

Are women happier than men at work? A multilevel analysis

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Using the Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS) 2004, we analyse gender difference in job satisfaction in terms of pay level, achievement and job security. These three dimensions are related to each other; satisfaction in one dimension may lead to satisfaction in other aspects of the job. The multilevel structure of the WERS 2004 allows this study to employ random intercept ordered logistic (multilevel) models. Both the random intercept ordered logistic and the pooled ordered logistic models provide almost identical significant determinants. However, the former provide stronger evidence of the importance of workplace factor as shown by the workplace level variance parameter. The pooled models ignore the variance between workplaces. The evidence on workplace variance suggests that the estimates and inference of the random intercept ordered logistic models are more reliable than those of the pooled models. This analysis finds that women are happier than men in these dimensions of job satisfaction; for an example in terms of satisfaction with the amount of pay, see Table below. Moreover, workplace-related factors, such as skill match and flexibility are consistently identified as the important determinants for all aspects of job satisfaction.

Table: Ordered logistic regression estimates for satisfaction with the amount of pay

	Pooled		Random intercept	
	Exponentiated Coefficients	t-statistics	Exponentiated Coefficients	t-statistics
Female	1.274	7.21	1.304	7.50
Dependent Children	0.983	-0.45	0.990	-0.26
Age	0.985	-1.48	0.982	-1.61
No qualification	†			
GCE/GCSE/A level	0.983	-0.40	1.023	0.48
Degree+	0.997	-0.09	0.956	-1.37
Same skill	†			
Lower skill	0.728	-4.75	0.756	-3.96
Higher skill	0.618	-17.25	0.612	-16.63
Log work hours	0.656	-15.26	0.616	-16.01
Log establishment size	0.964	-4.20	0.960	-2.98
Neither secure/insecure job	†			
Insecure job	0.728	-6.89	0.698	-7.30
Secure job	1.519	11.88	1.573	12.04
Flexibility	1.111	13.24	1.131	13.92
Proportion of women	0.483	-11.18	0.441	-8.67
London	†			
The rest of England	0.896	-2.45	0.897	-1.54
Scotland	0.966	-0.59	0.989	-0.12
Wales	1.039	0.51	1.070	0.57
Public sector	†			
Manufacturing	1.306	4.34	1.346	2.94
Utility/construction	1.731	7.53	1.822	4.97
Services	1.289	5.06	1.283	2.98
Relative pay	1.002	23.48	1.002	24.80

No of observations (n): 20,051. $\sigma_u^2 = 0.404$ (Std. error = 0.028, t-statistics=14.429)

Note: significant attributes are in bold. † indicates reference variable.