

HIGH PERFORMANCE SPORTS COACHES JOB SATISFACTION AND INTENTION TO CHANGE JOB IN PUBLIC SECTOR SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS*

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Abstract

Objective. To determine the relationships between high performance sports coaches job satisfaction and the intent to change their current position and the profession. **Methods.** 87 high performance sports coaches from Lithuania participated in a survey. Participant's job satisfaction was measured with Minnesota's job satisfaction questioner short form. Intent to change job was measured with two questions: Do you have intentions to change you profession? Do you have intention to change your organization? **Results.** The study found that employees had high levels of job satisfaction and internal satisfaction but were dissatisfied with external factors such as pay, benefits, and working conditions. No significant differences were found in job satisfaction between genders or age groups, but significant among coaches in different cities. Employees who intended to change their profession or organization had lower levels of overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction. The study also found medium-level negative correlations between overall job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, extrinsic job satisfaction, and the intent to change profession and organization. **Conclusions.** Study highlights the importance of addressing external factors to improve employee satisfaction and retention. By focusing on areas such as pay, benefits, and working conditions, organizations can increase employee satisfaction and reduce turnover, ultimately leading to more successful operations in public sector sports organizations.

Keywords: *Job satisfaction, Intent to leave, Intent to change job, Sports organizations, High performance sports coach*

1. INTRODUCTION

Every working person desires job satisfaction, but the decreasing number of employees in sports organizations each year presents a problem for promoting physical activity. Research has shown that job stress positively affects the intention to leave work, job satisfaction negatively affects the intention to leave work, and emotional exhaustion positively affects the intention to leave work (Yo and Supartha, 2019). Individuals suffering from burnout may exhibit a decline in work quality (Kumar, 2015) and experience depression symptoms more frequently (Oreskovich et al., 2015). In modern society, there is increasing interest in retaining employees, and good working conditions are essential for employee well-being.

The popularity of research on the intention to change jobs and job satisfaction has practical significance, as knowledge of these variables can help predict job turnover. Moreover, job satisfaction is related to lower employee turnover (Rudolph et al., 2021) and better work

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quality (Stefanovska-Petkovska et al., 2019), which is particularly important for sports coaches in training athletes to achieve high performance. However, there is a lack of research on the psychological and behavioral states of sports organization employees, highlighting the need for further study (Cho and Lee, 2022).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Concept of job satisfaction

Due to the popularity of the field of organizational psychology among employees and organizations (Spector, 1997), various scholars and practitioners provide their definitions of what job satisfaction is. However, the two most commonly encountered definitions describe job satisfaction as a pleasant or positive emotional state that arises from evaluating one's job or work experience (Jex, 2002; Setyaningsih, Widaningsih, & Widodo, 2020) and as whether people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their job (Spector, 1997).

In general, most definitions encompass emotional feelings towards one's work, including their job or their attitudes towards specific aspects of it, such as colleagues, salary, or working conditions (Lu, While, & Barriball, 2005). Moreover, the level of job satisfaction can be determined by how much job outcomes meet or exceed expectations. However, job satisfaction depends not only on how much employees enjoy their work. Taber and Alliger (1995), who studied employees of the American Institute of Education, assessed how much they enjoyed individual tasks while performing their duties. Their scores were moderately correlated with satisfaction with the job itself and weakly associated with overall job satisfaction. Taber and Alliger (1995) also found that other factors (such as concentration levels required for work, level of supervision, and task importance) did not affect job satisfaction. This study indicates that improving one's sense of well-being while performing work tasks increases overall job satisfaction. However, the weak relationship suggests that other factors besides pleasure contribute to how employees feel satisfied at work.

According to Jex (2002), job satisfaction consists of three components: a mood component, a cognitive component, and a behavioral component. While the emotional component reflects the feelings experienced at work, the cognitive aspect of job satisfaction reflects the employee's beliefs about their work or work situation - the employee may think that their job is interesting, stimulating, boring, or demanding. Often, these two aspects are related. The behavioral component is an indicator of work-related behavioral intentions, such as arriving at work on time, working hard, and so on.

