Does Satisfaction with the Job Influence Job Search and Work Absence? Evidence from Spain

Inmaculada García Mainar[1]**, Víctor Manuel Montuenga Gómez**[2]

[1] *Departamento de Análisis Económico, University of Zaragoza, Spain*

[2] *Departamento de Economía y Empresa, University of La Rioja, Logroño, Spain*

Abstract   The aims of this paper are, first, to explore the relationship between the level of satisfaction with different aspects of the job and the search for another job; and secondly, to look into any possible relationship between job dissatisfaction and work absence. In order to undertake the study of these two dimensions, a probit analysis is carried out for Spain with data coming from the European Community Household Panel for the years 1994-2001.

Keywords   Externalities, Satisfaction, Job Search, Work Absence.
JEL Classification   J28, J62, J63.

1 Introduction

The study of job satisfaction is important for several reasons. The most apparent is directly related to the worker's well-being, since job satisfaction is one of the elements that best predict this well-being. This, in turn, is one of the most

Correspondence to: Víctor Manuel Montuenga Gómez

(e-mail: `victor.montuenga@unirioja.es`)

important topics of analysis in the social sciences. Given that job dissatisfaction has a bearing on economic agents other than the worker him/herself, examining the factors that contribute to improving the level of satisfaction is relevant in alleviating the problems caused by the workers' lack of enthusiasm. Among the consequences of job dissatisfaction, we can first of all single out a lower productivity rate among workers who have less motivation to properly carry out their task than those who obtain greater satisfaction in their jobs. A second consequence is the workers' search for another job that may offer better conditions, and a third is a greater tendency towards work absence that, in economic terms, means higher costs for employers. Focusing on these latter two consequences, some empirical evidence has been reported in the literature. As regards the first, there seems to be a clear negative relationship between the level of job satisfaction and the search for another job, suggesting that dissatisfied workers may be willing to leave their current job and to look for another with the aim of obtaining greater satisfaction. A worker may be dissatisfied with the current job because it does not require the level of training he/she has attained, his/her qualifications may allow him/her to aspire to a better paid job or one that seems more appropriate to his/her training. In such cases of over-qualification, the worker may find many incentives to look for another job, although he/she may refuse to do so if the current job offers good enough chances of promotion, so that he/she may reach the same level of satisfaction without being forced to take on the strain of the search and change of job. A high percentage of job change is a result of voluntary movements, which suggests that the role played by job satisfaction in job mobility may be important. Pissarides and Wadsworth (1988) indicate that 75% of job changes in 1984 in Great Britain were the result of voluntary movements. Some researchers have concluded that a low level of job satisfaction may foreshadow possible future decisions to leave the job (cf. Vroom, (1964), Akerlof et al., (1988), McEvoy and Cascio, (1985) and Freeman, (1978)). With respect to the relationship between job satisfaction and work absence, this has not been

much researched or studied, despite its importance. Several kinds of work absence can be distinguished, such as that originating from illness, accidents, justified absence and absence without just cause. The existing literature usually makes no distinction between the motivating causes. Studies of psychology address this problem by analysing the relevance of several factors in work absence (personal and employment characteristics), together with the consequences of absences on the worker's stability and promotion. Several results from work absence research are worth mentioning. Steers and Rhodes (1978) show the importance of the workers' capacity and motivation to the level of work absence, as well as its lower level in situations affecting the chances of promotion. Brown (1994) proves that the nature of the work contract influences work absence, although many factors determine this variable. One of these factors is the introduction of compensation offered by health insurance. Kenyon and Dawkins (1989), drawing on time series data from Australia, find evidence that some elements that affect the level of job satisfaction determine work absence. Finally, Johansson and Palme (1996) conclude that women are absent less frequently than men, and Clegg (1983) finds a negative correlation between work absence and job satisfaction. Against this background, the aim of this paper, focused on the case of Spain, is twofold. First, we will explore the relationship between the level of satisfaction with different aspects of the job, and the search for another job. Second, we will investigate the relationship between job dissatisfaction and work absence. In order to undertake the study of these two dimensions, the following section will describe the empirical evidence available in Spain. In Section 3 the empirical specification is offered, and the analysis of the relationship between job satisfaction and, respectively, job search and work absence are presented. Finally, Section 4 presents our main conclusions.

