



JOB SATISFACTION IN THE CONSTRUCTION TRADES

Job satisfaction describes an individual's level of fulfillment or enjoyment within their field of employment. Since 1972, the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago has collected data on the attitudes, behaviors and attributes of the American public through the longitudinal General Social Survey (GSS). One section of the GSS focuses on individual work experience, including job satisfaction. Figure 1 shows that across four separate economic cycles between 1974-2014, construction workers reported higher levels of job satisfaction (highlighted in yellow) than all other industries (highlighted in blue)¹.

Satisfaction	Cycle 1 (74 to 81)	Cycle 2 (82 to 90)	Cycle 3 (91 to 07)	Cycle 4 (08 to 14)
Construction¹	(N = 240)	(N = 477)	(N = 705)	(N = 275)
Dissatisfied	10.4%	13.6%	10.4%	13.5%
Satisfied	89.6%	86.4%	89.6%	86.5%
All Other Industries²	(N = 1986)	(N = 2680)	(N = 2977)	(N = 1021)
Dissatisfied	15.7%	18.0%	16.4%	15.1%
Satisfied	84.3%	82.0%	83.6%	84.9%
Differences				
Dissatisfied (Sig. of Diff ³)	-5.3% (0.03)	-4.4% (0.02)	-6.0% (0.00)	-1.6% (0.50)
Satisfied (Sig. of Diff ³)	5.3% (0.03)	4.4% (0.02)	6.0% (0.00)	1.6% (0.5)
1 Pearson chi-square = 4.113, d.f. = 3, P-value = 0.25 was performed to test the difference between columns				
2 Pearson chi-square = 6.815, d.f. = 3, P-value = 0.08 was performed to test the difference between columns				
3 These values are the result of the application of the test of significance of the difference between two proportions				

Figure 1: Job Satisfaction Across Economic Cycles Between Construction and All Other Industries²

¹ The difference between job satisfaction in the construction industry compared to all other industries was statistically significant for the first three economic cycles.

² For additional details on the work see: Albarrah, M., Shan, Y., Goodrum, P., and Taylor, T. (2016) "Relationships between cycles of economic expansion in construction and craft workers' job satisfaction and preferences." *Canadian Journal of Civil Engineering*. 44(1): 29-36. DOI: 10.1139/cjce-2016-0358