

THE POTENTIAL USE OF FAMILIARISATION TRIPS FOR INCREASING WORK MOTIVATION AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG EMPLOYEES IN TOURISM

Lenka Istijanović*, Milena Nedeljković Knežević,
Maja Mijatov Ladičorbić

University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, Novi Sad, Serbia

ORCID iDs: Lenka Istijanović <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3402-5697>
Milena Nedeljković Knežević <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7549-789X>
Maja Mijatov Ladičorbić <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4209-0791>

Abstract

Familiarisation trips, organised with the primary goal of acquainting travel agents with the values of a certain destination, represent a form of business travel that is, by nature, accompanied by a certain level of stress, conditioned both by the nature of the work tasks themselves and by the requirements of the trip. Since they require significant investments, primarily in money and time, this research aimed to determine if they could be correlated with the work motivation and job satisfaction of employees in tourism. Observing the obtained results, it was concluded that employees in tourism have a positive attitude towards familiarisation trips and that they recognise the benefits they bring regarding their daily business tasks. Overall, it is noticeable that the given trips greatly correlate with the employees' satisfaction, as well as their motivation. In order to use familiarisation trips as efficiently as possible, it is necessary to carefully plan them and create itineraries that would enable the best possible balance between work tasks and free time, to reduce the physical and mental burden to the lowest possible degree. Additionally, employees should be allowed to spend their free time engaging in activities that they perceive as fun and relaxing. By introducing these changes, the image of familiarisation trips in employees' perception would be significantly changed, and a better use of this resource would be enabled.

Key words: tourism, motivation, satisfaction, familiarization trips.

* Corresponding author: Lenka Istijanović, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, PhD student, University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, Trg Dositeja Obradovića 3, 21000 Novi Sad, Serbia | lenka.istijanovic@gmail.com

ПОТЕНЦИЈАЛИ КОРИШТЕЊА СТУДИЈСКИХ ПУТОВАЊА ЗА ПОВЕЋАВАЊЕ РАДНЕ МОТИВАЦИЈЕ И ЗАДОВОЉСТВА ПОСЛОМ КОД ЗАПОСЛЕНИХ У ТУРИЗМУ

Апстракт

Студијска путовања представљају облик пословног путовања намењеног упознавању туристичких агената са вредностима одређене дестинације. С обзиром да намећу значајна улагања, пре свега у новцу и времену, дато истраживање је имало за циљ да утврди да ли ова путовања могу бити кориштена и за повећање радне мотивације и задовољства послом код запослених у туризму. У ту сврху креиран је троделни упитник и спроведено је анкетно истраживање које је обухватило 102 испитаника који представљају запослене у туристичким агенцијама и субагенцијама у Републици Србији. Утврђено је да запослени имају позитиван став према студијским путовањима и да препознају њихов утицај на рутинске пословне активности. Ова путовања утичу на задовољство запослених, а самим тим и на њихову мотивацију, стога је неопходно пажљиво планирање, посебно приликом креирања итинерера који треба да настоје да омогуће баланс између радних задатака и слободног времена, тежећи да се физичко и психичко оптерећење смање на најмању могућу меру и омогуће запосленима да своје слободно време проведу бавећи се активностима које доживљавају као забавне и опуштајуће.

Кључне речи: туризам, радна мотивација, задовољство послом, студијска путовања.

INTRODUCTION

One of the biggest challenges managers face is how to use the limited resources available to them and contribute to the achievement of the organisation's goals. Often, the backbone of an organisation's success is represented by its human resources, that is, its human capital. Human capital in a broader context refers to the competencies, knowledge, experiences, creativity, and other social and personal characteristics of an individual that are necessary for work and the creation of new values (Vujović et al., 2014). How many of these characteristics an individual will use in the realisation of his business tasks is largely determined by his motivation for work (Vo et al., 2022). An insufficiently motivated employee, despite possessing satisfying knowledge and skills, can achieve poor results (Germann, 2004); thus, it is necessary to find adequate, but also effective, ways of improving not only work motivation but also employee satisfaction. This can be a particular challenge in a sector like tourism, where the nature of the tourism market has created a work environment filled with various stressors. Compared to the goods market, in which goods move from supply to demand (Vujičić-Đorđević, 2016), the tourism market requires the temporal and spatial synchronisation of various participants in the supply to satisfy demand. Overall, the tourism market is characterised by the sea-

sonal concentration of tourist traffic, the simultaneous provision of services with the consumption process, the high elasticity of tourist demand, and the influence of non-economic factors (Unković & Zečević, 2014). As a result, in practice, the occurrence of excessive work hours, sometimes organised in three shifts, which often do not take into account the schedule of weekends and vacations, but require high work performance in an environment that implies emotional work, accompanied by a significant number of interpersonal conflicts, is not uncommon (Yoo, 2023).