2.2. Job satisfaction in the field of sports coaching

Service-oriented professions, such as trainers, teachers, doctors, and nurses, all share the common goal of providing a positive tangible or intangible impact to their clients. Despite role differences, all service-oriented professions face similar challenges related to the nature of their professional environment (e.g., a large number of clients, a fast-paced environment, and limited personal time). The goals of personal trainers (PT), athletic conditioning trainers (ACT), and HPSC are to provide clients or athletes with guidance and knowledge on how to create and maintain a healthy lifestyle, improve their quality of life, and enhance their fitness. To adapt to each athlete, a sports specialist must be able to create and evaluate programs, monitor a client's progress, and periodically provide reports to the athlete, client, or supervisor. However, in the coaching profession, various skills are needed, such as counseling, emotional support, mentoring, teaching, selling, marketing,

group dynamics management, as well as legal knowledge and contract mastery (Chiu, Lee, & Lin, 2010). Sports coaches are required to take care of not only athletes but also their environment, auxiliary staff, and funding agencies, and there is a constant pressure to show results in competitions (Cho & Lee, 2022). Moreover, practitioners must continuously follow the scientific literature to improve and update their knowledge and apply it in practice, maximizing the benefit to the client. Therefore, the job duties of PT, ACT, and HPSC are unique compared to other healthcare professions, especially in the medical field (e.g., nurses and doctors).

Although starting a career based on helping individuals can provide a sense of reward, the significant physical and psychological needs associated with service sector professions can lead to burnout and a desire to change jobs (Adriaenssens, De Gucht, & Maes, 2015; Oglesby, Gallucci, & Wynveen, 2020). Burnout can be described as a multifactorial negative psychological response to chronic work-related stressors (Schaufeli, Maslach, & Marek, 2017). In terms of career fields such as fitness professionals, work-related situations (e.g., decreased client attendance), and among HPSC, reduced athlete performance and number of children, may be perceived as stressful when there is an importance to maintain work in an unstable economic environment (Gucciardi, Hanton, Gordon, Mallett, & Temby, 2015). Thus, a negative psychological response is often characterized by a decreased sense of achievement, depersonalization from the client or team, and overall detachment from work (Schaufeli, Maslach, & Marek, 2017).

3. METHODOLOGY AND ORGANIZATION

Participants. The study involved high-performance sport coaches (HPSC) from the five largest budgetary sports organizations in Lithuania. The sample was obtained through a quantitative study using a convenient non-probability sampling method. Only those employees (coaches) who agreed to participate in the survey and filled out an anonymous electronic questionnaire in their free time were surveyed. The results obtained apply only to the respondents who participated in the study and not to the entire population, as the representative sample is smaller than that determined based on data from the Lithuanian Sports Centre for 2021. The Paniotto formula was used: $n=1/(\Delta^2+1/N)$.

- N - size of the general population;
- n - size of the representative sample;
- Δ - margin of error of the sample.

With a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level, it was determined that a representative sample of 334 employees was required to obtain statistically significant results. $n=1/(0.05^2+1/2029) = 334$ The survey reached 169 coaches, of which 87 fully and properly completed the questionnaire.

Table 1: Characteristics of the participants.

		N	Percent
Gender	Male	34	39.1%
	Female	53	60.9%
Age	20-30 Years	17	19.5%
	31-40 Years	26	29.9%
	41-50 Years	17	19.5%
	50 + Years	27	31.0%
City	Vilnius	13	14.9%
	Kaunas	24	27.6%
	Klaipėda	24	27.6%
	Šiauliai	16	18.4%
	Panevėžys	10	11.5%

The research methods were applied in the study. A questionnaire survey was used in the study, and the level of job satisfaction was assessed using the short version of the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire. It consisted of a 5-point Likert-type scale with 20 items. The evaluation and interpretation - the sum of all the answers to the questions measures the overall job satisfaction. All twenty statements allowed measuring the overall level of employee satisfaction with work. It was divided into three levels of job satisfaction based on the calculated sum of all the marked points on the scale:

1. Up to 25 points - low job satisfaction level;
2. 26-74 points - average job satisfaction level;
3. 75 or more - high job satisfaction level.

Based on Danaci and Koç (2020), internal job satisfaction was assessed based on twelve statements from the Minnesota questionnaire (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, and 20). Meanwhile, external job satisfaction was assessed based on the other eight statements (5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, and 19). According to Pearson and Seiler (1983), Likert scale scores below 3.50 are considered more on the “dissatisfied” side, while scores above 3.50 are considered more on the “satisfied” side. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.937. The intention to change jobs was determined by answering the following questions:

Are you planning to change your profession at the moment?

