

THE IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES ON EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION WITH BENEFITS AND PERKS: EVIDENCE FROM SERBIAN FINANCIAL SECTOR

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Abstract. *After the downfall of socialist regimes, human resource management systems in transition countries like Serbia were transformed, establishing entirely new employee compensation system. In this paper, the most common benefits and perks in the Serbian financial sector, as well as their significance for the employee satisfaction are explored, with the focus on the effectiveness of its structure. The investigation of differences in impact of benefits and perks on employee satisfaction is performed with respect to gender, education, age, and job position of the respondents. The empirical research is conducted by a survey questionnaire. Results suggest that there are no differences in employee satisfaction between respondents of different genders, and education, while partial differences in employee satisfaction are confirmed with respect to age, and job position. The results indicate that benefits and perks in Serbian financial sector should be better structured, and provide guidelines for the investigation of more favorable total compensation package.*

Key words: *benefits, perks, employee satisfaction, compensation packages, human resource management*

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is a long way from early industrial employment conditions to the contemporary compensation packages aimed to remunerate any work or task in today's work environment. In addition to employers evaluating their employees, employees are increasingly able to value their employers. This is why engaging and adequately structured compensation packages are important for business organization, to attract and retain employees, which are the key to competitive, profitable and sustainable business (Bessette, 2014). Salary is generally a basic component of the overall compensation package, but not enough to motivate and retain key employees (Rowland, 2011; Marescaux et al., 2013). Benefits and perks, in addition to salary and short and long-term incentives, are the basic components of the employee's compensation system in developed economies. Benefits and perks do not represent a reward for the results achieved; they are a reward for affiliation to the organization (Ellig, 2014; Armstrong, 2009).

Benefits have multiple functions in the organization. Benefits are reflection of social justice, and the value that employees achieve based on their contribution to the organization. Benefits encourage competition between organizations and contribute to attracting and retaining employees (Herman, 2019; Carter, 2008; Zhou et al., 2009). They provide control over the costs of compensation system in the organization and improve the organizational reputation due to the care of employees. Benefits include, but are not limited to, pension and health insurance, life insurance, a company car, as well as certain special benefits. Certain benefits are a legal obligation, such as social insurance, unemployment insurance and compulsory health insurance. There are benefits that provide a balance of work and private life (holiday pay, paid leave on various grounds), as well as other allowances of a material nature, paid dental services, transportation costs, mobile phones, and similar allowances (Armstrong, 2009; Lee et al., 2006; Zhou et al., 2009). Depending on the business organization, certain benefits can be offered to both employees and their family members.

Perks are assigned to managerial or other specific positions in the organization. They represent additional benefits that do not exist in the benefit program for all employees. Perks are determined depending on the position in the organizational hierarchical structure, and to a certain extent they are viewed as power symbols. The following perks can usually be found in the compensation package: company car, financial advisor (for the purpose of private investments and tax savings), voluntary privately funded pension or health insurance for management. Perks can vary between business organizations, may include paid vacation at resorts, paid meals at expensive restaurants, personal use of a company vehicle, paid childcare, professional associations' and clubs' membership, and other perks provided by business organizations for their managers. These perks have significant material value, and managers achieve significant benefits through them. Some authors believe that rewarding managers with perks facilitates and improves their work and encourages productivity (Pržulj, 2011; Rajan & Wulf, 2006).

Many countries of Central and Eastern Europe faced the rapid development of the socialist government and society after the World War II and this trend managed to last for almost 50 years, depending on the country. This significantly affected the way of life in those countries, as well as all segments of social, cultural, political, and economic development. That is why the fall of Berlin wall and the collapse of Soviet Union were the trigger for a sudden downfall of socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe countries. Some countries recovered faster and implemented substantial economic reforms, while others still lag behind in these reforms

(Svejnar & Uvalic, 2012). Serbia unfortunately belongs to those transition countries that had to learn to adapt to new circumstances the hard way, due to the civil war, international sanctions, hyperinflation, NATO bombing and many other misfortunate events that were interrelated.

The compensation practices in Serbia, as in other Central and Eastern European countries, are being transformed, while Serbia faced with changed labor market developments, new management techniques, and various structure of compensation packages, including benefits, as one of the reward components (Marelli & Signorelli, 2010; Lewis, 2005; Festing & Sahakians, 2013). However, this topic is usually addressed by lawyers and theorists interested in regulative framework and possibilities of various compensation structures (Draskovic & Andrejevic, 2021).