Familiarisation trips, that is, trips that are organised with the primary goal of acquainting tourist intermediaries with the values of a destination (Kolb, 2006), are mainly seen as promotional tools (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006; Koutoulas et al. 2009; Alvarez, 2010); however, they also have great potential to be used as a mean of motivating employees. Although familiarisation trips represent a type of business travel, by introducing elements of rest and leisure and careful planning of the itinerary, they can also be presented to employees as a type of reward by the management, where, with a minimal additional expenditure of resources, significant impacts on the motivation and satisfaction of employees can be achieved. With that in mind, the main aim of this paper was focused towards researching the employees' general attitudes about familiarisation trips. Besides that, the focus was also on researching their general job satisfaction and work motivation, as well as on determining if there is a correlation between these two important constructs with the perception of the familiarisation trips among the employees in tourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job satisfaction is considered one of the primary factors that determine a company's effectiveness and efficiency (Dziuba et al., 2020). This term, which can be defined as the degree to which an individual enjoys their job (Spector, 1997), represents one of the fundamental elements of employee motivation (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Job satisfaction might be considered a multidimensional concept that reflects employees' overall emotional response to their job and work environment. It is shaped by various factors such as interpersonal relationships, leadership style, organisational justice, and the balance between work and private life. According to Ersoy (2024), job satisfaction is significantly negatively correlated with turnover intention, suggesting that more satisfied employees are less likely to leave their jobs. Similarly, Medina-Garrido, Biedma-Ferrer, and Ramos-Rodriguez (2017) emphasise the positive link between work-life balance and both well-being and performance, indicating that job satisfaction is beneficial not only for the individual but also for the organisation as a whole. These findings show that job satisfaction is still an important factor for both employee well-being and how well an organisation performs in

today's fast-changing work environment (Medina-Garrido et al., 2017; Ersoy, 2024).

Considering job satisfaction among employees in travel agencies, it could be said that it is essential for providing successful business operations. The tourism sector often involves working under pressure, solving problems in real time, and maintaining a high level of interpersonal interaction, making employee motivation and emotional well-being crucial. Satisfied employees tend to be more polite, patient, service-oriented, and loyal, which contributes to positive customer experiences and strengthens the agency's reputation. In the context of travel agencies, where human interaction is at the core of the service, investing in employees' satisfaction is ultimately an investment in competitiveness and long-term business stability (Abou-Shouk et al., 2021; Eid & Abdel Rady, 2023).

The Generic Job Satisfaction Scale, used for the purpose of this research and developed by Macdonald and MacIntyre (1997), is considered a reliable instrument designed for the purpose of measuring overall job satisfaction that might be implemented in each type of industry, including tourism. The scale consists of ten items for indicating the level of agreement with statements reflecting the employees' subjective experience of the work itself, the work environment, and personal fulfilment in their job. The focus of the scale is on general emotional attitudes towards work, rather than on specific factors such as salary, promotion opportunities, or relationships with colleagues. Its main advantage is reflected in its universality and simplicity of use, making it suitable for research across diverse organisational and cultural contexts. Results obtained from this scale provide an insight into the employees' overall satisfaction and can serve as a foundation for further analysis and interventions aimed at improving the concrete work environment (Macdonald & MacIntyre, 1997).

Furthermore, understanding what motivates employees is the first step toward improving their work motivation. According to the author Berovic Emkic (2010), motivation is defined as the determination of factors that create, shape, and direct the behaviour of an individual toward a certain goal. Accordingly, motivation for work can be considered as a set of factors arising both from the individual himself and his environment, which initiate work behaviour and determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration (Pinder, 2014). There are several theories of work motivation. One of the most famous is Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which emphasises that people strive to fulfil certain needs, primarily physiological, then the needs for safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualisation (Maslow, 1954). Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation states that work motivation is mostly influenced by intrinsic job demands and the creation of opportunities to achieve recognition and support (Herzberg, 1966).

Among the more recent theories is the self-determination theory, which is an empirically based theory about human nature and behaviour.

This theory places special focus on motivation, personal development, and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The self-determination theory is based on the assumption that people are fundamentally curious, self-motivated beings, directed towards individual growth, who not only react to environmental stimuli but, following their motives, goals, and values, actively self-regulate their lives to progress. At the same time, the theory recognises that human vitality and self-motivation can be significantly reduced in certain contexts and under the influence of specific conditions of upbringing. Accordingly, this theory places particular emphasis on identifying the environmental and social conditions in all spheres of human life that can encourage or destroy an individual's self-motivation, vitality, and well-being. In other words, the theory tends to identify which conditions and contexts most often lead to individual prosperity (Martela, 2020).