Do you plan to leave the sports organization where you currently work?

Answer options were (1 - no; 2 - sometimes I think about it; 3 - yes).

Demographic data, such as gender, age group, and the city where they work, were also collected in the questionnaire (Table 1).

Research procedure. After obtaining the permission of the Research Ethics Committee of Lithuanian Sports University (permit No. 30012) to conduct a scientific study, an electronic version of the questionnaire was sent to the directors of sports education centers of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda, Šiauliai, and Panevėžys municipalities, with a request to share the questionnaire with high-performance sports coaches. The survey was conducted from December 2022 to March 2023 using the *apklausa.lt* website. The data was collected and analyzed statistically.

Statistical analysis of research results. The data collected during the study was analyzed using the statistical software program SPSS 28.0. The results were presented in graphs and tables indicating percentages or means. Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used to compare two groups. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare means of several independent samples. Spearman's correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between job satisfaction and the intention to change jobs. Differences between features were considered statistically significant when the p-value was less than 0.05.

4. RESULTS

The results are shown in Table 2. As can be seen, both the overall job satisfaction and internal satisfaction ratings exceeded the 3.50 threshold, indicating that HPSC employees are satisfied with internal satisfaction factors and overall, with their work. The average scores indicate the employees' average job satisfaction. The average rating for external satisfaction is lower than 3.50, indicating HPSC dissatisfaction with external factors.

Table 2: Average value of job satisfaction in HPSC

	Overall satisfaction	Inner satisfaction	External satisfaction
Scoring Averages (\pm SD)	74.84 (\pm 13.93)	47.91 (\pm 6.82)	26.93 (\pm 7.91)
Average of the Likert scale values (\pm SD)	3.74 (\pm 0.70)	3.99 (\pm 1.04)	3.36 (\pm 0.57)

Figure 1 presents the results indicating that the overall satisfaction level does not significantly differ between genders ($p > 0.05$). The level of job satisfaction among males was found to be moderate (74.03 ± 13.4), while among females it was high (75.36 ± 14.4).

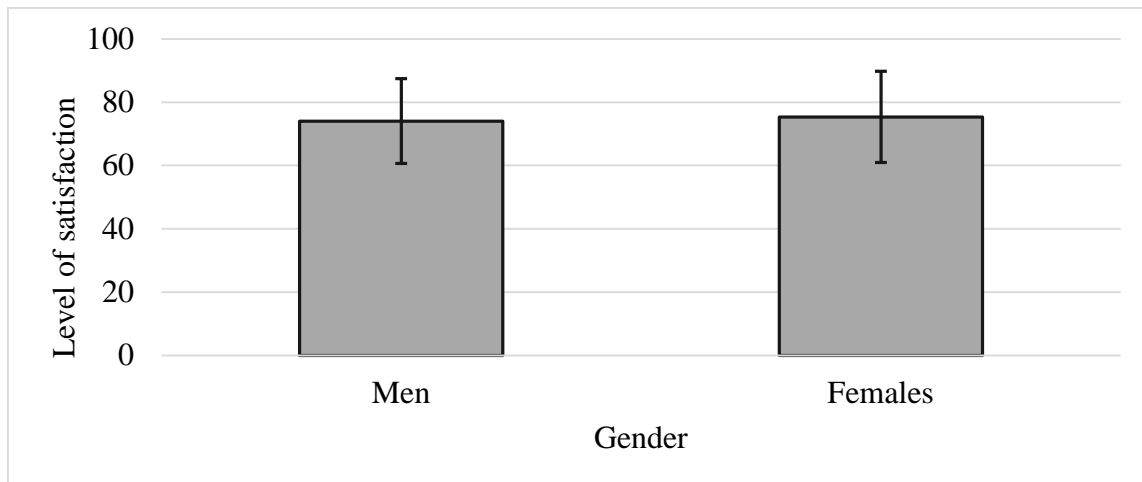


Figure 1. HPSC overall distribution of employee job satisfaction levels by gender ($\bar{x} \pm$ SD)

Results presented in Figure 2 indicate that the overall satisfaction level does not significantly differ between different age groups ($p > 0.05$). The level of job satisfaction was found to be high among those aged 20-30 (79.18 ± 15.076), medium among those aged 31-40 (73.58 ± 11.168), high among those aged 41-50 (76.59 ± 16.707), and medium among those aged 50 and above (72.22 ± 13.687).