2 Data

The data used in this study come from the eight waves (1994-2001) of the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) for the Spanish case. This survey provides a great deal of information about the job characteristics of those workers surveyed, the level of satisfaction with different aspects of the job, whether the worker is looking for a new job, and work absence. The ECHP consists of approximately 18,000 individuals in each wave, the sample used here being around 4,000. Our sample includes those who are currently working and whose information regarding the analysed variables is complete. These variables are presented in Table A in the Appendix, with some descriptive statistics. Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the several variables provided by the survey that measure different aspects of job satisfaction. All of them set a scale from 1 to 6, the level of job satisfaction increasing as the figures increase. Each variable's average value has been calculated for the total sample, and differentiating the groups we want to study - i.e., public and private sector, and managerial and non-managerial staff. We have calculated the t-statistic from the test of identical means of the defined groups. Looking at Table 1, we notice the average values of all the variables, except satisfaction with earnings, are above the scale's central value of 3.5, both in the samples' total and in the various sub-samples. The highest value for the several job aspects corresponds to that of the type of work, except in the public sector, where the highest satisfaction is provided by job security. Comparing the sub-samples, the valuation is higher in the public sector than in the private. These differences are significant in all cases. Managers and supervisors declare greater satisfaction than the other workers in all aspects, except in that of number of working hours, where their satisfaction decreases. Finally, note that the differences are significant in all cases except in that of number of working hours.

Table 1. Mean reported job satisfaction levels.

	All	Private sector	Public sector	t-stat. on sector sector difference	Managers and supervisors	Employees	t-stat. on job status difference
Job (1-6)	4.259	4.156	4.578		4.538	4.164	
	(1.26)	(1.27)	(1.15)	-27.35	(1.13)	(1.28)	-24.313
Earnings (1-6)	3.296	3.231	3.503		3.545	3.212	
	(1.32)	(1.31)	(1.31)	-16.71	(1.28)	(1.32)	-20.720
Job security (1-6)	4.187	4.013	4.739		4.638	4.035	
	(1.53)	(1.50)	(1.49)	-39.02	(1.38)	(1.55)	-32.456
Type of work (1-6)	4.327	4.229	4.633		4.658	4.215	
	(1.29)	(1.30)	(1.19)	-25.46	(1.14)	(1.32)	-28.230
Number of working hours (1-6)	3.956	3.786	4.482		3.939	3.961	
	(1.37)	(1.38)	(1.18)	-42.08	(1.39)	(1.36)	1.313
Shift (1-6)	4.202	4.090	4.545		4.292	4.172	
	(1.37)	(1.37)	(1.34)	-26.94	(1.39)	(1.37)	-7.082
Environmental conditions (1-6)	4.198	4.167	4.292		4.304	4.163	
	(1.35)	(1.34)	(1.36)	-7.52	(1.34)	(1.35)	-8.509
Distance and communications (1-6)	4.180	4.130	4.334		4.268	4.150	
	(1.47)	(1.46)	(1.48)	-11.19	(1.49)	(1.46)	-6.530

Note: Standard deviation in parenthesis

Table 2. Mean values of job search.

	All	Private sector	Public sector	t-statistic on sector difference	Managers and supervisors	Employees	t-statistic on job status difference
Job search by worker (1=search, 0=not search)	0.098 (0.30)	0.109 (0.31)	0.060 (0.24)	13.39	0.071 (0.26)	0.107 (0.31)	9.808

Note: Standard deviation in parenthesis

Table 3. Mean values of work absence.