According to the self-determination theory, employees have three basic needs (needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness), and the extent to which these needs are satisfied determines their motivation and sense of well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2002). The need for autonomy refers primarily to the employee's need to have the freedom of choice and the ability to express their ideas and make decisions on how to implement work tasks. It is actually about the need for independent decision-making and initiation into action (Deci & Ryan, 1987). The need for competence is related to the employee's desire to be efficient, successful, and good at his job (Van den Broeck et al., 2010). This need is met when employees have the opportunity to use and develop their skills. The need for relatedness stems from people's nature as social beings, which makes them strive to be accepted (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Only when employees feel that they belong to a certain group and have friends at work is this need satisfied.

The spectrum of motivation within the self-determination theory consists of five types of motivation, i.e., intrinsic motivation, identified, introjected, and external regulation, and amotivation (Table 1). An intrinsically motivated employee feels excitement and happiness whenever he works because he perceives work itself as a reward (Chen, 2016). Employees under the influence of identified regulation accept a certain job if they believe that in this way they will increase their chances of advancement towards a better position and the achievement of a more favourable social status (Gagné et al., 2010). The term autonomous motivation is used as a collective term for intrinsic motivation and identified regulation because they are both characterised by high levels of volition and choice (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The thoughts "I don't want to lose" and "I want to prove to everyone that I can do it" influence employees to make an effort; that is, they make employees act under the influence of introjected regulation (Hwang et al., 2002). Under the influence of external regulation, employees work to achieve financial rewards and ensure business security, but also to avoid criticism (Gagné et al., 2015; Tremblay et al., 2009). Controlled

motivation refers to introjected regulation and external regulation, where the regulation of behaviour is characterised by pressures that are considered to be externally controlled (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Ryan et al., 2022).

Table 1. Five types of motivation that represent the spectrum of motivation within the self-determination theory

Intrinsic motivation	A person behaves in a certain way or performs an activity because it is interesting to them or gives them pleasure.
Identified regulation	A person behaves in a certain way or performs an activity because they value it and associate it with a personal goal.
Introjected regulation	A person behaves in a certain way or performs an activity to gain approval or avoid disapproval from themselves and others.
External regulation	A person behaves in a certain way or performs an activity to avoid punishment or receive a reward.
Amotivation	It depicts a state of apathy, indifference, and lack of interest.

Source: Gagne et al., 2010

In the context of a modern approach to employee motivation, based on the self-determination theory, author Daniel Pink (2009) primarily emphasises the difference between intrinsic rewards, that is internal rewards that arise from the individual himself (the possibility of choice, development of competence, achievement of progress) and extrinsic rewards, received by other persons (money, promotion, praise) (Buchbinder & Shanks, 2008). In many cases, motivation stems from a specific need that leads to a certain behaviour, where, after the fulfilment of the given need, some kind of reward follows (Buchbinder & Shanks, 2008). The rewards given achieve good results only in cases when the employees perceive them as valuable. Extrinsic rewards have the power to develop a sense of dependence in employees, making them constantly strive for the reward to feel satisfied. This type of reward is often the best for employees who engage in algorithmic activities, while for employees who perform creative activities, it can have harmful effects (Pârjoleanu, 2020). Pink (2009) points out that only routine activities should be rewarded to encourage motivation and emphasises the importance of recognising the fact that certain activities are monotonous, but that employees should have the opportunity to realise them in the way they deem appropriate. According to him, motivation often increases when more diverse activities that encourage the acquisition of knowledge are introduced in the workplace.

Hypothesis Development

Familiarisation trips, or fam trips, refer to the travel of tourism employees (tourist agents, operators, organisers) to a destination to get acquainted with its offer and to improve the destination's image and capacity utilisation (Perdue & Pitegoff, 1990; Kolb, 2006). These trips have multi-

ple functions: they enable the acquisition of practical knowledge, develop personal and professional skills of employees, and contribute to increasing the competitiveness of tourism organisations (Bieger & Laesser, 2004; Holloway, 2016). In the context of Serbia, where tourism is a growing sector of the economy, the importance of such educational and experiential activities is particularly evident. Familiarisation trips provide employees with practical experience and familiarity with the destination, enabling them to convey information to tourists more accurately, convincingly, and confidently (Cooper et al., 2018). They also encourage innovation and sales, as this experience helps employees present the offer more authentically, increasing customer satisfaction and business success (Kotler et al., 2017). In addition, familiarisation trips strengthen the cooperation within the sector by building networks of contacts that facilitate coordination and the development of new business opportunities. These trips require significant investments, primarily in money and time; however, if successfully organised, they can be an excellent way to promote a destination (Davidson & Rogers, 2006). In tourism research, familiarisation trips are often seen as promotional tools (Dore & Crouch, 2003; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006; Koutoulas et al., 2009; Alvarez, 2010); however, the possibility of using them as a tool for increasing work motivation and job satisfaction of employees is neglected.