In the present study, the impact of certain components of the compensation system on employee satisfaction was examined, to provide new insights into how particular benefits and perks affect satisfaction in the workplace, depending on gender, education, age, and job position of employees. Despite the interest in this field from scientific and professional public increased in recent years (Radovanovic, 2021), in particular the deeper study of benefits and perks, as compensation components, is missing (Festing & Sahakians, 2013; Morley et al., 2012). There are important limitations in the literature regarding the most desired benefits and perks, depending on employees' gender, education, age, and job position. The present study copes with this gap in knowledge, which may benefit the development of tailored benefits and perks for certain subgroups of employees, with the emphasis on their gender, educational, age or job differences.

Based on the defined research problem of current study, employee satisfaction was determined as a dependent variable. The research was based on the subjective perception of employees that a particular benefit or perk affects their satisfaction in the workplace. In the current study, the influence of different demographic characteristics on employee satisfaction as a dependent variable was analyzed. Demographic characteristics of respondents (gender, education, age, and job position) were independent variables. The research was based on the assumption that the observed demographic characteristics affect employee satisfaction with particular benefits and perks, as common components of compensation. The current study makes constructive contributions by giving recommendations to the business community, decision makers and other actors in the financial sector, to consider different aspects of employee satisfaction when implementing benefits and perks in compensation packages.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the lack of the scientific literature dealing with the specifics of the Serbian employee compensation policies, there have been numerous studies done by scholars in the academic world regarding the relationship between compensation and motivation, as well as the relationship between the motivation and achieved business performances in general (Adeoye, 2019). Mansor et al. (2012) in their study explored the relationship between employee satisfaction and motivation with different compensation components (salary, insurance benefits). They found significant positive correlation, proving that compensation is a predictor of high work motivation and job satisfaction. This was confirmed by Islam & Saha (2001) research, studying the satisfaction of bank employees in Bangladesh, and Jehanzeb et al. (2012). Danish & Usman (2010) confirmed that the strongest factor motivating employees is an adequate compensation model, and Shafiq &

Naseem (2011) concluded that a poorly designed compensation model leads to dissatisfaction and low employee motivation. There are no significant differences in employee motivation and satisfaction depending on gender (Vlosky, 2009), but the impact of compensation on job satisfaction and motivation is more pronounced in older employees (Douglas et al., 1991).

The impact of benefits on employee satisfaction and motivation is significant and positive (Uppal, 2005). Benz (2005) came to the same conclusion, emphasizing the special importance of benefits. Benefits that guarantee employees flexibility through various forms of work, have a strong motivational impact on talented members of the business organization (Hitka et al., 2015; Schlechter et al., 2015). In contrast to the previous, Munap et al. (2013) and Mabaso & Dlamini (2017) concluded that the benefits offered by the organization are not able to fully motivate employees. According to another study, benefits have an ambivalent effect; they have neither a positive nor a negative influence on employee satisfaction and their work engagement (Slavic et al., 2019).

Nthebe et al. (2016) in their study investigated the relationship between benefits, motivation and work efficiency. The analysis confirmed that the correlation between benefits and work motivation is strong and positive, which significantly affects the growth of efficiency at work. Muse & Wadsworth (2012) studied the relationship between non-traditional benefits and employee motivation. The conclusions of their research confirmed the strong motivational effect of these benefits, and the positive impact on employee work motivation. Benefits that provide security to employees significantly increase work motivation (Hulkko-Nyman et al., 2012). Muse & Wadsworth (2012) studied the motivation with benefits depending on respondents' gender, and found that the differences were not statistically significant.

Nemeckova (2017) found in her research that benefits have an impact on employee motivation and their work results, although not directly, because many employees consider certain benefits to be guaranteed. Some benefits have a constant significant impact on employee motivation, primarily various forms of education and professional development. Khan (2012) suggested a greater impact of individual benefits on motivation, while training and development and motivation are closely related, and have a strong positive impact on business performance. Ozkeser (2019) confirmed a positive association between employee training and development and their motivation.

Niehaus (2008) confirmed that benefits, in the form of pension insurance, as a component of compensation package, has a positive impact on employee productivity. This opinion is prevalent in research also by other authors. The positive impact of benefits in the form of pension insurance on employee satisfaction and motivation is confirmed in the works of Kozarevic et al. (2014), while pension insurance schemes motivate employees to improve work results (Dugguh & Iliya, 2018). Contrary to the above claims, Fashagba & Adeyele (2011) believe that pension insurance has little impact on employee motivation and their perception of work.