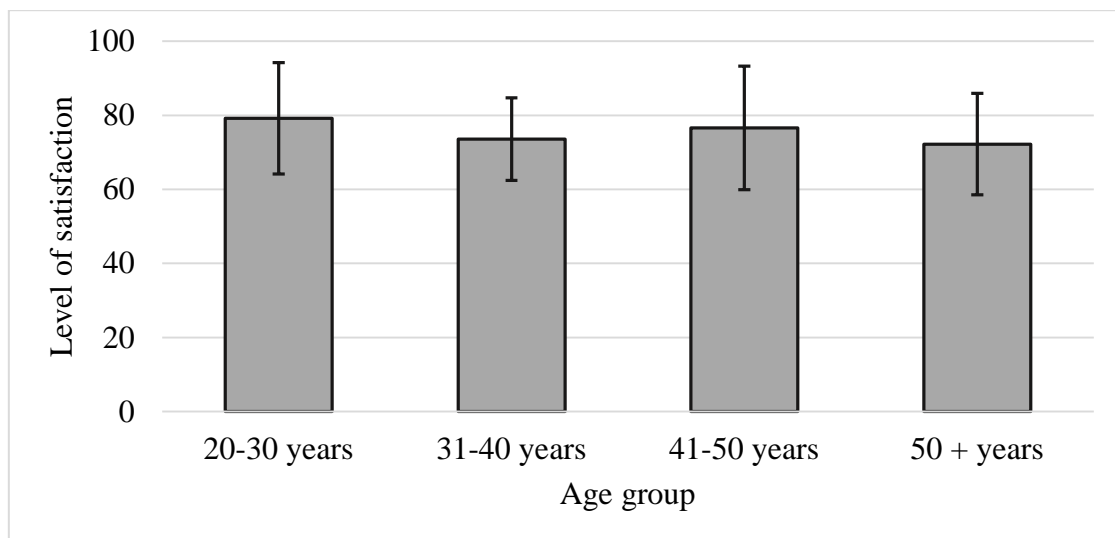


Figure 2. The distribution of job satisfaction levels among different age groups of HPSC ($\bar{x} \pm$ SD)

Results presented in Figure 3 indicate that the overall satisfaction level of coaches in different cities significantly differs ($p < 0.001$). The lowest overall satisfaction level was found among coaches in Vilnius, although it remains medium (60.77 ± 9.427). The highest overall satisfaction level was found among coaches in Šiauliai – high (83.25 ± 11.556). The overall satisfaction level of coaches in Kaunas is medium (73.00 ± 14.099), in Klaipėda it is high (77.58 ± 11.462), and in Panevėžys it is high (77.50 ± 14.864).

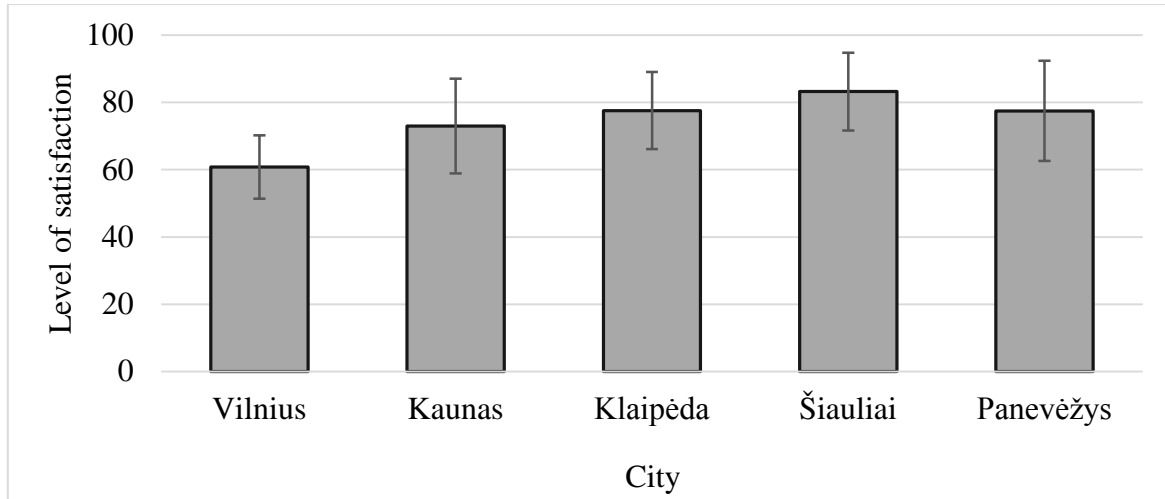


Figure 3. The distribution of job satisfaction levels among different cities of HPSC ($\bar{x} \pm SD$)

