

# **Job Satisfaction: What Really Makes Us Enjoy Our Work May Surprise You!**

2005 National Career Development Association  
Global Conference  
June 23, 2005

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# Motivation for the Study

- Wealth of experience assisting career seekers and career decision-makers
- The big question: What happens once people begin working in the jobs they have chosen?

# Job Satisfaction

## Definition:

“the feelings a worker has about his or her job experiences in relation to previous experiences, current expectations, or available alternatives”

- Balzer et al., 1997, p.10

# Why Study Job Satisfaction?

- Important element of employees' mental health (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969)
- Individuals spend approximately 86,000 hours of their lives working (Reardon, Lenz, Sampson, & Peterson, 2000)
- Abundance of research on Job Satisfaction and its correlates

# Social Significance

- ✔ Effects of Job Satisfaction on individuals
- ✔ Effects of Job Satisfaction on organizations
- ✔ Effects of Job Satisfaction on society
- ✔ Relationship between Job Satisfaction and life satisfaction
- ✔ Development of organizational interventions to increase employee Job Satisfaction

# Purpose of the Study

- Increase current knowledge regarding Job Satisfaction and its correlates
- Exploratory study examining relationships among four constructs not yet analyzed in concert
- Analysis of the relationships between Person-Environment Congruence, Self-efficacy, and Environmental Identity and Job Satisfaction

# Hypothesis

- There will be a positive correlation between the predictor variables of Person-Environment Congruence, Self-efficacy, and Environmental Identity and the criterion variables of Satisfaction with Work, Satisfaction with Pay, Satisfaction with Promotions, Satisfaction with Supervision, Satisfaction with Co-workers, and Overall Job Satisfaction

# Selection of Predictor Variables

- Individual variable: Self-efficacy
- Environmental variable: Environmental Identity
- Interactional variable: Person-Environment Congruence
- Existing research: Person-Environment Congruence and Job Satisfaction “the magic .30”
- Is there more to the story?

# Participants

- Target population: Employed persons in the private sector; large multinational business organizations
- Employees involved in the study

# Selection of Measures

- ✓ Vocational Interests: The Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI; Holland & Gottfredson, 1985)
- ✓ Position Classification: The Position Classification Inventory (PCI; Gottfredson & Holland, 1991)
- ✓ Self-efficacy: The Self-efficacy Scale (SES) (Sherer et al., 2000)
- ✓ Environmental Identity: The Environmental Identity Scale (EIS; Gottfredson & Holland, 1996; Holland, 1997)
- ✓ Job Satisfaction: The Job Descriptive Index (JDI; Balzer et al., 1997)
- ✓ Theory-basis, sound psychometric properties of all instruments

# The Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI)

- 11 scales, 6 scales assessing Holland's interest areas and 5 clinical scales
- Individuals respond with *Yes* for occupations that are appealing, *No* for occupations that are unappealing, and leave blank those for which they have no opinion
- Sample occupations:
  - Locomotive Engineer (Realistic)
  - Geologist (Investigative)
  - Cartoonist (Artistic)
  - Youth Camp Director (Social)
  - Television Producer (Enterprising)
  - Court Stenographer (Conventional)

# The Position Classification Inventory (PCI)

- ☞ Items associated with each of Holland's six types
- ☞ Individuals respond by indicating the degree to which each descriptor applies to their work position by marking *Often, Sometimes, or Seldom/Never*
- ☞ Sample position descriptors for the question:  
"What skills, abilities, or personal characteristics must be exercised by a person in this position?"
  - Direct the work of others
  - Engage in heavy physical activity
  - Follow directions

# The Self-efficacy Scale (SES)

- Measure of Generalized Self-efficacy and Social Self-efficacy (ONLY General scale used in this study)
- Individuals respond by indicating the degree to which they agree with each statement
- Sample items:
  - If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it
  - Failure just makes me try harder
  - When I decide to do something, I go right to work on it

# The Environmental Identity Scale (EIS)

- ☞ Individuals respond by endorsing the degree to which each statement characterizes their work environment
- ☞ Sample items:
  - This environment clearly signals to workers what performance is expected of them
  - In this workplace people know what to do and when to do it
  - This organization simultaneously pursues many conflicting goals

# The Job Descriptive Index (JDI)

- 6 Subscales, each with 9 or 18 adjectives (*JIG* included)
- Individuals respond by marking *Yes*, *No*, or *?* in response to each adjective on all 6 checklists
- Sample items:
  - *Work* Subscale: Fascinating
  - *Pay* Subscale: Income provides luxuries
  - *Promotions* Subscale: Fairly good chance for promotion
  - *Supervision* Subscale: Hard to please
  - *Co-workers* Subscale: Talk too much
  - *Job in General* Subscale: Better than most

# Data Analysis

- ✓ Canonical correlation analysis
- ✓ Predictor domain: Person-Environment Congruence, Self-efficacy, Environmental Identity
- ✓ Criterion domain: Satisfaction with Work, Satisfaction with Pay, Satisfaction with Promotions, Satisfaction with Supervision, Satisfaction with Co-workers, Overall Job Satisfaction

# Results

- ✓ Significant multivariate relationship among variables in the predictor and criterion domains
- ✓ Two statistically and practically significant canonical roots identified
- ✓ First canonical root explained 33% of shared variance in two data sets
- ✓ Second canonical root explained 12% of shared variance in two data sets

