

Satisfaction with work and satisfaction with life: Difference across occupations

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Research question

In what occupation is job satisfaction typically higher than life-satisfaction or is life-satisfaction higher than job satisfaction?

Do such differences vary across social categories?

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Context: Concepts of happiness

Happiness – Life Satisfaction

	Passing	Enduring
Life aspects	Pleasure (Instant utility)	Domain-satisfaction (i.e. Job-satisfaction, marital satisfaction)
Life as a whole	Top experience	Life satisfaction (Happiness)

Source: [Veenhoven, 2008](#)

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The database

- WageIndicator – World wide data set on occupations and wages
- Loonwijzer – The Netherlands
- ISCO-03 - Occupation standardisation

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Method

- 160.806 wage-employed people in the Netherlands
- Years 2009 – 2018 (before the covid-19 pandemic)
- 130 occupations

Data sets:

- Life satisfaction ten-point scale
- Job satisfaction from five-point scale to a ten point scale by linear regression ($=1+(v-1) \times 2,25$)

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Results

L129

	A	B	L	M	N	O	P
1	Nummer	ISCO 2008-03	Life satisfaction - Job satisfacti				
2	1	Commissioned armed forces officers	0,31				
3	2	Non-commissioned armed forces officers	0,19				
4	3	Armed forces occupations, other ranks	0,43				
5	4	Legislators and senior officials	0,48				
6	5	Managing directors and chief executives	0,26				
7	6	Business services and administration managers	0,38				
8	7	Sales, marketing and development managers	0,32				
9	8	Production managers in agriculture, forestry and fisheries	-1,93				
10	9	Manufacturing, mining, construction, and distribution managers	0,23				
11	10	Information and communications technology service managers	0,48				
12	11	Professional services managers	0,25				
13	12	Hotel and restaurant managers	0,41				
14	13	Retail and wholesale trade managers	0,14				
15	14	Other services managers	0,35				
16	15	Physical and earth science professionals	0,60				
17	16	Mathematicians, actuaries and statisticians	-0,16				
18	17	Life science professionals	0,44				
19	18	Engineering professionals (excluding electrotechnology)	0,48				
20	19	Electrotechnology engineers	0,28				
21	20	Architects, planners, surveyors and designers	0,47				
22	21	Medical doctors	0,09				
23	22	Nursing and midwifery professionals	0,22				
24	23	Paramedical practitioners	-0,33				
25	24	Veterinarians	0,52				
26	25	Other health professionals	0,43				
27	26	University and higher education teachers	0,34				
28	27	Vocational education teachers	0,28				
29	28	Secondary education teachers	0,46				
30	29	Primary school and early childhood teachers	0,39				
31	30	Other teaching professionals	0,16				
32	31	Finance professionals	0,41				
33	32	Administration professionals	0,49				
34	33	Sales, marketing and public relations professionals	0,46				
35	34	Software and applications developers and analysts	0,44				
36	35	Database and network professionals	0,18				
37	36	Legal professionals	0,55				
38	37	Librarians, archivists and curators	0,12				
39	38	Social and religious professionals	0,41				
40	39	Authors, journalists and linguists	0,34				
41	40	Creative and performing artists	-0,25				
42	41	Physical and engineering science technicians	0,50				
43	42	Mining, manufacturing and construction supervisors	0,13				

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Overall results

- Higher happiness in life than happiness at work
- Job satisfaction was higher in just 7 occupations
 1. Production managers in agriculture forestry and fisheries
 2. Forestry and related workers
 3. Paramedical practitioners
 4. Creative and performing artist
 5. Mathematicians, actuaries and statisticians
 6. Ship and aircraft controllers and technicians
 7. Car, van and motorcycle drivers

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Specific results – lower educated frequently report more work-satisfaction

Overall in 6% of the occupations more work satisfaction than life satisfaction reported

- Lower educated – 23%
- Middle educated – 7%
- Higher educated – 6%

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Specific results – other possible results

- Gender
- Age
- Having children or not

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Conclusion

- In most occupations people report higher life satisfaction than job satisfaction
- Lower educated people more often report higher job satisfaction than life satisfaction

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