Regardless of their promotional function, familiarisation trips can be considered as a specific form of work preparation or training, which directly contributes to the employees' ability to carry out their tasks. Some studies focused on researching the relationship between training and employees' motivation and their job satisfaction (Ozkeser, 2019; Meira et al., 2023; Iskandar et al., 2024). The study by Ozkeser (2019) was focused on researching the relationship between training activities and employees' motivation as part of the human resource management functions, on the basis of understanding the manner in which training contributes to increasing the employees' motivation within the business environment. The research was conducted on a sample of 200 employees, mostly highly educated young adults, working in consulting roles. The main findings indicated that training plays an important role in increasing the employees' motivation, as well as that motivation levels vary with age. In general, the study highlights the significance of structured training programs in fostering more motivated and high-performing employees (Ozkeser, 2019). Other studies also indicated that appropriately designed training and development programs for employees strongly contribute to higher levels of work motivation, job satisfaction, and general performance (Meira et al., 2023; Iskandar et al., 2024). For example, the study conducted by Iskandar et al. (2024) showed that soft-skills training has a positive impact on employees' performances in the tourism sector, highlighting the importance of focusing organisational efforts toward employees' development and

well-being. Meira et al. (2023) even noticed that tourism managers consider training as the most important practice within the human resource sector, while frontline employees also indicated the importance of training in increasing their intrinsic motivation, thus highlighting the significance of training in employees' engagement and their satisfaction across different cultural contexts.

While numerous studies highlighted the benefits of familiarisation trips, research also distinguished their potential challenges. Other studies that are related precisely to familiarisation trips are mostly focused on the fact that employees in tourism represent business tourists, who do not go to the destination for rest and leisure, but during their stay are exposed to stress caused by both the demands of the job and travel. The most common causes of stress among business tourists are loss of time, surprises, and routine interruptions. Loss of time occurs in situations where environmental conditions make it impossible for a business tourist to carry out their work tasks. Then there is an accumulation of work, and it is also difficult or impossible to prepare for future work tasks. Surprises refer to unpredictable events that can occur during travel, such as the loss of luggage, which requires the investment of additional energy and a change of plans for business tourists. Routine breakers represent events that disrupt the business tourist's habits, which are significant for the quality of their life. They can prevent maintaining a healthy diet or engaging in physical activity (Segalla et al., 2014). Stress during a business trip cannot be eliminated; however, introducing a better balance between work and rest, and enriching the content of the business trip with activities of lower intensity will contribute to the relaxation, rest, and recovery of employees after a hard day's work (Ivkov Džigurski, 2012) and can positively reflect on the work motivation and job satisfaction of employees. However, due to the absence of papers that are focused towards researching the employees' perception of familiarisation trips, their job satisfaction and work motivation within the single study in tourism sector of Serbia, this paper represents the starting point to research the general attitudes towards this type of travels and to determine if there is a correlation between such perception and employees' job satisfaction and work motivation. The main foundation of this research is reflected in the aforementioned studies, which focus on the positive relationships between training and employees' work motivation and job satisfaction (Ozkeser, 2019; Meira et al., 2023; Iskandar et al., 2024). Building on these ideas, the current study develops two hypotheses that reflect employees' perspectives of familiarisation trips and their potential link to motivation and job satisfaction.

H1: Employees in the Serbian tourism sector perceive familiarisation trips as beneficial for the effective performance of their business tasks.

H2: There are correlations between employees' perceptions of the benefits of familiarisation trips in the tourism sector in Serbia and employees' job satisfaction and work motivation.

The theoretical framework of these hypotheses relies on two complementary perspectives. For H1, the explanation can be found in the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1986), which presumes that the positive perception lies in the balance between the time and energy invested in fam trips and the benefits obtained in the form of knowledge, skills, and professional recognition. For H2, the foundation lies in Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984), which suggests that direct experience and reflection lead to a deeper understanding and more efficient performance of business tasks, in turn fostering higher motivation and job satisfaction.

METHODS

To determine whether familiarisation trips can be used as tools for increasing work motivation and job satisfaction of tourism employees, a survey was conducted in the period between January 25, 2024 and February 25, 2024. For the research, a questionnaire was created, which consists of three parts, and was distributed in electronic form to the e-mail addresses of 225 travel agencies and subagencies. The criteria for selecting the given agencies and subagencies were that they represent a registered company in the field of tourism, which is actively operating and has its headquarters on the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Out of the targeted travel agencies and subagencies, 102 responded to the invitation to participate in the research.