	All	Private sector	Public sector	t-statistic on sector difference	Managers and supervisors	Employees	t-statistic on job status difference
Work absence in the last four working weeks (1=yes, 0=no)	0.108 (0.31)	0.103 (0.30)	0.123 (0.33)	-5.39	0.095 (0.29)	0.112 (0.32)	4.333

Note: Standard deviation in parenthesis

Table 2 shows the average value of a dummy variable that takes value 1 when the worker is looking for work and value 0 when not. Workers in search of a job are 10% of the total figure, and there are significant differences between those belonging to the public sector and those belonging to the private sector, as well as between the managerial staff and the other workers. The degree of job search is higher in the private sector and among non-managerial staff. Table 3 offers the percentage of workers who have been absent at least once in the last four weeks. We use this measure of work absence because it is the one offered by the PHOGUE, even though we are aware that it is not the best measure, which would require data on the reason for the absence and the level of annual work absence over several periods of time, since work absence is a dynamic phenomenon. Our measure shows that workers exhibiting work absence are 10.8% of the total and that there are significant differences between both the public and the private sectors, and between managerial and non-managerial staff, absence being higher in the public sector and within the non-managerial employees. Once the descriptive analysis of relevant variables has been completed, we use econometric techniques in order to examine the factors that determine the detected variations, and we attempt to determine the possible causal relationship between them.

3 Empirical results

Workers' job search is related to some aspect of dissatisfaction with their current job. In order to analyse empirically the variables that lead workers to look for jobs when they are already working, we estimate a probit model with a dichotomic job search variable. The analysis is carried out for the whole sample and for the various sub-samples we have taken. The results of the estimations are found in Tables 4 and 5. Both pool and random probit estimations have been considered. The variable measuring job satisfaction, used to obtain the results presented in Table 4, is the general notion of satisfaction with the job.

Table 4. Probit job search.

Variable	Pool estimation					Panel estimation				
	All	Public sector	Private sector	Managers and supervisors	Employees	All	Public sector	Private sector	Managers and supervisors	Employees
Constant	6.003	6.592	5.894	3.416	6.519	7.823	9.901	7.554	5.443	8.189
	(26.22)	(10.22)	(23.83)	(5.76)	(25.64)	(24.03)	(9.50)	(21.85)	(6.11)	(23.07)
Net earnings per hour worked in logarithms	-0.561	-0.669	-0.541	-0.397	-0.609	-0.730	-0.947	-0.697	-0.577	-0.764
	(-23.95)	(-11.69)	(-20.92)	(-8.45)	(-22.49)	(-22.10)	(-10.12)	(-19.45)	(-7.91)	(-20.60)
Number of working hours per week in logarithms	-0.692	-0.702	-0.693	-0.263	-0.750	-0.917	-1.166	-0.891	-0.497	-0.958
	(-18.02)	(-6.04)	(-17.00)	(-2.34)	(-18.35)	(-17.46)	(-6.59)	(-16.23)	(-3.08)	(-17.34)
Public Sector	-0.094			-0.163	-0.063	-0.112			-0.223	-0.066
	(-3.18)			(-2.74)	(-1.85)	(-2.65)			(-2.42)	(-1.42)
Manager	0.208	0.114	0.223	0.029		0.201	0.138	0.217	0.010	
	(4.44)	(0.92)	(4.37)	(0.54)		(3.21)	(0.77)	(3.22)	(0.14)	
Supervisor	0.119	0.123	0.120			0.132	0.140	0.140		
	(3.94)	(2.02)	(3.43)			(3.37)	(1.59)	(3.13)		
Overeducation	0.453	0.375	0.471	0.488	0.447	0.498	0.475	0.511	0.545	0.500
	(19.95)	(6.96)	(18.83)	(9.30)	(17.73)	(17.01)	(6.04)	(16.06)	(7.41)	(15.67)
Manual	-0.142	-0.135	-0.148	-0.078	-0.156	-0.163	-0.201	-0.167	-0.143	-0.181
	(-5.57)	(-2.11)	(-5.31)	(-1.30)	(-5.53)	(-4.57)	(-1.93)	(-4.38)	(-1.57)	(-4.73)
Agriculture	0.221	0.096	0.238	0.013	0.237	0.254	0.152	0.279	-0.013	0.279
	(3.95)	(0.41)	(4.09)	(0.07)	(4.03)	(3.30)	(0.44)	(3.53)	(-0.04)	(3.55)
Industry	-0.105	-0.253	-0.097	-0.147	-0.090	-0.115	-0.301	-0.106	-0.182	-0.089
	(-3.84)	(-2.12)	(-3.40)	(-2.54)	(-2.91)	(-3.07)	(-1.69)	(-2.76)	(-2.10)	(-2.15)
Job satisfaction	-0.291	-0.245	-0.302	-0.307	-0.287	-0.340	-0.313	-0.350	-0.398	-0.332
	(-36.96)	(-13.26)	(-34.59)	(-17.02)	(-32.72)	(-32.62)	(-11.25)	(-30.68)	(-14.59)	(-29.00)
Number of observations	8209	25552	8455	25306	33761	8209	25552	8455	25306	33761
Log-L	-8970.37	-1624.02	-7336.93	-1874.45	-7081.32	-8599.13	-1518.74	-7071.31	-1784.86	-6869.58

