discussed broadly, but satisfaction in hospitality industry is approached most of the time from the client and customers perspective. The author of the thesis had knowledge and understanding of both, customer, and employee satisfaction before starting the project. Unexpectedly this caused delays when creating and writing the framework as the subject and aim had to be narrowed down.

Process for research, tools, and methods arose as an outstanding learning process. Contextualizing the theory and having concrete examples and figures to support the theoretical framework. After going past the questionnaire and starting the analysis the project moved along fast.

The timetable and schedule had to be adjusted many times in order to get the thesis finished. Through personal responsibility and connection to the subject and research topic of employee satisfaction the completion of the thesis was achievable. The author has past and current experience in the hospitality industry which was the main driver for the completion of the thesis. Through the process, there was gain to professional and personal skill set, which was only possible through the process of the theory, data collection, and conclusions of the research.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. The questionnaire

#### Muutokset työtyytyväisyydessä koronaviruspandemian jälkeen hotelli- ja ravintola-alalla

 Pakolliset kysymykset merkitty tähdellä (\*)

Kyselyn tarkoitus on kartoittaa koronaviruspandemian aiheuttamia muutoksia työtyytyväisyydessä hotelli- ja ravintola-alalla.

Kysely koostuu väittämistä sekä avoimista kysymyksistä ja vastaaminen kestää noin 3-7 minuuttia. Vastaukset kerätään anonyymisti. Kiitos vastauksistasi.

**Seuraava**



## Taustatiedot

### 1. Ikä \*

- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-44
- 45-49
- 50-54
- 55-60+
- En halua kertoa

### 2. Sukupuoli \*

- Nainen
- Mies
- Muu
- En halua kertoa

### 3. Työkokemus vuosissa alalla \*

Työkokemuksesi lasketaan hotelli- ja palveluun liittyvät työnkuvat.

- 0-2
- yli 2
- yli 5
- yli 10
- yli 15

### 4. Työsuhteeni tällä hetkellä on (valinnainen)

- Kokoaikainen
- Osa-aikainen
- Määräaikainen
- Muu, tarkemmin:

**5. Osasto \***

Valitse sopivimmat

- Vastaanotto
- Kiinteistöhuolto
- Myynti- ja markkinointi
- Kokous
- Hallinnolliset tehtävät
- Spa
- Keittiö
- Kerroshoito
- Ravintola
- Muu:

**6. Olen viimeisen 3 vuoden aikana vaihtanut työpaikkaa tai alaa \***

- Kyllä, olen vaihtanut työnantajaa.
- Kyllä, olen vaihtanut alaa.
- Ei, en ole vaihtanut työnantajaa tai alaa.
- En halua kertoa

7. Väittämät selvittävät miten työpaikoilla perustarpeet, kuten palkka, työmäärä sekä turvallisuus ovat toteutuneet viimeisen kolmen vuoden aikana.

	Täysin eri mieltä	Eri mieltä	Neutraali	Samaa mieltä	Täysin samaa mieltä
Koin, että työpaikallani ei ole ollut uhkaa irtisanomisesta, lomauttamisesta tai työtuntien vähentämisestä. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Turvallisuus työpaikallani oli ylläpidetty hyvin. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Työmääräni ei ole kasvanut. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Olen kokenut kompensaationi työstäni riittäväksi. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Palkkani työstäni vastasi työnkuvani vaativuutta. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Osastollamme on ollut riittävät työntekijä resurssit suoriutua työtehtävistä. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
En ole ollut huolissani terveyteni puolesta töissä. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Vastaa kysymyksiin perustuen kokemuksiisi työpaikallasi viimeisen kolmen vuoden aikana.

**8. Seuraavat väittämät selvittävät miten eri piirteet ja tekijät ovat vaikuttaneet työtyytyväisyyteen viimeisen kolmen vuoden aikana.**

	Täysin eri mieltä	Eri mieltä	Neutraali	Samaa mieltä	Täysin samaa mieltä
Olen päässyt kehittämään ja hyödyntämään taitojani työpaikalla hyvin. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Työtehtäväni ovat sopivan vaihtelevia. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Työnkuvani ja tehtäväni ovat olleet sopivan haastavia. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minulla on ollut mahdollisuus viimeistellä tehtäväni alusta loppuun hyvin ja ajan kanssa. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Työmääräni ei ole lisääntynyt. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koen, että minulla on ollut työtehtäväni sekä vastuuni hyvin kontrollissa. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Olen kokenut työni pääsääntöisesti merkitykselliseksi. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koen, että minulla on tarpeeksi vaikutusvaltaa oman työnkuvan ja työtehtävien suhteen. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koen, että tietoni ja taitoni ovat riittäviä työtehtävieni suorittamiseen itsenäisesti. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saan riittävästi palautetta ja tukea työssäni. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koen saavani jatkuvaa, säännöllistä ja riittävästi tukea työpaikallani esimenkilöltäni. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Seuraavat kysymykset ovat avoimia eivätkä pakollisia. Avaa vapaasti mielipidettäsi sekä kokemuksiasi.

10. Oletko itse huomannut muutoksia pandemia-ajan aikana tai sen jälkeen omassa työtyytyväisyydessä? Jos kyllä, niin mitä?

11. Mitkä koet olleen suurimmat vaikuttavat tekijät työtyytyväisyyteesi koronapandemian aikana?

12. Koetko, että työnantajat ja työpaikat vastasivat tarpeeksi hyvin pandemian aiheuttamiin muutoksiin?

13. Avoimet kommentit