In the first part of the questionnaire, demographic data was collected, that is, data related to the gender, age, and the level of education of respondents. Observing the socio-demographic characteristics, it can be determined that the sample is dominated by women (76.5%) compared to men (23.5%). The largest share of respondents is between the ages of 41 and 50 and has a higher education.

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (n =102)

Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
Male	24	23.5
Female	78	76.5
Age	Number	Percentage (%)
18-30	21	20.6
31-40	31	30.3
41-50	28	27.5
50-65	22	21.6
Education	Number	Percentage(%)
High School	9	8.8
Higher school/faculty	70	68.6
Master's studies	22	21.6
PhD studies	1	1.0

Note: Author's calculations based on data analysis in SPSS 23.00

The second part of the questionnaire included the multidimensional work motivation scale (Gagne et al., 2010) and the generic job satisfaction scale (Macdonald & MacIntyre, 1997). The scales were translated and adapted from English to Serbian to make them suitable for research. The variables within the scales were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale (1-do not agree at all, 2-partially disagree, 3-not sure, 4-partially agree, 5-completely agree), where the respondents expressed the degree of agreement/disagreement with the statements. For the generic job satisfaction scale, which measures only one factor, the value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined to be 0.901. For the multidimensional work motivation scale, which measures four factors (intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, and external regulation) and which consists of four subscales, the value of Cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.874 was measured. Based on the alpha coefficient, it can be determined that both scales show good reliability.

The third part of the questionnaire covered the respondents' attitudes regarding their perception of familiarisation trips. The items used in this study were developed by the authors in accordance with the research objectives of the paper and by considering the specific work context of employees in travel agencies in Serbia. They were designed to identify the key aspects of employees' perceptions and experiences related to familiarisation trips, particularly their attitudes about the usefulness of such trips for performing their job, involving the emotional experience of the trips themselves. Given that existing literature does not offer validated scales directly addressing this specific topic, the items' construction was based on theoretical foundations related to training and motivation in the tourism sector, as well as practical knowledge of how travel agencies operate. Respondents indicated the degree of agreement/disagreement with seven statements using a five-point Likert scale.

Data processing within the paper was carried out with the help of the statistical program SPSS (Portable IBM SPSS v.23 application). A descriptive statistical analysis was conducted, as well as a correlation analysis between respondents' attitudes about familiarisation trips, the generic job satisfaction scale, the multidimensional work motivation scale, and its subscales. In addition to the correlation analysis, a T-test was also conducted to check whether there were statistically significant differences in the respondents' answers regarding their gender. An analysis of variance was conducted to determine whether there are differences concerning the age of the respondents, as well as a regression analysis to see which attitudes of the respondents related to travel determine the presence of certain types of motivation.

RESULTS

Looking at the obtained data, it was determined that the largest number of respondents participated in more than 10 familiarisation trips (32.4%), followed by those who participated in fewer than 5 (29.4%) and those who only went once (20.6%). The values for the statements used to identify the respondents' attitudes about familiarisation trips indicate that the highest average scores are recorded for the statements "Familiarisation trips are very important for the quality of my work" and "Familiarisation trips make it easier for me to do my job," followed by a small standard deviation, thus confirming H1. The lowest average value was recorded for the statement "During the familiarisation trip, I sometimes feel like I'm on vacation." Also, this statement records higher values of standard deviation, which indicates greater variability between respondents' answers.

A T-test of independent samples between the given statements and the gender of the respondents determined that there were no statistically significant differences in the responses. Conducting a one-factor analysis of variance, the difference was determined for the statement "Familiarisation trips make it easier for me to do my job." A statistically significant difference was identified at the $p < 0.05$ level in the LOT results of the four age groups: $F = 3.407$, $p = 0.021$. Namely, it was established that respondents who belong to the age groups of 51-65 and 41-50 years believe that familiarisation trips make it easier for them to do their work, compared to the respondents aged 18-30.

Table 3. Values of statements used to determine respondents' attitudes regarding familiarisation trips

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
I like to go on familiarisation trips.	4.265	1.0617
I look forward to going on a familiarisation trip.	4.225	1.1424
During the familiarisation trip, I sometimes feel like I'm on vacation.	3.588	1.2535
Familiarisation trips are very important for the quality of my work.	4.431	0.9493
Familiarisation trips make it easier for me to do my job.	4.431	0.9699
Familiarisation trips have a positive effect on my work motivation.	4.333	1.0373
Familiarisation trips have a positive effect on my job satisfaction.	4.284	1.0184

Note: Author's calculations based on data analysis in SPSS 23.00

Looking at the results of the multidimensional work motivation scale, it can be determined that the highest value was recorded for the statement "Because I enjoy this work very much" ($M=4.265$; $SD=0.9432$), used to measure intrinsic motivation. This indicates that the respondents record a high degree of pleasure in the work they perform, with smaller values of standard deviation, which show a small variability in the responses. Additionally, the highest average values were recorded for the items measuring

intrinsic motivation, followed by the values recorded in the identified regulation items. The lowest value was identified for the item “I do this job for the pay-check” ($M=2.343$; $SD=1.3460$), which is an integral part of the external regulation subscale, which also has the lowest average values.