The impact of benefits on employee satisfaction and their work engagement is somewhat limited (Kulikowski & Sedlak, 2020). However, gender differences are important for defining the optimal compensation model, primarily because certain benefits (tangible, intangible, or combined) may affect employee performance differently, depending on gender (Sittenthaler & Mohnen, 2020). Galanaki (2020) also confirms the greater importance of benefits for female employees. Benefits significantly affect the satisfaction of female employees, and this is especially pronounced in crisis conditions. During a recession, if the share of benefits in compensation packages decreases, it significantly affects female employees, so organizations have to adequately allocate certain components of compensation in crisis conditions (Galanaki, 2020).

In the Republic of Serbia, different types of benefits are available to employees, depending on the business organization, length of employment, job position, and other factors. In general, all employees have access to legally guaranteed benefits, pension and health insurance, maternity leave, and others that are binding on employers. The most frequently used benefit is maternity leave, which is used by employees in 77.8% of business organizations (Berber, 2015).

Research study from 2012 confirmed that the benefits and perks for employees, especially in managerial positions, include: professional training and development, flexible working hours, mobile phone, laptop and company car for private use, as well as paid additional health insurance, for interventions not covered by compulsory health insurance. Additional perks may include private pension insurance, life insurance, membership in professional associations (Marinović Matović, 2012).

A 2018 study confirmed that 38% of business organizations include various categories of intangible benefits in compensation packages (Berber & Slavic, 2018). Basic, statutory benefits include pension and health insurance, while additional benefits are provided by the business organization, from its own resources.

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses are developed, explored and analyzed based on the adopted methodology:

- H1. There are gender differences in employee satisfaction with benefits and perks
- H2. There are educational differences in employee satisfaction with benefits and perks
- H3. There are age differences in employee satisfaction with benefits and perks
- H4. There are job differences in employee satisfaction with benefits and perks
- H5. Education is the most desirable benefit, regardless of employee demographics

3. METHODOLOGY

Empirical research for this study was carried out with the aim to explore the significance of benefits and perks for the employee satisfaction. This research was conducted in Serbian financial sector by a survey questionnaire. Demographic characteristics, such as gender, level of education, age and current job position, were explored through the first part of the questionnaire. The second part of the questionnaire was focused on the effect of common benefits and perks on employee satisfaction. This part of questionnaire was structured based on the authors' experience coupled with the literature investigations, especially considerations of Nemeckova, who identified benefits that are the most often present in financial sector in Central and Eastern European countries (Nemeckova, 2017). Following benefits/perks were investigated: paid education and language courses, cell phone, notebook, professional stays and traineeships, pension insurance, health insurance, life insurance, legal services, and other benefits/perks. To assess their effect, respondents were asked to rank each benefit/perk by its importance, assigning a certain number of points per each item, whereby the benefit that strongest satisfied them was assigned with the maximum number of points (9), next benefit by its influence was assigned with 8 points, and the benefit with the weakest effect on their satisfaction was given 1 point. This made it possible to determine the significance of each benefit or perk for the respondents.

The survey was conducted in period of 3 months, from October 2020 till December 2020. Questionnaires were distributed to financial organizations being active at the territory of Serbia, addressing their employees. Serbian financial sector consists of following organizations: banks, insurance companies, investment and voluntary pension

funds, broker-dealer and leasing companies, as well as other legal entities that are engaged in financial activities (Law on Banks, 2005). Empirical study was carried out on the entire territory of the Republic of Serbia. The target population consisted of employees of organizations that provide financial services, including monetary intermediation, insurance services, reinsurance, pension funds and subsidiary activities in the financial services field. The research did not include employees in other organizations of the financial sector, dealing with the following activities: activities of holding companies, activities of trust funds (trusts), investment funds, and similar financial entities. Based on available data of the Republic Bureau of Statistics, the target population of the research could not be determined precisely, since it included the number of employees in the entire sector of financial and insurance activities, while the current study covered only part of organizations operating in this sector (Republic Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

Prior to processing and data analysis, testing of distribution was performed. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk normality tests revealed the significance level >0.05 for all observed variables, which means that sample population wasn't normally distributed.

Before testing the defined hypotheses, the sample size validity, and the statistical power of the research were analyzed. The sample power was calculated post-hoc, using G*Power (Faul et al., 2009), whose values indicate good (>0.95), sufficient ($0.95-0.85$), and weak (<0.85) statistical power. Calculated power of two-tailed independent t-test (Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test) for between-subjects, assuming an effect size of 0.5, and an alpha error of 0.05, with sample size group 1 of 80 respondents (male), and sample size group 2 of 101 respondents (female), was 86.99% (for the whole sample). The calculated power for research sample, based on education, was 62.53%. Calculated power of Kruskal-Wallis test, assuming an effect size of 0.25, and an alpha error of 0.05, with total sample size of 181 respondents, divided into 3 groups, was 85.67%, and for the four groups (based on job position), calculated power was 80.64%.