# First Canonical Root: Organizational Mission Satisfaction

- Predictor variable of greatest value in the model:  
Environmental Identity
- Criterion variables of greatest value in the model:  
Satisfaction with Supervision, Overall Job  
Satisfaction, Satisfaction with Co-workers,  
Satisfaction with Promotions
- Environmental Identity was the most powerful  
predictor of Satisfaction with Supervision and  
Satisfaction with Co-workers

## Second Canonical Root: Work Tasks Satisfaction

- Predictor variables of greatest value in the model: Self-efficacy and Iachan index
- Criterion variable of greatest value in the model: Satisfaction with Work
- Self-efficacy and the Iachan index were the most powerful predictors of Satisfaction with Work

# Post-hoc Analysis: Management and Non-Management Employees

- Significant multivariate relationship for both sub-samples
- One statistically and practically significant canonical root identified for both sub-samples

# Management and Non-Management Employees

## First Canonical Root: Organizational Mission Satisfaction

- Predictor variable of greatest value in the model: Environmental Identity
- ALL criterion variables were substantially correlated with first canonical variate for criterion domain
- For management employees, Environmental Identity was the most powerful predictor of Satisfaction with Promotions and Satisfaction with Pay
- For non-management employees, Environmental Identity was the most powerful predictor of Satisfaction with Supervision and Satisfaction with Co-workers

## Discussion of Results: Environmental Identity and Job Satisfaction

- Environmental Identity is a strong predictor of Job Satisfaction
- When individuals are able to identify the goals of their organization, it is easier to determine where they fit and what contribution then can make**
- Definition of organization

# Organizational Mission Satisfaction Explained

- ✔ Satisfaction with many aspects of one's job as a consequence of perceiving the rules, rewards, and goals of the organization to be explicit and unchanging
- ✔ Co-workers and supervisors transmit organization's mission
- ✔ Other factors less important
- ✔ Necessity for organization to consistently act on explicitly stated mission, rules, and rewards

# Discussion of Results: Self-Efficacy and Person-Environment Congruence and Job Satisfaction

- Multivariate solution – based on interaction
- Importance of confidence in one's ability to accomplish work activities
- Earlier research linking Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction
- Value of work that corresponds with vocational interest pattern
- Earlier research linking Person-Environment Congruence and Satisfaction with Work

# Discussion of Post-hoc Findings

- For homogenous groups, ONLY Environmental Identity predicts ALL facets of Job Satisfaction
- Environmental Identity most strongly predicts Satisfaction with Promotions and Satisfaction with Pay for management employees
- Environmental Identity most strongly predicts Satisfaction with Supervision and Satisfaction with Co-workers for non-management employees
- Inherent differences in needs and goals of employees at different levels?
- Difference in Correlates of Job Satisfaction for heterogeneous and homogeneous groups

# Limitations

- ✓ Self-report instruments
- ✓ Instrument properties
- ✓ Non-normal data distributions
- ✓ Unequal representation of personality and environment types
- ✓ Ties among Holland codes
- ✓ Limitations of Person-Environment Congruence indices
- ✓ Nature of sample and generalizability
- ✓ Is Holland's theory appropriate for prediction at the group level?

# Implications for Individual Career Development & Career Change

- Guiding job hunters in assessing the Environmental Identity of an organization before accepting a job offer
- Recognizing the role of high/low Environmental Identity in the quality of organizational experiences
- Seeking necessary organizational information and/or clarification of organizational mission, rules, and goals to improve Job Satisfaction

# Implications for Individual Career Development & Career Change

- Using self-assessments to determine interest patterns before selecting an occupation or accepting a job
- Analyzing match between one's interest pattern and current job
- Seeking appropriate change in self and/or job to increase Job Satisfaction

# Implications for Individual Career Development & Career Change

- Assessing one's Self-efficacy related to work
- Working with a counselor to augment Self-efficacy and increase Job Satisfaction

# Implications for Career Development on an Organizational Level

- Developing an organizational strategic plan to increase Environmental Identity
- Training for upper-level management and supervisors on the organization's mission, rules, and goals
- Helping subordinate employees understand the organization's mission, rules, and goals
- Ensuring that the mission, rules, and goals are consistently and clearly expressed in behaviors of higher level employees; importance of modeling

# Implications for Career Development on an Organizational Level

- Matching employees with work positions that correlate with their interest patterns
- Seeking feedback from employees regarding the degree to which they are interested in their work
- Changing employee responsibilities and tasks as appropriate to better match interests

# Implications for Career Development on an Organizational Level

- Assessing applicants' Self-efficacy in the hiring process
- Assessing employees' Self-efficacy when assigning work tasks
- Implementing organizational interventions to increase employees' Self-efficacy

# Conclusions

- Environmental Identity, Self-efficacy, and Person-Environment Congruence are all positively correlated with Job Satisfaction
- Need to reconceptualize Person-Environment match?
- Change in the work environment vs. individual change – implications for Job Satisfaction
- Importance of Environmental Identity for individuals, employers, career counselors, human resources professionals

# For More Information

- View and print presentation materials:  
[www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter](http://www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter)
- Contact the primary researcher:  
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