Table 4. Values of the subscales of the multidimensional work motivation scale

Subscale	Mean	Standard deviation
Intrinsic motivation		
1. Because I enjoy this work very much	4.265	0.9432
2. Because I have fun doing my job	3.961	1.1425
3. For the moments of pleasure that this job brings me	3.951	1.1203
Identified regulation		
1. I chose this job because it allows me to reach my life goals	3.627	1.1851
2. Because this job fulfils my career plans	3.559	1.1822
3. Because this job fits my personal values	3.912	1.1089
Introjected regulation		
1. Because I have to be the best in my job, I have to be a ‘winner’	3.020	1.2663
2. Because my work is my life, and I don't want to fail	2.725	1.4836
3. Because my reputation depends on it	2.559	1.5258
External regulation		
1. Because this job affords me a certain standard of living	3.284	1.2217
2. Because it allows me to make a lot of money	2.490	1.1582
3. I do this job for the pay-check	2.343	1.3460

Note: Author’s calculations based on data analysis in SPSS 23.00

The results of the generic job satisfaction scale indicated that the highest mean scores were observed for the statement “I get along with my supervisors” ($M = 4.294$; $SD = 1.1133$), followed by “I feel good about working at this company” ($M = 4.265$; $SD = 1.0984$) and “I feel close to the people at work” ($M = 4.176$; $SD = 1.1554$). The statement “On the whole, I believe work is good for my physical health” ($M = 3.147$; $SD = 1.2618$) received the lowest mean scores, followed by “My wages are good” ($M = 3.294$; $SD = 1.2071$) and “I receive recognition for a job well done” ($M = 3.598$; $SD = 1.3516$). These results suggest that although the respondents perceive their work environment as positive and characterised by strong interpersonal relationships, there is still room for improvement at the workplace.

The relationship between the respondents’ attitudes about familiarisation trips and the generic job satisfaction scale, the multidimensional work motivation scale, and its subscales was expressed using the Pearson linear correlation coefficient. A moderate positive correlation was identified between all statements related to familiarisation trips and the generic job satisfaction scale. A medium positive correlation is also present between the statement “During the familiarisation trip, I sometimes feel like I’m on vacation” and identified regulation and introjected regulation subscales, as well as the

multidimensional work motivation scale. The statements “Familiarisation trips make it easier for me to do my job” and “Familiarisation trips have a positive effect on my job satisfaction” also presented a medium positive correlation with the subscales of introjected regulation and external regulation and the multidimensional work motivation scale, thus confirming H2.

Table 5. Values of statements used to determine respondents’ job satisfaction

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
I receive recognition for a job well done	3.598	1.3516
I feel close to the people at work	4.176	1.1554
I feel good about working at this company	4.265	1.0984
I feel secure about my job	3.922	1.0872
I believe management is concerned about me	4.029	1.3604
On the whole, I believe work is good for my physical health	3.147	1.2618
My wages are good	3.294	1.2071
All my talents and skills are used at work	3.961	1.1767
I get along with my supervisors	4.294	1.1133
I feel good about my job	4.167	1.0349

Note: Author’s calculations based on data analysis in SPSS 23.00

Table 6. Results of Pearson’s linear correlation between respondents’ attitudes about familiarisation trips, the generic job satisfaction scale, the multidimensional work motivation scale, and its subscales

Statement	Identified regulation	Introjected regulation	External regulation	Multidimensional work motivation scale	Generic job satisfaction scale
I like to go on familiarisation trips.	0.062	0.126	0.169	0.145	0.211*
I look forward to going on a familiarisation trip.	0.077	0.126	0.176	0.151	0.272**
During the familiarisation trip, I sometimes feel like I’m on vacation.	0.206*	0.226*	0.152	0.206*	0.281**
Familiarisation trips are very important for the quality of my work.	0.094	0.210*	0.240*	0.194	0.292**
Familiarisation trips make it easier for me to do my job.	0.155	0.251*	0.270**	0.225*	0.372**
Familiarisation trips have a positive effect on my work motivation.	0.092	0.252*	0.210*	0.191	0.322**
Familiarisation trips have a positive effect on my job satisfaction.	0.154	0.307**	0.280**	0.242*	0.338**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