In order to test the research hypotheses, and explore the potential gender and educational differences in employee satisfaction with benefits and perks, a nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used. Mann-Whitney U test compares differences between two independent groups, requiring the ordinal or continuous dependent variable, without normally distributed values. Regarding education, employees were divided in two groups. The first group consisted of employees who had high school degree; the second group was the ones who had graduated from university.

Further, the importance of particular benefits and perks for employee satisfaction was tested, depending on their age and job position. Age and job position differences were analysed with non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis Test, a nonparametric test that is used to explore the differences between two or more groups, requiring a continuous or ordinal dependent variable. The age range included employees belonging to three age groups: ≤ 33 (young and new hires), 34-50 (prime-aged employees), and ≥ 51 (mature employees). Concerning job position, employees were divided in four groups: Ordinary (job position of common occurrence), Specialist (professional who uses specialized knowledge within a particular subject area), Middle management (management positions underneath the top management and above the non-management employees), and Top management (senior-level executives, those positions that hold the most responsibility).

The defined subject of research and the hypotheses were methodologically processed by standard statistical tests, with the analysis performed using the statistical package SPSS (IBM SPSS Statistics 22 software). The statistical power analysis was performed with the use of G*Power 3.1.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research involved 181 employees engaged in various operational and managerial positions in the Serbian financial sector. Descriptive statistics of the selected sample are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of the examined sample (n=181)

Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Gender	Male	80	44.2%	44.2%
	Female	101	55.8%	100.0%
Education level	High school	29	16.0%	16.0%
	University	152	84.0%	100.0%
Age	≤33	13	7.2%	7.2%
	34-50	60	33.1%	40.3%
	≥51	108	59.7%	100.0%
Job position	Ordinary	40	22.1%	22.1%
	Specialist	71	39.2%	61.3%
	Middle management	64	35.4%	96.7%
	Top management	6	3.3%	100.0%

Source: Authors' calculation

This research of the most frequently applied benefits and perks in the Serbian financial sector in 2020 has shown that benefits are the basic components of the compensation package in Serbia, as it is a case in many developed economies, according to Ellig (2014). The results also show a various structure of benefits and perks in the Republic of Serbia, which confirmed the findings of Festing & Sahakiant (2013), regarding the different structure of compensation packages in transitional countries.

The investigation of differences in impact of benefits and perks on employee satisfaction was performed by investigating respondents by gender, education, age and job position. Descriptive statistics of gender differences are shown in Figure 1, while the descriptive statistics of educational differences are shown in Figure 2.

As shown in Figure 1, both female and male employees ranked „paid education & language courses” as the most desirable benefit. Also, “paid education & language courses” are in the first place in Figure 2, which represents the results with respect to employee education.

To analyze gender and educational differences in employee satisfaction with benefits and perks, non-parametric Mann-Whitney Test was utilized. The results indicate that there was a slight difference in mean ranks, where female employees are favoring following benefits: paid education & language courses, notebook, pension insurance, health insurance and life insurance. Regarding male employees, they give priority to: cell phone, professional stays & traineeships and legal services. Mann-Whitney Test for educational differences indicates that employees with high-school education give priority to following benefits: paid education & language courses, pension insurance, health insurance, life insurance and legal services. University educated employees are more satisfied with cell phone, notebook and professional stays & traineeships. Mean ranks are slightly different between these two subgroups of employees. According to Mann-Whitney test, both gender and educational differences in employee satisfaction with benefits/perks are not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), so hypothesis H1 and H2 are rejected. This suggests that there are no differences in employee

satisfaction with benefits/perks between respondents of different genders and education. A similar conclusion was drawn from the study of Muse & Wadsworth (2012), who did not find statistically significant gender differences in employee satisfaction with benefits. Result regarding educational differences should be accepted as conditional, given the low statistical power (62.53%), caused by the small size of the sub-sample “employees with high school”.