Note: t-statistic deviation in parenthesis

Table 5. Probit job search. Coefficients of the several job satisfaction variables

Variable	Pool estimation					Panel estimation				
	All	Public sector	Private sector	Managers and supervisors	Employees	All	Public sector	Private sector	Managers and supervisors	Employees
Earnings	-0.192	-0.115	-0.212	-0.206	-0.190	-0.218	-0.116	-0.242	-0.267	-0.213
	(-23.48)	(-6.29)	(-23.04)	(-11.29)	(-20.69)	(-20.37)	(-4.32)	(-20.38)	(-9.89)	(-18.19)
Job security	-0.240	-0.200	-0.252	-0.246	-0.238	-0.280	-0.263	-0.290	-0.298	-0.278
	(-35.77)	(-14.09)	(-32.89)	(-16.79)	(-31.48)	(-31.59)	(-11.89)	(-29.34)	(-14.33)	(-28.20)
Type of work	-0.213	-0.173	-0.222	-0.204	-0.215	-0.254	-0.227	-0.262	-0.267	-0.254
	(-28.12)	(-9.68)	(-26.52)	(-11.79)	(-25.42)	(-25.17)	(-8.34)	(-23.80)	(-10.58)	(-22.87)
Number of working hours	-0.148	-0.097	-0.158	-0.112	-0.155	-0.171	-0.115	-0.181	-0.153	-0.179
	(-19.88)	(-5.13)	(-19.44)	(-6.95)	(-18.35)	(-17.67)	(-4.19)	(-17.32)	(-6.55)	(-16.58)
Shift	-0.106	-0.027	-0.125	-0.065	-0.119	-0.127	-0.027	-0.147	-0.097	-0.139
	(-14.95)	(-1.61)	(-15.80)	(-4.33)	(-14.63)	(-13.46)	(-1.07)	(-14.22)	(-4.47)	(-13.13)
Environmental conditions	-0.136	-0.077	-0.151	-0.161	-0.131	-0.155	-0.084	-0.172	-0.188	-0.154
	(-18.91)	(-4.74)	(-18.75)	(-10.63)	(-15.97)	(-16.51)	(-3.48)	(-16.61)	(-8.87)	(-14.56)
Distance and communications	-0.074	-0.046	-0.081	-0.082	-0.072	-0.085	-0.054	-0.092	-0.102	-0.083
	(-11.31)	(-3.06)	(-11.07)	(-5.93)	(-9.64)	(-9.65)	(-2.34)	(-9.52)	(-5.05)	(-8.51)

Note: t-statistic deviation in parenthesis

In Table 5, the coefficients, and the corresponding t-statistics, of the other aspects of satisfaction studied are reported, in order to strengthen the decision of which measure to choose.

Despite the point estimates differing slightly between the pool and the panel estimations, our results are qualitatively the same and, hence, are not discussed separately. Considering the variables significant at the 5% level, out of the coefficients estimated with the total sample, the result is that the workers who most look for jobs while they are working, regardless of the aspect of satisfaction which is employed in the analysis, are those who are worst paid, those who work the fewest hours, those who work in the private sector, those who are non-manual workers, those who are overqualified and those who work in the services sector. With regard to the workers of the public sector, differences between the type of worker and the type of activity are non-significant. This does not occur in the case of workers in the private sector, where the aforementioned general results hold. A similar conclusion is reached regarding the samples of managerial and non-managerial staff, with the only exception being those working in the Industry sector, in which the result is common for both sub-samples. Results in Table 5 allow us to assess which aspects of satisfaction are more relevant in the worker's decision of looking for another job. As a general rule, it can be inferred that satisfaction with job security, with the type of job and with the earnings, are the aspects considered by workers to be more influential in their decisions to look for another job. By contrast, satisfaction with distance and communications are clearly the aspects which least affect workers' decisions. These conclusions show no marked differences across the sub-samples studied. Job dissatisfaction can also provoke work absence. In order to study the relevance of this aspect, besides the personal characteristics of the worker, we estimate a probit model with the dummy of work absence. The estimation is carried out for the whole sample of the PHOGUE and for all the sub-samples, again distinguishing between pool and panel estimation. The results appear in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Probit job absence.

