**ABSTRACT**

**Purpose**: Job satisfaction is becoming increasingly important, especially since the end of the last millennium, as there are numerous organizations that have fostered its relevance to increase job-commitment in their companies. On one side, managers have to learn how to handle and to manage efficiently the dynamic capabilities and their soft skills so as to adapt the environment in which collaborators operate. On the other side, the environment is adapted by employees. Although there is a wide research in this area, there is still a gap in the literature, as the latest literature review points to adverse situations of burnout and job stress with effects on organizational commitment, mediated by job satisfaction. Bearing this highlight in mind, this paper aims to explore the current state of research related to job satisfaction and its impact on organizational performance. It intends to analyze job satisfaction of employees towards the whole organization, as well as towards organizational managers and leaders.

**Design/methodology/approach**: The first part of this paper is based on the systematic literature review, embracing scientific papers related to job satisfaction, derived from the Web of Science and from Scopus databases, mapping analysis and bibliographic coupling using the R Bibliometrix software. Furthermore, bibliographic coupling and most co-occurrent keywords in the title, keywords and abstracts were listed. The next part of the research paper is based on the questionnaire analysis; the methodology used is qualitative and exploratory in nature in order to deepen the knowledge of managers and leaders and the perceptions of employees, based on two case studies.

**Findings**: The topics covered in this study include, among other things, motivation, leadership, and influence of human resources policy, which need to be deepened in practical and ‘in-loco’ contexts. The topics have been tested empirically through questionnaires, based on which it was concluded that the overall level of employee satisfaction with the companies in which they operate is high, both as far as the organization itself and their managers are concerned. It was concluded that leaders adopt a transformational leadership style, motivating and inspiring their employees, and that employee satisfaction is related to their leaders' attitudes and motivational factors.

**Originality/value**: This research provides deeper knowledge on an empirical area, helping to fill in the gap related to the necessity to synthesize this important knowledge area, providing the contribution of various studies in this field and paving the way to further research.

The achievements of this paper open new avenues for other researchers because of the knowledge gaps identified in the existing research that lead to future research inspirations.

**Research limitations**: Unavailability of business associations in the central region (a non-profit organization to support entrepreneurs in the central region) to participate in the study; work modality was not taken into consideration. Although the databases used, i.e. ISI Web of Knowledge and Scopus, are the best-recognized databases in the academic field, restricting the research to those databases only might be considered a limitation. A further restraint is directly linked to the study’s methodology, as it aims to recover and explore a large range of existing research and it does not result in a detailed analysis. Consequently, for future research, multiple -case studies would enrich this research area.