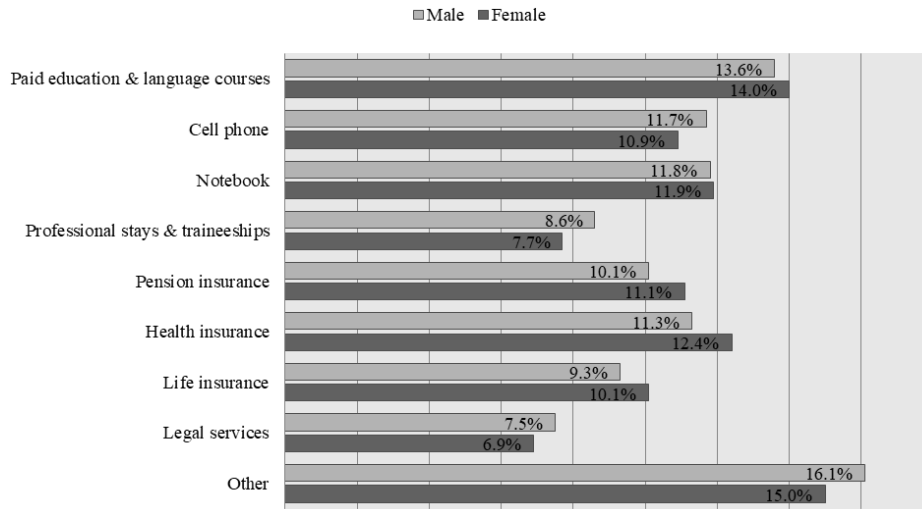


Fig. 1 Most desirable benefits and perks depending on gender

Source: Authors' calculations

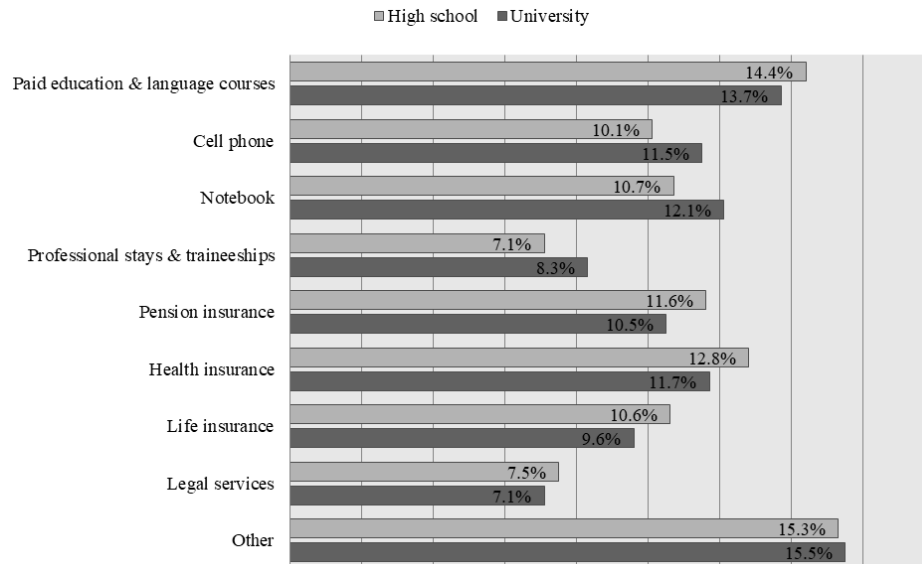
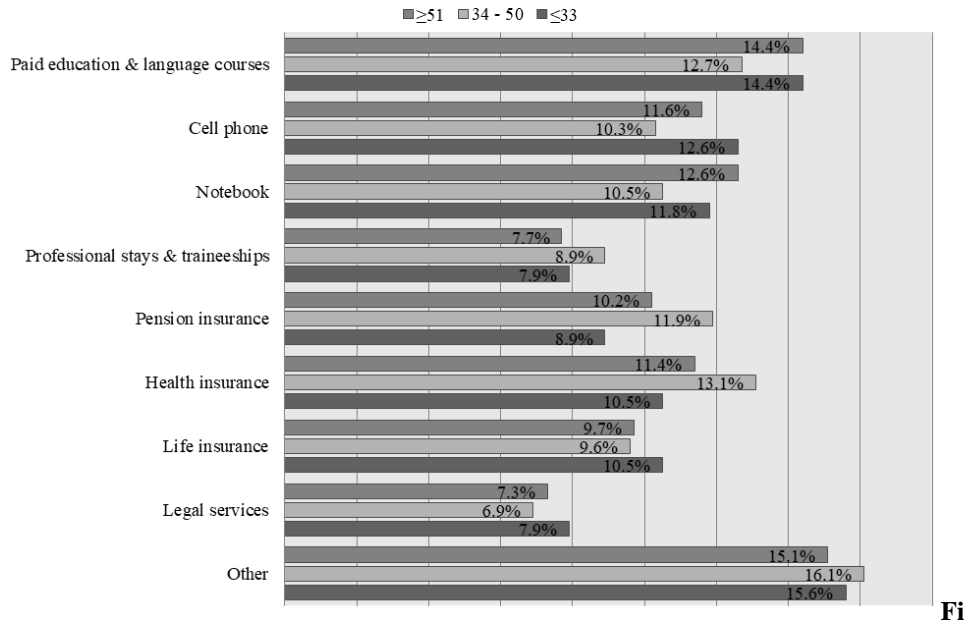