Variable	Pool estimation					Panel estimation				
	All	Public sector	Private sector	Managers and supervisors	Employees	All	Public sector	Private sector	Managers and supervisors	Employees
Constant	-0.252	1.529	-0.492	1.534	-0.549	-0.355	1.462	-0.580	1.449	-0.621
	(-1.11)	(2.76)	(-1.96)	(2.82)	(-2.15)	(-1.38)	(2.28)	(-2.05)	(2.36)	(-2.15)
Health good or very good	-0.461	-0.535	-0.433	-0.406	-0.479	-0.490	-0.573	-0.461	-0.442	-0.506
	(-19.15)	(-11.68)	(-15.26)	(-7.99)	(-17.47)	(-18.38)	(-11.06)	(-14.80)	(-7.83)	(-16.72)
Health bad or very bad	0.837	0.815	0.856	1.077	0.786	0.896	0.901	0.907	1.169	0.844
	(17.38)	(8.42)	(15.38)	(9.45)	(14.74)	(16.79)	(8.14)	(14.87)	(9.18)	(14.34)
Net earnings per hour worked in logarithms	-0.024	-0.019	-0.041	-0.075	-0.012	-0.021	-0.011	-0.041	-0.072	-0.010
	(-1.12)	(-0.42)	(-1.69)	(-1.78)	(-0.47)	(-0.86)	(-0.20)	(-1.50)	(-1.50)	(-0.36)
Number of working hours in logarithms	-0.143	-0.552	-0.063	-0.493	-0.092	-0.148	-0.579	-0.065	-0.494	-0.102
	(-3.53)	(-5.45)	(-1.42)	(-4.69)	(-2.07)	(-3.23)	(-5.01)	(-1.30)	(-4.21)	(-2.05)
Public sector	0.183			0.059	0.215	0.182			0.062	0.218
	(7.30)			(1.19)	(7.39)	(6.21)			(1.09)	(6.49)
Manager	-0.057	-0.113	-0.023	-0.002		-0.056	-0.117	-0.022	-0.011	
	(-1.38)	(-1.22)	(-0.50)	(-0.03)		(-1.20)	(-1.11)	(-0.43)	(-0.21)	
Supervisor	-0.024	-0.060	0.001			-0.024	-0.064	0.000		
	(-0.92)	(-1.28)	(0.03)			(-0.83)	(-1.21)	(0.01)		
Over-education	0.051	0.028	0.058	0.003	0.066	0.050	0.016	0.060	-0.003	0.066
	(2.62)	(0.73)	(2.59)	(0.08)	(2.97)	(2.30)	(0.37)	(2.42)	(-0.07)	(2.71)
Manual	0.077	-0.034	0.115	0.103	0.069	0.090	-0.025	0.126	0.120	0.078
	(3.19)	(-0.66)	(4.14)	(1.89)	(2.52)	(3.21)	(-0.40)	(4.00)	(1.94)	(2.50)
Agriculture	0.226	0.217	0.217	-0.157	0.293	0.234	0.200	0.224	-0.252	0.306
	(4.05)	(1.04)	(3.72)	(-0.81)	(4.96)	(3.66)	(0.84)	(3.38)	(-1.14)	(4.56)
Industry	0.064	0.051	0.052	-0.111	0.113	0.070	0.056	0.059	-0.117	0.123
	(2.55)	(0.63)	(1.94)	(-2.09)	(3.94)	(2.42)	(0.59)	(1.93)	(-1.93)	(3.75)
Job satisfaction	-0.025	-0.035	-0.022	-0.041	-0.023	-0.024	-0.032	-0.021	-0.044	-0.021
	(-3.30)	(-2.21)	(-2.50)	(-2.38)	(-2.65)	(-2.82)	(-1.78)	(-2.23)	(-2.33)	(-2.26)
Number of observations	33649	8177	25472	8429	25220	33649	8177	25472	8429	25220
Log-L	-10819.46	-2878.90	-7921.28	-2480.89	-8315.93	-10371.73	-2846.11	-7870.22	-2466.28	-8258.28

