

# Study: The association between job flexibility and job satisfaction

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Workers whose job gives them some control over their hours of work report higher levels of job satisfaction, according to a new study based on the Longitudinal and International Study of Adults (LISA).

The new study, published in *Insights on Canadian Society*, examines the relationship between the two key concepts of job flexibility and job satisfaction among Canadian workers aged 18 to 64.

Workers who are satisfied with their job are more likely to remain at their current job. Understanding what factors affect job satisfaction is therefore important.

Four aspects of job flexibility are examined in the study: the order of work; how the work is done; the speed of work; and the hours of work.

## Control over hours of work is associated with higher job satisfaction

In the LISA, job satisfaction is self-reported on an 11-point scale, where 0 corresponds to "very dissatisfied" and 10 corresponds to "very satisfied." Respondents are classified as satisfied if they report a score of 8 or higher. Using this scale, about half of men and women aged 18 to 64 reported that they were satisfied with their job overall.

Canadian workers reported various degrees of job flexibility. For example, 37% of men and 33% of women reported a high or a very high degree of control over how their work is done. Furthermore, about 2 in 10 men and women reported that they had a high or a very high degree of control over their hours of work.

Of all aspects of job flexibility examined in the study, control over hours of work was most strongly associated with job satisfaction.

Specifically, 61% of men who reported a "high" or "very high" extent of control over their work hours were satisfied with their job, compared with 46% among those who had less control over their work hours. Among women, 60% of those who had a "high" or "very high" control over their work hours reported being satisfied with their job, while just under half of those with less control reported employment satisfaction.

The relationship between control over hours of work and job satisfaction remained even after accounting for other factors that are also associated with job satisfaction, such as personal characteristics and job quality indicators (that is, wages, work hours, training, union status, pension plan, or responsibilities at work).

## Young workers experience greater job satisfaction from having control over their hours of work

The study found that both men and women were equally likely to see an increase in their job satisfaction level when they had control over the hours of work, which suggests that the nature of the association between job flexibility and job satisfaction differs little between men and women.

Among women, those with children derived no more satisfaction from flexible work hours than those without children, which suggests that the presence of children at home does not affect the relationship between job flexibility and job satisfaction among women.

The study, however, found that workers aged 18 to 33 experienced the largest increase in job satisfaction if they had control over hours of work in comparison with older workers.

Such results suggest that the relative importance of hours of work decreases with age, and that millennials place greater value on flexible work arrangements than older generations.



### Note to readers

This study uses data from the 2014 Longitudinal and International Study of Adults (LISA), and includes individuals aged 18 to 64 who were employed during the reference week of the survey. In the study, workers who are "satisfied" with their job are those who reported a score of 8 or higher on a scale of 0 to 10 when asked about the extent to which they were satisfied with their job

Job flexibility in LISA is measured as the response to the question, "To what extent can you choose or change...", followed by a particular facet of job flexibility. The four facets considered in LISA are "the sequence of your tasks;" "how you do your work;" "the speed or rate at which you work;" and "your working hours." The response to each of these four questions is measured on the same 5 point scale—(1) "not at all;" (2) "very little;" (3) "to some extent;" (4) "to a high extent;" (5) "to a very high extent." An individual is said to have control over a particular facet of job flexibility if they respond that they have a high extent or a very high extent of control over that facet.

### Now available: Third wave of results from the Longitudinal and International Study of Adults

Today, Statistics Canada releases the third wave (2016) of LISA, a longitudinal survey that collects information from respondents across Canada regarding their jobs, income, education, health, and family. The data can be used to examine multiple aspects of the life and well-being of Canadians, including those related to the workplace.

### Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5144](#).

The study "[The association between job flexibility and job satisfaction](#)" is now available as part of *Insights on Canadian Society* ([75-006-X](#)).

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)).

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