Fig. 2 Most desirable benefits and perks depending on education

Source: Authors' calculations

Building on these conclusions, an analysis was performed to assess the most desirable benefits and perks of financial sector employees, depending on their age. Results are presented in Figure 3.



g. 3 Most desirable benefits and perks depending on age
 Source: Authors' calculations

As shown in Figure 3, many similarities exist between employees in group “≤33” and employees in group “≥51”. These two subgroups of employees rank “paid education & language courses”, “notebook” and “cell phone” among the top three benefits. All subgroups of employees agree that “paid education & language courses” are among the most desirable benefits. This benefit generally takes the first place in all age groups. Only employees aged 34-50 in the Serbian financial sector ranked this benefit in second place, just behind “health insurance”. Differences between respondents of various ages are most evident in relation to the age group “34-50”.

Kruskal-Wallis Test was utilized to analyze age differences in employee satisfaction with benefits and perks. The results are given in Table 2.

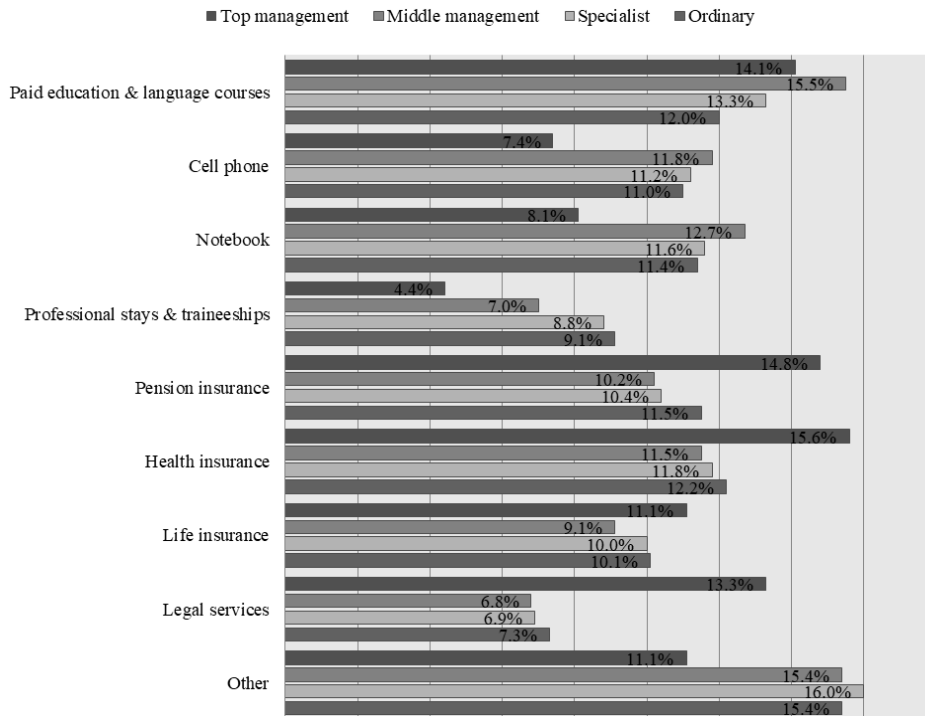
Results of Kruskal-Wallis Test indicate that there is a statistically significant age difference in employee satisfaction with benefit “notebook” (p=0.007). Test results do not show any other statistically significant age difference, regarding employee satisfaction with other benefits. Current research results partially confirmed hypothesis H3. While there are differences in employee satisfaction with benefit “notebook” between employees in various age groups, results imply that there are no significant differences regarding other observed benefits.

Table 2 Age differences in employee satisfaction with benefits/perks

Variable	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
	≤33	34-50	≥51		
Paid education & language courses	92.35	79.74	97.09	4.478	0.107
Cell phone	106.12	81.08	94.69	3.966	0.138
Notebook	93.42	74.05	100.13	9.858	0.007
Professional stays & traineeships	91.88	96.83	87.65	1.236	0.539
Pension insurance	71.12	102.78	86.85	5.677	0.059
Health insurance	76.77	102.92	86.09	5.111	0.078
Life insurance	96.23	89.38	91.27	0.194	0.907
Legal services	94.54	88.03	92.22	0.325	0.850
Other	81.58	93.93	90.50	0.672	0.714

Source: Authors' calculation

Respondents with different job positions were also analyzed in order to determine the similarities or differences between benefit preferences of financial sector employees. The results are shown in Figure 4, while job differences in employee satisfaction with benefits and perks were analyzed with non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis Test (Table 3).