Note: t-statistic deviation in parenthesis

Table 7. Probit work absence. Coefficients of the several job satisfaction variables

Variable	Pool estimation					Panel estimation				
	All	Public sector	Private sector	Managers and supervisors	Employees	All	Public sector	Private sector	Managers and supervisors	Employees
Job	-0.029	-0.046	-0.024	-0.025	-0.030	-0.032	-0.049	-0.027	-0.029	-0.032
	(-3.83)	(-3.12)	(-2.71)	(-1.52)	(-3.51)	(-3.79)	(-2.95)	(-2.77)	(-1.62)	(-3.43)
Earnings	0.008	0.016	0.005	0.017	0.005	0.012	0.022	0.009	0.024	0.007
	(1.25)	(1.29)	(0.68)	(1.17)	(0.72)	(1.71)	(1.51)	(1.03)	(1.48)	(0.91)
Job security	-0.026	-0.063	-0.015	-0.030	-0.026	-0.025	-0.064	-0.014	-0.032	-0.025
	(-3.46)	(-4.15)	(-1.72)	(-1.79)	(-3.11)	(-3.02)	(-3.70)	(-1.50)	(-1.70)	(-2.75)
Type of work	0.008	0.030	0.003	0.005	0.005	0.010	0.038	0.004	0.007	0.006
	(1.06)	(1.83)	(0.42)	(0.32)	(0.62)	(1.21)	(2.10)	(0.42)	(0.42)	(0.68)
Number of working hours	0.019	0.042	0.012	0.028	0.016	0.021	0.043	0.014	0.030	0.016
	(2.74)	(2.97)	(1.46)	(1.94)	(2.02)	(2.65)	(2.68)	(1.52)	(1.86)	(1.84)
Shift	-0.026	-0.011	-0.031	-0.007	-0.031	-0.025	-0.006	-0.031	-0.000	-0.032
	(-3.82)	(-0.81)	(-3.83)	(-0.47)	(-3.92)	(-3.22)	(-0.38)	(-3.45)	(-0.02)	(-3.67)
Environmental conditions	-0.016	-0.027	-0.011	-0.009	-0.018	-0.014	-0.022	-0.011	-0.004	-0.018
	(-2.52)	(-2.24)	(-1.45)	(-0.70)	(-2.45)	(-2.04)	(-1.59)	(-1.33)	(-0.26)	(-2.23)

Note: t-statistic deviation in parenthesis

By observing the coefficients estimated in the total sample, we find that work absence is higher if the worker's health condition is bad or very bad, if the worker belongs to the public sector, if he/she is overeducated, if he/she is a manual worker, and if he/she works in the Agriculture or the Industry sectors. By contrast, work absence will be reduced if the worker's health is good or very good, the lower the number of hours worked, if he/she works in Services, and if he/she is satisfied with his/her job. The hourly wage and the type of worker are found to be non-significant variables. The significant variables common to all the groups are those that indicate the health condition of the worker and satisfaction with the job. However, by comparing the other significant variables in the groups, the following results are obtained. Regarding the public and private sectors, in the latter, work absence increases with overqualification, with performing manual work, or with working in Agriculture. The number of working hours negatively influences the probability of work absence only for those workers in the public sector. Within the managerial/non-managerial groups, the latter are more often absent if they are in the public sector, they are overqualified, they do manual work and they are not in the Services sector. All these factors are non-significant in the sub-sample of managerial staff. Estimates in Table 7 show a first noteworthy result. Satisfaction with job security is not a relevant factor in determining work absence. This evidence contradicts Jimeno and Toharia (1996), who find that permanent employees are more likely to be absent from work than temporary employees. Satisfaction with the number of hours worked is also found to be non-significant. In all sub-samples, satisfaction with earnings and with the type of work are influential factors in determining work absence, except for managers and supervisors in both cases, and for those working in the private sector in the case of satisfaction with the type of work. At the other extreme, satisfaction with environmental conditions and with distance and communications are only relevant determinants in the case of non-managerial employees. Generally, these

results are in line with those found in other countries by Hamermesh (2000), Allen and van der Velden (2001) and Gazioglu and Tansel (2002).