DISCUSSION

The analysis of the respondents' attitudes regarding familiarisation trips showed that the majority of the statements recorded high average values, indicating an overall positive perception of familiarisation trips and their benefits. Thus, these findings supported H1, which proposed that there are positive perceptions of employees in the tourism sector in Serbia according to the benefits of familiarisation trips for performing their business tasks. The statements "Familiarisation trips are very important for the quality of my work" and "Familiarisation trips make it easier for me to do my job," which are accompanied by the highest average values and a small standard deviation, emphasise the importance of familiarisation trips for the realisation of regular business tasks of the respondents. The results of the single-factor analysis of variance further indicated that the attitude "Familiarisation trips make it easier for me to do my job" was particularly prevalent among respondents over 40 years old, who have significant professional experience and who, unlike younger generations, primarily those ages 18 through 30, recognise the importance these journeys possess. Meanwhile, the statement "During the familiarisation trip, I sometimes feel like I'm on vacation," which recorded the lowest average values and a higher standard deviation, alluded to the fact that familiarisation trips are generally perceived as a work task, without the presence of elements of rest and leisure. This kind of information is not surprising, especially taking into account the purpose of the trip itself.

Observing the values of the multidimensional work motivation scale and its subscales, it was determined that the respondents were primarily guided by intrinsic motivation, followed by identified regulation, indicating that they are under the influence of autonomous motivation. Namely, the satisfaction of basic needs, that is, the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, affects the type of motivation of the employee. When managers enable the satisfaction of basic needs, employees are autonomously motivated (Van den Broeck et al., 2016) and approach the realisation of their work tasks with pleasure, realising their value and importance (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Autonomously motivated employees achieve better results and are generally happier at work (Deci et al., 2017). Additionally, they report higher levels of job satisfaction and record lower levels of subjectively experienced stress (Fernet & Austin, 2014; Gagné et al., 2010).

The values of Pearson's linear correlation between respondents' attitudes towards familiarisation trips and the multidimensional work motivation scale, and its subscales, showed a medium positive correlation with most statements. This relationship was present across all subscales except for those related to intrinsic motivation, where no significant correlation was observed. This could suggest that familiarisation trips are perceived mostly as an activity primarily motivated by external, controlling factors rather than by genuine interest or enjoyment. As controlled motivation is

influenced by external rewards, power dynamics, or driven by internal pressures such as guilt or the need to preserve self-esteem (Ryan and Deci, 2017), relying on such motives may undermine employees' autonomous motivation. Therefore, when organising and conducting familiarisation trips, it is important to create conditions that enable employees to satisfy their basic psychological needs, which could help reduce the feeling of external control. Additionally, the medium positive correlation between the generic job satisfaction scale and the statements related to familiarisation trips indicates the potential of using these trips as a tool for increasing employees' work motivation. If considering familiarisation trips as a form of employee training, it could be said that the findings of this study are in line with the main results of studies conducted by Ozkeser (2019), Meira et al. (2023), and Iskandar et al. (2024), who indicated positive relations between training and employees' work motivation and job satisfaction. This suggests that, when positively perceived, familiarisation trips could contribute to achieving higher levels of job satisfaction. If employees view these trips, which are an integral part of their professional roles, as enjoyable and if they do not trigger stress, they can positively affect work motivation. Currently, the observed correlation results primarily link familiarisation trips to introjected and external regulation, indicating the presence of controlled motivation. However, the medium positive correlation between the statement "During the familiarisation trip, I sometimes feel like I'm on vacation" and identified regulation indicates that these trips have the potential to fulfil personally valued goals, and thus, they could develop more autonomous forms of motivation. Therefore, it can be concluded that the above-presented research results provide support for H2, which posited that there are correlations between employees' perceptions of the benefits of familiarisation trips in the tourism sector in Serbia and employees' job satisfaction and work motivation.

CONCLUSION

Familiarisation trips are a type of business trips that have numerous potential. Since they require significant investments, primarily in money and time, it is irresponsible to view them only as promotional tools; thus, this research aimed to see whether they can also be used as tools for increasing the work motivation and job satisfaction of employees in tourism.

Observing the obtained results, it can be concluded that respondents, or more precisely the employees in tourism in this case, have a positive attitude towards familiarisation trips and that they recognise the benefits they bring in the realisation of their business tasks. It is noticeable that these trips are in correlation with the job satisfaction of employees and their work motivation, as well. For now, familiarisation trips are in the highest correlation with controlled motivation, which, if compared to autonomous mo-

tivation, generally results in less favourable business results. Accordingly, for the sake of the prosperity of an organisation in all aspects of business, it should strive to enable the satisfaction of the basic needs of employees, that is, the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which would create an environment that fosters and allows the prosperity of autonomously motivated employees. In the context of familiarisation trips, the focus should be on their redesign to enable the satisfaction of these needs. First of all, as these trips are imbued with a certain level of stress due to their nature as a work task, additionally burdened by the requirements of the trip, the focus should be placed on recognising and reducing the most common causes of stress, that is, the loss of time, surprises, and routine interruptions, to a minimum. This would be achieved by carefully planning the trip, as well as by creating an itinerary that would enable the best possible balance between work tasks and free time available to employees, to reduce the physical and psychological burden to the lowest possible degree. Employees should be allowed to spend their free time engaging in activities that they perceive as fun and relaxing. By introducing these changes, the image of familiarisation trips in the perception of employees would be significantly changed, and better use of this underutilised resource would be enabled.