**Fig. 4** Most desirable benefits and perks depending on job position

Source: Authors' calculations

Table 3 Job position differences in employee satisfaction with benefits/perks

Variable	Mean Rank Ordinary	Mean Rank Specialist	Mean Rank Middle mgmt	Mean Rank Top mgmt	Chi-Square	As.Sig. (2-tailed)
Paid education & language courses	74.25	88.44	103.25	102.33	8.489	0.037
Cell phone	87.48	91.26	96.79	49.67	4.947	0.176
Notebook	84.76	89.44	101.04	44.00	8.032	0.045
Professional stays & traineeships	101.10	100.20	78.63	46.83	11.971	0.007
Pension insurance	98.05	88.55	85.80	128.50	4.660	0.198
Health insurance	92.95	91.04	86.34	127.33	3.517	0.319
Life insurance	95.19	94.09	84.03	100.83	1.885	0.597
Legal services	91.51	88.08	88.88	144.83	6.968	0.073
Other	96.75	93.80	88.65	44.67	5.987	0.112

Source: Authors' calculation

Results of Kruskal-Wallis Test indicate that there was a slight difference in mean ranks. Employees at ordinary job positions are favoring professional stays & traineeships. Middle management gives priority to the following benefits: paid education & language courses, notebook and cell phone. Regarding top management, their most preferred benefits are: legal services, pension insurance, health insurance and life insurance. According to Kruskal-Wallis Test there are statistically significant job differences in employee satisfaction with following benefits/perks: paid education & language courses ($p=0.037$), notebook ($p=0.045$), and professional stays & traineeships ($p=0.007$). Hypothesis H4 is partially confirmed. There are significant job differences in employee satisfaction with some benefits/perks between respondents at different job positions. Result regarding job position differences could be accepted, given the statistical power 80.64%, since it is considered that 80% power level is enough to detect effects (Cohen, 1992).

Further on, the lack of differences can be explained by less employee interest in this compensation component, since benefits and perks are common in financial sector. For example, in contemporary business environment, which implies a high degree of digitalization, notebook and cell phone are a necessary work tool, not a perk. Also, most banks, insurance companies and financial organizations in Serbia provide private health and pension insurance, and continuous professional development for their employees, so these benefits have become common and expected. The results confirm the findings of Armstrong (2009) who believes that benefits and perks are not a reward for the achieved result, but a reward for belonging to the company. In Serbian financial sector most of the researched benefits and perks are taken for granted, which may explain why they do not have a strong effect on employee satisfaction. The benefits received by financial sector employees have been traditionally present for many years, and as a result they do not have a significant impact on employee satisfaction and work engagement. These results are also confirmed by Muse & Wadsworth (2012), whose study found that only non-traditional benefits have an impact on employee motivation.

To further investigate satisfaction effect of benefits and perks, current research assumed that education is the most desirable benefit, regardless of employee demographics. To address this assumption, each benefit and perk was assigned a certain number of points by respondents. The most desired benefit/perk was awarded with the maximum number of points (9), and the least desired with 1 point. Benefit preference was ranked,

comparing the number of points of each with the total number of points awarded to all benefits/perks. The result of the analysis is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Most desired benefits and perks in Serbian financial sector

Variable	Min	Max	M	Sd	Total points	Percent
Paid education & language courses	1	9	6.44	2.617	1,166	13.8%
Cell phone	1	9	5.25	2.447	950	11.2%
Notebook	1	9	5.52	2.215	1,000	11.8%
Professional stays & traineeships	1	9	3.77	2.129	683	8.1%
Pension insurance	1	9	4.99	2.405	904	10.7%
Health insurance	1	9	5.56	2.127	1,006	11.9%
Life insurance	1	9	4.54	2.453	822	9.7%
Legal services	1	9	3.35	2.430	606	7.2%
Other	1	9	7.23	2.416	1,309	15.5%

Source: Authors' calculation

The research results showed that “paid education & language courses” is the most significant benefit for employees in the financial sector in the Republic of Serbia, regardless of gender, education, age, and job position (covering 13.8% of the total points). Employees in the age group “34-50”, and employees at ordinary job positions, rank “paid education & language courses” in second place; top managers in third place, while the highest significance of this benefit was noted in all other observed subgroups. As the analysis of research results determined “paid education & language courses” as the most significant benefit, hypothesis H5 is confirmed. Education is the most desirable benefit in the financial sector in the Republic of Serbia, regardless of employee demographics, according to current study. The results of current research are consistent with previous research of Khan (2012), Nemeckova (2017), and Ozkeser (2019), who all confirmed strong positive impact of educational benefits on employee satisfaction.