Data presented in Figure 4 shows the intentions of HPSC to change their profession and their satisfaction level. The majority of HPSC do not intend to and do not think about changing their professional activity. The image shows a gradual decrease in job satisfaction level from those who do not intend to change to those who do. The presented data shows that the overall satisfaction level significantly differs ($p < 0.001$) between those who do not intend to change their profession (80.29 ± 12.26), those who sometimes think about it (64.29 ± 8.32), and those who intend to change their profession (57.75 ± 16.215).

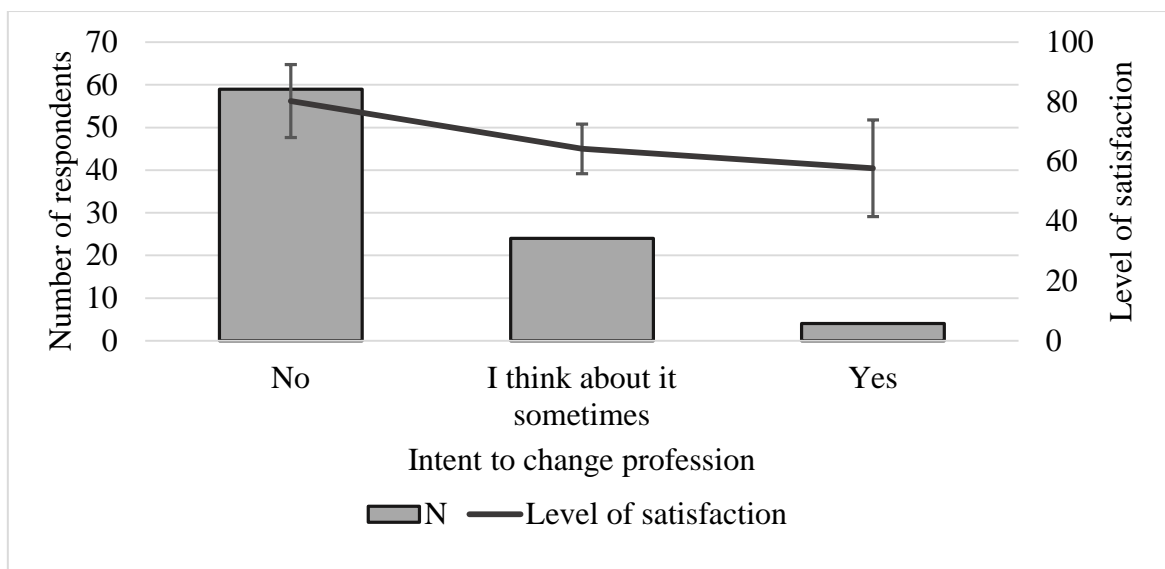


Figure 4. The intention to change profession (N) and job satisfaction level of HPSC ($\bar{x} \pm SD$)

