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

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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 they 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 the organization’s mission.
- Other factors are less important.
- Necessity for the 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

- Contact the primary researcher: svernick@dpscs.state.md.us