The current research results also show that “pension insurance” is a highly ranked benefit, of high significance for all employees, regardless of their gender, education, age, and job position. This result was also supported by Niehaus (2008), Kozarevic et al. (2014), and Dugguh & Iliya (2018). On the contrary, Fashagba & Adeyele (2011) in their study confirmed that pension insurance does not satisfy employees or motivate them to improve their work results.

5. CONCLUSION

This article contributes to the limited literature on benefits and perks, as well as their significance for employees in Serbia. Moreover, it adds to the knowledge on how structure and importance of benefits and perks differ, depending on employee demographics. This study demonstrates differences and similarities in the most commonly present benefits and perks, by performing a comparative analysis between employees of different gender, education, age, and job position. This investigation provided useful information about employee satisfaction and motivational effects of the existing compensation packages structure, and direction for its future improvements.

Statistical data analysis uncovered five important conclusions. First, the analysis suggested that there are no differences in employee satisfaction with benefits/perks between respondents of different genders. Second, results imply that there are no differences in employee satisfaction with benefits/perks between respondents, depending on their education level. Again, the conclusion regarding educational differences should be accepted as conditional, given the established low statistical power. Third, the current research confirmed statistically significant age difference in employee satisfaction with benefit “notebook”, and no other statistically significant differences, regarding employee satisfaction with other benefits. Forth, the current research proved that there are significant differences in employee satisfaction with benefits/perks between respondents of different job positions. Fifth key finding of current analysis is that education is the most desirable benefit in Serbian financial sector, regardless of employee demographics.

In many national economies, the policy of additional benefits and perks, within the overall compensation package, has become highly relevant and attempts to deliver surplus value to employees. Simultaneously, there should be a straightforward analysis of the employee satisfaction and motivational effect of each of the applied benefits. The contribution of this research is reflected in the fact that it provides decision makers with the clear insight necessary to understand how certain benefits affect employee satisfaction, or indirectly how they affect the improvement of business performances.

Research study has several limitations. Based on the research results and research limitations, several possible directions for future research could be conceptualized, which would significantly complement the knowledge regarding the contribution of benefits to employee satisfaction. One limitation is that research singled out only certain benefits, which the respondents could rank. However, the study indicated that benefits packages in Serbia are probably taken for granted, and that more benefits components should be included in this research. Future studies should expand the list of observed benefits, and thus analyze the significance of those not covered by this study. Repeated research, using the same methodology in some future period, could confirm the reasons for the different importance of benefits, and thus provide key stakeholders a valid basis for improving the compensation system. The representativeness of sample, according to certain characteristics, is the next limitation. Certain subgroups of respondents had an uneven share in the total observed sample. The age subgroup “≤33” participated with only 7.2% in the total sample, while “top management” with only 3.3%, which is insufficient for drawing general conclusions regarding the employee satisfaction and motivational impact of benefits and perks on these subgroups of employees. The recommendation for future studies is to balance all subgroups of respondents, which would increase the statistical power of the research.

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UTICAJ DEMOGRAFSKIH RAZLIKA NA ZADOVOLJSTVO ZAPOSLENIH BENEFICIJAMA I PRIVILEGIJAMA: PRIMER FINANSIJSKOG SEKTORA SRBIJE

Nakon pada socijalističkog režima, sistemi upravljanja ljudskim resursima u zemljama u tranziciji, kao što je Srbija, transformisani su, uspostavljajući potpuno novi sistem nagrađivanja zaposlenih. U ovom radu istražene su najčešće beneficije i posebne pogodnosti u finansijskom sektoru Srbije, sa fokusom na efektivnost njihove strukture. Istraživanje razlika između uticaja beneficija i posebnih pogodnosti na zadovoljstvo zaposlenih je sprovedeno u odnosu na pol, obrazovanje, starost i radno mesto zaposlenih. Empirijsko istraživanje je sprovedeno anketnim upitnikom. Rezultati ukazuju da ne postoje razlike u zadovoljstvu između ispitanika različitog pola i obrazovanja, dok su potvrđene delimične razlike između ispitanika kada se uzme u obzir njihova starost i radno mesto. Rezultati ukazuju da bi beneficije i posebne pogodnosti u finansijskom sektoru Srbije trebalo bolje strukturirati, i daju smernice za istraživanje povoljnijih ukupnih paketa kompenzacije.

Ključne reči: beneficije, posebne pogodnosti, zadovoljstvo zaposlenih, kompenzacioni paketi, upravljanje ljudskim resursima