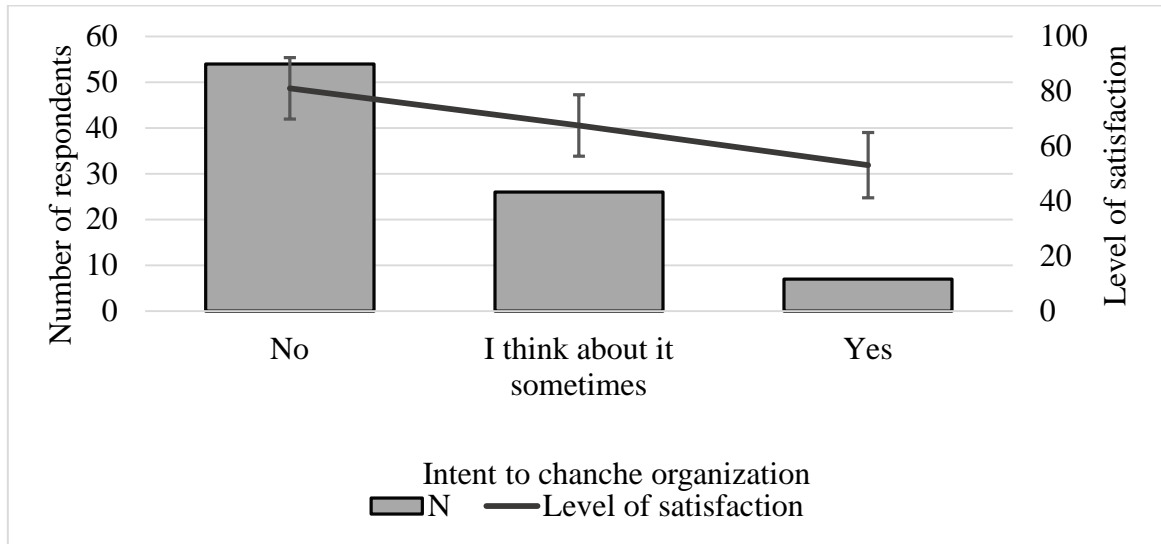


Figure 5. The intention to change organization (N) and job satisfaction level of HPSC ($\bar{x} \pm SD$)

Data presented in Figure 5 shows the intentions of HPSC to change their organization and their satisfaction level. The majority of HPSC do not intend to and do not think about changing their organization. The image shows a gradual decrease in job satisfaction level from those who do not intend to change to those who do. The presented data shows that the overall satisfaction level significantly differs ($p < 0.001$) between those who do not intend to change their organization (81.13 ± 11.186), those who sometimes think about it (67.62 ± 11.186), and those who intend to change their organization (53.14 ± 11.838).

Table 3: The relationship between overall, intrinsic, and extrinsic job satisfaction and the intention to change profession and organization of HPSC

Intention to change job	Overall job satisfaction	Internal job satisfaction	External job satisfaction
Intention to change profession	$r = -.599^{**}$ $p < .001$	$r = -.481^{**}$ $p < .001$	$r = -.614^{**}$ $p < .001$
Intention to change organization	$r = -.615^{**}$ $p < .001$	$r = -.465^{**}$ $p < .001$	$r = -.656^{**}$ $p < .001$

Data presented in Table 3 shows moderate negative correlations between overall job satisfaction, internal job satisfaction, external job satisfaction, and the intention to change profession and organization. This indicates that when the level of job satisfaction is lower, people are more likely to consider and intend to change their organization and profession. External job satisfaction had a stronger correlation with the intention to change profession.

Table 4: The distribution of sources of job dissatisfaction of HPSC

Variable	Darbo aspektas	Vidutinis vertinimas ($\pm SN$)
The way my boss handles his/her workers	extrinsic	3.34 (± 3.34)
The way company policies are put into practice	extrinsic	3.22 (± 1.24)
My pay and the amount of work I do	extrinsic	3.22 (± 1.243)
The chances for advancement on this job	extrinsic	3.21 (± 1.268)
The way my co-workers get along with each other	extrinsic	3.31 (± 1.113)
The praise I get for doing a good job	extrinsic	3.32 (± 1.289)
The chance to tell people what to do	intrinsic	3.48 (± 0.833)

Data presented in Table 4 shows the sources of job dissatisfaction among HPSC, whose average evaluation was lower than 3.50. External factors are significantly more frequent than internal factors, of which there is only one – satisfaction with the opportunity to indicate to people what they should do.

5. DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to establish the relationship between job satisfaction and intention to change job among coaches in public sector sports organizations. The hypothesis put forward was confirmed, as job satisfaction had a moderately negative correlation with the intention to leave, indicating that coaches who intend to change their work or profession are less satisfied with their job. These findings are consistent with the results of other studies conducted in Lithuania (Valickienė, Valickas & Sinkevič, 2007) and among sports coaches and teachers in the United States (Bravo et al., 2019; Madigan & Kim, 2021). However, Hann et al. (2011), who studied 1,174 family physicians over five years, found that although higher levels of job dissatisfaction were associated with an increased likelihood of leaving their job, higher job satisfaction did not prevent them from leaving. This raises the question of whether higher job satisfaction really impedes job change, thus requiring further longitudinal studies to establish this.