4 Conclusions

The aim of this work is to provide empirical evidence about two characteristics, which have been detailed in two objectives. The first is to study the relevance of satisfaction with job aspects when the worker chooses to look for another job, and the second is to try to discover whether job satisfaction affects work absence. The empirical analyses offered are carried out through the European Community Household Panel (ECHP), that offers abundant individual information to study this essay's topic. The empirical results are obtained from the descriptive analysis of the data and from the estimation of probit models in both pool and panel forms, even though few differences are found between the two types of estimation. As regards the first objective, the analysis of the worker's job search shows that it increases when earnings and working hours decrease, when he/she works in the private sector, when he/she is a supervisor or manager, when he/she is a non-manual worker, when the worker is overqualified for the job she/he is currently doing, and when he/she is dissatisfied with any aspects of the job considered. As far as work absence is concerned, it is fundamentally determined by the health condition of the worker, perhaps indicating that most absence is due to health reasons. Work absence is more likely in those who are working fewer hours, who are in the public sector, who are overqualified, who are manual workers, and who are dissatisfied with the job.

5 Appendix

Table A. Mean and standard deviation of explanatory variables		
Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Health good or very good	0.83	0.37
Health bad or very bad	0.03	0.16
Net earnings per hour worked in logarithms	6.61	0.52
Number of working hours per week in logarithms	3.69	0.25
Public sector	0.25	0.43
Manager	0.08	0.26
Supervisor	0.18	0.38
Overeducation	0.57	0.50
Manual	0.46	0.50
Agriculture	0.04	0.19
Industry	0.33	0.47
Note: t-statistic deviation in parenthesis		

References

1. Akerlof, G.A., Rosse, A.K. and Yellen, J.L. (1988): *Job Switching and Job Satisfaction in The U.S. Labor Market.* Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, 2, pp. 495-582.

2. Allen, J. and van der Velden, R, (2001): *Educational mismatches versus skill mismatches: effects on wages, job satisfaction, and on-the-job search.* Oxford Economic Papers, 53, pp. 434-542.

3. Brown, S. (1994): *Dynamic implications of absence behaviour.* Applied Economics, 26, pp. 1163-1175.

4. Clegg, C.W. (1983): *Psychology of employee lateness, absence and turnover: A methodological critique and an empirical study.* Journal of Applied Psychology, 68, pp. 88-101.

5. Freeman, R.B. (1978): *Job satisfaction as an economic variable.* American Economic Review, 68, pp. 135-141.

6. Gagliozu, S and Tansel, A. (2002): *Job satisfaction in Britain: Individual and Job Related Factors.* ERC Working Papers in Economics 03/03.

7. Hamermesh, D. (2000): *The changing distribution of job satisfaction.* Journal of Human Resources, 36, pp. 1-30.

8. Jimeno, J.F. and Toharia, L. (1996): *Effort, absenteeism, and fixed term employment contracts.* Revista Española de Economía, 13, pp. 105-119.

9. Johansson, P. and Palme, M. (1996): *Do economic incentives affect work absence? Empirical evidence using Swedish micro data.* Journal of Public Economics, 59, pp. 195-218.

10. Kenyon, P. and Dawkins, P. (1989): *A time series analysis of labour absence in Australia.* The Review of Economics and Statistics, 99, pp. 232-239.

11. McEvoy, G.M. and Cascio, W.F. (1985): *Strategies for reducing employee turnover: A meta-analysis.* Journal of Applied Psychology, 70, pp. 342-353.

12. Pissarides, C.A. and Wadsworth, J. (1994): *On-the-job search. Some empirical evidence from Britain.* European Economic Review, 38, pp. 385-401.

13. Steers, R.M. and Rhodes, S.R. (1978): *Mayor influences on employee attendance: A process model.* Journal of Applied Psychology, 63, pp. 391-407.

14. Vroom, V.H. (1964): Work and Motivation. Wiley, New York.