The conducted research significantly contributes to the enrichment of knowledge about general perceptions of familiarisation trips among tourism employees in travel agencies of Serbia, and correlations between such perceptions and their work motivation and job satisfaction. However, it also has its limitations. Namely, there is a small proportion of male respondents in the given sample, which can influence the making of wrong conclusions that are not valid for both sexes. No matter the fact, such a proportion of males and females in the sample is not so surprising when speaking about the survey research conducted within social sciences. Overall, only employees in travel agencies and travel intermediaries are included in the sample, while employees from other companies in tourism who also participate in familiarisation trips have been left out of the sample. Future research should overcome these limitations. Also, future research could put its focus on identifying the positive and negative aspects of familiarisation trips and providing proposals and more concrete measures for planning more efficient trips, which will achieve greater benefits for the organisation.

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ПОТЕНЦИЈАЛИ КОРИШТЕЊА СТУДИЈСКИХ ПУТОВАЊА ЗА ПОВЕЋАВАЊЕ РАДНЕ МОТИВАЦИЈЕ И ЗАДОВОЉСТВА ПОСЛОМ КОД ЗАПОСЛЕНИХ У ТУРИЗМУ

**Ленка Истијановић, Милена Недељковић Кнежевић,
Маја Мијатов Ладичорбић**

Универзитет у Новом Саду, Природно-математички факултет, Нови Сад, Србија

Резиме

Свако предузеће сусреће се са изазовом како најбоље да искористи доступне, лимитиране ресурсе како би остварило сопствене циљеве и често као најзначајнија детерминанта успеха јављају се људски ресурси, односно хумани капитал предузећа. Степен до ког ће запослени да искористе своја знања, вештине и друге компетенције у великој мери условљен је њиховом мотивацијом за рад и задовољство послом, те је неопходно константно улагати напоре како би се они одржали на оптималном нивоу. Ово може да буде посебан изазов у сектору попут туризма, у ком су запослени изложени значајном нивоу стреса, који је условљен бројним факторима који не потичу само из специфичности туристичког тржишта, као и саме природе посла.

Студијска путовања, односно путовања која се организују са примарним циљем упознавања туристичких посредника са вредностима неке дестинације, за запослене у туризму представљају пословна путовања праћена одређеним нивоом стреса. Пошто ова путовања остварују одређени негативан ефекат на запослене, и уједино изискују значајне инвестиције, истраживање је имало задатак да одговори на питање да ли студијска путовања могу да имају двојаку функцију, односно да ли се она могу искористити и као алати за повећање радне мотивације и задовољства послом запослених у туризму.

Спровођењем истраживања које је обухватило узорак од 102 испитаника, који чине индивидуе запослене у туристичким агенцијама и субагенцијама које активно послују и имају седиште на територији Републике Србије, утврђено је да запослени у туризму имају позитиван став ка студијским путовањима и да препознају бенефите које ова путовања доносе у реализацији њихових пословних задатака. Препознат је утицај студијских путовања на задовољство послом запослених, што консеквентно може да се одрази и на њихову мотивацију за рад. За сада, студијска путовања, као и остале радне обавезе, код овог сегмента запослених у туризму бивају под утицајем контролисаних мотивација.

Зарад просперитета предузећа, треба тежити омогућењу задовољења основних потреба запослених, односно потребама за аутономијом, способношћу и повезаношћу, како би се креирало окружење које неугује и дозвољава просперитет аутономно мотивисаних запослених. У контексту студијских путовања тежиште треба поставити на њихово редизајнирање како би се и у овом аспекту омогућило задовољење датих потреба. Превасходно, пошто дата путовања бивају прожета одређеним нивоом стреса, фокус треба поставити на препознавање и редуковање најчешћих узрочника стреса на минимум. Пажљивим планирањем путовања, као и креирањем итинерера који би створио што бољи баланс између радних задатака и слободног времена доступног запосленима, допринело би се смањењу физичког и психичког терета. Уједино, требало би омогућити запосленима да дато слободно време проведу бавећи се активностима које перципирају као забавне и опуштајуће. Увођењем ових измена, значајно би се променио имиџ студијских путовања и омогућила би се боља употреба овог недовољно искориштеног ресурса.