Examining job satisfaction among coaches is important in order to increase work productivity, as well as the level of sports training, and to maintain or improve athletes' performance (Washington & Reade, 2013). While differences were found between different age groups and genders in other studies conducted in Lithuania (Savickas, 2022; Šalnienė & Fominienė, 2021), this was not the case in this study. Andrade et al. (2019) also conducted a study to examine whether gender differences affect the level of employee job satisfaction, and found that the overall level of job satisfaction did not differ between men and women. Dumangöz (2021) examining job satisfaction among tennis coaches, found that age has a significant effect, which they attribute to the fact that older coaches have more experience and are recognized as coaches. However, the results of Savickas (2022) and Baykara & Orhan (2020) were opposite, with younger coaches reporting greater job satisfaction. Similarly, Baykara and Orhan (2020) did not find any differences between genders in their study. However, in this study, a significant difference was found only among coaches from different cities. Therefore, we cannot yet conclude that coaches' gender or age has a significant effect on job satisfaction.

The results of this study on job satisfaction among coaches are related to the results of other studies, which helps to highlight trends in job satisfaction and its relationship with the intention to change job among HPSC, which can later help identify major problems and ways to improve job quality. Analyzing the research data revealed that job satisfaction among HPSC varies between medium and high levels, which is consistent with Gujytė (2020) research on job satisfaction in Lithuania's sports sector.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of scientific literature shows that the majority of health and sports organization employees are satisfied with their work because they enjoy what they do. Research also indicates that autonomy, feedback, skill variety, task identity, and task significance are significantly related to job satisfaction. Scientific literature also demonstrates a significant relationship between job satisfaction and intention to change it.

It has been established that dissatisfaction among sports coaches in the study was determined by: the nature of leadership by the director, the practical implementation of the

organization's policies, the ratio of salary to workload, career opportunities provided, mutual understanding among colleagues, and the praise received for good work.

It has been found that the sports coaches who participated in the study were satisfied with internal satisfaction factors and generally satisfied with their work, but dissatisfied with external factors. There was no significant difference in job satisfaction between gender and age groups. A significant difference was found between job satisfaction of coaches from different cities.

It has been established that lower job satisfaction among sports coaches in the study leads to a greater intention to change the organization and profession. External job satisfaction level has a stronger relationship with intention to change profession than internal job satisfaction level.

ZADOVOLJSTVO POSLOM SPORTSKIH TRENERA VISOKIH PERFORMANSI I NAMERA O PROMENI POSLA U SPORTSKIM ORGANIZACIJAMA JAVNOG SEKTORA

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Izvod

Cilj. Utvrditi odnose između zadovoljstva poslom sportskih trenera visokih performansi i namere da promene svoju trenutnu poziciju i profesiju. Metode. 87 trenera visokih performansi iz Litvanije je učestvovalo u upitniku. Zadovoljstvo učesnika je mereno kratkim formularom Minesotinog upitnika o zadovoljstvu poslom. Namera o promeni posla merila se sa dva pitanja: Da li nameravate da promenite profesiju? Da li nameravate da promenite svoju organizaciju? Rezultati. Studija je pokazala da su zaposleni imali visok nivo zadovoljstva poslom i unutrašnjeg zadovoljstva, ali su bili nezadovoljni spoljnim faktorima kao što su plata, beneficije i uslovi rada. Nisu nađene značajne razlike u zadovoljstvu poslom između polova ili starosnih grupa, ali su one bile značajne među trenerima u različitim gradovima. Zaposleni koji su nameravali da promene svoju profesiju ili organizaciju imali su niže nivoe ukupnog zadovoljstva poslom, internog zadovoljstva poslom i eksternog zadovoljstva poslom. Studija je takođe otkrila srednje negativne korelacije između ukupnog zadovoljstva poslom, internog zadovoljstva poslom, eksternog zadovoljstva poslom i namere da se promeni profesija i organizacija. Zaključci. Studija naglašava važnost rešavanja spoljnih faktora za poboljšanje zadovoljstva i zadržavanja zaposlenih. Fokusirajući se na oblasti kao što su plate, beneficije i uslovi rada, organizacije mogu povećati zadovoljstvo zaposlenih i smanjiti fluktuaciju, što na kraju dovodi do uspešnijeg poslovanja u sportskim organizacijama u javnom sektoru.

Ključne reči: *zadovoljstvo poslom, namera o odlasku, namera o promeni posla, sportske organizacije, sportski trener visokih performansi*

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